SPRINGER BRIEFS IN EDUCATION

R. Scott Webster
Timo Airaksinen
Poonam Batra
Margarita Kozhevnikova *Editors*

Humanizing Education in the 3rd Millennium

Springer

SpringerBriefs in Education

We are delighted to announce SpringerBriefs in Education, an innovative product type that combines elements of both journals and books. Briefs present concise summaries of cutting-edge research and practical applications in education. Featuring compact volumes of 50 to 125 pages, the SpringerBriefs in Education allow authors to present their ideas and readers to absorb them with a minimal time investment. Briefs are published as part of Springer's eBook Collection. In addition, Briefs are available for individual print and electronic purchase.

SpringerBriefs in Education cover a broad range of educational fields such as: Science Education, Higher Education, Educational Psychology, Assessment & Evaluation, Language Education, Mathematics Education, Educational Technology, Medical Education and Educational Policy.

SpringerBriefs typically offer an outlet for:

- An introduction to a (sub)field in education summarizing and giving an overview of theories, issues, core concepts and/or key literature in a particular field
- A timely report of state-of-the art analytical techniques and instruments in the field of educational research
- A presentation of core educational concepts
- An overview of a testing and evaluation method
- A snapshot of a hot or emerging topic or policy change
- An in-depth case study
- A literature review
- A report/review study of a survey
- An elaborated thesis

Both solicited and unsolicited manuscripts are considered for publication in the SpringerBriefs in Education series. Potential authors are warmly invited to complete and submit the Briefs Author Proposal form. All projects will be submitted to editorial review by editorial advisors.

SpringerBriefs are characterized by expedited production schedules with the aim for publication 8 to 12 weeks after acceptance and fast, global electronic dissemination through our online platform SpringerLink. The standard concise author contracts guarantee that:

- an individual ISBN is assigned to each manuscript
- each manuscript is copyrighted in the name of the author
- the author retains the right to post the pre-publication version on his/her website or that of his/her institution

More information about this series at https://link.springer.com/bookseries/8914

R. Scott Webster · Timo Airaksinen ·
Poonam Batra · Margarita Kozhevnikova
Editors

Humanizing Education in the 3rd Millennium

Springer

Editors
R. Scott Webster
Federation University
Berwick, VIC, Australia

Timo Airaksinen
University of Helsinki
Helsinki, Finland

Poonam Batra
Central Institute of Education
University of Delhi
Delhi, India

Margarita Kozhevnikova
Herzen State Pedagogical University
of Russia
St. Petersburg, Russia

ISSN 2211-1921 ISSN 2211-193X (electronic)
SpringerBriefs in Education
ISBN 978-981-19-1204-7 ISBN 978-981-19-1205-4 (eBook)
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-1205-4

This Springer imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Singapore Pte Ltd.
The registered company address is: 152 Beach Road, #21-01/04 Gateway East, Singapore 189721, Singapore

Preface

We are finishing work on this book as the world undergoes the coronavirus pandemic. Our participants, located in different parts of the world, are exchanging impressions of what is happening around them and providing each other with words of moral courage and support. Through both our individual and common experiences we are gaining some insight into the state of humanity in the new millennium as the events that surround this pandemic unfold and learning about the kind of education that humanity needs. The preliminary conclusions are as follows.

Firstly, the life of all humanmankind is interconnected in obvious ways. Therefore, we need education that acknowledges this connectedness based on the understanding of humankind as one, albeit diverse. Secondly, in the face of common challenges, the actions of the authorities remind us what we want the 'state' and 'government' to be: those structures and people to whom we, society, transfer our aggregate funds and the responsibility for our interests. Education is oriented on this role of the state, which education itself embodies, and therefore tries to raise citizens capable to properly carry out the functioning of society and state institutions. Thirdly, each of us is responsible for ourselves and those connected with us. Even although we are equipped with all kinds of technologies and immersed in digital channels of communication, empathy and human kindness remain our main potential. Another vital component is our personal meanings. Finding ourselves in lockdown is a test of what remains with us in such limited conditions. For a human being it is these elements that give life meaning.

Problems are a normal part of existence, but today's problems differ in scale of their consequences from the past, primarily due to the rapid expansion of the human population and technologies affecting our and other species and the entire planet. Reflecting upon education and its essential aims we cannot ignore this. We need to consider the difficulties and challenges met by education and also the dangers for which education perhaps is responsible.

The group of authors contributing to the book formed as a result of the international initiative 'Human Education in the 3rd Millennium' launched by philosophers of education, and the Initiative round-table conference held in July 2019

stands in solidarity with many other colleagues around the world involved in similar considerations.

In the past, some significant discussions and studies have been conducted under the auspices of UNESCO (e.g. Delors, 1998; Faure, 1972), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and recently the 'Futures of Education' project. There are numerous other endeavours around the world with similar aims such as ventures to develop educational programmes that address the environment, citizenship, social-emotional dimensions, morality, character development, values and happiness, or such as Education for Global Humanism, World Core Curriculum, Happiness Curriculum, Network for Public Education, Research Community on Neoliberal Education Policy. The initiated action to formulate and adopt the Declaration resembles conceptual actions taken by educational philosophers, such as the Manifesto for Post-Critical Pedagogy or 'Education for change—Change for education. Teacher manifesto for the 21st century' undertaken by educators.

We stand together with all those colleagues who think and work to bring about a positive transformation and, particularly, to humanize education because we share the same goals and emphasize the human meanings of education. In addition, we believe that it is necessary to focus on our own participation in the actual formation of educational policy. Our initiative is based on the belief and the need to give critical voice to educators to enable a collective global professional decision-making.

This book is an attempt to offer a significant contribution at the international level which we hope will lead to a future Declaration. Based on these understandings we will be able to envisage what should be given greatest importance so that education meets its responsibility to each person, humanity, and the world.

While rethinking the meaning of education at the beginning of the new millennium in the light of this logic, the words of the most prominent humanist of our era, the Dalai Lama, are especially inspiring:

> My hope and wish are that one-day formal education will pay attention to what I call 'education of the heart'. Just as we take for granted the need to acquire proficiency in the basic academic subjects I am hopeful that a time will come when we can take it for granted that children will learn as part of the curriculum the indispensability of inner values: love, compassion, justice, and forgiveness.

The authors of the book helped to set up the Initiative round-table conference—'Human Education in the 3rd Millennium' (2019) and were keynote speakers. These authors are from all over the world: Finland, Russia, the UK, Germany, India, Tibet, Brazil, the USA, and Australia.

St. Petersburg, Russia

Margarita Kozhevnikova
Coordinator of the international initiative 'Human Education in the 3rd Millennium'

References

Delors, J. (1998). *Learning: The Treasure Within*. UNESCO.
Faure, E. (1972). *Learning to Be*. UNESCO.

Introduction

The purpose of this book is to propose some insights and ideas into how we might humanize education. As such, the chapters that comprise this book are designed to inform, provoke, and guide further inquiries into how to imagine and actualize human education. It is the view of all the contributors of this book, that education should be primarily understood as *human education* which offers universal goods for the entire planet. As such, it centres the significant values that make life, in a holistic sense, meaningful, worthwhile, and socially just.

One of the main tasks that any attempt to actualize human education must face, is to overcome the various fragmentations. These include how knowledge has been fragmented from knowers, thought from action, education from training, ethics from education, processes from purposes, and national and/or ethnic divisions from a united humanity. It is the uniting of these fragmentation that are considered to have utmost importance for education. Therefore, many of the contributions in this book will have a philosophical approach as it has been the philosophy of education that has traditionally engaged with such ideals. However, these cannot be separated from matters of policy as it is through these that ideals are made a reality.

In order to create an approach to education that is specifically human, we are required to undertake a sustained investigation to identify and articulate what it means to *be human* and in particular, an educated humanity. This requires engaging with questions such as, 'what is the distinctiveness which makes us human?' and 'how does education enhance human beings?' There will always be a diversity of views on this and other matters due to the various political, religious, and ideological frameworks that people typically drawn upon. Nevertheless, we see great value in undertaking this inquiry to recognize and appreciate that the ultimate value of education is in enabling *all* individuals and their communities to grow and flourish *with* each other and in harmony with an environmentally and socially diverse world.

Consequently, this book embodies a diversity of contributors from around the world, as well as their diversity of writing styles. The chapters will also vary in length and in the manner or engaging readers and we celebrate such a diverse approach for seeking and sharing universal concerns and aspirations. The book itself is dividing into four main sections addressing: Being Human; Educational Policy; Democracy;

and Education. These four themes are all interrelated and formed the framework for discussion at the round-table conference held in India in 2019 and the content of the Memorandum. The first theme addressing *Being Human* reflects the main interest addressed at the beginning of this introduction. We consider that a rich philosophical engagement is necessary to ensure that education is indeed human education.

The second theme of *Educational Policy* acknowledges that philosophical ideals of education must be actualized through carefully designed and formalized approaches. This ensures that procedures are aligned to importantly recognized values and aims. The tendency has been to adopt value-neutral language and to make appeals to ideologically free evidence. For education to be specifically human education, the values of policymakers ought to be articulated clearly with rigorous understanding and justification, in order that those responsible for enacting such policies, may do so through their freely chosen commitment.

The third theme addresses *Democracy* and signals that there ought to be great diversity of participation into the philosophizing and policy formation. Democratic life provides opportunity for *all* members of the community to exercise their intellectual freedom to critically question, inquire and create possibilities. Hence, a major challenge for education and research is to reimagine democracy for the current world in which we find ourselves.

The fourth theme of *Educational* indicates that teaching and learning cannot be reduced to apolitical and values-neutral strategies of a technical sort. They are understood to fundamentally be human interactions and therefore must be educational in nature. These four themes form the network of significant features and values which comprise human education. This book seeks to contribute towards the growth of understanding as we seek unity among our global diversity.

Memorandum

The two-day Initiative round-table conference, 'Human Education in the 3rd Millennium', held on July 7–8, 2019 in Dharamsala, India, was the first event of the global education initiative, which brought together scholars from ten countries, and included the Dalai Lama as a special keynote speaker. The main conclusion of the conference was to initiate the World Forum 'Human Education in the 3rd Millennium' aimed at developing a collective Declaration.

We have come together with shared concerns regarding dangerous trends affecting global society and education. Humankind, which has become a planetary power, has considerable influence on the future the entire Earth. Education needs to nurture new human responsibility to reduce violence against nature and other people. In this sense our initiative supports the directives of UNESCO on education, which embody the needs of the world. We share the ideas presented in the 1972 and 1998 reports to UNESCO, but we testify that they have not been properly realized. So in order to make education capable of accomplishing goals for the world, we need to identify and confront certain aspects of current educational policies, including managerialism and neoliberal ideologies, and clarify the current situation within education itself, that is characterized by very low interest in educators and educatees as humans as well as the very low interest in collective well-being and democratic values. This situation contributes to the technocratic-informational scenario that characterizes the development of civilization in the post-industrial era.

We are aware of various other attempts and initiatives in educational practice, theory, and philosophy in the world, aimed at changes in education. We are making common cause with them and believe that the World Forum will provide a place for many of them. Our initiative is based on belief in the need to give a voice to educators and educationists and belief in the possibility of coming to a collective decision in the form of a Declaration by the specially developed organization of the World Forum.

A philosophical and interdisciplinary approach to the concerns of education compels us to examine the notion of 'being human' that apparently underpins educational paradigms and policies around the globe.

Thus we identify four main themes as necessary and essential to the World Forum on 'Human Education in the 3rd Millennium': educational policy; being human; democracy; education.

Educational Policy

1. Damaging trends in education, strongly associated with neoliberalist ideology, reduce teachers and students to economic units that produce and consume. This is evident in the standardization, benchmarking, high-stakes testing, accountability measures, commercialization, and the centralized control of education that undermines the values and norms of democracy and a social ethos of shared purpose. The neoliberal creation of an individualistic society immersed in populism, sectarianism, and narrow self-interest is unacceptable at a time when the public good, democratic norms, and global cooperation are critical for a socially just, environmentally sustainable and peaceful future.

   Education policies around the globe are privileging the concept of 'learning' over 'education'. 'Learning' lends itself more readily to cultures of high-stakes testing.
2. Since the scope of 'education' is much broader than 'learning', educational policies should include our relationship with the living world, human societies and ourselves.
3. 'Miseducative' trends, detrimental to individuals and the larger human community, seem to have emerged under politically constructed conditions that prevent educators from participating in policy making. Current trends reflect a collusion between political and corporate power that marginalizes educators, their professional judgements, professional, and academic autonomy and self-determination.

Being Human

4. All ideological approaches to education are based on assumptions about human nature. (Thus, neoliberalism reduces humans to *'homo economicus*', rational maximizer.) But there might be greater educative value in revisiting questions such as 'what is a human being?' and 'what is an educated human being?' and 'what ought to be the higher purposes of human beings?', since human being by own nature is inexhaustible and indefinable.
5. Students need to be supported in learning how to exercise their agency and live happy and meaningful lives. To this end, education should be designed to give

expression to student and teacher agency and their need to make meaning and belong. *Eudaimonia* (happiness/ flourishing), which is the direction of human aspiration, requires an education grounded in a sound understanding of human nature, motivation, needs, and desires, and also an education grounded in a sound understanding of the inherent value of the whole Earth, both natural and human (in all of its ecological and social diversity).

6. Education should recognize and address the human need for an inner life and self-transcendence, with values of empathy, fraternity, and compassion. The ethical dimensions of human development need to be made integral to meaningful knowledge, capacities, skills, and sensibilities.
7. Education also needs to engage with the challenges of a 'post-human' era which is likely to bring radical shifts in our understanding of what it is to be human.

Democracy

8. Democracy refers not only to governance designed to protect individual rights and provide political representation. It is a means for creating spaces and dialogue for cooperative ways of life that value equal dignity for all, rights of self-determination, social justice, and solidarity. Creating such dialogic and cooperative spaces requires overcoming of epistemic injustice, that is, the inclusion of everyday knowledge, experiences and worldviews also of socially and culturally marginalized students in formal education (see also the attachment.)
9. There is an inherent tension between the ideology of neoliberalism and democratic values. Neoliberalism is a form of totalitarianism which makes the economy an unassailable idol to be served—not critiqued. By contrast, democracy places the public good, justice, and freedom above economics. The embodiment of neoliberalism with its 'common sense' ideals promotes the pursuit of private good while democracy promotes public interest which benefits everyone. That is why ideals of democracy in education are under attack by populism, etc. and worth defending.
10. In this sense universities have specific responsibilities towards the public sphere: to inform public debate and to help society address complex matters.
11. Education cultures in neoliberal conditions are increasingly defined by managerial deference, technocratic efficiency, upward accountability, and performance, along with the involvement of new actors and organizations from business and philanthropy. Depoliticization and the transformation of education from a public good into a private good are determinative to such developments. To combat these tendencies, education must be open, transparent, and democratic so that the legitimacy of education is not judged in terms of narrow instrumental claims of efficiency or effectiveness.
12. Our concern in reclaiming democracy is to affirm the need for educational institutions and cultures to respect teachers' agency, voice, artistry, and professional

judgement as fundamental to sound education. It is also to affirm a vision of education which empowers young people to become experimental, critical and creative human beings who value compassion and respect for others.

13. Reclaiming democracy requires public ownership and governance of schools in which schools are run by democratically accountable bodies that answer to the needs and interests of students, families, and the communities they serve, rather than being run for-profit by opaque, unaccountable actors and institutions.

Education

14. To overcome the narrow framework of 'learning' and design education that is able to discuss existing concerns and address them adequately, requires a different vision of education, based on a system of human-oriented principles.
15. Education must be designed to overcome epistemic injustice, that is, to include the everyday knowledge, experiences and worldviews of socially and culturally marginalized students, to pose questions and facilitate inquiry, to nurture critical, creative, and ethical thinking. Educational spaces that function as communities of inquiry sustain educatees' interest, motivation, and curiosity, while encouraging self-questioning, imagination, reflexivity as well as the development of empathy, emotional maturity, openness to others, and an appreciation of difference.
16. Questions of value, diversity, social justice, and human nature should be among the objects of reasoned and evidence-based inquiry in schools and other educational spaces. This would include the design of curriculums, teaching-learning resources and the preparation of teachers.
17. Education should also engage educatees in activities which enable them to experience a rewarding growth of self-determination and allow them to contribute to a better world through connection with other beings.

Contents

Editors and Contributors

About the Editors

R. Scott Webster is Associate Professor currently working at Federation University in Melbourne. He is the coordinator for the Curriculum and Pedagogy Research group and has interests in educational theory, philosophy of education, curriculum theory, pedagogy, critical thinking, and spirituality. He has written and contributed to various articles, chapters, and books including *Educating for Meaningful Lives* (2009), *Understanding Curriculum: The Australian Perspective* (2019), *Theory and Philosophy in Educational Research* (2018), *Rethinking Reflection and Ethics for Teachers* (2019), and *Education as Confronting Self and Society* (2021). *E-mail*: sswebster@federation.edu.au.

Timo Airaksinen is Professor of Practical Philosophy Emeritus, University of Helsinki, Finland. He is a cynical realist. Research: seventeenth- and eighteenth-century empiricist philosophy and natural theology (Hobbes, Berkeley), philosophy of literature (Kafka, M. de Sade, linguistic tropes), virtue ethics and social conflict theory. He has travelled worldwide and published widely, most recently *Vagaries of Desire* (Brill, 2019; open access). *E-mail*: timo.airaksinen@helsinki.fi.

Poonam Batra is Professor of Education at the Central Institute of Education, University of Delhi, India. Major areas of professional focus include public policy in education; curriculum and pedagogy; social psychology of education, teacher education, and gender studies. Professor Batra has co-authored several key education policy documents in India. Her recent research examines the imperatives of comparative education from a South Asian perspective, and the politics of school and teacher education reform. She is currently working as Co-I on Transforming Education Systems for Sustainable Development (TES4SD) Network Plus Project, funded by the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) of UK Research and Innovation. *E-mail*: batra.poonam@gmail.com.

Margarita Kozhevnikova is the Coordinator of the international initiative 'Human education in the 3rd millennium'; head of the Research laboratory for social and personal development at the Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia; leader of the NGO Association Obrazovanie cheloveka (Human education). She is the author of *The Horizons of a New Sociality in Education* (Ed., chapters] (In Russian); *Teaching. The Buddhist Tradition of Philosophy of Education* (In Russian), 'Desire in Buddhism and the Concept of "Child people" and "True adults"' (Chapter in: *Desire: The Concept and Its Practical Context*), editor of *Teacher with Oneself* (Ed., chapters) (In Russian); *Human education. Philosophy of Education: The Seminar* (Ed., chapters); 8 books and over 70 papers. *E-mail*: margaritakozh@yandex.ru.

Contributors

Timo Airaksinen University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland

Ronald Barnett University College London Institute of Education, London, UK

Poonam Batra Formerly with the Central Institute of Education, University of Delhi, Delhi, India

Howard Gardner Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, USA

Meenakshi Gopinath Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace (WISCOMP), New Delhi, India

The Dalai Lama Tenzin Gyatso Dharamshala, India

Walter Omar Kohan State University of Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Margarita Kozhevnikova Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia, St Petersburg, Russia

Bob Lingard Australian Catholic University, Sydney, QLD, Australia

Darcia Narvaez University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN, USA

Krassimir Stojanov University of Eichstaett-Ingolstadt, Eichstätt, Germany

John A. Weaver Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, GA, USA

R. Scott Webster Federation University, Berwick, VIC, Australia

Being Human

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Education of the Heart for a Happy Life

The Dalai Lama Tenzin Gyatso

Education should bring about a happy life, a happy community and a happy world. If these are our criteria, I fear that modern education has been failing us. We all want to live a happy life and yet every day on the television we can see people facing problems. There are unthinkable conflicts in the name of religion.

Before young children enter the formal education, they have a purity of heart and their basic human nature is unaffected. Children don't care about what each other's religious beliefs are, nor are they concerned about their nationality or family background. They play together with a smile.

Over the past decades, I have had a number of discussions with scientists—they were interested in Buddhist psychology, and I wished to learn about science. I began to discover that we agree that basic human nature is a compassionate. This is logical; we all, even trouble makers, at a young age have received care, in particular loving kindness from our mothers, and affectionate companionship from friends.

My first teacher of compassion was my mother; not my father, who had a very short temper and would sometimes punish me. My mother never showed anger; she was always kind. It is because of a mother's loving kindness that we survive. And, according to scientists, those children who have received the greatest affection from their mothers, possess a deep inner peace and sense of security throughout their lives. Those whose mothers abandoned them when they were young, or who faced some traumatic experience, will feel an insecurity deep inside, no matter how successful they become later in their life.

I consider that we human beings are social animals. All social animals, even birds, are survivors who remain entirely dependent on a group or community. If basic human nature is compassionate and virtuous, then why do we humans create so many problems? I believe the cause of our predicament to be educational in nature.

T. Gyatso (✉)
Dharamshala, India
e-mail: tsewo@dalailama.com

R. S. Webster et al. (eds.), *Humanizing Education in the 3rd Millennium*,
SpringerBriefs in Education, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-1205-4_1

Today's schools fail to properly address basic human values as modern education is grounded in materialistic objectives.

This so-called modern education came into being in the West at the beginning of the industrial revolution. Prior to this, as far as I know, education took place in monasteries and nunneries and was largely associated with religious faith. At the start of industrialization, there was a need for specialization in education. Subjects such as mathematics and science needed to be taught. Therefore, a separate institutionalized system of instruction developed.

The newly established education system was concerned with the development of our brain, and no attention was given to the cultivation of warm-heartedness. Though at first, I think, there was a balance between the religious institutions and the new secular education, today in Europe and America, large Christian monasteries and nunneries are empty. People no longer pay attention to spiritual matters; their focus is on material values, technologies, and science, the aims of which are mainly intended for economic prosperity.

Entire generations that have made their way through this modern education system are ignorant of how to develop inner peace. When they face emotional problems such as anger, jealousy, or fear, they are unprepared to tackle these, and often rely on drugs or alcohol.

In today's education, there seems to be no instruction on how to maintain one's peace of mind in the midst of a problem. I therefore believe that work is needed in the field of education. At the kindergarten level, we teach children physical hygiene; we should include the teaching of emotional hygiene to be continued through a student's senior year.

If we ask children whether they prefer an angry face or a smiling face, it is natural that their response will be, "A smiling face!" When parents occasionally express anger, children become upset. They naturally, biologically, appreciate human love as well as compassion, which conveys a sense of concern for the child's well-being.

Children also naturally recognize the need for a positive social atmosphere that includes supportive friends, and they soon realize that showing love for others is the best way to bring about the secure, loving environment they seek.

As social animals, I believe pursuing self-interest is legitimate, but we need to be wisely rather than foolishly self-interested. To be happy we need a positive attitude and the best way of doing this is to show concern for others—to take care of other members of the community. Education should explain how to develop peace of mind and maintain inner strength.

In India, for more than three thousand years, the concepts of *ahimsa* (non-violence) and *karuna* (compassion) have existed. These don't involve mere prayer to a creator being; they confront our inner world. There has also existed the practice of *shamatha,* where the mind calmly abides on its object of thought, and *vipassana*—deep insight into what is being considered—demonstrating the importance attributed to the mind and not merely to physical and material concerns.

When we speak of mind, we are not referring to the sensorial mind, but to something more profound. Materialistic life is concerned merely with the sensual: the experience of pleasant feelings. Listening to music, for example, causes us to feel

happy. The real troublemakers are our anger and fear which do not exist only on the sensorial level but are present on the mental level as well. It is important to recognize that there are five sensory level consciousnesses, as well as a sixth mental consciousness. During sleep, the five sense organs no longer work, but the sixth—the mental consciousness—remains active. Anger and fear are related to this sixth level consciousness; they are not limited to the five sensorial.

We must develop an understanding of the map of the mind. We shouldn't consider consciousness to simply be one level of our identity. There are different types of mind and emotions. This is not religious; it is academic and will enable us to better cope with our negative emotions. With this knowledge we will hopefully no longer need to rely on tranquilizers.

In Switzerland, during a long road journey many years ago, I stopped for lunch in the home of affluent friends. After our meal I went to the bathroom to rinse out my mouth and there I saw a bottle of tranquilizers. I felt, "Oh, this materially successful family also needs tranquilizers!" This is due to a lack of knowledge of how to cultivate peace of mind. To have peace of mind we need to know its enemies, which are anger, fear, and too much self-centeredness.

An understanding of quantum physics can also be useful. A Chinese quantum physicist has noticed that a belief in the views of quantum physics reduces the tendency to cling to things. He noticed that when he felt too much grasping at things, in either a positive or negative way—as possessing some sort of independent quality or independent fault—emotions such as attachment or aversion arose. Quantum physics establishes that nothing exists as it appears. Most destructive emotions are based on appearances rather than any deeper reality. Quantum physics seems to demonstrate just what Buddhist psychology and the philosophy of ancient masters such as Nagarjuna have stated.

Since my youth, over seventy years ago, I have believed this view, shared by quantum physics and Buddhist philosophy, to be very helpful for maintaining peace of mind. It should, however, be combined with altruism: infinite love. I have found that these two qualities—a correct view of the way things exist and great love for all beings—are the most effective tranquilizers.

It saddens me that religion itself is being used a source of conflict and even of killing. I think of our neighbors in the Middle East, in Syria, and in Afghanistan, all Muslims, submitting to the same Allah, following the same Quran and praying five times a day. However, due to minor differences between the Shia and Sunni schools of thought, they kill each other! This is unthinkable! Both Shiites and Sunnis believe in the same Allah. They are truly brothers and sisters, children of Allah; how can they kill each other?

In India, the British colonizers did a very good job of constructing railways and creating a postal system. Regrettably, they neglected traditional Indian knowledge of the mind. Instead, they introduced what I have been referring to as "modern education" focused on materialistic goals and tendency to follow a materialistic way of life. I sometimes tease my modern Indian friends, telling them that they are only "Indians by body," and that from the point of view of our thinkings, I am more Indian than they are. I am committed to the revival in this country of ancient Indian

knowledge of the mind and emotions. India possesses the unique ability to combine its ancient knowledge of the mind and emotions with a modern education.

I am one individual human being, and in all my life, which has not been an easy one—at sixteen I lost my freedom, at twenty-four I lost my own country—in the face of challenging times I have found that ancient Indian thought has been of immense help in maintaining my peace of mind.

I am pleased that, with the help of the Himachal Pradesh Government College in Dharamshala as well as the Delhi School System, educational programs have been developed and implemented. The curriculum for educating the mind and emotions is not religious; it is strictly secular. It delights me that India is reviving its ancient knowledge. Mahatma Gandhi-ji demonstrated to the world that problems can be solved in a non-violent way, free of weapons. Nelson Mandela followed this example in his battle against apartheid in South Africa, and Martin Luther King totally devoted himself to a non-violent path to bring equality to African Americans.

Our modern system of education deals mainly with training the brain. Education can be utilized either constructively or destructively. Our wonderful brain must be combined with a warm heart and a sense of responsibility. We must ensure that we do not devote our valuable human intelligence to pursuits that lack moral principles, such as the development of weapons of destruction.

In the Western world, with its predominant belief that we are the creation of God, this Creator is not thought of as angry. Whether from the point of view of Judaism, Christianity, or Islam, God is possessed with infinite love. This infinitely loving God is considered to be our father. If anyone truly believes in God the Creator, possessed with infinite love, then how can humans kill each other? How could the First and Second World Wars have taken place?

I believe that with the help of our wonderful human brains, and by means of education, we should be able to develop infinite love. Only we human beings have the ability to develop loving kindness and infinite love; animals, who do not possess a brain such as ours, aren't able to do this.

The cultivation of A*himsa* is essential. Though scientists say that the natural quality of our human mind is compassionate, when anger or jealousy arise in our lives, they destroy our peace of mind, creating problems for others and causing us great suffering as well. Realizing this, we should recognize that *ahimsa*, or non-violence, is the most effective way to deal with challenges. We must accept that within human society our brothers and sisters are bound to hold a variety of different views. In order to survive on this planet together we must endeavor to peacefully live harmoniously despite our different views.

Global warming is becoming an ever-pressing challenge to our survival on this planet. A Taiwanese Nobel Laureate in Chemistry recently told me that human life could come to an end in the next seventy to eighty years. Recently in Mongolia, there has been a steady decline in snowfall, causing many animals to die. Similarly, India is facing problems that appear related to climate change. In America, weather conditions are steadily becoming more unpredictable. Not long ago there were many lakes in Afghanistan, however it is now a desert. In Tibet, decade after decade, water resources are diminishing. And in Siberia, people are experiencing serious

new problems related to climate change. All of these are due to global warming. As I am already eighty-four years old, the warning from my Taiwanese Nobel Laureate friend may not be a personal concern. However, for the sake of our children, we must seriously address global warming throughout the world!

Regrettably, the present American president, Mr. Donald Trump, does not seem concerned with the challenges facing our world. We cannot passively rely on our politicians; we must be proactive. We must personally decide not to use coal; we must use alternative energy sources such as solar and wind energy. The consequences we are now experiencing are the result of industrialization and its reliance on fossil fuels. Each one of us must now make a commitment to changing the way we lead our lives. For many years, I have not taken a bath; instead, I take brief showers to consume less water. I retain a vivid memory of once being on a train crossing the hot plains of India and passing a station with an open water tap and water flowing wastefully. I can still feel the discomfort I experienced. Here in India, as in Africa, water scarcity is such an urgent problem! It is tragic that some parts of the world are drying up, while others experience flooding. This is due to global warming.

It seems to me that most of the people responsible for causing problems on this planet have received what would be considered a very fine modern education. Sadly, their fine education hasn't taught them to diminish their greed, jealousy, fear, or anger. I therefore stress that the existing form of education is simply not adequate.

The population of the world today is over seven billion of which one billion hold no religious beliefs. Among the other six billion, there are sadly troublemakers. This is due to a lack of knowledge and moral principles. I believe that this is a reflection of the deficiency that exists in our modern system of education.

The essence of religion, I believe, is warm-heartedness and compassion. Animals very much appreciate this compassionate attitude. If you give a dog some bread with loving kindness, it will show its appreciation, while if you give bread without the expressed kindness, the dog will take bread and show no response. Whether we call it religion or not, this deeper affection brings us together. It is this quality that we need to emphasize.

Religion and faith are individual matters while compassion and loving kindness are common values. In Buddhism, we find different philosophical schools such as Chittamatra and Madhyamaka. Historically, the adherents of these schools held public debates and disputes; however, they were also learning from each other, benefitting from the different insights being presented by their opponents.

When I am asked what it means to be an educator, a teacher, I answer: "I don't know." I believe that it is important that teachers feel and express genuine care and concern for their students, including a sense of responsibility and love. When children feel this, they naturally feel supported and will be happy to participate in class. A teacher may be a great scholar, but if she or he doesn't smile, the students will lack any enthusiasm for learning. When I was young, my tutor kept a whip beside him. I can vividly remember that when the time came for the lesson to start, the whole sky became dark. But gradually, when he showed a smile, I learned more of the subjects I was studying better and felt happier. I, therefore, believe that teacher-training is very important.

The seven billion human beings with whom we share this planet earth, are mentally, emotionally, physically, the same. Wherever I go, I always feel that we are all the same human brothers and sisters. If I were to place too much emphasis on the fact that I'm Tibetan, or that I'm Buddhist, or that I am somehow different, I will become a very isolated and lonely person. On the other hand, when I feel that we are all the same as human beings, then there are no longer barriers between us. I therefore stress the importance of promoting a sense of the oneness of humanity.

As I've said before, we are social animals. An individual's future depends on his or her community and in this twenty-first century, seven billion human beings make up one human community. Caring for one another is the most effective way by which we can fulfill our own happiness. In Buddhism we refer to all living beings as our "mother sentinel beings." In reality, there are limitless species of sentient beings, however we are not able to connect with them all; we can only really concentrate on this world, this planet. Among the seven billion human beings there exist many different languages, making it difficult to communicate with everyone. However, because we have the same human brain and the same human heart, I am dedicating my life to trying to create a compassionate seven billion human beings by means of education.

In conclusion, this conference on "Human Education in the Third Millennium" is a clear indication that an increasing number of educators feel that the existing education system is inadequate. This is a wonderful sign. I think, that educators from different parts of the world should discuss and question whether or not our present education system is satisfactory.

You scholars, who have come from different countries, are showing genuine interest in humanity. You are seriously pursuing how to build a better, happier, and more peaceful world. This is our shared goal. This brilliant human brain should not be used to create weapons that kill others. Our wonderful ability to reason must be combined in education with a warm heart and a sense of responsibility, in order to bring about a peaceful, happy world.

The 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, is the spiritual leader of Tibet and a Nobel Peace Prize laureate. Since 1959, he has lived in exile in Dharamsala in northern India.

