

Neohumanist Educational Futures: Liberating the Pedagogical Intellect

Neohumanist Educational Futures: Liberating the Pedagogical Intellect

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Personal Reflections

Sohail Inayatullah

The origins of this book are varied. For me, they are both professional and personal, and in the spaces outside these two defining but confining categories.

The traces of this book certainly go back to a special issue of *New Renaissance* (Autumn 1996) titled "Holistic education". Essays by Ivana Milojević on women and holistic education, Marcus Bussey on redefining education, and myself on multiculturalism and education are foundational pieces for this book. We would like to thank the editor, Dada Vedaprajnananda for leadership in providing a forum for helping us and others develop the theory and practice of neohumanism. *New Renaissance* remains a social and spiritual incubator for social innovation (www.ru.org).

More recent links can be traced to the *Journal of Futures Studies* (<http://www2.tku.edu.tw/~tddx/jfs/>). The links between critical theory and spirituality, between globalisation and alternative visions of education, and between pedagogy and futures studies have been developed there. Ivana Milojević (critical spirituality and education) and Marcus Anthony (integrated intelligence and education) contributed to Vol. 9, No. 3, 2005; Helene Pederson (on schools and speciecism) contributed to Vol. 8, No. 4, 2004; Marcus Bussey (critical spirituality and neohumanism) contributed to Vol. 5, No. 2, 2000; and myself (Teaching Futures Studies: From strategy to transformative change) in Vol. 7, No. 3, 2003. We would like to thank the *Journal of Futures Studies* for moving the discourse from education about the future to education about alternative futures, specifically toward neohumanist futures.

Instrumental in moving this book from an idea to reality was a seminar held at the end of August, 2003, in Dubrovnik called New Wave: Vision of Youth (http://www.gurukul.edu/news_00009.php). Motivated by the enthusiasm and idealism of youth from that region, Didi Ananda Rama inspired all of us to work in writing a book on neohumanist education.

My personal commitment to neohumanism and neohumanistic education goes back decades. For me, the neohumanistic challenge is about opening

up identity from the exclusivist dimension of territory and community to far more inclusionary planetary articulations. This means challenging those attitudes, selves that ‘other’ others—that are racist, sexist, nationalistic in practice. Having grown up in a number of places—Lahore and Peshawar, Pakistan; Bloomington and New York, USA; Geneva, Switzerland; Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; Honolulu, Hawaii; and now living in Mooloolaba, Australia—I’ve seen how I have been othered—put down, bullied, made to feel less—and how I too have used the weapons of nation, religion, gender on others. Even in spiritual practice, as we attempt to move toward universal humanism, we, I, have disowned selves that are far less inspiring. Recognizing these disowned selves is crucial in developing a neohumanist self. Without this new self, our educational content, process and structure will tend to remain tied to historical exclusionary identities.

The chapters in front of you are attempts to move out of these identities, to create new futures, particularly exploring the implications of neohumanism for pedagogy.

There is no end game to neohumanism—it is not as if we are suddenly enlightened and become neohumanist. Even the enlightened being must speak, and when she or he does so, language is used. Language is central to the challenge of pedagogy. Language is not transparent, but opaque. Our worldviews—of transcendence but also of trauma and dogma—are complicit in language. Thus, neohumanist educational futures: it is a vision, an ideal, a possibility of a different type of education. Realizing this vision, however, does not only come from theorizing, but from creating schools that practice neohumanism, so that the theory is interactively informed by day-to-day learnings. In between the theory and the practice is the person. Neohumanism is about transforming that person, expanding our selves and our societies, embracing the earth, and indeed the universe. Doing so requires liberating not just educational processes, content and structures but the self, the intellect, we use to envision these possibilities.

Marcus Bussey

As Sohail Inayatullah has acknowledged the sources and inspiration for this book, I would like to offer three credits of a different nature. The first is to Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar (1921-1990) who first developed the idea of neohumanism articulated in this text. His first discourses on neohumanism as a general reframing of the social were given in 1982 and

he noted its particular relevance to education. A number of educators at the time made the first steps toward applying his ideas in the context of early childhood pedagogy. Didi Ananda Mitra and Ananda Nivedita developed a curriculum that appeared as *The Circle of Love*. This book and its underlying ordering of the curriculum into stages that correspond to the yogic concept of the *Brahma Chakra*—the evolutionary cycle of creation—remains an invaluable resource today. Since then numerous texts have appeared to enrich our educational thinking, culminating in two significant books, a collection of essays on neohumanist education by Sarkar¹ and Didi Ananda Rama’s wonderful and visually sumptuous collection of neohumanist reflections.²

The beauty of all the thinking on neohumanist education to date is its openness to the cultural contexts in which it finds itself. This openness is premised on the recognition that to write a classroom method would kill the creative and transformative spirit of neohumanism. Why? Texts have a tendency to become dogma, and any classroom method would prematurely define what is right, possible and relevant. Such definition would soon become both historically and culturally bound.

Method without deep intention/reflective/deconstructive processes will inevitably become a victim of its own best intentions—violence to self and other will always result. Sarkar wisely left no neohumanist education method. His was a cultural project in which he valued open systems over closed. He recognised that the uniqueness of the human condition—its existential condition—meant that replicability of a pedagogical process through legislating curriculum and mandating behavioural, structural and affective processes would destroy the real meaning of neohumanist education.

Intention-as-method should always unleash the creative energies of those involved and should also affirm agency. Intention-as-method means deep praxis. The core of the neohumanist method exists not in the classroom but in the human heart. Principles for benevolent action are built into it at all levels of the human condition: the physical, intellectual, and spiritual. This is what we must work with.

The second credit is to the tireless work of Arati Brim. Her part in my story is significant though we have only met face to face on one brief occasion. I have been teaching in neohumanist schools and/or contexts since 1988 and it has been a growing and deepening experience for me. I went to the first global neohumanist conference held in India in 1992, and it was then that I

was first inspired to edit a text like this. Then, in 1995 I decided to do a Masters in education focussing on neohumanist education.

Filled with confidence I went to a university, found an open minded supervisor and started work. Early on she turned to me and asked me to define neohumanist education for her. I was struck dumb. I could not find any appropriate way to communicate what I thought and felt. With my tail between my legs I went away. I dropped out of the course and thought long and hard. At this time I read everything I could find, meditated and kept teaching. Then in 1998 I received an email from Arati asking me to help write up pages for the new neohumanist education web site—<http://gurukul.edu/>. Suddenly the words started to flow. Thank you Arati!

Arati has also worked closely with Didi Ananda Rama in designing the first comprehensive diploma in neohumanist early childhood education. In addition, she has pretty much single-handedly produced the *Gurukul Newsletter* for the past ten years. Her quiet role in the venture cannot be under estimated.

My third credit is a thank you to my parents Marjorie and Victor Bussey. The creative world of ideas that is the hallmark of my parents' love of living and learning can certainly be seen to have shaped my own concerns and career. Of further note is the detail of my mother's painting *Kundalini** on the front of this book. I am convinced that my interest in education and sensitivity to creative processes as a way of engaging in transformative education owe much to her own vital engagement with art and education.

This book in many ways is a journey to the heart of learning. There is no attempt here to define a method for the classroom or school. The chapters are exploratory and open. Learning, as I have pointed out, is not something that can be codified. It is not curriculum, though this has something to do with education. Nor is it about information or even wisdom, though these too are aspects of learning. Learning, or specifically neohumanist learning, is an attitude, a stance that cannot be easily expressed and certainly cannot be prescribed. The teacher comes to embody the process; hence it is always alive and responsive to context. Neohumanist education is something you come to feel as much as think.

The paradox of futures work is that it has much less to do with the future than the present and the past. Neohumanist futures involves working in the present towards desired outcomes that foster increased levels of

* *Kundalini* is the coiled serpent that is the source of creative energy and the vital spiritual power within our own being.

meaning, wellbeing and purpose around the world. In this process we acknowledge our indebtedness to the past in the form of the rich and diverse cultural traditions we inherit today.

Simultaneously, we must acknowledge the debt we owe to those in the past whose lives and cultures have suffered because of the actions of our predecessors. This double debt carries on into the present where affluence in one part of the world is linked to poverty in another. Similarly, this debt is projected into the future, as affluence today is in many ways built on diminished returns in the future for future generations who will not only inherit the best of what we do today but also the foreseen and unforeseen results of current economic, social and environmental activity.

So, when we come to map neohumanist educational futures we must unpack the traditions that inform the neohumanist educational potentiality while acknowledging the deeply ethical commitment it has to a fulfilment of our debt to the hidden temporal economics described above. Indebtedness, which brings gratitude not guilt, is a necessary condition for a deepened sense of connection and responsibility towards all generations, past, present and future, as well as to the cultures and environments (both human and natural) that have, do or will sustain them.

It is hard for modern Western consciousness, permeated by a belief in individuality and personal agency and autonomy, to feel comfortable with this concept of indebtedness: the owing of an impersonal debt. Yet this awareness has many useful ethical dimensions. Firstly, it humbles those who feel 'above' or 'outside' of the social, historical and environmental contexts of their humanity. Secondly, it also underscores the relationship with past, present and future, bringing with it a sense of responsibility and the need for ethical and sustainable action at all times. Thirdly, it carries with it a spiritual imperative linked to a sense of belonging to a 'story' or 'body' of humanity by virtue of blood spilt, tears shed, and hope unfulfilled; this is what might be called belonging by virtue of *the debt that cannot be repaid*.

Ivana Milojević

I owe a personal debt to the people and experiences that helped make me who I am today. What follows is my story. This story contextualises my attraction to the neohumanist stretching of boundaries and challenging of tightly held yet socially constructed identities. Similarly to personal

histories offered by Sohail Inayatullah and Marcus Bussey, my personal commitment to neohumanist education also goes to childhood. Furthermore, both my personal and professional engagements with core neohumanist ideas have not been an easy process but have gone through many trials and tribulations. This has been a process of both trauma and transcendence, in regard to my own identity, educational and knowledge processes that I have been part of, and indeed, in regard to my own views of life itself. One common thread in this process has certainly been the questions of who and why I am and where I may be going. Another common thread is my desire to go toward ever-expanding vistas, well beyond the confines of imposed, stifling answers and confining identity structures. In this process, some events held greater significance than others.

My first memory of a confining identity was when a group of boys didn't let me join their game as I was 'a girl'. They were moving miniature cars by hand, over improvised tunnels, bridges and roads—a task apparently beyond my capabilities and those of my gender. As a girl and a woman, I have experienced various forms of exclusion, semi-inclusion and subtle and not so subtle dwindling of my humanity all my life.

Throughout my childhood, through both formal and informal education practices, I received two messages that often collided—that I was a 'human' and that I was a 'girl/woman'. As a human, I had the opportunity to fully participate in a human society, however, as a girl/woman I had the obligation to know/accept my limitations as a member of a particular 'sub'/inferior social group. I was often confused as to what to expect from myself. For example, I could see that my academic 'achievement' in primary and secondary school was 'superior' to that of all the boys that attended the same classes as I did. Unlike me, no boy was a straight 'A' student there and then. At the same time, I could also see that all the 'important' people in human history that somehow 'excelled' in the area of academic achievement—i.e. theorists, philosophers, academics, scientists—were not of my gender. The 'best' explanation for this phenomenon given to me related to men's superior physical size/strength, ability to go into the army, late but also extraordinary development in their late teens, and the peculiar influence of male hormones and brain size.

Needless to say, I was relieved, enthused and inspired by discovering feminist theory. This increasing knowledge of feminist theory, concepts, research and methods has been slowly, over the years and decades, chipping away at the damage done in my early childhood. Thus my first

chosen identity was that of ‘a feminist’—an identity that was initially giving me some freedom to cross over one particular boundary/border.

We all carry many traumas within our psyche. Two major ones for me—that continued chipping away any certainty I may have had in regard to the social construction of identity—were the wars in the former Yugoslavia and my migration to Australia. In various ways, these two qualitatively different types of event took away my national, ethnic, and professional identity based on a particular social strata. Upon my arrival in Australia, I also ‘managed’ to change my racial identity—from considering myself as ‘white’ to being considered by others as ‘olive’. A peculiar racial identity indeed (!), but certainly based on particular histories of migration and various ‘otherings’ operating within the Australian context. The complexity of the ethnic/racial/cultural mix of my current family is yet another reason in a series of personal events that have led to neohumanism making sense to me. Beyond various geo- and socio-sentiments, there lay the possibility for a unified humanity, a vision of our identities as they truly, ultimately are. The latest scientific (i.e. human genome mapping), anthropological (i.e. where we all originally come from) and psychological research (i.e. what we need to do to be mentally healthy and happy) requires a vision and functioning cosmology that can further facilitate the development of a ‘conscious’ evolution of/for a global/planetary human society. To me, the not so wonderful alternatives to planetary based cosmologies and philosophies such as neohumanism will only result in further divisions among humans, environmental degradation, as well as a further increase in social anomia and various forms of violence.

But the beauty of neohumanism is that the liberating possibilities do not stop here, with consideration only given to the sentient beings we identify as human. Rather, neohumanism enables us to position ourselves within a broader context of ever evolving life on Earth, and possibly beyond. This planetary vision transcends various limitations posed by individualism, nationalism, industrialism, competitive globalism, as well as classism, castism, racism, and patriarchy. As such, it is based on the new emerging ecological paradigm rather than the anthropocentric philosophy of the Enlightenment. However, if this new paradigm is not realized, the impairment to human spirit and psyche, through various boundaries of socially constructed identities, cannot be overstated. Many decades ago Sigmund Freud discovered and described the damage done when *narcissistic injury*—the infatuation with one’s self—becomes a *narcissistic*

rage, wherein the individual associates with a larger group such as an ethnic group or nation–state and perceives injuries to the group as an injury to the self. When such events do occur, this narcissistic rage can only be reduced by the violent ‘undoing’ of hurt, through forms of both illegal and legalised violence, “just war” being an example of the latter. Subsequently, the cycles of the ‘initial attack’ and ‘subsequent revenge’ perpetually continue.

Neohumanism, on the other hand, challenges these historical and contemporary developments in regard to global war, violence and social injustice in a simple yet profound way by asking the following question: What happens when the human desire for limitlessness—for identifying with something larger than the self—goes all the way, beyond limitations of ethnicity, class, race, religion, gender, nation–state, and even species? To me, the answer is again both simple and profound: There are no enemies to fight, no boundaries to thwart our spirit, no socially constructed identity based on a gripping fear of being lost, and no attachments worth human suffering.

Among many challenges neohumanism throws at contemporary dominant ways of being, thinking and doing is in relation to how we treat and what we teach our children. It is painfully obvious to me that if we continue to model and teach—in both covert and overt terms—various forms of ‘othering’ and limiting identities, the contemporary processes of domination, ‘power over’, unrelenting competition and endemic violence will continue. And so will human misery and hopelessness. It has been said many times before that our current dominant educational processes, structures and contents—which are too often in line with and directly feeding into various individual and social dysfunctions—need to be fundamentally challenged. Countless educators, parents and community members have been working relentlessly to help us both further theorise as well as put into practice alternatives that are inspiring, transformative and doable. Some of those individuals, and their influence on this book, have been mentioned earlier in this foreword. Countless others, many of whom we have not had personal contact with, are also helping the transformative praxis of planetary neohumanistic education continue, whether they are using these particular terms or not. My sincere thanks go to all who are part of this process in general, and to the writers and readers of this text in particular. Education may not help save the (human) world, but an education of a particular kind just might. At the very least, it may

help with one's own spiritual yearning, personal transformation and the walk back home.

¹ P.R. Sarkar, *Discourses on Neohumanist Education*, Calcutta, Ananda Marga Publications, 1998.

² Ananda Rama, *Neohumanist Education: Documentation on Neohumanist Education as Propounded by Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar*, Mainz, Ananda Marga Gurukul Publications, 2000.

Introducing Neohumanism

While the roots of neohumanism are certainly based on the spiritual practice of Tantra (from the broader Indic episteme), neohumanism and neohumanistic education is situated best as a transcivilizational global pedagogy.

Neohumanism has both a linear dimension, continuing the progressive evolution of rights that the Enlightenment has given us, and a cyclical dimension, embracing our ancient spiritual traditions, creating thus a turn of the spiral, transcending and including past and present.

Neohumanism thus aims to relocate the self from ego (and the pursuit of individual maximisation), from family (and the pride of genealogy), from geo-sentiments (attachments to land and nation), from socio-sentiments (attachments to class, race and religious community), from humanism (the human being as the centre of the universe) to neohumanism (love and devotion for all, inanimate and animate, beings of the universe).

The chapters

The book itself is divided into five parts.

Chapters by Marcus Bussey, Acharya Vedaprajananda, Ivana Milojević and Sohail Inayatullah theorize neohumanist education. In these chapters, educational process is set within the context of globalisation and the theoretical domains of critical theory and social futures.

The second part is focused on the spiritual in education. Chapters by Tobin Hart and Marcus Anthony explore the genealogical and epistemic traditions that have defined the spiritual in education and with which neohumanist theory dialogues. A further chapter by Ivana Milojević offers insights into how neohumanism is situated in the discourse of collective violence pedagogy, with specific reference to the relationship of transformative educational practice to both 'hard' and 'soft' versions of religion and constructions of the spiritual.

The third section of the book focuses on particular issues in educational futures. Included are chapters on partnership education by Riane Eisler, social cohesion by Marlene de Beer, speciesism by Helene Pederson, indicators of alternative education by Vachel Miller, the teaching of neohumanist history by Marcus Bussey and Sohail Inayatullah, and finally

Peter Hayward and Joseph Voros' role-playing game that provides an experiential sense of the implications of neohumanism for leadership.

Part Four presents two examples of neohumanist education in practice, with a case study by Ivana Milojević of a neohumanistic school and Mahajyoti Glassman's thoughts on how to teach neohumanism.

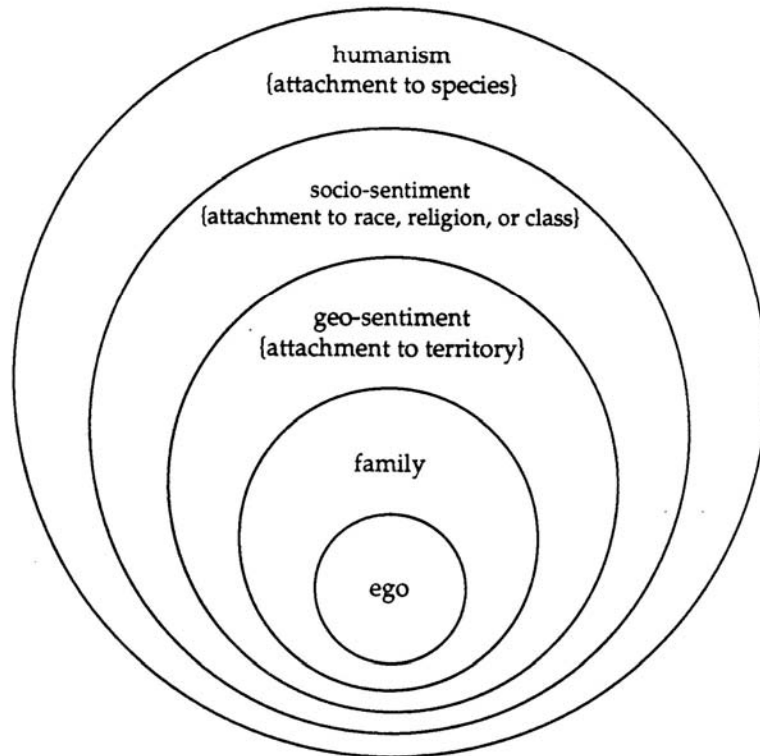
The book concludes on a futures note with an exploration of neohumanist educational scenarios by Sohail Inayatullah.

Interspersed in these parts are short Perspectives by Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar, Acharya Shambushivananda, and Acharya Maheshvarananda (interviewing Paulo Freire) and the book concludes with a short set of appendices.

We hope that this book will engage the intellect; however, our intention is that this process of engagement leads to its liberation. As Sarkar wrote many years ago: "*Sa' vidya' ya' vimuktaye*" or "Education is that which liberates". Thank you for joining us on this journey.

neo-humanism

{love and respect for all beings, animate and inanimate, in the universe}



Sarkar's neohumanism: the liberation of the intellect

THEORETICAL CONTEXT

Chapter 1 Mapping Neohumanist Futures in Education

Marcus Bussey

Problems of the future can no longer be ignored: they are part of the present. Ervin Laszlo

Cut off from his religious, metaphysical and transcendental roots, man is lost; all his actions become senseless, absurd, useless. Eugène Ionesco

The body, mind, and self of every individual have the potential for limitless expansion and development. This potentiality has to be harnessed and brought to fruition. Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar

... the underlying struggle for our future is not between the conventional polarities of right and left, religion and secularism, or capitalism and communism. Rather, it is between a mounting grassroots partnership resurgence that transcends these classifications and the entrenched, often unconscious, dominator resistance to it.

Riane Eisler¹

These four quotations, from individuals occupying different cultural spaces, challenge us to live and act reflectively and with a sense of purpose. Each writer represents something significant in the thinking and culture of the twentieth century. Each points to specific concerns that orient our thinking at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Essentially, we are faced with huge issues relating to the environmental, social, economic, and political contexts arising from the human domination of this planet. Neohumanist futures education offers a practical and ethical process to facilitate our engagement as a species seeking transformative skills to educate for tomorrow, today.

Neohumanist futures work

To think about the future is important as it gets us to think about ourselves, our hopes and fears, and the plans we have. As cultures we have a similar relationship with the future. The dreams of the past in many ways inhabit

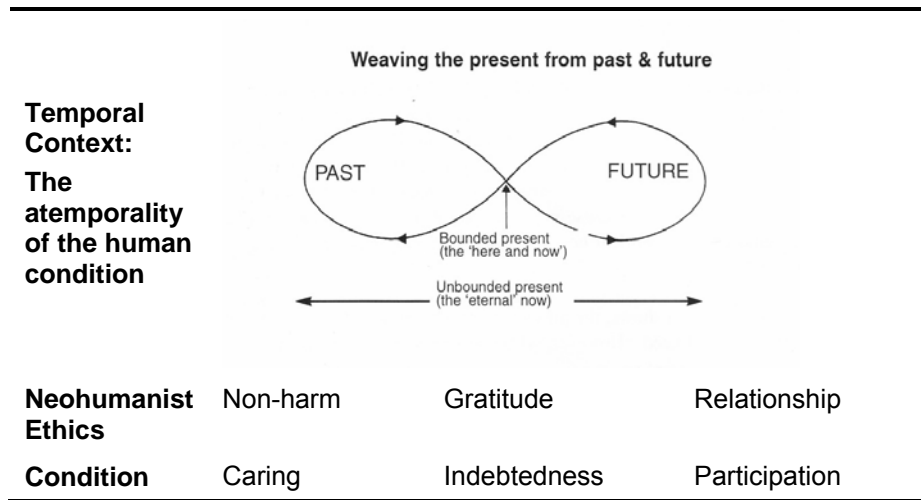
the present:² take for example space travel and telecommunications. Once such things were the subjects of speculations and imaginative literature, today they are a reality.

Futures is a form of thinking that questions the future in order to help us better see the present.³ When we do this we come to appreciate our role in the creation of the future, and with this understanding to also actively work towards creating futures that we would wish for future generations. In this way neohumanist futures work *anticipates* through the application of foresight; *critiques* in order to unpack the assumptions and beliefs civilizations and individuals have that implicitly create the future; and *participates* in the emerging reality by engaging with the social and personal dimensions that stamp the future with form and potential.

For those engaged in educational policy, or social policy in general, and also those establishing or working in neohumanist schools, neohumanist futures is about understanding that we have a choice about which future we will live and which future we will bequeath to future generations. With choice, of course, comes responsibility. Also some choices are more illusory than real; we have inherited conditions that require direct action today. The indebtedness of the human condition is such that when we are aware of it and the implications of the atemporal and impersonal relationship that this implies we can only, in good faith, act for the betterment of the human and planetary condition.

To walk the earth lightly, internalising the principal of non-harm, to live gratitude and to work always in the knowledge of our relationship to the physical, organic and human worlds is the heart of neohumanist ethics and underpins all such futures work. Such an ethic is based on the recognition that the human condition is no longer simply the province of human beings. It is, in the strict sense, a neohumanist condition that incorporates past, present and future, and also the planetary context. It opens up educational contexts in which speciesism can be addressed along with other cultural habits arising from the human tendency to view the world as a resource. In sum, the human condition is a spiritual Gaian phenomena.

Figure 1 offers an overview of neohumanist ethics as a basis for futures work in education.



Source: Image from R. Slaughter with M. Bussey⁴

Figure 1: Neohumanist ethics

What empowers and activates this neohumanist sensibility is the cultivation of an impartial love that registers as a spiritual resource rather than as partial or possessive expression of ‘natural love’.⁵ Love and the spiritual practices that sustain it are central to neohumanist futures work yet they remain in the background, because they are inner personal processes that cannot be legislated. This inner dimension of the human is easily overlooked but is at the heart of an alternative vision of communicative action,⁶ one that rests on the intrapersonal, that builds on silence as a valid process and thus embraces as equal all non-linguistic activity rather than privileging intellect and language as the central measure of sentience and consciousness.

Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar sums this up clearly:

Neohumanism includes within its scope not only human beings and animate creatures, such as plants and animals, but also all inanimate entities as well, for the scope on neohumanism extends down to the smallest particles of sub-atomic matter...Why should the love and affection of developed human minds be restricted to human beings only?⁷

The roots of neohumanism

The neohumanist worldview is the result of a fusion of traditions that are rooted in historically different civilisational processes. This fusion has the potential to revitalize the intellectual and ethical orientations inherent in

each of these civilizations, leading in turn to the emergence of a qualitatively new orientation to the social, cultural and ethical dimensions that define meaning and the purpose of human existence.⁸

Neohumanism as a concept was developed to give form to the recognition that we needed a new narrative to provide the inspiration and the tools to transform our selves and our future. It offers a clear methodology that hinges on an activated critical spirituality that complements the critical method that underpins the most proactive and vibrant areas of futures research.

Rooted in a distinctive fusion of Western humanism, and its derivative traditions of Romanticism, socialism and Enlightenment empiricism, with the ancient Indic episteme of Tantra⁹ it proposes an holistic view of life that is philosophical in nature but practical in effect. One cannot be a neohumanist just by espousing the philosophy, because at heart neohumanism is an ethical system that actively situates one in the thick of life.

This civilisational fusion brings to neohumanism a flexibility that is well suited to poststructural concerns that acknowledge both depth and discourse as the epistemological underpinnings of human agency and that these concerns are central to any consideration of consciousness. Thus the methodology of neohumanism is scientific in nature but deeply metaphysical in origin, offering as Sohail Inayatullah puts it, “an integration of the rational and the intuitive”.¹⁰

Education for liberation

Neohumanism is best understood in the context of a holistic or spiritual critical pedagogy. Its Tantric roots invoke the Sanskrit motto: *Sa vidya Ya Vimuktaye*: “Education is that which liberates”. This motto refers to the physical, intellectual and spiritual domains of human life. The mythic world of Tantra, the world of Shiva, Krishna and the battlefield of the Kurukshetra, is a ceaseless flow of energy moving between stagnancy and transformation; liberation in this context is a process as much as a goal and calls upon all to wage a struggle against physical, social and spiritual impediments to the realisation of a just world which fosters both collective and individual potential.

Seen in this light, we but need to change our theoretical and civilisational lens in order to see neohumanist educational theory and practice following in the footsteps of the critical pedagogical tradition. This point can easily be established with reference to the central themes of social justice,

reflective action and a commitment to practical, not theoretical engagement with the real-life issues of teaching *in situ* found in the heart of critical pedagogy.¹¹

It is important to realize that a name tells a story and that in the context of critical pedagogy the word 'critical' does not mean to criticize. It means to look beneath the surface of the taken for granted, to question assumptions and to ask the telling questions: 'Who benefits from things as they are?', and of course, 'Who loses?'. As a way of approaching the world it is characterised broadly by its commitments to social justice and universal ethics.¹² As such, the term can only be loosely defined. I like the descriptive definition given by Symes and Preston here:

[Critical pedagogy] is an orientation, not a closed paradigm; it is a way of addressing problems, not a set of answers; it is ready to be amended at any time; it is therefore somewhat resistant to precise statement of how it is to be implemented; it is truly 'educational' in the etymological sense of the word, leading out to new and revised forms... Critical pedagogy is committed to engaging social realities (the pragmatic impulse) but it is not to be bound by them, just as it sees no reason to apologize for a visionary dimension (the romantic impulse). Indeed, in the quest to distil from contemporary social theory an adequate basis for education policy and practice, the emphasis on utopian praxis is essential.¹³

Applied neohumanism

Neohumanism shares this utopian dimension; it is a form of what critical pedagogue Henry Giroux calls "concrete utopianism".¹⁴ Such a vision serves as a catalyst for engagement (praxis), generating the momentum for developing the visionary energy to describe and strive for the 'good life' well lived. Yet critical pedagogy is not the only stream that converges in the neohumanist tradition. There is also a healthy dose of postcolonial critique in which the privileges and oversights of a Eurocentric academic and theoretical tradition are challenged.¹⁵ The fingerprints of feminism can also be seen here as we find the gendered and partial narratives of patriarchy overthrown and new models of thought and action proposed.¹⁶ There is also a poststructural sensibility present that allows the aspiring neohumanist to challenge narrative, seeing it as layered and causal in nature. And beyond the poststructural lies the indigenous sensibility of an ecological and mystical kind. Tantra here is the most potent strand, in the

hands of P. R Sarkar it functions almost as an anti-narrative that merges *vidya* and *avidya* (knowledge that leads to liberation versus knowledge that leads back into bondage) in a transcendent social theory that weaves human struggle and consciousness into an ever unfolding cosmic drama.

Thus we find that neohumanism is both critical and spiritual, analytic and synthetic, merging as it does the scientific rigor of the West with the integrative embrace of the East. To step beyond the theoretical maelstrom, we find the neohumanist individual bringing together an ethical sensibility, a desire to serve, with a deep awareness of belonging. It is difficult to know if there is an order of appearance, I suspect that they emerge differently according to an individual's personality. What is clear however is that there are different processes available to us that help establish us in the neohumanist way.

There is no doubt that *sadhana*, the Sanskrit term for the 'struggle' associated with the good fight, or a contemplative practice of some kind is essential. Life-style folds into this and becomes a method of its own. Awareness grows out of theoretical immersion in the pool of neohumanist specific material and also in a broadening awareness of the theoretical and historical context of the neohumanist philosophy. Beyond this there is the labour of love, applied neohumanism as service, which instils in us an awareness of body, working with mind and with soul towards a worthy end. The utopic stance of an end worth striving for inspires and generates hope in the hearts of those engaged in developing a neohumanist orientation to life and teaching. Work in itself can be a creative expression but singing, painting and artistic expression of all kinds kindle joy and, when shared with a community of kindred souls, quickens the joy and commitment to go ever deeper.

The critical domain of neohumanism focuses on unpacking the structures that confine and limit us. It does so against a backdrop of universal humanism that challenges the authority of culture, tribe class and nation-state. Neohumanism offers consciousness as an absolute to which we are all working, in the same way as the cultural critic John Ralston Saul described 'practical humanism' as "the voyage towards equilibrium without the expectation of actually arriving there".¹⁷ This journey becomes both the defining feature of our humanity and the driving force behind all ethical activity. In this sense human activity is an ongoing struggle to become more conscious, to go ever beyond the confines of self and custom by a rigorous application of the ethical principals of neohumanism. This self-referentiality, what Iris Murdoch calls "the circular nature of

metaphysical argument”,¹⁸ may seem dubious until it is placed within the context of a scientific methodology which saves it from becoming a mere dogma.

In this context, life itself becomes a laboratory in which we test our ethics and, because neohumanism is imbued with the spirit of both West and East, we find in it scope to allow for the extroversial energy of enacted living, the inherent dynamism of the West to explore and question, and the introversial quest, the East’s drive to penetrate to the heart of things through a reflective and meditative empiricism, which perpetually seeks to expand human consciousness through inner reflection and the identification of self with a universal stance while putting to the test all received truths through an interior processing of reality in which the body/mind acts as the microcosm of the world.

Mapping the Western roots of neohumanist education

Having established the Tantric context of neohumanism, it is time to turn to the Western traditions with which it can be associated. All traditions are sources of power. This power has shaped and continues to shape human lives—the physical, emotional, intellectual, ethical and spiritual geographies of their existences—all over this planet. Essentially this power rests on its right to define the ‘real’. Neohumanist futures stress the importance of understanding and engaging with the metaphors and values that shape traditions. It is these metaphors and values that open or close societies and individuals to change, allowing or disallowing transformation in different areas.