Three Sacred Enterprises: Human Creations that Must Be Preserved and Strengthened

Howard Gardner

Abstract While the word 'sacred' is typically restricted to the religious sphere, I believe that it is worth identifying certain human inventions as meriting special consideration and status. In this essay, I single out three enterprises as meriting the description of 'sacred': the learned professions, institutions of higher learning, and the pursuit of truth. Various factors in the contemporary world—prominent among them, the digital media—threaten the viability of these three enterprises. Their loss would be tragic—professions, universities, and truth are worth fighting for.

Most human beings have something that they consider to be very special, worth preserving, even worth fighting for. For much of human history and for many today, those special items include members of one's family, one's religion, one's nation, as well as certain items—ranging from photographs to heirlooms. We acknowledge the unique states of these items by terming them sacred. Yet, at the same time, all too often, we take these items for granted, and indeed, we may only recognize their importance when these items are in jeopardy, when we fear that we may lose them, or indeed, when we no longer have them.

While I value each of the aforementioned items, of late I have come to realize that there are other human inventions that I value greatly. These inventions emerged over the decades, even the centuries, often in ways that were not apparent to most observers at a specific time. And as in the case with the aforementioned items, their unique value has only become clear when they appear to be in jeopardy. Here I single out three of them—the professions, institutions of higher education, and the pursuit of knowledge in a disinterested fashion. I describe why I value them, what I see as threatening them, and how one might preserve and even strengthen them.

First, the professions. Before recorded history, there were presumably healers, storytellers, judges, and teachers. But in recent centuries, many societies have developed the idea of professions and of professionals. Individuals deemed professionals are charged with handling human needs—health, justice, verifiable knowledge of

H. Gardner (✉)
Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, USA
e-mail: hgasst@gse.harvard.edu

R. S. Webster et al. (eds.), *Humanizing Education in the 3rd Millennium*,
SpringerBriefs in Education, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-1205-4_2

what is happening in the world, as well as the attainment of important new knowledge. Professionals, like doctors, lawyers, journalists, and professors as examples, have been given power and prestige with the understanding that they will behave in a fair and disinterested manner, serving the wider community rather than filling their own pockets or favoring their own personal causes.

Next, colleges and universities. Over the course of the millennium, institutions of higher learning have developed with two major purposes: to make sure that the current knowledge and skills of humankind are preserved and passed on to the next generation; and to equip at least some individuals to add to the corpus of human knowledge, which can include both correcting the present record and opening up new areas of study and discovery.

Finally, the pursuit of knowledge, not for an ulterior motive, but to make sure that we can learn and understand as much as possible of our world, and indeed of the wider universe. And, crucially, that knowledge must be as accurate as possible, and when it is not accurate, it must be open to challenge so that errors or misconceptions can be acknowledged and 'the record' be corrected. Central to the pursuit of knowledge is fidelity to truthfulness. It's no accident that two of the oldest North American higher education institutions—Harvard and Yale—feature Veritas on their insignia. And when truth is minimized or even ridiculed, the pursuit of knowledge is doomed.

Let me be personal. As a young person growing up in the United States in mid-century, I took these three entities for granted. And indeed, as a scholar working for decades within a university setting, I again never questioned the validity or the longevity of these three entities.

How wrong I was! In the last twenty-five years, all three entities have been dramatically disrupted.

- The decline of the professions is due in part to the self-centeredness, even the selfishness of many professionals—such individuals come to value their own personal success more than faithfulness to the core principles of their profession and concomitant service to their communities.
- The status of our institutions of higher learning has steadily declined. Indeed, in recent years, a significant proportion of the population of the United States—and indeed a majority of those who vote Republican—see our universities as detrimental to our national interest.
- Not only has the knowledge of the expert ceased to be valued. But from both the left (with its postmodern excesses) and the right (with its antagonism to expertise and to institutions of higher learning that are seen as politically torqued), there is skepticism about truth, if not outright embracement of fake news, or alternative facts. Needless to say, the survival of disinterested universities and disinterested professions cannot be expected when respect for truthfulness—indeed love of truth—has been abandoned.

I wish I could say that this lamentable state of affairs is just an American phenomenon, but it is not. We see signs of the same trends all over the world. And while perhaps America has contributed unduly to this disruption, it may well have occurred anyway. As just one example, I don't see 'Brexit' as in any way an American phenomenon.

And of course, throughout history (and presumably before!) authoritarian leaders throughout have burned books and attacked scholars and artists who did not simply embrace the orthodoxy… or the latest pronouncement of 'the leader.'

In recent years, we have all witnessed the rise—if not the hegemony—of digital technology, with particular emphasis on the internet, the worldwide web, and social media. In this context, it's of course essential to consider the extent to which these three disruptions can be tied, wholly in part, to the inventions and events of the last fifty years which, for short, we could call Silicon Valley creations.

Again, becoming autobiographical, I became skeptical about the 'democratic promise' of the new media as early as 2005. At that time, I approached a major American philanthropic organization for support so that my colleagues and I could study the effects of the new media on young person's ethical and moral compass. And for fifteen years, we have chronicled the ways in which behavior and attitudes are shaped by Silicon Valley—and not always, to be sure, in a positive way.

That said, I am not a techno-determinist. The status of professions in the developed world was being undermined well before the advent of the Internet or the worldwide web. In the United States, institutions of higher learning reached their peak in the 1960s and never fully recovered from the chaos of the late sixties and early seventies, and investment by American states in their public colleges and universities was challenged by punitive voting propositions well before Steve Jobs or Bill Gates launched their enterprises. Finally, many postmodern scholars had little use for the concepts of truth—or beauty or goodness—well before Fox news was a glint in Roger Ailes eyes.

Still, there's no question in my mind, that each of these three disruptions was magnified—and perhaps multiplied multifold—by high speed communication, available to everyone, where anyone can say whatever he or she likes, without consequence, and where powerful computational algorithms and devices, with no concern about any of my 'three sacreds,' are designed to accumulate as much knowledge as possible about all human beings, with consumerism and control being the well-funded desiderata.

If I am even partially right, what can I, what can we do? I am not at all sure that I know the answer. But I do know what I believe and what my colleagues and I have done. I believe that the only way to resurrect or reclaim the professions, universities, and disinterested scholarship is for those who believe in them to work as hard as we can to make them as exemplary, as admirable, and as attainable as possible. I believe that large portions of the public do respect those professionals who give rather than take; institutions of higher learning that strive to exemplify the values that they preach; and scholars and other experts who pursue knowledge wherever it takes them, who report carefully what they have found and learned, who are not afraid to admit error, who model those behaviors for others, and who call to account those individuals, practices, and institutions that knowingly and even deliberately violate these standards.

Toward these ends, my colleagues and I at Harvard Project Zero have for over 25 years tried to understand what we call 'good work' in the professions—work that is at once excellent in quality, personally engaging, and carried out in an ethical

manner. In so doing, we have tried to be careful scholars, indicating what we have found, correcting the record when we can, presenting and publishing our findings in reputable truth-valuing outlets. For the last eight years, we have studied institutions of higher education, and in our writings we seek to indicate the pressures which they are confronting and to highlight those schools and those practices which exemplify the highest standards and expectations of the sector. Finally, over the years, we have developed many curricular interventions which are designed to engender 'good work' and 'good citizenship' in young people ranging from K-12 education to higher education. In no way do we reject the new technologies; but we believe that, like all tools, they can be put to various uses and it's up to human beings to work to make them help realize those values that we cherish. (Interested readers should visit thegoodproject.org and howardgardner.com.)

I am not so naïve or conceited as to think that we ourselves can bring about a resurrection or reassertion of high quality in the professions, in colleges, and universities, and in the propositions and conclusions put forth by scholars. It's a task for thousands, if not millions—and, alas, it may fail. But only if those of us who do believe *in these sacred terrains* do our utmost, do we have any chance of bringing about a society—indeed, societies—in which we hope that those who come after us will have the opportunity to live.

Howard Gardner is the Hobbs Research Professor of Cognition and Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. A recipient of the MacArthur Prize Fellowship, the University of Louisville Grawemeyer Award in Education, the Prince of Asturias Award for Social Sciences, and the Brock International Prize in Education, he is a leading thinker of education and human development. He has studied and written extensively about intelligence, creativity, leadership, and professional ethics, and is senior director of Project Zero and co-founder of the Good Project. For the last several years, he has worked in various capacities with Harvard undergraduates and is now undertaking a study of liberal arts and sciences in the twenty-first century. Gardner's intellectual memoir, *A Synthesizing Mind, will be published this summer* (2020) by MIT Press.

The Meaning of 'Human Education' for the Modern World

Margarita Kozhevnikova

Education should become the 'basis of the pyramid' for solving the problems of the modern world. These problems have emerged due to a contradiction between the great powers of humankind and the weaknesses of our social and moral consciousness. First there is a need to problematize the hidden anthropological foundations of educational ideas and policies in order to clarify the understanding of a human and the education necessary for humans holistically not just for their cognitive intelligence. But today the narrow concept of 'homo economicus' dominates the basis of educational policies. We therefore need to expand the notion of the human in ethnocultural and historical contexts, and also 'human in general' in order to understand the basic human problems. The theory of subjectnost' (subjectness) has a special potential for such a consideration. The stated thesis is that education today needs a 'turn to subjectnost'.

1 Modern World

If we try to outline the problems of the modern world, then, first of all, as the most serious, are those where the 'world' is understood as the *human habitat*—the Earth. Secondly, our 'world' can be understood as the *human* species so there are problems of providing for its survival. Are the first problems inevitably caused by the second group of problems, associated with the life and colossal growth of humankind? Thirdly, is the societal world with its problems of interpersonal interactions, within communities at the local, national and global levels. We see lack of mutual trust, contradictions, violence and wars, as well as the loss of faith in social and political ideals, including the demise of democracy under the influence of global financial

M. Kozhevnikova (✉)
Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia, St Petersburg, Russia

R. S. Webster et al. (eds.), *Humanizing Education in the 3rd Millennium*,
SpringerBriefs in Education, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-1205-4_3

(neoliberal) capitalism. The previous problems of survival and well-being are interconnected with the societal problems. Fourthly, the world of *human culture*, that is of our creation and self-creation, which underlies the above dimensions. The challenges here include the need to clarify attitudes towards knowledge and experience that have grown enormously, to preserve the depth and breadth of human heritage, to cultivate thoughts, knowledge, discourse and values that benefit humanity regarding the problems outlined above. Fifthly, the problems of the 'inner world' or '*humans with themselves*', that is of psycho-physical self-regulation, and self-awareness especially in regard to emotional, cognitive, relational, activity, personal, moral, social and political spheres. This group is seen as the master link in the logical chain of problems since self-awareness is central for an 'intelligent human' and the focus of each person's responsibility.

I am arguing that we need to correlate this entire logical chain to the objectives of education, so that education could form the basis of the pyramid of solving world problems, starting with the last group as the core.

Observing these layers of problems, we recognize a main contradiction: on the one hand, the material and technological growth and power of humankind, and on the other hand, the weakness or insufficiency of our social and moral consciousness. Heisenberg (1958) represented this with the metaphor: material power is like a ship so solidly built of steel and iron that the magnetic compass indicates only its own bulk, and humanity is like a captain who has lost its orientation.

Despite our evolutionary and scientific progress, homo sapiens, 'intelligent humans' who inhabit this planet, have not yet learned how to handle ourselves so that we can peacefully interact amongst ourselves and restrain our power with wisdom. Consequently, we have become the main danger to the Earth.

The concept of 'cruel optimism' (Berlant, 2011) introduced in relation to the historical, cultural and political aspects, when applied to the model of modern civilization, should be decoded as the indomitable and inexorable increase in the efficiency and pace of 'progress', in that disastrous race, guided by the power of our desires, which is devoid of awareness of the real state of affairs—of *what we humans are* and *what we truly want*.

2 'Human Education'

'Human education' has not been sufficiently problematized, especially regarding the 'human' who is to be educated. The need to problematize this is symptomatized by the aforementioned phenomenon of 'cruel optimism', especially regarding educational policy. Thus, the fruits of education obtained under its current priorities of commercialization, managerialism, accountability, etc., result in the growing power of humanity. However, this is accompanied with the continuing human weakness in relation to ourselves, both individually and socially, which dramatically demonstrated by the inability to resolve conflicts.

Not knowing what we humans are, and what we truly desire, reduces self-understanding to purely rational and technical approaches to ourselves, as if from 'the point of view' of machines and computers that were created by us, but which are not human. Such an approach is also adopted into education. This seems to be contributing to the potential victory of the machines over humans.

An additional reason to problematize the 'human' in education is that all educational ideas have hidden anthropological foundations which bring the struggle of different paradigms into policies. With this being recognized we ought to require that education policy-makers disclose and advocate their vision of humans and human society and allow a diversity of views.

Today, we can notice that the basis of modern educational policy is influenced by the concept of 'homo economicus', that is, a rational being, acting for self-interest, profit and personal advantage. It becomes a hidden construct. We can witness the established pattern that the processes of the social sciences turn into social actions (MacIntyre, 1981), and thus, social sciences are unified with social management (Fendler, 2006). This leads to 'economization' complemented by managerialism, which causes alienation on different levels, especially a loss of authentic motivation. In other words, this is the shift of actors attention and interest from purposes, processes, content and actual activities (cognition, upbringing, training, care, creativity) to external accountability measures (indicators, optimization, accountability, 'innovations', etc.).

For the sphere of trade and finance, the motivation of self-interest and rationality of 'profit' are useful, and therefore, the introduction of the notion of humanas having economic motivations often ascribed to Adam Smith and its subsequent application is understandable. But for many other areas of human activity and life these two forces are disruptive, because they create a distraction, sidetrack of motivation. Due to these two, a gap arises in direct connection of a human with the world, others and even with oneself. This is especially evident in the area of education.

In addition, the concept under discussion itself has the disadvantage of being a limited and even closed model. And a conceptual model of a human can and should be such a multidimensional model, which is open to our own thinking and participation.

Thus, our task is to problematize 'human education'. In the past, education was associated with clearly articulated understandings of human nature (pedagogy was associated with anthropology) by Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Fichte, Hegel, Herbart, Humboldt, Ushinsky in Russia (1867, 1869), other European and American philosophers and educationists. In the twentieth century in Germany, starting from the 1920s, first works on philosophical anthropology (Scheler, Plesner, Gehlen) developed, and then, in the 60s, educational anthropology was based on them (Bolnov, Derbolav, Loch, Roth and others) and achieved 'culturally-historically determined prospects' in 'historical-pedagogical anthropology' as promoted by Wulf and others.

A view of the human in ethno-cultural and historical specificity, which is preferable to a view of 'man in general' in the spirit of our postmodern era, is more important for the 3rd and 4th groups of the problems listed above. Take for example Russia, where educational reforms started after *perestroika* and continued since then under the influence of Western educational policies. We find that it is necessary to take

into account the particular Russian mentality.[1] In other cases, also cultural-historical anthropological studies of national 'profiles' can contribute to specific educational models. But these views must be based on understanding 'human in general'.

The phrase 'human education' first appeared in the title of the work of Froebel of 1826, in which he emphasized human nature, the integrity of 'life' and the unity of nature in all things founded in God and claimed 'self-activity' and 'continuous growth' as principles of education (Froebel, 1887). In India, Tagore linked the ideas of man's nature, 'the religion of man', 'universal man', 'creative unity' as synchronization of humans' inherent weaknesses, strengths, creative thinking with nature's own creative ability and his ideal of education to bring about perfection of man (embodied in his school Shantiniketan and university Visva Bharathi). The next significant book, entitled 'Human Education' of 1953 by Montessori, examined the nature of the child and her main conclusions were the principles of 'self-activity', 'freedom', 'help to life' and 'expanding education' (Montessori, 2017).

The understandings that were developed by our predecessors often made comparisons about humans to animals or to God. Today in a cosmopolitan and globalized world, we cannot easily draw upon the terminology of religion (especially any particular religion), rather, we need to turn to more universal views such as scientific ones. And, since the relations of humankind with the natural world are aggravating, today it is more important not to distinguish between ourselves and all living beings, while the distinguishing comparison with complex machines, especially with artificial intelligence, comes to the fore.

As many argue, instead of humanism, based on anthropocentrism, the current context may likely correspond to the positions of naturocentrism, biocentrism and ecocentrism. Importantly, we need a kind of human-responsibility-centrism. We must acknowledge that we often create more problems than solutions and therefore ought to accept responsibility for the consequences for our own lives and for the world around us, that we have influenced. Thus, we should not miss the identification of ourselves as humans for the theoretical foundation of education. Indeed, we need this as the content of education itself because currently, even educated people do not think about what it means to be human. Such content of education will also help to convey the issue of self-identification to people themselves, thereby challenging the power of social engineering and informational manipulation. As for education itself, this approach to its entire content as to the study of ourselves, humans, together with the world with which we are connected and for which we are responsible, is an opportunity to create a holistic model in education itself.

With the growth of the human population and the complexity of societies, developing an understanding of the relationship between a human and humankind becomes more urgent. In the last decades of the twentieth century, humanism has been criticized not only for being limited by the framework of anthropocentrism, but also for being associated with the notions of individuality or individual subject. These

[1] The profile, with its archetypal principle of 'space' as an absence of a 'border', and archetypal nest (e.g. passivity, theorization, homogeneity, intuition, etc.) (Kozhevnikova, 2019).

notions are based on the concept of 'subject', which has also become problematic but which is traditionally essential for understanding 'human'.

3 Phenomenon of Human Being

As it seems, our main goal is to 'revive' the problematization of '*human*', which is even more important than simply clarifying the concept of human. Recognition needs to be given to the huge variety of views which is partly due to the complexity of the topic and the diversity of cultural backgrounds. In addition it is impossible to arrive at a 'complete' definition of a 'human' because being human is an incomplete phenomenon of becoming.

For the purpose of such problematization, the construct of 'homo economicus' is a common counterpoint and therefore requires more attention. The objections to this construct consist of more than concerns about value and ethics. Its major flaw is that it cultivates untrue notions. Due to its original economic reading, it is proposed to completely decipher the 'man' only in *materialistic* terms, which has resulted it a seriously atrophied understanding.

At a more subtle level, extending to the non-material spheres, the basing of individual interest represented by hedonism and welfarism (the views in the Austrian school of economics: L. Mises, F. A. Hayek, etc.) still suffers from the limitation of an '*individualist*' scope. For example, happiness remains a fact of an individual life which tends to support an individualistic view. However, as a 'social animal' (Aristotle) humans do not exist in isolation from society, and consequently ought to be understood as social beings or relational beings rather than as separate individuals. This has important relevance for education.

And at the last level of discussion of this construct, even if we add the context of the community and think of a human as acting for maximum personal interest in the framework of the community's relations, understanding a man as the natural absolute *egoist* is still false, since in this case there is no room for empathy, ability to truly understand the Other, love, care, self-sacrifice. But we know that this is not true, from history and our own experience and, finally, from the findings and theories of ethologists and even geneticists (Dawkins, 1976).

Other shortcomings of the construct of 'homo economicus', hidden in the affirmation of the identity of 'pleasure', 'satisfaction of desires', 'happiness' and 'profit', should also be addressed in terms of relations with Others. Indeed, the problem field of desire is typically avoided within this concept, which reduces a person to an animated rational being programmed for profit and personal gains. As a result, manipulation takes place and the immature state of a human is cultivated or rather exploited to function within a consumerist society.

Now, I shall share some insights on these issues derived from ongoing research based on phenomenological and dialectical approaches which are Hegelian in origin.

The phenomenological examination of such a complex phenomenon as our experience of 'being human' was carried out sequentially according to the levels of experience, that in phenomenological discernment were distinguished by their essential differences as 'system', 'living', 'living being' and 'specific human'. Thus it was discovered that the fundamental, simplest distinguishable layer is experience of an 'order' which was identified as a 'praphenomenon of system' inherent to all existing, animate and inanimate. Therefore, the notions of human as a system in sciences are understandable.

Maintaining 'self'[2] is seen as the very meaning of the existence of a phenomenon (thing) in the relationship of 'self' and 'outer other' (system and environment). This relation as a contradiction resulting in the problem of 'adaptation' is felt by us as the main on this level.

But our experience cannot be limited to the systemic dimension, because it is essentially characterized as moving one. For us as the living identity is change. It is not 'self' equal to itself (like Fichte's A = A, or absolute I = I), but rather the dynamic oneness of 'self' and 'other'.

This understanding, resulting from the recognition of our identity as a dynamic phenomenon, is coined in the concept of *subjectnost'* (Russian)—*subjectness* (an inherent property of the living 'to be a subject'). This again returns us to the problem of understanding 'a subject', now in a different way which is not ontological or epistemological where the subject is opposed to an object or being located in a framework of self-consciousness, 'I', covered by the concept of subjectivity, but in a meaning associated rather with volition.

This approach is close to the ideas of many Indian and Western philosophers, from the ancients to Schopenhauer, and after him Bergson, Scheler, etc., all of whom paid great attention to the phenomenon of volition and interpreted it in various ways. Significant educational concepts are substantially connected with this phenomenon.

The term *subjectnost'* was introduced by Russian psychologists in the late 1970s and 1980s continuing the Vygotskian tradition of activity approach (especially S. L. Rubinshtein and A. N. Leontiev), similar to the concept of 'agency'. The basis for it was laid by Vygotsky's late psychological views of a fundamentally dynamic structure of personality, activity and 'directive consciousness' (Vygotsky, 2005). The discussion below develops this concept in the theory of subjectnost' being in progress (in Kozhevnikova, 2016a, 2016b, 2020 etc.).

Here, subjectnost' is used to refer to the basic phenomenon of our experience, present in all states while we are alive, permeating our entire psychophysical entity and, thus, common to all living things. So, this is subjectnost', which distinguishes us as living from other systems, from machines, from artificial intelligence. By phenomenological discernment of my experience as the living, is *such a self-identity which in interaction with the 'other' appears as setting its own vector of change. In this sense, this change constitutes a direction emanating from myself (the living) as the inexhaustible and therefore fundamentally indefinable source of unfolding*. Here,

[2] Here 'self' implies a general self-identity, counterposed to the 'other' as general alterity and the 'Other' as another subject.

'*indefinite*' as a dynamic oneness of 'self' and 'other' is in the core of it, leading to the *unfolding* as an expansion of the scale, opportunities and breadth of directivity.

Subjectnost' provides the parameters of our experience and our development to maturity during life. Above the *level of the system* in our human experience this gradual expansion manifests itself in the growth of various properties of subjectnost' itself, starting with those at the *level of 'living'*, continuing with *levels of 'living being'* and a '*specific human' level*. We recognize all these layers in our own experience, since all of them in unity simultaneously are the phenomenon of the human we are. A living organism as the 'self' relates to the 'other' just as to a possible object for itself, for example as food. (In human experience, we have various types of 'food', including emotional experiences, social phenomena, meanings, etc.) Subjectnost' of living being (animal) becomes 'open' to itself and to others, and is thus endowed with a 'light of intelligence', and intersubjectivity. An animal feels itself and it sees the Other as another subject, here the 'self - other' relationship becomes 'fight', 'competition'. Specific human subjectnost' has 'open embracing' character (we incorporate the motives of Others into our own, due to share with them interests; or to love for the Others; or concern for specific Others or for own nation or humanity, in general, or even other species, for example, when rescuing kangaroos, koalas, lizards, birds during a fire in Australia). And human subjectnost' is endowed with thinking ability and such essential characteristics, as self-expression and self-transendence. Our 'self –other or Other' relationship is 'creation' ('project') and 'co-creation' ('cooperation').

The 'self – other' dialectic is crucial for human development to the state of maturity, the latter being mainly characterized by the abilities and position of responsibility in relations with the 'other' and Others. The 'Child people' are not aware of what they truly desire, since they do not recognize the nature of 'happiness' which is subjective and is essentially the very unfolding of their subjectnost' as such (Kozhevnikova, 2016b). And their attitude to collective Others is as to 'Adults', from whose hands directly or indirectly they receive the objects of desire.

Education in the light of this concept is to facilitate the expansion (growth) of subjectnost', that occurs through the relationship and interactions with 'other' and Other. The implications for education on human 'system' level refer to the field of issues that can be described in terms of 'fit in' and 'cope' (training, mastering clichés, subjecting students to the rules, etc.); on our 'living' level this is individualization, the search for one's own orientation; and for 'living being (animal)' level this is socialization in the sense of general ability to survive in a social world.

Regarding our 'specific human' level, the educational goal is to lead to a state of personal maturity, which *sublates* self-other/Others opposition (in thinking, motivations, emotions, actions). Instead of the relation of 'cope' with the 'other' or 'eating' it or 'fighting' with Others, people in their relations come in their development to the mature abilities and position of the Adult, that is, responsibility for themselves and care for Others (the care displays the 'embracing' subjectnost') and finally to the relation to the world, which is in the nature of a 'mission'.

And if we *keenly peer* at what rests the human world, subject to the problems listed at the beginning, it will become clear that even taking into account all the

advanced means of technology, science, communication, this is not only skilful integration into the environment (in general, the Earth), and not only the successful actualization of our subjectivity of the living in the sphere of survival, and not only wise competition with others. But this human world cannot hold on without the connecting power of cooperation, empathy and concern for the world and for the good of Others, generosity, dedication, altruism, without selflessness. It is worth recalling many things that people normally do, and the areas of professional activity in which all this is necessary, especially at the decision-making level. When these motivations are replaced by a pure selfish interest, both the relationships between people and communities are damaged, and the activity itself is damaged, because selfish thinking is too narrow in scope and therefore far from the actual state of affairs. Thus, our own state of an 'Adult', our mature position is so significant for ourselves and society.

Education always and today, together with the omnipotent Internet, even more than before fosters the formation of the image of collective Others as 'Adults', powerful in their rationality, knowledge and ability to influence the world. This is basically true since this power is accumulated by contributions from innumerable human beings. But this strength seems to be amassed outside of man as a kind of a 'store'. And this is in the line with today's scientistic and technical vision of education as an 'extracorporeal' that exists in some technologies and information outside of any living person—teacher and student.

But moral consciousness, critical thinking and responsibility cannot in any way develop on any other basis than through a person's inward experiences. Moral strength and wisdom exist only in and through individuals exercising personal wisdom and strength. So, as a result of accepting collective Others as 'Adults' and adopting a personal infantile position, we are faced with the problem of today's 'Child-people', who are the target audience of populist mental goods of all kinds and desire industry, and the great aforementioned contradiction between human 'strength' and 'weakness'.

4 Conclusion

We need to recognize the responsibility of education to resolve the discussed contradiction, and its role as the base of the problems solutions pyramid. This will indicate that education ought to start with the group which is located within the crucial connection of the chain of all problems.

For education this is the 'turn to subjectnost" that means the priority of the spheres of self-awareness and motivation, the development of understanding of oneself and Others and the development of the capability (in relation to Others), on the one hand, to resolve conflicts, and on the other hand, to maintain a 'counter-manipulative resilience'. Obviously, 'teachers in person', with their subjectnost', for all these tasks are becoming more and more essential.

As we have *indefiniteness* in the core of our human entity, we are the 'living cauldron', where all the processes take place, in particular, most important life meanings arise from integrated intentions, perceptions, emotions and thoughts. Thus, it seems that we should provide space in education for this '*indefinite*' as a resource of inner freedom, protect and cultivate it. All this demonstrates the need for a true 'human education' and humanitarian paradigm in educational policies.

References

Berlant, L. (2011). *Cruel optimism.* Duke University Press.

Dawkins, R. (1976). *The selfish gene.* Oxford University Press.

Fendler, L. (2006). Why generalisability is not generalisable. *Journal of Philosophy of Education, 40*(4), 437–449.

Froebel, F. W. (1887). *The education of man.* D. Appleton & Company.

Heisenberg, W. (1958). *The physicist's conception of nature* (A. J. Pomerans, Trans.). Harcourt, Brace and Co.

Kozhevnikova, M. (2016a). The problem of teachers' autonomy (The glance from inside the Russian educational reforms). A paper given at 'John Dewey's "Democracy and Education" 100 Years on: Past, Present, and Future Relevance' Conference on 28 September–1 October 2016. Homerton College and Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge.

Kozhevnikova, M. (2016b). Desire in Buddhism and the concept of 'child people' and 'true adults'. In T. Airaksinen & W. W. Gasparski (Eds.), *Desire: The concept and its practical context* (*Praxiology*, Vol. 24, pp. 135–155). Transaction Publishers.

Kozhevnikova, M. (2019). 'Rossiya, ne imeyuschaya granits' (Koncepty rossiyskoy mental'nosti: k problemam razvitiya obrazovaniya) ('Russia that has no borders' concepts of the Russian mentality: On the problems of the development of education). *Gumanitarnye Vedomosti TGPU im. L. N. Tolstogo* I (29), 88–109.

Kozhevnikova, M. (2020). Fenomen sub'ektnosti: problemy interpretacii (The phenomenon of subjectnost': Problems of interpretation). *Cennosti i smysly 6*(70), 31–45.

MacIntyre, A. C. (1981). *After virtue: A study in moral theory.* University of Notre Dame Press.

Montessori, M. (2017). *Obrazovanije cheloveka* (Human education). Ekaterinburg: Narodnaja kniga.

Ushinskij, K. (1867, 1869). *Chelovek kak predmet vospitaniya: opyt pedagogicheskoi antropologii* (Human being as a subject of education: The experience of pedagogical anthropology). T. 1, 2 (Vol.) Moskva, Moscow.

Vygotsky, L. (2005). Konkretnaya psihologiya cheloveka (Specific human psychology). In *Psihologiya razvitija cheloveka* (Human development psychology) (pp. 1019–1037). Smysl. Eksmo.

Margarita Kozhevnikova is the coordinator of the international initiative "Human education in the 3rd millennium"; head of the Research laboratory for social and personal development at the Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia; leader of the NGO Association Obrazovanie cheloveka (Human education). She is the author of *Human experience. (On the understanding of human education)* (In Russian); *The Horizons of a New Sociality in Education* (Ed., chapters) (In Russian); *Teaching. The Buddhist Tradition of Philosophy of Education* (In Russian), 'Desire in Buddhism and the Concept of "Child people" and "True adults"' (Chapter in: Desire: The Concept and Its Practical Context), editor of *Teacher with Oneself* (Ed., chapters) (In Russian); *Human education. Philosophy of Education: The Seminar* (Ed., chapters); 8 books and over 70 papers.

Towards a Post-human Education for the Twenty-First Century

Ronald Barnett

Abstract The present age has been described both as 'post-human' and 'inhuman'. It is an age in which (i) man's inhumanity to humanity is evident, in which (ii) humanity's hubris over its knowledge has led to the be-spoiling of the planet, and in which (iii) the digital world, robots and the world of things are both supplanting humans and providing humans with undreamt possibilities. The very idea of 'human education' has, therefore, to be radically re-thought for a post-human age. There are several challenges here. Firstly, whereas 'human education' places the human at the centre of education (especially in the humanities), the idea of 'post-human' education dislodges the human. Secondly, the post-human has been deployed both as a descriptive category, identifying unfolding features of the contemporary age; *and* as a recommendatory category, offering suggestions as to ways forward. Thirdly, it has concerned itself with epistemological matters (how we are to understand the world) *and* with ontological matters (what is there in the world and what is the place of humanity in that world?). A post-human education must be sensitive to these matters *and* must have something to say about how they play out respectively across the sciences and across the humanities.

1 Introduction

Let us not speak blithely of the third millennium, for it may not advance very far. Will there even be a *twenty-second* century for this Earth (let alone a 2999)? That is the question. At least, it is the question that must haunt us as we face the matter of education in the twenty-first century. And that question having been posed, the idea of the 'post-human' takes on a new edge. Already a somewhat haphazard concept, with various allusions, it here takes on a literal meaning. To a sense that the human dimension—and humanity—has had its own way for too long and now the balance should be reweighted more in favour of nature, we should now add that that very idea

R. Barnett (✉)
University College London Institute of Education, London, UK
e-mail: ron.barnett@ucl.ac.uk

R. S. Webster et al. (eds.), *Humanizing Education in the 3rd Millennium*,
SpringerBriefs in Education, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-1205-4_4

takes on a dark interpretation. Unless a post-human age can be consciously entered—not just entertained—the world may not survive. Actually, the Earth will go on until it is claimed by the Sun, but all life as it is known will have been vanquished.

In education, and especially against the background of a globalised market economy, some like to speak of 're-humanizing' education. That sentiment is understandable but it implies that the meaning of what it is to be human is clear—at least in principle. It could also imply a longing to return to a time when human beings were really human, and an assumption that that is also possible. However, the cluster of ideas associated with the idea of the post-human shatters any such complacency. What it is to be human now has to be completely re-thought so as to envisage completely new relationships between humans and their environments, both natural and technological.

Has education begun seriously to consider *these* matters? The idea of the post-human, after all, has been with us for some years but there have been only a few instances of it being seriously taken up in education circles. Any reluctance is understandable for education characteristically puts the human in the shop window. Education is the education of human beings! The idea of a post-human education, whether for the twenty-first century or for any other century for that matter, however, seems to be an oxymoron, putting together two categories—'post-human' and 'education'—which should be kept separate. The idea of the post-human suggests somehow that the human dimension should at least be dislodged, but the idea of education wants firmly to keep them—education and the human—together. Can this circle be squared? Can 'education' and 'post-human' live—if that is the operative word—together? What might that relationship look like?

2 The Idea of the Post-human

The literature on the idea of the post-human is voluminous and growing. It reaches deep into philosophy (especially referring to Nietzsche's nihilism [Herbrechter, 2013]), contains a cultural history (seeking a departure from the Enlightenment [Braidotti, 2013]), ranges widely across contemporary movements in the world, especially those of a technological character and contains a deep sensitivity to the natural environment; indeed, to the whole Earth (Mickey, 2016). The post-human contains both *pessimistic* strains, with concerns about the inhumanity of humanity, and *optimistic* strains, with imaginings of Promethean states of being, in which humans become more than human. In its pessimistic strains, the post-human has a sense that humanity has been and frequently is much *less* than human; and has become inhuman (Lyotard, 1991) and, in that sense, post-human. In its positive strains, the idea senses a new age in which humans may even exceed what it has long taken the idea of human to mean.

Two orientations are important for our purposes here, the post-human as a *descriptive* category and the post-human as a *recommendatory* category. As a descriptive category, those of a post-human persuasion seek to identify trends that suggest a

displacement of human beings from the ordering of the world. The emergence of a digital age is noted, in which analogue humans fare badly given the welter of data, instantaneity and processing capacities that far exceed those of human beings. In this shift from an analogue to a digital age, human beings are being by-passed, more or less literally so, not least as, in the internet of things, computerised devices come to 'talk' to each other. The coming of driver-less cars is a dramatic example, but there are already many circuits and situations of this kind and other examples are readily to hand in the displacement of human beings in this interactive Web 2.0 age. The computer beats the human being on the chessboard. More notably still, robots, cyborgs, the surveillance of humans by machines, the replacement of human judgements by machines (in health assessments) and the use of learning analytics (in education), presage—it seems to many—an era in which human beings are at best relegated to barely more than units of data and at worst are hardly needed, let alone wanted on board.

Alongside this descriptive use of the category of the post-human is a more philosophical but also *recommendatory* set of purposes. It is suggested that not only technologies but knowledge as it has developed over the past three hundred years since the Enlightenment have placed human being at its centre. Again, different strands are evident. Knowledge has come to be a way in which human beings can secure reliable knowledge of the world. It has suited the purposes and the interests of human beings. And those interests have largely those of a will to control the external world (Habermas, 1978). Moreover, the dominant epistemology has contained a tacit sense of knowledge as a mirror of, and being held up to, the world (Rorty, 1980). Knowledge consisted, therefore, of a relationship between a knower—or knowers—and the external world. In knowing the world, the human being looked out on the world, espied it and tried to make sense of it. The world, as known, was a world crafted by human beings for human beings.

Understood against this kind of context, the idea of the post-human has taken on a full-blown philosophical character, with both epistemological and ontological aspects. Rational and scientific knowledges, long felt to be the epitome of thought, have been critiqued as being insufficient: there are many other valid ways of understanding the world. Further, human beings have been seen as losing their place as supreme in the world and are now seen more as one set of all of the sets of entities—organic and inorganic—that populate this Earth. In this post-human world, both epistemologically and ontologically, humans dislodge themselves.

It is no accident that this way of comprehending human being has emerged alongside the arrival of the idea of the 'anthropocene', as it is being termed. A controversial concept, its use is to indicate that the Earth has come to be configured by human interests, such that in aeons of time, the human imprint on the Earth will be seen to be as significant as that of former geological ages. Anthropocene is an ecological concept in that it is fact and value combined. It says something about the world—that the human species has wrought its effects on the world, especially through its technologies—and it is also critical of those effects. The human species has sought to understand the world not only to act in it but to control it in humanity's interests. Climate changes, global warming and ecological degradation, including the be-spoiling of the oceans,

are just manifestations of this Anthropocene. And again, alongside its descriptive character arise, for some, positive possibilities as to 'planetary stewardship' (Ellis, 2011, quoted in Hourdequin, 2015:20).

The idea of the post-human, therefore, is posing large questions as to what it is to be human, and an awkward fork has arisen, neither of which seems to be attractive. On the one hand, being human has been posited as being other than a mere part of Nature, indeed as separating ourselves from Nature. There lay the distinction between the civilised and the barbarous. Science was an epitome of this outlook, for its method lay in isolating nature and bringing about a radical separation of the human and nature: this was the character of the laboratory. But that outlook, inherited especially since the Enlightenment, led ultimately to an apparently value-free control over Nature, as if Nature was a set of objects for man's use—and it was mostly men.

On the other hand, the post-human revolt against this set of attitudes leads into difficulties of its own. The post-human outlook seems to posit human beings as being entities with no more status than microbes or mountains. A 'flat ontology' (Harman, 2018) is urged in which humans are simply natural assemblages with no more rights than anything else. And, indeed, we have witnessed movements variously claiming rights for animals but also for non-animal entities. Concerns are raised about the Brazilian rainforest, an Icelandic glacier, the sea itself and the atmosphere above the Earth. Current alarms about the fires in Australia and California combine many of these concerns, both animal and vegetable. In all of this, human beings not just lose their status but are excoriated and even pilloried for being human.

3 Dilemmas of Being Human: Whither Education?

Here, then, is a stark and awkward fork. On the one hand, humanity is understood as separate from the world, its *human* reasoning having placed it in a supremely powerful position, and through that reasoning, having developed knowledges and technologies that have sought to dominate, control and extract capital from the world. That path has led both to Auschwitz—an *in*human world—and to a world in which mankind is swept up into a machine-dominated world, and subject to that world. All that is possible here is a post-human world consisting of some kind of accommodation to the machine-world (which includes but goes much further than the internet of things). On the other hand, humanity is rendered into an object that is simply one small part of nature, of no more value than a glacier or a microbe. *Either way*, this is literally a post-human world in that the human, as being (as noun, as *human-being*) and as a dimension of life (as adjective, as *human* being) is vanquished, is lost from view.

This is a bleak turn of events. On the one hand, we are presented with description-cum-prophecy, a post-human world which is emerging and to which we can only find some kind of accommodation. On the other hand, we receive hope-cum-recommendation, a post-human world, in which humanity relegates itself to a place within a total democracy of all entities in the world (Latour, 2004). Both paths lead to a fading away of human being as such, of being human and, along both paths, the

human dissolves, either as a matter of unstoppable forces or as a result of a sense of a better but profoundly different world order.

What are the implications of this set of dilemmas for education? This coming of the post-human world poses grave issues for education at all levels, from the earliest schooling to university. There has been some but very little effort so far to work out the implications of the category of post-human for education and what work has been undertaken has been very schematic, amounting hardly to more than pin-pricks into a thorny set of problems (Herbrechter, 2018; Snaza & Weaver, 2015; Snaza et al., 2014; Weaver, 2010)

We need, I think, to make *two fundamental distinctions.* The first is precisely the distinction that I have been urging, as between the post-human understood as a capturing of machine-dominated changes now well underway and the post-human understood as an urging towards a totally different—and ontological—understandings of the human in the world, as simply one of the multitudinous sets of entities in the world. The other distinction is that between science and the humanities. (Ideally, one would here make several distinctions between forms of knowledge but let us here keep it simple.) These two sets of distinctions, placed upon each other as axes, give us four quadrants. Let us take them in turn and let us, too, largely ignore differences as they would play out at different stages across the education system, and across different ages of learner. In each quadrant, there are both dangers and positive possibilities.

4 The Four Quadrants

i. ***Science and the post-human technological world***

In this quadrant arises the challenges of exploring the possibilities that the post-human technological world brings. Negative possibilities are evident in the displacement of human beings from work, the surveillance and manipulation of human beings (not least through digitised machines) and the sheer displacement of human beings from life itself (as the internet of things takes off). Positive possibilities are evident, for example, in the design of prosthetics, enabling individuals without human legs to walk seemingly untroubled; in the extension of human being into the world in new ways (in social media); and in enabling humans to explore hidden aspects of the world (new technologies open the depths of oceans to all peoples to afford delight and widening responsibilities).

The science curriculum and its learning experiences can and should bring learners face-to-face, as it were, with all of these possibilities and critically examine them. In each of the fields of science, and its newer developments in computer science and so on, students could directly examine the possibilities, both negative and positive, that the field offers. Where, in turn, is physics, chemistry, biochemistry and bioengineering going in this post-human age? Learning experiences could extend across cognitive, experimental, experiential, and sensory fields and, in the process, extend their possibilities for

criticality, as the different aspects of *this* posthumanism—both negative and positive—are explored.

The key question such a curriculum would address is this: What are the possibilities for science to help in realising the *trans*-human life?

ii. ***Science and the post-human in an ecological perspective***:
Here, a quite different tack lies ahead of science education; and one that is even more challenging. It would consist of placing science in what, as noted, is being called a 'flat ontology' (Harman, 2018). In a way, science has always done this, that is to say, on the surface at least, it has made no distinction between a quark and a quasar in their ontological status. It has not been said that one is more important than the other: the tiniest sub-nuclear particle is worthy of just as much attention and respect as the greatest heavenly body. But a hierarchy has emerged of a different kind over the last half-century or so, in which science has come to see itself and be perceived as standing over nature (and over the humanities as well). It is through science that human beings have secured technological control of nature (and it is through science that academics have seized control of research budgets).

These reflections point to a curriculum that would help to usher in a new kind of science. This would not be to diminish the epistemological status of the knowledge claims of science but it would be to enlarge our sensitivities towards nature. Pupils and students would be encouraged to write poetry about entities in the natural world, to imagine what it would be to be a molecule, to inquiry into science-in-literature, to explore the lives of women and men in science and to examine and to evaluate the effects of science in the world. It would be a curriculum that affords science, nature and humanity equal respect. It would be a curriculum that helps to develop in learners an ecological consciousness. It would deploy science to reveal the wonders of the Earth, and to see those wonders as wonders, as full of wonder.

This would be a post-human science in that it would produce a science that plays up nature as such and in which, as a result, the hand of humanity would be diminished. It would be a recovery of the dispositions towards science prior to the twentieth century, in which Darwin, Newton and Boyle would inquire into nature but still remain enchanted by it, and even see mysterious forces at work in it. It would be more a science-for-nature and less a science-of-nature. It would open to a reverence for nature, an abiding respect for nature, and a sense of its inherent worth. It would be again—to recall a term of art from the past—a form of 'natural philosophy'.

iii. ***The humanities in a post-human and technological world***
That the humanities are in crisis is a stark indication of their plight in a post-human and technological world. This is not new, of course. The worth of the humanities has been explicitly a matter of concern for many decades, gathering pace for different reasons in the wake of the two world wars (Nussbaum, 2010; Plumb, 1964). Those concerns, though, have been exacerbated by the coming of the digital age, as digital flows of data and information seem to overcome the powers of the human analogue mind. Nice philosophical questions arise:

Does meaning mean anything to computers? Can computers possess concepts and intentions? Can they experience a rainbow or love?

Is it enough, in this context, simply for the humanities to insist on themselves, and on their humanity? No, it is not enough. They need to assert themselves alongside the technological, the digital, and explain what is being lost. The loss here is *not* that of the humanities but of what it is to be human. As intimated, this is difficult ground. For what is it to be human? Haven't there been over recent decades many examples of human beings leading the world into *in*human places? The humanities, therefore, have to beware of their tendencies towards hubris. A way forward would be not to pretend, as representatives of humanity, to a superiority over either science or the digital presences in the world but to work with those presences and to find new kinds of human endeavour and realisation thereby. Interdisciplinarity, yes, but pressing on jointly with the sciences to address the conundrum of being human in a post-human age.

iv. ***The humanities—an ecological option***

What would it be for the humanities to *become* post-human? That is a question! It would be for the humanities *in part* to surrender their sense of the innate superiority of *human* being and fully to recognise that human being is only one form of entity on this small Earth. That italicised phrase—*in part*—is necessary because some seem now espouse the cause of total democracy of all things on this planet (Latour, 2004). Who speaks for the glaciers, for the white rhinos, for the Brazilian forests? They all have their claims alongside human being. But babies and bathwater come to mind: there is a danger here in this ontological generosity of losing sight of there being not just past achievements of humanity but of future and even new possibilities opening for humanity. After all, the glaciers, the rhinos and the forests cannot speak for themselves. It is human beings who will be doing that. So a specialness still attaches to human being as such.

The question remains: What would or could the humanities look like in this post-human world? It is, after all, an ecological world, a world in which every species and every class of entities has its place, organic *and* inorganic. The inorganic is crucial here. Technologies have their place alongside entities in the natural world. In this quadrant (d), then, in contrast to quadrant (c), it would be the task of the humanities to work out the potentialities of human being, when placed in this total ecological context. Neither hubris nor absolution for humanity's sins would be on the cards. Here, the humanities would be charged—or, better still, would charge themselves—with the task of glimpsing new forms of living-with-the-world, and even of spirit in the world (Stiegler, 2014).

This living-with-the-world would not be an easy life, and nor would it amount to a return to some kind of pre-industrial living. To the contrary, it would eke out possibilities for new cultures of life-with-the-world, in all of its forms. Nor would this be an easy acceptance of the world. Rather, as befits the field of education, it would include critical elements, critique not only of technologies but of nature itself. There is nothing new in this: medicine is already

critical of viruses, as they reek their havoc across the Earth. For their part, the humanities would be evaluative of all that is in the world, seeking to realise the full possibilities of humanity as one of the sets of entities in the world, albeit the only one with *responsibilities* towards the world.

So the humanities would be charged with the grandeur of the world in all of its forms, seeking new possibilities for human being that respects and does justice to all the entities in the world. This would be a transdisciplinary undertaking, with the humanities not merely working with each other but with all the disciplines, across the sciences and technologies, to eke out new possibilities for human beings and for human being as such. It would be to identify and to help to inject new energies, a new spirit, into the Earth. Such a project would give new life to Heidegger's (1998) phrase of 'being-possible'.

5 Conclusions

Human education in the third millennium has to be thought through entirely afresh. Against the backdrop not only of man's inhumanity to man but also of man's inhumanity to this Earth (and it has been largely men in view here), what it is to be human in the twenty-first century has to be confronted anew. Is the ecological degradation of the Earth and its climate 'crisis'—as it is being termed (Public Citizen, 2019)—a sign of man's humanity or *in*humanity? Moreover, the digital world has brought new challenges, of the blurring of boundaries between man and machine: Is a prosthetic leg that enables a person to 'run' as never before a 'leg'? Being human is now open and controversial.

The phrase 'human education' begs the question, therefore: Is it to be an education of humans or a *re*-education of what it is to be human? Latour (1993) has said that we have never been modern—but perhaps we should say that *humans have never been human.* They have both fallen short of the consideration that properly owes to human beings and they have also over-reached themselves in assuming their state of civilisation. This is at once a post-human and an inhuman age.

These considerations have to be worked through not only at all levels of an education system but in every discipline. This is not a matter just for the humanities for the hardest science is deeply implicated. In shaping curricula and learning experiences, the separate challenges of technology and the digital age, on the one hand, and arrival of the ecological age, on the other hand, have to be addressed; and perhaps these two sets of consideration point in different directions, when pressed to their limits. On the one hand, a Nietzschean superman and superwoman, transcending the boundaries of being human, in being extended into new realms of experience and possibility, in living-through-machines. On the other hand, humanity loses itself in self-abnegation, becoming no more than a blob of ectoplasm, as it declines to raise itself above the other entities in the world. Is being human in the third millennium a matter of heroic achievement and accomplishment or is it a matter of new modesty

and humility, in the face of a new sense of the wonders and inherent worth of the world? This dilemma must surely be explicitly put on the agenda of the meanings and possibilities of 'human' education in the third millennium.

References

Braidotti, R. (2013). *The posthuman.* Polity.
Ellis, E. (2011). The planet of no return: Human resilience on an artificial earth. *Breakthrough Journal, 2* (Fall), 37–44. https://thebreakthrough.org/journal/issue-2/the-planet-of-no-return
Habermas, J. (1978/1968). *Knowledge and human interests.* Heinemann.
Harman, G. (2018). *Object-oriented ontology: A new theory of everything*. Penguin.
Heidegger, M. (1998/1962). *Being and time.* Blackwell.
Herbrechter, S. (2013). *Posthumanism: A critical analysis.* Bloomsbury.
Herbrechter, S. (2018). Posthumanism and the ends of education. *On education.* No 2. https://www.oneducation.net/no-02-september-2018/posthumanism-and-the-ends-of-education/
Hourdequin, M. (2015). *Environmental ethics: From theory to practice.* Bloomsbury.
Latour, B. (1993). *We have never been modern.* Harvard University.
Latour, B. (2004). *Politics of nature: How to bring the sciences into democracy.* Harvard University.
Lyotard, J-F. (1991). *The inhuman.* Polity and Blackwell.
Mickey, S. (2016). *Whole earth thinking and planetary coexistence: Ecological wisdom at the intersection of religion, ecology, and philosophy.* Routledge.
Nussbaum, M. (2010). *Not for profit: Why democracy needs the humanities.* Princeton University Press.
Plumb, J. H. (ed.). (1964). *Crisis in the humanities.* Penguin.
Public Citizen. (2019, June 6). *Letter to major networks: Call it a climate crisis—And cover it like one.* https://www.citizen.org/article/letter-to-major-networks-call-it-a-climate-crisis-and-cover-it-like-one/
Rorty, R. (1980). *Philosophy and the mirror of nature.* Blackwell.
Snaza, N., Appelbaum, P., Bayne, S., Carlson, D., Morris, M., Rotas, N., Sandlin, J., Wallin, J., & Weaver, J. A. (2014). Toward a posthumanist education. *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing, 30*(2), 39–54.
Snaza, N., & Weaver, J. A. (Eds.). (2015). *Posthumanism and educational research.* Routledge.
Stiegler, B. (2014). *The re-enchantment of the world: The value of spirit against industrial populism.* Bloomsbury.
Weaver, J. A. (2010). *Educating the posthuman: Bio-sciences, fiction and curriculum studies*. Sense.

Ronald Barnett is Emeritus Professor of Higher Education at University College London Institute of Education. He is a past Chair of the Society for Research into Higher Education (SRHE), was awarded the inaugural prize by the European Association for Educational Research for his 'outstanding contribution to Higher Education Research, Policy and Practice' and has been elected as the inaugural President of the Philosophy and Theory of Higher Education Society. He is a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences, the SRHE and the Higher Education Academy, has published over 30 books, has written over 150 papers, has given 150 keynote talks across the world and is a consultant in the university sector.

(Non-)Human Education in the Capitalocene

John A. Weaver

Abstract In this chapter, I deal with four different approaches concerning posthuman education. These four are humans morphing with technology, human and other animals, the posthumanities, and the end of humanity. I connect these four approaches to potential pedagogical concerns and the idea of a democratic world. The Work of Donna Haraway (*Anthropocene or Capitalocene: Nature, history and crisis of capitalism.* Kairos, 2016a, *Staying with trouble: Making kin in the Chthulucene.* Duke University, 2016b), Vinciane Despret (*What would animals say if we asked the right questions?* University of Minnesota, 2016), and Hallam Stevens (*Life out of sequence: A data-driven history of bioinformatics.* University of Chicago, 2013) to stress the importance of the rise of the Capitalocene and posthumanism.

> We could simply let the human-animal distinction go or…not insist on maintaining it.
>
> —Matthew Calarco, Zoographies: The Question of the Animal from Heidegger to Derrida, 2008: 149.
>
> For the first time…associations of humans and nonhumans can finally enter into the collective in a civil way. No one requires them any longer to split in two…separated into objects and subjects.
>
> —Bruno Latour, Politics of Nature: How to Bring the Sciences into Democracy, 2004: 164.
>
> [1.]the stone (material object) is *worldless*; [2.] the animal is *poor in world*; [3] man is *world-forming*.
>
> —Martin Heidegger, The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics, 1983/1995: 177.

J. A. Weaver (✉)
Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, GA, USA
e-mail: jweaver@georgiasouthern.edu

R. S. Webster et al. (eds.), *Humanizing Education in the 3rd Millennium*,
SpringerBriefs in Education, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-1205-4_5

1 Introduction

What if we started with Calarco's recommendation and did not insist on creating strict demarcations between the animal called human and other animals? What would an education look like if we officially acknowledged and invited other animals into institutions of learning? They are most certainly already there involuntarily partaking in pharmaceutical laboratory experiments and biology lessons, scurrying about the halls and walls, supporting some humans with their intellectual and physical needs, and providing eggs and milk to schools as they roam the premises. What if we assumed human animals were not the only creatures to educate their young? What a wonderful pedagogical experience we would offer our novice learners if we showed them how other species educated their young and how we human animals collaborated and coexisted with other animals.

What if we took Calarco's recommendation one step further and invited Bruno Latour into our conversation and created a parliament of things at all levels of learning? We now would not only have to think how human animals learn alongside non-human animals but how things are also part of the educative process. It would require us to accept that computers, books, chairs, playgrounds, beakers, Bunsen burners, and other things were not inanimate objects placed merely for humans to manipulate and use, but were actual participants in a conversation about truth, learning, knowledge, democracy, life, death, and an infinite other topics. The question is not how other non-human animals and things might influence the education of human animals. Instead it is how open are human animals to acknowledging the limits of humanism that historically placed human animals on a pedestal outside of nature and into its own kingdom where they ruled not as co-inhabitants with other species but as omnipotent and omniscience despots? How poor a world Heidegger formed when he continued the long-standing Western tradition of banishing non-human animals from the world of creation, and turned them into automatons that could not speak, feel, learn, mourn, or think. Human education in the third millennium needs to understand how other animals are world forming as well.

Let's place human animals and non-human animals and newly renamed non-sentient actants into a broader, dire context often referred to as the Capitalocene. Most observers of the current state of earthly conditions refer to this era as the Anthropocene, but I follow Donna Haraway's (2016a, 2016b) lead and refer to it as the Capitalocene. (Haraway [2016a] in her most recent book, *Staying with trouble*, refers to this era also as the Chthulucene.) I do so because to name it the Anthropocene is to continue a dangerous anthropocentric tradition in which human beings are viewed as the only players in the high stakes game of survival. Naming the current era the Anthropocene assumes humans caused the current environmental disaster, which they have, but it also assumes that only humans have the solutions to our earthly problems and only human perspectives matter. To name our era the Anthropocene places human beings at the center, once again, and demonstrates we have learned nothing. The current environmental crisis demonstrates humans are not the center of earthly existence. If anything it is proving we are merely the center of most earthly

problems. The Capitalocene I think better captures that the problems we face are not fatal, unless ignored, but rather a direct result of how humans order the world in their economic, political, and intellectual mindsets. It is capitalism that has engrained in the powerful and affluent that it is good and right to view the world from a perspective of self-interest and that this perspective is rational. Capitalism has rationalized that everything is an economic object, everything can be quantified, and everything, and everyone, is an economic entity in which their value is reduced to a monetary figure. It is this mindset that has reduced the earth to a Heideggarian standing reserve and created a frenzy for every last seam of coal, drop of oil, bead of sweat from the brow of all humans and non-humans, and every second of time in the name of utility and profit. While humans gluttonously feast at the altar of Wall Street and multinational corporations, the overfed dismiss and ignore the extinction of non-human species, the growing number of wars, the rise and reemergence of diseases, and the emaciation of millions as minor setbacks in the accumulation of wealth. What will the precious few who survive eat when sustenance is no longer possible in depleted soil and waters? Can a capitalist eat his stash of gold? No one can run away from the problems created by the Capitalocene because it is not the elephant in the room that no one wishes to address. It is the room. If the Capitalocene with its self-destructive tendencies is not addressed, it is impossible and unnecessary to address any educational issues in the third millennium because there will be no educational institutions and no third millennium.

A route out of the Capitalocene is to rethink Anthropocentrism and recognize as Haraway (2016a) has that humans can only survive if non-humans and non-sentient objects are invited into the conversation to rethink the earth's current trajectory. Haraway is not a fatalist, or a humanist, nor a climate change denier. She is a realist. Haraway recognizes that humans are a part of the problem that has led to environmental disaster, but she recognizes we are also part of the solution. To accept that there is a serious environmental crisis throughout the earth and to attempt to join forces with non-human beings and non-sentient entities is to recognize that a problem exists and we can only survive it by joining together not in the name of profit but life. This is what Haraway (2016a) refers to as *Staying with Trouble*. It is no trouble at all to assume humans are the center of the universe or to assume that capitalism is the only way to live. It is the safe way to (not) think, but there is no future in it. It is, however, a lot of trouble to try to understand how non-human beings think and act in the world and how the current crises are impacting them, to rethink economic orders, or to acknowledge human destructive tendencies often done in the name of "prosperity." Anyone who insists on acknowledging the rights of non-human beings to exist and to undo capitalism is certainly staying with trouble, and trouble will follow for sure, but they are also staying with life, the only life we know and have.

The earth is a sinking ship in its current course, but it is also a lifeboat, perhaps a better word is an ark, with plenty of room in it for everyone, human, other animals, and non-sentient objects. In fact, the ark is bigger than the sinking ship, but it is a risk jumping on board. Changes will have to be made and accepted before anyone boards. It is a captainless ark. There is no Noah on this lifeboat. There cannot be because Noah and the theological tradition from which he is from is very much part of the

anthropocentric problem. Noah is a dominionist, and dominion theology proclaimed the earth was given to humans to do as they saw fit. Well we tried this theology and we know it has created environmental calamity. If we allow the dominionists on board the lifeboat, it will surely sink. Dominionists suffer from a Nietzschean Ressentiment, an envy that rages against life. What follows in the rest of this chapter is my attempt to begin a conversation of how we can rethink education in the third millennium at the end of the Capitalocene. I will refer to this conversation as posthumanism, the posthuman, and the posthumanities, and I will attempt to rethink the liberal arts as a core value in this troubling conversation.

2 Educating the Posthuman

When we think of the posthuman there are at least four ways to think about it: humans merging with technology, humans and other non-human animals, the end of humanity in the Capitalocene, and the role of the humanities in a posthumanities world. There are other viable ways of thinking about life after the Capitalocene such as Object-Oriented Ontology, New Materialism, and Affect Theory. Each provides a viable and vibrant understanding of our current state of affairs, but I will focus on the posthuman.

First, the posthuman as a merging with technology. There is a revolution brewing within the human body and its origins are external. Traditionally, technology as it relates to human bodies is seen as an object alien to the human subject, as an intrusion into a human body, or a human creation used for human needs. The word posthuman implies none of these assumptions. The posthuman is a morphing, melding, and molding of the human body with some form of permanent technology. Technology is not a violent intrusion into the human body; instead, it is a supplement, appendage, prosthetic, or an extension to the human body, thereby making it at the very least different and most likely better than a natural human body. It is in two areas where the posthuman is emerging: bioinformatics and data generation. It is these two areas that have the most dramatic pedagogical implications.

The rise of bioinformatics and data I think are the most impactful on the posthuman condition because they fundamentally reshape life. With bioinformatics, we are discussing the reshaping of the human or non-human body. For instance, it is becoming common practice as Hallam Stevens (2013) in his important work points out to take the natural body and alter it by removing a specific DNA strand and replace it with a presumably better strand. This process inevitably requires a non-human DNA sequence be joined with a human sequence making the human recipient something more than human. What we are experiencing at this moment is the creation of a different Homo Sapiens group that is potentially physically and intellectually superior to any natural human group. How will we educate a natural human being with presumed lesser physical and intellectual capabilities? Will we begin the process of redefining who is disabled and developmentally behind the new human species? Let us never forget too that posthuman history will not be much more different than

human history, maybe just more intensified. There is no reason to believe that the discriminatory tendencies we experience throughout the world today will somehow disappear with the advent of the posthuman. The well-connected, wealthy, privileged, and politically powerful will benefit from these biotechnological developments disproportionately more than less fortunate groups. How we address these concerns now will shape educational experiences to come.

In regard to data, I cannot overstate the importance of educational scholars to come to grips with the reality of data collection. It is literally everywhere and everything. Data defines who we are and what we might become. The bitterly ironic part of the data revolution in the posthuman era is that more data is being collected on students than ever before, but teachers and students are inadequately prepared to interpret this data. This means data only reifies the status quo and benefits the wealthy and powerful, thereby jeopardizing any hope for a future democratic world to come. The data-driven posthuman future only points to an oligarchical world. In 1979 Jean Jacques Lyotard (1979/1984) published his famous report on French-speaking Canadian universities. This short report is remembered for ushering in a two-decade long debate over what postmodernism might be and coining the phrase an "incredulity toward meta-narratives." What is often forgotten about this report is he asked fundamentally important questions that we still have not addressed. Lyotard noted that a key to our future world will be who controls the data banks. So far we know a partial answer to his key question. Powerful nation-states, Facebook, Amazon, and other powerful multinational corporations control the data banks and humans do not. This disproportionate control of data by these entities is a direct assault on democratic rights and needs to be addressed immediately before democratic ideals fade into the past. The key pedagogical question regarding data is how do educational institutions help young people to access and control data? This means we need to teach young people how to interpret data and create meaning from the data. I have always been influenced by J. Hillis Miller (1992: 256) in this matter. To interpret is a fundamental act of life. To be alive is to interpret sensory data that educates our bodies every moment of our existence, this holds for human and non-human bodies. To not interpret is to be "safe, but dead. Not to interpret is death." We have created throughout most of the world safe but intellectually dead students. This cannot hold if we wish to create a viable, sustainable planet in a post-Capitalocene era.

Second, the posthuman is the end of anthropocentrism, and its educational arm, humanism. Peter Sloterdijk (2009) suggests that humanism in its Western traditional form is a series of love letters. The catch is in order to be addressed by these love letters one must be literate and not everyone was deemed literate in the human sense of the term. The initial letter writers were Greek and anyone not Greek could not receive a letter, then the Romans came along and only citizens of the empire could receive a letter, then the church emerged and only Christians could receive one, then the nation-state and only citizens could receive a love letter. Now we enter a new era in which the nation-state is being usurped by multinational corporations and only consumers can receive a letter. We have never experienced a time in which all humans were recognized as worthy of receiving a love letter. A posthuman education has to do two things regarding who is worthy of a love letter. The first thing we need to do

is to make sure everyone is recognized as having a universal right to an education from pre-kindergarten up to and through graduate school.

The second thing we need to do is to recognize that all living sentient beings are worthy of receiving a love letter, we humans just have to learn how to communicate with these beings in order to speak their language. We need to invent a radical notion of literacy that includes all sentient beings. To begin this redefining of literacy and education, we need to acknowledge the limits of anthropocentrism and humanism. As Western humanists began to write love letters to their fellow humanists, they also developed a knack to inflate their abilities as unique. These humanists rationalized that only humans were sanctioned by god to reign over the earth. They rationalized that only humans suffer, but other animals know pain and anguish too. Humanists also proposed that only humans have language. This has always been the key foundational pillar to anthropocentrism. Yet ethologists and animal psychologists like Vinciane Despret (2016) point out all animals communicate in some form. They just do not communicate like humans do. Humanists argued that only humans suffered from stress and anxiety, again animal psychologists point out that other animals suffer from psychological maladies too such as depression. Art, now there is something only humans can do. Right? No, other animals create art. The only question that really remains is not what is it that humans can do that other animals cannot do. It is, rather, why is it that humans think they have to be superior to other animals? The pedagogical challenge for posthumanists is how can we create an educational environment in which humans learn their uniqueness without assuming it makes them superior.

Third the posthuman is the end of humanity but not necessarily in the literal sense. Eugene Thacker (2010: xv) noted in his book *After Life* that posthumanism is a "challenge of thinking a concept of life that is foundationally, and not incidentally, a non-human or unhuman concept of life." This basic statement unmoors the assumption that humans are the center and purpose of life. What would happen to the world if humans were not the center of all life? Some would say the world would become healthier for other species. This though is often a cynical statement against life in the name of life. More importantly, those who think the earth would be better off with no human species at all demonstrate they are no different from the apocalyptic fundamentalists of religion or the genocidal, megalomaniacal, and exploiting capitalists. Thacker is not raising an apocalyptical point. He instead is asking for a rethinking of what life means and who/what counts as life. This becomes an important pedagogical question we should pose to the young. If humans are not the center of life or the definition of what is "valued" life then how can we, as humans, live alongside and with other species without assuming our lives are more important? Who then decides who/what should live and who/what should die? This is a question that should infiltrate every curriculum from the pre-kindergarten level to post-secondary education. This question would change the way we think economically, theologically, historically, culturally, and philosophically, and, therefore, it should change what and how we teach our young. Ironically, if we as humans begin to ask these questions there are plenty of groups of humans (women, religious minorities, LGBQTI individuals, the poor, ethnic minorities) who might for the first time count

as human life worthy of life. In other words, it is not hyperbolic to suggest that all human life may finally be cherished when all non-human life is finally honored. But this should not be the reason humans begin to value all non-human life. If complete human equality becomes our motivation to value all life, then it becomes just another form of anthropocentrism.