No personal or social ‘event’ occurs in a vacuum. How schools respond to futures issues, concerns, methods and values depends on where they are situated within the history of ideas. When we look at schooling systems from this perspective we discover a number of traditions. Some are more politically and economically favoured than others both because they support the *status quo* and because they make sense within the context of late capitalist society. This sense making is important because some systems are almost invisible as a result of the dominance of a specific worldview.

Each paradigm hinges on how we define humanity, the purpose of education, and the role of schooling within society. It is important to recognize also that all traditions emerge from recognition of an inherent and powerful defining characteristic of humanity. **Table 1** outlines the

major educational traditions that have shaped Western educational discourse.

Table 1: The major educational traditions in Western educational discourse

	<i>Humanist</i>	<i>Utilitarian</i>	<i>Romantic</i>	<i>Democratic</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Spiritual</i>
Form	Liberal	Vocational	Individual	Social	Ecological	Holistic
Metaphor	Mind	Hand	Culture	Contract	System	Spirit
Verb	Imagine	Make	Create	Consent	Connect	Relate
Core Value	Justice	Order	Passion	Freedom	Sustainability	Transcend

The first two columns set the context for the dominant understanding of education in the West. Humanists, who focus on the high culture of civilisations, emphasise the intellectual engagement with products of culture deemed of value: books, music, art, philosophy, mathematics, etc. The interest here is profound but more abstract than practical. Advocates of a utilitarian education on the other hand, claim that we should learn to become effective members of the adult world; and that this effectiveness is measured by our productive capacity in the workforce. The emphasis here is on practical skills and competency in the sciences and mathematics. Much of the intellectual engagement with pure ideas that is honoured by humanists is devalued in this tradition. Within utilitarianism the dignity of labour is often affirmed but in the capitalist context it is usually the economic value of labour that is esteemed. Recent developments in education have witnessed a battle between these two traditions with the utilitarians at the moment gaining the upper hand.

What is clear is that each tradition listed in the table has a different understanding of the child and where authority lies. Each tradition identifies certain human truths and draws on specific histories that have lead us, as a globalizing civilisation, to where we are today. In this sense, each tradition tells an important story: a story that neohumanist educational futures needs to listen to in order to fully engage the human potential.

The question of authority

Looking at authority, where it lies and how it is expressed, helps us understand why education systems function as they do, why there is so much resistance in schools and why concepts such as failure and

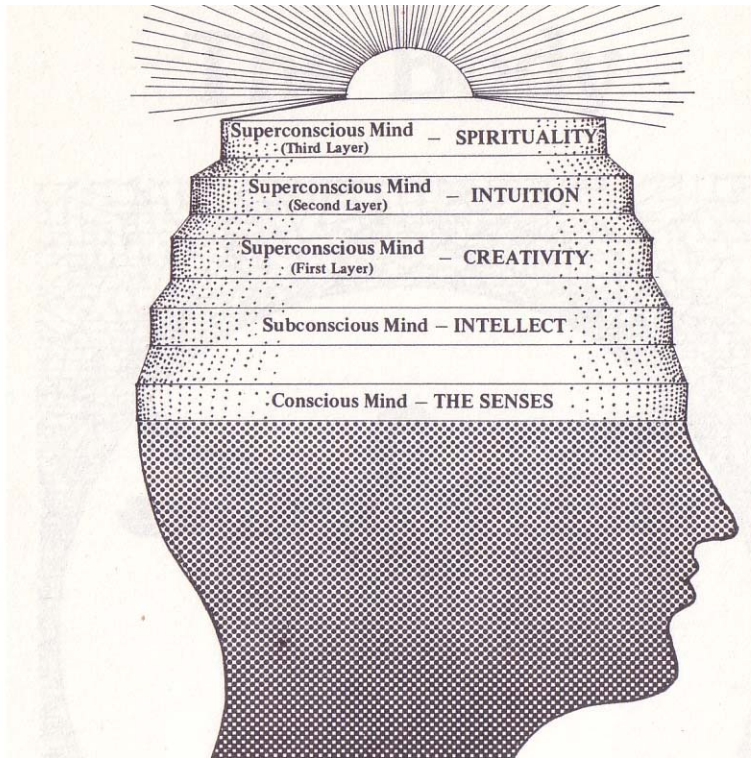
accountability are so pervasive at present. **Table 2** takes the traditions and identifies sites of authority that determine the context and limit of learning, establish a grammar or set of rules that define that nature of the language and the focus of the educational project.

Table 2: Sites of authority in educational traditions

	Humanist	Utilitarian	Democratic	Romantic	Green	Spiritual
Site of Authority	Text, Intellect and Imagination; Tradition	Patriarchal; Rules and Traditions	Consensus— Popular Authoritarianism	Heart and Ego	Consensus— The Commons and Future Generations	Gnosis and tradition; Master and Disciple
Tag	Liberal	Vocational	Community	Alternative	Sustainable Gaian	Shamanic Gnostic

Each position however is rooted in sets of not mutually exclusive values that determine how we orient ourselves to life, learning and teaching. The great Romantic philosopher, Jean-Jacques Rousseau held individual experience to be the seat of authority. His was a deeply child centred philosophy. “Hold childhood in reverence...Give nature time to work before you take over her business”.¹⁹ He had little time for pure academia, for the tricks of intellect, nor did he care for the mediocrity of the utilitarian position. His romantic thirst for the experience of life, lead him to assert “Things! Things! I cannot repeat it too often. We lay too much stress upon words; we teachers babble, and our scholars follow our example”. He went on, “Let all lessons of young people take the form of doing rather than talking; let them learn nothing from books which they can learn from experience”.²⁰ This romantic position stood as an alternative to traditional forms of education and inspired both Maria Montessori and Rudolph Steiner when establishing their educational models.

Neohumanist education attempts to offer a synthesis of these positions. It does so by offering a radically comprehensive definition of mind. **Figure 2** depicts mind as layers of consciousness. In doing so it draws on Tantra as a science of mind and reflection whose deep insights into the human condition inform both Buddhism and Hinduism.



Source: Ananda Mitra Avadhutika²¹

Figure 2: Mind as layers of consciousness

These layers, known in Tantra as *kosas*, identify specific aspects of human reality.²² Holistic education needs to engage all layers if it is to fulfil its mandate. Neohumanist education recognises that all aspects of mind are of equal importance and that to over emphasise any one at the expense of the others leads to imbalance in both the personal and social world.

Furthermore, the *kosas* are seen as an ideal curricular ordering device and have been used as such in recent developments in neohumanist pedagogy (Appendix 1).

The question of discipline

Where authority is placed determines how schools discipline and assess students. There are silent but extremely powerful links between history, class, power and authority as it is played out in any civilisation. Bell hooks puts it bluntly: “our ways of knowing are forged in history and relations of power”.²³

Discipline, however, can be a truly liberating and wonderful experience. This beauty is built on a sense of order and purpose, it is ethical at the core and when enacted builds trust and joy into our lives. When discipline matches the needs of individuals, it builds their self esteem and empowers them to engage with their life's true purpose: the ever deepening of their relationship with the divine.

Sarkar points out that the natural order that is discipline is essential for any system to function and expand.²⁴ In this sense indiscipline is not a problem for external authority but for the individual and society in terms of facilitating the potential to generate futures that fulfil their neohumanist potential. Central to this realisation is a shift from alienated individual to a self, contextualised in a living web of relationships. Part of the neohumanist agenda is to facilitate this awareness and shift the responsibility for loving discipline from external authority (hard ego) to inner personal and social processes.

The decline of the ego marks the movement of consciousness from terrified (therefore dangerous) isolation to strong (loving/trusting) inclusion. This movement is from unit consciousness to holistic consciousness. Neohumanist educational philosophy is focused on this movement as the expression of human *dharma**—the natural evolution of consciousness is the defining feature of humanity—and fosters this movement by exploring the inter-relationship of consciousness with society and the phenomenal universe.

Neohumanist futures recognises that discipline is not primarily about external control of the 'other'. It is a discipline that ideally emerges from within, but needs to be structured through *practice* and a sense of *mission*. Primarily such 'practice' is rooted in love of both self and other. Our indebtedness is anchored in this love-connection as the debt was sown by indiscipline that at root is born of selfishness and a lack of awareness of the interconnectivity of life.

Global education

The holistic nature of neohumanist education also makes neohumanist futures relevant to the emerging global learning environment. Such an environment has the potential to be either colonising or participatory in nature. Neohumanist education builds on local cultural and economic

* Sanskrit word with no clear English equivalent: roughly it means, 'natural propensity' or 'essential characteristic'. See also the Glossary of Sanskrit terms at the end of this book.

patterns while holding a global vision for humanity as an integrated, sustainable system of ecological and cultural networks that balance global needs with local imperatives.

The local is too often overlooked in educational thought as the 'big picture' is more exciting than the practicalities of establishing schools on the ground. The intimate relationship between neohumanism and the participatory economic theory of PROUT[†] however balances the temptation of theorists to forget the local. Learning cooperatives of all kinds have a direct relevance for neohumanist educational futures that may begin with schools but will foster local relevance as a source of social renewal and as a catalyst for sustainable economics and agriculture.

Neohumanism brings together action, imagination, knowledge and ethics in order to create the optimal conditions for sustainable human activity. These four characteristics are synthesised with a spiritual outlook and commitment to libratory practice, thus it moves us towards what Marcus Anthony calls integrated intelligence.[‡] This libratory practice in turn links with the PROUTist commitment to co-operative development, self-reliance and spirituality. The links here are profound because it is too easy to think in the habit of disciplines and see economics as one activity and education as another. The transdisciplinary nature of neohumanism, demonstrated by its close links with PROUT economic and social theory, give it the flexibility and critical edge to be effective as a vehicle for the emergent global environment which ultimately fosters fluid knowledge networks that sustain the knowledge economy.

Focus on learning cultures and a readiness to learn

When we define learning as a fluid process it no longer seems appropriate to confine it to disciplinary pathways and social structures that are simply 'schools'. Neohumanist educational futures liberates us from the narrow confines of education as just a systemic act and returns it to lived cultural processes that span the divide between academic heights and the joys of practical activity. The basic premise here is that learning happens as we live. It happens actively in the family, with friends and at school. It also happens passively via a range of media and through what is commonly

[†] For more on PROUT see either P.R. Sarkar's PROUT in a Nutshell series or visit <http://www.proust.org/> also see Vadaprajnananda Chapter 3.

[‡] See Marcus Anthony, Education for Transformation, Chapter 4 of this text.

described as the 'hidden curriculum'. Learning is also relational and all learning is supported by forms of culture: some forms are positive, meaningful and *transformative*; other forms are toxic, meaningless and *formative*.

Teachers, students and their families can generate positive learning cultures when all concerned share in the learning process. In these contexts authority is shared, the joys and struggles are not born in loneliness, and though much learning is the result of personal existential journeys, there is a framework, a working context that supports this journey by allowing for mistakes, offering models of behaviour and values that support the diligence, passion and vision that motivates learning and sustains it over time. Ignorance in a neohumanist context is no longer the 'enemy' but is seen as motivational, curiosity is the corrective and knowledge a process of engaging with life.

Learning cultures hinge on a child's readiness to learn. There is no doubt that in principle all humans have the innate capacity to learn. What is less certain is if they have the freedom to learn. This freedom is an inner capacity. Until a child is freed from their inner 'demon' they can only learn in a partial and incomplete way.

What is at the root of a lack of inner freedom is a complex question. From a neohumanist perspective, some of it is simply their own life lesson—we all have these inner fault lines that we need, throughout life, to negotiate. Some of it is each individual's life history that compounds these inner fault lines. Children suffer either at the hands of others or as the result of the mishaps of life. They may have an abusive teacher or family members; they may be bullied by their peers; they may lose a loved one or experience any number of traumas. Readiness describes an individual's ability to overcome inner resistance, dismantle habits they have developed to avoid failure as 'taught' in traditions learning environments, and to access self confidence which feeds the will to learn.

So readiness to learn is a complex human algorithm. Every child is unique and therefore requires acceptance and love. But as a society there are also expectations. With these expectations come choices: personal and social choices. Neohumanist educational futures has a central preoccupation with choice and how we grapple with the forces that often silence possible choices and make them coherent and even plausible. Central to this deconstruction of the social imaginary is critical spirituality.

Critical spirituality

The critically spiritual perspective builds on the synthesis of four elements of human activity: action, imagination, knowledge and ethics. For sustainable educational practice to occur these are oriented around a spiritual perspective or orientation that strips away the instrumental accountancy of modern educational management and promotes deep relationship in order to achieve transformative development in students, rather than the calculative information banking and assessment measures in practice around the world today.

It takes as its starting point the recognition that critical pedagogy has failed to make the clear inroads into education we had hoped. It promised much but delivered little not because it was philosophically deficient but because it worked with a limited understanding of human consciousness. Critical pedagogy is concerned with the action, imagination, knowledge and ethics but has overlooked the spiritual as the source of transformative energy. It thus developed what Henry Giroux calls a language of critique but failed to simultaneously engage a language of possibility.²⁵

Critical spirituality addresses this deficit by accounting for the transformative force of spiritual processes in all significant critical activity. Neohumanist educational futures, by integrating the spiritual into all dimensions of the curriculum, not as a disciplinary imperative, but as a predisposition within learning towards wonder and awe, generates the learning culture that will best facilitate all involved in educational practice that privileges the possible over the critical and thus it allows for 'open multilayered futures' to have pride of place over 'closed and colonised futures' which too often are egoistic and partial.

When we imagine futures that are rich and diverse we are drawing on the critically spiritual capacity within us. This critically spiritual imagination is a central feature of neohumanist futures of all kinds. It has particular significance within the educational context because children learn best when their full range of faculties are engaged with the process, when they feel honoured and respected as co-creators of the future and when they feel the debt that cannot be repaid not as a burden of guilt but as a privilege that invites them into the learning circle that is life.

From who am I? to When am I?

It is useful to think about our roles as teachers, parents and students in the light of this question. The Australian Aboriginal elder Maureen Watson once reminded a group of government bureaucrats that they are 'ancestors

of the future'. We all need to be reminded of this salient fact when thinking about education that is sustainable and libratory.

Sohail Inayatullah²⁶ framed the above questions some years ago in order to remind us that we do not exist in simple linear time. We need to take into account that time is linear, cyclic and also spirula. When we do this we "find complementary roles for the individual, for structure and for the transcendental".²⁷ Furthermore we also need to acknowledge that the individual consciousness is a patterning of the past, the present and the promise of the future.

The energy that informs traditions, rooted in the past, saturates the meaning making dimension of culture and validates specific forms of reasoning, acting and imagining while invalidating others. Similarly the pressure of the present bears down on the individual to create current contexts that inform and constrain action and choice. The individual is thus in many senses a construction of past weights and present, immediate pushes. These forces are formidable and in many cultures well nigh insurmountable. If they are to be contested they need to be challenged by images of the future and a critically spiritual imagination. Neohumanist educational processes actively strengthen this imaginative resource.

The forces described here can be best understood when mapped using the futures triangle.^{§28} They are summed up in **Figure 3**.

Figure 3 maps the forces at work in our lives. How we answer the question of 'When are we?' determines the answer to the existential cornerstone of self: 'Who am I?'. From a neohumanist perspective the answer must begin with 'I am a spiritual being'. A spiritual being is reflective. When a reflective being recognises their connection to life and the world and thus avoids the trap of duality, then they become aware of their indebtedness to the past, the present and the future. In recognising the ties of the debt that cannot be repaid, we become active and transformative within the cultural and social setting that gives us meaning. Agency is thus returned and with it purpose, meaning and energy.

§ This method was developed by Sohail Inayatullah to map the forces that order the present and determine what individuals and societies understand to be possible and preferable.

When am I?

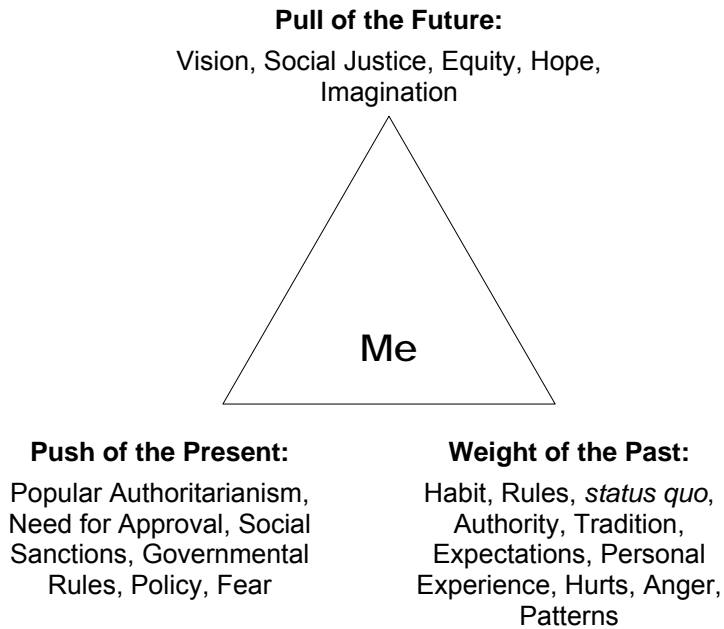


Figure 3: The futures triangle—When am I?

Conclusion

This chapter has been concerned with identifying the key features and the central concerns of neohumanist educational futures. Central to the treatment of neohumanist educational futures has been the understanding of the interconnectivity of existence in and across time and race. Neohumanism is simultaneously a practical yet subjective activity. It requires a special kind of imagination that is practical and practiced, yet critical and linked to clear philosophical principals while being inspired by the desire to liberate ourselves from the physical, intellectual and spiritual impediments that constrain human agency both at the individual and social levels. In working towards these goals it draws on both Western and Eastern educational traditions and proposes an alternative understanding of consciousness set within the Tantric tradition in order to reassess the possibilities of education and transformative social action.

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Chapter 2 Neohumanism, Globalisation and World Futures

Vedaprajnananda Avadhuta

A new philosophical approach could be an important component in the work of solving current and future ecological problems and in laying the groundwork for the political and economic structures of a future global society. Neohumanism, an ecologically and spiritually centered humanism, widens the perspective of traditional humanism and gives importance to all living beings. Neohumanism holds that all living beings have intrinsic or existential value, regardless of their utility to human beings.

From the perspective of neohumanism, economic development should not be achieved at the cost of eliminating the bio-diversity of the planet. Reforming the educational system and the mass media can accelerate lifestyle changes, which will encourage people to make a wiser utilisation of physical resources.

Similarly, from the standpoint of neohumanism, economic development should not come at the cost of social justice. Present patterns of economic globalisation, in which economic wealth and political power is concentrated in particular regions (the North) or in particular social classes could give way to a more equitable arrangement. Neohumanist thinkers see a decentralized economic system with an emphasis on balanced regional development and economic democracy as a cornerstone of a global society of the future. A corresponding political structure based on a party-less democracy and eventually including a world constitution and world government would complement the economic system.

Neohumanism

Traditionally, humanism has focused on inter-human relationships, and this viewpoint was instrumental in advancing the cause of social justice throughout the world. In the current era of environmental crisis, an expanded form of humanism, neohumanism, also considers humanity's relationship with other living beings and the entire eco-system. First formulated by P. R. Sarkar in 1982, neohumanism holds that the core human value is love for all living beings. Due to unfavorable social

circumstances, the expression of this value is often thwarted, and as a result humans engage in conflicts within their own species and with other species as well. Understanding the reasons why humanity's innate love is checked, and how it can be corrected is a key feature of the neohumanist approach.

Geographic sentiments

A great portion of human activity is guided by rationality. Humans study their environment and make decisions based on a logical understanding of their situation. However, not all human action is guided by rationality. People have various likes and dislikes that cannot be explained in terms of rational deduction alone. In the neohumanist analysis, these are known as 'sentiments'.

One of the most important human sentiments is the attachment that people feel for their particular geographic location. Geographic or **geo-sentiments** are evident in a farmer's intense feeling for each inch of land that he owns. The love one has for his or her home town or village is another example. As innocent as these first examples are, when politicians make use of this sentiment they often transform it into sub-sentiments that goad people to war.

Geo-patriotism, geo-economics and geo-religion are all examples that demonstrate the power of the geographic sentiment. In the case of **geo-patriotism**, the political leadership tells the body-politic that their country is the best, and that others are inferior. The propaganda used to support this idea may contradict geographical, economic, historical and cultural facts, but the passion aroused by this sentiment is enough to mobilize masses to fight bloody wars. World War II is a case in point.

Another variant of the geo-sentiment is **geo-economics**. Here the goal of the political leadership is to strengthen the economic position of their particular nation-state at the expense of others. Mercantilism, the sixteenth century policy of capturing the gold and other wealth of the New World and bringing it to Spain, Portugal and other European centers is an extreme example of geo-economics. The continued colonisation of the Americas, Africa and Asia by European countries up into the twentieth century can also be viewed as a manifestation of geo-economics.

Still another variant of the geo-sentiment is **geo-religion**. Here people believe that a particular location is a holy site of their faith and will not recognize the claims of others to this site. The continuing battle over the status of Jerusalem, stretching from the Crusades right up to the present

day, is an example of the power of a geo-religious sentiment in shaping human events.

From the standpoint of neohumanistic analysis, the only way to neutralize the often devastating effects of geo-sentiments is through education which will provide people with knowledge needed for them to make rational decisions in social, political and economic matters. Going further it is not merely the provision of facts which is necessary, but it is necessary for people to develop a consistently rational methodology in analyzing the claims of political leaders who may try to utilize geo-sentiments. When this rational spirit is achieved, then it is difficult for geo-sentiments to be used in the political arena.

Social sentiments

In the same way that one may develop an attachment to a particular geographic location, people also express strong identification with social groups to which they belong. A simple version of what neohumanism calls a **socio-sentiment** is the allegiance that a fan has for his or her favorite football team. But this allegiance can also be to a racial group, religious group, linguistic group or ethnic group.

As with geo-sentiments, socio-sentiments are often the cause of intense intra-human conflict. The problems of racism, extreme nationalism, xenophobia, etc., in the neohumanist analysis are considered to be manifestations of various socio-sentiments. As these socio-sentiments are deeper and more tenacious than the geo-graphic sentiments, neohumanist thought holds that mere education is not enough to put an end to racism, hatred of foreigners, persecution of minority groups, etc.

A particular kind of social outlook is needed in order to surmount the obstacles which socio-sentiments place in the way of social harmony. Broadly speaking, it is possible to observe two basic approaches that individuals have towards society. Some people live only for their own selfish pleasure and never think of the needs or rights of others. In neohumanistic terminology they are following the “**principle of selfish pleasure**”. The second approach which neohumanism identifies is where people have a determination to move towards their own personal goal but also make a resolve to eliminate the social inequalities that divide humanity. This approach is known as the “**principle of social equality**”, and is considered by neohumanists to be a cornerstone in efforts to build an equitable and just society. Sarkar explains that the “endeavor to advance towards the ultimate reality by forming a society free from all

inequalities with everyone of the human race moving in unison is called *Sama Samaj Tattva* (principle of social equality)".

The process of building thoughts and actions based on this principle of social equality is what neohumanist thinkers call "**proto psycho-spirituality**". When a human being identifies with a particular social group, his radius of thought is in a sense confined to the limits of that group. The conscious ongoing effort that people make to expand their radius of thought to include, not just a single social group but the entire universe, is a mental process (psychic) which culminates with love for all other beings, and hence neohumanists consider it to be a psycho-spiritual approach. If this process is cultivated and if the principle of social equality is also observed, neohumanists believe that is possible for people to overcome the socio-sentiments that cause social strife.

Ordinary humanism

The last obstacle, which neohumanists identify as a barrier to social harmony is "humanism". At first this statement may appear strange, but neohumanists here are referring to a degenerated form of humanism.

Throughout the world national leaders often try to put a smooth gloss or give a civilized explanation for their policies, even when they are in fact trampling human rights. Thus words like "peace", "democracy", "internationalism", "brotherhood", may be attached to actions that are in fact contrary to the real spirit of humanism. The tendency of humanism to turn into pseudo-humanism is the first defect which neohumanists cite in what they term "**ordinary humanism**".

According to neohumanists, the decline of humanism into empty slogans can be avoided through psycho-spiritual practices which ensure that "love for all beings" becomes a strong motivating force in an individual's life rather than an abstract phrase to which only lip-service is given. Neohumanist thinkers attribute the defects of ordinary humanism to the absence of such practices. As humanism traditionally grew in reaction to the excesses of religion, the secular shape that it took was bereft of any religious or spiritual base. From a neohumanist standpoint the 'baby' of spirituality was thrown out with the 'bathwater' of organized religion. Neohumanists recommend the practice of psycho-spiritual exercises (such as meditation) in order to provide people with a continuous source of inspiration, thereby enabling them to live up to humanist ideals.

Another shortcoming of traditional humanism is that while giving importance to human rights, it does not recognize the rights of plants and

animals. Neohumanists believe that the cruelties which animals have suffered down the ages, and humanity's current wanton destruction of flora and fauna, is evidence that the arena of human concern needs to be extended. In recent years the growth of the animal rights movements and the linking of social justice organisations with environmental causes is evidence that the base of humanism is widening.

The lack of importance given to plants and animals in traditional humanism is addressed by neohumanists who identify two sources of value in all plants and animals. There is **utility value** and **existential value**. Humans usually take care of plants and animals because of their **utility value**. If a cow gives milk, she has utility value to the human being and he feeds her and keeps her alive and well. If that same cow can no longer give milk, her utility value diminishes and the human being may no longer keep her alive. Neohumanists look not only to utility value but also to the existential value of any plant or animal. They say that regardless of a plant or animal's utility to humans, a plant or animal wants to maintain its own existence, and that humans should recognize this existential value. Thus from the neohumanist standpoint, if a plant or animal has no utility value or even negative utility value, its existential value argues for preserving it and against its destruction. This recognition of the existential value of plants and animals adds an ecological dimension to humanism.

Neohumanists believe that the deepening of humanism with a psycho-spiritual approach and the widening of humanism, with an ecological component makes it an appropriate tool in tackling the ecological and socio-economic problems facing an emerging global society.

Global society of the twenty-first century

As the twenty-first century opens, one of the key descriptive words for the new century has been "globalisation". Recently the issue of globalisation has caused a sharp polarisation around the world. Proponents of economic globalisation say that the implementation of free trade and the integration of the world economy will usher in a new golden age of prosperity for all. However, opponents of economic globalisation contend that it is a process that will only aggravate already deep chasms dividing the world's haves and have-nots. They also contend that the process of economic globalisation is running hand in hand with the increasing destruction of the environment and the homogenisation of culture.

While globalisation usually refers to economic globalisation, and a globalisation according to one particular style of economics and politics,

there are other possibilities. Hazel Henderson looks ahead to a society in which a strong civil sector exerts its influence to bring about social justice, to an economic system in which a thriving micro-enterprise sector brings about a better distribution of wealth and to the evolution of an effective system of global governance. Likewise, neohumanists also envision a global society based on common values of respect for all people and as well as for other living beings. Instead of a globalisation that destroys the environment and results in the imbalances of wealth, a global society in which the values of social justice and ecology both have a significant role to play is another possible scenario for the future. The emergence of such a global society would encompass changes in fundamental values, lifestyle as well in the economic and political strata.

Ecology, lifestyle, and culture

The emergence of a global economic system has been coupled with a corresponding deterioration of the world's eco-system. Lester Brown believes that some of the most important challenges of the twenty-first century lie in issues such as global warming, falling water tables, unsustainable use of water, declining productivity of oceans, loss of forest, and loss of species. He sees a battle of ecology *vs.* economics ahead. The UNDP report of 1998 backs up this view, noting that there is a now a downward spiral of the economy and the environment, forcing poor people to deplete the earth's resources in order to survive. The report elaborates this by citing that 12 per cent of animal species, 11 per cent of bird species and almost 4 per cent of fish and reptile species are now classified as threatened. In addition, 44 per cent of fish species are fished at their biological limits and 25 per cent of fish stocks are depleted or in danger of depletion. In its report of May 2006, the World Conservation Union (IUCN) lists more than 16,000 species that are at risk of extinction.

However, it is not only the poor who contribute to the pressure on the environment. Alan Thein Durning calculated that since 1940 Americans alone used up as much of the Earth's mineral resources as did everyone before them combined. He notes that, ironically, in this pursuit of material wealth, they have not increased their levels of happiness and satisfaction.

The pressure on the environment which humans exert in the form of deforestation, destruction of habitats of wild animals, destruction of wetlands, pollution of air and water, etc., could be alleviated with changes in lifestyle. A few examples of environmentally friendly lifestyle changes

are the use of public transportation (as opposed to the private automobile), the non-acquisition of unnecessary consumer goods, and changes in diet.

Although the increased use of public transport is a lifestyle change which individuals must make. Its implementation depends on public policy. Public transport must be made available if individuals are to use it. In the United States for example, public policy has long favored the development of roads and private automobiles. One of the problems in changing public policy is the power of vested interests (the older industries) that presently exert a considerable influence over the governmental process. The president of General Motors in the early 1950s said, "What's good for our country is good for General Motors and vice versa", and the powerful auto lobby has consequently exerted considerable influence on public policy. Thus, what appears to be a decision for individuals to make also involves a careful look at the economic and political system.

Mahatma Gandhi opined that "the earth has enough for every man's need, but not for everyman's greed". The curbing of greed is an individual change, which neohumanist thinkers believe is related to the very philosophy that underlies society. Alan Thein Durning observes that "the consumer society fails to deliver on its promise of fulfillment through material comforts because human wants are insatiable, human needs are socially defined, and the real sources of personal happiness are elsewhere", neohumanists also contend that the tremendous acquisitional thirst of humans can not be satisfied with material goods and that the desire to accumulate physical goods could be channelized in directions which would have a better effect on the environment and would also yield a more equitable distribution of wealth. The redirection of the thirst for material goods to intellectual or spiritual 'goods' is seen as a way to ease the pressure on the biosphere as well as to provide humans with a more satisfying way of life. Once again, what appears to be a personal choice of individuals to make also depends on support from the educational system and the mass media

In addition to its social and ecological impacts, the process of globalisation also is leaving its mark on human cultural expression. The UNDP report of 1998 stated that 3000 of the world's 6000 languages are "endangered". In her study of changes in the Indian region of Ladakh, Helena Norberg Hodge has warned that the process of economic globalisation is threatening to overrun local expressions of culture including language, dress, and diet, leaving the world culturally impoverished and in possession of one 'mono-culture'. P. R. Sarkar goes one step further and

calls it a pseudo-culture. He notes that exploitation is not only a physical act. He calls attention to **psycho-economic exploitation** in which the mass media infuses inferiority complexes in the mind of people and then the economic and political system takes advantage of a crippled population. This type of exploitation can only be curbed if both the mass media and the educational system remain independent and free from partisan political influence. Also, media and education ideally should be freed from the control of vested economic interests. These latter points would require substantial economic and political changes.

Progressive economics and social justice

Opponents of economic globalisation in its current form argue that the present economic system concentrates wealth in the hands of a few and within some regions at the expense of others. The UNDP reported that in 1993 the world's Gross Domestic Product totaled \$23 trillion of which \$18 trillion was in the developed countries and \$5 trillion was in the developing countries. They also observed that the poorest 20 per cent of the world's people saw their share of global income decline from 2.3 per cent to 1.4 per cent over the last 30 years. While proponents of conventional economics maintain that the widening of free trade and the free flow of capital around the world will create new economic opportunities for all, David Korten and Jan Knippers Black both call attention to the fact that the economic turnover of some of the largest multinational corporations is now greater than the GDP of many nation-states, and that socio-economic decision making has thus moved beyond the periphery of the usual democratic processes.

Neohumanists would like to see an economic system that addresses social welfare concerns and ecological needs as well as being efficient and modern. They see the best hope for achieving all of these aims in a system of **economic democracy** that is also known as the **Progressive Utilisation Theory (PROUT)**. Such a system they believe would lay the base for a harmonious and prosperous global society.

The concentration of economic wealth into fewer hands is addressed by PROUT in two ways. First, ceilings on wealth accumulation by individuals would be a basic feature of the system. Secondly, the patterns of ownership of economic enterprises would be changed from the current predominance of the limited stock company with 'absentee' stockholders. That is, in the PROUTist model of economics, most of the middle sized enterprises would be organized as cooperatives and the share-holders

would be the people who actually work in those enterprises. Very small enterprises with few workers dealing in non-essential goods would be privately owned. Large-scale key industries (transportation, defense, energy, etc.) would be managed by public boards or by local governments (in federal systems). Proponents of this three-tiered economy believe that it would provide a more equitable distribution of wealth and a more democratic process of economic decision making than is achieved under contemporary capitalism.

This model also addresses the lopsided aggregation of wealth in a few regions. It calls for the setting up of self-sufficient economic units with balanced economies. That is, the working population would be spread out in agriculture, agriculture-related, industrial and service sectors, rather than lumped into one sector. Currently there are many lesser developed countries where a large percentage of the work force is in agricultural sector and most manufactured products are imported from abroad. The self-sufficient units would be formed taking into consideration linguistic, cultural, geographical and economic considerations. They might not conform to present nation-states, many of which have been carved out of former colonial empires with no regard to actual economic or cultural conditions. When different self-sufficient areas reached similar levels of economic activity they might merge with others and in the long run the world could become one economic unit. Thus, according to this vision, globalisation will be reached following a process of steady local and regional activity.