Finally, there are the posthumanities. Like the other forms of posthumanism discussed here, the posthumanities grow out of a crisis. As humanism rose to prominence as the major way Western empires educated their elites, including subjugated elites, so did the humanities. When monarchical empires were replaced by nation-states, the humanities remained a bulwark of what it meant to be "civilized" and a "citizen." In the United States for instance early curriculum inventors did not reject the idea of literature as a necessary curriculum subject in order to create United States citizens. It was British literature that was rejected. The humanities remained central to the task of inventing a nation and it took at least 75 years after independence for a thing called USA literature to emerge.

It also holds that dismantling a nation is faster. With the decline of nation-states and the rise of multinational corporations as the dominant form of human organization, the humanities are in crisis. Literature is no longer needed to invent citizens, consumers are only needed and utility is the measure of value not literacy. History is no longer needed, the past is not profitable nor profit making. Philosophy is no longer needed, who needs someone asking pesky questions when the only question that needs to be asked is "what are you doing today in order to make money?" As Michael Bérubé and Jennifer Ruth (2015) point out the humanities are still viable disciplines of study on university campuses. The old arguments supporting them though no longer seem to hold. Now return of investments and future employment seem to dominate rationales. This shift in "value" has created a crisis for the humanities and as a result a posthumanities has emerged. Now instead of national literatures there is comparative literature that looks not only at print material but scientific documents and technological innovations. Instead of Eurocentric histories, there are now postcolonial histories as well. Instead of just neoclassical economics, there is also feminist economics and the rhetoric of economics. There are now studies movements that look at identity formations rather than at nation-state formations. These curriculum developments saved the humanities from the cold hands of utility. It is time for primary and secondary schools to see the value of the posthumanites and reshape their curriculum accordingly.

3 The Necessity for a New Liberal Arts

I have spent the bulk of this chapter arguing that the liberal arts (mathematics, rhetoric, poetry, literature, history, philosophy, and economics) are anthropocentric and Eurocentric, and there is a need to rethink everything including the liberal arts in light of an environmental crisis I refer to as the Capitalocene. Now I want to suggest the liberal arts is not by its nature anthropocentric or Eurocentric. Its history is, but its future need

not be. A non-anthropocentric and Eurocentric liberal arts is already taking shape and this new shape demonstrates how the liberal arts approaches posthumanism. It is historians (Pearson, 2012), philosophers (Calarco, 2008; Derrida, 2002), and writers (Arimah, 2017; Coetzee, 2003; Ghosh, 2016; Sinha, 2007) who are leading the way in helping us to understand the impact the Capitalocene has on the world and how humans can rethink their role in shaping the world. Reclaiming the liberal arts from a utility logic will require us to rethink our curriculum but more importantly rethink why we adopt certain topics of discussion, discovery, exploration, and research over other topics. We have miseducated our young to think an education at any level is earned because it will lead to better earnings. This is literally a dead-end for all of the world. We should not take history, literature, poetry, philosophy, mathematics, or sciences classes at any educational level because it will lead to more material success but because these topics will help us see a future in which all species can survive and thrive. If humans are truly unique as humanists have argued for centuries, then we humans better find ways to think differently before the world is destroyed. If we cannot see this as human beings, then we are not unique at all no matter what any humanist might think. We are merely extinct.

References

Arimah, L. N. (2017). *What it means when a man falls from the sky*. Riverhead Books.

Bérubé, M., & Ruth, J. (2015). *The humanities, higher education and academic freedom: Three necessary arguments*. Palgrave-MacMillan.

Calarco, M. (2008). *Zoographies: The question of the animal from Heidegger to Derrida*. Columbia University.

Coetzee, J. M. (2003). *Elizabeth Costello*. Viking.

Derrida, J. (2002). The animal that therefore I am (more to follow). *Critical Inqiury, 28,* 369–418.

Despret, V. (2016). *What would animals say if we asked the right questions?* University of Minnesota.

Ghosh, A. (2016). *The great derangement: Climate change and the unthinkable*. University of Chicago.

Haraway, D. (2016a). Staying with trouble: Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Chthulucene. In J. W. Moore (Ed.), *Anthropocene or Capitalocene: Nature, history and crisis of capitalism* (pp. 34–76). Kairos.

Haraway, D. (2016b). *Staying with trouble: Making kin in the Chthulucene*. Duke University.

Heidegger, M. (1983/1995). *The fundamentals concepts of metaphysics*. Indiana University.

Latour, B. (2004). *The politics of nature: How to bring the sciences into democracy*. Harvard University.

Lyotard, J-F. (1984). *The postmodern condition: A report on knowledge*. University of Minnesota.

Miller, J. H. (1992). *Ariadne's thread: Story lines*. Yale University.

Pearson, C. (2012). *Mobilizing nature: The environmental history of war and militarization in modern France*. Manchester University.

Sinha, I. (2007). *Animal's people*. Simon & Schuster.

Sloterdijk, P. (2009). Rules for the human zoo. *Environment and Planning D: Society & Space, 27,* 12–28.

Stevens, H. (2013). *Life out of sequence: A data-driven history of bioinformatics*. University of Chicago.

Thacker, E. (2010). *After life*. University of Chicago.

John A. Weaver is a professor of curriculum studies at Georgia Southern University. He has a Bachelor of Arts in history and political science from Alderson-Broaddus College in Philippi, West Virginia, a Master of Arts in German and Italian history from Villanova University, and Ph.D. in comparative education from the University of Pittsburgh. He is the author of *Educating the Posthuman* (2010), *Democracy, Science, and Curriculum Studies* (2018), and editor of *(Post) Modern Science (Education)* with Peter Appelbaum and Marla Morris, and *Posthumanism and Educational Research* (2015) with Nathan Snaza.

Educational Policy

Education Policy in the Time of Climate Emergency and Global Pandemic

Bob Lingard

Schooling systems are steered by policy, which might be seen as the 'authoritative allocation of values'. Each aspect of that definition has been challenged by the various processes of neoliberal globalisation. Thus, while policy traditionally has been under the authority of nation states, globalisation has seen an enhanced influence of international organisations having authority within the policy processes of nations. Think of the OECD. Think of the UN's SDGs. Allocation processes within state structures have changed, first through new public management and then through network governance, which has witnessed private sector actors, including edu-businesses, involved across the policy cycle in potentially undemocratic ways. Values have seen the meta-goal of schooling as the production of the necessary human capital to ensure a globally competitive national economy. Recently, there has been the rise of nationalism and ethnonationalism within some nations expressed as a right-wing anti-globalisation. However, that critique offers nothing for a more progressive framing of education policy. The global Coronavirus pandemic and the climate emergency both demonstrate the urgent need for a progressive cosmopolitanism and for schooling policy to stress humanist and educative goals and a disposition that acknowledges that we are all part of one humanity. Such policy also needs to be developed in inclusive democratic ways.

1 Defining Policy

Schooling systems are run or steered by policy formulated within the changing structures and practices of the state. Public policy, including education policy, might be seen, using an old definition, as 'the authoritative allocation of values' (Easton, 1953).

B. Lingard (✉)
Australian Catholic University, Sydney, QLD, Australia
e-mail: Robert.Lingard@acu.edu.au

R. S. Webster et al. (eds.), *Humanizing Education in the 3rd Millennium*,
SpringerBriefs in Education, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-1205-4_6

Gale and Densmore (2003) argue that Easton was actually talking more about politics in this definition, rather than explicitly about public policy. We thus probably need to reframe Easton's definition, suggesting that policy is the authoritative allocation of values framed by politics and mediated by the logics of practice of the state. For Bourdieu (1998), the logics of practice of the state, particularly in relation to policy, articulate or assert the right to apply the universal ('the monopoly of the universal') within society and within street level organisations. Thus, for example, systemic schooling policy applies or at least is meant to apply in all schools in the same way. This universal character of education policy sits in clear contrast with the idiosyncratic 'thisness' of schools and classrooms and indeed of pedagogical practices. This universal/specificity distinction suggests a ready Bourdieusian explanation of inevitable infidelities in policy implementation or enactment of education policy in schools and classrooms (Rawolle & Lingard, 2008, 2015). In policy enactment, we see policy as palimpsest, policy being re-read as it moves from text to enactment or practice in schools and these re-readings are mediated by the specific contexts of schools and classrooms (Ball et al., 2012).

Elsewhere, Fazal Rizvi and Lingard (2010) have argued that each element of Easton's old public policy definition—authority, state allocation processes and values (ideologies, discourses)—has been challenged substantially by both globalisation and state restructurings in respect of education policy, with the latter also indirectly related to the former. Thus policy authority today, the legitimate right to exercise power (*a la* Weber), functions globally, as well as regionally, nationally, subnationally and locally. For example, think here of the policy influence of the OECD in respect of schooling systems of wealthy member nations or of the authority of the World Bank in relation to policy in developing nations in receipt of Bank loans. On the former, think of the impact of the OECD's PISA within participating nations and on the latter think of the earlier Bank loans/structural adjustment trade-offs. Think also of the significance of the EU in education in European nations (Lawn & Grek, 2012; Papanastasiou, 2019), despite education being the responsibility of member nations under the principle of subsidiarity. Think also of UNESCO and the 2015 Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDG4 on education. So policy ideas now flow globally and policy imaginaries of policymakers within nations have in effect been debordered (Peck & Theodore, 2015).

Allocation processes refer to the mediating effects of state structures on how policy steers and reaches schools. State structures have also changed substantially over the last thirty years or so. We have witnessed changing practices of statecraft, that is, there have been changes in both state structures and practices. These changes have occurred through new public management with the state steering at a distance in a post-bureaucratic way through performance indicators/data and subsequently through the instantiation of network governance. Network governance has witnessed civil society actors and particularly private sector actors (e.g. edu-businesses, philanthropies, corporations) enter the complex game of public policy formation, decision-making and implementation (Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004, p. 25). Thus new actors have been involved across the policy cycle, from agenda setting to policy text production, through to implementation, enactment and sometimes policy evaluation. Here we

acknowledge that we need to think about policy processes as well as policy texts, and see policy as process, text and practice.

The involvement of new actors across the policy cycle has affected, limited might be more accurate, democratic processes of policymaking. Furthermore, network governance is stretched globally, catalysing new scales and spaces of policy influence. The state, which has been restructured, has also in some ways been rescaled (Brenner, 2004) and linked to regional agreements and international ones stemming from international organisations such as the OECD, World Bank, UN and UNESCO. While international organisations basically deal with nations, globalisation has precipitated new spatialities (Amin, 2002), so that these international organisations today also reach inside nations across national borders. PISA for Schools is a good example of this (Lewis et al., 2016), where individual schools and local school systems participate in a global comparative measure of school performance.

Rescaling and new spaces of policy result in different values coming into play in public policy and this is especially evident in education policy, which traditionally at a macro-level has been about constituting the 'imagined community' which is the nation (Anderson, 1991), creating the nation through the constitution of national citizens. Schooling within nations today is also about the production of global citizens and a conception that we are all part of humankind, although this is under some pressure with the recent rise of new nationalism, which will be commented on below.

Values and discourses are the third element of Easton's definition. As implied above, today these circulate globally and most often at the macro-level see schooling in terms of the production of the requisite human capital to putatively ensure the global competitiveness of national economies. This has had a negative reductive effect on the broader purposes of schooling as articulated in and through policy. The hegemony of the neoliberal has also seen the valorising of competition between schools, encouragement of school markets and parental choice and a new self-regarding individualism as a putative way to enhance the quality of schooling with a proliferation of data central to this policy regime. Top-down, test-based accountability drives many schooling systems today also with reductive effects on the width of the curriculum. Much research has also illustrated the negative impacts of this policy approach on social justice, exacerbating inequalities (Chmielewski, 2019), on quality concerns and also on the broader purposes of schooling beyond the production of the desired and requisite quantity and quality of human capital. These changes to policy and policymaking processes have substantially reshaped and rescaled policymaking in education and its focus. Humanist concerns have been somewhat elided, yet schools and teachers, often despite the human capital policy framing of policy, still tend to emphasise these humanistic purposes of schooling in school and classroom practices.

As noted above, policymaking imaginaries to some extent have been 'debordered', yet policy enactment 'remains a stubbornly localized, context-specific process' (Peck & Theodore, 2015, pp. xv–xvi). This is why, despite the circulation of these global policy imaginaries, they still play out in path dependent ways in different systems of schooling, mediated by the specific histories, cultures and politics of any given nation, or indeed even of sub-national political units within federal political arrangements. The nation state is not supine in the face of these globally circulating

policy ideas, but it needs to be recognised that the nation state now works in different ways. So what we see is not a homogenising or converging of schooling policies, but rather the emergence of hybrid models of policy. Human capital theory, though, still frames at a meta-policy level most policies in most schooling systems globally. As noted, but to reiterate, this has seen a weakening of humanist, opportunity and more specifically educational rationales for schooling policy and also resulted in a weakening of commitments to socially just schooling and exacerbated inequalities produced through schooling (Chmielewski, 2019).

Peck and Theodore (2015) suggest that today with the mobility of policy ideas around the globe we are witnessing what they refer to as 'fast policy' linked to the 'debordering' of policy imaginaries of national policymakers, that is, the ways in which policy ideas from elsewhere enter national and local policy conversations and debates. They suggest this policy mobility (policyscapes) contracts timelines for policy production. The result is the '[t]ransnationalization of policy discourses' linked to the '[c]osmopolitanization of policy actors and actions' (p. 224). These globally circulating discourses encourage '[d]eference to global best practices and models' and to ideas that work (pp. 224–225). This is the mobility of the reductionist trope of 'what works' on a global scale. For Peck and Theodore, fast policymaking is actually about global policy mobilities, rather than straight forward policy transfer (p. 6). Policy mobilities emphasise relationalities and multi-directionality, while in contrast the concept of policy transfer depicts unilateral, one-way effects.

2 Evidence-Informed Policy

Today in schooling systems around the globe there is much talk of the need for 'evidence-based' policy. I would argue strongly that we can only ever have and only ever should aspire to, 'evidence-informed' policy. This is so because, as Head (2008) has argued, all policy is an admixture of facts (evidence, research), values (politics, ideologies, discourses) and professional knowledges. Professional knowledges mediate policy production within state structures and also policy enactment in schools and classrooms. Furthermore, values or discourses frame up policy and this is particularly so in respect of schooling policy. The questions are whose values, what values and who should be involved in determining such values at system, school and classroom levels. The point to be made here then is that we can only ever have evidence-informed policy rather than evidence-based policy. The latter would instantiate a technocracy rather than a democracy. Head's observation also points out the centrality of teacher professional knowledges to policy enactment, and it is those knowledges that give teachers some agency in the policy cycle.

Today, in the context of globalisation and fast policymaking, research evidence flows more rapidly across national borders into systems and schools. Additionally, research conducted by private consultancies, multinational consultancy firms and edu-businesses possibly has a more significant place in policymaking in the situation of network governance with significant implications for the democratic and social

justice purposes of schooling. This type of research in relation to policy might be seen as research *for* policy as opposed to research *of* policy, and as such, it takes the status quo as a given. There is thus a neglect of the fact that policy discursively constructs the nature of the problem to which the policy is a putative solution (Bacchi, 2009). Critical policy analysis and research *of* policy is necessary within a democracy to understand whether or not policy is achieving its goals and to deconstruct taken-for-granted assumptions that can impede the provision of socially just schooling.

The enhanced significance of data in respect of schooling policy has also had implications for the place of research in policymaking in education. Much of schooling has been datafied (Williamson, 2017), while the data infrastructures central to the datafication of schooling which have been created, often involve large edu-businesses as a sort of hidden privatisation of schooling policy (Lingard, 2019; Sellar & Gulson, 2019). Data also potentially are replacing research evidence in terms of evidence-informed policy. As Luke and Hogan (2006, p. 206) have pointed out, 'the centrality of data and numbers to contemporary modes of governance mean that current debates over what counts as evidence in state policy formation are indeed debates over what counts as educational research'.

There are interesting matters to contemplate here in respect of democratic policymaking in education. I would argue we should only have data-informed policymaking and given that all policy, as noted, is an admixture of research, values and professional knowledges, there is an important place for democratic input regarding how values might frame what data is collected and how it is used. In the context of the Coronavirus pandemic, many nations have surveilled their populations in terms of adherence or otherwise to lockdown and stay at home policy responses. Post the pandemic there are many issues raised here regarding privacy and access to data collected by schools and school systems, as well as within the broader society. The involvement of edu-businesses in the creation of data infrastructures for schooling systems also raises important privacy issues regarding the potential for such edu-businesses to on-sell student data to third parties for profit.

3 Contextual Effects

Policies sit in particular contexts (and actually discursively construct such contexts) and as such are framed by the dominant or hegemonic values, discourses at any given time. Considerable mention has been made to this point about the impact of globalisation on education policy processes and content. However, we have to acknowledge something of a backlash against neoliberal globalisation evidenced in the politics of many nations around the globe today. This opposition has been from both the left and the right. It is right-wing critics, however, that are at this moment seemingly having more policy effects, though as will be noted below, the global Coronavirus pandemic has led to national state interventionist policy responses that challenge many of the taken-for-granted assumptions of neoliberalism.

Regarding the right-wing backlash against global neoliberalism, think, for example, of President Trump's xenophobic 'America First' stance and strident opposition to multilateralism and international organisations (the WHO, for example); think of Brexit; think of the rise of far-right parties in various parts of the globe (Alternative for Germany, One Nation in Australia, Le Penn's party in France). What we have seen is the emergence of new racisms, a new ethnonationalism, indeed new nationalisms and support for economic nationalism against the 'free markets' and no-tariffs of neoliberal globalisation.

Globalisation of the neoliberal kind witnessed restructuring of the way schooling policy was made in many nations, evidenced in a rescaling to national level of some policymaking in schooling. The creation of national curriculum in England following the Education Reform Act of 1988 is case in point, as is the subsequent weakening of Local Authority input into schooling policy. The creation earlier this century of a national curriculum and national testing in Australian federalism, where schooling is the Constitutional responsibility of the states and territories, is another instance of rescaling to the national level (Lingard, 2018). National schooling policies/interventions in the US under President G.W. Bush (*No Child Left Behind*) and Obama (*Race to the Top*) are additional exemplars. As Appadurai (2006) argued, loss of economic sovereignty in the context of neoliberal globalisation has seen nations emphasising ethnos or culture as the resource over which they appear to retain control. This has been evident in the rise of national approaches in schooling and in the culture wars over the content of schooling. However, with the rise of ethnonationalism there are real dangers in terms of schooling policy of a strengthening of this emphasis on the national in schooling and a weakening of support for cosmopolitanism, the production of global citizens and schooling for the global common good.

The impact of globalisation on education policy has been mentioned. This saw in methodological terms a need to move away from methodological nationalism in policy analysis. In that context, Ball (2012, p. 93) observed, 'Education policy analysis can no longer sensibly be limited to within the nation-state – the fallacy of methodological territorialism… policy analysis must also extend its purview beyond the state and the role of multinational agencies and NGOs to include transnational business practices', and I would add, philanthropists. It has been suggested that this recognition of factors beyond the nation almost saw a 'methodological globalism' replace 'methodological nationalism', at times 'projecting a flat world of policy travel and transfer' with an overwhelming focus on global effects considered in a unidirectional way (Clarke, 2019, p. v). Furthermore, often, the understanding of the global in national policymaking in education almost neglected who the actors were in this scenario. The point needs to be made, and especially in the context of the current rise of economic nationalism and ethnonationalist xenophobia, that policy analysis today needs to consider the multiple geographies and cartographies, along with multiple directions, of policy influences and effects. Yet, the nation state remains very important in policymaking in schooling, but works in different ways. We need to move in contemporary policy analysis beyond a methodological nationalism/methodological globalism binary.

4 Conclusion

The global flow of the Coronavirus 'along the pathways of trade and international capital' (Roy, 2020) has seen national responses and the closing of national borders, indeed a closing of societies and economies. This is a health crisis and an economic crisis. Why focus on that here? Well, government responses to the global pandemic, irrespective of political ideology, have witnessed a real stepping back from the central shibboleths of neoliberalism with implications for post-pandemic education policy and for reconsidering the values that ought to underpin education policy. Governments in the UK, Denmark, Spain, Australia and New Zealand, for example, have provided increased funding for those unemployed because of the closing down of the economy through different kinds of wage guarantees. Spain has introduced a universal basic wage (and nationalised private hospitals); debates about such a wage have come to the fore in many societies. Most governments have rejected the central trope of neoliberalism of individual self-responsibility and instead replaced it with a collective focus, a focus on the collective common good and societal responsibility for all: we are all in this together. State steering of the economy has also been more apparent.

While the virus might have been spread by the more mobile and privileged, its impact has been greatest on the poor and disadvantaged. The inequality within and between nations created by neoliberal globalisation (Piketty, 2013) and played out in schooling (Chmielewski, 2019) has become starkly obvious in the face of the global Coronavirus pandemic. There has been an increased respect for 'front-line' workers, doctors, nurses, paramedics, drivers, grocery store/supermarket workers and teachers. This increased respect has raised awareness that many of these are undervalued and underpaid and work for the benefit of all.

There is renewed respect for science. Medical researchers, epidemiologists, statisticians, statistical modellers and doctors have been very prominent in nations' public health responses to the pandemic. This, it is to be strongly hoped, has challenged the rise of post-truth in politics. This post-truth context has witnessed emotion, affect and personal beliefs and values become more significant in framing political opinions and some policymaking than facts, evidence, and even research. Post-truth has been most apparent in respect of the science of climate change and many governments' inadequate responses to the current climate emergency. This was clear during the recent devastating and destructive Australian bushfires. It is hoped the centrality of science and research to taming the pandemic will carry over into post-pandemic politics and policymaking, becoming more evidence-informed, but also framed by concerns for the common good within nations and globally.

Arundhati Roy (2020) has suggested that the pandemic ought to provide 'a portal, a gateway between one world and the next' so that we can imagine the world anew. This would be a post-neoliberal globalisation world: in this world, policies in education would be developed democratically and schools would be funded in redistributive ways to ensure they were a machine for more equality and social cohesion and geared, as with all public policy to local, national and global common goods. There would be

a concern for the production of citizens with cosmopolitan dispositions recognising that we are all part of a single humanity and one precious planet. Certainly, the pandemic has unequivocally illustrated yet again that we are all part of a common humanity.

Climate policy would be framed by the science and schooling would be really about sustainability and acknowledge that our resources are finite (Rappleye & Komatsu, 2020). There is a very real political opportunity, a portal here, for reimagining how we develop education policy and what its focus ought to be and how both might be linked to a socially just world framed by concerns for global humanity and the global common good. UNESCO's International Commission on the Futures of Education, which will report in late 2021, is an important site for facilitating a global dialogue about the futures of education, but such dialogues must go on at all levels from the local through the national to the global.

References

Amin, A. (2002). Spatialities of globalisation. *Environment and Planning A, 34*(3), 385–399. https://doi.org/10.1068/a3439

Anderson, B. (1991). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism.* Verso.

Appadurai, A. (2006). *Fear of small numbers: An essay on the geography of anger*. Duke University Press.

Bacchi, C. L. (2009). *Analysing policy: What's the problem represented to be?* Pearson.

Ball, S. J. (2012). *Global Education Inc.: New policy networks and the neo-liberal imaginary.* Routledge.

Ball, S. J., Maguire, M., & Braun, A. (2012). *How schools do policy: Policy enactments in secondary schools.* Routledge.

Bourdieu, P. (1998). *Practical reason: On the theory of action.* Stanford University Press.

Brenner, N. (2004). *New state spaces: Urban governance and the rescaling of statehood*. Oxford University Press.

Chmielewski, A. K. (2019). The global increase in the socioeconomic achievement gap, 1964 to 2015. *American Sociological Review, 84*(3), 517–544. https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122419847165

Clarke, J. (2019). Foreword. In N. Papanastasiou (Ed.), *The politics of scale in policy: Scalecraft and education governance* (pp. v–xii). Policy Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvh9w1zj

Easton, D. (1953). *The political system: An inquiry into the state of political science.* University of Chicago Press.

Gale, T., & Densmore, K. (2003). *Engaging teachers: Towards a radical democratic agenda for schooling.* Open University Press.

Head, B. W. (2008). Three lenses of evidence-based policy. *Australian Journal of Public Administration, 67*(1), 1–11. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8500.2007.00564.x

Koppenjan, J., & Klijn, E.-H. (2004). *Managing uncertainties in networks: Public private controversies.* Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203643457

Lawn, M., & Grek, S. (2012). *Europeanizing education: Governing a new policy space.* Symposium Books.

Lewis, S., Sellar, S., & Lingard, B. (2016). PISA for schools: Topological rationality and new spaces of the OECD's Global Educational Governance. *Comparative Education Review, 60*(1), 27–57. https://doi.org/10.1086/684458

Lingard, B. (2013). The impact of research on education policy in an era of evidence-based policy. *Critical Studies in Education, 54*(2), 113–131. https://doi.org/10.1080/17508487.2013.781515
Lingard, B. (2018). The Australian curriculum: A critical interrogation of why, what and where to? *Curriculum Perspectives, 38*(1), 55–65. https://doi.org/10.1007/s41297-017-0033-7
Lingard, B. (2019). The global education industry, data infrastructures, and the restructuring of government school systems. In M. Parreira do Amaral, G. Steiner-Khamsi, & C. Thompson (Eds.), *Researching the global education industry* (pp. 135–155). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-04236-3_7
Lingard, B. (2020). The policy sociology of Geoff Whitty: Current and emergent issues regarding education research in use. In A. Brown & E. Wisby (Eds.), *Knowledge, policy and practice in education and the struggle for social justice*. UCL Press. https://www.uclpress.co.uk/products/127616
Lingard, B., Martino, W., Rezai-Rashti, G., & Sellar, S. (2016). *Globalizing educational accountabilities*. Routledge.
Lingard, B., Sellar, S., & Savage, G. C. (2013). Re-articulating social justice as equity in schooling policy: The effects of testing and data infrastructures. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 35*(5), 710–730. https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2014.919846
Luke, A., & Hogan, D. (2006). Redesigning what counts as evidence in educational policy: The Singapore model. In J. Ozga, T. Seddon, & T. Popkewitz (Eds.), *World Yearbook of education 2006: Educational research and policy: Steering the knowledge-based economy* (p. 170184). Routledge.
McIntyre, L. C. (2018). *Post-truth*. MIT Press.
Papanastasiou, N. (2019). *The politics of scale in policy: Scalecraft and education governance*. Policy Press.
Peck, J., & Theodore, N. (2015). *Fast policy: Experimental statecraft at the thresholds of neoliberalism*. University of Minnesota Press.
Piketty, T. (2013). *Capital in the twenty-first century*. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
Rappleye, J., & Komatsu, H. (2020). Towards (comparative) educational research for a finite future. *Comparative Education*. https://doi.org/10.1080/03050068.2020.1741197
Rawolle, S., & Lingard, B. (2008). The sociology of Pierre Bourdieu and researching education policy. *Journal of Education Policy, 23*(6), 729–741. https://doi.org/10.1080/02680930802262700
Rawolle, S., & Lingard, B. (2015). Bourdieu and doing policy sociology in education. In K. N. Gulson, M. Clarke, & E. B. Petersen (Eds.), *Education policy and contemporary theory: Implications for research* (pp. 15–26). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315818429
Rizvi, F., & Lingard, B. (2010). *Globalizing education policy*. Routledge.
Roy, A. (2020, April 3). The pandemic is a portal. *Financial Times*.
Sellar, S., & Gulson, K. N. (2019). Becoming information centric: The emergence of new cognitive infrastructures in education policy. *Journal of Education Policy*, 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1080/02680939.2019.1678766
Williamson, B. (2017). *Big data in education: The digital future of learning, policy and practice*. Sage.

Bob Lingard is a Professorial Fellow in the Institute for Learning Sciences and Teacher Education at Australian Catholic University and an Emeritus Professor at The University of Queensland. He has published widely in the sociology of education and policy sociology in education.

Challenges to Educational Policy: A Philosophical View

Timo Airaksinen

Abstract This paper discusses some contemporary problems of education and educational policy, first in Finland and then in a broader international context. In the end, I try to suggest some ways out of the dilemmas I have reviewed. Educational policy may look like a formidable tool in good hands, but this may be an illusion. Too many schools are what I call storage schools, or schools where students may learn nothing, or they need not learn anything. This may depend on the hidden curriculum, but not necessarily. Educational optimism may be an illusion as well, namely, the idea that educational policy making guides and leads society forward toward a brighter future. In Finland, whose school system deserves admiration, the alienation of the underprivileged classes has led to the polarity of populist politics, just like in other countries. However, the populists certainly are not emphasizing the role of education in social life. This is to say, our learning results may be impressive but in a more general, but equally important sense, the schools and education fail.

1 The Notions of Education and Educational Policy

When we discuss education, people normally use the term as a very wide umbrella concept, much wider than they should. Therefore, to speak of educational policy can be misleading. Of course, we can provide a procedural definition: educational policy is all those measures the state and its relevant organizations take in order to create, manage, and control an educational system within its borders. What, then, is an educational system? In a circular manner, we say it is whatever is controlled by educational policy. This is a pseudo-problem, if we all agree what education is; we all have the necessary understanding and silent or tacit knowledge of it. We can also speak of hermeneutical pre-understanding of what we need to discuss as social and cultural issues. The same applies to 'we'—who are we? I mean by 'we' all the competent agents who belong to a culture. This also is going to be circular: who says who are competent? Answer: those who are competent and empowered to do so,

T. Airaksinen (✉)
University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland
e-mail: timo.airaksinen@helsinki.fi

R. S. Webster et al. (eds.), *Humanizing Education in the 3rd Millennium*,
SpringerBriefs in Education, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-1205-4_7

which is to say that competent means the same as empowered. This kind of situation is typical of social science; it generates a body of knowledge that is profoundly riddled with this kind of uncertainty, and thus it is an essentially contested field. This body is at the same time factual and normative, which seems unavoidable in social sciences, but this is to say that they lack objectivity.

2 Home Schooling

I will first focus on educationally relevant sources of knowledge and their implementation in developed countries, thinking of course first Finland, and starting from it. What I say applies to other similar countries, I hope. First, only some education, or some aspects of education, take place in schools, and in that case, educational policy cannot control educational activities that occur beyond schools. This is the reason why some people adopt home education and why such a decision is hardly tolerated by the educational elites in Finland: parents are not trusted, or the children's right to education are defined without reference to their parents' right to control and define the future of their children. Parents can be dangerous and they sometimes form a threat to their own children.

The state legislation accepts the possibility of home schooling but this practice is supposed to be monitored strictly and in detail. What happens in home schools has not been studied in Finland, and that is a symptomatic fact: home schooling belongs to religious minorities and immigrant families who have special needs. Religious people are afraid of the mainstream Lutheran influence and immigrants may want to protect, say, their daughters from the programs that educate boys and girls together. Some immigrant cultures abhor this. At the same time, it is difficult to reach the official standards of learning at home, if the parents are not academically educated and determined in what they are trying to achieve. Good examples are mathematics and foreign languages. How do you learn French pronunciation at home from your parents who are unfamiliar with the language? This may sound utilitarian, but it illustrates an important point: all children must learn practical skills.

In Finland, which is a social democracy, practically all children go to school, for several reasons. Parents' rights over their children are restricted so that the state and its legislation protect children under the legal fiction that they are autonomous and, accordingly, have their own rights. This is to say, their parents cannot decide what their children learn. On the contrary, they must learn what is best for them, defined independently of the parents' values and cultural background. The fiction, again, is that this is the best for the children and hence they need it. I have met fierce personal resistance to this idea in the USA, which is more libertarian than Finland, and so will further clarify the Finnish perspective.

An accepted Finnish moral rule is that a basic need implies a right (Maslow, 1970). If you need something, and the need is a basic need, you have a right to it. Without education no child can manage her future life as a mature and successful citizen; therefore, she needs education, and because she needs it, she has the relevant right.

Somebody, namely the state, has the corresponding duty to provide the educational services. Parents have the derivative obligation to see that this happens.

Only the state can educate, because another principle of Finnish ethical thinking aims at full equality of all, and only a comprehensive education in school can guarantee that. School does not select its intake based on probable academic achievement level or aptitude, or the wealth of the parents. All children are equal when they enter school, they all get the same education, and thus they all start their adult life from an equal social stance. This is what philosophers have called justice as fairness (Rawls, 1971). It emphasizes equal starting points yet accepts inequality of achievements to a certain degree. Various redistributive mechanisms are then used to control any wider financial inequalities in the long run. The system seems to work quite well, but recently the rise of a strong political populist movement indicates that social alienation and anomic sensibilities trouble large segments of the population. The system empowers some but leaves too many people feeling alienated. The problem may depend on the nature of the working life more than education, but this shows, anyway, that school does not fix all social problems.