Global governance

Neohumanist thinkers also envision political transformation which would complement and support changes in the economic system. As with economics, their approach is both local and global.

The twentieth century saw the extension of political democracy to most places in the world. However there are problems with the current forms of democracy practiced around the world. Wherever the standards of morality, education and socio-political knowledge of the electorate are not high, then democracy is often flawed. Neohumanists argue that the various governments should raise the standard of the electorate through education and other campaigns and monitor the results of these efforts through standardized tests of the electorate. Another suggested reform would require candidates to submit their platforms in writing and making these platforms legally binding (i.e., an elected official who went against

his stated platform would be subject to removal from office). Finally, neohumanist writers propose the setting up of a party-less form of democracy, where candidates run as individuals and not as members of a group ticket. These steps they believe would improve the standard of government from the local to the global level.

As the world becomes well-knit due to continued developments in transportation, communication and integrated economics, the need to have some form of global governance is keenly felt, especially in light of demands to address global ecological problems and to enforce basic human rights. Neohumanists are in the forefront of those who propose ways to bring about global government.

The experiments of the twentieth century (League of Nations and the United Nations) in this direction have not yet yielded a working system of global governance, as individual nations have never given up enough sovereignty to supra-national bodies to make this possible.

Neohumanist writers envision a gradual transition to global government. In the first phase a global body would make laws but local governments would carry them out. In the second phase administrative powers would also be given to the global body.

They also propose a two-chambered legislature in which one chamber would seat countries equally while in another seats would be allocated according to population.

In terms of social justice the most immediate benefit of such system will be to protect the human rights of minorities. Presently human rights problems in which minorities are involved are not amenable to international efforts as they are considered to be the 'internal affairs' of different nations. Under a system of global governance, this objection would no longer be valid.

Conclusion

Along with rapid changes in technology, the world is becoming a smaller place. It is not a question about whether there will be a global society in the twenty-first century. It is a question of what kind of global society will emerge. If present patterns of social outlook, economics, government and personal lifestyle remain unchanged then the nightmare scenarios of environmental collapse and social turmoil envisaged by some observers may yet come true.

That said, humanity also has the tools to forge a global society in which the conflict of economy and ecology is minimized, in which economic wealth is shared more equitably and in which the varieties of human cultural expression are allowed to flourish.

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Chapter 3 From Multiculturalism to Neohumanism: Pedagogy and Politics in Changing Futures

Sohail Inayatullah

Prior to the events of September 11th, in the West multiculturalism had come to mean better representation of minorities in public and private sector positions of authority and equal opportunity in hiring practices. ‘Tolerance’ for other^{*} racial, linguistic, and national groups had been the catch-phrase in the swing toward multiculturalism, in the search for a rainbow culture.

But while the right wing—focused on social protectionism—has been suspicious of this agenda, it is only recently that this suspicion has become open hostility and widespread throughout the world. In almost every nation today, it appears that there is a leader such as the former Speaker of the House of Representative of the USA, Newt Gingrich, who challenges the notion of multiculturalism.¹ Even more radical are the views of USA Senator Trent Lott who glorified segregation, arguing that this is where it went all gone wrong for the USA.[†] Earlier, Gingrich had argued that multiculturalism will destroy the idea of the American nation, indeed any nation. Multiculturalism, particularly, multicultural education, is evil. Most recently, Tom Tancredo, Republican Congressman, and fighter of illegal immigration into the USA, argued that illegal immigration with the cult of multiculturalism will lead to the end of the United States.² America will become “A Tower of Babel”.³

This attitude has become crystallized since the events of September 11th, 2001 in the USA, October 12, 2002 in Bali, and March 11, 2004 in Spain. From meaning more justice and fairness and representation of the other, multiculturalism has come to mean the portals by which the other re-

^{*} For more on this, and multiculturalism and the other, see the works of Ziauddin Sardar, in particular, Ziauddin Sardar, *Postmodernism and the Other: The New Imperialism of Western Culture*. London, Pluto Press, 1998.

[†] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trent_Lott; Lott did apologize and repudiated his earlier remarks. <http://archives.cnn.com/2002/ALLPOLITICS/12/13/lott.comment/index.html>

enters the Gates of Civilization, causing havoc and moral destruction. It is this fear that has led the Australian Prime Minister to state that he believes in Santa Claus: that is, the myths of the West must remain exclusive and not denigrated because of rational secular culture or because of the non-Christian views of others. Once Santa Claus is challenged, what else is left! The threat to the Western canon has become a threat to the West itself. Writes Janet Albrechtsen in *The Australian*, the:

West's multiculturalism created conditions that encouraged the West's fanatical enemies. We were so busy being inclusive, denigrating our own culture, that we were not noticing what was happening. I suggested that Multicultural Man and his lazy cultural relativist thinking needed to be dismantled. A few others were saying the same thing. But not many.⁴

Tancredo agrees. "We will never be able to win in the clash of civilizations, if we don't know who we are. If Western civilization succumbs to the siren song of multiculturalism, I believe we're finished."⁵

While it is easy to dismiss right wing leaders as merely representing a type of fascism, in fact multiculturalism does threaten the nation-state (and religion). Bounded by the ideals of liberalism and individuality, one version of God, nation as culture, in the context of an efficient marketplace—the nation-state, if it were to yield to the demands of other cultures and civilizations, would find its very cultural existence threatened. It, the nation-state, would either (continue to) undergo a violent breakdown or it could transcend its own limitations and become multi-civilizational and global, and even in the long run create a Gaia of civilizations⁶—a garden of cultures as P. R. Sarkar has imagined.⁷ In a paradoxical sense, Gingrich and others around the world are thus right. Multiculturalism is evil but only in the context of exclusive and narrow collective representations of community such as the nation-state, religion and, indeed, civilization itself.

For those committed to creating and participating in pedagogy that allows for the authentic voices of other civilizations—that overcome the limitations of the ego-bounded rationality of the European Enlightenment—multicultural education is about transcending the text of nationalism and creating a new type of planetary globalism. This is a globalism not confined to the economic but a globalism where humans reflects on who they are, where they are going—this is the creation of a global mind, even a global soul. This then is a plea for the recognition of differences that are part of the postmodern thrust but not its conclusion; a

climax neither in capitalist homogeneity nor postmodern nihilism but in life-embracing unity: neohumanism.

Neohumanist pedagogy

Neohumanist pedagogy cannot be timid. It must:

- (1) Challenge conventional accounts of history focused only on kings and warriors and the empires and nations they reside over (at the expense of workers, intellectual history, periods of peace and safety). Thus, neohumanist teaching is focused on macrohistory, mapping the grand patterns of history, ensuring that the voices of the many are included.
- (2) Challenge economic accounts of history that externalize society and the environment. Thus, neohumanist teaching includes the environment in all assessments.
- (3) Challenge teaching that is focused on current events, seeing them as disconnected news items, ignoring deeper structures and worldviews that cause these events. Thus, neohumanist teaching is focused on depth—critically unpacking the given world.
- (4) Challenge pedagogy that focuses only on structure, often reinscribing a view that reality is only “out there” and not in our own self practices. Thus, neohumanist teaching is focused on integrating the outer worlds with the inner worlds (the meanings we give to reality).
- (5) Challenge accounts of gender—fairy tales, for example—that reinscribe narrow roles for women and create new stories that inspire without propagandizing. Thus, neohumanist teaching is focused on unpacking gender hegemony and creating partnership.
- (6) Challenge pedagogy that assumes only one future, always focused on one way of doing things. Instead, neohumanist teaching focused on innovation, how things can be different, and how mistakes in the past could have been avoided (the futures not taken). Thus, neohumanist pedagogy is focused on alternative futures.
- (7) Challenge pedagogy that creates victim hood—at any level, the litany, the structure, the worldviews or the myths we live by, that is, ultimately neohumanist education searches for the possibility of agency, even to the point of education (content, structure, process) co-creation.

Thus, neohumanist education is focused on personal, social and spiritual empowerment. It challenges traditional dynastic accounts of history; economism; flatland news analysis that avoids deeper causes;

externalizing at the expense of inner meanings; sexism; narrow accounts of choice and possibility; and content that creates passive acceptance of social, economic, environmental, political and psychological reality.

Multiculturalism and neohumanist pedagogy is a positive step from the wasteland of uniculturalism (of any tradition, whether Islamic, Indic, Confucian or Western) but certainly not its conclusion—a transcultural neohumanism is the next step.

But what has worried many (in North and South alike) is that a pedagogy of difference will eliminate the nation–state developmentalist project, will undo the hard fought gains of the Enlightenment and its myth of progress. For the West, multiculturalism means that the Other—for example, as Woman, as Muslim, as Taoist, as Aboriginal—will have categories of self, community and God, represented as part of normal day–to–day pedagogy—their ways of seeing the world will be legitimised and seen as a potential self, a valid future, instead of as backward—to be studied by anthropologists or placed in the category of ethnic studies by Ministries of Education. How we time the world (calendar); What are appropriate school holidays?; How should the school day begin (prayer, meditation or national anthem)?; What are appropriate ways of knowing, including what is the role of emotional and spiritual intelligence in testing?; and, What is the appropriate headdress, if any, and what of uniforms?—will all be up for grabs.

For Third World nations, the fear is that this means that dissent (instead of obedience, rote learning) will become part of the curriculum, that, for example, Indians in Pakistani textbooks are not constructed as evil money traders or that Pakistanis in Indian textbooks are not constructed as fanatical warriors.⁸ This could lead to a terminal failure for the national development project—the nation stays cohesive through an external enemy, without which, diversity would lead to chaos. That each person has these multiple selves is ignored, thus creating the hope of national and individual unity.

The multicultural position that the views of religious and cultural minorities should not be seen as threatening to the dominant religion or State ideology but as part of national richness (outside and inside) has yet to become the norm. Opposition is still seen as dangerous to the post-colonial self, since the self remains fragile, in inferiority to the West (though the dramatic changes in East Asia and now the rise of India are certainly seeing a new found confidence). As well, multiplicity of perspectives can lead not to a tolerance of others, but texts that call for the

elimination of the other, as with many madrasses in Pakistan. Security becomes primary.

West and non-West, North and South resist multiculturalism largely as in the long run it calls for a transformation of the nation–state and a transformation of the feudal nature of knowledge—one way of doing things with a clear hierarchy of who is above and who is below, what counts and what does not count. In Confucian society, for example, it challenges the unquestioned power of the professor, seeing his knowledge and his favoured location in hierarchy as only one way of designing the structure of knowledge—there are alternatives, peer to peer learning, for example.

Beyond shallow liberalism

However, a civilizational renaissance is not about moving from a simple plea to pluralism. Pluralism in democratic society is about many voices vying for attention. The best ideas win out. The role of the teacher is to fairly present differing perspectives. However, pluralism remains contextualised by liberalism. Thus pluralism as currently valorised, is shallow. A deeper pluralism would ask: how do differing civilizations articulate the rights of the Other and what are the points of unity in these differences? How is the Other not an identity 'out there' but part of our disowned selves.

For example, while in liberal pluralism all values are open to individual choice, in Hawaiian civilization one does not choose *aina* (land not real estate) or one's genealogical relationships with ancestors. They are deep givens. In Islamic civilization as well there are certain fundamentals that bound what is possible. In ancient Tantra, as articulated by Shrii P. R. Sarkar, before pedagogy begins there are moments of meditation. This permits the intellectual mind to become pointed, allowing the intuitive self greater understanding of the topic at hand. The mind is open to the new, fresh to other perspectives. Certainly daily Tantric (or any other type) meditation sessions are not what most modernist educators have in mind when arguing for 'multicultural education'. Most either prefer a secular model where the day begins with the national anthem or a religious model where prayer towards a particular deity announces one's allegiances. And yet, scientific data suggests that meditation in the morning would enhance creativity, inner peace, and indeed, intelligence.⁹

Neohumanist cultural education or deep multiculturalism is about creating structures and processes that allow for the expression of the many

civilizations, communities and individuals that we are in the context of a global planetary system.^{‡ 10} To begin this enormous task, as part of a new pedagogy, we must first contest the value neutrality of current institutions such as the library. For example, merely including texts from other civilizations does not constitute a multicultural library. Ensuring that the contents of texts are not ethnocentric is an important step but this does not begin to problematize the definitional categories used in conventional libraries. We need to ask what a library would look like if it used the knowledge paradigms of other civilizations? How would knowledge be rearranged? What would the library floors look like? In Hawaiian culture, for example, there might be floors for the Gods, for the *aina* and genealogy. In Tantra, empirical science would exist alongside intuitional science, creating integrative knowledge. Floor and shelf space would privilege the superconscious and unconscious layers of reality instead of only focusing on empirical levels of the real. In Islam, since knowledge is considered *tawhidic* (based on the unity of God), philosophy, science and religion would no longer occupy the discrete spaces they currently do.

Of course, the spatiality of 'floors' must also be deconstructed. Information systems from other civilizations might not privilege book-knowledge, focusing instead on story-telling and dreamtime as well as wisdom received from elders/ancestors (as in the Australian Aboriginal episteme) and perhaps even 'angels' (either metaphorically or ontologically).

A multicultural library might look like the World Wide Web but include other alternative ways of knowing and being. Most certainly, knowledge from different civilizations in this alternative vision of the 'library' would not be relegated to a minor site or constituted as an exotic field of inquiry such as Asian, ethnic or feminist studies, as are the practices of current libraries. The homogeneity of the library as an organizing information system must be reconstructed if we are to begin to develop the conceptual framework of multicultural education. To do so, we must further articulate the differences that define us.

[‡] Ray and Anderson develop evidence that there is large scale support for this position (at least pre 9/11).

Metaphors of difference

Another point of entry to understanding difference is to investigate the metaphors we use to navigate how we see our futures.[§] For example, while the image of the unbounded ocean might represent total choice to American culture—for Muslims, the image of the ocean is seen as absurd. It is direction, toward Mecca, that is more important. Choice is bounded by tradition and the collectivity of the *Ummah* (the global community). For those within the Tantric worldview, it is the image of Shiva dancing between life (knowledge) and death (ignorance) that is the defining metaphor. Shiva represents simultaneous destruction and creation—the cosmos and self in purposeful process. Within modernity, it is the dice representing randomness that holds sway on most. Things in themselves have no meaning or purpose. It is what humans choose to signify that is critical for moderns and postmoderns.

In education, these metaphors are expressed as the student is an empty vessel that must be filled (either by the Star teacher or more often by the Ministry of Education, sinful or evil and must be punished (by the rod), or as in neohumanism, part of a garden to be watered, nurtured (or pruned when appropriate). These deeper metaphors are often decisive in terms of which educational strategies are successful. They also define the success of alternatives such as neohumanistic education. That is, if the dominant societal metaphor is that of the child as sinful then the ecological gardening metaphor will have foundational challenges in taking root. First steps might be to till the soil, engage in values discussions with parents, local areas, educational systems.

Differences in metaphors not only represent deep structures in terms of how civilizations view self, other, nature but also how we ‘language’ the world. Language is not neutral but a carrier of civilizational values, actively constituting the real. Language has become a verb, an interactive practice in the creation of new worlds. For example, it is not so much that many of us now speak English but rather that we ‘english’ the world in our knowing and learning efforts.

Multicultural education is thus not only about learning and teaching more than one language but also about seeing how languages construct worldviews. Committed to avoiding the pitfalls of cultural relativism, a

[§] These observations are based on hundreds of futures workshops done around the world. For more on this, see Sohail Inayatullah, *Questioning the Future*, Tamsui, Tamkang University Publications, 2005.

critical pedagogy would also investigate the epistemic costs associated with any particular language and civilization, asking which perspectives are enriched, which impoverished? We thus argue for a pedagogy of deep difference, not a shallow interest focused on advertisements that create a mythology of 'we are the world'.

These differences are critical not only at the civilizational level but at national and individual levels. How we constitute knowledge is not neutral but based on the structures of various knowledge cultures. American knowledge culture is far more focused on issues of empirical operationalization than in Indic culture, where theory *a la* spiritual knowledge is, in general, more important. The traditional vertical relationship between guru and disciple is central. German intellectual culture, while equally hierarchical, is more concerned with the great philosophies, with the thoughts of the Masters—Hegel, Kant, Marx, for example. True knowledge is about understanding these schools of thought. The Indic model has seen minor debates on the nature of the truth, but overall agreement on the mission—*ananda***—and that reality is spiritual at some level and that individuals can access this reality.

How individuals search for information and truth within these cultures also differs. In one, the search is for the best university, in another for the best guru, in the third for the best thinker. Of course, modernity has been about eliminating different styles and universalizing them in the university: where knowledge and non-knowledge have come to be defined by technocratic specialists; where dissent is manufactured by hierarchical experts; and, where all differences must be scrutinized by knowledge specialists. However, the structure of the past does not so easily disappear. For example, in modern secular Indian culture, the traditional structure remains with the State and elite academic institutions now playing the role of guru.

Even avoiding or allowing for civilizational and cultural differences, individuals learn differently. We know that some learn best from doing; others from theoretical lectures; and still others through visual media. Some prefer professorial lectures; others small groups, and some one-to-one interaction. Some are analytic, others are synthetic. Some are intuitive; others sense-based; others reason-based; and still others learn through authority. Some focus on *scientia* (thinking), others on *praxis*

** *ananda* in Sanskrit mean Bliss—it is both an end point for personal and social evolution and an internal state of God intoxication that comes as an act of divine grace.

(transformative action), others on *techne* (doing) and still others on *gnosis* (or contemplative seeing). Women and men also know and learn differently. In contrast to the individualistic style of men, research seems to support that women prefer learning in groups, working in win-win situations to achieve desirable outcomes.

However, we are not arguing from an essentialist position either with respect to civilization, ways of knowing, or individual styles. Differences in how we teach and learn are structural, based on our individual biography. Holistic pedagogy, even while it aspires for a unity of discourse, must first unravel these differences. Teaching multi-culturalism and being multi-cultural then is far more than ensuring that one's educational faculty is from diverse backgrounds. Civilization, language, cultural-national knowing styles, ways of knowing, and gender all confront univocal pedagogy. Pedagogical differences call for a deep pluralism in how we know and learn, for a critical political ecology of interpretation. Are we ready for such efforts? Most of us are not. It is far easier to teach by rote or to assume that one's audience is of one mind, than to teach and learn in the context of deep variation. Teaching across civilization and ways of knowing involves constant interaction with self (problematizing one's teaching style) and with students (discerning what is happening within their worldview, in how they create meaning) as well as the categories of 'self' and 'student'. Dynamic cultural interaction, far more than liberalism can ever hope to aspire towards, is required.

Limits of the multicultural

However, and this is crucial to an understanding of multiculturalism, what is problematic is the confusion of the essentialist values of difference with the notion that everything from that culture must be recovered. For example, many practices are not post-rational practices that are inclusive of many ways of knowing, rather they are simplistic pre-rational practices that confuse cause and effect, that confuse levels of reality. The logical mistake of misplaced concretism is often made, leading some to argue that angels can be tapped so that humans can travel to Mars. Or that gender discrimination is not problematic since 'our culture is different'. This remains the problem of tradition—in what ways is tradition central to cultural definition, and in what ways does it suppress particular individuals and groups (most often, women, and those at the bottom of the economic ladder).

While, certainly, indigenous cultures are the caretakers of the future—the strength of the West has been in assimilating other cultures, in appropriating them and thus forever stalling its own Spenglerian demise. This is crucial. One dimension of the West is its linearity, there is progress as well as continual crisis—always creating technological breakthroughs—we are comfortable in hypertime (but now paying the price via cancer rates, environmental crisis and world terrorism), this is the dominant ego of the West. However, another side of the West has been focused on distribution, rights, care for the other, soft and spiritual time (the emerging cultural creatives). The latter has been open, indeed, embraced multiculturalism, while the former sees it in superficial terms, as useful for productivity, and as a cultural challenge.

This said, even while the West has an ego and alter-ego, as do other civilizations (East Asia having Confucian and Taoist selves; Islam having a syncretic soft side—scientific and spiritual—and a harsher side that stands in confrontation to the other), cultures should be seen as fluid, as in process, learning from others. Thus, suppressed cultures should be seen in their entire humanity, as good and evil, and not as romantic reified archetypes that are the sole carriers of wisdom, of humanity's salvation.

The question then becomes: in what ways are our fears of other cultures merely our projections. Can we write curriculum that moves from tribal pedagogy to planetary pedagogy—our particular stories being a tapestry of humanity's (and nature's) evolution?

This is crucial. Multiculturalism is useful because it forces us to move outside our own civilizational metaphysics, whether this be the notion of good and evil (us as good; them as evil) or vidya/avidya (internal/external, we are inner motivated people, they are outer motivated) or yin-yang (the sun and the shadow). Multiculturalism also calls on us to have a deep conversation in terms of how each culture sees self (as concrete, as soul, as fluid), nature (to use, to steward, to live in, to eradicate), women (as partners, or as commodities for the nation—state project or for capitalism/socialism) and the other (to use, to exoticise, to ...).

However, it can be used as a way to freeze culture. As well, migrant communities in response to the dominant culture create a fossilized version of their culture. While their original home may have changed, they remain in the eighteenth century. Thus, after multiculturalism is neohumanism, which includes the views of civilizations, but asks and prods us to see ourselves as foundationally human in synergetic relationship to nature (and more and more to technology).

While the previous section has focused on the uncultural versus multicultural debate with a call for a neohumanist solution to this crisis, this section will unpack culture and pedagogy as a way to create alternative futures of culture and education.

Deconstructing multiculturalism

Causal Layered Analysis (CLA)^{††} is a poststructural theory of knowledge and method that seeks to unpack and synthetically integrate multiple levels of thinking about the future—the empirical, the systemic, the worldview and the mythical.

CLA assumes four levels. The **first** level is the “litany”—quantitative trends, problems, often exaggerated, often used for political purposes—(children need to learn the basics, e.g.) usually presented by the news media. Events, issues and trends are not connected and appear discontinuous. The result is often either a feeling of helplessness (what can I do?) or apathy (nothing can be done!) or projected action (why don't they do something about it?). This is the conventional level of most futures research which can readily create a politics of fear.^{‡‡} The litany level is the most visible and obvious, requiring little analytic capabilities.^{§§} Assumptions are rarely questioned.

The **second** level is concerned with social causes, including economic, cultural, political and historical factors (teachers are not well-trained, children spend too much time on computers, for example). Interpretation is given to quantitative data. This type of analysis is usually articulated by policy institutes and published as editorial pieces in newspapers or in not-quite academic journals. If one is fortunate then the precipitating action is sometimes analyzed (population growth and advances in medicine/health, for example). This level excels at technical explanations as well as academic analysis. The role of the state and other actors and interests is often explored at this level. The data is often questioned; however, the

^{††} CLA as theory and methodology is used throughout this book, as for example, in the chapters by Marcus Anthony and Helena Pederson.

^{‡‡} The Club of Rome's *Limits to Growth* and other studies is a modern example of this.

^{§§} Of course, those who developed the litany required great not only analytic capability but as well the capacity to touch the system, the worldview and myth/metaphor level. A litany is not a litany unless it has something to rest on. For example, the litany of economism rests on the world financial system, which rests on the worldview of capitalism, which rests on the myth of greed, the invisible hand, and self-interest.

language of questioning does not contest the paradigm in which the issue is framed. It remains obedient to it.

The **third** deeper level is concerned with structure and the discourse/worldview that supports and legitimates it (the industrial paradigm's focus on standardization in terms of time, subject; the spiritual approach focusing on inner growth; the globalized approach to enhancing skill and capacity for competing in the world knowledge economy; the biological approach to genetic intervention, for example). The task is to find deeper social, linguistic, cultural structures that are actor-invariant (not dependent on who are the actors). Discerning deeper assumptions behind the issue is crucial here as are efforts to revision the problem. At this stage, one can explore how different discourses (the economic, the religious, and the cultural, for example) do more than cause or mediate the issue but constitute it, how the discourse we use to understand is complicit in our framing of the issue. Based on the varied discourses, discrete alternative scenarios can be derived here. For example, a scenario of the future of education based on globalisation (learning languages, digital media skill so one can compete better) versus the spiritual view (find your inner mission, bliss, learn what you need for your life journey) versus industrial (learn obedience so one can become a good employee, a future teacher or educator). These scenarios add a horizontal dimension to our layered analysis. The foundations for how the litany has been presented and the variables used to understand the litany are questioned at this level.

The **fourth** layer of analysis is at the level of metaphor or myth. These are the deep stories, the collective archetypes, the unconscious, of often emotive, dimensions of the problem or the paradox (child as sinful; child as seed; all as learners, for example). This level provides a gut/emotional level experience to the worldview under inquiry. The language used is less specific, more concerned with evoking visual images, with touching the heart instead of reading the head. This is the root level of questioning; however, questioning itself finds its limits since the frame of questioning must enter other frameworks of understanding—the mythical, for example.

This fourth level takes us to the civilizational level of identity, the educational and cultural metaphors discussed above. This perspective takes a step back from the actual future to the deeper assumptions about the future being discussed, specifically the post, non or arational. For example, particular scenarios have specific assumptions about the nature of time, rationality and agency. Believing the future is like a roll of the dice is quite different from the Arab saying of the future: "Trust in Allah but tie

your camel”, which differs again from the American vision of the future as unbounded, full of choice and opportunity. For the Confucian, choice and opportunity exist in the context of family and ancestors and not merely as individual decisions. Thus, all education is located in not just the self but in community. Choices are made as to what can help the family, not just about finding one’s personal bliss or location in the world knowledge economy.

In terms of multiculturalism, the litany of multiculturalism is expressed in two ways. Prior to September 11th, it was the Coca-Cola commercial of “We are the world”. Children from around the world in song, united. Since September 11th, it is expressed as the hordes of foreigners attempting to break into Fortress OECD with advance agents living in the rich nations, providing the means. It is a reverse of Galtung’s¹¹ structural theory of imperialism, wherein the center uses the local bourgeois and state bureaucrats to develop a bridgehead to the periphery.

Indeed, Galtung’s theory helps us explain this phenomenon from a systemic perspective. It is the reversal of hundreds of years of traders, priests and gunships creating the colonies. Now, the colonies have returned to the center of the empire, and clearly since September 11th, there is anger in the air. Education thus is one of the root causes, as it has created tolerance for others instead of creating a culture which focuses on national, religious and civilizational identity. Nations in the non-West look at this debacle, protesting that their ‘citizens’ are not treated fairly in the West, and simultaneously they work to ensure that diversity does not spread in their own nations.

Other systems reasons for multiculturalism include globalisation—air travel, capital travel, and now more and more, labour travel, currently only for those in the knowledge economy but soon for other sectors as well. Tourism has come to be the multicultural industry par excellence, both for its capacity to create encounters with the other, and as well for clearly showing the superficial nature of contact with the other; i.e. it is only with the hotel staff or pool cleaner that there is contact. The newest global industry is education—with billions open for grabs at the university level (the globalized university) but also soon at the high school level, as this part of the economy is also privatised.

Multiculturalism can also be understood by the challenge to the Enlightenment project focused on science and rationality. Spiritual modes of knowing are now attempting to fight back from their marginalisation in the modern era.

At the worldview level, there are certainly multiple perspectives on multiculturalism.

From the conservative, it is a mistake and we should go back to civilizational fortresses. Those already in the gates should live according to merit, and not from any notion of equal opportunity, that is, social justice should not be the operating mode of progress since only the individual is real. (As per the Thatcher quote that “there is no such thing as society”¹²).

From the liberal view, multiculturalism, in moderation, will create a better society, a richer society. The best and brightest immigrants will help create national wealth. Others will take the unattractive jobs—jobs that those in the Center no longer wish to come near.

From a third world state perspective, multiculturalism is at one level, natural, there has always been an ecology of worldviews in local areas. But at a modern level it is dangerous—communities need to forget their ethnicity, even language, and unite around a common national language. Often, this is code for the domination of one ethnicity, as with the Punjabis in Pakistan or one religion as with Hindus in India.

From an evolutionary scientific perspective, variation is who we are. Human difference is not ‘race’ based, indeed, there is no genetic basis for race. Difference comes from how we have adapted to the external environment (skin colour). The challenge is to not focus on the differences, but on our common humanity.

What are some stories at the myth level that inform this discussion. As mentioned earlier, first is the notion of the Fortress. Second is the notion of the diaspora, evil exile. Third is the notion of a planetary ecology, the metaphor of the garden, each flower representing its own beauty, the garden existing in ecological diversity. The last metaphor is that of survival of the fittest. Just as the most developed species have survived, so should the most developed cultures. Multiculturalism merely allows those not necessarily fit to survive and prosper. And, it shows the strength of culture; fleeing to areas where it can adapt, and survive creating fusion cultures.¹³

Scenarios of the future

While Causal Layered Analysis focuses on depth, what of breadth? To deal with the full range of multiculturalism, we offer the following scenarios.

(1) **Universal Mosaic.** This future is legitimised by a mixture of ways of knowing, spirituality and science, that there is variation in life, and it should be protected and valued. The most important project is creating a global community, protecting ecological diversity and creating global gender partnership. This community should be as diverse as possible given a range of shared basics—a global neo-magna carta. Thus there must be global governance allowing difference but ensuring that culture is not used to oppress others. There is thus some fluidity in the notion of culture. Indeed, diversity can also come from new life forms—artificial intelligence and even spiritual life forms, what philosopher P. R. Sarkar has called *microvita*. Not only should we protect past species we should create new ones. Education should be diverse but deep, focused on ways of knowing, particularly moving from the rational to the post-rational, the spiritual. It would be focused on using our collective capacity to solve the world's problems (energy, pollution, violence) and move from survival to thrival. The future is that of Earth as Gaia.

(2) **Fortress.** The multicultural experiment has failed. September 11th was the final nail in the coffin. Cultures should retreat to their nations. There should be a global police and military force under USA plus UN leadership to ensure that pirates do not roam the seas and air and even outer space. Generally travel (especially for political migrants and those who do not accept the rules of the host nation) should be restricted. However, capital should continue. Western ideas of individuality and freedom plus liberty should be the world maxims but given the problematic nature of 'universals' it is better that each nation defines its values as long as it does not threaten the global economy. Denmark, for example, now sends out a DVD of Danish culture, including images of men kissing each other and topless females to ensure that migrants understand the importance of sexual openness in Danish society.

They argue that civilizations are in clash and the sooner everyone recognizes this fact, the better for all. We can co-exist but the basis of who we all are cannot be negotiated (Santa Claus, for example, for the West; cartoon depicting Muhammad as a terrorist for Muslims).

Over time, as capital truly globalizes and as safeguards for the West develop globally, then the multicultural experiment can continue again. However, this is at the shallow level of the litany (knowledge about other cultures so that one can succeed in capital accumulation) and

certainly not for deeper ways of knowing. Education should teach the basics so that individuals understand who they belong to, their history, their nation, and all that is true, good and beautiful. The future is that of multiple fortresses—however, the walls are for those who are culturally different, not for those nations that have deep cultural similarities.

- (3) **Globalisation all the way.** In this scenario, multiculturalism is seen from its instrumental advantage. That is, migration of the best and brightest can lead to global excellence and wealth for all. Multiculturalism is having teething problems as the Islamic world rids itself of extremists just as the Western world did many centuries ago. Globalisation, of course, makes this Islamic problem a world problem. The West should be respectful of Islam and other religions and should continue to support democracy and equality wherever and whenever it can. Multiculturalism within limits is a win-win situation for all. Education should be skill based, helping individuals prepare for the future. Difference is important in that it will lead to a better understanding of others, thus allowing the individual to make friends and influence people. Difference is an economic niche—culture is a high-end export, critical for success in a global knowledge economy.
- (4) **The Great Transition.** We are in the middle of a grand transition. Traditional views of nature, reality, truth and sovereignty are being challenged by genetics, feminism, multiculturalism, postcolonialism, artificial intelligence, nano-technology, globalisation and the internet.¹⁴ As well, we are in the midst of a grand demographic transition. In the first phase humanity will become largely Asian and African (Caucasians becoming a dominant minority)¹⁵ but in the second phase, germ line intervention will make our biological selves as fluid as our clothes. We do not know where we are going but notions of fixed identity in terms of culture, race, nation and religion will be of little help for us. True, there will be set backs—from terrorists, from rogue scientists, from fundamentalists—but humanity are on the verge of scientific and collective greatness: progress in every possible way. Education should challenge and question all basics—nothing should be left to ‘God’, rather it is time to teach the real story of ‘man’ as creator of the future. National limits, cultural limits, religious limits, all impose unnecessary barriers on what we can be. Only that which has scientific basis should be taught in schools and university. Where there

is no evidence base, as per the scientific method, it should be thrown out. Our future is that of Spaceship Earth

Neohumanistic education is certainly closer to the Global Mosaic, however, the Fortress Scenario needs to be compassionately understood, that is, it is local leaders (mullahs, for example) and national leaders call on this future as they are afraid of their loss of power as the world changes dramatically around them. Global all the way is crucial in breaking up feudal structures; however, without a commitment to equity, it will only lead to empire. The Great Transition can create a neohumanistic future, however, with the new technologies, if we are not careful, dystopia (of the 1984 or *Brave New World* variety) can easily result. Evidence base is crucial, but often our paradigms blind us to the evidence. Having multiple frames, multiple forms of intelligence, allows us more flexibility.