3 The Street and the Information Highway

Metaphorically we can say that the Street educates our kids; that is, peers are very important to the youth. We may forget that at least half of what people learn—and young people learn quickly—they learn from the Street, from their peers. How do we control that? That is difficult, to put it mildly. If their peers do not accept school education, school education cannot be successful. If the Street is against school, what can the policymakers do about it? Perhaps nothing because children are conformists, and ready to use extreme methods to bring others into line, for instance what music to listen, how to speak, and how to dress. All parents know this and most of us also worry about it because it may involve bullying and violence, but also because it may well be dysfunctional. It may damage the child. However, education in the Street and the influence of the Street also are functional because they socialize kids and make them more competent to face the social and interpersonal challenges in their future adult life. No school curriculum can teach as much or train them so well.

In today's world, to speak of the Street should perhaps be replaced by the notions of social media and Information Highway. Whatever be the name, the same challenges are there. What do children learn on the internet? At least information regarding sex is readily available to all regardless of age and maturity level. It is incredible what they can learn about sex on the internet, and how misleading it all is. Sex as simple performance in all its repetitiveness is maximally far from the truth, and children must face this basic fact. At the same time the internet is full of information, both relevant and irrelevant, true and false. Perhaps we should be pessimistic about the young people's future ability to draw these distinctions in a consistent and reliable way. Media reading skills are essential but, I wonder, do the school curricula really take this seriously? I doubt it. Is the size of a country's defense budget less important

than Harry and Megan (in January 2020)? I mean, more people know about them than about the defense budget. Modern media deliberately confuses such issues, apparently to sell more adds to people who are hooked to gossip, but they also want to serve the public by publishing some news. This allows them to argue that they do a public service, which helps them with taxation, if they are business enterprises. Of course, even government-owned stations like BBC and in Finland YLE are vulnerable because of the overall success of this trivialization of news.

4 Pseudo-Education and Storage Schools

A common but less discussed challenge to any educational system is the threat of pseudo-education. I mean schools as storage houses for kids who are too young to work, but too old to stay at home. I read a study that stated that most of the schools around the world fail, or in most of the schools the kids learn very little (see Heller, 2018). And if they are not expected to learn very much it is a nightmare scenario. And they are not expected to learn much, that is clear. They are going to learn nothing because they are supposed to be kept in storage so that they cannot cause trouble in the streets. Even in Finland, the Social-democratic government in 2019 suggested raising the mandatory schooling age from 16 to 18 just to reduce the number of unemployed youths. Is it not a wonderful idea to put unemployed youths to school? They should learn something there, but this residual group is not motivated to do that, as we know. Of course, they do no longer figure in unemployment statistics, which is good for the government and its educational department. It all looks good. Is that enough? Their idea of extended schooling did not die quickly. Those kids no longer decorate the unemployment statistics.

The idea of storage school is a moot one. I do not want to argue that they are created deliberately. They result from bad educational policy making. To suggest otherwise is too cynical, although my Finnish example above may look bad enough. The Finnish system has a good reputation abroad, yet it has its own blemishes. In developing countries, the problem of storage schools is endemic. Their pupils come from poor families, they are often traumatized, their parents are unable to help, teachers are uneducated and badly trained, their work is not appreciated, the perceived value of education is low, and the learning results are not monitored. The call of the streets is in the air, or much hard work at home (Chimomb, 2005).

The idea of storage school is never explicitly mentioned in educational policy. It is a matter of the hidden curriculum, which always is a key challenge to educational policy. Whatever the law says and the schools are supposed to achieve, the hidden curriculum is always there, sometimes facilitating and sometimes preventive. In the case of storage school, it provides facilitation, as scandalous as it is.

5 Education vs. Training

Next, I would like to draw a line between training and education. Here populists and neoliberals agree. In Finland the former term of training is becoming more and more predominant. The economy does not need the social sciences and humanities education at the MA level. One can learn on the job what is needed at work, which sounds to the populists and neoliberals like an obvious truth. Such fields as law, medicine, and engineering are exceptions to the rule. Finland is the land of engineering and engineers, and the cultural belief is that we must not lose that tradition. All this will be reflected on the school system.

Who would speak for social sciences and the humanities is unclear, which is a depressing thought. Some of us still think in terms of the enlightenment and consider a civilized person to be properly cultured and not inclined toward neo-barbarism (Donskis, 2003, p. 212). For instance, Finnish schools have a mandatory philosophy curriculum, which of course is a good sign, and religious teaching still has a strong position. I am not convinced that schools should teach state-sanctioned Lutheran and Orthodox religion, but thus far the defenders of this tradition have been most influential. Schools also teach fine arts, but the trend is to cut the hours of such subjects. The question is, how much such 'useless' subjects are appreciated. They may not have much instrumental or economic value, although this is debatable, but their intrinsic value is great.

The neoliberal idea of education does not really consist of 'education' but rather seems to be entirely training for a working life, useful career, and political apathy. Who knows what the future will be like but the neoliberals want to emphasize skills for the future tasks? How are they or anyone, supposed to know what skills might be needed in the future? In Finland nowadays, at the university level, it is all about skills, to be ready for the challenges of working life. But as I said, the future is always dangerously open and as such unpredictable. From what we have at present we cannot predict the future.

Technology changes fast and the global turns of politics are unpredictable. No one predicted personal computers and, later, the new phone technology, even the global giant Nokia failed miserably; one cannot predict such innovations without first inventing them. This simple fact is obviously difficult to understand. To take drastic examples: what kinds of knowledge and skills will be required in the world after significant climate change becomes established; or what knowledge and skills will be required after a nuclear war or a global pandemic, worse even than the Spanish flu (around 1918, 100 million people died). Skills are valuable and necessary, but we only know which ones are needed when the time warrants their presence. We can make predictions on probability, such as needing a foreign language: English is important but other languages have value too. We will need mathematics and perhaps we need social sciences as well, if they are sciences and not merely semi-camouflaged political speculation. Think of history curricula which in most countries glorify own history and its wars in a nationalistic perspective.

History may offer valuable understandings for facing future problems. For example, the Dalai Lama says that religions (and he seems to mean dogmas concerning transcendent and omnipotent gods), lead to quarrels and ultimately to hatred and violence. Without history we would not know what the Christian world was like some four hundred years ago, when religious wars were raging all over Europe (Donskis, 2003). We can hardly imagine what the Christian religion meant to the people of that time. Similarly, the concept of atheism has changed drastically through the ages. History can inform us with new insights, and we can thus understand better, say, religiously based terrorism.

6 What Should and Can Be Done

Then there is the narrower concept of education. Who knows what it means? I mean a valuable person-centered education, education to be a civilized citizen, who is a critical, democratic citizen. This distinguishes education from mere training. R. D. Anderson explains:

> The University of Berlin, founded in 1810 under the influence of Wilhelm von Humboldt, is traditionally seen as the model institution of the 19th century. In fact, the German system emerged from innovations both before and after 1810. Its features included the unity of teaching and research, the pursuit of higher learning in the philosophy faculty, freedom of study for students (Lernfreiheit, contrasted with the prescriptive curricula of the French system), the educational ideal of Bildung based on neo-humanist admiration for ancient Greece, corporate autonomy for universities despite their funding by the state, and the notion of academic freedom. The group of reformers in Prussia included philosophers like Fichte and Schleiermacher as well as Humboldt, and Berlin University was a focus of national cultural revival. The German model had a profound influence throughout central, eastern, and northern Europe. (Anderson, 2005)

What happened next? We witnessed the rise of Germany as a military might in the nineteenth century that first won wars and then lost the Great War, and it became the breeding ground for Nazism in response to the Treaty of Versailles. Lofty ideals and progressive practices do not make a nation immune to home-grown barbarism, which reminds us of the theses of educational pessimism: national politics and culture determine education rather than the other way around. This is what happened to the very nation that developed the Humboldtian ideal of higher education.

I am old enough to have experienced and lived through the last stages of that ideal model of the Humboldtian university life in Finland. Then the all-powerful ministry of education changed it all: stronger centralized administration, less academic freedom, and practical-economical orientation. I miss my university because it has changed significantly, and I am retired.

We cannot go back in history all the way to the beginning of the nineteenth century. Some romantic minds may dream of it, followed by those who panic under the threat of the neoliberal and populist models. Schools and universities are supposed to serve big business and its industrial needs. What can be done? In Davos in January 2020 the

leading CEOs of the word, together with omnipresent Mr. Donald Trump, announced that the greatest threat to their wealth accumulation is financial overregulation. They insist on more freedoms, in the libertarian sense, and then they can make more money that benefits and befits us all. At the same time economic inequalities have led to massive social alienation and anomic vacuum, and the rise of populism.

The last example of the power of populist campaigning is, of course, Brexit. The best example is how banal the news become, and what truly interests people these days is, of course, Megxit. Something must be done and our last hope is more and better non-instrumental, critical, enlightening education for our young people. We have already lost too many generations, but perhaps we could save the new ones? However, no educational system alone may save us from the barbarism of the future, but it is a good start.

7 The Global Perspective

The educational perspective of the rich Western countries is misleading. Our problems are not the same as the problems of developing countries (see the most recent UNESCO's report Education Failure in Developing Countries, on the Internet). Therefore, it does not make sense to demand that developing countries adopt the educational practices of the West. In many developing countries, the battle line is between enlightened progressivism and conservative traditionalism. For instance, equality may not be an automatically accepted value. Gender, family line, caste, leadership roles, and religion may dictate one's lower or higher position in social life in a way that cannot and should not be challenged. See the Human Rights Declaration of African Countries, or The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (also known as the Banjul Charter). Should we battle such distinctions at the school by means of curricular change and development? In these days, in the Western world, we accept the idea of the near-sacred role of traditions and the identities they create. Identity politics is everywhere.

Who are we to say how other people should live? At the same time, cultural practices and traditions can be deeply dysfunctional, which may justify their rectification; but the Western educationalists cannot do it for them. Nevertheless, it all starts from schools and schooling; if that does not help to alleviate bad cultural norms, nothing does. The rich and the poor countries are in the same lifeboat, as we can see: all countries must battle between values, or valuelessness, as well as systemic alienation that threatens the civilized society. All young people should be able to go to school, both girls and boys, and they should stay and learn something there. They should learn something that is useful but is also intrinsically valuable.

All this may present a threat to the tradition in which they are immersed. But that cannot be helped: whatever new understandings they learn, the less dependent and uncritical they become of their own particular traditions, but this is a threat to traditional power wielders. However, if the tradition is based on power, it is a dead tradition that deserves to be changed. It lives on borrowed time. The question

of education ultimately is a question about social power and the status of power wielders. That is why liberal democracy is such a threat to some elites. Of course, India is a democracy but at the same time riddled with not-so-functional traditions. China is not a democracy: they have erased most of their traditions. The adoption of democracy would be a better start.

References

Anderson, R. D. (2005). *Germany and the Humboldtian Model*.https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198206606.003.0004

Chimomb, J. P. G. (2005). Issues in basic education in developing countries: An exploration of policy options for improved delivery. *Journal of International Cooperation in Education, 8*, 129–152.

Donskis, L. (2003). *Forms of hatred*. Rodopi.

Education Failure in Developing Countries – Report. (2015). http://www.efareport.unesco.org

Heller, K. (2018). *Schools fail to educate at least 30 percent of our students*. https://psychcentral.com/lib/schools-fail-to-educate-at-least-30-percent-of-our-students/

Maslow, A. H. (1970). *Motivation and personality* (2nd ed.). Harper & Row.

Rawls, J. (1971). *A theory of justice*. Harvard University Press.

The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (also known as the *Banjul Charter*). 1986.

Timo Airaksinen is Professor of Practical Philosophy Emeritus, University of Helsinki, Finland. He is a cynical realist. Research: seventeenth- and eighteenth-century empiricist philosophy and natural theology (Hobbes, Berkeley), philosophy of literature (Kafka, M. de Sade, linguistic tropes), virtue ethics and social conflict theory. He has travelled worldwide and published widely, most recently *Vagaries of Desire* (Brill, 2019; open access).

Rehumanising Education Policies

R. Scott Webster

Abstract Government policies regarding education have sought to gain greater control of teachers and student experiences, especially since the early 1970s (Schostack and Goodson in *Democracy, education and research.* Routledge, 2020) often through various appeals to quality or scientific management (Apple in *Ideology and Curriculum.* RoutledgeFalmer, 2004). As part of this endeavour, their policies have focussed upon the activities of learning and teaching rather than upon education. It is argued in this chapter that education offers quite a different discourse compared with teaching and learning. This is because education specifically refers to humans as social beings and their moral growth in a political context. The discourse that deals specifically with learning and teaching tends to be apolitical, value-neutral and technical, promoting an input/output orientation where teaching is the input and learning outcomes are the output. It is argued in this chapter that in order to ensure educational policies promote education, they ought to be re-humanised by encouraging all participants in educational activities to pursue their own philosophical aims of personhood which embrace moral and spiritual ideals.

1 Politics of Learning

Education policies, developed by both national governments and international organisations such as UNESCO and the OECD, have been promoting the activities of 'learning' and 'teaching' as being essentially technical in nature, while marginalising the concept of 'education'. Biesta (2017, p. 30) argues that this privileging of 'learning' and 'teaching' over 'education' is due to what he refers to as the 'politics of learning' which reduces 'learners' and 'learning' to the service of the political agenda, such as addressing issues of the economy and employment primarily through accountability and performativity. Indeed Biesta (2017, p. 22) even suggests that the concepts of both 'teaching' and 'learning' have become so hegemonic in policy literature that they are often assumed to be a singular term '*teachingandlearning*'. It is

R. S. Webster (✉)
Federation University, Berwick, VIC, Australia
e-mail: ss.webster@federation.edu.au

R. S. Webster et al. (eds.), *Humanizing Education in the 3rd Millennium*,
SpringerBriefs in Education, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-1205-4_8

important to recognise that while there are overlaps, 'teaching' and 'learning' differ significantly to 'education'. This concern is also asserted by Apple (2004, p. 104) who explains that the policies which adopt such a focus 'move in a direction quite the opposite from moral and political considerations. Instead spheres of decision making are perceived as *technical problems*'.

Clearly not all learning or teaching can be considered as educative. For example, training, indoctrination and even brain-washing rely upon teaching and learning as apparently education does too. However, education refers to ideals of human flourishing associated with living a good life and is often characterised by appeals to emancipation, broadening and growth, whereas the other processes such as training and indoctrination, refer to a specialisation, narrowing or even an oppressive form of conditioning involving conformity (Biesta, 2010; Peters, 1966). Therefore, if education is to be possible in our societies, policymakers should discriminate between education and indoctrination so that the sorts of learning and teaching which are promoted might be valuable and appropriate for education. This can be achieved by focussing on a well-developed understanding of *education* which is primarily based upon aspirations for personhood within a politically desirable context such as democracy. That is, education policies ought to promote the sorts of persons which young humans ought to become in order to be able to participate in democratic life (Delors, 1998; Guttmann, 1999; Schostack & Goodson, 2020).

2 Social Efficiency Ideology

When education policies become dominated with 'teaching' and 'learning' rather than with 'education', they can be understood as promoting social efficiency ideology (Magrini, 2014; Webster & Ryan, 2019), sometimes referred to as scientific management (Apple, 2004). This ideology promotes depoliticised understandings of learning and teaching as if they are only technical activities which constitute the main input and output factors in schooling. Its history goes back to the process-product research conducted through the behaviouristic psychology of Thorndike, as he sought to offer policymakers 'scientific' evidence upon which good teaching methods could be identified (Lagemann, 2000). As such, this ideological approach is attractive for managers and bureaucrats who value control and accountability while pursuing efficiencies.

Policymakers who draw upon social efficiency ideology often assert that their policies do not emerge from political or ideological perspectives but are instead based upon evidence-based research, best practices and even science. For example, under the Bush administration the *No Child Left Behind* document makes claims to a body of evidence which is scientifically based, 110 times. Hammersley (2004, p. 134) argues that what appears to be politically neutral and 'hard' evidence is often used rhetorically to 'discredit opposition' because evidence is asserted as being of a 'scientific' nature, thereby portraying that policies are founded upon 'proof' (Pring, 2004a). Therefore the policies ought to be accepted as incontestable.

However, Whitty (2016, p. 46) claims that 'so-called "evidence-informed" policy is not what university-based researchers would recognise as research'. Indeed, as academics, Hodkinson and Smith (2004, p. 157) report 'there are few "safe" scientific truths about learning that have been currently produced'. Referencing teacher education in England as an example, Whitty (2016, p. 32) contends that 'there is much to suggest that the Conservative led Coalition Government's policy on teacher education was ideologically driven rather than informed by evidence about the quality of training'. He therefore concludes that policymakers tend to cherry-pick only the evidence which substantiates their own ideological position, rather than harbour any genuine interest in the more rigorous sorts of research which pertain to education. This is partly demonstrated in the reference materials listed in policies which substantially use other government departments' reports and publications rather than academic sources.

Policies which focus on learning and teaching rather than on education, can therefore be understood to be primarily driven by the 'politics of learning'. This is exercised by governing elites because learning and teaching lend themselves more readily to what Schostack and Goodson (2020, p. 28) refer to as an 'econocracy' where 'everything is measurable'. This is in contrast to education which by its very nature is not easily measurable (Stolz & Webster, 2020). Blake et al. (2000) identify that such an ideological approach is in fact nihilistic because it denies the possibility of valuing life and educative growth in terms which do not conform to economic efficiency. Indeed the ideals of efficiency and effectiveness are rather empty in terms of value and worthwhileness, because they can only reference themselves in terms of any 'good'. That is, things are considered 'good' only if they are efficient and effective. To address such concerns policymakers must go beyond social efficiency ideology to engage with what it might mean to *be* living a good life as educated people?

3 The Ontological Impact

The *being* or ontology of students, is affected by the types of experiences they undergo while learning, whether such learning experiences are educative, non-educative (e.g. training) or mis-educative (e.g. indoctrination). According to Pring (2004a, p. 206), '[t]o educate is to develop the capacity to think, to value, to understand, to reason, to appreciate' which must necessarily involve 'intentions, motives and thoughts'. Therefore, the knowledge which is learned is not an 'objective' commodity deposited into the heads of students, but is acquired through experiences which have some effect on their *being* including attitudes, interests and desires. This connection between learning and the *being* or character of students has been pointed out with dire warnings by both Dewey and Freire. For example, Dewey (2008a, p. 29) claims that '[p]erhaps the greatest of all pedagogical fallacies is the notion that a person learns only the particular thing he [sic] is studying at the time. Collateral learning is the way of formation of enduring attitudes, of likes and dislikes, may be and often is much more

important'. Consequently, he was critical of learning experiences in the traditional manner, which, while resulting in the acquisition of knowledge, nevertheless tended to cause students to become passive, docile, scatterbrained and to lose their sense of inquisitiveness and curiosity about the subject or even with life in general.

Similarly, Freire (2000) through his banking concept, warned against students developing passive characters by adopting an oppressed consciousness by simply accepting the notion that inert, official knowledge is to be 'banked' or deposited into their minds. He used the term 'dehumanisation' to describe the loss of individual intentionality, interest and purpose, as students surrender themselves to authoritative curricula and systems. What both of these educators warned against was the sorts of learning experiences which lead to the loss of an interested and curious spirit of inquiry. Dewey (2008a, p. 11) describes such learning experiences as 'miseducative' to remind us that while 'all genuine education comes about through experience [this] does not mean that all [learning] experiences are genuinely or equally educative'. This is why it is vitally important for policies to focus on 'education' rather than on only efficiency or effective learning.

Acknowledging the inescapable ontological impact that learning experiences have, Peters (1966) offers two main criteria for determining whether these can be understood as offering educational value or not. The first criterion involves students developing an understanding of *why*, and the second involves them coming to *care* about such things. This coming to care reflects a desirable ontological impact of educative learning. That is, through educative learning 'a person cares about and is interested in what is worthwhile as well as being knowledgeable about and in command of such things' (Peters, 1966, p. 37). This ontological aspect is argued by Barnett, like Dewey before him, to be more important for education than the acquisition of knowledge. This is because he argues that under any ideological approach, there is always a certain 'ontological commitment' which prioritises ontology over epistemology such that it 'provides the frame' for both what content is valued, how it is to be acquired and how this ought to affect the student as a person (Barnett, 2003, p. 55; 2007, p. 70).

Ontological impacts have some recognition in the literature of UNESCO. The preamble to Faure's (1972, p. xix) *Learning to Be*, begins with the aspiration that 'for all of those who want to make the world… a better place… *education* is a capital, universal subject' [my emphasis]. The overall aim of education in this document, written to guide educational policies worldwide, is to promote 'the art of living, loving and working' (Faure, 1972, p. 66) for all people so that they can come to embody the aspirational ideals which are necessary for living well together as a global community. Attempts to separate the various aspects of students into dimensions such as the intellectual, physical, aesthetic, spiritual, etc., for the purposes of specific 'learning' is considered in this report to be a 'mutilation' of personhood. Hence their call to 'learn to *be*' is framed within a philosophical understanding that education involves a holistic conception of humans. The philosophical élan in this publication has carried over to the Delors (1998) report to UNESCO titled *Learning: The Treasure Within* as represented by the fourth pillar of learning—learning to be. This presents an understanding of human persons in a holistic and socially connected manner.

Unfortunately, their emphasis upon 'learning' rather than upon 'education' has made it difficult to retain the ontological focus in other more nationally based policies.

Clearly 'learning' has been reduced to measurable outcomes while 'education' focusses upon both processes and end purposes *together*. Such end purposes pertain to aspirational ideals for a good life and for public living in general. While learning and teaching can be relevant for desirable endeavours (e.g. education) and undesirable ones (e.g. indoctrination) because they are only processes without intrinsic end purposes, education has end purposes which are inherently moral and political. These centre on what it means to be human and what it means to live a good life with others. Policies which promote education must have clear aspirational aims pertaining to what sorts of persons students ought to become. This shall be the focus on the following section.

4 Rehumanising Policy

Education policies ought to clearly emphasise ontological aims over and above epistemological ones. That is, in order for policies to be recognised as offering *educational* guidance, they ought to emphasise what it means to *be* educated humans above the skills, capabilities and qualifications which graduates may *have*. This is not considered to be an 'add on' to educational endeavours but rather is contended that emphasising ontology or character is central to education. Dewey (1977, p. 267) has argued that 'the ultimate purpose of *all* education is character-forming' [my emphasis] although the development of knowledge and employment-related skills still have importance. This requires a holistic understanding of human persons and, in particular, educated human persons.

One way that policymakers can address this is through Pring's (2004b, p. 37) 'moral seriousness' which is 'a matter of *seriousness* in thinking about what is worth living for…' Reflecting the second criterion of education as advanced by Peters which is coming to *care*, Pring (2004b, p. 87) argues that it is the actual *interests* of the students 'which ought to be educated'. Accentuating these interests more existentially perhaps, is Biesta who argues that students' desires ought to be educated. This entails people giving serious consideration as to 'whether what we desire is actually desirable?' (Biesta, 2017, p.16). By drawing upon Levinas, Biesta (2017, p. 49) claims that the desires which we ought to be moved by, which are simultaneously individual and social goods, are not selfish or 'egological'.

Collectively, interests, desires and care, can be understood as our *will* (Barnett, 2007; Frankl, 1988), *erōs* (Alexander, 2013; Garrison, 2010) or *passion*, which all pertain to personal identity. For example, Garrison (2010, p. xiii) considers that 'we become what we love. Our destiny is in our desires' and therefore 'the education of *erōs*' ought to be 'the supreme aim of education'. Similarly, Alexander (2013, p. 394) claims that '[h]uman existence… is driven by a desire, an Eros, to experience life with a sense of meaning and value' and when 'Eros engages culture as education… it transforms into care… Eros become *agapē*'. He continues to explore how both *erōs*

and *agapē* are united together in love which is wholehearted, devoted and single-minded, so that through education, people, as social beings, might flourish together with the environment in a passionate care towards all that we know. Through such an education, people become more caring and loving in their way-of-being or character.

Policymakers ought to make clear the sort of character which ought to be pursued through their policies. The ultimate aim of education is to enable each individual to flourish as a member of a social group, coming to understand one's place in the world, desiring to participate in the world to promote the 'good' for oneself and the social and environmental 'public good'. Such growth of personhood does not only consist in cognitive understanding but also includes a holistic appreciation, care committed moral conviction which involves a desire to do 'good'.

This conviction and passionate desire is described by various educators such as Dewey, Garrison and Barnett, as pertaining to one's spirit—not in a reified sense of possessing an essence but rather the manner of how we are *moved*. One's spirit is the 'moving force' or energy within one's *being*, providing purpose and direction to one's life and a 'why' for being moral (Webster, 2009). People conduct themselves according to what they desire, and when considered morally it is not just their actions which are considered but also their *being*. Dewey (2008b, p. 274) describes moral deliberation 'as making a difference in the *self*, as determining what one will *be*'. This kind of deliberation does not just involve enhancing logic and rationality but it relates directly to character which Dewey describes as being integrated via a spiritual attitude.

5 Conclusion

It has been argued in this chapter that educational policies ought to focus upon education rather than only on teaching and learning. This is because teaching and learning lend themselves too readily to the ideology of social efficiency which can actually encourage activities to work in directions quite different to education, such as towards training or indoctrination. In order to promote education, it is argued that policies ought to be rehumanised by encouraging philosophical aims of personhood to be pursued, which embrace moral, political and spiritual ideals. This will assist all readers of such policies to remain cognisant as to the aspirational ideals for the betterment of humanity and which help to make life worth living.

References

Alexander, T. M. (2013). *The human Eros*.: Fordham University Press.
Apple, M. W. (2004). *Ideology and curriculum* (3rd ed.). RoutledgeFalmer.
Barnett, R. (2003). *Beyond all reason.* SRHE & Open University Press.
Barnett, R. (2007). *A will to learn.* Open University Press.
Biesta, G. J. J. (2010) *Good education in an age of measurement*. Paradigm.
Biesta, G. J. J. (2017). *The rediscovery of teaching*. Routheldge.

Blake, N., Smeyers, P., Smith, R., & Standish, P. (2000). *Education in an age of nihilism.* RoutledgeFalmer.
Delors, J. (1998). *Learning: The treasure within.* UNIESCO Publishing.
Dewey, J. (1977). Moral principles in education. In J. A. Boydston (Ed.), *John Dewey the middle works Vol. 4: 1907–1909*, (pp. 265–292). Southern Illinois University Press.
Dewey, J. (2008a). Experience and education. In J. A. Boydston (Ed.), *John Dewey the later works Vol. 13: 1938–1939* (pp. 1–62). Southern Illinois University Press.
Dewey, J. (2008b). Ethics. In J. A. Boydston (Ed.), *John Dewey the later works Vol. 7: 1932* (pp. 1–462). Southern Illinois University Press.
Faure, E. (1972). *Learning to be*. UNESCO.
Frankl, V. E. (1988). *The will to meaning*. Plume.
Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Continuum.
Garrison, J. (2010). *Dewey and Eros*. Information Age Publishing.
Guttmann, A. (1999). *Democratic education.* Princeton University Press.
Hammersley, M. (2004). Some questions about evidence-based practice in education. In G. Thomas & R. Pring (Eds.), *Evidence-based practice in education* (pp. 133–149). Open University Press.
Hodkinson, P., & Smith, J. K. (2004). The relationship between research, policy and practice. In G. Thomas & R. Pring (Eds.), *Evidence-based practice in education* (pp. 150–163). Open University Press.
Lagemann, E. C. (2000). *An elusive science.* University of Chicago Press.
Magrini, J. M. (2014). *Social efficiency and instrumentalism in education.* Routledge.
Peters, R. S. (1966). *Ethics and education.* George Allen & Unwin.
Pring, R. (2004). Conclusion: Evidence-based policy and practice. In G. Thomas & R. Pring (Eds.), *Evidence-based practice in education* (pp. 201–212). Open University Press.
Pring, R. (2004). *Philosophy of education.* Continuum.
Schostack, J., & Goodson, I. (2020). *Democracy, education and research.* Routledge.
Stolz, S. A., & Webster, R. S. (Eds.). (2020). *Measuring up in education.* Routledge.
Webster, R. S. (2009). *Educating for meaningful lives*. Sense Publishers.
Webster, R. S., & Ryan, A. (2019). *Understanding curriculum: The Australian context* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
Whitty, G. (2016). *Research and policy in education.* IOE Press.

R. Scott Webster is Associate Professor at the School of Education at Deakin University in Melbourne. He is the coordinator for the Curriculum and Pedagogy Research group and has interests in educational theory, philosophy of education, curriculum theory, pedagogy, critical thinking and spirituality. He has written and contributed to various articles, chapters, and books including *Educating for Meaningful Lives* (2009), *Understanding Curriculum: The Australian Perspective* (2019), *Theory and Philosophy in Educational Research* (2018), *Rethinking Reflection and Ethics for Teachers* (2019), and *Education as Confronting Self and Society* (forthcoming).

Democracy

Exploring a Canvas for Coexistence: A Role for Education in India

Meenakshi Gopinath

Abstract The need for education to play an effective role in nurturing Cultures of Peace is today internationally acknowledged. It is also seen as an indispensable element in processes of conflict transformation. In multi-ethnic and multi-religious societies like India, that are fractured along the fault lines of class, caste, region, religion and gender, the transformatory potential of education to play a peace sustaining role is severely constrained. The recrudescence of populism and jingoistic nationalism has deepened divisions, accentuated communal and sectarian violence and reinforced prejudice. This paper argues that for Indian education to provide effective antidotes to quell these tendencies and "demilitarize" the mind, it has to engage with a creative reclaiming of the "secular" project embedded in the spirit of the Indian constitution. It also needs to employ the tools of creative thinking, dialogue, civic participation, community engagement and non-violent action. It must continuously push the envelope on the theory and practice of democracy—as not merely political but also cultural engagement. It is through the interrogation of pedagogical frames that transmit prejudice and intolerance, that education can provide the conceptual alphabets to build a vocabulary of peace and fulfil its promise as a transformatory force.

"*Sa Vidya ya Vimiktaye"* a motto in Sanskrit, is proudly displayed in several institutions of learning in India—a country with extant traditions of knowledge creation and cultures of integral learning. Briefly translated, the motto means "that alone is knowledge which leads to liberation". Yet, whether Indian education today lives by this transformatory exhortation is seriously open to question.

The domain of education in India, today, as a possible liberatory space faces severe challenges from three distinct but inter-related trends in its society and polity. First, the threat to secular spaces from different fundamentalisms; second, the growing legitimacy of a culture of militarism and third, the dislocations and increasing inequities wrought by neo-liberal policies that diminish the role of the State as the provider of quality public education.

M. Gopinath (✉)
Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace (WISCOMP), New Delhi, India

R. S. Webster et al. (eds.), *Humanizing Education in the 3rd Millennium*,
SpringerBriefs in Education, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-1205-4_9

1 The Nationalist Vision and Composite Culture

The visionaries of the Indian national movement saw education as an effective instrument for the transformation of the consciousness of an enslaved people, to equip them to energize the anti-colonial struggle. Three men, Gandhi, Tagore and Nehru—while holding substantially different views—helped to shape the nationalist discourse on education most decisively. Their positions on ethics, morality, culture and modernity were to provide the conceptual alphabets within which the vocabulary of education for a "new" India was initially constructed.

However, despite differences of emphases, at root these men shared a remarkable commonality in their commitment to preserving what came to be described as the "composite culture" of India, and its ability to draw upon and creatively negotiate diverse influences from the cultures and religions of the world without—to use Gandhi's phrase—being "swept off one's feet by any one of them".

Tagore, Gandhi and Nehru, represent, as Khilnani (2002) has eloquently argued, "an important moment in the making of a tradition of public reason—the creation of an intellectual space which allowed morals and ethics, and the political choices these entailed, to be debated, revised and decided upon. At its best moments, the arguments and ideas generated quite exceeded the bounds of nationalism or nationalist thought. They engaged with the problem of how to construe the relation between political power and the presence of multiple faiths. How can a moral and integrated life be lived under modern conditions—where political power is concentrated in the state, but where beliefs are multiple and diverse across society?" What set Tagore and Gandhi apart from other Indians who wished to root public morals in religion was their recognition that no religion taken in its traditional sense could serve as a basis of a public morality. So Gandhi's intellectual itinerary involved "a strenuous dismantling and reassembly of religious traditions". By drawing on Islam, Christianity and the folk traditions of Hindu devotion, Khilnani argues, Gandhi engaged in a spiritual recovery that was respectful of existing religious faiths but also used them as a reservoir for re-articulation. Tagore's "poet's religion" reflected a humanist faith in the capacities of man and a belief in the transcendent powers of art and aesthetics.