Scenarios of course exaggerate so that we can better understand the range of probable and possible futures. But let me close this chapter on difference and shared basics with a restatement of my preferred future, the Global Mosaic with aspects of The Great Transition.

Shared basics—a personal perspective

The issue is that given the Many that we are today, is there a One that can be learned about? Our futures depend on living such an ethical sensitivity.

To begin with, we need to learn/teach the painful struggles we have overcome, the challenges that we have creatively resolved. But we should not only reflect on our own human history but as well include our complex interaction with Nature and the Divine.

Our knowing of nature should not be as an Other to us, but as a living and breathing process that exists for itself.

The divine should be conceived not as an entity that can be claimed and owned but as the ineffable, as the cosmic inspiration that leads to ever greater love, to ever greater understanding of others.

The divine pulls history forward, creating a progressive thrust that does not accede to narrow genderisms, nationalisms, culturisms, humanisms, or other exclusive forms of identity. Multiculturalism, while an important part of the decolonisation of the mind, restates the traumas of the past, instead of focusing on the trans-culturalism of the future.¹⁶

There are some basics that must be taught irrespective of difference. These are issues of how we treat one another (especially those vastly different from us), how we treat those weaker than ourselves, how we treat nature,

and what our relationships with the Unknowable are. Each civilization has basic ethical guidelines. While new technologies such as gene therapy and artificial intelligence confront how we think and learn, they do not stop the more important process of asking what it means to be human, or to become human. They do not stop the wondering and knowing process. Even as postmodernist relativism undoes the rationality of progress, we are called to new/ancient more inclusive levels of rationality. The true, the good, and the beautiful, or *sat* (truth as benevolence), *chit* (existence) and *ananda* (endless bliss), in multicultural education must not be lost sight of. The routes to them, the meanings we give to them, the frames we know and learn from, however, are broadened. It is this wisdom culture that neohumanism education seeks to recover and, indeed, reinvent. Neohumanist education seeks to expand the frames of knowledge we use to construct our world, going beyond tribal, religious, national and even civilizational lenses.

Neohumanism does not create a new compromise between uni and multi; rather, it creates a new reality.

Deep multicultural education qua neohumanism envisions a future where the multiplicities that we are, unite in the common neohumanity that we can be.

Whether this is at all plausible will be explored in the final chapter of this book.

Readings

¹ Newt Gingrich, *To Renew America*, New York, Harpercollins, 1995.

² <http://www.rightwingnews.com/interviews/tancredo.php>

³ Holley Bailey, 'America's Border War', *Newsweek* (3 April), 2006, 26.

⁴ Janet Albrechtsen, 'End of an innocent age', *The Australian* (27 July), 2005, 15.

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⁶ See Ashis Nandy and Giri Deshingkar, 'The Futures of Cultures: An Asian Perspective', in Eleonora Masini & Yogesh Atal (eds.), *The Futures of Asian Cultures*, Bangkok, Unesco, 1993.

⁷ P. R. Sarkar, *The Liberation of Intellect – Neo Humanism*, Calcutta, Ananda Marga Publications, 1983; P. R. Sarkar, *Supreme Expression* (Vol. II), Netherlands, Nirvikalpa Press, 1978. See Sohail Inayatullah, *Situating Sarkar*, Maleny, Gurkul Publications, 1999. Also see: Sohail Inayatullah, *Understanding Sarkar*, Brill, Leiden, 2002.

⁸ See S.P. Udayakumar (ed.), *South Asia: Handcuffed to History: Narratives, Pathologies, and Violence in South Asia*, Westport, Ct., Praeger, 2000.

⁹ <http://www.esalenctr.org/db1/>. http://www.esalenctr.org/db1/archives_001.cfm. Also, www.tm.org

¹⁰ See Paul Ray and Sherry Ruth Anderson, *The Cultural Creatives*, New York, Harmony Books, 2000. See: www.culturalcreatives.org.

¹¹ Johan Galtung, 'On the Last 2,500 years in Western History, and some remarks on the Coming 500', in P. Burke (ed.), *The New Cambridge Modern History, Companion Volume*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1979.

¹² <http://briandeer.com/social/thatcher-society.htm>.

¹³ See, for example, Gautam Malkani, 'Mixing and Matching', *FT Weekend* (22/23 April), 2006, W7/8. Also, Sohail Inayatullah, 'The futures of Asia': www.metafuture.org

¹⁴ Michio Kaku, *Visions: How Science Will Revolutionize the 21st Century*, New York, Anchor Books, Doubleday, 1997. See also the work of Ray Kurzweil, particularly, *The Age of Spiritual Machines*, New York, Penguin, 1997.

¹⁵ http://www.cia.gov/nic/NIC_globaltrend2015.html#link7. Sally Neal, Social Trends: Implications and Opportunities. Queensland Government, Department of Primary Industries. www.dpi.qld.gov.au/business/Welcome.html. Also, see, <http://www.lifeissues.org/international/v9n5.html>

¹⁶ See, for example, Claude Grunitzky, *Transculturalism: How the World Is Coming Together*, New York, True Agency, 2004.

Chapter 4 Visions of Education: Neohumanism and Critical Spirituality

Ivana Milojević

Introduction

Two central assertions are made in this article. The first is that our present historical moment is marked by ever-increasing cultural, social, demographic and epistemic complexity. The second is that even though a number of pedagogies have been developed in response to this complexity, most fall short in terms of the practical implementation of their own theoretical and ethical principles.

As these complexities, together with certain contemporary unsettling historical processes (globalisation, postmodernism, new information and communication technologies, environmental changes, etc.) have removed some old certainties (progress, development, absolute truth) an empty space is created that begs to be filled. This is where the competing visions for social and educational reform and transformation start vying for dominance, and the fertile ground for (physically and epistemologically) violent conflicts gets created.

As these changes are profound and deeply unsettling they strike at the heart of what we (humans)—individually and collectively—are about. The fundamental perennial questions about the nature of the world and ourselves, apparently resolved during periods of perceived certainty, have to be dealt with and ultimately answered yet again.

In terms of providing answers to these questions and resolving newly arrived uncertainties three main movements that incorporate three different visions for local and global futures are currently apparent in Australia and indeed, all over the Western (industrially overdeveloped) world.

These three main visions are:

1. Religious fundamentalism/Back to the past.
2. Continuing Enlightenment paradigm/Secular progressivism (whether modern or postmodern) and

3. Eupsychia (perfection and liberation of self) + conscious human evolution/Critical spirituality.

I next summarise the first two visions and then focus on the third possibility for our future, especially in terms of Tantric, Vedic and Buddhist influences and the potential of these worldviews to engage with critical pedagogies and present issues and dilemmas.

Vision 1: Religious fundamentalism/Back to the past vision

This is one (global) response to (global, regional, local, personal) uncertainties. It is the most visible, the loudest and the crudest. It is one way to live and one way to answer perennial questions. Obviously, this movement satisfies certain human needs for connection, stability, and security. In terms of the Indian episteme, it satisfies the needs of the three lower chakras (*muladhara*, *svadhisthana* and *manipura chakras* presiding primarily over the physical body). These include the needs related to fundamental survival, emotions and sexuality, and personal/group power.

In Australia the most outspoken groups with this particular vision for the future are liberal conservatives, born again Christians, One Nation and Family First* members and other conservative groups firmly embedded within a white, Western, fundamental(ist) Christian worldview. Their vision for the future includes:

1. Revival of the old, tested through time, the traditional. The literal interpretation of the religious text is the only way for human salvation;
2. Bringing back the focus on idealised family (nuclear, hierarchical, authoritarian);
3. Cardboard masculinity and femininity (includes glorification of hyper masculinity, misogyny and homophobia, anti-abortion advocates);
4. (One) nation building/vision for 'all Australians'. This includes a nation defined in strict and 'has been' terms wherein compassion is put on a back seat when it comes down to 'the others'. For example, refugees/asylum seekers are considered a potential threat to "the security and health of Australians";¹

* Unaffiliated conservative political parties that are attracting small but vocal support.

5. Monoculture (society, environment, mind) and closing of borders/putting up of a (physical, emotional, spiritual, cultural) fence to protect 'us' from 'them'. This includes a commitment to:
6. "winning the war against terror... the need for careful deployment of our armed forces, in co-operation with allies and the international community".²

This vision is intimately linked with the "back to the basics" demands in education: focusing on the 3 Rs (reading, writing, arithmetic) and the passing on of 'the truth'. For example, conservative education commentator and journalist Andrew Bolt summarises this position beautifully in his article, "Give us the Truth: Teach but Don't Preach":

I should worry when teachers preach, not teach, about the "stolen generations", for example. Or about global warming, asylum seekers, Iraq or our history, and all those other emotional subjects where they make it seem rude to ask for the facts.

And:

I feel cheated and deceived by our education system. ... every single handout painted Western countries ... as some kind of big, evil polluting Satans responsible for a largely natural process. Then in English, teachers would continuously show their anti-war bias when we studied media texts.³

In another article, he takes issue with Australian multiculturalism, blaming it for the deterioration and collapse of a school:

The 'death' of Melbourne's Moreland City College ... the reason ... the answer ... fashionably multicultural school ... increasing number of Middle Eastern children who went there made to feel at home ... their parent's old home and not their new Australian one ... to make a tough situation worse, its discipline and academic standards were left to slide ... No doubt, the students at both Moreland and School X also got the usual teaching about Australia and its past, about our 'genocide', our 'stolen generations' and our 'racism' ... is it smart to let poorer state schools become dominated by a minority culture and turned into ghettos ... are we asserting our values and our core culture strongly enough? ... enforcing rules of civilised behaviour ... discipline, rigour, a little prudishness and belief in Australia and respect for its rituals ...⁴

This sound understanding of “Australian heritage and culture” (not heritages and cultures) is also part of Family First vision of education.⁵ Ultimately, the perennial answers about the nature of the world and humans are answered through creationism, ‘original sin’, and the battle between good and evil. The way out is to accept the top down hierarchy and the strict interpretation of ‘the truth’ as defined by those that hold (social and religious) power.

Implications for education

Thus, while other elements of this vision may also include: holistic development of children, reduction of class size and the equality of access to education⁶ this is to be done within a framework that is, in essence, exclusionary of ‘the other’, different and foreign.

Indeed, multiplicity and exposure to multiple worldviews themselves may be seen as a problem. As expressed by a US based Rabbi:

If I were a Jewish parent sending my kids to public school, not only would I not want the teacher to preach the superiority of Christianity to Judaism, I wouldn't even want the teacher to say that all religions are equal. I'm prepared to teach my child that all religions are equally deserving of respect, but not that they are all equally valid. If my child were to come home and say, “According to school, one religion is as good as another and therefore it doesn't make any difference whether I observe my religion or some other,” I would feel undermined as a parent.⁷

So while in Australia many, including state schools, incorporate this teaching *about* the religion(s), back to the basics vision demands the continuation of teaching *in* the religion (as is currently the constitutional right in Queensland and which applies to both religious and state schools).

The key words used within this discourse are those of a “character development”, “core culture”, “nation’s future”, “pursuit of excellence”, “parental choice in education”, “control/accountability” that ultimately get translated into the everyday praxis as exclusionary practices of whatever is seen not to belong to the mainstream (family, religion, worldview, sexuality, culture). The level of tolerance towards different/evil/perverse is low and the compassion is oriented towards the sameness (towards those that think and act as I/we do).

Other elements of this back to the basics vision/demands for a particular future include:

1. For educational *process*: firmness, discipline, standardisation, teachers as trainers and dispensers of basics and accumulated established truths;
2. For educational *structure*: stern, functional, basic, symbols that promote dominant views and values displayed;
3. For educational *content*: focus on 'the truth' as defined by the most powerful social group, non-negotiability of curriculum or very limited negotiability.

Schools of course remain vehicles for building values of hyper-patriotism and nationality, idealised family and the alleged 1950s social cohesion. Another common, not always openly stated but definitely underlying assumption is that control and accountability are to be exercised within 'power over' and 'peace through strength' conceptual framework. Especially during the time of perceived crisis and chaos, society and education are to return to 'common sense' approaches in terms of disciplining disobedience, both among adults (punitive measures, imprisonment) and the children (corporal punishment/pro-slapping initiatives).

As illustrated in the debate regarding school violence and the ability of teachers to discipline students, suggestion in regard to what might improve the situation included:

"Bring back corporal punishment. It works in most Asian countries..."

"The cane, strap, belt, ruler. Works wonders. There wasn't any violence when I was at school (sic!)"

"Bring back the cane. How demoralising is it for a good kid to see the repeat offenders get away with bad behaviour"

"Parents won't do their jobs and raise their children properly..."

"Government took away parenting powers from parents long time ago..."

"We have the problem where troublemaking kids are allowed to stay in school when they simply should be booted out. The aim should be to stop Neanderthals from breeding full stop"⁸

These views that consist of blaming and that express the desire for firmness, discipline and authoritarianism fit very well into the worldview of what Michael Apple calls a "new alliance" and a "new power block".⁹

This new power bloc that has formed in the USA in particular and in developed Western countries, including Australia, in general:

... combines multiple fractions of capital that are committed to neoliberal marketized solutions to educational problems, neoconservative intellectuals who want a 'return' to higher standards and a 'common culture', authoritarian, populist, religious fundamentalists who are deeply worried about secularity and the preservation of their own traditions, and particular fractions of the professionally oriented new middle class who are committed to the ideology and techniques of accountability, measurement, and 'management'.¹⁰

This includes a particular vision of a "dynamic, productive, flexible, *truly competitive* and efficient industry, farms and business" (emphasis added).¹¹

In conclusion, and most importantly, this new power block has utilised a particular image of the romantic past to fill in the vacuum created by the disintegration of the old and the lack of articulation of new futures narratives. As argued by Apple:

Its [new alliance's] overall aims are in providing the educational conditions believed necessary both for increasing international competitiveness, profit, and discipline and for returning us to *a romanticized past* [italics added] of the 'ideal' home, family, and school.¹²

This vision—pushed predominantly by fundamentalist Christians and various neo-conservatives in places such as North America and Australia but by various other fundamentalist/conservatives in different parts of the world—is extremely problematic from both the Buddhist and critical education perspective/worldview.

The main point of contention/fear is that ultimately such vision would create society that cannot move forward, that defines 'normality' in very narrow and strict terms, and that limits compassion to what's close and familiar. As well, that such an interpretation of humanities past, present and the future incorporates the view of children either in terms of 'tabula rasa' that are to be filled with 'the truth' or in terms of unruly deviance/lower development that is to be disciplined/brought into (one standard fits all) adulthood.

Given that this vision has a long history within the West it comes as no surprise that many historically progressive educators saw critical secularism as the main way out of this (religious fundamentalist)

paradigm. Enlightenment/secular progressivism is also often seen as being able to address the demands of our changing societies through the focus on the rational, empirical and verifiable. Thus it is the rising of scepticism, questioning and secularism (helped by modern science and postmodern philosophy) that is seen to be able to both address current issues as well as to oppose the historical and contemporary rise in religious fervour, fanaticism and dogma.

Vision 2: Secular progressivism (modern and postmodern)

Rather than going back to the past for guidance, the continuing Enlightenment paradigm focuses on the future. Western philosophical orientations such as evolutionism, euechronic utopianism and progressivism reflect this view of 'salvation' not in the after life (in heaven) but in the after (present) time (on Earth, eventually). This doctrine of secular salvation is via human rationality, especially science¹³ and, of course, through education. Historically, it is possible to trace the invention of this idea:

Before the late eighteenth century, history had been interpreted as being cyclic and thus repetitious. The late Enlightenment produced several thinkers who made the Age of Reason's implicit notion of the idea of progress explicit and placed it in a novel time-forward scheme that challenged the notion of cycles. The shift in utopian approaches from a future ideal place to a future ideal time—euechronia—marked a major departure from the traditions begun by Thomas More and prepared the way for the revolutionary era ahead.¹⁴

Both evolutionism and utopianism imply that "social institutions can be rationally transformed in ways that enhance human wellbeing and happiness" but they disagree about how and how fast change is to be achieved.¹⁵ While evolutionists focus on piecemeal change and slow, incremental modifications, utopians, on the other hand, focus on "wholesale ruptures", grand designs for social reconstruction, conscious design, rational calculation and political will.¹⁶

The current mainstream educational model, also referred to as 'modern education', grew out of the debate and out of the tension between the above mentioned approaches to social change—utopianism, evolutionism and progressivism. It replaced the previous dominant educational model, which can best be described as a *religious model* of education, having finally won the centuries' old battle. The 'educated' person of the twentieth

century finally became “an effect of teachable knowledge, not an effect of divine dispensation or natural evolution”.¹⁷ This new scientific, secular and rationalist discourse was based on an alternative vision of the future and an alternative reading of the past. The paradigm of evolution eventually replaced the paradigm of Creation, reason, faith, empirical evidence the Truth of God, scientific inquiry the given text that is to be memorised, and so on. The particular vision of the future—as progressive movement from the past and present rather than as regress from the Golden Age, which better served the needs of a more secular, scientific, industrial civilisation—also ‘won’.

Secular modernism: educational implications

Other elements of modern/ist education include:

1. For educational *process*: process standardised even when ‘child centred’, outcomes measured through certain technical means (eg various tests), top-down, teachers as dispensers of legitimate knowledge.
2. For educational *structure*: mass education in mostly formalised educational settings.
3. For educational *content*: Objective reality could be discovered through reason and is accessible through language; world was created in the Big Bang and will end with a Big Crash but in between humans can evolve their societies; division of educational disciplines, normative interpretation of facts, values, truths.

Ultimately, the educated subject is defined through rational thought (I think therefore I am) with a unified, fixed subjectivity. Education and knowledge are seen as inherently liberating and emancipating, thus the focus is on consciousness raising and ‘correct’ socialisation.

Foucault, on the other hand, saw the educated modernist subject in terms of ‘governmentality’ (deployment of normalising/surveillance techniques) and ‘technologies of the self’ (internalised gaze within nodes of power/knowledge). Foucault’s assertion is that the structure and organisation of schooling firmly locate bodies and minds in place. By the teaching of particular knowledge and skills that are based on educational regimes of truth, a particular subject is always developed on the basis of these normalising regimes. The governed subject becomes the self-regulated subject, therefore successfully fulfilling “the practical needs of schools, businesses, and society as a whole for discipline and order”.¹⁸ As a

result, “systems that had been developed by reformers to restructure society were adopted by society to maintain the social order”.¹⁹

These (modernist) traditions have been and remain very powerful. The key modernist idea of progress, for example, has remained a narrative educators from both the Left and Right ends of the political spectrum shared. As argued by Popkewitz, until very recently, both still relied on “modernist notions of progress to justify their theoretical, empirical, and political strategies”.²⁰ This has been done without reflective examination and with “almost missionary zeal” in order to obtain the ‘salvation’ of the masses through education.²¹ These narratives have been the cornerstone of many influential theoretical positions from Marxism and neo-Marxism, to feminism, postcolonial and critical theory.

Another shared assumption was the ‘social justice’ discourse that can also be historically traced:

The birth of the concept of social justice coincided with two other shifts in human consciousness: the “death of God” and the rise of the ideal of the command economy. When God “died,” people began to trust a conceit of reason and its inflated ambition to do what even God had not deigned to do: construct a just social order. The divinization of reason found its extension in the command economy; reason (that is, science) would command and humankind would collectively follow. The death of God, the rise of science, and the command economy yielded “scientific socialism.” Where reason would rule, the intellectuals would rule.²²

Another problem with the modernist progressivism—as expressed through social justice discourse—is that virtue is ascribed to social systems thus denoting a regulative principle of order—ultimately, the focus is not virtue but power, argues Novak:

From this line of reasoning it follows that “social justice” would have its natural end in a command economy in which individuals are told what to do, so that it would always be possible to identify those in charge and to hold them responsible. This notion presupposes that people are guided by specific external directions rather than internalized, personal rules of just conduct. It further implies that no individual should be held responsible for his relative position. To assert that he *is* responsible would be “blaming the victim.” It is the function of “social justice” to blame somebody else, to blame *the system*, to

blame those who (mythically) “control” it. As Leszek Kolakowski wrote in his magisterial history of communism, the fundamental paradigm of Communist ideology is guaranteed to have wide appeal: *you suffer; your suffering is caused by powerful others; these oppressors must be destroyed.*²³

Many of the underlying assumptions informing the work of ‘progressive’ educators have thus been challenged in our times. One answer was the development of postmodernism—variously referred to as either a new historical and cultural era or as a new worldview and theoretical perspective. Often referred to as the era that comes ‘after’ modernism (see Lather’s 1991 ‘Charting Postmodernism’ and the division of all history into premodern, modern and postmodern) this reference to postmodernism as a new stage in history promotes a decisively modern classification.

In any case, the postmodern condition of knowledge is to provide the ‘incredulity toward modernist meta-narratives’²⁴ and a critique that:

... rejects Enlightenment totalizing theories and cultural stories which, as framed in modernist narratives, explained the world from a centred and privileged position[s].²⁵

This scepticism towards modernist meta-narratives has led postmodernists to question modernist attempts to totalise and unify a heterogeneous and diverse world, attempts that are either based on ‘laws of nature’ or ‘laws of history’. Instead, postmodernists argue for multiple sites from which the world is perceived and theorised. Postmodernism argues for “multiplicity, difference, heteroglossia and specificity”.²⁶ Furthermore, postmodernism argues against any notion of ‘objective reality’ and ‘objective truth’ that can be discovered through ‘reason’ and correctly applied methods of scientific inquiry.

Postmodernism aimed to transform such modernist hegemonic and dominating tendencies by emphasising:

... plurality of ethnicities, cultures, genders, truths, realities, sexualities, even reasons, and argu[ing] that no one type should be privileged over others. In its concern to demolish all privilege, postmodernism seeks a more equal representation of class, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity and culture.²⁷

Secular postmodern/ism: educational implications

By applying the postmodern lens and with no intention of being prescriptive, it is possible to deduce a range of implications that are

implied by the secular progressive educational stance. Some of the elements include:

1. For educational *process*: constructionist, open text and reader/centred, focus on interpretations, ideally dialogical and democratic
2. For educational *structure*: situated, contingent/partial/in flux, use of new information and communication technologies
3. For educational *content*: Reality always negotiated, interdisciplinary, focus on micro narratives and what is missing from the mainstream discourse, multi-literacies, multiple intelligences, "multiple sites from which the world is spoken".²⁸

The human subject is no longer seen in terms of an essential ontology but as a product of discourse, regimes of knowledge and regimes of truth.

Ever since Foucault²⁹ initially reconceptualised schools as institutions of surveillance, discipline and control, and aligned them together with factories, armies and prisons, postmodernist scholars have questioned education's role in continuing and enhancing the modernist project. Most importantly, postmodernism has abandoned a positivistic search for 'facts' as constitutive of knowledge, and has challenged the modernist belief that knowledge is in itself inherently emancipating and liberating. Rather, knowledge is seen as 'constructed' rather than 'discovered' and is also seen as a method of surveillance and discipline. For Foucault, truth is not "the reward of free spirits, the child of protracted solitude, nor the privilege of those who have succeeded in liberating themselves".³⁰ Truth is never outside of power or lacking in power. Instead, it is "a thing of this world".³¹ Therefore, each society has its own "regimes of truth", its general "politics of truth" which in effect are a type of "discourse which it accepts and makes function as true".³² What counts as knowledge to be included in the curriculum is not so much the result of 'objective evidence' but of negotiations between various social groups.

The postmodern thesis that everything is relative caused a major problem when trying to assert that something, anything is in some distinctive way itself.³³ Furthermore:

In a world without "Truth" or "Reason" — or any other grand narrative such as "Morality", "God", "Tradition" and "History" — there is nothing that "can remotely provide us with meaning, [and] with a sense of direction".³⁴

This lack of meaning, lack of sense of direction emerges as most postmodernists, “in the tradition of Foucault ... generally refuse to offer a vision of the future”. Unlike modernists, they believe that offering a *vision* “such as providing a solution, ideal or utopian hope ... would set limits on possibilities for the future”. In addition, they believe that offering a vision of the future means “to assume a position of political authority (intellectual as centre)” which is a position that is generally declined on “ethical grounds”.³⁵

This causes yet another problem—of postmodernism leading itself to form “a nihilistic cluster of philosophical perspectives which are built upon a sense of finality rather than of beginnings”.³⁶ This finality, of dismantled modernity and current postmodernity as the stage of finality, uncannily resembles the Hegelian and Marxist ‘end of history’. As modernist reality is destroyed not by alternative visions but “by the collapse of all visions”,³⁷ this helped create an environment in which “everything goes, but nothing much counts”.³⁸ Thus a ‘political paralysis’ at the Left end of the political spectrum³⁹ and the ability of a ‘new [conservative] power block’, a ‘new alliance’⁴⁰ to assert its current hegemony.

To conclude, the secular modernist vision has been destabilised by both its inherent contradictions as well as by postmodernism. Postmodernism, on the other hand, while a powerful deconstructive tool, fell short in offering viable alternative that can: a) make sense to the people outside of the Academia, b) address the perennial desire to save (whether through secular or religious means) our selves, and c) provide a counter narrative to religious dogmatism.

In short, progressive secularism seems to fail to address the needs of the human spirit while religious fundamentalism fails to address the needs of human society to move forward. Is there a third way?

Vision 3: Critical pedagogy meets alternative spirituality

Critical spirituality is a concept that aims to transcend the two previously mentioned poles. It intends to do this by incorporating both the rational and empirical with the somatic, the meditative⁴¹ and the devotional. This concept acknowledges the reality that humans are spiritual beings but asserts that wider knowledge and understanding of various spiritual traditions and their contemporary developments are crucial in our times. Furthermore, these traditions are seen not as primarily distinct (and/or ‘right’/‘wrong’) but in terms of their reciprocity. Another crucial assertion

of the new spirituality is that spirituality is seen as a work in progress rather than a statement of absolute, never changeable truths.

Implications of this concept for critical pedagogy are numerous. As Parker Palmer argues,⁴² the spiritual is always present in all (including public) education, whether it is acknowledged or not. The difference is how is the spiritual to be. As seen in the first vision, spiritual issues can be approached in a way that impedes critical thinking and reflectivity (education *in* religion). Alternatively, spiritual issues can be thought of as separated from human subjects, as an externalised object of inquiry (education *about* religions). The new spirituality movement is, on the other hand, about education *through* the experience of the spiritual. It is accepted that this experience can be achieved through a variety of means and pathways, and that, ultimately it is the journey (full of trials and errors) that counts. Thus critical spirituality approaches crucially correspond with the main aims of critical pedagogy—fostering of critical thinking skills, questioning of the hegemonic discourses, development of critical consciousness, transformation of society (and self), and so on. Before I develop this further it is important to connect the latest trend towards “New Spirituality”⁴³ with the idea of ‘holistic’ education, as these two terms correlate but also differ.

Advocates of holistic education argue that education should cultivate the physical, psychological, emotional, moral and spiritual dimensions of a learner. Holistic education is spiritual, because spirituality is its integral part. Spiritual education focuses on the relation the individual has with the universe/collective consciousness. Spiritual education is holistic in that it is “encompassing all of life”.⁴⁴ As Ron Miller and Yves Bertrand explain about holistic and spiritual approaches:

Throughout the 200-year history of public schooling, a widely scattered group of critics have pointed out that the education of young human beings should involve much more than simply moulding them into future workers or citizens. The Swiss humanitarian Johann Pestalozzi, the American Transcendentalists Thoreau, Emerson and Alcott, the founders of “progressive” education—Francis Parker and John Dewey—and pioneers such as Maria Montessori and Rudolf Steiner, among others, all insisted that education should be understood as the art of cultivating the moral, emotional, physical, psychological and spiritual dimensions of the developing child. During the 1970s, an emerging body of literature in science, philosophy and

cultural history provided an overarching concept to describe this way of understanding education—a perspective known as *holism*. A holistic way of thinking seeks to encompass and integrate multiple layers of meaning and experience rather than defining human possibilities narrowly. Every child is more than a future employee; every person's intelligence and abilities are far more complex than his or her scores on standardized tests.⁴⁵

In the past twenty-five years, we have witnessed a very strong resurgence of this spiritualistic movement. Industrialized civilization has failed to fulfil a fundamental human need to understand our presence on Earth ...People have always wondered: "Does life have a meaning?" Hence the proliferation of spiritualistic movements that answer positively: "Yes, there is another world, an unnameable world with a thousand names that we must experience." The goal of spiritualistic education is to familiarize the individual with this spiritual reality—also called mystical or metaphysical.⁴⁶

Although these two concepts are closely connected, there is an important distinction between holistic and spiritual education, argues Marcus Bussey.⁴⁷ The way holistic education has developed so far has been " ...too much in the head and not enough in the heart. It was bound up with 'shoulds' that were wonderful but lacked the transformative force to shift people into a discourse that actively promoted a condition of self transformation".⁴⁸ Bussey's take on the central question—why most pedagogies that have been recently developed as a response to 'new times' falls short when principles are to be translated into practice—would be that our current values and habits are ingrained in such a way that it is difficult to simply "become holistic".⁴⁹ Because holism did not contain within itself a deep commitment to an integrative spiritual practice, continues Bussey it has "met a dead end".⁵⁰ Without consistent reflective work no deep transformation of our consciousness can occur, the holistic platform remains rhetoric. It is a commitment to spiritual practice, concludes Bussey that is "the only way to fill the hole in holism, or, to put it another way, put the whole into holism".⁵¹

However, many holistic educators would agree with Bussey's assertion that "transformative process can only come about through sustained meditative reflection".⁵² For example, one of the leading theorists on holistic education, John Miller, has recently argued:

In holistic learning, teachers must also nurture their own deeper selves. I encourage teachers to set aside time during the day to develop their inner life. Activities like gardening and meditation allow us to make the transition from a calculating to a listening mind. Another technique is mindfulness.⁵³

The crucial difference as compared to traditional religions is that these techniques are more flexible than ritualised and that techniques are used not in terms of denial and suppression (of 'bad parts of human nature') but in terms of channelling (replacing with more beneficial).

Before I proceed any further in exploring connections between critical spirituality and critical pedagogy it is also crucial to distinguish this new emergent spirituality from the religious fundamentalism and education in religion, or even education about religion.

As discussed earlier, religious education is mostly concerned with handing down a particular given truth, particular religious tradition and knowledge. As argued by Laukhuf and Werner,⁵⁴ religion is the service and adoration of God expressed in forms of worship; it refers to an external formalised system of beliefs, values, codes of conduct and rituals—it is a codified set of morals. Spirituality, on the other hand, is a very personal and individual value system about the way that people approach life, varying from person to person and changing throughout a person's life.⁵⁵ While religion is "a specific way of exercising that spirituality and usually requires an institutional affiliation", spirituality does not require an institutional connection.⁵⁶ According to Palmer, it is about:

... the ancient and abiding human quest for connectedness with something larger and more trustworthy than our egos—with our own souls, with one another, with the worlds of history and nature, with the invisible winds of the spirit, with the mystery of being alive.⁵⁷

Religion not only attempts to institutionalise spirituality, in many instances this is done "for the perpetuation of the institution rather than for the explicit welfare of the individual".⁵⁸ Unfortunately, spirituality has, in our times, been seriously compromised by its identification with institutional religions, argues O'Sullivan.⁵⁹ This is problematic because spirituality is neither religion nor is it in the sole province of religion.⁶⁰ As Krishnamurti also argues, spirituality "does not belong to any cult, to any group, to any religion, to any organised church". The spiritual mind:

Is not the Hindu mind, the Christian mind, the Buddhist mind, or the Muslim mind ... [it] does not belong to any group which calls itself religious ... [it] is not the mind that goes to churches, temples, mosque ... nor it holds to certain forms of beliefs, dogmas ... It is a mind that has seen through the falsity of churches, dogmas, beliefs, traditions. Not being nationalistic, not being conditioned by its environment, such a mind has no horizons, no limits.⁶¹

The mystic notion of God may be replaced "by the more philosophical notion of truth and still the discovery will remain essentially the same".⁶² From a spiritual perspective, religions are problematic because "as they are taught and practiced today [they] lead to conflict rather than unity".⁶³ Because of factionism brought by religions, Tagore, Aurobindo and others argue that religions should best not be officially taught, but 'the truths' common to all religions could and should be taught to all children.⁶⁴ According to Palmer, however, spirituality is less about teaching truths than about helping with articulating and thinking about particular questions. He argues that people rarely raise spiritual issues, partly because of "the embarrassed silence that may greet us if we ask our real questions aloud".⁶⁵ But also, another, perhaps even more significant reason why people don't ask these questions is because someone will try to give them "The Answer".⁶⁶ Spirituality is not about answers but about questions such as:

"Does my life have meaning and purpose?" "Do I have gifts that the world wants and needs?" "Whom and what can I trust?" "How can I rise above my fears?" "How do I deal with suffering, my own and that of my family and friends?" "How does one maintain hope?" "What about death?" ... "How shall I live today knowing that someday I will die?"⁶⁷

Spirituality is therefore primarily concerned with "a personal interpretation of life and the inner resource of people".⁶⁸ In its "broadest sense, spirituality is the manifestation of the spirit, just as physiology is one manifestation of the body and emotions are a manifestation of the mind".⁶⁹ It is "at the core of the individual's existence, integrity" transcending "the physical, emotional, intellectual, and social dimension".⁷⁰

This new interpretation of spiritual is absolutely crucial for our times, argues O'Sullivan. If the ecological paradigm is to replace the modernist, industrial one, if we are to move towards "a global planetary education",

it will be necessary to have “a functional cosmology that is in line with the vision of where this education will be leading us”.⁷¹ The newly developing ecological (and we could add here also postmodern dialogical) community needs “a mystique”, even “the great liturgy”.⁷² This could be found in the renewal of “human association with the great cosmic liturgy in the diurnal sequence of dawn and sunset as well as the great seasonal sequence”.⁷³ Parker Palmer also argues that it is through the universal connection with nature that spirituality may be approached. For example:

Seasonal metaphors offer a way to raise deep questions about life without blinking, while honoring the sensibilities of everyone from Jews to Buddhists, from Muslims to secular humanists, from Christians to those whose spirituality has no name. When we raise such questions in the context of safe space and trustworthy relationships, the soul can speak its truth—and people can hear that truth in themselves and in one another with transforming effect.⁷⁴

In terms of the emergence of this new cosmology we are in the midst of profound changes—an option is emerging that is a real alternative to both the religious fundamentalism and secular progressivism. As argued by Tacey:

We are in the midst of a spiritual revolution. Churches are emptying and traditional forms of faith are being abandoned. Meanwhile interest in a more personal spiritual experience, ranging from exploring indigenous religions and long-forgotten mysterious sects and cultures, to seeking spirituality in nature, has never been greater.⁷⁵

“The coming of a Spiritual Age”⁷⁶ has by now become so obvious that we are in the midst of a ‘spiritual revolution’. This spiritual revolution is:

... a spontaneous movement in society, a new interest in the reality of spirit and its healing effects on life, health, community and well-being. It is our secular society realising that it has been running on empty, and has to restore itself at a deep, primal source, a source which is beyond humanity and yet paradoxically at the very core of our experience. It is our recognition that we have outgrown the ideals and values of the early scientific era, which viewed the individual as a sort of efficient machine. We now have to revise our concepts of life, society, and progress, while preserving the advances that technology and science have given us. Significantly, the new revolution is found at the heart

of the new sciences, where recent discoveries in physics, biology, psychology, and ecology have begun to restore dignity to previously discredited spiritual visions of reality. Science itself has experienced its own revolution of the spirit, and is no longer arraigned against spirituality in the old way.⁷⁷

The new, emergent 'God' is markedly different from the God often imagined within Judeo-Christian-Islamic tradition, if conceptualised at all. That is, the word has come to signify "a non-anthropomorphized, genderless entity, equivalent to the sum total of matter or energy in the universe".⁷⁸ Similarly, Trenoweth writes:

As often as not, our God today is androgynous and increasingly our God sides more solidly with the oppressed than the oppressor. Our God is a shape-shifter. When we envisage God, she is as likely to be the colour of chocolate as the colour of snow and might sit high on a cloud or lie curled beneath the earth, birthing the forests, the animals, the mountains, the oceans and, over and again, the human generations. Or perhaps, as the Dalai Lama would have it, we envisage no God at all, for the one true reality lies in blissful emptiness, perfect place.⁷⁹

To avoid such a heavily laden term, 'God' is being replaced with more 'neutral' words such as the concepts or "collective consciousness" (Jung) and "noosphere" (Teilhard de Chardin) or more recent concepts such as "Source" and "Being". "Believing" is also replaced by terms such as "Journey" or sacred "pathway". The terms spiritual and spirituality are also redefined:

In the new cultural paradigm, which has been taking shape for some time, 'spirituality' bursts free from its former confinement, and becomes a much larger field of human activity. 'Spirituality' is the new, broad, umbrella term ..., [that] refers to our relationship with the sacredness of life, nature, and the universe...⁸⁰

In line with 'postmodern' developments, one of the main characteristics of this new spirituality is its inclusiveness—"covering all pathways that lead to meaning and purpose".⁸¹ In sum, new spirituality has become "diverse, plural, manifold, and seems to have countless forms of expression". Furthermore, it is centrally concerned with 'the other(s)' as its goal is "connectedness and relatedness to other realities and existences, including other people, society, the world, the stars, the universe and the holy".⁸²

Another main characteristic of this new spirituality is its anti-dogmatism that goes hand in hand with all inclusiveness. Inspired by Buddha's and other spiritual teachers' insistence that we examine their teachings and test the efficiency of the teaching by ourselves and for ourselves, adherents of new spirituality no longer accept certain claims just because the authority says it is so. As exemplified in the classic *Kalama Sutra* (known as the "Buddhist Charter of Free Enquiry"), the links with the critical pedagogy are all too obvious:

Don't accept ideas just because others have believed them for a long time or because others say that it is true. Don't accept these ideas just because they are written in ancient books or scriptures. Don't accept these ideas just because the teacher offers a convincing argument. Don't accept these ideas just because you have great respect for the teacher ... You should examine these ideas for yourself and ask yourself if they are of benefit to your life, are not a source of sorrow or regrets or likely to bring blame from the wise. If these ideas are profitable to your life and are unlikely to cause suffering to yourself or any living creature and are praised by intelligent people and are likely to produce happiness, then, and only then, should you accept them and live according to these principles.⁸³

And while all this may be new it is also very old. As argued by Bertrand, "the spiritualistic educational movement is probably one of the oldest on the planet. Like the tide, it always returns".⁸⁴ Not only is the spiritual education movement arguably one of the oldest approaches in education, it is also one of the most widely found—throughout history and human societies. According to Bertrand, the idea of spiritual vision of/for the world stems from "Platonism and Neo-Platonism, from Hinduism and the Oriental religious philosophies such as Taoism and Zen".⁸⁵ The main sources that the recent spiritual renewal draws upon are, according to him, religions, metaphysics, Eastern philosophies, mysticism, Taoism, Buddhism, perennial philosophy and the concept of cosmic consciousness.⁸⁶ But there is, of course, an indigenous approach to spirituality (apparently 'out of bounds' for non-indigenous researchers and educators),⁸⁷ as well as feminist spirituality,⁸⁸ 'postmodern' *Quantum Spirituality*,⁸⁹ "secular"⁹⁰ or "critical" spirituality.⁹¹ Lastly, in addition to these approaches to spirituality, each of the three major monotheistic religions—Judaism, Christianity, Islam—also includes a 'softer', mystical and spiritual orientation.⁹²

Implications for education

The implications of this new emergent spirituality for education are numerous. As the body of literature exploring these implications is enormous, I will limit myself to raising several crucial points. The main intervention/implication in the area of the education:

1. For educational *process*: education comes from within; education cultivates inner peace, harmony and balance, be the change you want to see.
2. For educational *structure*: in traditional and alternative settings, throughout and through life.
3. For educational *content*: focus on human and cosmic unity, spirituality explored and thought, promotes cardinal human values, aims of education one with the aims of life.

Compared to the first two visions, the main difference between the new spirituality and religious fundamentalism is the insistence on anti-dogmatism, direct spiritual experience and inclusiveness of the former. Most importantly, flexibility in re-interpreting perennial spiritual 'laws' in the context of the contemporary historical moment; focus on dialogical and interpretative processes removes conditions for promoting social conservatism—the feature all too apparent among religious fundamentalists. In short, three main characteristics of new spirituality are a) inclusiveness—everyone is essentially spiritual, with Buddha nature within; b) non-literalism, change through experience and dialogue is possible; and c) the importance of inner practice and direct spiritual experience.

The second vision enables social progress but as it is informed by secularism it neglects the inner spiritual dimension characterized by a desire for inner peace and salvation in the now. As well, while postmodernism discovers the same law as Buddha and New Spirituality—perpetual change and impermanence—it does not suggest what to do with this insight. In the context of new spirituality, the discovery of impermanence/ever-present change is utilised to help *bodhichitta* [the mind that aspires to enlightenment] develop wisdom and internalize the perennial ethics of love, compassion and altruism.

New spirituality places responsibility for one's salvation on these internal processes rather than on something external to one's self (social intervention in the second vision or God's Grace in the first). Whether achieved here and now or in a thousand aeons, the Buddha state—the

enlightenment—is both possible and the responsibility of each and every person. Thus the credo: To save the world we first must save ourselves. In Buddhism, this is to be achieved through means such as:

1. For the development of wisdom: Right Understanding/View/ Perspective and Right Thought/Intention/Resolve;
2. For the development of morality, for ethical conduct: Right Speech, Action and Livelihood;
3. For mental development: Right Effort/Endeavour, Mindfulness and Right Concentration (mediation and intuitive insight).

Ultimately, salvation is not only for our own fun and enjoyment but for the sake of all sentient beings.⁹³ Utopianism and individualism as well as critical thinking and devotion are no longer separate and can be simultaneously put into practice.

Education finally needs to start with ourselves, and ourselves alone. This is because:

By ourselves is evil done; by ourselves we pain endure. By ourselves we cease from ill; by ourselves become we pure. No one can save us but ourselves, no one can and no one may. We ourselves must walk the Path.⁹⁴

Conclusion

The three distinct contemporary movements/three different visions for local and global futures explored in this text are to be understood in terms of Max Weber's 'ideal models'. While some elements of each could be found among the others, each represents a particular way to answer perennial questions of who we are, why we are here and where should we be going. While all three are at one level just a way to live/understand the world at another they are differently positioned in terms of where we, a human species, may be going. It is my view that the direction we chose to be the new guiding narrative will determine the quality of lives of many future generations to come. And even though the first two alternatives do satisfy certain basic human needs for humanity to move forward, we desperately need the third story and beyond.

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Chapter 5 Neohumanism: Critical Spirituality, Tantra and Education

Marcus Bussey

Neohumanism is an ethical approach to human systems. In the current educational climate the function of education is characterized in the language of human capital expansion.¹ From the neohumanist perspective, education is reframed as an ethical and liberatory activity that could best be characterized in the language of human capacity building. This is a shift in emphasis, not a denial of education's central role in improving society and preparing future generations for worthwhile social engagement.

Because of its liberatory focus neohumanist education is clearly aligned with the critical pedagogical movement as represented by numerous educators and thinkers. It is my contention that neohumanism offers a revitalised critical theory that builds upon the energetic engagement of critical pedagogues with the narrow vision of education that underpins the industrial model of learning. Neohumanist critical theory, founded on a critical spirituality, expands on the exciting and insightful work of critical educators such as Paulo Freire who developed the concept of 'conscientization',² Ivan Illich who recommended we 'deschool' society³ and bell hooks who has argued that rather than teaching to conform we should "teach to transgress".⁴ Furthermore, it clearly takes up Henry Giroux's challenge that we need to move from developing a "language of resistance" to a "language of possibility"⁵ and that, although all critical pedagogical activity is utopian in nature, we as educators are also practically engaged with issues of immediate concern and that therefore we need to offer a 'concrete' utopic: a vision of the future that transcends the present and is yet attainable as a process of engagements and ruptures with the present. Paradoxically this present is both individually located in each one of us while simultaneously being a part of the creative and ordering forces of the social imaginary.⁶

Critical engagement

Neohumanism is also a philosophy of hope and empowerment. This is central to its critical engagement with issues of transformation and renewal. As a tool of cultural ferment its critical dimension is inclusive and

eclectic and this too is reflected in the general profile of critical pedagogy offered by Peter McLaren:

Critical pedagogy has begun to provide a radical theory and analysis of schooling, while annexing new advances in social theory and developing new categories of inquiry and new methodologies. Critical pedagogy does not, however, constitute a homogenous set of ideas. It is more accurate to say that critical theorists are united in their objectives: to empower the powerless and transform existing social inequalities and injustices ... Critical pedagogy ... provides historical, cultural, political, and ethical direction for those in education who still dare to hope.⁷

At its heart, critical pedagogy is a richly fertile ground upon which to establish the neohumanist vision of a society engaged in freeing itself from the 'ties that bind' us to narrow and essentially oppressive economic, cultural and psychological practices. Thus Maxine Greene muses:

I must ask again what a critical pedagogy might mean for those of us who teach the young at this peculiar and menacing time. Perhaps we might begin by releasing our imaginations and summoning up the traditions of freedom in which most of us were reared. We might try to make audible again the recurrent calls for justice and equality. We might reactivate the resistance to materialism and conformity. We might even try to inform with meaning the desire to educate 'all the children' in a legitimately 'common' school. Considering the technicism and the illusions of the time, we need to recognize that what we single out as most deficient and oppressive is in part a function of perspectives created by our past. It is a past in which our subjectivities are embedded, whether we are conscious of it or not. We have reached a point when the past must be reinterpreted and reincarnated in the light of what we have learned.⁸

Critical spirituality, as the critical analytic within the neohumanist project, is such a 'reinterpretation' and 'reincarnation' of the past. It fuses the critical tradition of an engaged humanism with the synthetic tradition of engaged Tantra. The creative energy released by the convergence of two independent traditions meeting in the shared quest for social justice and meaning cannot be under-estimated. This potential is not simply a matter of being able to chart a course and realise it; it is the ability to engage the multidimensional facets of our humanness in order to create maps to

preferable futures that retain their promise and their openness. Such futures resist definition, challenging us as both individuals and societies to *be* our best, *do* our best and *dream* our best.

Extending the critical diaspora

The critically spiritual stance paradoxically contests the normative as it strives to establish it. The tension in educational terms is between a human desire for certainty and the spiritual reality that all things are both contested and absolute. This results in a negative theological context that stamps the knowable within the unknowable as the ground for all education and the process of becoming becomes a social and personal struggle for emancipation. This can be described, using Ilan Gur-Ze'ev's term, as the diasporic quality of the critically spiritual position. This idea is worth pursuing here:

Diasporic philosophy represents a *nomadic*, hence "Diasporic" relation to the world, to thinking and to existence. Its starting point is the presence of the *absence* of truth, God, and worthy hedonism. Diasporic philosophy is positioned against any secular and theist philosophical, existential, and political projects that represent positive utopias and reflect "home-returning" quests. While thus rejecting all dogmas and other forms of closure and sameness, it also refuses all versions of nihilism and relativism.⁹

The critically spiritual can be linked with this contestation of truth, God and utopian goals as it links teachers applying it to the present in a deeply visceral sense. The need to live the educational process as a life quest that disallows any 'home-coming' and retains its (problematic) openness to all eventualities and yet maintaining an ethical sense of commitment to what Gur-Ze'ev calls counter education: that process of educational engagement which resists alienation from self and other. Gur Ze'ev again:

The big challenge for the critical mind and for humanistic education is not so much the fruit of alienation but the disappearance of (the consciousness of) alienation within the totality, which is governed by Instrumental Rationality.^{*10}

For Gur-Ze'ev even the category of 'spirituality' has been trivialised and commodified. The critical sensibility is obscured and must be reclaimed,

* Forms of rationality that strip the world of meaning and mystery; oppress non-Western people as well as Western; value efficiency and productivity over relationship and dreaming. This concept is central to the Frankfurt school's critique of modernity.

(but how?): for a worldview that is critically humanistic, in the sense that Gur-Ze'ev uses this term, any reduction of experience to a set of spiritual ethics is essentialist and bound to result in the further enslavement of those who apply it. The critically spiritual sensibility is alive to such a tension and positions itself within the negative (theological) space of self transcendence through identification with a non-self that is a spiritual category within the Tantric worldview inhabited by *nirguna*[†] or negative Brahma. In this way the critical attempts to live/bridge the tension of the mutual coexistence of linear, spirula and circular Being. The negative furthermore implies the positive, the Tantric category of *saguna* which affirms the relative reality of existence. This is the ground for the concrete utopic Giroux calls for and which activates hope and purpose in a world of impoverished meanings.

The neohumanist moment

The conditions of late modernity have resulted in a convergence in history, environmental violence, economic injustice, political bankruptcy, resurgent religious fundamentalism, technological change and philosophical confusion. This moment places before us two possible routes into the future. The individual, every one of us, is faced with the choice between loss and alienation on the one hand (the future is an intensified and colonised extension of the present malaise) or a reclamation of self and spirit on the other (the future is an open and creative counter to present hubris). This convergence has created the conditions for the emergence of a neohumanist sensibility; we live at a moment in time that not just necessitates a deepening of human awareness but also validates it.

At the heart of this process is our human capacity to reflect upon our selves. This is something new at the collective level in terms of the history of human consciousness, the last step perhaps being the emergence of our capacity to think[‡] a thought and not hear it as the voice of the gods. Thus ending the age of what Julian Jaynes has called the 'bicameral mind'¹¹ around 1000 BCE. This reflective capacity can best be described as signalling the emergence of the neohumanist moment. Niklas Luhmann sees the capacity to self reflect as a defining feature of modernity.

[†] *Nirguna* means 'unqualified' – it is the non-attributional Godhead; *saguna* on the other hand is the qualified or attributional divinity mystics identify with the world and the generative processes that sustain creation.

[‡] Before this we simply acted and any thought was considered 'revelatory' – the voice of the gods.

The question (for individuality) is no longer 'What should I be?' but rather 'How should I be?' ... An individual in the modern sense is someone who can observe his or her own observing.¹²

This reflective faculty, when truly enacted transcends itself; it lies at the heart of this new humanism. It suggests a human formula:

Reflection + Ethics + Action = Transformation

This process links self-actualisation with social renewal and premises this renewal on an ethical foundation that issues from an expansive humanism. It is implicit to this new emerging reality that ethics underpin both personal and social action.

In this sense we build a condition for re-imagining the possible by bridging the gap between the impersonal social imaginary faculty and the personal capacity to envision or imagine. The social imaginary is described by Cornelius Castoriadis as a process of signification:

Social imaginary signification brings into being things as *these here* things, posits them as being *what* they are—the *what* being posited by signification, which is indissociably principle of existence, principle of thought, principle of value, and principle of action.¹³

The personal capacity to envision is linked to hope and the reflective capacity to deconstruct and reconstruct the world around us and choose specific sets of conditions over others. This is a form of *eupsychia*: the ability to imagine and enact the constantly improving self. At its deepest level this is a spiritual condition that strengthens the personal identification with the world around us and provides the inspiration to come to its aid. This need to act is rooted in a set of conditions that are both personal (the desire for a better future for our children) and altruistic (the wish to care for the other).

Sarkar's Tantra

The Western temper of the critical has been expressed above yet the Tantric needs further expansion as many in the West will have a slanted understanding of this term. Often associated with ingenious sexual practices the central themes of Tantra are easily overlooked. Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar has devoted much time to elucidating a revitalised Tantra that retains its authentic roots in the pre-Aryan culture of early Indian society while responding to the central concerns of Modernity.¹⁴ The result

is a mytho-poetic engagement with the intellectual and ethical concerns of the past two centuries.¹⁵

Sarkar has sought to balance the material concerns of our age of extremes¹⁶ with the deep sense of anxiety that has resulted from generations of social and economic upheaval and technological change. The ageless stance of the mystic is brought to bear upon the physical, social, and spiritual problems of an age of transformation in which progress is all too often confused with superficial change.¹⁷

Being rooted in the indigenous experience of reality, Tantra has a broad metaphysical base that allows for ways of knowing, feeling and processing that go far beyond the limited rationality that informs the Western Enlightenment project and has resulted in the dominance of what Gur-Ze'ev referred to above as Instrumental Rationality and which Vachel Miller critiques in Chapter 12 of this text. Priorities are different because, as Sarkar notes, "spiritual life controls all other arenas of human life".¹⁸ This perspective generates a synthesising outlook steeped in what Sarkar calls the 'spiritual vision' central to an Eastern enlightenment. So in Sarkar's Tantric worldview:

- The individual can only exist within a collective, he or she has no meaning otherwise
- Individual and collective consciousness work together in striving to overcome the physical and social obstacles that arise on the path of evolution
- Soul or consciousness is an infinite and eternal entity of which we are a spark. We are part of an unending and ongoing cosmic dreaming¹⁹
- Reality is relative but very real from our position within its unfolding story
- We have relationship with everything and are thus responsible for the maintenance of the whole by serving the parts. This relationship is sacred and our service is the way we maintain our mythic connection with the whole. The personal drama of life is also mythic and reflects our relationship with the sacred.

Most indigenous cultures have found their purpose to be in maintaining cosmic balance and working in harmony with others and their environment. In many ways traditional Tantra has followed this pattern. Modern Tantra, as Sarkar has defined it, has a more dynamic agenda. It is specifically liberatory and therefore political. *Tan* in Sanskrit means 'bondage', and *tra* means 'to liberate from'.²⁰ Traditionally this was

interpreted to mean the individual transcending the limitations of their own ego. Sarkar radically shifted the emphasis from the individual to the collective by linking the two so that neither could progress without the other. Spirituality ceases to be selfish and becomes a collective act.

Within this construction of Tantra the individual works on their own liberation by following specific physical, social and spiritual practices, while at the same time struggling to free others from physical, social and spiritual bondage. This brings to spirituality an ironic tension in which the individual must engage with the world in many ordinary and extraordinary ways. Thus, as Jennifer Fitzgerald points out, “spirituality is both a grand project and an everyday task”.²¹ The poet David Rowbotham summed the situation up nicely when he wrote, “Pray speak beauty. But dust first spoke”.²² Much of the energy and dynamism of Tantra lies in this ironic tension.²³

Critical spirituality

Critical spirituality emerges as the result of this tension. It is a ‘thirdspace’, such spaces are described by Edward Soja as characterised by a hybridity of values and voices.²⁴ Such a space is, however, founded on an ethic that hinges on a redefinition of the human, not simply as a species orientation but as a broad-based condition of inclusive relationship with planet and universe. This is a ‘threshold’ concept that deliberately collapses and reconstitutes our identity. As conditions converge and traditions meet the threshold emerges as a peculiar point of meeting that turns us both inward and outward simultaneously. We stand in relation to our humanity with a critically spiritual ‘gaze’ that informs the activity of being human with transformative power. This situating hinges on the collapse of numerous dualities that have defined the human experience to date.²⁵ The result is a relational and layered dynamic that forces us inward to re-engage consciousness as an act of relation, and outward toward action that is both ameliorative and transformative of the lived condition.

Transformation will only emerge when we take personal responsibility for creating the conditions necessary for our continued presence on the planet. Critical spirituality recognises that, to paraphrase James Scott, what is rational to a bureaucrat is not so to a mystic.^{§26}

§ See the opening quotation for Chapter 12 in this text.

Donald Rumsfeld, in his (in)famous *non sequitur*, described a range of knowns and unknowns.** Much that is mysterious for him and his advisors falls within the domain of the valid from a critically spiritual perspective. Silence, mystery, awe and ignorance are all necessary categories for understanding the past, the present and the future. This is the fertile ground of dreams and archetypes, it is where the social imaginary of Castoriadis meets the personal imaginary of the citizen. It is here, where biography meets history, subject merges with object and agency and structure at last 'tie the knot', that we find a valid ground to activate a critically spiritual consciousness.

This critical engagement with soul lies at the heart of neohumanism and is a key component of a revitalised humanity. When agency and structure are in balance then the future opens up and becomes a place of realistic dreaming. This is not a utopia of closure where freedom is sacrificed to the Dream.²⁷ Rather it is a condition of continuous becoming in which personal subjectivities constantly renegotiate the context of their becoming through objective adjustment. This is the horizon of the possible, and is driven by what Louis Marin calls a utopic.²⁸ The point, he argues, is that utopia is a trap but paradoxically, humanity must have utopias, visions of the good, the hoped for other place, in order to shape and inform social choices. The creative energy involved in the generation and dissolution of utopic possibilities is central to the maintenance of the social order. This terrain is the place of dreams (utopic), the emotional anchor of individuality within the impersonal process of the social imaginary. In this way, agency, a necessary condition for transformation, is reclaimed.

Thus the condition of *being* ceases to be defined in the passive sense of submitting to an external reality, or as a denial of that reality as illusion or *maya*; instead it takes on a more muscular identity as a process of energetic reflective engagement with the conditions of mind and social ordering that so often deny agency as a condition of social reality. This condition of being involves both spiritual reflection and intellectual critique. Meaningful *doing* is the result of effective being and results in global action. Personal and collective identity, purpose and fulfilment result and immediately transformative praxis becomes a dimension of social reality.

** 'Reports that say that something hasn't happened are always interesting to me, because as we know, there are known knowns; there are things we know we know. We also know there are known unknowns; that is to say we know there are some things we do not know. But there are also unknown unknowns—the ones we don't know we don't know'—United States Secretary of Defence, Donald Rumsfeld.

Dreaming now takes on the creative potential of becoming. This is the gift of the emergent critically spiritual condition.

So critical spirituality creates new categories for making sense of reality and acting upon it. It fills the hole in holism by actively promoting an integrated vision of the human being and thus challenges the dominant hegemonic discourse that stifles agency and colonises the future. New categories allow for dissent. Some of these categories are steeped in Tantra and the Indic episteme, others allow for indigenous insights into relationship and the ontology of identity.²⁹ Still others draw on new insights into human nature and the nature of ethical action offering a framework for understanding consciousness as a living energy, *microvita*, that has organic properties and can multiply and also die.³⁰ When categories are challenged we find the present is less claustrophobic, it becomes a fragile and contested terrain over which various possible presents and futures, and even pasts contend.³¹

Dimensions of critical spirituality

The critically spiritual perspective integrates the concerns of critical theory for social justice, gender equity and processes of legitimation with an identification with the other that is based upon a meditative stance that establishes a sense of unity with and between minds. This identification is the root of relationship and was alluded to in the thinking of Michel Foucault as an ethic of care that had been eclipsed by the Western obsession with the Delphic injunction to “Know oneself”.

One of the main themes Foucault explored in the early eighties was ‘the care of the self.’ The nearly complete uncoupling of this imperative from its twin, ‘know yourself,’ is an essential element of his diagnosis of modernity, in which the latter imperative was gradually to eclipse the former as a philosophical object.³²

The schism created by the triumph of self-knowledge (as intellectual facility) has led to the dominance of the head over the heart. The latter was ‘feminized’ and radically devalued as a way of knowing and engaging reality.

Critical spirituality fosters the identification of self with the world, the collective and the cosmic good. It does so by acknowledging the depths of the human condition and building contemplative processes to incorporate these into the construction of knowing and acting. As Foucault acknowledges, care is a central ingredient here. Care implies relationship with both self as other (the deeper self denied by modernity) and also self

as world: That part of reality that Joanna Macy describes in her book *World as Lover, World as Self*.³³ The concept of care has also informed the work of Nel Noddings who has linked it with feminine ways of knowing that have been traditionally devalued as the result of patriarchy.³⁴ Thomas Berry characterises this synthetic knowing with an ‘ecozoic’ awareness:

Our challenge is to create a new language, even a new sense of what it is to be human ... This universe itself, but especially the planet Earth, needs to be experienced as the primary mode of divine presence, just as it is the primary educator, primary healer, primary commercial establishment, and primary lawgiver for all that exists within this life community. The basic spirituality communicated by the natural world can also be considered as normative for the future ecological age.³⁵

Cultural invention

Inventiveness within the cultural domain requires both vision and humility. Transformative praxis is premised on our ability to imagine an alternative and to anchor our potential in a meditative and reflective stance that enables us to challenge our conditioning and social restrictions. Critical spirituality opens up the present and the future to alternatives and this is a key component within the neohumanist educational programme: the freeing of students from conditioned responses; their empowerment through practical engagement and the return of meaning to learning.

In the imaginative domain the critically spiritual perspective allows us to see imagination not as a romantic and unitary process but as a social tool for the production and maintenance of dominant power structures. It simultaneously allows us to understand how curricular processes may challenge these structures through the identification and facilitation of alternative forms of enquiry.

The following figure (**Figure 1**) illustrates how imagination can be rethought as a tool for active learning and empowerment.

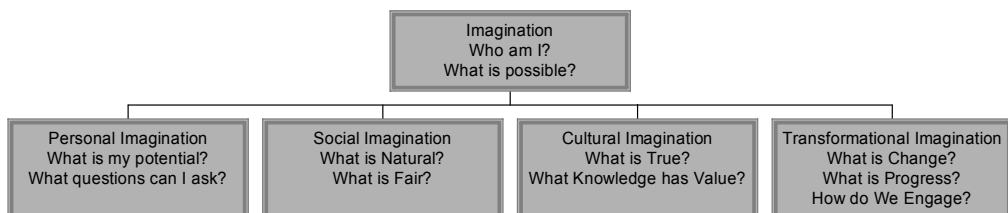


Figure 1: Imagination as a tool for active learning and empowerment

Combine this understanding with powerful reflective tools such as meditation, the arts and solitary activity and educational processes become both more challenging and more open. The transgressive nature of bell hooks' description of education as both reflective and participatory becomes more accessible. As a Buddhist critical pedagogue with a feminist lens she is clear that reflective action is central to any intellectual engagement with the world. Thus she observes:

Progressive, holistic education, 'engaged pedagogy' is more demanding than conventional critical or feminist pedagogy. For, unlike these two teaching practices, it emphasizes well-being. That means that teachers must be actively committed to a process of self-actualization that promotes their own well-being if they are to teach in a manner that empowers students.³⁶

This is challenging work but she is clear that it is both a privilege and a joy to so teach.

To educate as the practice of freedom is a way of teaching anyone can learn. That learning process comes easiest to those of us who teach who also believe that there is an aspect of our vocation that is sacred; who believe that our work is not merely to share information but to share in the intellectual and spiritual growth of our students.³⁷

Because the neohumanist strategy is to collapse the distinction between the individual and society, the work of cultural invention becomes the work of self-invention. Critical spirituality fosters this creative dilemma by grounding the critical in a spiritual rather than intellectual engagement with the reality of students, their families and their schools.

Human systems

Education as a human system has been treated as a tool for social engineering and as a result much of its deeper social potential has been overlooked. The critical pedagogical movement has challenged the assumptions behind this treatment but has not been able to make significant inroads into the educational establishment. This is due to two fundamental factors. Firstly, the economic system that drives social processes makes much of the critical position incomprehensible within the current paradigm. Secondly, the critical, rooted as it is in a deep humanism, has privileged intellectual critique over a more holistic engagement with questions of identity and emergence.

Critical spirituality offers some redress here as it deliberately steps out of the current civilisational paradigm, offering metaphors and priorities that stand in contrast to those of a domesticated humanism. The potential for Tantra to revitalise humanism is great as it aligns with emergent systems work as described by Robert Flood. In this context neohumanist education as a system of human engagement can acknowledge the following paradoxes:

We do not manage over things—we manage within the unmanageable

We do not organise in any absolute sense—we organise within the unorganisable

We cannot know everything—we will simply know of the unknowable³⁸

In addition we can add:

We do not just teach the knowable—we teach within the unknowable (acknowledging mystery)

We do not simply imagine the imaginable, ie working with the images supplied by cultural codes and current symbols promoted by global media—we imagine within the unimaginable (decolonizing our futures)

The space and flexibility generated by open-ended systems theory, and mapped in these paradoxes, allows for us to activate the critically spiritual sensibility that is at the heart of neohumanist reconstructions of the meaning and practice of education. The presence of the unmanageable and the unknowable allows for awe and mystery as well as opening up learning to communal engagement. The doors of the learning factory (a.k.a. school) are thrown open as an educational monoculture ceases to be relevant to the emergent context in which information is reduced to currency^{††} and civilizations dialogue in ways that are mutually beneficial.

Thus we meet the second weakness of critical pedagogy head on: with civilisational dialogue we have the cross fertilization of traditions that allows for the unthinkable to occur. Humanism fruitfully engages with Tantra and develops holistic solutions based on the affirmation of spiritual practice and the mythic within ethical processes that have direct access to the transformative love and power of the universe.

^{††} See Tobin Hart's Chapter 6 of this text.

Implications for education

In redefining the nature of our humanity, education is immediately faced with a whole set of new questions to explore. No longer are we simply concerned with effectively transferring information and establishing the cultural habits required for a spiritually and ethically impoverished pool of human capital. Education can now occur in an atmosphere of hope and purpose.