Nehru's vision was closer to Tagore's and reflected deep respect for the traditions of scientific enquiry, trying simultaneously to develop a morality without the fallback to religion. The violence of the Partition of India had made him acutely conscious of the challenge that sectarian beliefs could pose to a fledgling democratic polity.

Tagore's initiatives at *Shanti Niketan*, the university he founded, were designed to create an Indian who would become the social conscience and cultural leader of that age. Gandhi's *Nai Talim* was a method of learning to interrogate enslavement and servitude. His philosophy of Basic Education was formulated as a practical critique of colonial education intended to integrate children's learning of different subjects with training in a manual craft. Nehru envisioned education as a humanizing, progressive and essentially liberal undertaking. These broadly provided the strands with which the educational project in post-independent India sought to weave its trajectory (Bhattacharya, 1998).

2 History and Its Discontents

In the agenda followed by the Indian state after independence, particularly from the1960s, education was harnessed to the nation-building project. Among other developments, the *mantra* of "Unity in Diversity" informed its "National Mainstream" and was a widely shared imperative. The teaching of history in schools was expected to serve as a vital ingredient of this mission, and it became especially from the late 1970s, a contested political terrain.

The influential Kothari Commission Report on Education of the mid-1960s articulated a position in which a national perspective was assumed to be synonymous with a modern perspective. The responsibility to produce model textbooks to buttress this modernist orientation fell on the National Centre for Educational Research & Training (NCERT) set up in 1961. It drew to its fold eminent scholars and historians, mostly of the political Left, leaving a profound impact on Indian historiography and later debates. The young nation-state was not particularly inclined to curricula that prioritized the students' freedom to reconstruct knowledge in the context of a local ethos (Kumar, 2001).

During the closing decades of the twentieth century, even as the traditional Right was preparing the popular imagination against official secularism, educational policy came under pressure to accommodate the ideology of religious revivalism. The ascendancy of the Bharatiya Janata Party (the political party of the Hindu Right) to power at the centre in March 1998, witnessed a "legitimized" assertion of the militarist discourse of cultural nationalism. The NCERT textbooks were in the eye of the storm during the period, for their attempts to rewrite history to subvert the saffron (the colour associated with Hindu politics) agenda of the Hindu Right. The saffronization of Education represents an inflection point in a process that interrogates the discourse of secularism in India. With the ouster of the BJP-led government at the polls in 2004, the reins of power shifted to the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance. The National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCFSE), 2000 crafted by the BJP government was revised in an attempt to avowedly better align it with the ideals of equality and justice enshrined in the Indian Constitution. The new document was approved by the Central Advisory Board on Education (CABE) in September 2005. The role of education in building a culture of peace and encouraging students to explore diverse sources of information was foregrounded for the first time (NCF, 2005).

The modernist conception of India, which shaped the Constitution and the choice of its national symbols, cast the idea of the Indian nation primarily as a political and not cultural or civilizational community (Parekh, 2003). In this view, India's political identity consists of its commitment to the fundamental principles of justice, liberty, equality, fraternity and the dignity of the individual—all of which were new to the country and somewhat at odds with its cultural and social practices. While it served as an inspiring idea for the imperatives of forging an independent nation-state out of a multiplicity of identities, it paid little attention to their internal diversities or their creative historical interventions, and lacked a coherent notion of the place of religion

in political life (Vajpeyi, 2002). Broadly it underscored the notion of secularism as the equidistance of the state from all religions as opposed to the Western idea of a strict separation of "Church and State". For a deeply religious society like India, its ambivalences proved difficult to navigate. Sizable sections of the Hindu population became increasingly restive with policies of the then ruling Congress Party that were perceived as appeasing minorities, in particular the Muslims who constitute 14.2% of the population of India. It is this anxiety that the forces of *Hindutva* (the political ideology of right-wing Hindu nationalism) capitalized on with startling degrees of success.

The scale of violence targeting ethnic, caste-based, religious and sexual minorities has been on the increase in India. In the second decade of the twenty-first century, higher educational institutes are the new sites where these battles are being fought. The might of the state is used to curb dissent, with student protestors and some faculty in national and state universities being charged with sedition in a manner unprecedented in post-colonial India.

3 "Reform" and Appropriation

The growth of Islamic Madrasas with generous funds received from the Middle East and the reported funding of Christian Missionary institutions by Western sources provided the justification for moves to effect changes in curriculum as with the laws on religious conversion. Christian Missionaries were seen as an added threat since they were able to provide education of quality throughout the country. The inability of many government schools to match their standards proved an irritant. In addition, these schools provided economic and educational opportunities to hitherto disenfranchised *Dalits* (lower castes) and other marginalized groups, many of whom embraced Christianity in the process (Gopinath, 2001).

A controversy over the so called "*Talibanization*" of education erupted over the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) edict of October 25, 2001, to delete certain sections from well-known prescribed textbooks. Coming in the wake of a growing culture of censorship, be it of Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* or Hussain's paintings, films and posters, it reflected a disconcerting trend of intolerance impacting the learning and socialization of future citizens.

In the school settings of post-colonial societies like India, teaching uses highly visible texts which carry the status of "prescribed" and mandatory reading. Though terms like "curriculum" are in use, in practice, it is the prescribed textbook which acts as the de facto curriculum, and remains the only reliable indicator of what is required for the examination. The textbook's status as canon consequently has far greater impact on the shaping of consciousness than is acknowledged. Textbooks have, for example, been used extensively as a tool for religious instruction and "moral" and "value" education, in both Muslim denominational schools and also by the Vidya

Bharati run schools.[1] These schools invariably fall back on literature prepared by the *Vidya Bharti* Network or the *Markazi Maktaba Islami*. Similarly, Christian, Sikh and other religious minorities also prepare textbooks to advance their distinctive cultural and value systems.

Effectively, outside of the State run NCERT system children are being socialized into mindsets that reinforce sectarian identities. A point to note is that religious minorities in India are constitutionally permitted to establish educational institutions and avail special benefits such as relaxations in rules of admission and governance structures. This has added to majority grievance and heightened its sense of "reverse" discrimination.

Yet even mainstream schools have not been particularly effective in quelling non-inclusive bias and practice. Evidence suggests that they have either been unwilling or unable to offer an effective alternative orientation to contain prejudice. Textbooks prescribed by even "secular" central and state education boards in the country have been known to communicate religious, caste and gender prejudice (Setalvad, 1999). It is easy to see how this can potentially block the chances of intra- and inter-community dialogue and inhibit reconciliation in socially and politically fractured spaces.

The fact that children and especially their access to education are under assault in areas of conflict, the world over is not pure coincidence. We have witnessed their manifestations in Rwanda, Sri Lanka, Northern Ireland, South Africa, Kosovo, Serbia, Israel and Turkey among others. In countries like India where schisms exist along fault lines of class, caste and religion, along a continuum of quotidian violence, effective antidotes to divisive tendencies have to be imaginatively embedded where socialization and education begin.

4 Identity and Pedagogy

The question of whether education in South Asia can become an effective vehicle for building peace between communities and the countries of the region has no easy answers. But some beginnings can be made. Since the teaching of history has been seriously implicated in the reinforcing of negative stereotypes that provoke social conflict, interventions in this sphere are urgently needed. Kumar (2001) has shown, based on extensive studies of curricula in India and Pakistan, for example, that the manner in which the freedom struggle is presented to children helps sustain the hostility between the two countries. "The teaching of History forces a perpetual quarrel about the past in both countries and the biases are carried into inter-community perceptions within each country" (ibid.).

Path breaking initiatives in Northern Ireland, like integrated schools for both Catholic and Protestant children, the *Cultural Heritage* and *Education for Mutual*

[1] *Vidya Bharati* is the apex educational network of organization propounding Hindu Nationalism referred to as **Sangh Parivar**. *Markazi Maktaba Islami* publishes books on Islam in Urdu, Hindi and English.

Understanding programmes, proved highly successful in enlisting education into strategies aimed at transforming the conflict. Similar innovative attempts at educating for peace promoted by UNICEF in war-scarred countries in Burundi, the Republic of Congo, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Lebanon, Liberia, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Sudan, the former Yugoslavia and Sri Lanka, helped to build some bridges (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000).

The early "secular" modernist preoccupations with nation-building in India had very consciously kept discussions on religion outside the parameters of school and university curricula. What makes this a difficult terrain is that in South Asia, faith is a reality that touches millions of people in incomprehensible, sometimes violent ways. More effort is needed to create frames of reference in which the ambivalences of faith can be accommodated. There is a need to distinguish between faith and its perversions. Education about the boundaries of organized religion is crucial to enhance our vigilance of its political misuse.

There is a real opportunity for educational processes and institutions to rigorously analyse the etiology of communal prejudice and violence and persuade young citizens to turn away from them (Vajpeyi, 2002).

5 Educating for Peace: Antidotes and Interventions

To provide ideational antidotes to the militarization of the mind, Indian education must effectively engage in the protection and preservation of democratic cultures of pluralism and inclusivity. This entails processes of cultural and ontological introspection informed by a non-homogenizing, more granular appreciation of Indian realities….. their challenges and possibilities. In this way, educational spaces can ideally provide a fecund context to seed and nurture cultures of peace.

The need to promote a culture of peace through the curriculum in India finds its first articulation in the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) document of 2005. The NCF of 1988 had equality of education and opportunity as its first concern, and the document of 2000 had education for a cohesive society as its primary focus. The curricular and pedagogic concerns in the NCF 2005 were informed by a respect for pluralism, equality of rights and gender justice (NCERT, 2005). Advocating a partnership between school and community, the document acknowledges the importance of local knowledge traditions and encourages comparative, contextual and non-homogenizing approaches to teaching and learning. It foregrounds education as a tool in the long-term process of building peace, while recognizing "peace" as a process that includes justice and civic responsibility. The document calls for "reorienting" education, emphasizes the nurturing of nonviolent conflict resolution, dialogue skills and respect for human rights. There is, here, a palpable recognition that the exclusion of minority, "local" or less "visible" cultures from schools could adversely affect the motivation to learn among socially and economically marginalized communities who continue to grapple with historical deprivation, isolation and exploitation. Efforts are underway to formalize a new NCF since 2019 with the ruling

BJP receiving a massive mandate to govern the country for a second term. Education is the key to its populist agenda. In light of its current efforts to script a more homogenous, majoritarian notion of "Indian-ness", the role of the State as a possible facilitator of a culture of peace may stand significantly altered.

6 Learning from Conflict

Between the "prescribed texts" and "proscribed discourse" (like the ban imposed by the educational authorities on any discussion in schools of the anti-Sikh riots of 1984, the significant silences on Gandhi's assassination in some recent history textbooks and the valorization of select war heroes and conquests), educational spaces are being nudged into reinforcing monocultures of the mind. A sensitive exploration of the nature of conflicts themselves is integral to an education for emancipation. Education must address the structural causes of conflict (illiteracy, unemployment, ignorance, etc.) on which no consensus exists in society. Insulating learners from the fact of conflict, which is so endemic to our societies, puts brakes on the locomotives for change.

The critical enquiry that is so crucial to the vitality of education is also essential to nurture the pre-dispositions for peace in our societies. Making the world safe for difference involves eschewing structures that enforce a spurious or sterile harmony where richer ambiguities, even tensions exist. A conflict resolution educator's search for common ground involves recognizing differences while building on commonalities.

7 Developing Critical Thinkers

What goes on in most post-colonial societies in the name of learning is what Paulo Freire describes as "the banking concept of education" whereby with the teacher as narrator, education becomes an act of "depositing" information that students "store" and are expected to accurately remember and recall. This reinforces the hierarchy of authority and negates education as a process of collaborative enquiry (Freire, 1970). The retrieval of secular spaces demands a renewed commitment to developing critical thinkers. Critical thinking needs imagination where students and teachers practise anticipating a new social reality. It involves creating a discourse of ethics and hope on the one hand, and making the ongoing struggle for democratic public spheres both in and outside schools and universities, on the other, an important focus of education.

For a variety of reasons, institutes of higher learning and research in India have abdicated their roles as sites for the "dissenting tradition". Are universities in their attempt to adapt to the changing demands of the State and the Market promoting a new anti-intellectualism and turning into "gentle panopticons"? If so, it is in inventing alternative possibilities of engagement around active coexistence and cultures of

peace that the university becomes central—particularly as a form of knowledge system that is nurturing a Learning Commons that transcends cartographic anxieties and processes of "othering".

8 Dialogue as Engagement

An urgent need exists for the creation of traditions of democratic dialogue within educational spaces. Post-colonial educational practices in India had placed premium on the "debate" as a highly valued aspect of intellectual reasoning. Even today, the winning of trophies and awards for the activity of "debating" is accorded pride of place in most schools, colleges and universities. The traditional communicative *goshti* (coming together to discuss) and *samvaad* (dialogue) have been replaced by the more assertive *vad-vivaad* (debate) and rhetorical mastery. The importance of dialogue cannot be stressed enough. Genuine listening and careful speaking are prerequisites for societies that seek to nurture inclusivity and diversity, and could provide the panacea for the crisis of civility that affects public spaces. The strengthening of inter-ethnic dialogue and cooperation is an urgent task today. Studies have shown with a weight of statistical evidence that the likelihood of inter-community violent conflict in cities and towns in India is inversely proportional to the extent that Hindus and Muslims, for example, have previously engaged in shared civic institutions and activities (Varshney, 2002).

The "internal disarmament" and "demilitarization of the mind" necessary for genuine dialogue requires the suspension of certitudes and an openness to "unsettling" interrogations. The community of teachers in a multi-ethnic, multi-religious society like India needs training in active listening and dialogic methods of pedagogy to transmit the value of nonviolent techniques as integral to civic education. This could go a long way in breaking stereotypes and mental strait jackets.

At one level, this involves questioning the comforting shibboleths we live by, reflective of Paulo Freire's elucidation that education is politics and politics has educability (Freire, 1970). It also involves making conscious choices about the aims of pedagogy. It is a call to deconstruct creatively the illusions of our epoch; not to provide a simple map of the world as a "stable" universe where identities are unproblematic (Mehta, 2002).

Can Indian education today offer effective responses to the "monotheism of consciousness" that threatens to invade life in the global village? Can context-sensitivity that Ramanujan (1995) described as the guiding paradigm of the classical Indian approach to grammar, time and space, music, healing and rules of behaviour—once again inform its systems of meaning? Can the emphasis on interdependent roles and spaces—once characteristic of community coexistence across groupings and boundaries—once again enter the world of learning?

These and related questions must engage practitioners who work to realize the full potential of education as a transformative enterprise that seeks to align pluralism and peace. How India's New Education Policy (NEP) of 2020 faces up to these challenges

and provides effective antidotes to the monocultures of the mind that foment conflict and violence, will be the litmus test of its democratic mandate.

Maria Montessori's famous exhortation that "establishing lasting peace is the work of education….all politics can do is keep us out of war", comes home to us today—compelling and clear.

References

Bhattacharya, S. (Ed.). (1998). *The contested terrain: Perspectives on education in India.* New Delhi.

Bush, K. D., & Saltarelli, D. (Ed.). (2000). *The two faces of education in ethnic conflict***.** UNICEF Innocenti Insight, Florence.

Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. The Continuum International Publishing Group Ltd.

Gopinath, M. (2001). *Trenches, boundaries, spaces.* In P. R. Chari (Ed.), *Security and governance in South Asia* (pp. 56–58). Manohar.

Khilnani, S. (2002). *Nehru's Faith, 34th Jawaharlal Memorial Lecture.* New Delhi.

Kumar, K. (2001). *Prejudice & pride* (pp. 239–246). Viking.

Mehta, P. B. (2002). *Philosophy, citizenship and education.* S.M. Luthra Memorial Lectur, New Delhi.

"National Council of Education Research and Training, National Curriculum Framework", NCERT: New Delhi, 2005. Retrieved from: http://www.ncert.nic.in/rightside/links/pdf/framework/english/nf2005.pdf. Accessed on 24 September 2015.

Parekh, B. (2003). *Re-imaging India* (p. 12). Institute of Social Sciences, New Delhi, Annual Lecture.

Ramanujan, A. K. (1995). Is there an Indian way of thinking? *Seminar, 434.*

Setalvad, T. (1999, October). How textbooks teach prejudice. *Communalism Combat*, 1–10.

Vajpeyi, A. (2002). Teaching against communalism. *Economic & Political Weekly*, 5093–5097.

Varshney, A. (2002). *Ethnic conflict and civil life*. Oxford University Press.

Meenakshi Gopinath is an educationist and currently serves as Founder-Director of Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace (WISCOMP), an initiative of the Foundation for Universal Responsibility, that promotes the leadership of South Asian women in the areas of peace, international affairs and regional cooperation. She is also Principal Emerita of Lady Shri Ram College, New Delhi and Chair, Board of Governors, Center for Policy Research, New Delhi. A member of multi-track peace initiatives in the South Asian region, Meenakshi's work and publications focus on Gender, Security, Peacebuilding and Education. She has received national and international awards for her work in the field of education

Democratic Education and Epistemic Justice

Krassimir Stojanov

Abstract A democratic society needs an education for democracy, and this education must be in itself just. This is quite obvious, and many authors write about "democratic education" and "educational justice" as both sides of the same coin. However, both "democracy" and "justice" have been rarely linked to the main business of education, namely production and acquiring of academic knowledge. In this chapter, I address this deficit by elaborating on a epistemic concept of democratic and just education. In the first part I argue, following John Dewey, that democracy is not only a form of government, but also (and in first place) a social lifeform, which is characterized by a non-hierarchical diversity. A democratic lifeform, which is focused on education, is distinguished in first place by its epistemic diversity. This diversity is oppressed by what Paulo Freire calls "banking concept of education", which is on stake in the second section. This conception, which still dominates schools worldwide, excludes beliefs, experiences, perspectives, and worldviews of the students who do not belong to a canonized and homogeneous mainstream culture from the cooperative production and acquisition of knowledge in the classroom. I argue that this exclusion could be described with Miranda Fricker as epistemic injustice. In the final section, I share some ideas on how epistemic injustice can be overcome in the classroom.

1 Introduction

At the very beginning of this article, I shall recall two widely accepted points: first, the proper functioning of a democracy presupposes well-educated citizens. Second, a truly democratic society is a just society. One's participation at the democratic process of public deliberation, cooperative decision-making, and collective control of the institutions of the society obviously requires one's acquiring awareness and knowledge about one's own rights, understanding how the institutions function, as well as skills of reasoning and argumentation. On the other hand, the citizens can

K. Stojanov (✉)
University of Eichstaett-Ingolstadt, Eichstätt, Germany
e-mail: Krassimir.Stojanov@ku.de

R. S. Webster et al. (eds.), *Humanizing Education in the 3rd Millennium*,
SpringerBriefs in Education, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-1205-4_10

understand themselves as co-authors of the institutions and the rules of their society—a self-understanding that is a prerequisite of every democracy—only if they view these institutions and rules as just and hence non-oppressive ones.

If we think these two features of a democratic society in their interrelation, we should conclude that this society needs an education for democracy; an education that must be in itself just. After all, schools are institutions with crucial importance for the development and the social life of the citizens, and a society can hardly count as "just" if its schools produce or amplify unfair inequalities, or discriminate against certain students.

This interrelation is indeed obvious, and many authors write about "democratic education" and "educational justice" as both sides of the same coin. But, strangely enough, both "democracy" and "justice" have been rarely linked to the main business of education, namely the production and acquiring of academic knowledge. In most cases, "democratic education" becomes restricted to school policies of students' representation and participation at school's government, and to students' becoming informed and skillful about democratic decision-making. On the other side, "educational justice" is usually focused on issues about fair distribution and re-distribution of educational resources and opportunities, as well as about students' rights, while teaching and learning as the core dimensions of schooling remain largely outside of the scope of that term.

In this chapter, I address this deficit by elaborating on an *epistemic* concept of democratic and just education. In the first part I argue, following John Dewey, that democracy is not only a form of government, but also (and in first place) a social lifeform, which is characterized by a non-hierarchical diversity. A democratic lifeform, which is focused on education, is distinguished in the first place by its *epistemic diversity*. This diversity is oppressed by what Paulo Freire (1996/1970) calls the "banking concept of education", which is discussed in the second section. This conception, which still dominates schools worldwide, excludes beliefs, experiences, perspectives, and worldviews of the students who do not belong to a canonized and homogeneous mainstream culture from the cooperative production and acquirement of knowledge in the classroom. I argue that this exclusion could be described with Miranda Fricker (2007) as epistemic injustice. Epistemic justice that is prerequisite for both democratic and just education can be at best conceptualized *ex negatio*, as the opposite of epistemic justice. In the final section, I will share some ideas on how epistemic justice can be pedagogically achieved in the classroom. These ideas are to a great extent inspired by pedagogical projects that are connected with the Dalai Lama's secular ethics like the "SEE-Learning" project, although I do not discuss these projects explicitly here, for they deserve a systematic reconstruction and evaluation in their own terms; a reconstruction which should be elaborated in a separate paper.

2 Democratic Education as an Epistemic Concept?!

"A democracy is more than a form of government; it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience" (Dewey, 1916, p. 101). This well-known statement from Dewey's "Democracy and Education" marks the birth of a key motif in the contemporary political and educational philosophy, namely the distinction between democracy as a system of political institutions, and democracy as a social lifeform, as a form of everyday interactions between the members of a community. According to this distinction, the political surface of democratic institutions, which formally grant civic rights such as freedom of speech, religious freedom, or fair elections, must remain only an apparently democratic façade, if this surface is not grounded in democratic attitudes and habits of the society members. These attitudes and habits include in first place the motivation and the capability to "[t]he breaking down of those barriers of class, race, and national territory which kept men from perceiving the full import of their activity" (ibid., p. 101). A democratic citizenry is the opposite of a closed and homogeneous community; it is characterized by the open-mindedness of its members, by their inclination and ability to interact with persons who differ from themselves in their origin, cultural background, or system of beliefs. Furthermore, democratic citizens treat their mutual differences and their diversity as a major source of impulses for enrichment of their respective experiences and courses of action, in short—for their personal growth.

This concept of democracy as a diverse and inclusive lifeform leads often to an understanding of democratic education basically as character education, as cultivation of democratic habits of mutual respect and cooperation. As a main tool for this appears to be the establishing of bodies of students' self-government such as students' parliaments, and including the students in practices of collective decision-making with regard to resolution of existing conflicts at the school, using its resources, the design of classrooms, dress codes, etc. The teaching of the norms and the institutions of a democracy within the particular school subject of civic education completes, according to this understanding, the scope of democratic education.[1]

However, democratic education, thus understood as character education plus civic education, is barely linked to the main business of schooling, namely the acquirement of academic knowledge, as it is normally taught in the various disciplines of science, humanities, and arts; disciplines which are not *directly* political in their essence. Thus, it is perfectly possible that a school possesses a well-functioning students' parliament,

[1] An example for this understanding of democratic education is the Resolution of The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the States of the Federal Republic of Germany "Democracy as objective, subject and practice of historical and political education in schools" (see Kulturminister-Konferenz 2018). In this paper that is probably the most important programmatic document for democratic education in Germany there is a lot of talk about a broader inclusion of contents relating to democracy as a form of government and as a "lifestyle" into the school curricula, students' participation at school's government, encouraging students' civic engagement and organizing "democracy days" (ibid., p. 6f.). However, modes of transmission and production of knowledge in school subjects beyond civic education are almost completely out of the scope of the Resolution.

equips the students with plenty of information about the democratic state, initiate them in conflict resolution and collective decision-making, but nevertheless offers a conventional, top-down provision that does not leave much room for the students to express their own pluralistic beliefs and perspectives to the taught content.

To be sure, Dewey himself profoundly addressed the epistemic dimension of education. He emphasized the educational role of scientific knowledge and its social contexts of production and transmission (see ibid., pp. 221–226; 306–329). However, many authors in the field of democratic education, most of whom are more or less explicitly inspired by the educational philosophy of pragmatism tend to overlook its epistemic element—probably because they are blended by its strong focus on everyday experience and social interactions that are not easily linked to academic, trans-contextual knowledge. This is a very significant deficit because widespread practices of transmission of that knowledge sharply contradict the ideal of the breaking down of the barriers between closed groups, and ignore or even suppress the diversity of students' beliefs and perspectives in the classroom. These practices could be subsumed under what Paulo Freire calls "a banking concept of education"—a concept, which is not only undemocratic, but also creates dramatic (epistemic) injustices at schools, as explained below.

3 "Banking Education" as Undemocratic *and* Unjust

Probably nobody described the modes of undemocratic, oppressive teaching better than Paulo Freire did this in his conception of "banking education". According to him, this is a kind of information transfer in the form of "depositing", in which the students are the "depositories" and the teacher is the "depositor" of pieces of fixed and static, ultimately dead knowledge (Freire, 1996/1970), p. 53). This mode of "education" treats the students like empty "containers" which the teacher must fill (ibid., p. 53).

Fill with what? Strictly speaking, not with knowledge, but with mechanic information about facts and norms for adaption to the existing social order, for "[k]knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other" (ibid., p. 53).

In the banking concept of education, the students are excluded from this collaborative production of knowledge, since their own considerations, beliefs, and experiences do not matter at all within this concept. This is particularly true with regard to students from underprivileged, socially or culturally oppressed groups. According to Freire, the teacher who deposits "knowledge" into the heads of the students is one of the oppressors who seek to preserve the existing social order, in which s/he has a privileged status (see ibid., p. 55). Even if one finds the term "oppressors" as too strong, one could hardly dispute the fact that school knowledge canons usually mirror the systems of beliefs and norms of the upper and middle classes as well of the cultural majorities. While these systems might echo the socialization and the family

upbringing of the students who belong to the upper and middle classes, the experiences and the perspectives of the socially and culturally underprivileged remain completely unrepresented in the classroom.

The "banking education" approach might also take place in courses which aim to prepare the students for democratic citizenship. This is the case when the teachers of such courses attempt just to deposit knowledge about democratic institutions, about human and civic rights, about constitutional norms, etc., into the heads of the students. Nevertheless "banking education" is always deeply undemocratic. For it always neglects and even negates the diversity of the students by reducing them to uniform empty containers to be filled with unified "knowledge", and it does not contribute to the breaking down of the barriers of class, or cultural group, but rather cements these barriers.

The model of "banking education" that still dominates the schools worldwide is not only *undemocratic*, but it is also *unjust*. By ignoring the beliefs, the perspectives, and the experiences especially of the students from underprivileged families, this model generates what Miranda Fricker (2007) calls "epistemic injustice".[2]

According to Fricker, epistemic injustice takes two central forms: "testimonial injustice" and "hermeneutical injustice" (ibid., p. 1). While testimonial injustice is characterized by a lack of sensitivity for the specific beliefs and experiences of certain persons, hermeneutical injustice is basically about a structural neglect of the needs and efforts of those individuals to articulate their beliefs and experiences in terms of propositional knowledge.

Testimonial injustice occurs in cases in which credibility is assigned based on who individuals are and not what they (may) know. In an educational context, these are cases in which less credibility is given to students of a lower social and cultural status, although their ability to gain and produce knowledge may be equal to, or even greater than that of middle-class students. So, several empirical surveys from Germany show that teachers regularly evaluate children from immigrant families as being eligible only for low-performance, non-academic secondary schools without a college-preparatory track (see Bernewaser, 2018).The main reason seems to be a pattern of thought that is widespread among school teachers in Germany. According to this pattern, the family socialization and "acculturation" of every child determine his or her learning ability and knowledge-related credibility (see Mannitz & Schiffauer, 2002, pp. 97–100). Thus, not only the level of a child's knowledge but also the "quality" of her culture and socialization are subject to discriminatory evaluation when decisions are made concerning the kind of secondary school the child should attend. In this way, the barriers of class, origin, and cultural background become unbreakable….

This case is a clear example of the lack of what Fricker calls testimonial sensitivity. This is a lack of both empathy to students' beliefs and experiences, and of a respectful readiness to include those beliefs and experiences in the space of shared information and argumentative discussion. As Fricker (2007) emphasizes, not including someone

[2] I developed the following considerations on epistemic injustice first in Stojanov (2018, p. 42f).

in that space means not recognizing him or her as a "knower" and therefore hindering his or her cognitive development (145).

The second form of epistemic injustice, hermeneutical injustice, occurs when disrespect toward the experiences, aspirations, and achievements of certain people is embodied in publicly and educationally validated language. This is the case particularly when there are no publicly recognized and developed concepts capable of adequately articulating the experiences, aspirations, and achievements of members of marginalized groups (Fricker, 2007, pp. 5–7 and 147–152; Kotzee, 2013, pp. 344–345). So, it seems to be the case that in the language that is dominant at the educational institutions in Germany, no concept exists to express the multi-cultural and multi-lingual socialization of students from immigrant families as an educational potential, although translating between different languages and cultural contexts is obviously a valuable achievement that can serve as a basis for producing new and important knowledge. Instead, educational authorities place these students in cultural boxes, thus reducing their distinctive subjectivity to manifestation of a single "foreign culture" which is seen as "deficient" in comparison to Germany's "leading culture" (*Leitkultur*). As some studies suggest, it is very difficult for those students to find verbal means (in the form of publicly recognized concepts) to argue against their own cultural stereotyping and against the neglect of their specific knowledge and abilities in schools (see Mannitz, 2002, pp. 319–320; Mannitz & Schiffauer, 2002, pp. 87–100).

Testimonial and hermeneutical injustices in the classroom cause huge psychological harm to the concerned students: Testimonial injustice makes them objects of moral disrespect, which expresses itself in non-recognition of the students as knowers, in excluding them from the social process of collaborative production of knowledge. In addition, hermeneutical injustice entails a disregard to the particular experiences, perspectives, forms of expression, and potentials of the students. In other words, hermeneutical injustice is characterized by a structural lack of empathy for the students, and by a lack of social esteem for them. As Axel Honneth persuadably shows, it is exactly emotional neglect, moral disrespect, and social disregard, which hinder the development of one's personal autonomy and agency (see Honneth, 1995, p. 129). Since education is basically about that development, treating students with emotional neglect, moral disrespect, and/or social disregard is the deeper and most crucial form of educational injustice (see Stojanov, 2018, p. 42). Accordingly, emotional concern or empathy, moral respect, and social esteem should be seen as the main features of the just treatment of students in the classroom.

The critical question therefore is, how, by which pedagogical measures could a democratic, cooperative production of knowledge in the classroom be designed in accord with the recognized forms of empathy, respect, and social esteem?

4 Main Features of Democratic and just Teaching

For Freire the opposite of the "banking education" is the dialogic problem-posing education. Here the students are no longer "docile listeners", but "critical co-investigators in dialogue with the teacher" (Freire, 1996/1970, p. 62). The role of the teacher is to create "[t]he conditions under which knowledge at the level of the *doxa* is superseded by true knowledge, at the level of the *logos*" (ibid., p. 62).

One can understand this claim in the sense that educative teaching should depart from the "doxas" of the students, that is, from their rather intuitive, unexamined beliefs, and then proceed with the rational, conceptual articulation, modification, and revision of these beliefs through their inclusion in the dialogic practice of reasoning. This should enable the students to critically evaluate existing views and norms, and to resist oppression and indoctrination by developing their own theories about the world, as well as their own ethical commitments.

The first step of addressing the subjective beliefs and experiences of the students in their individuality and diversity requires the recognized form of *empathy*. The subsequent inclusion of these subjective beliefs and experiences in discourses of reasoning and argumentation is a form of *respect* for the students with regard to both their individual points of view, and to their capacity to articulate these points of view in a rational or conceptual way. Finally, encouraging the students to develop their own theories and ethical commitments is a form of *social esteem* for their potential to contribute to the enlargement of the knowledge and of the value horizon of the society.

In short, democratic and epistemically just teaching takes the form of a discourse, within which the intuitive beliefs and everyday experiences of the students are being articulated with academic concepts, and within which all participants experience empathy, respect, and social esteem.

Of course, this is only a very general picture of a democratic and just pedagogy. Much more elaboration (including empirical research) is needed on the question, how could this pedagogy be practically arranged in the classroom, and how educative discourses can be structured. I believe that educational initiatives that are linked to the Dalai Lama's approach of secular ethics, as for example the "SEE-Learning" project, could be very instructive for such an elaboration. Particularly relevant for the further development and the implementation of the conception that I sketched in this paper are the relatively detailed modeling of the interrelations between acquisition of knowledge and personal experience, as well as between self-awareness, interpersonal awareness, and appreciation of interdependence in the "SEE-Learning" concept (see SEE Learning, 2019, pp. 19 and 21f.). However, this concept deserves a systematic exploration and evaluation on its own; an exploration and evaluation, which are beyond the scope of this paper.

5 Conclusion

I have argued in this paper that both "democratic education" and "educational justice" should be related to the core task and domain of schooling, namely the production and the acquisition of academic, conceptually structured knowledge in various disciplines. This demand contradicts a widespread understanding of democratic education and educational justice, according to which "democratic education" is focused on students' participation in schools' self-government and on equipping students with information about democratic institutions and norms, while "educational justice" is limited to questions of distribution and re-distribution of educational resources.

The epistemic kernel of "democratic education" and "educational justice" could be elaborated at best *ex negatio* by first reconstructing the epistemic counterparts of both terms. My claim is that the opposite of "democratic education" is "banking education", and the opposite of "educational justice" is "epistemic injustice" in its major forms of testimonial injustice and hermeneutical injustice. The overcoming of both banking education and epistemic injustice requires the inclusion of the students as partners in the discursive and collaborative production of knowledge in the classroom. This inclusion presupposes the recognition of the diversity and the individuality of students' beliefs, views, and experiences as well as their potential to articulate and transform these beliefs, views, and experiences in a conceptual way. At the end of the day, a democratic and just education means recognizing all students as co-producers of knowledge with their unique perspectives and biographies. This recognition implies treating all students with empathy, respect, and social esteem. I do not think that there is yet a satisfactory answer to the question, by which concrete pedagogical tools and models this treatment could be sustainably implemented and institutionalized in the classroom. Further analytical and empirical research is required to search for genuine answers to this question.

References

Bernewasser, J. (2018). *Gleiche Leistung, schlechtere Note.* https://www.zeit.de/gesellschaft/2018-08/rassismus-schule-metwo-diskriminierung-migrationshintergrund-namen. Accessed 4 February 2020.

Dewey, J. (1916). *Democracy and education: An introduction to the philosophy of education.* The Macmillan Company.

Freire, P. (1996/1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Penguin.

Fricker, M. (2007). *Epistemic injustice: Power & the ethics of knowing.* Oxford University Press.

Honneth, A. (1995). *The struggle for recognition: The moral grammar of social conflicts.* Polity Press.

Kotzee, B. (2013). Educational justice, epistemic justice, and leveling down. *Educational Theory, 63*(4), 331–349.

Kulturminister-Konferenz. (2018). *Democracy as objective, subject and practice of historical and political education in schools.* https://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/Dateien/veroeffentlichungen_beschluesse/2009/2009_03_06-Demokratiebildung-engl.pdf.pdf. Accessed 31 January 2020.

Mannitz, S. (2002). Auffassungen von kultureller Differenz: Identitätsmanagement und diskursive Assimilation. In W. Schiffauer et al. (Eds.), *Staat—Schule—Ethnizität. Politische Sozialisation von Immigrantenkindern in vier europäischen Länder* (pp. 255–320). Waxmann.

Mannitz, S., & Schiffauer, W. (2002). Taxonomien kultureller Differenz: Konstruktionen der Fremdheit. In W. Schiffauer et al. (Eds.), *Staat—Schule—Ethnizität. Politische Sozialisation von Immigrantenkindern in vier europäischen Ländern* (pp. 67–100). Waxmann.

Stojanov, K. (2018). Educational justice and transnational migration. *Journal of Global Ethics, 14*(1), 34–46.

The SEE Learning Companion. (2019). *Social, emotional & ethical learning: Education the heart and mind*. Emory University.

Krassimir Stojanov is Professor and Chair of Philosophy of Education and Educational Theory at the University of Eichstaett-Ingolstadt, Germany. Main topics of his research are educational justice, the concept of Bildung, the Frankfurt school and its educational implications, among others. He is author of *Education, Self-Consciousness, and Social Action. Bildung as a Neo-Hegelian Concept* (Routledge 2018).

Education

The Moral Education Needed Today: Decolonizing Childhood and Reconnecting Children

Darcia Narvaez

Abstract The human psyche has been colonized by existing industrialized-corporate-military-economic powers that push us away from connection. Today in high income nations like the USA, children grow up unnested and disconnected, not only from other people but from the natural world. Without nested companionship, children grow without the deep social bonding and nature connection characteristic of our ancestors. Instead, children learn to resonate with archetypal forms of abandonment, growing up dysregulated and disconnected, becoming more self-protective than open-minded or openhearted, unlike the adults from societies where our evolved nest is provided. Because our species-typical developmental system or nest is denied for most children, they grow up anxious, seeking remedies in addictions, including control or addictions. Virtue development is simultaneously thwarted. Many children in the USA arrive at school after a toxically stressful childhood with dysregulated neurobiologies (e.g., overreactive stress response) and underdeveloped sociality. Educators can help meet students' needs for calmness, belonging, and connection by mimicking our ancestral context for raising healthy and happy children. In our ancestral context, humans are lovers of the earth, beauty and wholeness. Getting back to respect the other-than-humans is critical for ecological health. Ideas and efforts to educate for reconnection to nature are spreading.

1 The Setting

Civilization likes to tout itself on solving longstanding human problems (e.g., Pinker, 2011). However, knowledge of our deep history shows the opposite to be true. Civilization has brought about declining health, epidemics, war, slavery, colonization, species extermination—all problems that continue to plague the world (Wells, 2010). For some millennia, grain-dependent societies have decimated their land base, undermined the balance of local ecologies, and claimed the lands of others, enslaving or

D. Narvaez (✉)
University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN, USA
e-mail: dnarvaez@nd.edu

R. S. Webster et al. (eds.), *Humanizing Education in the 3rd Millennium*,
SpringerBriefs in Education, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-1205-4_11

destroying anything in the way (Zerzan, 2018). Although the Chinese and others traveled the world long before, when Europeans developed technologies for successful marine navigation, they went out to colonize the world, eliminating what they did not recognize or honor (Turner, 1994). Sanctioned by the Doctrine of Discovery and the Law of Corporations (Kyd, 1793), the hegemonic attitude toward the rest of the world continues today among high-income countries and their global institutions promoting capital over every other value (e.g., World Trade Organization; Wallach & Woodall, 2004). Like capitalism earlier, neoliberalism has been forced on the globe, accompanied by vices turned into virtues and rewarded: dishonesty, greed, envy, lust, pettiness, vulgarity, cruelty (Mueller, 2002), creating vast material inequality, and inequality in human well-being (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2011). An extraction and consumerist ideology requires a disconnection from the earth community to dominate, control, and exterminate the unwanted, thwarting evolution's "design" of a diversity of species, "endless forms most beautiful" (Darwin, 1859). Instead, the dominant culture seeks to standardize and homogenize human beings along with everything else, eliminating the biocultural diversity of the planet's evolutionary history (Zerzan, 2018). The dominating powers have brought about the "death of birth" and the sixth mass extinction, as argued by Wilson (1992) and Kolbert (2014). And so, because of a shifted baseline about what is normal and an expectation of "progress" (Narvaez, 2019c), we are at the brink of planetary disaster for ours and many other species.

2 The Human Cost

The human psyche has been colonized by existing industrialized-corporate-military-economic powers though the initial domestication of the human spirit which may have begun with settled agriculture and the enslavement of weed species (particular grains, domesticable animals) (Martin, 1992, 1999). Most humans resisted domestication for most of human history (Zerzan, 2018). However, the relentless robbery of the commons over millennia by elites (Bollier, 2014; Polanyi, 2001) and forced human enslavement as part of civilization's need for labor began a vast colonization of human spirit that we experience today, furthered by industrialization—which instigated the perception of human beings as machines, and extended the ravaging capitalism of today (Moore, 2015).

The misunderstanding extends to humanity's place on the earth. In recent centuries and especially among industrialized nations, assumptions about human nature, human beingness, and human development are narrowly anthropocentric. The rest of the earth, the other-than-human, is perceived as only a stage for human activity (Kohák, 2000) rather than a web of relationships among persons, only some of whom are human (Harvey, 2017). In the dominant paradigm from the West, humans are perceived to be more like machines than relational creatures with spirits and insight-consciousness (Bohm, 1994). Morality too has become disembodied and

often disconnected as intellect and reasoning are emphasized over emotion and intuition development, relational capacities, communal imagination, and holistic virtue (Narvaez, 2016).

But civilization is not our original heritage. What is typically ignored is that the human genus has been around for 6 million years and the species homo for about 2 million years. For 99 percent of our existence, humans lived as small-band hunter gatherers, still in existence with members numbering from 5 to 50 (Fry, 2006). These societies lived in "immediate-return" economies where collected or hunted food was consumed right away. These people moved periodically along well-tread migratory routes, shifted in and out of collectives at will, and lived sustainably or perished. Several of these groups have been around for 100,000–150,000 years (Lee & Daly, 2005; Suzman, 2017), living largely peacefully and durably (Fry, 2013). Importantly, these societies provide our species-typical child raising approach, as nested and connected members of the earth community, which may be necessary to reverse the planetary damage underway.

3 Child Raising

For some time, civilizations have moved away from our species-typical way of growing optimal human beings. Babies arrive very immature so the species evolved intensive caregiving in early life (the evolved developmental niche or nest; EDN; Narvaez, 2014),[1] when neurobiological systems are highly immature and require extensive support for proper development (e.g., Narvaez, 2018; Narvaez et al., 2013; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). As a result, we are "biosocial becomings" (Ingold, 2013) and self-organize around our experiences, resonating with the states and overtures of our caregivers (Trevarthen, 2001). Civilization has degraded its provision of the EDN, ignoring or minimizing our species' basic needs, shifting human nature toward self-protectionism (Narvaez, 2016, 2019a, 2019b, 2019d, 2019e).

Without nested companionship, children grow without the deep social bonding and nature connection characteristic of our ancestors. Instead, children learn to resonate with archetypal forms of abandonment, growing up dysregulated and disconnected, becoming more self-protective than open-minded or openhearted, unlike the adults from societies where the EDN is provided (Ingold, 2005; Konner, 2005; Narvaez, 2014). Thus, instead of helping young children grow and develop their evolved inner guidance system with community support, the dominant industrialized cultures have engineered childhood away from growing the inner compass, instilling fear

[1] The Evolved Developmental Niche (EDN) for human beings is only slightly different from their social mammalian line's developmental system, which emerged between 20 and 40 million years ago. Humanity's EDN includes soothing perinatal experiences, breastfeeding for several years, and throughout childhood: responsive relationships including with a set of alloparents, affectionate touch, positive climate, self-directed play, and nature connection (Hewlett & Lamb, 2005; Narvaez, 2014).

and anxiety, altering the course of children's development and requiring external sanctions to control the dysregulated persons that result.

Worldview is affected by the lack of the EDN (Narvaez, 2019). The multigenerational experience of dysregulated individuals influences the perceptions of human nature. Whereas in societies that provide the EDN human nature is presumed basically good and an ongoing development throughout life (Sahlins, 2008), EDN-degraded societies assume that the dysregulated individuals they produce are representative of human nature generally (e.g., Hobbes, 1651/2010). They often fail to understand that in the absence of companionship (EDN) care, humans become destructive (Clark, 1990). Children's lives have been twisted away from species-normal experiences to those that foster peonage of empire. We take this for granted now. We make children and expectant mothers afraid and undermine their bonding and relational trust. Children's temperament and personalities form around self-protection. We force everyone to comply with the system or be punished. No other animal abuses its offspring with punishments and coercions or engineers their offspring as do hierarchical human societies.

Significantly, children are no longer given role models of optimal human functioning with all capacities developed (and instead, in the USA, most media role models are violent). The experiences and narratives adults provide have become very narrow and derisive of anything outside of dominating and consuming a materialistic, manifest world. Children are surrounded by anthropocentric role models aimed at achievement and material gain rather than facilitating bio-communities to flourish. In the deadening prison, that is civilized society today, children spend their time from a young age in front of screens (Turkle, 2017). This draws children away from their own center and makes them ever dependent on outside stimulation and direction. The way humans are bio-socially constructed has worsened with the development of media that interferes with young children's brain and social development as they become far more attached to cell phones rather than to faces and face-to-face games. In this process, individuals grow up with little sense of freedom, autonomy and wholeness.

Children are self-organizing, meaning makers from what they experience and as social mammals evolved to expect a highly supportive developmental system (Narvaez, 2014). Our children and the adults they become have been signaling that things are not right for generations. But there is no way to fix the current crises with more of the same, with manipulations and fixes of disordered children and adults. Instead, we must return to our heritages of honoring children, providing the evolved nest to all, ensuring that everyone's basic needs are met. The solution is to return to the sustainable ways—attitudes, skills, perception, worldview—of our sustainable ancestors. To do this, we must decolonize and reconnect our children.

4 Moral Education as Reconnecting Children

Getting along with others, including other–than-humans, cooperatively was a key adaptation of our ancestors and fundamental to virtue (Narvaez et al., 2019). But cooperation has not been considered necessary to foster through modern education where the focus has been largely on developing cognitive faculties, often at the expense of affective, intuitive, creative, and cooperative sensibilities (though see recent moves in the USA toward social and emotional learning [SEL] programming in schools; e.g., Elias et al., 2016).

Though we are innately prepared for cooperation, many of its skills must be fostered by supportive experience—which the EDN provides in early life as layers of neurobiological systems are shaped for life, through epigenetics and other mechanisms (Narvaez, 2012). If the postnatal period is socially stressful and poorly responsive, the neurobiological structures of mature personhood will be foundationally undermined (Narvaez, 2014). The gaps in foundational capacities are initially masked but emerge later when other layers meant to be built on top of earlier layers reveal the weak or nonexistent "floors below" (Knudsen, 2004). Or, the gaps emerge under stress, leading to a cacostatic response (too much or too little), less adaptive than the flexible responses of an intelligent creature.

Facing a classroom of anxious, depressed, or dysregulated students, educators can provide a sustaining classroom environment (Narvaez, 2010; Narvaez & Bock, 2014). They can guide pupils in learning self-calming practices, such as belly breathing. At the same time, class activities can help students build social skills and social bonding with classmates. Educators can help students understand their fuller connections, to the community and to the natural world, mimicking as much as possible our ancestral formula for raising healthy, happy children (Narvaez, 2014).

In our ancestral context, nature and village provided the moral education "classroom." Childhood evolved to be a time of play and exploration with no socially induced fear. Children were able to self-organize within the evolved nest where basic needs were met for high autonomy, belongingness, competence, and social purpose. Life took place within a particular natural landscape where children learned to be cooperative with nature's laws, developing the virtues needed for band life: social attunement, consideration, enjoyment, imagination; virtues that extended to the other-than-human persons in the local landscape. Virtue was necessary for survival. The non-industrialized world continues to show a broader sense of human insight-intelligence and consciousness, one that connects with the local natural world and universal energies, centering individuals and communities in developing socio-emotional and ecological intelligences that allow for living durably with the landscape. Restoring an Indigenous worldview[2] in education may be fundamental for planetary flourishing (Four Arrows, 2016; Four Arrows & Narvaez, 2015).

[2] The Indigenous worldview is one of two worldviews (Redfield, 1953). It considers the cosmos moral, connected, sacred and sentient whereas the dominant worldview considers the cosmos amoral, fragmented and disenchanted. The two worldviews hold contrasting assumptions which affect attitudes beliefs and behavior (Four Arrows & Narvaez, 2022).

Within schooling, decolonizing and reconnecting children means giving them back their power to grow themselves with a supportive community that provides virtuous role models and non-coercive mentoring (Montessori, 1966). It means giving space to individual growth trajectories following the built-in evolved logic of development (Steiner, 2003). Like all animal offspring, children have built-in guidance systems for developing their full capacities when given appropriate role models and support. Honoring children's biological imperative means not forcing literacy training but waiting for the child herself to initiate it (Shepard, 1998). Immersed experience in living life is expected by children's innate developmental course, not reading about life. Building knowhow skills in multiple domains, especially those of passionate interest, should be the focus of childhood until adolescence. Schooling approaches that tend to follow the child's own developmental course include Montessori (Seldin, 2006), Reggio Emilia (Edwards et al., 2012), Sudbury (Gray, 2013), and Waldorf (Steiner, 2003). All these approaches point to play as the primary activity of childhood (Sahlberg & Doyle, 2019). Honoring individuality within schools means letting the children decide how to spend their time, with fast amounts of play expected and supported (Gray, 2013). Neuroscience supports this but so does over 30 million years of social mammalian heritage (and longer; Burghardt, 2005). Adults who did not play as children are more stiff-minded and aggressive, not having built the neurobiological structures for flexible responsiveness that marks intelligence (Narvaez, 2014). These approaches put children's needs first, making it more likely that they will grow into healthy, creative citizens.

5 Nature Connection

In our ancestral context, humans are lovers of the earth, beauty and wholeness. For example, Indigenous science considers humans as multifaceted beings comprised of body, mind, heart, and spirit who live in a world of many persons, including humans and the other-than-humans, a view that aligns with most articulated and unarticulated views around the world, and pre-Enlightenment perspectives in the Western world (Cajete, 2000; Harvey, 2017). Over millennia, civilization's distrust of nature and organic human nature increased alongside earth destruction leading to the environmental and spiritual crises faced today (Merchant, 2003). Getting back to respect the other-than-humans is critical for ecological health. Ideas and efforts to reconnect humans to nature are spreading. Jon Young and his team's work on nature connection may be an exemplar—they use community music making, rituals and trance to routinely let go of (not grasping) grudges, stress, and grief (Young, 2019). Schooling too can intentionally support nature connection (Sobel, 2015) and help children grow into earth-respecting creatures.

References

Bohm, D. (1994). *Thought as a system.* Routledge.

Bollier, D. (2014). *Think like a commoner: A short introduction to the life of the commons.* New Society Publishers.

Burghardt, G. M. (2005). *The genesis of animal play: Testing the limits.* MIT Press.

Cajete, G. (2000). *Native science.* Clear Light Publishers.

Clark, M. E. (1990). Meaningful social bonding as a universal human need. In J. Burton (Ed.), *Conflict: Human needs theory* (pp. 34–59). St. Martin's Press.

Darwin, C. (1859/1962). *The origin of species.* Collier Books.

Edwards, C., Gandini, L., & Forman, G. (Eds.). (2012). *The hundred languages of children: The Reggio Emilia experiences in transformation* (3rd ed.). Praeger.

Eisler, R., & Fry, D. P. (2019). *Nurturing our humanity*. Oxford University Press.

Elias, M. J., Ferrito, J. J., & Moceri, D. C. (2016). *The other side of the report card: Assessing students' social, emotional, and character development*. Corwin.

Arrows, F. (2016). *Point of departure.* Information Age Publishing.

Arrows, F., & Narvaez, D. (2015). Reclaiming our Indigenous worldview: A more authentic baseline for social/ecological justice work in education. In N. E. McCrary & E. W. Ross (Eds.), *Working for social justice inside and outside the classroom: A community of teachers, researchers, and activists* (pp. 93–112). Peter Lang.

Arrows, F., & Narvaez, D. (2022). *Restoring the kinship worldview: Indigenous voices introduce 28 precepts for rebalancing life on planet earth.* North Atlantic Books.

Fromm, E. (1955). *The sane society*. Rinehart and Winston Inc.

Fry, D. P. (2006). *The human potential for peace: An anthropological challenge to assumptions about war and violence*. Oxford University Press.

Fry, D. (Ed.). (2013). *War, peace and human nature.* Oxford University Press.

Gray, P. (2013). *Free to learn: Why unleashing the instinct to play will make our children happier, more self-reliant and better students for life*. Basic Books.

Harvey, G. (2017). *Animism: Respecting the living world* (2nd ed.). C. Hurst & Co.

Hewlett, B. S., & Lamb, M. E. (2005). *Hunter-gatherer childhoods: Evolutionary, developmental and cultural perspectives*. Aldine.

Hobbes, T. (1651/2010) *Leviathan* (Rev. ed., A. P. Martinich & B. Battiste, Eds.). Broadview Press.

Ingold, T. (2005). On the social relations of the hunter-gatherer band. In R.B. Lee & R. Daly (Eds.), *The Cambridge encyclopedia of hunters and gatherers* (pp. 399–410). Cambridge University Press.

Ingold, T. (2013). Prospect. In T. Ingold & G. Palsson (Eds.), *Biosocial becomings: Integrating social and biological anthropology* (pp. 1–21). Cambridge University Press.

Knudsen, E. I. (2004). Sensitive periods in the development of the brain and behavior. *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience, 16*(8), 1412–1425.

Kohák, E. (2000). *The green halo: A bird's eye view of ecological ethics.* Open Court.

Kolbert, E. (2014). *The sixth extinction: An unnatural history.* Henry Holt.

Konner, M. (2005). Hunter-gatherer infancy and childhood: The !Kung and others. In B. Hewlett & M. Lamb (Eds.), *Hunter-gatherer childhoods: Evolutionary, developmental and cultural perspectives* (pp. 19–64). Aldine Transaction.

Kyd, S. (1793–1794). *A treatise on the law of corporations.* J. Butterworth.

Lee, R. B., & Daly, R. (Eds.). (2005). *The Cambridge encyclopedia of hunters and gatherers.* Cambridge University Press.

Martin, C. L. (1992). *In the spirit*. Johns Hopkins University Press.

Martin, C. L. (1999). *The way of the human being.* Yale University Press.

Merchant, C. (2003). *Reinventing Eden: The fate of nature in Western culture*. Routledge.

Miller, J. P. (2008). *The holistic curriculum* (2nd ed.). University of Toronto Press.

Montessori, M. (1966). *The secret of childhood*. Ballantine Books.

Moore, J. (2015). *Capitalism in the web of life: Ecology and the accumulation of capital*. Versa.

Mueller, J. Z. (2002). *The mind in the market: Capitalism in modern European thought*. Knopf.
Narvaez, D. (2010). Building a sustaining classroom climate for purposeful ethical citizenship. In T. Lovat & R. Toomey (Eds.), *International research handbook of values education and student wellbeing* (pp. 659–674). Springer.
Narvaez, D. (2012). Moral neuroeducation from early life through the lifespan. *Neuroethics, 5*(2), 145–157.
Narvaez, D. (2014). *Neurobiology and the development of human morality: Evolution, culture and wisdom*. W. W. Norton.
Narvaez, D. (Ed.). (2018). *Basic needs, wellbeing and morality: Fulfilling human potential*. Palgrave-MacMillan.
Narvaez, D. (2016). *Embodied morality: Protectionism, engagement and imagination.* Palgrave Macmillan.
Narvaez, D. (2019a). Evolution, childhood and the moral self. In R. Gipps & M. Lacewing (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of philosophy and psychoanalysis* (pp. 637–659). Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198789703.013.39
Narvaez, D. (2019b). Humility in four forms: Intrapersonal, interpersonal, community, and ecological. In J. Wright (Ed.), *Humility* (pp. 117–145). In book series, *Multidisciplinary perspectives on virtues* (N. Snow & D. Narvaez, series eds.). Oxford University Press.
Narvaez, D. (2019c). In search of baselines: Why psychology needs cognitive archaeology. In T. Henley, M. Rossano, & E. Kardas (Eds.), *Handbook of cognitive archaeology: A psychological framework*. Routledge.
Narvaez, D. (2019d). Moral development and moral values: Evolutionary and neurobiological influences**.** In D. P. McAdams, R. L. Shiner, & J. L. Tackett (Eds.), *Handbook of personality* (pp. 345–363). Guilford.
Narvaez, D. (2019e). Original practices for becoming and being human. In D. Narvaez, Four Arrows, E. Halton, B. Collier, & G. Enderle (Eds.), *Indigenous sustainable wisdom: First Nation knowhow for global flourishing* (pp. 90–110). Peter Lang.
Narvaez, D., & Bock, T. (2014). Developing ethical expertise and moral personalities. In L. Nucci & D. Narvaez (Eds.), *Handbook of moral and character education* (2nd ed., pp. 140–158). Routledge.
Narvaez, D., Four Arrows, Halton, E., Collier, B., Enderle, G., & Nozick, R. (2019). People and planet in need of sustainable wisdom. In D. Narvaez, Four Arrows, E. Halton, B. Collier, & G. Enderle (Eds.), *Indigenous sustainable wisdom: First Nation knowhow for global flourishing* (pp. 1–24). Peter Lang.
Narvaez, D., Panksepp, J., Schore, A., & Gleason, T. (Eds.). (2013). *Evolution, early experience and human development: From research to practice and policy*. Oxford University Press.
Pinker, S. (2011). *The better angels of our nature*. Viking.
Polanyi, K. (2001). *The great transformation: The political and economic origins of our time* (2nd ed.). Beacon Press.
Redfield, R. (1953). *The primitive world and its transformations*. Cornell University Press.
Sahlins, M. (2008). *The Western illusion of human nature*. Prickly Paradigm Press.
Sahlberg, P., & Doyle, W. (2019). *Let the children play: How more play will save our schools and help children thrive*. Oxford University Press.
Seldin, T. (2006). *How to raise an amazing child the Montessori way*. DK Publishing.
Shepard, P. (1998). *Coming home to the Pleistocene* (F. R. Shepard, Ed.). Island Press/Shearwater Books.
Shonkoff, J. P., & Phillips, D. A. (2000). *From neurons to neighborhoods: The science of early childhood development*. National Research Council, Committee on Integrating the Science of Early Childhood Development. National Academy Press.
Sobel, D. (2015). *Nature preschools and forest kindergartens: The handbook for outdoor learning*. Redleaf Press.
Steiner, R. (2003). *Soul economy: Body, soul, and spirit in Waldorf education.* Steiner Books.

Suzman, J. (2017). *Affluence without abundance: The disappearing world of the Bushmen*. Bloomsbury.
Trevarthen, C. (2001). Intrinsic motives for companionship in understanding: Their origin, development and significance for infant mental health. *Infant Mental Health Journal, 22*(1–2), 95–131.
Turkle, S. (2017). *Alone together: Why we expect more from technology and less from each other*. Basic Books.
Turner, F. (1994). *Beyond geography: The Western spirit against the wilderness*. Rutgers University Press.
Wallach, L., & Woodall, P. (2004). *Whose trade organization?: The comprehensive guide to the WTO*. The New Press.
Wells, S. (2010). *Pandora's seed: The unforeseen cost of civilization*. Random House.
Wilkinson, R., & Pickett, K. (2011). *The spirit level: Why greater equality makes societies stronger*. Bloomsbury.
Wilkinson, R., & Pickett, K. (2019). *The inner level: How more equal societies reduce stress, restore sanity and improve everyone's well-being*. Penguin.
Wilson, E. O. (1992). *The diversity of life*. Penguin.
Young, J. (2019). Connection modeling metrics for deep nature-connection, mentoring and culture repair. In D. Narvaez, Four Arrows, E. Halton, B. Collier, G. Enderle (Eds.), *Indigenous sustainable wisdom: First Nation know-how for global flourishing* (pp. 219–243). Peter Lang.
Zerzan, J. (2018) *A people's history of civilization*. Feral House.

Darcia Narvaez is Professor Emerita of Psychology at the University of Notre Dame who focuses on moral development and flourishing from an interdisciplinary perspective, integrating anthropology, neuroscience, clinical, developmental, and educational sciences. Dr. Narvaez's current research explores how early life experience influences well-being and moral character in children and adults. She is a fellow of the American Psychological Association, the American Educational Research Association, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science and is former editor of the Journal of Moral Education. She has published numerous articles and chapters, and more than 20 books. A recent book, *Neurobiology and the Development of Human Morality: Evolution, Culture and Wisdom*, won the 2015 William James Book Award from the American Psychological Association and the 2017 Expanded Reason Award. She writes a blog for Psychology Today ("Moral Landscapes") and hosts the webpage EvolvedNest.org.

Rethinking Education

Poonam Batra

Abstract This paper begins with a critique of neoliberal reforms that have shaped education to fulfil individual aims and self-interest defined in narrow economic terms. Embedded in coloniality, the neoliberal education project accords priority to skill development over human capacities to relate, cohere and be just. Questioning Eurocentric universalism has led to the view that the world we live in is a pluriverse. Epistemological and ontological questions are therefore fundamental in engaging with issues of social inequality and the Anthropocene. To enable equity and social justice, it is important to design content and processes of education that are egalitarian and emancipatory in nature. Social and environmental movements and the construction of anti-colonial national imaginaries in diverse societies can provide new discourses of education. The project of human education is a challenge of content as well as pedagogic approaches, as true education is as much about liberating others as oneself.

1 Introduction

Education systems across the contemporary world have been shaped by neoliberal reforms for over three decades. The international education project[1] that drives these reforms is entwined with ideas of modernity and development embedded in coloniality. With multiple meanings, practices and experiences, colonialism was a cultural project whose influence is palpable in contemporary societies of the global south. Reforms have influenced education policy in different countries, leading to policy

[1] The term 'international education project' is being used here as an umbrella term that indicates the convergence of a host of international think tanks and players: global networks and projects, including bilateral agencies that form part of an international education community such as the EFA and a global epistemic community that Stephen Ball talks about (Ball, S. J. [2012]. *Global education inc: New policy networks and the neo-liberal imaginary*. Routledge).

P. Batra (✉)
Formerly with the Central Institute of Education, University of Delhi, Delhi, India
e-mail: batra.poonam@gmail.com

R. S. Webster et al. (eds.), *Humanizing Education in the 3rd Millennium*,
SpringerBriefs in Education, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-1205-4_12

'borrowing' via a 'global epistemic community' and processes of 'internationalisation'. Instead of learning from decolonised and subaltern knowledges, what we see is a disruption of diverse post-colonial processes via a reform policy transfer—constructed in decontextualised abstraction, rationalised by a target-driven universal agenda (Batra, 2019).

Based on the human capital approach, the neoliberal agenda for education is designed to fulfil individual aims and self-interest defined in narrow economic terms. This has created a wedge between the needs of society and policy formulation. According to Pinar (2015: 223), neoliberal reforms mirror colonialism that 'increases cultural dependency and political subjugation while encouraging modernisation with its rhetoric of rights and reparation'.

The tendency of contemporary education to incorporate interests of global capitalism and the free market accords priority to the development of specific skills over human capacities to relate, cohere and be just, thus limiting human agency. With undue focus on instrumental aims of education, 'knowledge' itself is being repositioned, even marginalised. What kind of knowledges are disseminated and others suppressed; which knowledge has premium and why; and how the power of reason is undermined in preference for popular identities and desires, distorts the idea of individual rights and social justice. In this context, it becomes critical to examine how 'knowledge' itself becomes a pawn in the politics of power. This compels us to examine the limits of neoliberal models of economic production and their impact on education policy and practice, particularly in impeding processes of social democracy.

The neoliberal agenda not only dictates curriculum content that serves the free market in a globalised economy, it dictates what happens inside the classroom as well. For instance, the emphasis on STEM propagated by international assessments have filled up the space of school curricula and pedagogic communication. School timetables are reluctant to allot time to social sciences as these are not critical to competing in international assessment tests. In teacher education too, sociology and philosophy are no longer theoretical markers for developing teachers with critical understanding of learners, contexts of learning, knowledge and pedagogical communication. The undermining of social sciences also appears to be taking away the possibility of studying how neoliberal policies and the free market impact societies, creating alienation, especially among the youth.

2 Contestations in Educational Debates

There have been continuing debates on how existing systems of education tend to reproduce divisiveness and hierarchies in society, and the extent to which education can resist imposition of dominant knowledges and pedagogies that stifle democratic ways of thinking. School curriculum has been examined as a space of intervention where both kinds of forces operate—those which maintain status quo and those which attempt to disrupt processes that sustain inequality and injustice, in order to create

a more just society. Models of teacher education on the other hand, have been slow to change. Most tend to remain disconnected from classroom and social realities, tending towards the promotion of 'universal' theoretical knowledges and 'one size fits all' kind of solutions. This tends to disempower teachers who are trained to think of 'knowledge' as a set of givens; learners as disconnected from their socio-cultural milieu; and teaching as an act of authority and control. Teacher education curricula and pedagogic approaches rarely empower the developing teacher to exercise agency in classrooms, schools and policy making (Batra, 2005, 2014).

In examining different kinds of knowledges, it is important to engage with how 'science' as 'content' and 'method' has dominated formal school and teacher education. At the same time, the concept of 'folk' theory and 'practical', tacit or 'commonsensical' knowledge often positioned as the key to develop 'good teachers', needs critical interrogation.

In privileging universal, de-contextualised knowledge, school and teacher education curricula tend to undermine and make invisible knowledges and knowledge systems that emanate from diverse societal contexts. The pedagogical influence of the 'geo-politics of knowledge' leads to an education that disempowers, leaving virtually no space for cultivating human agency to change the conditions we work and live in. In this frame, equity ceases to be the aim of education. Instead, education ends up strengthening systems and processes that sustain inequality and social injustice.

3 Contours of an Emancipatory Education

Colonisers have typically viewed culture as an impediment to educate, modernise and develop scientific thinking and universal knowledge.[2] As a consequence, education remained disconnected from people's lives and social milieu even in post-colonial societies, leading to alienation from formal knowledge.[3] For education to become human, it is important to view culture as a means of meaning-making and making knowledge socially and politically relevant. While culture contextualises formal knowledge and is crucial to cultivating capacities for critical thinking and problem-solving, it must also become the subject of interrogation and inquiry. For instance, it would be critical to examine how prejudiced 'local knowledges' can be projected as 'cultural' and posed as major frameworks of 'human values' based on 'religion', 'social norms and behaviour' that are violative of basic human rights. Diverse cultures may also offer diverse means of education and pedagogical approaches other

[2] Colonisers' rejection of sociocultural contexts and knowledge in shaping curriculum in India created deep conflict between education and culture, thus isolating school knowledge from the socio-cultural milieu of children (Kumar, 2005).