Language characterises the public nature of our human-ness and forms much that we inherently value and accept as reality. Critical theory has expanded our appreciation of the constraints to the possible, developing a language of critique; critical spirituality has in turn augmented this by offering a language of possibility that recognises the non-linguistic as a realm of deep power and signification.³⁹

Some of the implications for education are mapped in this book. Essentially education is reconfigured to engage *horizontally*, via an array of critical sensibilities, with issues of central importance to humanity: peace, gender equity, speciesism, geo and socio sentimentality, globalisation, environmental sustainability and the like; while engaging *vertically* with the process in order to ground the performative dimension of learning through acknowledging the primacy of a spiritual orientation to life and liberation. Such an orientation is the backdrop to the horizontal and brings with it the humility, awe and love that enable students to respond to both subject (care of self) and object (care of other) empathetically. This response is essential for any deep foundational ethical transformation to occur.

As critical spirituality pushes critical theory into a new orbit it allows for direct engagement in issues central to transformative education as described by authors such as Riane Eisler, Tobin Hart and Parker Palmer. It makes the re-imagining of humanity a personal activity with global consequence. In doing so it fully underpins the concrete utopianism Henry Giroux seeks as central to the critical pedagogical movement. As a result, critical spirituality becomes the fuel in the tank of global neohumanist praxis as it puts us in touch with the entire flow of relationships that sustain planet and self. This deep connection is rooted in the Tantric worldview in which all processes are interconnected and fosters a deep sense of gratitude to all that makes our now possible. This gratitude is rooted in an ethic founded on a debt to the universe. It is a debt that cannot be repaid, but lovingly embraced, in order to make meaningful our responsibility to and connection with creation.

The definition of 'human' in this context loses its species orientation and refers instead to the condition of embeddedness summed up in this indebtedness. This embeddedness requires engagement with all levels of responsibility, hence the concerns of neohumanist education with the local relevance of schools, the conditions of physical, psychic and economic oppression that inhibit learning, the problems of gender and the difficulties encountered around the world in the face of institutional and physical violence. It also accounts for neohumanist educator's challenge to the narrow concerns of education with the selfish drives of humanity and the violence this focus implies as an example of speciesist privileging.[#]

Similarly, critical spirituality underpins our explorations into the language and grammar of learning that underpins so much of the exploration of consciousness that is found in this text. Intelligence, wisdom, transformation and human political action all need to be redefined within the emergent context of a neohumanist ethic that entirely reinscribes the human condition. With this comes new possibilities and the opening up of the creative potential of education to better all those who seek to know themselves. This betterment implies wisdom, and with wisdom comes meaning and from meaning purpose emerges as a source of energy and inspiration. From inspiration comes love and this is the end point and beginning of all learning.

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*Perspective 1 Neohumanism in Evolutionary Context**

Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar

During the last million years of human history, proper justice has not been done to humanity; a particular class, a particular section has been given greater importance than others, and in this process the other sections of humanity have been neglected. For instance when a soldier sacrifices his life on the battle field, his death is announced in bold headlines in the newspapers; but the same newspapers do not mention anything about the great hardship his widow faces to raise their small family after the death of her husband. This is how one-sided justice has been meted out.

Though the matter concerns grammar and is not easy to change over night, the term 'man' in common gender includes both man and woman. Then why does not 'woman' also mean both woman and man? This is also lopsided justice.

Human beings have limped forward in their journey of history for the last million years bearing the burden of this defective social system; all were not given equal justice.

That is why I say, that neither has justice been done to 'humanity' (the abstract idea of human beings) nor has justice been done to 'humanism' (the abstract idea of the works performed by human beings). Now it is high time to make a reappraisal of this down-trodden humanity, of down-trodden humanism. Oftentimes, some people have lagged behind, exhausted, and collapsed on the ground, their hands and knees bruised and their clothes stained with mud. Such people have been thrown aside with hatred and have become the outcastes of society; they have been isolated from the mainstream of social life. This is the kind of treatment they have received. Few have cared enough to lift up those people who lagged behind, and help them forward.

When some people started advancing, they thought more about themselves and less about others, not did they think about animals and

* Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar, *Liberation of Intellect—Neohumanism*, Calcutta, Ananda Marga Publications, 1982, 92-94, 99-101

plants. But if we analyse with a cool brain, it becomes quite clear that just as my life is important to me in the same way other's lives are important to them; and if we do not give proper value to the lives of all creatures, then the development of the entire humanity becomes impossible. If people think more for themselves as individuals or for their small families, castes, clans or tribes, and do not think at all for the collectivity, this is decidedly detrimental. Similarly, if people neglect the entire living world—the plant world, the animal world—is this not indeed harmful? This is why I say that *there is a great need to explain humanity and humanism in a new light*, and this newly explained humanism will be a precious treasure for the world.

What is neohumanism? Neohumanism is humanism of the past, humanism of the present and humanism—newly explained—of the future. Explaining humanity and humanism in a new light will widen the path of human progress, will make it easier to tread. Neohumanism will give new inspiration and provide a new interpretation for the very concept of human existence. It will help people understand that human beings in this created universe, will have to accept the great responsibility of taking care of the entire universe—will have to accept that the responsibility of the entire universe rests with them.

To build a healthy human race we should have proper guidance in philosophy, in science, in all branches of human knowledge—which we do not have. We have utilized science more for destructive purposes than for benevolent aims; we have distorted the thought processes of human beings; we have deliberately misguided people instead of leading them along the proper path. We have taught people to think about which bomb can annihilate many millions of people at a time—but never propagated a philosophy to teach them to think how millions of people could be benefited by psycho-spiritual practices. Thus human beings today are following a defective path and there is a desperate need for a change in direction. The only remedy is neohumanism.

A distorted humanism has created tremendous harm in the world, and is still doing so. Unless it is replaced by neohumanism it may cause catastrophic harm for humanity. So what is neohumanism? Humanism newly explained, newly propagated is neohumanism—the philosophy which will make people understand that they are not merely ordinary creatures. This philosophy will liberate them from all inferiority and defects and make them aware of their own importance; it will inspire them to build a new world.

There are three stages on this path of neohumanism. The first one is called spiritual practice. What is spiritual practice? It is body-mind-spirit. This process will show you how to remove the defects of the psychic world and also the external world, and enable you to move towards the spiritual world without delay. This movement towards your spiritual goal will also help you to establish yourself in the psychic and physical worlds, so you will be able to render greater service to people. This is what I call 'spiritual practice'. Progress in this spiritual process starts with the elevation of protoplasmic cells and finally ends in the attainment of the Supreme Goal. This process will help the physical world and the psyches of the psychic world directly and indirectly, and also the spiritual world directly. But this is not enough; our journey does not end here.

The second stage of neohumanism is spiritual essence. This stage is related mainly to the psychic and spiritual strata. If you consider the entire human race, you will see that humanity has a collective mind. Now changes will have to be effected in the mental flow of this Collective Mind: you will have to create a new wave of thought in it. Because of the manner of human thinking thus far, the pace of human progress has been painfully slow. If it is given a new direction, the speed of progress will be greatly accelerated.

Thus we find that this second stage of neohumanism, its spiritual essence, will take place in the psychic and spiritual realms; it will occur in the collective psychic mind of humanity. Then the global thought processes of humanity will take an entirely new turn, and that will also strengthen humanities' collective spirit. Humanity as a whole will be converted into a powerful spiritual force, and in that stage no pseudo-humanistic strategy will work.

But there is still something more beyond this, which I have described as 'spirituality as mission'. So firstly there is spirituality as practice, then there is spirituality as essence and finally there is spirituality as mission. When all three combine, when the individual's entire essence becomes one with the controlling pattern of the Cosmological Order, this will be the highest expression of neohumanism. That neohumanistic status will save not only the human world, but the plant and animal worlds also. In that supreme neohumanistic status, universal humanity will attain the consummation of its existence.

SITUATING THE SPIRITUAL IN EDUCATION

Chapter 6 From Information to Transformation: What the Mystics and Sages Tell Us Education Can Be

Tobin Hart

In many moments in our lives there seems to be a choice of whether to go a little deeper or whether to go on to the next item, person, or task. When we pass by someone familiar and hear “How are you?” when do we say “Fine” and move on without missing a step, and when do we linger for a few moments? When we eat a morsel of food, how long do we allow the taste and texture to wrap around our tongue and when do we bring in the next mouthful? When we do go a little deeper, experience is measured not by quantity but is perceived as intensity; both have value but our lives are mostly shaped by these intensities, these moments of more depth. Education is no different; the choice to go deeper into the material or to move on to the next bit of information is always present. Both aspects are necessary, but in contemporary practice too often curricular expectations, looming standardized tests, emphasis on molding a workforce, and general anxiety push us to move on rather than moving into. The result is that contemporary education concentrates attention on the surface and often loses sight of the depths.

So I have asked the question: “What would the direction of education be if we derived our practice from the deepest view of human consciousness and culture?”. And this immediately raises another question: “Who has seen into these depths?”. In answer to this latter question the great sages and mystics from across our world come to mind. In ‘asking’ several of these individuals what education can and should be, I have found coherence and complementarity from Plato to Krishnamurti, Aurobindo to Emerson, Whitehead to James, along with many others. For the purposes of this chapter I have synthesized these views toward a focus on the aims or goals of education.

In doing so a clear epistemic sequence emerges in which we see successive understandings of that open and problematic word ‘education’ emerge. What presents itself as a simple and publicly lucid concept suddenly becomes a continuum of meaning and activity. The model of learning that

emerges from the following exploration takes us through six successive stages from learning as information gathering to learning as knowledge building. And from here to learning that involves, successively, intelligence, understanding, wisdom and finally transformation. All in fact add to the composite identity that is education. Furthermore, all need to be both honored and engaged for education to truly fulfill its promise.

Contemporary education

For the most part, contemporary educational praxis is about information exchange, and molding a work force. From this view, the goal of education is dominated by the downloading of facts and factoids. There has been significant improvement over the past twenty to thirty years in understanding how learning takes place,¹ but generally mainstream educational orientation remains focused on shaping a populous for the marketplace and treats the child as a container to be filled and controlled. In contrast, the sages and mystics advocate a balance between inviting the 'inner teacher' to unfold and guide from the inside, while applying appropriate information and guidance from the outside. Contemporary educational practice does not include the inner teacher in planning curriculum. The emphasis remains skewed toward 'putting in' rather than 'bringing forth'. This approach has resulted in the commodification of knowledge—where little information is turned into understanding but instead remains in fleeting service of the multiple-choice exam. Cultivation of full potential calls for something more. Without it, education becomes farthest from liberation; it becomes "dangerous",² resulting in "arrested growth",³ and even "soul murder".⁴ The sages and mystics universally suggest a more balanced goal that sees education as a clearing for deep experience that invites depth and intensity. And where do these depths actually lead?

Mapping depth

Drawing from a range of mystics and sages from across time and culture, I have constructed a map of the depths of knowing and learning that move through six interrelated layers of experience. In this map, *information* is given its rightful place as currency for the educational exchange. Information can then open up into *knowledge*, where direct experience often brings together the bits of information into the whole of mastery and skill. This then opens the possibility of cultivating *intelligence*, which can cut, shape, and create information and knowledge and involves a dialectic of the intuitive and the analytic. This is followed by the layer of

understanding that takes us beyond the power of intelligence to see through the eye of the heart. Understanding contrasts and balances objectivism and offers a way of knowing that serves character and community. Education then has the possibility for the cultivation of *wisdom* which blends insight into what is true with an ethic of what is right. Finally the depths lead to the possibility of creative *transformation*.

This learning process might be thought of as microgenetic development, meaning the series of developmental changes which occur even in a single thought, feeling, or lesson. Microgenetic development differs from the development of the individual over time (ontogenetic). It is a process that can happen in an instant or over the course of an assignment or exercise.

Entering into these depths offers an approach to education that is both practical and remarkable, one that replaces radical disconnection with radical amazement. It includes the education of the mind and the heart, balances intuition with intellect, mastery with mystery, and cultivates wisdom over the mere accumulation of facts. This is education where growing down—embodiment—is the means to growing up; one that emphasizes knowing as much as knowledge. It is education designed for us to assist ourselves in our own evolution, enabling us to align with the rising currents of creation.

The currency of information

I am only going to school until it comes out on CD Rom. A fifth grade boy

This is the golden (or maybe the silicon) age of information. Information abounds like never before and each time we look, the amount available seems to have doubled. We have access to everything from pipe bombs to prophecy. We no longer need priest, permission, or professor to gain access to the mysteries, they are available in the bookstore or with a click of the mouse. Not so long ago we might be killed for possessing, or even mentioning the secrets. But today there is such a remarkable access to information that we may even begin to wonder if the World Wide Web is becoming the world wide mind—the collective unconscious of the planet in digital form.⁵ Computer technology and the internet represent the ‘second coming’ in information access, the first being Gutenberg’s invention of the printing press in the fifteen century. Both have precisely the same effect of providing access to more ideas more directly. But what are the implications for education?

Education gathers around information. But in this expanding sea of information what is the appropriate function of information for the educational endeavor and how should teachers and students hold and handle information? How does the silicon or the ink get alchemized into the gold of knowledge and more?

Information involves discrete facts and skills. Information includes the average temperature in Boise, the correct spelling of a word, the chemical formula for salt. It is the currency of education and will remain so. Most of educational debate orbits around which and how much information should be passed along, and how and how well are we doing it. Should we concentrate on basic skills or more diverse subjects? How should the learning environment and teaching practice be structured to maximize information exchange? Tests for teachers and for students determine how much of the 'right' information they have remembered—and when we use the word 'performance' it means just and only this. Up to a point this is reasonable. It is certainly appropriate to gather around the currency of information and basic skills. As Aristotle says: "It is clear that children should be instructed in some useful things—for example, in reading and writing—not only for their own usefulness but also because many other sorts of knowledge are acquired through them".⁶ But we have missed the forest for the twigs if this is our exclusive focus. What has happened is that the currency for learning—information—remains the goal in and of itself. Too often schools skim on the surface of information at the expense of intelligence and understanding. The dominant motif is one of acquisition.

Plato tells us that when we focus on mere acquisition, we create "imitators",⁷ instead of artists. This acquisition motif creates a compliant and dull populous. Whitehead says that "a merely well-informed man is the most useless bore on God's earth".⁸ Even at the University level he notes the consequence of reproducing mere imitators: "I have been much struck by the paralysis of thought induced in pupils by the aimless accumulation of precise knowledge, inert and unutilized".⁹ The task of education is, in part, to help children think and act well, not to teach them what to think. However, in a climate dominated by downloading and acquisition, we provide students with a list of what there is to see and instructions in the proper way to see it. The mystics and sages tell us that human life is about unfolding and growing through lived experience. Instead of working with an organic principle of unfoldment, more akin to gardening, contemporary educational goals engender a mechanical

practice of exchanging inert ideas—a production line. The organic and intuitive process of learning gets reduced to a linear downloading of discrete, often out-of-context content. Too often there is no time for the appreciation of and attention to value and meaning. This downloading is serious business and so learning to play with the information becomes a distraction from the curricular goal. The result is demotivation, and a loss of wonder and curiosity. *Romance*, as Whitehead noted, gets surpassed in favor of some modicum of *precision*. But, as he reminds us, we need both at each step in order to lead to *generalization* or to move toward Hegel's *synthesis*.¹⁰ This is not to imply that we should expect children to learn only that which they find some immediate pleasure in, but that information grows arid and pleasureless unless we can find relevance and resonance with it.

Relevance implies that an idea or topic relates to us or something we are close to. If we find interest or meaning (relevance) in something we pay attention and tend to learn it. Few things are more straight-forward in life. Interest enables the three year old to know the names of dinosaurs, including which ones eat meat. It allows the child who struggles with simple mathematics to be able to interpret and memorize baseball statistics; children who have trouble with basic written language skills have little difficulty memorizing and writing the words to popular songs. Interest means that emotions have been engaged and we know that cognition and emotion are interdependent. Emotion activates attention which drives learning and memory.

Resonance literally implies that something vibrates us. Challenge, curiosity, rich sensory experience, and juicy information wakes us up producing an echo or resonance within us. As with art, it is not just the superficial outline, contours, or the shape of the information; “there is something additional, a breath that draws your breath into its breathing, a heartbeat that pounds on yours”.¹¹

The source for resonant exchange is the information and its particular form of presentation (e.g., through a lecture, a book). Superficially presented information or information out of context is less likely to resonate within us. As Emerson says: “Nothing interests us which is stark or bounded, but only what streams with life”.¹² Great teachers know their subject deeply enough to bring forth its presence and vitality—its streaming life.

Mastering the puzzle of knowledge

What we want is to see the child in pursuit of knowledge, and not knowledge in pursuit of the child. George Bernard Shaw¹³

Knowledge involves the comprehension of systems of information instead of simply discrete pieces. Having knowledge means holding together the puzzle of information and implies the basic ability to use information. At the deep end there may be comprehension and mastery over a domain or skill. The debater can make a reasoned and measured argument, the mechanic diagnoses the car problem, the writer shapes a story. Whereas acquisition is the motif when information is seen as the goal, mastery, in the form of skill or comprehension, is the high water mark of knowledge.

The term knowledge has several dimensions. As systems of information, knowledge is generally seen as content held passively in our minds for application when needed. Knowledge may be of 'external' material—for example, the botanist's taxonomy of plants, or 'internal'—for example, the nature of one's presuppositions and prejudices.

Beyond knowledge as an entity, it is also understood as skill or competence. Instructions to assemble the new bicycle serve as information—discrete and inert; we gain knowledge or 'know-how' when we succeed in putting the pieces together successfully (with or without the directions). Mastery may involve a mental operation like using a mathematical formula, or a mental and physical activity like riding a bike or repairing a car. When we are able to do this consistently with precision we say that we have mastered it. We might even add a further dimension to the meaning of mastery, stretching it deeper still, when we do something not only with precision and efficiency but with a particular artfulness or quality.

Beyond knowledge as an entity and as ability, it may also be thought of as a process of valuing; this meaning is more subtle. The activity of gaining knowledge is defined as recognition or becoming aware, and this involves a process of valuing. That is, inherent in the activity of gaining knowledge one inevitably places priorities on one technique or one idea over another. The chef filets the fish in one style over another because he has placed a higher priority on an outcome—for example, speed, or safety, or visual or gustatory aesthetics. The student forms a particular perspective regarding her geography lesson because it has been valued in a certain way for very individual reasons (e.g., she wants a good grade on the test or her family is traveling to the region of interest this upcoming summer). As fallout of

the quest for scientific absolutes, knowledge (like information) is often understood to be independent from values and the process of valuing, thus remaining 'pure', 'scientific', and 'true'. However, gaining knowledge is ultimately entwined with valuing. That which we select to remember or master is done so in a way that places a certain value or a set of priorities on one thing, or one way, as opposed to another. When we gain knowledge we co-construct content and worth through our presuppositions, or perceptual filters, and our intention. So knowledge, rather than being simply a static, abstract entity, is laden with value and is also in flux—it is an “undivided whole in flowing movement”.¹⁴ The implication is that attention to the subjective process of valuing is integral to the development of knowledge.

Bohm contends that the fragmentation of knowledge and the separation of knowledge from values has “helped to lead not only to a dangerously irresponsible use of knowledge, especially scientific, but even more to a general loss of meaning in life as a whole¹⁵ ... [Knowledge and values] are inseparably interwoven in a single undivided process”.¹⁶

Perhaps the most universal way of moving information into the pattern wholes of knowledge is through offering material in the ways that we live and understand our lives: through stories and metaphors. Stories and metaphors offer patterns of meaning that may be interpreted at many different levels. They weave bits and pieces into patterned wholes located in time, space, with history and direction—just like our lives. Stories, whether the story of a biological cell, a metaphysical idea, or an historic event, connect ideas and events into the stream of life, to the “pattern that connects”, as Gregory Bateson named it. Inevitably we act according to our stories (e.g., “I am a good student.” “The world is round.”).

A long tradition of progressive educators have attempted to provide a more immediate or embodied relationship to the object of learning. Rousseau advocated learning “naturally” and learning by doing;¹⁷ his call was taken up by Pestalozzi's focus on learning through direct concrete experience.¹⁸ Dewey emphasized learning by experience and through cooperative endeavors;¹⁹ Bruner focused on contextual understanding and emphasized intrinsic rewards;²⁰ and Freire suggested critical dialogue, which involves a more direct, active participation derived from real world concerns.²¹ Essentially they recognized and advocated the active engagement that develops mastery of knowledge.

Great teaching takes place as some unique alchemical mixture within the trinity of educational practice—the student, the teacher, and the subject.

The integration of these three creates a sacred clearing or structure and invites a 'trialectic' and a 'dialogue'. In an infinite variety of ways great teachers dance with method, student, and ideas to invite learning.

The power of intelligence

Educate not just to transmit subject but to bring about a change in your mind. Jiddu Krishnamurti²²

Intelligence involves the ability to both use information and knowledge, and to create it; intelligence shapes, changes and creates knowledge. It cuts with the knife of analytic thought and reconstructs through creative synthesis and imagination. The capacity for critical examination and evaluation open up closed systems of knowledge; knowledge and information can be taken out of context, recontextualized and can be manipulated for one's own uses. As Krishnamurti (1974) says "intelligence uses knowledge"²³ and this involves the capacity to think clearly. In intelligence, judgment overtakes mere opinion, and multiple perspectives emerge as the world is perceived more fully. Rather than seeing either/or binaries, intelligence sees the multiplicity of the world—"either, or, or, or" endlessly along with immeasurable combinations and relationships. In a similar vein, Swedenborg suggests that "the rational mind is primarily an instrument that consciously discovers relationships".²⁴

The Greek philosophers distinguished between "the fact that" and "the reason why".²⁵ While knowledge and information deal with "the fact that," intelligence can take up "the reason why". And in this way intelligence is about the way knowledge is held and handled. This is the "art of the utilisation of knowledge".²⁶ Training for intelligence involves cultivating thinking rather than mandating what to think. Education then becomes assisting the powers of the mind in their self development. This includes one's own self-creation, as Sai Baba advocates, "train[ing] the individual in the process of creative self-sculpture".²⁷

As part of training for intelligence there is a shift from accepting and amassing answers, as is more typical at the levels of information and knowledge, to challenging problems through asking questions. In a study of the education of great scientists "good mentors taught their students not only the words—facts and formulae—but also the 'music of science'"²⁸—this involves playing and dancing with the questions and often looking for new questions rather than always demanding the fastest closure from a

definitive answer. In contemporary schooling much of this “music” and play is absent because:

Neither teachers nor students are willing to undertake “risks for understanding”; instead, they content themselves with safer “correct answer compromises.” Under such compromises ... [education is considered] a success if students are able to provide answers that have been sanctioned as correct.²⁹

Gardner summarizes several experiments, from physics to the humanities, in which even high achievers are unable to demonstrate understanding of the principles that they have memorized.³⁰ While some students can recall sophisticated theories and formulae (information and knowledge), they are unable to apply and perform outside a limited classroom context and instead fall back on mental explanations and strategies that were established in preschool years. While the volume of information accumulated was impressive, their intelligence did not grow sufficiently to use the information in working on an unfamiliar task. More testing, more homework, and more school days will do nothing to improve the ability to skillfully handle knowledge and information, it can only entrench ‘correct answer compromises’ and further dry up intrinsic motivation.

Under girding intelligence is the activity of knowing. Rather than emphasize various forms in which intelligence emerges (mathematical, spatial, etc.) as Gardner³¹ been so influential in doing, I want to focus on the aspects of knowing that are common across all of them. Once knowing is freed, it is able to express itself in infinite variety of integrated ‘intelligences’.

The activity of intelligence can be fostered through (at least) three general functions: “the skills of rational-empiricism, the development of logics and questioning, and the self-reflection of phenomenology”.³²

The *empirical/rational* involves (empirical) observation and (rational) analysis. As we cultivate the conventional scientific method we develop observational capacities and methods for forming and testing hypotheses. Kolb's description of the empirical/analytic process recognizes different sub-components or mental activities within this process: observation, problem identification, brainstorming, developing a means to test a hypothesis, testing it, and then back to observation in a loop of inquiry. Each aspect represents a dimension that may be assessed and enhanced as we teach this method of inquiry. For example, one may have a great ability to brainstorm multiple possibilities but little know-how in defining the

most salient problem to solve, or in planning how to test a hypothesis. Identifying and teaching of these strategies directly enhances intelligence.

Questioning and Logic involves the ability to identify and correct faulty reasoning, and uncover understanding through the use of questions. While this is often thought of as a more mature capacity, basic reasoning skills have been successfully introduced in elementary schools as “Philosophy for Children”.³³ As a means of developing reasoning capacity this program invites questions such as: “What is the problem?” “Is there evidence to support claims?”, “What counter-examples or exceptions are there to challenge the claims?”. In addition, Mathews challenges Piaget’s limits on children’s cognitive capacity by suggesting that subtle and sophisticated reasoning, including metaphysical questioning, is possible in early school age children.³⁴

Critical questioning can begin to challenge the logic and evidence of unchecked assumptions (“What is the evidence for your conclusions? What are the exceptions?”). When pushed further, the capacity for critical questioning may deconstruct the context and underlying assumptions on which ideas are founded, even the presuppositions of the logic itself.

Phenomenology represents another interrelated dimension of inquiry that especially complements questioning and rational-empiricism. Using the subjective world of the individual as the basis for understanding, phenomenology notes and brackets experience. It brings everyday lived experiences, so often left out of the empirical/analytic and of logic/questioning, to a position of value. It is a means of inquiry centered on qualitative description and self-reflection, one which fills a gap that has been widened by the dominance of scientism with its emphasis on measurement, objectification, and verification of what is ‘out there’.

While often equated with a purity of linear logic, the activity of intelligence is multifaceted and operates as a dialectic of the intuitive and the analytic.³⁵ The mind reveals quantum leaps in pattern recognition, creative synthesis, and understanding that cannot be explained by linear processing. By itself linear, sequential logic reveals only a partial view. As William James declares:

The one thing it [sequential logic] cannot do is to reveal the nature of things ... When you have broken the reality into concepts you never can reconstruct it in its wholeness.

Out of no amount of discreteness can you manufacture the concrete ... For my own part, I have finally found myself

compelled to give up the logic, fairly, squarely, and irrevocably ... Reality, life, experience, concreteness, immediacy, use what word you will, exceeds our logic, overflows and surrounds it.³⁶

The intuitive dimension has been referred to as meditative thinking,³⁷ spontaneously arising cognition,³⁸ pure experience,³⁹ ontological thought,⁴⁰ contemplative knowing,⁴¹ to name a few terms. Einstein tells us: "Only intuition, resting on sympathetic understanding can lead to these laws, the daily effort comes from no deliberate intention or program, but straight from the heart".⁴² The conscious aims of education can include the cultivation of both sides of this dialectic.

The heart of understanding

Someday, after we have mastered the winds, the waves, the tide and gravity, we shall harness for God the energies of love. Then for the second time in the history of the world, man will have discovered fire.
Pierre Teilhard de Chardin⁴³

In daily conversation we say we 'understand' something when we have a basic grasp of an idea, thing, or act. Usually this understanding implies a generally agreed upon meaning, a consensus. Thus, a chair is for most circumstances and most people, a chair. This is basic shared understanding. Understanding also comes to mean the ability to apply information in ways beyond the limited context in which it was acquired; for example, when we know enough about the thing or idea to apply it in novel situations. But I want to go past these to something deeper. The origin of the word 'understanding' means literally 'to stand among'. This implies crossing boundaries inherent in 'standing apart from' and moves toward intimacy and empathy. This opens the door to a richer perception that transforms information and, along with it, the self who is perceiving. As Buber says "all real living is meeting",⁴⁴ and understanding of the sort I am describing comes in the activity of meeting.

Conventional knowing is dominated by objectivism which traps the other at a distance. The other remains an 'it' for our distant examination, utilitarian manipulation, or as an object to possess. The root meaning of the term objectivism means standing against or apart from. This capacity allows us to step back from enmeshment with the world and has in turn enabled the advances of science, and given rise to the emphasis on an autonomous self. But there is a down side to this posture as Parker Palmer describes:

This image [standing over or against] uncovers another quality of modern knowledge: it puts us in an adversary relationship with each other and our world. We seek knowledge in order to resist chaos, to rearrange reality, or to alter the constructions others have made. We value knowledge that enables us to coerce the world into meeting our needs—no matter how much violence we must do. Thus our knowledge of the atom has brought us into opposition to the ecology of earth, to the welfare of society, to the survival of the human species itself. Objective knowledge has unwittingly fulfilled its root meaning: it has made us adversaries of ourselves.⁴⁵

With the distance between knower and known maintained and without a recognition of their interplay, we remain separate from (above or outside) the world we are perceiving. The modernist milieu of objectification of the other, including the natural world (environment and body), contributes to difficulties in relationships and limits experience from which to make ethical choices. At the beginning of this century William James recognized that “materialism and objectivism” tend to lead human beings to relate to their world as alien. And, as James said: “The difference between living against a background of foreignness [i.e., treating the world as alien] and one of intimacy means the difference between a general habit of wariness and one of trust”.⁴⁶ The result of this habitual wariness and distance is anxiety, depersonalization, alienation, and narcissism. Objectivism serves as insufficient ground on which to fashion character or human values.

Understanding requires a fundamental shift in the way we know. Buber describes this shift as a movement from an “I-It” relationship” toward one of “I and Thou”.⁴⁷ Understanding comes when we empathize with the other, lean into the other, and suspend our self-separateness for a moment. As we move away from objectivism, what emerges is a recognition and appreciation of interconnection. This way of knowing is as useful in science as it is in human relationships. Barbara McClintock, Nobel Laureate in genetics, is a prime example. In working with corn plants she described a less detached empiricism, one in which she gains “a feeling for the organism”, that requires “the openness to let it come to you”.⁴⁸ The other is no longer separate from, but is part of our world and ourselves in a profoundly intimate way. Krishnamurti says: “To help him to be alive it is imperative for a student to have this extraordinary feeling for life, not for his life or somebody else’s life, but for life, for the village, for the tree”.⁴⁹ And this comes through shifting the way we know. Such thought

stretches past the limits of what we conventionally refer to as intellect and intelligence and into the realm of understanding.

Said another way, understanding is learning to see through the eye of the heart. All of the wisdom traditions speak of this heart, for example: the eye of the soul for Plato, the eye of the Tao,⁵⁰ South on the Native American medicine wheel,⁵¹ and the Chinese “hsin” which is often translated as mind but includes both mind and heart.⁵² “Both Matthew and Luke speak of a single eye which lights the whole body like a lamp and without which ‘how great is the darkness’”.⁵³ “In contrast to modernity which situates knowing in the mind and brain, sacred traditions identify ... essential knowing, with the heart”.⁵⁴

Understanding moves out from the confines of the rational into the transrational. No longer confined by linear logic or linguistic limitation it takes up the logic of the heart— an experience not unlike what it might be like to walk into a world in which the learned laws of physics have been upended. Paradox and possibility open up. Old divisions of either/or move even beyond multiplicity to seeing with a singular depth, to the heart of things. Note the Gospel of St. Thomas:

When you make the two one, and when you make the inside like the outside and the outside like the inside, and the above like the below, and when you make the male and the female one ... then you will enter [the Kingdom].⁵⁵

The mind is opened beyond the limits of reason through the knowing heart and it is only through this opening that we gain understanding. This is the secret, according to the wisdom traditions, that will take education and our world beyond where it is today. This opens us beyond self-interest and provides a new center for knowing and acting.

The heart of understanding is cultivated through empathy, appreciation, openness, accommodation, service, listening, and loving presence. These activities move past an objectivist knowing (standing against) to meet the other (object, idea, or person) more directly and spontaneously.

At the foundation of education for character is the heart of understanding: character is about developing wholeness—a self undivided—and this takes the heart as its center point.

The eye of wisdom

Be patient toward all that is unresolved in your heart ... Try to love the questions themselves ... Do not now seek the answers, which can not be given because you would not be able to live them—and the point is to live everything. Rilke⁵⁶

Wisdom is an activity rather than a static entity to be accumulated. That is, “one does not have wisdom—as if it were a thing. Rather, one acts wisely”.⁵⁷ Wisdom is distinguished from technical mastery or intellectual acuity especially by its moral dimension. Emerson says that true wisdom is a blending of “the ‘intellectual’ perception of truth and the moral sentiment of right”.⁵⁸ Wisdom involves “human action which possesses both intellectual and ethical orientation; and ... [this] is the task of education”.⁵⁹ Wisdom has been described as involving capacities for empathy, self-knowledge, listening, comfort with ambiguity, a tendency to de-automatize thought routines, and movement beyond conceptual limits.⁶⁰

Wisdom serves to dynamically expand and integrate perspectives and involves the capacity to listen and translate the power of the intellect and the sensitivity of the heart into appropriate form (action, attitude, etc.). Wisdom “is the capacity of the mind to honor the wisdom of the heart”.⁶¹ Whereas the heart of understanding is universal and indiscriminate, wisdom is able to bring this broad unconditionality to the particularities of a situation. For example, the wise response is not always “Just love”, it may be strategic, disruptive, confrontational. Jesus was said to have turned over the tables of the money changers who were sent up in a holy temple; Martin Luther King organized a sit in at a lunch counter in Montgomery; Gandhi’s radical non-violence confronted the authority of the British Empire. And we would not say that these actions are ‘smart’, but they seemed to be wise.