[3] This isolation characterises the bulk of educational practice in India and lies at the root of the country's poor performance in universalising critical education (Batra, 2014).

than those associated with formal education, such as apprenticeship, communities of practice, situated cognition.

If education is indeed a shared and global responsibility, it must first acknowledge the need to address specific needs of diverse societies. Universal solutions to the specific problems that societies across the world encounter cannot be the path forward, mainly because many of these problems may have occurred as a consequence of universal[4] ways of looking at educating diverse societies. This engagement compels us to bring back classical debates and reflections, emanating from philosophical theorisation on the relationship between education and the kind of society we want. Scholarship across the world is likely to provide a variety of examples that could help us discuss the relationship between education and society in the context of different socio-cultural worlds, including colonial struggles and post-colonial engagements.

Aims of education encompass the growth of both—the individual and the society. While education provides the reorganisation of experience leading to growth of the individual child, it is also the most critical agency for reconstruction and maintenance of society's democratic principles (Dewey, 1938). The critical link between experience and education, lucidly articulated by Dewey stands discarded as a guiding principle in the current arrangements of formal education. This has undermined the need to reflect on one's actions and thought as necessary to develop finer capacities and sensibilities—the ability to discern, understand and negotiate the limitations of language as the only tool of communication.

Developing an ethical sense and sensibilities in Deweyan terms needs to be distinguished from ideas of developing morality and values. Moral education over the years has led to privileging some communities or religions leading to competitiveness rather than social cohesiveness. It may be more meaningful to define human values in the context of progressive and democratic societies and countries that foreground ideals of equality, liberty, justice and fraternity.

In order that education makes 'social equality and social justice' viable aims of education (acknowledging that education alone cannot achieve this), it is important to select and treat content, and design processes of education that are egalitarian and emancipatory in nature. It would be necessary to bring into the 'content' of education, key concerns that help to problematise social, economic, environmental, political realities that pose major challenges to human civilisation. These could be: ideological debates, the institution of patriarchy, issues of protectionism, impact of climate change on the most vulnerable, white supremacy and the upsurge in racist and casteist behaviour across societies. It would be necessary to examine how these are perpetuated through school and higher education curricula, and through politically motivated concerted efforts at altering popular historical consciousness of large masses of people.

[4] The term 'universal' refers to the universal frames which have dominated educational discourses, such as theories of child development; theories of learning that have little scope to account for cross-cultural differences. Viewing children/learners and the process of education from a universal prism undermines diversities of language, culture and socio-economic realities that shape children and the manner in which they learn.

While a lot can be achieved via appropriate selection of curriculum content and its treatment, critical pedagogic communication is necessary to ensure that learners engage with social diversity and multiple perspectives, and understand their own and others' position in society. Pedagogical communication needs to follow basic principles of democracy. This can be achieved by: engaging with difference, as in diversity and the impact of intersectionalities; teaching and studying an understanding of and coping with 'alterity'—a comprehensive relationship with the other; to teach to respect all and listen to the 'other'. Alterity is particularly important in enabling young people to understand diversity and appreciate difference rather than hierarchise difference. A nuanced engagement with diverse perspectives can help the human mind to make itself supple and profound.

Teacher education programmes for instance, ought to help surface conflicts and dilemmas in a manner that allows participants to empathise, appreciate diversity and question hierarchies of power. As argued by Maturana and Valera, 'Conflict can go away only if we move to another domain where co-existence takes place. The knowledge of this knowledge constitutes the social imperative for a human-centered ethics' (cited in Escobar, 2008: 17). A deeper journey into the inner self and its relationship with the wider social and natural world has to begin with the opening of the mind, examining and challenging power equations and hierarchies, and the obstacles that resist change.

Education needs to become the means to interrogate domination and exploitation in societies; and a means to develop inner resilience and a sense of social justice. This becomes possible when the educational process is designed as dialogue—between teacher and students and among students—helping students to think and reflect from several perspectives as they engage. Breaking hierarchies between the teacher and the taught helps students to develop capacities of empathic inquiry, critical thinking and a discerning judgement rather than becoming judgemental. In this sense, education needs to be based on a clear conception of the 'true aim of human life, both individual and collective', for the 'individual exists not in himself alone but in the collectivity…the free use of our liberty includes also the liberation of others and of mankind' (Aurobindo, 2002: 14).

4 Learning from the Post-colonial

Struggles grounded in the everyday, such as Dalit[5] and feminist movements; civil rights and anti-racist movements; and environmental movements that foreground concerns of vulnerable communities, individual dignity and rights, are powerful

[5] The term Dalit was in use as a translation for the British Raj census classification of Depressed Classes prior to 1935. It was popularised by the economist and reformer, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (1891–1956), himself a Dalit. Scheduled Castes is the official term for Dalits.

sources of learning. Anti-colonial and anti-caste struggles that tapped the emancipatory potential of education as part of freedom movements demonstrate what transformative education looks like. For instance, recognising the counter-hegemonic nature of a 'modern' system of education, Ambedkar (1891–1956) accorded it central importance in his endeavour to 'overthrow the hierarchical structure and ideology of caste'. Deeply influenced by the philosophy of Gautama Buddha (fifth century BCE), Kabir Das (fifteenth century) and Jyotiba Phule (1827–1890) and his own political struggles, Ambedkar's socio-political thought was rooted in 'social democratic liberalism' (Velaskar, 2012).

Ambedkar was also deeply influenced by Dewey's thoughts on democracy as 'associated living', central to which are ideas of equality, fraternity and mutual respect (Mukherjee, 2009). In Ambedkar's ideas of democracy carefully crafted in Indian Constitution, 'criticality was accorded to a synthesis between individuals, community and society'. For both Phule and Ambedkar, the democratisation of the method of knowing was also critical. This includes seeking the integration of 'the principles of prajna (critical understanding) with Karuna (empathetic love) and samata (equality)' (Rege, 2010: 93). In the Indian context, the key question being glossed over the century-long transition from colonial rule to neoliberal reforms is the question of addressing inequality in and through education. This was the essential epistemic difference that modern education failed to discern and that neoliberal reforms seek to gloss over (Batra, 2020: 5).

The construction of anti-colonial national imaginaries in diverse societies of the global south can provide new discourses of education and compel us to rethink education, its purposes, processes and methods. 'Once we engage in a critical form of listening to the life experiences of subaltern peoples, the decolonisation of consciousness becomes a real possibility…enabling a new social imaginary' as 'knowing is inseparable from being – epistemology is inseparable from ontology' (Kincheloe, 2008: 193, 251). This can help us to view education as a critical site for developing a democratic social order and enable the imagination of transformative pedagogies that can facilitate epistemic justice.

5 Addressing the Anthropocene

A critical question for and in education relates to how the natural environment and habitats of millions of species other than the human are under grave threat and how education could play a role in reversing this trend. Here again, it would be important to examine how education in terms of knowledge, its application and formal arrangements has in the first place contributed to the environmental disasters that human society witnesses. It is critical to understand how the trajectory of (unsustainable) development is sustained through the modern system of education that is being reformed by a neoliberal agenda only to strengthen it further.

Environmentalists have called out the dominance of traditional subject knowledge in schools as 'a legacy of the eighteenth century conception of knowledge…grounded

in the idea of the universal applicability of reason and in the instrumental nature of rationality'. Laying the foundations for a mechanist intellectual framework such knowledge is critiqued to be 'objectified, abstract, absolute and unchanging'. Attention is called to the need to reconstruct educational knowledge. The argument is that our relationship with nature is fundamental to this reconstruction, and that 'direct engagement with the environment…is fundamental to learning, and schools need to be embedded in the local community so that learning tasks can emerge out of real life contexts and both teacher and learner can work together' (Tasker, 2004: 28). This approach was largely ignored by mainstream education that instead focused on the need to change human behaviours to create more sustainable life styles.

Studies however, reveal that 'people with a high level of environmental awareness do not necessarily have a good personal ecological balance sheet. People from poorer backgrounds, on the other hand, who have under-average positive attitudes towards nature, pollute the environment the least'. The plea therefore is that education for sustainability should enable and encourage students 'to question the mechanisms that have created the Anthropocene and make a sustainable Anthropocene conceivable – in this form, it stands in the tradition of enlightenment in the best sense' (Niebert, 2019: 2).

While the cumulative effects of a consumerist lifestyle on the earth's ecosystem has been the focus of climate change activists, there is very little emphasis on 'environmental (in)justice with regards to the unequal distribution of sufferings, such as the thoughtless exploitation of labourers (other humans) for our need for overconsumption…the instrumentalization, reification, and commodification of non-human animals for food production' (Su & Su, 2019: 1). The socio-ecological crisis is therefore, 'not a surface-phenomenon' requiring only a little bit of mending here and there. Rather, it is built into the core of modern culture that needs to be problematised and challenged (Schmidt, 2013: 479).

Problematising the role of education would be critical to envisioning a new role that education must play in addressing the Anthropocene, especially as 'modern science and technology not only contribute to rampant destruction but no longer seem able to devise workable solutions to it. That is why epistemological questions are fundamental in discussing questions about nature' (Escobar, 2008: 8). This compels us to look at cultural roots of informal education[6]—such as the links communities have traditionally had with nature that facilitated civilisations to survive in ecological harmony and how these are seriously threatened by the economic growth model of development. Several theorists questioning Eurocentric universalism are of the view that 'the world we live in is a pluriverse – it is inherently pluralistic. It contains many imperfect worldviews from where many plausible modes of thinking, doing

[6] 'Informal education' here refers to self-directed learning which is typically part of several communities in India and elsewhere, such as learning among agrarian communities, artisans, weavers and crafts people.

and living can be developed and employed. Self-critical intellectuals have continued to generate many plausible modes of thinking, doing and living from the intellectual heritage of different peoples' (Nweke, 2019). This needs to be at the centre of our efforts to reimagine education.

6 Conclusion

The project of human education is thus a challenge of content as well as pedagogic approaches as these are intertwined in an educational experience. 'Dialogue as education' prompts young people to think critically, resist conformity, question themselves and what is around them with the aim to understand the relationship between knowledge and power; and to develop a sense of agency to challenge these to better their lives and the lives of others. True education is as much about liberating others as oneself, from material shackles and the fetters within—ideas embedded in the educational imagination of Tagore and Gandhi. Aesthetic knowledge, the creative arts and working with the hands foregrounded by several philosophical traditions are central to developing 'sensibilities', and to reimagine education. The notion of the abstract individual, central to traditional Western philosophies needs to be challenged via 'critical ontology with its understanding of the social construction of selfhood and its never ending embrace and respect for others and difference' (Kincheloe, 2008: 251). 'The one-truth ways of seeing and being' embedded in a system of ideas that focus primarily on 'self-centeredness and economic self', will need to be questioned epistemologically and ontologically (ibid.).

Human education would focus on developing capacities for 'being human'—to relate and communicate with each other; empathise; agree to disagree; appreciate difference; develop the ability to listen, observe and act rather than react; resist dogma, question social and gender inequities and reflect on oneself; learn to 'witness' one's own thought and action. David Orr (2004: 20) reminds us that education for some of the most eminent philosophers like Rousseau and Dewey 'had to do with the timeless question of how we are to live. And in our time the great question is how we will live in light of the ecological fact that we are bound together in the community of life, one and indivisible, now threatened by human carelessness'. The current health crisis,[7] symptomatic of a deeper environmental and social predicament of human civilisation, is a stark reminder that we cannot go about with 'business as usual'. It compels us to look within, to ask difficult questions and to reimagine education to create an environmentally and socially just world.

[7] COVID-19 Pandemic.

References

Aurobindo, S. (2002). Letters on Yoga p. 234. Cited in Integral Psychology Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust, 14.

Batra, P. (2005). Voice and agency of teachers: Missing link in national curriculum framework 2005. *Economic and Political Weekly,* 4347–4356.

Batra, P. (2014). Problematising teacher education practice in India: Developing a research agenda. *Education as Change, 18*(sup1), S5–S18.

Batra, P. (2019). Comparative education in South Asia: Contribution, contestation, and possibilities. *Comparative and international education: Survey of an infinite field* (International Perspectives on Education and Society, Vol. 36, pp. 183–211). Emerald Publishing Limited.

Batra, P. (2020). Echoes of 'coloniality' in the episteme of Indian educational reforms. on education. *Journal for Research and Debate, 3*(7). https://doi.org/10.17899/on_ed.2020.7.4

Dewey, J. (1938/1948). *Experience and education.* Macmillan.

Escobar, A. (2008). *Territories of difference: Place, movements, life*. Duke University Press.

Kincheloe, J. L. (2008). *Knowledge and critical pedagogy: An introduction* (Vol. 1). Springer Science & Business Media.

Kumar, K. (2005). *Political agenda of education: A study of colonialist and nationalist ideas*. Sage Publications India.

Mukherjee, A. P. (2009). BR Ambedkar, John Dewey, and the meaning of democracy. *New Literary History, 40*(2), 345–370.

Niebert, K. (2019). Effective sustainability education is political education. On education. *Journal for Research and Debate, 2*(4). Accessed on 5 April, 2020. https://doi.org/10.17899/on_ed.2019.4.5

Nweke, V. (2019, May 3). *What is wrong with the foundations of education in a pluriverse? A personal account*. Convivial Thinking. Accessed on 5 April, 2020. https://www.convivialthinking.org/index.php/2019/05/03/what-is-wrong-with-the-foundations-of-education-in-a-pluriverse-a-personal-account/

Orr, D. (2004, September/October). *The learning curve: All education is environmental education* (Resurgence, No. 226), 18–20.

Pinar, W. F. (2015). *Curriculum studies in India: Intellectual histories and present circumstances*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Rege, S. (2010). Education as Trutiya Ratna: Towards Phule-Ambedkarite feminist pedagogical practice. *Economic and Political Weekly, 45*(40), 88–98.

Schmidt, J. C. (2013). Defending Hans Jonas' environmental ethics: On the relation between philosophy of nature and ethic. *Environmental Ethics, 35*(4), 461–479.

Su, H., & Su, S. (2019). Why solving intergenerational injustice through education does not work: On education. *Journal for Research and Debate, 2*(4). Accessed on 5 April, 2020. https://doi.org/10.17899/on_ed.2019.4.3

Tasker, M. (2004, September/October). *Listening culture: What can schools do to develop a new theory of knowledge?* (Resurgence, No. 226), 28–29.

Velaskar, P. (2012). Education for liberation: Ambedkar's thought and Dalit women's perspectives. *Contemporary Education Dialogue, 9*(2), 245–272.

Poonam Batra is Professor of Education, formerly with the Central Institute of Education, University of Delhi, India. Major areas of professional focus include public policy in education; curriculum and pedagogy; social psychology of education, teacher education and gender studies. Professor Batra has co-authored several key education policy documents in India. Her recent research examines the imperatives of comparative education from a South Asian perspective, and the politics of school and teacher education reform. She is currently working as Co-I on

Transforming Education Systems for Sustainable Development (TES4SD) Network Plus Project, funded by the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) of UK Research and Innovation.

Education and the Political Role of an Errant, Loving and Childlike Questioning

Walter Omar Kohan

Abstract This text explores the political role of questioning in education through three conceptual figures inspired by Latin American traditions of educational and philosophical thought: the educator as an errant, loving and childlike figure that teaches self-questioning through practicing self-questioning. After a brief introduction where the theme of the chapter is contextualized in terms of the actual attacks against Paulo Freire by the Brazilian government, each of the key concepts (errantry, love and childhood) is presented in a different section. Finally, in the last section some implications are taken from the actual Latin American educational reality in terms of its contribution to the education of the present.

1 Introduction

The relationship between education and the political is very controversial. Nowadays in Brazil, around the figure of Paulo Freire, there is an intense controversy precisely on that issue. While the most famous Brazilian (and Latin American) educator has stressed that (all) education is political, the actual Brazilian government states that this legacy is precisely the main reason for the crises and problems of Brazilian education and promotes a "de-politicalizaton" of education. They affirm that the "ideologization" (that is how they word it) of the educational system fostered by Freire's legacy has led to its lack of content and to weaken the authority of the teacher. Teachers should not discuss ethical and political issues, it is argued, but transmit "apolitically" the subject matter they know to those who do not know it, i.e., what Paulo Freire called fifty years ago a "banking model" of education. Ethical and political issues should be left to the family and not be discussed in Public schools.

The argument is not new and Freire faced it during his life. He showed (Freire, 1994) that this position is, on the one side, fake: not discussing ethical and political issues is also ethical and political in that; it prevents students from having a public space—school, may be the only one for many, at least in Brazil—where those issues

W. O. Kohan (✉)
State University of Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
e-mail: wokohan@gmail.com

R. S. Webster et al. (eds.), *Humanizing Education in the 3rd Millennium*,
SpringerBriefs in Education, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-1205-4_13

could be discussed. At the same time, it contributes to the dissemination of the ethical and political values affirmed outside school. Finally, if accepted, the lack of discussion of ethical and political issues in public schools would lead to the empowerment of institutions like family and church and weaken even more public education and the role of public educators. So that the issue is not if education is or is not political but what kind of political assumptions we presuppose, what political values we affirm, what kinds of spaces we privilege to discuss the political dimension of life and what political aims we foster with our educational practices.

Paulo Freire is symbolically a very important figure in Brazilian education. Almost 15 years after his death, he was named as official Patron of Brazilian education by the National Congress in 2012. But in fact the Brazilian educational system is very far from being a Freirean one. Why, then, this attack more than twenty years after his death? Why a new attempt to exile him? Why so much anger with a figure elsewhere acknowledged, author of the worldwide most quoted book on education[1] and who received more than 40 doctorates *honoris causa* in Universities on the five continents?

I consider that the anger, and fear, generated by Paulo Freire is related not mainly to his political ideas as they are affirmed in his books—what is very vaguely and imprecisely called by his opponents as "cultural Marxism", but to the educational and political value of his "pedagogy of the question". In effect, even though *The pedagogy of the Oppressed* is certainly the most read and studied of Freire's books, it seems to me that the most politically strong and relevant to our time is one of his "spoken books", co-authored with the Chilean Antonio Faundez, where they both agree that the most important thing in education is "to teach to question".[2] Questioning and not a set of answers is what counts most in a Pedagogy of Liberation.

In this brief text, I will unpack these statements. In a book in which scholars discuss the state of education in the world, I offer this chapter on Freire because I think in a *Pedagogy of the Question* rests what is most specific for Latin America's contribution to education. Certainly, the educational role of questions and questioning has a much larger history in different traditions and could be traced at least back to the Socratic conversations in Ancient Greece. But there are some specific marks of this pedagogy of the question that Freire and other Latin American educators put together, contributing something unique: a loving, errant and childlike pedagogy of the question. In what follows, after a general section on the educational and philosophical value of questions and questioning, these three traces will be presented and unfolded in their educational and political value.

---

[1] According to a recent research in Google Scholar by Elliot Green. Interestingly, the book is more quoted in English and Spanish than in Portuguese: http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2016/05/12/whatare-the-most-cited-publications-in-the-social-sciences-according-to-google scholar/. Access November. 2, 2017.

[2] A literal translation of the title of the original book would be: *towards a pedagogy of the question.* It has been translated, though, as: *Learning to Question: A Pedagogy of Liberation* (Continuum, 1989).

2 Questions, Philosophy and Education

It is usually assumed that someone who asks a question is a "not knower" and someone who answered is a "knower". And it is also generally assumed that teachers know and students do not know. More, if someone is a teacher it is supposed that she knows what she is teaching and enters the classroom because she knows what she teaches.[3] In fact, most of the teachers question very little in the classroom because this would mean they do not know what they question. Usually questions have mainly two spaces in teachers' practice: (a) students questioning after teachers' explanations to solve their doubts concerning what they should have understood, and: (b) teachers questioning in evaluations to check if students know what they are supposed to know, i.e., what teachers already know and have explained to them. This means that in most educational practices questions are not made to know but to be sure of what is previously stated as knowledge or to evaluate and control if someone else knows what he or she should know. Because of this process, students' questioning is impoverished through schooling and students have many more questions when they enter school than when they leave it or, at least, they gradually have a less vivid practice of questioning. It couldn't be otherwise: a side of the content teachers transmit, students learn the teachers' relationship to questions (to control others' knowledge) and their previous childlike curiosity to question is increasingly weakened.

What can a question do other than control knowledge? Many things. While it is difficult to cover all, one possibility is clear: what seemed firm and secure before questioning, is no longer firm and a path in thinking is opened. Questions, then, can be invitations to think about what before questioning seemed to be firmly in its place. They *can* give birth not only to new thoughts but to new relationships to what is being thought. "*Can*" expresses both possibility (new forms of the possible) and also power (new capacities to think and live): questioning, then, is political, because the way we question can open many possibilities and also new paths in how we think and live… Whether these possibilities are in fact actualized has to do with the modalities, forms and practices of questioning.

The verb "to question" is a transitive one and requires both a direct and an indirect object: we question someone about something. It could also be a reflexive one: this happens when the subject and the object of questioning are the same, i.e., when someone questions herself or himself about something. Whenever we question, the power of the question is directed to something on the outside world; when we self-question, the power of the question can do something extraordinary in ourselves, i.e., the form of the question becomes a unique opportunity to reform understandings in the questioner's thought and life.

When we question someone about something, we may raise an objection, but when we question ourselves it is the doubt that might take us somewhere. Doubt might

[3] This is probably the reason of many reactions against J. Rancière's, *The ignorant schoolmaster* (Stanford University Press, 1991): Because from the title, this book affirms what precisely seems an oxymoron: if someone is ignorant, one could not be a teacher and if one is a teacher, one could not be ignorant, but for Rancière this constitutes a condition of teaching.

move us from the place we are in thinking and allow us to inhabit other places… might provoke us to lose some control about ourselves… and to gain certain possibilities and potencies also for ourselves… if questioning is usually used pedagogically as a tool to gain control over one path already established, self-questioning can be educationally affirmed to lose certainty so that new paths can be envisioned and opened.

Since Socrates, we call philosophy this educational self-questioning. It has been practiced not merely as an intellectual activity but as a way of life (Foucault, 2011): "the examined life" without which it is not worth living for any human being (Plato, *Apology of Socrates* 38a). As Socrates showed it with his own life, a self-questioning life carries in a force to travel a thought-provoking path between knowing and not knowing. It prevents fixing oneself in knowledge and to always be on the path of knowing with others. This path was recreated in Latin American tradition of philosophical popular school. In the following sections, I will present how this educational questioning takes the characteristics of errantry, love and childhood in figures like Simón Rodríguez and Paulo Freire.

3 Errant Questioning

Self-questioning as educational and philosophical requires a double form of errantry from the educator: (a) as a traveler who errs or wanders, while putting into question what seems to be natural or normal in the common world: (b) as someone who makes mistakes and considers these mistakes as learning opportunities. Both forms of errantry lead to self-invention. Simón Rodríguez, an extraordinary philosopher and educator of the nineteenth century whom Simón Bolivar called "the Socrates of Caracas" repeated as a motto "we invent or we err". This phrase can have very different meanings.

The word "or" can mean at least: (a) an exclusive alternative, one or another, a disjunction: or we invent or we err but not both. That is, if we do not invent, we err. If we err, it is because we do not invent; (b) a doubt, that is, it might be expressing: what should we do: invent or err?; or (c) it might also mean that the second part ("we err") is an equivalence or another way of expressing the first one ("we invent"): we invent, that is, we err. In this sense, erring can be a form or example of inventing.

The verbs "to invent" and "to err" can also have several meanings. Invention might be associated with creation, innovation, new so that to invent can mean to create, to bring something new. But etymologically, invention comes from the Latin in-ventus: what has come in, inside, what has arrived. The movement of invention is from the outside to the inside. In fact, for Simón Rodriguez, the most important word in education was hospitality: to those who are outside, to those who need to enter.

And to err, as we have already noticed can mean the opposite of success but can also mean wandering, walking, traveling without a fixed destination. It is important to clarify this latter sense. Usually it is assumed that the errant does not know where

to go. But this is not the case: the errant knows that to really travel the destination of the trip cannot be anticipated. Because if the errant knew where to arrive, it would not be a journey but just the realization of a prophecy. The errant knows that to really travel means to be opened to the senses that emerge in the travel itself. So that the errant is an educational and philosophical traveler who knows that to really know needs to self-question and who knows that she does not know in order to be in the search of knowing.

As a motto for education, "we invent or we err" inspires several paths. On the one side, the errant educator considers education an act of invention in its double sense: she needs to invent first herself as an educator and her educational life opens space to the excluded, the marginalized, the oppressed, to say it in Freire's terms. On another side, it also means that erring as a form of wandering with others can be a valuable metaphor for the educational task: it is a form of journey where the teacher does not try to bring all the others to her position of knowledge as in a banking model, but displaces herself, with no fix destination, to be sensitive to the other knowledges and to the others of knowledge in the wandering educational journey.

4 Loving Questioning

In Pedagogy of the Oppressed, love is a condition of the truth of the acts of both the oppressors and the oppressed. In the former, it measures the true solidarity of their actions (Freire, 2018: 56), in the latter, their loving rebellion inaugurates a true, free life, a passage from love to death to love to life. Moreover, love is dialogical as an expression of courage and commitment to the liberation of the oppressed that, at the same time, makes love possible, because love is not possible when there is oppression (Freire, 2018: 3). Quoting Che Guevara, Freire recalls that every true revolution is born of love and can only be a loving act (Freire, 2018: 189). Let us remember the last lines of Pedagogy of the Oppressed: "if nothing remains of these pages, we hope that at least something remains: our confidence in the people. Our faith in men and in the creation of a world in which it would be less difficult to love"(Freire, 2018: 475). This is the vital, irrevocable passion, the deepest sense of Paulo Freire's thought and life. His belief in the possibility of, through education, creating a world in which it is less difficult to love. And also its non-negotiable, irrevocable political force: capitalism is unacceptable for many reasons, but the main one is the way it makes it impossible to truly love.

Love is not only or not mainly a personal feeling to other people. It is also a force to inhabit the position of the educator, to love its situation, the task and commitment to a pedagogy of the question. As French philosopher Badiou affirms, love stands on difference, on what is erratic and strange (Badiou & Truong, 2013: 60–61). Love also enables to experience another time, more durative than chronological time. Paulo Freire experienced this present, aionic time while he was educated in his childhood and projected this experience to his educational thought. Finally, love is the belief

that the world is never ended, that there is always the possibility, thought education, of giving birth to a new world.

Love is also a significant force in the Argentinian Mothers of Mayo Square, one of the political movements with strongest educational implications in Latin America during the last decades. As Hebe de Bonafini founder of the Mothers presents it, the mothers were simple women, most of them housewives, not too much interested in the political and economic situation of the country. But the moment their sons and daughters disappeared, kidnapped by the Army, the love they felt for them was a transformative force. A new world emerged with that love: they began to question, to protest on the streets, to confront the whole army with their single bodies. Love was political and educational, a force of resistance, of invention, of a childlike questioning energy.

5 Childlike Questioning

Paulo Freire didn't give too much energy to the education of chronological children. Nevertheless, childhood plays an extraordinary role in his educational thinking and practice. He himself was educated in a pleasurable and joyful framework, outside the chronological time of the school institution, experiencing an aionic time in his learning to read and write the words and the world. He learned in his childhood that literacy could and should be a loving, philosophical and artistic process even if it grants the ability to read into an unfair, ugly and unacceptable world. An aionic, childlike literacy should enable a profound, questioning and transformative reading of the world. Freire not only considers it essential to cultivate childhood beyond chronological childhood, i.e., to experience the aionic time of childhood—but as an educator he permanently experiences childhood all through his own life and considers that to maintain childhood alive is a condition to educate people of all ages.

Childhood, for Freire, is not a stage, but a condition of an educational life: it is necessary to not only keep alive the childhood that we were, but also the one we could not be (Freire, 2001). Childhood means for Freire a way of living that affirms curiosity, creation and transformation: it is a questioning being who does not fear to stand in the open path of questioning, and who, like a philosopher can only know that she does not know in order to always be on the path of an open thinking.

The more childlike an educator lives her educational life, the more she is exposed to the hostilities of a system reacting to what it considers a threat, at least in Latin American countries. However, the more childlike, the more educative this life will be, for it will be kept alive through questioning, which can entail joyful and curious modes of existence rather than the capitalistic, productive dominant one. Thus, a childlike life of an educator creates conditions for a childlike world, or an aionic childhood of the world. A childlike educator relates to the common world as a realm of potentialities, an open story always to be renewed, rebegun and reinvented: a place not only or not mainly to educate chronological childhood but to maintain human life open and sensitive to the strengths of childhood.

Being childlike is not only a desired state of education but also a state of political revolution. In effect, Freire considers in the early eighties that the Nicaraguan revolution he admired was childlike not because of its short age but because of its "curiosity, its unrest, its taste for asking, and fearless dreaming, for wanting to grow, create, transform" (Freire & Faundez, 1989). The Nicaraguan revolution lives the revolution as a child would do: in an open, non-dogmatic, and restless way. It knows that to deserve the name of a revolution, it needs not to know what a revolution is like but should open that to a restless questioning, in a curious process of searching and creating a revolution, of questioning and learning how to be a revolution while being a revolution. Freire ponders how a revolution experiences a revolutionary time, i.e., as a child being in the present. To live like a child, nothing more celebrated by Freire for what seems most needed and desired in Latin America: a political revolution.

6 Final Remarks

We have been living in difficult times in Latin America in recent years because of Neoliberal educational policies based on principles like privatization and meritocracy. Simón Rodríguez, almost two centuries ago, showed how the education needed is public, general and social. He remembers that Latins translated the Greek word for school, *schole*, by *otium* maintaining the original meaning of leisure, free time. And he adds: "say all the bad things you want to those who make a business of school, you will never say enough" (Rodríguez, 2001, II: 148) because whoever does business (in Latin, *neg-otium*) with school negates school, practices an anti-school. Business (*neg-otium*) denies what school is, what makes a school a school. School needs free time, time to question and think the kind of life being lived in a given society.

New winds have already started among us: the neoliberal experiment shows signs of erosion in many of our countries, especially in Chile, shown till recent times as its most successful face and where people of all ages are on the streets to say "it's enough", claiming for public education, free time, time to think and question the kind of world deserved to be lived; in Chile people meet in public squares to put into question the education they need; sharing a more durative and present time; in Colombia, Argentina and elsewhere in the region people are inventing in the streets a new education.

As also Chileans are experiencing in their bodies, the path is not easy, comfortable or without risks. The conservative forces are there to repress any alternative path. Maybe that's why Paulo Freire's childlike educational life is under attack nowadays in Brazil: because his life might inspire childlike, questioning and unrest. Maybe this is one of the contributions Latin American educational thought can offer nowadays to the world: the inspiration of a loving, errant and childlike educational and philosophical life.

References

Badiou, A., & Truong, N. (2013) *Elogio ao amor*. Martins Fontes.
Foucault, M. (2011). *The courage of truth: The government of self and others II*. Palgrave Macmillan.
Freire, P. (1994). *Pedagogy of hope: Reliving pedagogy of the oppressed*. Continuum.
Freire, P. (1996). *Letters to Cristina: Reflections on my life and work*. Routledge.
Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the heart*. Continuum.
Freire, P. (2001). *Pedagogia dos sonhos possíveis.* Unesp.
Freire, P. (2018). *Pedagogia do oprimido: o manuscrito.* Projeto editorial, organização, revisão e textos introdutórios de Jason Ferreira Mafra, José Eustáquio Romão, Moacir Gadotti. Instituto Paulo Freire; Uninove; BT Académica.
Freire, P., & Faundez, A. (1989). *Learning to question: A pedagogy of liberation.* Continuum.
Rodríguez, S. (2001). *Obras Completas* (Vols. 1–2). Presidencia de la República Bolivariana de Venezuela.

Walter Omar Kohan did post-doctoral Studies at the University of Paris and the University of British Columbia. Full Professor of Philosophy of Education at the State University of Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) since 2002, he is a Senior Researcher at the National Council of Research of Brazil (CNPq) and at the Foundation of Support of Research of the State of Rio de Janeiro (FAPERJ, Brazil). Director of the Center of Studies in Philosophy and Childhood (State University of Rio de Janeiro, www.filoeduc.org) he has been visiting professor at different universities in Italy, France, Argentina, Mexico, and Chile. Co-editor of Childhood & Philosophy. Published over 100 peer reviewed articles, chapters, and books in Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, English, and French. Main books in English: *Philosophy and Childhood. Critical Perspectives and Affirmative Practices* (Palgrave, 2014); *Childhood, Education And Philosophy: New Ideas For An Old Relationship* (Routledge, 2015); *The Inventive Schoolmaster* (Sense, 2015); Paulo Freire. A philosophical biography (Bloomsbury, 2021).