These examples reveal another characteristic of wisdom—the wise person sees beyond immediate self-interest. In this way wisdom does not simply serve individual growth but the movement of growth (evolution) in general. Wisdom provides a larger perspective, one that often goes beyond what we can see from a stance of fear and self-interest. Thomas Aquinas wrote: “Wisdom differs from science in looking at things from a greater height ... [it involves] *gnome*, or the ability to see through things”.⁶² While knowledge and intelligence are often equated with complexity, wisdom seems to emerge often as elegantly simple. Not a simplicity borne

of ignorance but a simplicity that is close to what is essential in life—it cuts to the chase, it sees through the cloud of complexity.

But why is this so absent from educational aims? Rorty suggests that the Cartesian shift marked the “triumph of the quest for certainty over the quest for wisdom”.⁶³ The goal thus became focused on rigor, prediction, and control rather than on wisdom or peace of mind. But this quest for certainty is a futile or delusional task since “what is really ‘in’ experience extends much further than that which at any time is *known*”.⁶⁴

Instead of grasping for certainty, wisdom rides the question, lives the question. Sternberg suggests that “the wise person views himself and others as engaged in an unending dialectic with each other and the world”.⁶⁵ An unending dialectic is an activity that raises anxiety in the one-right-answer world of most contemporary schooling. When questions are treated primarily as problems to be solved (the domain of intelligence) the question is set up in opposition to the questioner. From the start the question becomes something to beat, to conquer. This may be playful or deadly serious and represents the best of intelligent engagement. Wisdom treats the question differently. It seeks questions, like looking for the best fruit on the tree. It then bites into the question, living it, allowing it to fulfill its purpose as nourishment. Whereas intelligence will cut, dismantle, and reconstruct the question in order to work toward a solution, wisdom mainly rides the question to see where it goes and what it turns into. Bohm writes: “Questioning is...not an end in itself, nor is its main purpose to give rise to answers. Rather, what is essential here is the whole flowing movement of life, which can be harmonious only when there is ceaseless questioning”.⁶⁶

What this opens up to is not domination of the question but the possibility of wonder and insight. It welcomes epiphany as James Joyce named it. Heschel, in his study of the ancient prophets, concludes that wisdom comes through awe and reverence:

The loss of awe is the great block to insight. A return to reverence is the first prerequisite for a revival of wisdom ... Wisdom comes from awe rather than from shrewdness. It is evoked not in moments of calculation but in moments of being in rapport with the mystery of reality. The greatest insights happen to us in moments of awe.⁶⁷

Awe, wonder, reverence, epiphany are drawn forth not from a quest for control, domination, or certainty, but from an appreciative and open-ended engagement with the questions; this is why such qualities as

listening, empathy, comfort with ambiguity and so forth (as mentioned above) are associated with wisdom.

Much of acting wisely comes through the inward spiral of self-knowledge. For example, Merton suggests that: “the purpose of education is to show a person how to define himself authentically and spontaneously in relation to the world—not to impose a prefabricated definition of the world, still less an arbitrary definition of the individual himself”.⁶⁸ This keeps the question (and the person) alive, always at the edge of flowing into the next form, the next question. And for many mystics, self-knowledge opens to ultimate knowledge. For example, according to the gospel of St. Thomas:

The Kingdom of heaven is inside of you, and it is outside of you.
When you come to know yourselves, then you will be known,
and you will realize that it is you who are the sons of the living
Father. But if you will not know yourselves, you dwell in
poverty, and it is you who are that poverty.⁶⁹

When the inner life is attended to on a daily basis, it does not breed narcissistic preoccupation or indulgence, but the opportunity for depth and centering at the intersection of inside and outside. All of the mystics and sages affirm the Delphic oracle’s admonition to “Know thyself”. This inward awareness is not only important to provide balance but also because it reveals the intersection of our individual depth with a more universal depth. The universe lies not only about us but also within us—the outside can reveal the inside and visa versa.

*Each student’s emerging self is the curriculum.*⁷⁰ “Right education is to help you to find out for yourself what you really, with all your heart, love to do ... Then you are really efficient, without becoming brutal”.⁷¹ This provides inspiration as Patanjali has named it.⁷² To define oneself authentically, the voices that children listen to are not only those of parent and teacher and text, but especially those of his or her own heart.

Waking up into the wisdom space is facilitated through centering; “centering is an act of bringing in, not of leaving out. It is brought about not by force but by coordinations”.⁷³ These coordinations are a “gesture of balance”, as Tarthang Tulku named it,⁷⁴ that provide a dynamic center to our existence. We do not accumulate wisdom so much as we develop our powers of centering and coordination so that we may act wisely, from the wisdom space. In this way wisdom involves “assisting the mind in the powers of self creation”.⁷⁵

Wise people seem to find points of entry into the wisdom space. This may occur from a walk in the woods, through prayer, meditation, service, music, and so forth. This activity shifts attention from normally dominant ego-generated chatter and opens awareness. There is a Seik chant whose lines are “I am here. Let me be fully here”. Such presence is encouraged when we simply welcome and witness all of our being, including our shadow. Tarthang Tulku describes the practice of being “relentlessly honest” with ourselves as a basis of bringing our center to the here and now. Such presence and honesty activates the process of transformation.

The process and paradox of transformation

We do not believe in a power of Education. We do not think we can call out God in man and we do not try. Ralph Waldo Emerson⁷⁶

To transform means to go beyond current form. This means growth, creation, and evolution. When education serves transformation it helps to take us beyond the mold of categories, the current limits of social structure, the pull of cultural conditioning, and the box of self-definition; in so doing we ride the crest of the wave of creation, a wave that constantly collapses and rises into new form. We have the potential to “exist in such a way not only to comprehend the facts of our lives but also to transcend them”,⁷⁷ and this is what the deepest moments in education lead toward.

Transformation is both an outcome and a process; it is the push and the pulse that drives self-organization and self-transcendence. Jansch offers:

Self-transcendent systems are evolution’s vehicle for qualitative change and thus ensure its continuity; evolution, in turn, maintains self-transcendent systems which can only exist in a world of interdependence. For self-transcendent systems Being falls together with Becoming.⁷⁸

Drawing from Zen master Sasaki Roshi, Puhakka summarizes this impulse: “All things that arise are incomplete but have in them the character of striving for completeness”.⁷⁹ Transformation is a movement toward increasing wholeness that simultaneously pushes toward diversity and uniqueness—becoming more uniquely who we are, and toward unity—recognizing how much we have in common with the universe (and perhaps even the recognition that we are the universe). In this way self-actualization and self-transcendence are not contradictory but part of the same process. We actualize our ever-expanding potentials by transcending current self-structure. This is why Maslow preferred the active term self-

actualizing, which depicts an on-going process, as opposed to self-actualization, which implies an end-state.⁸⁰

Transformation emphasizes fluidity and flexibility, movement and freshness, will and surrender, responsibility and liberation. However, these seem far from what contemporary education insists on. Instead, “conventional schools work primarily for the purposes of limiting consciousness and reality to the current norms and defining power relations among the next generation”.⁸¹ Today’s schooling largely trains for adaptation to the status quo, as does much of psychotherapy—we seek to produce well-adjusted students (and clients) who can ‘fit in’ and fulfill our expectations of them in the workforce and in the classroom. And while adaptation has its place, it is incomplete and confining: “If your ideal is adjustment to your situation ... then your success is likely to be just that and no more. You never transcend anything. You grow but your spirit never jumps out of your skin to go on wild adventures”.⁸² Schooling has focused on adaptation to the status quo rather than its transformation within (person) and without (culture and society).

Each time of life has its developmental contingencies and opportunities; school age is a time for developing the tools of mind and the habits of heart that will serve and shape a life. Seneca captures a desirable outcome of education: “a mind which is free, upright, undaunted and steadfast beyond the influence of fear or desire”.⁸³ Education for transformation or freedom does not try to impose or force or even teach liberation but provides liberating (transformative) habits and tools, from the strength of will, to the clarity of mind, to the compassion of the heart. Through their appropriate use, one may have the personal power and vision to consciously join the wave of creation. Goethe says: “Whatever liberates our spirit without giving us mastery over ourselves is destructive”.⁸⁴ Transformative education enables us to avoid getting caught in our own little whirlpool of existence, so that we may live in the whole river of life. This is the whole function of education—cultivating one’s whole being, the totality of mind, and the “sensitiveness of soul”.⁸⁵ It gives mind and heart a depth and a freedom to love, understand, appreciate, and create.

Transformation is the process of creation, regeneration (a task of personal re-formation, as Swedenborg describes it),⁸⁶ and freedom to undertake that re-formation consciously.⁸⁷ This implies an opening up of consciousness—the adventure of “waking up” in Gurdjieff’s words.⁸⁸

Energy is created in the reaction of transformation and it often heats up and catalyzes further growth beyond the individual. Interdependence at

all levels reminds us that social structures (e.g., slavery), cultural beliefs or values (e.g., prejudice), and consciousness of the universe as a whole may be changed as the ripple of individual transformation grows to a wave. Gandhi's personal awakening to injustice led to the transformation of a society; when a mother's child was killed by a drunk driver she began an organization, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), that has helped to change attitudes and legislation about driving and sobriety. In this way the microgenetic spiral that I have outlined in this chapter serves ontogenetic (the development of the individual) and phylogenetic development (the evolution of the species and the world).

Personal transformation comes from earthquakes in our worldview and from tiny sparks offering a glint of insight. Form is transformed through an infinite number of events from a child learning to spell his or her first words to feeling loved by another.

The question is not whether transformation happens; it does. We change and grow. Instead, the question is, "Can we help it along?". Can we create an education that invites, even nudges transformation? Can we listen for that impulse of creation or that inner teacher that orchestrates growth?

In and of itself we could claim that the act of creation (in art, of the universe, of the thought and quality of our life in this moment) is synonymous with transformation. It is the current that moves us along; the fire that burns within us, as Krishnamurti described it.⁸⁹

Whitehead referred to creativity as the ultimate category—the category necessary to understand all other processes. That is, creation as a movement into novelty is the basic process of existence.

Perhaps creativity is the most tangible and reproducible symbol of transformation, transcendence and creation. Arieti wrote: "Creativity ...can be seen as the humble human counterpart of God's creation".⁹⁰ The creative wave of transformation is not confined to paint and poem but is about who we are and how we live.

Creative activity (broadly defined) provides a touchstone for the act of teaching/ learning. Any activity that involves freshness of thought or perception, offers provocation and opportunity to stretch thinking, or helps to develop the tools to rethink and re-experience our world, is creative and therefore potentially transformative. In addition, since we know that the teacher teaches not just a subject but also who they are, does the teacher express his or her creativity in some authentic way? As a teacher, are we a model and expression of growth? If we are, we can have

some assurance that we are offering educational sustenance and stimulating the impulse for transformation.

Transformation is inherently a spiritual endeavor. But suggesting this spiritual approach to education is not advocating some religious curriculum or add-on information for our schools. Parker Palmer reminds us that:

... the spiritual is always present in public education whether we acknowledge it or not. Spiritual questions, rightly understood, are embedded in every discipline ... Spirituality—the human quest for connectedness [and I would say creation]—is not something that needs to be brought into or added onto the curriculum. It is at the heart of every subject we teach, where it awaits to be brought forth (p.8) ... We can evoke the spirituality of any discipline by teaching in ways that allows the ‘big story’ told by the discipline to intersect with the “little story” of the student’s life.⁹¹

This is a skill that comes as we live our spiritual questions more knowingly and honestly. And living these questions means being present with them in this moment. As Whitehead wrote: “The present contains all that there is. It is holy ground ... The communion of saints is a great and inspiring assemblage, but it has only one possible hall of meeting, and that is, the present”.⁹² So the invitation reads “once an hour ask yourself softly, ‘Am I here?’”.⁹³ To be present allows us to consciously engage in our own transformation and the transformation of others.

An education of inner significances

What all this suggests is that education, from the view of these mystics and sages, involves a curriculum of inner significances as well as one of outer information. A curriculum of inner significances focuses on value, quality, virtue, resonance and relevance, which all tend to grow from the inside out. It does not require that more information be added onto contemporary curriculum, but invites us to the inside of the subject-matter, the other and the self. This is a curriculum where the largest questions sit along side the smallest, and all are fair game.

Knowledge, intelligence, understanding, wisdom, and transformation can be grown in any exchange which utilizes the currency of information; they are not limited to higher order development. It is a question of whether there is willingness to use the meeting of education as an opportunity to move a little deeper. Going deeper does not take away from the

information exchange but makes it richer, gives it context, brings it alive and may even awaken awe. We do this when we invite the student to directly and openly meet their world and themselves. This is enabled when we, as educators, meet ourselves, ideas, and our students directly, openly and honestly—in this way teaching primarily becomes a way of being. When we do so, the activity of meeting takes precedence and information can regain its place as currency and not as the main goal of education. Then the aims of education reach beyond mere information exchange to an education for transformation.

Information then serves as currency for learning, knowledge brings an economy of interaction, intelligence gives power, precision, and critical reflection to our enterprise, understanding opens the heart, wisdom balances heart and head leading us to insight and right action, and transformation culminates this deepening spiral as it enjoins us with the force of creation and communion.

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Chapter 7 Education for Transformation: Integrated Intelligence in the Knowledge Society and Beyond

Marcus Anthony

Integrated intelligence is the state of awareness that infuses individualised and localised intelligence with an intelligence that comprises transpersonal and nonlocalised potentials. The purpose of this chapter is to examine some potential roles of integrated intelligence in the short and long-term future of education and society. Given the relative newness of the discourse, the discussion that follows will at times be generalised, speculative and imaginative. More specific tools and applications of integrated intelligence will not be examined here.

In the first part of this chapter, integrated intelligence is explicated in more detail, and this is followed by an outline of the method used in this chapter—Inayatullah’s Causal Layered Analysis, situating the debate within poststructuralist discourse. Thereafter, two definitive problematics of education in the knowledge society are identified. Several possible benefits and implications of the introduction of integrated intelligence within these problematics are explored, looking at the short to medium-term. Finally, the focus moves beyond the knowledge economy to the potential use of integrated intelligence in the long term, to help induce personal and social transformation.

What is integrated intelligence and where is it found?

Although integrated intelligence is virtually absent from contemporary secular education and mainstream intelligence and consciousness discourse within the dominant mechanistic paradigm, it is nonetheless a widely posited conception and experience across a plethora of disciplines, discourses, civilisations and worldviews. Some of the most notable include spiritual healing and new age texts;¹ UFO phenomena;² Taoism;³ tales of the supernatural;⁴ neohumanism;⁵ Jungian and transpersonal psychology;⁶ parapsychology;⁷ deep ecology;⁸ quantum physics and systems theory;⁹ consciousness theory;¹⁰ cardio-psychology;¹¹ the worldview of various ancient cultures such as the Greeks, Romans and Egyptians;¹² shamanism,

animism and indigenous culture;¹³ and in popular songs, science fiction, general literature, movies and fairy tales and fantasy of numerous kinds, and in general literature.

Depictions of integrated intelligence vary somewhat within these texts, and nowhere is it explicitly referred to by the term “integrated intelligence”. Indeed innumerable terms are employed. For example, Lao Tzu’s “Tao” grants one a kind of transcendent perception where: “Without going out of the door, one can know things under Heaven”.¹⁴ Sheldrake and Smart refer to “telepathy” within a more rigorous parapsychological methodology, manifesting as the ability to know who is calling before one picks up the phone.¹⁵ Wildman refers to “The Dreaming” of the Australian Aborigines, which includes assumed telepathic potentials between individuals and perception of the spirit of places.¹⁶ Futurist Slaughter touches upon concepts such as “subtle awareness”, “causal insight”, “ultimate identity with the source”, “psychic intuition”, “super-consciousness” and “transcendent knowledge”.¹⁷ Meanwhile, physicist Peat refers to synchronicity as “the bridge between mind and matter”.¹⁸

Dossey, whilst himself preferring the term “distant non-local awareness” points out that the lack of an agreed upon terminology represents a tremendous obstacle in the field of alternative healing methods.¹⁹ This is a field heavily imbued with references to integrated intelligence. His point is also relevant to research and writing which deals with notions of an integrated intelligence. Thus the discourse on integrated intelligence is by no means a clearly-defined one, scattered across history, continents, intellectual discourses, and worldviews. There are numerous discrepancies regarding method, language and religious/spiritual interpretations. Yet this disparate discourse points to an intelligence that is consistent with the original definition given above. It is an area that deserves close scrutiny, as evidenced by its increased presence in contemporary discourses.

Integrated intelligence differs from most contemporary mechanistic depictions of intelligence and consciousness in that it is non-localised (moving beyond purely brain-based models of consciousness), transcends linear conceptions of time,²⁰ and acknowledges sources of inspiration and knowledge that are transpersonal. It implies that the brain is a permeable organ imbedded within a sea of consciousness. As transpersonal researcher Stan Grof states:

It has become increasingly clear that consciousness is not a product of the physiological processes in the brain, but a primary attribute of existence. The universe is imbued with creative

intelligence and consciousness is inextricably woven into its fabric.²¹

Integrated intelligence, as defined here, is comprised of two distinct domains. The first is higher order perceptions of the wholeness and integrated nature of the cosmos. This is the direct perception of the interface of cosmos and consciousness. The second is ‘paranormal’ perceptual phenomena such as ESP, clairvoyance, and transcendent visionary experience. Both these domains suggest an intelligence that transcends the individual and is integrated with the cosmos or greater environment.

Poststructuralism, intelligence and the knowledge economy

If integrated intelligence is to be more formally reinstated into our discourse on the nature of intelligence, and indeed our futures, our methodology requires a corresponding shift. As we will see below, integrated intelligence is largely neglected within the Western scientific paradigm, as its elusive and ‘paranormal’ nature renders its scope outside the bounds of the measurement fixation of that worldview. It also does not gel with the overriding assumption of a mechanistic universe where human consciousness is assumed to be epiphenomena—an accidental by-product of the material universe.²²

One step back: Western education and the mechanistic paradigm

Modern Western education and its “mind of the ratio” is a continuation of a broader civilisational paradigm—the materialistic and mechanistic worldview.²³

In the mechanistic/rationalist paradigm, ‘knowledge’ is restricted to the empirical and the sensory; the masculine, the ‘hard’ and the measurable.²⁴ It perpetuates “the matter myth”, that “the universe is nothing but a collection of material particles in interaction, a giant purposeless machine, of which the human body and brain are unimportant and insignificant parts”.²⁵ This paradigmatic assumption can be traced back to the ancient Greeks and the influence of Newton’s law of mechanics on Western thinking.²⁶ Yet such an assumption has been demolished by modern quantum and particle physics, and systems and chaos theory, including the chemistry of self-organising systems and the interface of biology and physics.²⁷ This represents an important challenge to essentially mechanistic and brain-based/reductionist interpretations of mind and consciousness. The recent proliferation of references to an integrated intelligence are, in

part, emerging from this evolving scientific discourse, and the emergence of a post-mechanistic paradigm.

Paradigms set limits not only upon concepts, but also on methods and tools. Thus Grof, deconstructing the tenets of contemporary science, argues that research is cumulative, with scientists only selecting those problems that can be readily examined with the prevailing acceptable tools, both conceptual and instrumental.²⁸ The West predicates its understandings on analysis and reductionist methods in general, where “facts and figures predominate”.²⁹

Parapsychology and the Western episteme

Western science’s attempts to deal with subtle and ‘paranormal’ phenomena contrasts greatly with those worldviews that acknowledge integrated intelligence, and this throws light upon our civilisational ways of knowing and their limits.

Parapsychology, which predicates its understandings on an attempt at empirical validation of many of the abilities we are referring to here—such as clairvoyance, telepathy, precognition and others—demonstrates how controversial and difficult these domains of awareness are to conclusively ‘prove’. Despite a history dating back to the 1920s, researchers in modern scientific parapsychology have failed to conclusively demonstrate the existence of psi. Skeptics are numerous, and regularly pour scorn upon any claims for the existence of the ‘paranormal’.³⁰ These skeptics predicate their dismissal upon the evidence (or lack thereof) gleaned from parapsychology.

Many proponents of psi concede that the scientific evidence is weak and/or highly problematical, and point to the elusiveness of psi phenomena. Kennedy follows a long line of psychic researchers who decry the “capricious, actively evasive and unsustainable” nature of psi.³¹ Others include James, Beloff, Braud, Eisenbud, Batchelder, and Hansen.³²

Yet the term ‘paranormal’ (beyond normal) is itself reflective of the Western mechanistic paradigm, effectively relegating all psi-related phenomena (including integrated intelligence) to the status of an insignificant ‘other’ within any given discourses, including those on intelligence and consciousness. The implication—and the effect—is that they are not to be taken seriously.

Parapsychology is deeply imbedded within the empirical traditions of the scientific tradition and thus the mechanistic paradigm. Varvoglis points to the limitations of parapsychology as currently practiced, arguing that it

focuses too much upon the detached, rationalist and empirical tools of science, thus limiting the valuable insights and knowledge that may be gleaned from other ways of knowing, including emotional, intuitive, metacognitive and creative forms of knowledge.³³ Schlitz echoes this point, urging parapsychologists to move beyond the “physicalist, materialist model” and parapsychology’s “nearly exclusive focus on statistical outcomes”,³⁴ and to embrace “the rich nature of qualitative experience”.³⁵

In short, parapsychology attempts to gain legitimacy via the very self-limiting methods that have initially excluded it from our discourses. This may represent a self-stultifying problematic for parapsychology. Yet post-critical thought and futures move beyond this sticking point by allowing for other ways of knowing to enter the discourse.³⁶

Postcritical thought and Causal Layered Analysis

Inayatullah's Causal Layered Analysis (CLA)* is a poststructural method that is utilized in this chapter. CLA is a means to conduct inquiry into the nature of past, present and futures. It problematises the present and the past, allowing the possibility of alternative futures to emerge.³⁷ According to Inayatullah, this approach is: “committed to multiple interpretations of reality,” and this legitimates “the role of the unconscious, of mythology, of the spiritual... instead of views of reality for which only empirical data exists”.³⁸

The purpose of CLA is to elucidate the deeper meanings imbedded within texts via the application of four specific components, and to allow the acknowledgement of other ways of knowing.³⁹ The first level of CLA is the “litany”, which examines the rational/scientific, factual and quantitative aspects of texts. The second level—the social/systemic—deconstructs the economic, cultural, political and historical components. The third level of CLA explores the discourse/worldview of texts, identifying the deeper social, linguistic, and cultural structures. The final component of CLA is the mythical/metaphorical level. This reveals the hidden and explicit mythologies, narratives, symbols and metaphors contained in texts. This includes any emotional, unconscious and archetypal dimensions.⁴⁰

Once the discourse is expanded into these four levels, the way is then cleared for a movement beyond the purely critical and rational, which in turn allows for the re-introduction of the actual experience and

* For more discussion of CLA, see Chapter 3 of this text: *From Multiculturalism to Neohumanism: Pedagogy and Politics in Changing Futures*.

employment of other ways of knowing, (including integrated intelligence). Integrated intelligence tools provide a means for actualizing what Slaughter calls “transformative” futures, where the transpersonal and spiritual have been re-integrated into our discourses.⁴¹

Integrated intelligence is thus the link that makes real Bussey’s claim that neohumanism provides the metaphysical depth to move beyond linear modes of rationality and sensory reality.⁴² While CLA and critical spirituality, by definition, predominantly employ analytical and critical cognitive modes, the employment of integrated intelligence potentially expands these discourses via a direct experiential link with a cosmic intelligence, grounding the entire framework in practical transpersonal/mystical experience. This would re-instate the missing dimension of “all the messy stuff” which has been left out of modernist science⁴³ and perpetuated by the aperspectivism of postmodernism.⁴⁴

Integrated intelligence in the knowledge economy

That we have now shifted from the industrial model economy to the knowledge economy is widely accepted. Peters and Humes write that in the major OECD countries more than fifty per cent of GDP is employed to produce and distribute knowledge. The catalyst for this in countries like Australia, the US, UK, Canada, Finland and Ireland has been the proliferation of the use of the internet and associated new technologies.⁴⁵

The purpose here is to take two salient problems within the knowledge economy and its education system, and to identify ways in which integrated intelligence might be employed to work towards the resolution of these problematics.

Problem 1: The rejection of intuitive and mystical knowledge

Contemporary education in the knowledge economy has all but totally rejected the mystical, the intuitive and the transpersonal—the cornerstones of integrated intelligence.

Education in the industrial and information ages

Beare and Slaughter suggest that modern schools are largely modeled upon the factory model that emerged from the industrialisation of society. The economic system and worldview that developed in Europe in the wake of the industrial revolution implemented a focus upon science, technology and instrumental reality.⁴⁶ Other ways of knowing became repressed within this industrial model of education.⁴⁷

Milojević argues that education in the age of globalisation is a follow-on from the industrial model. Both models are part of the same worldview, with their “scientism, instrumentalism, secularism, empiricism and technological determinism”.⁴⁸ She argues that computer technology can be seen as a manifestation of instrumental rationality and a techno-scientific relationship with knowledge. Thus although the image—the computer—may be perceived as new world, the worldview is the same.

Moffett, a visionary educator who worked within education for approximately half a century, argues that while contemporary public education covers ‘the 3Rs’ and vocational education adequately, it has forgotten personal and spiritual development. He states that contemporary corporate and political imperatives have sabotaged education and decimated the spiritual aspects of the system.⁴⁹ Following the thinking of the mystics and transpersonalists, he argues that humanity is posited within a cosmic framework, and that it is “not politics and economics but culture and consciousness (that) should provide the dual focus for a new sort of education”.⁵⁰ Moffett’s vision is of a schooling system and society infused with transpersonal consciousness (and thus integrated intelligence).

The valorisation of the verbal, linguistic and mathematical

Gardner, Fromberg, Beare and Slaughter, Moffett, de Bono and Gardner, Kornhaber and Wake have all pointed out that traditional schooling heavily focuses upon verbal/linguistic and mathematical/logical intelligences.⁵¹ The approach is linear, results are measured in linear ways, and the results are used for competitive ends.⁵² This approach developed from the Western European tradition which emerged during the nineteenth century and is fundamentally a “maturationist, linear child development framework”.⁵³ In this system teachers have lost the capacity for fluidity of teaching because they have been trained in “definitive, static models” of temporality.⁵⁴ The beliefs of educators reflect mechanistic conceptualisations of intelligence, with most of them believing that students learn as passive receptors of externally generated information/data, rather than seeing learners as beings capable of actively generating their own knowledge.⁵⁵ Intuitive thinking, imagery, imagination, analogy and other such ways of knowing are thus often marginalised.⁵⁶

The development of IQ tests has played a significant role here. IQ tests were originally developed to test a student’s capacity to meet the demands

of the industrial model of education, and particularly to control the increasingly large numbers of students who were pouring in from the countryside, by identifying at-risk students.⁵⁷ IQ tests predominantly measure mathematical and linguistic acuity.⁵⁸ Thus intelligence became defined in measurable mathematical and linguistic terms. Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences heavily criticises traditional concepts of a domain general IQ for these very reasons. One of the excluded domains has been intrapersonal intelligence. Significantly this incorporates personal feelings and the intuitive domain. Gardner's argument makes more apparent why integrated intelligence—which can be seen as a type of intrapersonal intelligence—has been largely left off the educationalists' map.⁵⁹

The secular state has reinforced the industrial society's reduction of the spiritual and mystical aspects of education.⁶⁰ Contemporary school students, though potentially highly proficient at mathematics and highly literate (relative to children from previous eras), are able to utilise a strictly limited range of cognitive processes.⁶¹ The cognitive processes of language and mathematics center upon rational/linguistic intelligence and conscious, ordinary states of awareness. Conversely, spiritual intelligence, argues Burke (following Zohar's argument), "rests in that deep part of the self that is connected to wisdom from beyond the ego, or conscious mind".⁶²

Possessive individualism and the ego

We can further note the rampant possessive individualism of Western cultures,⁶³ and the competitive ethos of the neo-Darwinian mind,⁶⁴ both encouraging ego-fixated states of awareness. Nisker argues that a new degree of individuality emerged in Europe during the scientific revolution. People became more and more identified with their own minds, which was seen as the source and centre of a personal self. They became enamored with their own powers of intellect and invention, and attention moved away from spiritual concerns. A culture of narcissism was born.⁶⁵

Since 1784 when Kant defined enlightenment as the "inclination and vocation to think freely" and "to use one's own understanding without the guidance of another",⁶⁶ Western society has increasingly valued independent thought over spiritual and transcendent wisdom, the latter of which requires some degree of surrender to a consciousness greater than the conscious mind and ego. The ego-transcendent states of the mystics inevitably become less valued, and thus possibly less common, in such a system.

In short, both the industrial and knowledge societies' models of education perpetuate the mechanistic paradigm's analytic and reductionist mind and its rational, linear ways of knowing, and the predominance of the individual ego. In turn, the mystical and spiritual are diminished.

Problem 2: Virtual worlds and the stultification of the subtle, inner and transcendent

A point related to the denial of the intuitive and the transcendent in the knowledge economy and modern education, is the increasing obsession with computer hardware and software, and internet technologies.

There are certainly potential benefits for spiritual education with new technologies and the internet. Markley and Elgin both see the mass media as a possibly potent force in the transformation of the species towards a more integrated and spiritual whole.⁶⁷ Elgin sees the potential for religious and spiritual traditions to make their wisdom available to help transform the mass media "into a more enlightened, healthy expression of that collective mind".⁶⁸

Yet while the internet increases both the volume of, and access to data, in its current form it does not facilitate the non-ordinary states of consciousness that are associated with integrated intelligence in the spiritual traditions.⁶⁹ Technological optimists also tend to fail to clearly distinguish amongst data, information, knowledge and wisdom.⁷⁰ While access to the internet will clearly improve the volume of the former three, it is questionable whether it would do anything to improve the latter, as wisdom is usually a function of life experience. Indeed many mystical traditions clearly distinguish between intellectual knowing and deep understanding. Silent, reflective modes of consciousness tend to be preferred (especially meditation), or tools which disrupt the conscious and learned mind's rational understanding—such as with the use of Zen koans.⁷¹

Use of computerised technology and the internet requires an externalised focus of attention, thus potentially stultifying the development of inner worlds for learners. It may be assumed that an estrangement from the psyche and inner life may be exacerbated by the continuing dissociation process that is inherent in focusing attention upon computer screens all day. Wilber has made a related point, suggesting that the proliferation of internet use has done little to foster connectedness and relationship because it lacks an inner dimension.⁷² The latter is the doorway to the transcendent in mystical tradition.⁷³

Elgin, identifying a related problematic, points to the damaging effect that the misuse of television is having on society, contracting society into a narrow consumerist worldview. Television has not been used to cultivate the capacity to make critical choices or enhance equanimity, but instead fosters “distraction and agitation”.⁷⁴ Thus technology, including the internet and computers, can potentially be used to foster self and spiritual awareness, or to degrade it.

Pearce states that the children of today are already becoming impaired in their ability to distinguish “subtleties”, which is a result of “the failure of appropriate (emotional, nurturing) stimuli and the massive over-application of inappropriate or high level, artificial stimuli”.⁷⁵ He states that the children of the present age are “damaged past the point of educability in any real sense”.⁷⁶ He refers to the research done at Tunbingen University in Germany where a study carried out over twenty years, and with some four thousand people, found three significant outcomes.

Firstly, the subjects of the study displayed an average of one per cent per year reduction in the capacity for sensory sensitivity and the ability to acquire information from the immediate environment. Secondly, only “highly concentrated bursts of over-stimulation”, such as loud sounds or intense visuals were being registered by the most recent subjects of the study. This rendered the children insensitive to subtleties. For example, children at the beginning of the study were able to distinguish amongst 360 shades of red, compared with just 130 in the latter group. Thirdly, the study noted the lack of adaptation of the brains of contemporary children in being unable to cross-index the sensory systems, such that there was no synthesis occurring in the brain. For example seeing was reduced to “a radical series of brilliant impressions which do not cross-index with touch, sound, smell and so forth”. Thus there is an impaired capacity to contextualise sensory stimuli. Pearce states that this accounts for why modern children are so easily bored and distracted unless provided with intense stimuli.⁷⁷

Pearce’s argument indicates that the prolonged use of computers, television and music, combined with an absence of proper nurturing, retards sensory acuity. It is reasonable to extrapolate that it may also retard intuitive capacities. The facilitation of integrated intelligence and the recognition of subtle intuitive feelings, according to the mystical traditions, requires a quiet and receptive state of mind. The study above

suggests that such states are becoming increasingly rare in the computer and entertainment age.

Potential uses of integrated intelligence within these problematics

How might both the introduction of a discourse, and the practical employment and experience of integrated intelligence influence these two interrelated problematics? Here several possibilities are considered.

Renewed meaning, renewed hope

The connectivity of integrated intelligence may provide hope and renewed meaning, even as it effectively re-maps our universe and worldviews.

Slaughter states that we need to identify sources of inspiration and hope in the contemporary world.⁷⁸ The need for meaning through knowing where we stand in relation to the cosmos cannot be easily done away with, and this meaning has traditionally been provided by religion.⁷⁹ Within spiritual discourses that incorporate integrated intelligence we see repeatedly the idea of a universal guiding consciousness, albeit taking somewhat different expressions: such as Sarkar's Supreme Consciousness,⁸⁰ the Buddhist's concept of the "universal mind",⁸¹ and spiritual educator Moffett's "cosmic consciousness".⁸²

A universe imbued with integrated intelligence is a deeply meaningful one, with a definite purpose. Employing the metaphors of quantum physics to back up her argument, Zohar suggests that there is an implicit covenant between the quantum vacuum (the ground state of being) and all people. This grounds all our meanings in a greater context. This is a sacred covenant because it is about the ultimate meaning of our existence.⁸³

Bussey points out that meaning and hope go hand in hand. Futures without meaning are futures without hope. Bussey argues that Inayatullah's CLA expands the legitimacy of our academic boundaries.⁸⁴ It is at this juncture that integrated intelligence enters the discourse, and hope and meaning are re-kindled. For an integrated cosmos is one where "the whole sends messages to the parts".⁸⁵ This situates the evolution of self within a cosmic context, an inherently meaningful scenario.

Senge sees personal mastery and the integration of the intuitive, transcendent and rational faculties as being intricately interrelated. The latter leads to the enhancement of the perception of the connectedness of the world, compassion, and commitment to the whole.⁸⁶ He sees a movement away from selfishness and towards a commitment to

something greater than ourselves, including a great desire to be of service to the world. This includes the experience of the awakening of “a spiritual power”.⁸⁷ Senge also sees this shift as a seminal part of the learning organisation. The encouragement of personal mastery in the terms mentioned here, will “continually reinforce the idea that personal growth is truly valued in the organisation”.⁸⁸ This principle could apply equally to the knowledge economy in general.

Thus it is that the introduction of tools and methods that might help to facilitate integrated intelligence (and its implicit connectedness with the intelligence of the cosmos) would be a step towards transcending the isolation of “possessive individualism”.⁸⁹ The methods of insight meditation, such as that employed by the Buddhists, were specifically designed as ways to explore and experience the connection of self and the world around us.⁹⁰ Critical futures, neohumanism and integrated intelligence allow for the legitimating of this process. As Bussey states, critical futures is “banging on the door” of meaning via an impact on the heart and soul, not just the mind. The knowledge economy posits humans as cogs in the machine, as individuals striving to fulfill themselves through consuming material goods, and achieving personal goals. Integrated intelligence, like neohumanism in general, inverts this metaphysic, positing the individual as deeply connected with the whole.⁹¹ It moves one from potential selfishness and greed, and re-instates eros and agape, both of which were largely evicted from the cosmos after the scientific revolution.⁹²

Egocentric individualism can itself be viewed as a projection of the fragmented ego state. Within the transpersonal model of psychological and cosmic evolution, the fragmented ego state is seen as a stepping-stone towards the transpersonal.⁹³ In this sense integrated intelligence is a tool that might help to facilitate the shift towards that evolutionary imperative. It will add a spiritual dimension to the secular and de-spiritualised education of the knowledge economy. It will add the transpersonal to the mathematical, the intuitive to the rational, the infinite to the linear. It will open the way towards an education for transformation of self and society.

It is the processes that are required to facilitate integrated intelligence which are likely to provide the greatest benefit in circumventing the two problematics above. Meditative, silent and reflective states requiring awareness of inner worlds and the subtle, are required to facilitate integrated intelligence. These will inevitably take young students away from machines and entertainment, and direct their awareness inward. For

the young of today, this has the potential to redefine the meaning of life from a focus upon entertainment and personal gratification, to the perception of their lives as being situated within a universal and spiritual context. One of meditative discipline's primary benefits, argues Hayward is its potential to help establish a society where human relationships and political systems might be predicated upon genuineness, compassion, gentleness, and on "truly knowing who we are".⁹⁴

Meditative states of mind leave the subconscious undistracted.⁹⁵ The capacity for mindfulness and equanimity is an intimate aspect of meditative traditions; and in the Buddhist tradition of *Samatha* (meaning quiescence), the process of fixing one's mind steadily upon an image is a seminal skill. Mindfulness is defined as "the faculty of sustaining the attention upon a familiar object without being distracted away from it".⁹⁶ Indeed, even sufferers of obsessive-compulsive disorders have been able to use meditation to gain insight, and thus to choose "new and more adaptive responses to the intrusive and intensely bothersome thoughts and urges which bombard their consciousness". In this process they also "systematically alter their own brain chemistry".⁹⁷ Thus the extrapolation that the so-easily-distracted youth of today might find similar benefits to the obsessive-compulsive disorder sufferers, via the use of meditative techniques, is not unreasonable.

In the Buddhist tradition, *Samatha* and *Vipassana* (insight) go hand in hand.⁹⁸ Thus while the focus of integrated intelligence in this chapter has been upon its perceptual benefits, the benefits in terms of quiescence and mindfulness should not be lost. For if we are to employ meditative methods to help facilitate integrated intelligence, the Buddhist tradition suggests that equanimity will surely accompany it.

Beyond knowledge to wisdom and transformation

Research suggests that perception of psi phenomena is enhanced when we are open-minded, when we share a common purpose and mutual trust with each other, and when we have mindful attention.⁹⁹ It may also require some degree of transcendence of the imperatives of the human ego. We find this potential of ego-transcendence and the expansion of consciousness within critical spirituality in general.¹⁰⁰ Thus, the employment of integrated intelligence may not be compatible with the aggressive, fast-paced, competitive culture of the modern global economy and the neo-liberal vision. Its best and most suitable applications will possibly occur within a global transformation of consciousness. Yet it may

be supposed that its *initial* applications within the global economy (in the ways suggested above) will also help to facilitate that shift in consciousness.

The wisdom society and the role of integrated intelligence

It is in the transmission and development of wisdom that integrated intelligence can potentially serve as a vital cognitive modality. Various critics have argued either that the wisdom society is approaching, or that it is essential for the futures of humanity.¹⁰¹ Dian, following the thinking of Rolf Jensen, believes that the information society will be short-lived, and that it will be replaced by the wisdom society, where “the human side of activity¹⁰² will be deemed more important”.

Slaughter also argues for a “wise culture that values wisdom above raw technical power”.¹⁰³ Slaughter sees the need for humanity to let go of the industrial model of education, and its values, priorities and structures. Instead there is a need for an “opening to the processes of transformation available through the perennial wisdom of humankind”.¹⁰⁴ Notably, argues Slaughter, such a culture “is far-sighted and imbued throughout with transpersonal awareness”.¹⁰⁵ Both of these are vital components of an integrated intelligence.

Wisdom and spiritual experiences are closely correlated. Elgin points out that enlightenment experiences are a kind of awakening, with the individual “being bathed by a light with immense wisdom and compassion”.¹⁰⁶ Elgin suggests that the term “*homo sapiens sapiens*,” (which he interprets as meaning “to be doubly wise”) epitomizes the true nature of humanity. He points out that such a definition of humanity shifts the collective goal of the species, enabling us to:

...discover our place in this living universe. It utterly transforms the nature of the human journey. Then we can ask ourselves: Are we serving our capacity for double wisdom, for knowing that we know—in other words, for awakening? And can culture co-evolve with that awakening of consciousness?¹⁰⁷

Conclusion

The knowledge economy is embedded within the Western mechanistic worldview, as are the predominant theories of intelligence and consciousness. Critical futures allows the decryption of the mythologies, power structures, and worldviews which undergird the knowledge society. In turn neohumanism allows us to integrate the world of science and spirit,

permitting opening of the discourse on the nature of consciousness and intelligence. In turn, the possible employment of integrated consciousness in the modern world may allow the development of a society which moves beyond the narrow dimensions of the knowledge economy and its technocratic hegemony, and towards a world imbued with a transpersonal wisdom.

As Wilber points out, a simple change of map will not suffice; such an approach will perpetuate fragmented consciousness, because a new intellectual framework does not go deep enough.¹⁰⁸ What is required is an expansion of our ways of knowing, and of what it means to be intelligent, and to be human; and that requires inner work, inner worlds, and the incorporation of the transcendent.

Integrated intelligence may assist us in not only accessing expanded sources of knowledge, but in re-connecting us with each other and the universal intelligence that has spawned us. In that sense we may become a page within the universal story. Integrated intelligence is thus potentially an intimate part in the healing of the vast macrocosmic wound created by the enlightenment split between heart and soul.

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Chapter 8 Collective Violence Pedagogy and the Neohumanist Peace- Oriented Response

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The underlying struggle for our future is not between the conventional polarities of right and left, religion and secularism, ... Rather, it is between a mounting grassroots partnership resurgence that transcends these classifications and the entrenched, often unconscious, dominator resistance to it. Riane Eisler¹

According to macrohistorian, futurist and educator Riane Eisler, in our nuclear/electronic/biochemical age—transformation towards a different type of global society than the current one is absolutely crucial for the survival of our species.² Since today, due to many technological changes, our species' possess technologies as powerful as the processes of nature, if we do not wish to destroy all life on this planet we have to change our dominator (patriarchal) cultural cognitive maps. As explained by Eisler:

We can better understand our past, our present, and the possibilities for our future by charting the dynamic interaction of two movements. The first is the tendency of social systems to move toward greater complexity, largely because of technological breakthroughs or phase changes. The second is the movement of cultural shifts between two basic organizational forms or “attractors”: the dominator [androcracy] and partnership [gylany] models.³

These two models—androcracy and gylany—represent two ends of a continuum of patterns for structuring human societies. They are ideal models as no family, society, or organisation orients exclusively to a partnership or dominator configuration, rather each is a combination of both that are present in various degrees.

Eisler's two basic models describe systems of belief and social structures that either nurture and support—or inhibit and undermine, equitable, democratic, nonviolent, and caring relations. At one end is the partnership model that embodies equity, environmental sustainability, multi-

culturalism, and gender-fairness. At the opposite end of the continuum is the dominator model, which emphasizes control, authoritarianism, violence, gender discrimination, and environmental degradation. They represent two basic underlying alternatives for human relations.

Most of our contemporary societies, and certainly most Western and global society, are located closer towards the dominator configuration end of this continuum. Which means that our ways of being, thinking and doing exist predominantly within the context of dominator epistemology and praxis.

According to Eisler,⁴ elements of dominator society, that form its core configuration, are as follows:

- Existence of the authoritarian structure with hierarchies of domination
- Ranking of males over females
- Institutionalization of fear, violence, and abuse
- High social investment in stereotypically 'masculine' traits and activities, such as the control and conquest of people and nature
- Myths and stories honouring and sacralizing domination

To this list, we could add the following:

- **The belief in one truth** and in salvation through religion/external God (religious version). The belief in one truth, as defined by science and reason (secular version). This secular/materialistic version also stipulates that "the cosmos is made up of mostly dead matter and empty space and is not 'alive'".⁵ Which also means that "we are floating through vast reaches of empty space, and most of life seems to lack any larger sense of meaning and purpose". Consequently, consciousness is seen as "a by-product of biochemistry and is located in the brain". The goal in life is thus "material success and social achievement" – and consequently results in the creation of social hierarchies and a competitive world.⁶
- The desire for a strong unified (mono-cultural) **nation** and nuclear, hierarchical and authoritarian **family**. The perceived need for the existence of the idealised strict father model so that family can be protected and supported in the dangerous, competitive and difficult world and children taught right from wrong.⁷

- The belief that **children** are born bad, “in the sense that they just want to do what feels good, not what is right. Therefore, they have to be made good”.⁸ Thus what is required of the children is obedience, and the main or even the only way to teach children obedience is through punishment,⁹ and this includes corporal punishment. Consequently, both physical and psychological violence are seen as necessary and workable solutions and methods for achievement of higher goals.
- The belief that the world is competitive and it is important to learn how to compete successfully. The conviction that a strong **economy** is based on people working hard and pursuing their own self-interests. The norm is “cutthroat competition” – where you “compete against others to make a killing”.¹⁰ Within economically and industrially developed economic places globalisation and new information and communication technologies are seen as automatically leading the way towards global progress, peace and stability. The assertion that economic globalisation is going to bring more material benefits globally and more consumer and employment choices by itself. The underlying assumption that those that are not among the winners in the economy are deficient in some regard and should be either left to their own devices or helped through charity.
- The belief that it will be mostly **new technologies** that will be instrumental in bringing about cyber democracy, a resolution to the environmental crisis, the liberation of people from the limits of time, geography, class, disability, race and gender as well as from repetitive boring tasks thus creating more time for leisure. Consequently the belief that social, cognitive and spiritual change will follow from/be influenced by these economic and technological changes rather the other way around.
- Within the Western world, the perception that the whole world is going (or should be going) in the direction of liberal democracy and towards “Western forms of **government**, political economy and political community ... the ultimate destination which the entire human race will eventually reach”.¹¹ Within the Western world – and societies aspiring to such – the belief in Western civilisation as the pinnacle of human development. Foreign policy to be predominantly based on the tactics of arms, balance of power, force and deterrence.¹²

There are many problems with this worldview and the praxis that arises from it. Take for example the negative implications to gender relations, child socialisation, ecological balance, psychological health, cultural diversity and so on. But one of its main dangers in our contemporary world is its promotion of violence in various forms and the prevention of the attainment of global peace.

Collective violence pedagogy within dominator society

The majority of today's peoples want peace. While some individuals do get a thrill from war and violence,* as it is only when such dramatic events are taking place around them that they feel fully alive/meaningfully entertained, this is rather the exception than the norm.† Most people, if given half a chance,‡ would choose to live within a society that has

* The latest brain mind research focuses on how our thoughts create particular physiological responses within the brain, especially the role of amygdala, which has huge implications in regard to what (particular) humans consider exiting/a thrill. For example, the research also focuses on studying how particular neurological patterns and pathways during childhood get established – i.e. the connection is made between viewed violence = fun and entertainment=arousal= actual violence. While the research is still preliminary (see, for example, popular text on this by Robert Winston, *Human Mind*, UK, Bantam, 2004) the evidence for the need for peace oriented environment surrounding young children in order to prevent violence being equated with excitement and fun keeps on getting stronger. Excellent study by Robin Grille, *Parenting for a Peaceful World*, NSW, Australia, Longueville Media, 2005) also confirms this argument using psychohistorical perspective – psychohistory being defined as an area that “analyses the way in which childhood experiences and emotional development influence social changes and world events” (p. 23). Like Eisler and others Grille also argues that “the human brain and heart that are met primarily with empathy in the critical early years cannot and will not grow to choose a violent or selfish life” (p. xvii).

† One good overview of “The Attractions of War” is provided by David P. Barash and Charles P. Webel, in their *Peace and Conflict Studies* reader, London, Sage, 2002, 136-139. These include (for combatants): “the sheer intensity of confronting the basic phenomena of life and death, and in the process, exploring the boundaries of one’s capacities” (p. 136); ‘a compelling sexual component...’the curve of sexual excitement and discharge, which is, after all, the physical core of life” (ibid); “the satisfaction of ‘belonging’ and companionship, particularly a kind of a male bonding that most men do not experience during civilian life” (ibid); other emotional and moral reasons (p. 137-138); and a “sanitized romanticizing of battle, found in many children’s cartoons and toys, movies (such as the *Star Wars* films), music, art, and literature” (p. 138).

‡ This would imply *informed choices* that include some awareness and knowledge of cause and effect/short and long term consequences of violence as well as awareness/knowledge of alternatives.

achieved freedom from various forms of violence—direct/physical, structural, psychological, epistemological, cultural and ecological.

There has been a significant change over the last thirty years in the way peace has been perceived and defined.[§] To start with, peace is no longer perceived and defined as something that happens by itself, after war and violence subside. Rather, peace is seen as an effort, as both a state and a process, a process that needs to be continuously, consciously and actively enacted. To enact peace, various peace keeping, peace making and peace building strategies are to be put in place. These strategies are to be practiced at individual, local/community, social/national, global and planetary levels.

To be able to achieve this *positive* and *holistic peace*¹³ what is required is particular knowledge as well as peace-oriented attitudes, ways of communication/behaving and skills for managing conflict. All these requirements are actively discouraged within the context of a dominator society. Dominator society is based on a particular collective violence promoting pedagogy. This pedagogy stems from a dominator based underlying epistemology, worldview and set of beliefs. Some of its main features have been outlined previously. In sum, the belief system within dominator society sees humans as inherently violent, territorial and self-centred/egotistical. Consequently, dominator societies engage in a particular praxis that, in fact, helps create a world in which humans do behave in violent, territorial and self-centred ways. To help create this bellicose society, the dominator worldview puts into operation a whole range of practices that reinforce hierarchical relationships between humans, as well as supremacy of humans over other living beings. Such practices have a whole range of implications from family relations and child rearing to the way global economy is structured. One example of the way dominator society contributes to/creates wars and inter-ethnic, inter-religious violence is summarised in the text box opposite.

This process has been shown to be extremely efficient. The category of the other is crucial for various forms of 'isms' to exist. Racism and nationalism are based on a premise that other race or nation is inferior. In nationalism, the other is presented as "evil, dangerous, and even as subhuman".¹⁴ Derogatory images of the enemy tend to have "considerable resilience",¹⁵ especially when enmity has been long-standing. This is because "the group loyalty most commonly tends to be associated with a propensity to

[§] See definitions of basic peace related concepts in **Appendix 3**.

denigrate those outside of the group—hence the association between patriotism (love of one’s country) and nationalism (feelings of superiority over other nations)”.¹⁶

Six steps in creating a bellicose society

- First, you create the category of ‘the other’ (even if that other was until recently part of ‘us’).
- Second, you attach to ‘the other’ the attribute of ‘the less’.
- Third, you create the sense of threat— ‘them’ coming after ‘us’.
- Fourth, you glorify heroic fighting and sacrifice for ones’ own people/land.
- Fifth, you actively prosecute opinions/ideologies that are trying to resist the above process (1-4).
- Sixth, when confronted with your own deeds, you deny them or justify them with ‘Others are also doing it’, or with ‘It’s a war’.¹⁷

This process of preparation for violence against ‘the other’ has been brilliantly summarised at the post WWII Nuremberg Trials by Adolf Hitler’s henchman, Hermann Goering:

Naturally, the common people don’t want war, but after all, it is the leaders of the country who determine the policy, and it’s always a simple matter to drag the people along whether it’s a democracy, a fascist dictatorship, or a parliament, or a communist dictatorship. Voice or no voice, the people can always be brought to the bidding of the leaders. This is easy. All you have to do is tell them they are being attacked, and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism, and exposing the country to danger. It works the same in every country.¹⁸

As this process of othering taps into people’s fear, in particular people’s fear of the unknown and different, it consequently results in demands for increased policing, peace keeping and ‘security’. But it is not ‘the other’ that prevents the world from becoming a more peaceful place. Rather, as argued by Eisler and many other scholars, it is our contemporary cognitive cultural maps, maps firmly based on a dominator worldview and values. There is agreement that among the most pressing dangers for the qualitative continuation of human societies in our era is contemporary

dogmatism of various kinds, and especially religious and ethnic hatreds. Xenophobia, racism and religious fundamentalism not only arise from the dominator worldview they in turn help maintain it. They remain the main fuel for both the dominator society as well as most globally dangerous forms of direct violence (i.e. terrorism, wars, potential use of nuclear and biological weapons with huge implications to the planet as a whole).

Other forms of 'othering' also exist. For example, in sexism, it is women that are most often on the receiving end of various discriminatory practices. This is because a woman is seen as 'the other', and everything associated with women and the feminine is seen as inferior (to the male and masculine principle). With all the gains feminism has made over the last century denigration of everything considered 'feminine' (i.e. nurturing, caring, cooperation, active listening and dialogue, flattened hierarchical structures, 'power with' rather than 'power over') continues.

In *Tomorrow's Children*, Eisler identifies education as the one crucial institution that will determine whether our future societies will be organised closer to the dominator or closer to the partnership end of the continuum. Relations based on fear, violence, and domination remain a possibility.¹⁹ Basic configurations of education that support such ways of organising human society are, according to Eisler, as follows:

- Teacher is the sole source of information and knowledge.
- Learning and teaching are artificially fragmented and compartmentalized.
- Curriculum is male-centred; leadership and decision making are male-controlled.
- One culture's worldview is the measure with which others are analysed and evaluated.
- Social and physical sciences emphasize the conquest of people and nature.
- Relations based on control, manipulation, and one-upmanship are highlighted and modelled.

Whichever culture and society adopts such a model, it is more likely that a society based on authoritarian structure will follow. Authoritarianism, and its fellow companions dogmatism and fundamentalism are incredibly fertile grounds for the development and continuation of various forms of violence.

In sum, our contemporary historical moment is one in which we are witnessing a global 'war against terrorism' but also increases in various forms of oppression, rising conservatism, neo-liberalism and

fundamentalism as well as 'raunch culture' and ultra consumerism.²⁰ There are numerous structures and processes that are currently supporting both dominator society and collective violence. These include:

- Militarism/armament/arms race/military industry
- Predatory economy (reductionist approach in economy, poverty, exploitation, extreme consumerism and materialism)
- Dehumanisation and 'me first' society
- Totalitarian ideologies and dogmatism of any kind
- Religious fundamentalism
- Imperialism/racial and cultural intolerances/nationalism/ethnocentrism
- Patriarchy/gender inequity, 'raunch' culture

But we are also witnessing indications that there is a social, cultural and epistemic shift occurring. Such a paradigm change may lead towards partnership society and non-violent futures. Among a majority of the populace there is an increase in the awareness that war and violence are obsolete as a means of conflict resolution, that, as one anti-war pamphlet read "war is so 20th century". There is also some indication that we are moving away from seeing violence as the legitimate way to discipline and maintain law and order. For example, corporal punishment in schools is pretty much on its 'way out', even though every so often various groups demand that it should be kept/reinstated. Instrumental in this epistemic shift/change in paradigm are various social movements that emerged and/or crystallised in the last century.

Resistance to the dominator model

To address various forms of 'othering' numerous social movements, worldviews and ideologies formed during the twentieth century. Some of these movements, worldviews and ideologies are outlined in the text box below.

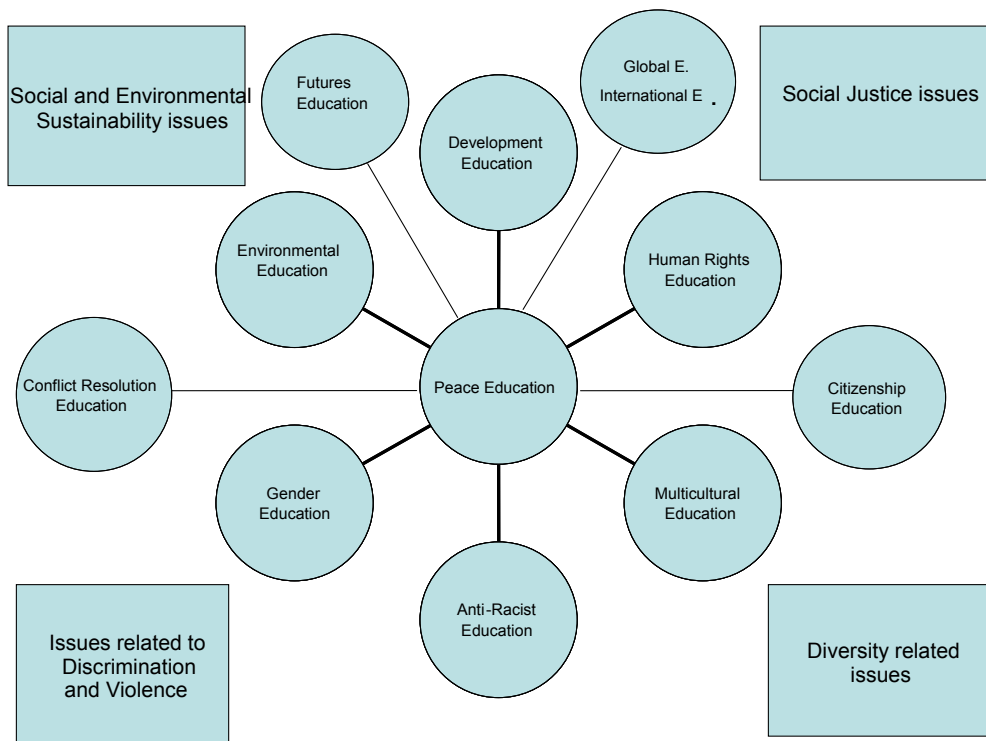
In education, these visions have crystallised around the issues of Environmental and Social Sustainability, Discrimination and Violence, Social Justice and Diversity. As outlined in **Figure 1** below, educators have developed a whole range of approaches and educational initiatives to facilitate the dismantling of our dominator society and the bringing about of a 'partnership'-holistic-peace oriented one.

Resisting 'othering' and hierarchical arrangements between various social groups and living entities

- Feminism: the worldview/ideology/social movement that speaks against women being seen as 'less'.
- Cosmopolitanism, multiculturalism and post/anti colonialism: that speak against other races/nations/people being seen as 'less'.
- Animal liberation movement: that speaks against the animals being seen as 'less'.
- The movement to protect children's rights and the movement against child abuse: that speak against seeing children as 'less'.
- The movement against ageism: that speaks against seeing older people as 'less'.
- Disability movement: that speaks against some of us being seen as 'less' because we do not necessarily have the same abilities as the mainstream population.
- Gay movement: that discounts sexual preference as the ground for discrimination and that speaks against people with same-sex sexual orientation being seen as 'less'.
- Ecological movement: that speaks against nature being 'less'.

These educational initiatives have been influenced by critical theory and constructivism in education, as well as by the long tradition of efforts by educational reformers such as Pestalozzi, Montessori, Dewey, Freire, Illich, Rogers, Neill, and many others. One of the main preoccupations of these educators has been how to enable democracy, rather than authoritarianism, and how to foster ethical and caring relations in and through education. This would consequently help build and support society based on partnership worldview, values and praxis.

Neohumanist education, as envisioned by Sarkar, corresponds to these educational initiatives in various ways. As seen in the overview provided by Marcus Bussey in Chapter 1, neohumanist education is fundamentally concerned with four issues that provided the base axis in the previous diagram. That is, social and environmental sustainability issues, social justice issues, diversity issues and issues related to discrimination and violence feature prominently as areas of concern.



Source: © Milojević, 2004

Figure 1: Peace education issues and connections

Neohumanist education is of global, transcultural and futures orientation, and the issues of human rights, citizenship, development, environment and gender also feature prominently. This approach facilitates promotion of positive peace, as discussed in the next section. Furthermore, neohumanist education facilitates the promotion of inner peace—the condition often viewed as a necessary psychological precondition for the meaningful pursuit/achievement of external/behaviorally oriented positive peace. The overall goal—the end game—is in the education for spiritual realization of the individual/liberation of the self/awakening of humans as spiritual beings and also in service to others/spiritual advancement of the human species. This is to be facilitated by a creation of “a new human culture through mutual *cooperation*”.²¹ This new human culture—emerging alternative future—is to “transcend all individual or group interests, all territorial limits of countries and states, and transform the fates of many people into one destiny”.²²

Going back to Eisler, if this second option is the direction we choose, that is, if we collectively/globally choose systems of belief and social structures that nurture and support equitable, democratic, non-violent, and caring relations²³ the basic configuration of education that supports this choice will include the following:²⁴

- Teacher and student knowledge and experience are valued.
- Learning and teaching are integrated and multidisciplinary.
- Curriculum, leadership, and decisionmaking are gender balanced.
- Multicultural reality of human experience is valued and tapped as a source of learning.
- Social and physical sciences emphasize our interconnection with other people and nature.
- Mutual responsibility, empathy, and caring are highlighted and modelled.

It is these features that inform various social movements and partnership oriented efforts in education, as described earlier. To these previously outlined social movements (and the subsequent positive peace oriented educational reforms) we can also add peace oriented movements inspired by various religious and spiritual traditions. This is because many peace oriented efforts in society and education have been influenced by the perennial ethics that arise from the majority of world religions. Still, faith based traditions are often seen, and contemporary global war against terror/ism is no exception, as one of the main contributing causes of direct violence among exclusionary religious groups. So how do we understand and theorise this contradiction: that on one hand, religious and spiritual traditions have inspired numerous peace oriented activities, and on the other, horrific acts of violence, including contemporary Islamic-based terrorism?

According to Johan Galtung, each religion has its 'hard' and 'soft' elements—elements that contribute to peace or war, respectively. Hard elements are the ones that are dogmatic, fundamentalist and literal—thus leaning, in Eisler's terms towards the dominator end of the continuum of organising human affairs (including organisation of religious and spiritual beliefs and experiences). Soft elements, on the other hand, are usually the so called 'mystical' traditions that exist within all religions and that are more open to difference, individual interpretation of sacred texts and religious tolerance.²⁵

Due to the high visibility of 'hard' elements within main religion traditions many peace oriented scholars and activist have abandoned religions as a

whole. The social movements that focused on positive peace which were outlined earlier (i.e. feminism, disability movement, environmental movement, gay liberation movement) have thus framed the debate mostly within secular/social justice discourse. I have described these approaches and their pedagogical implications in Chapter 4 in the sections that discuss the religious fundamentalist 'back to the past' vision and secular progressivism (modern and postmodern). In this chapter I deal more specifically with the issue of how these approaches contribute to peace, or alternatively, to violence.

In sum, and in terms of the promotion of violence over peace, 'hard' religious interpretations promote social hierarchies (man over women and children, white people over people of colour). Subsequently this approach leads to and maintains structural violence within local and global society. This worldview also contributes to ecological violence (man over nature), physical violence (punishment as a means of achieving law and order) and psychological violence and abuse (high use of habits that damage our relationships such as criticism, blaming, complaining, nagging, threatening, punishing, brining/or rewarding to control.²⁶

Peace is defined mostly in negative terms (as the absence of wars and violence) and the focus is predominantly on peace keeping approaches. Due to the belief in Western civilisation's superiority, cultural and epistemological violence is also promoted. Lastly, economy is defined in such terms that economic based violence often results. Indeed, it is the hard, fundamentalist religious worldview that may be behind the majority of the collective acts of violence perpetrated over the centuries.

The secular traditions mentioned earlier in this chapter, on the other hand, are organised closer to the partnership end of the continuum and are concerned with the establishment of social justice/positive peace. But there are also problems with some of these approaches (please refer to Chapter 4 Vision 2 on secular progressivism) that may make them powerless to address dangers coming from (hard) religions and their promotion of violence. Thus it is really important to discuss soft religious and spiritual movements that worked actively on the promotion of positive as well as inner peace. As argued by Galtung:

Every religion [and we could also add 'every spiritual tradition' here as well] contains, in varying degrees, elements that contribute to peace or war. For the sake of world peace, dialogue within religions and among them must strengthen the peacemaking elements within them.

A crucial place among peace-promoting spiritual traditions (see more in Chapter 4, Vision 3: Alternative Spirituality section) is taken by Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar's neohumanism. Neohumanism takes issue with one of the main reasons why various forms of violence take place, that is, it takes issue with existing social hierarchies and anthropocentric worldviews. As it speaks about all of us being part of the same, 'the one', omnipresent Being, neohumanism has the potential to address one of the root causes of current wars and violence—the various processes of 'othering'.

Promotion of peace through neohumanism

To establish lasting unity in human society the spiritual sentiment is indispensable. When human beings bring the entire universe within the range of their minds through spiritual practice, the result will be one universe, one universal society. ... The only way to establish universalism is to bring about mental expansion through spiritual practice. P.R. Sarkar²⁷

The main problem with the contemporary dominant 'modern/ist' model of education²⁸ in terms of the promotion of various forms of violence are its disciplinary nature and the underlying worldview that encompasses industrialism, nationalism, progressivism, orientalism and anthropocentrism. Thus the mainstream—most widespread and normative—model of education is still more closely aligned to the dominator paradigm. There have been attempts to move this huge system towards a partnership paradigm—for example, through more inclusive teaching and learning practices, rewriting of curricula to be less male and Western centred and through the use of non-violent (cooperative, participatory) pedagogical approaches in teaching methodology. Non-violent conflict resolution methods (i.e. Peer mediation, anti-bullying programs), non-violent communication (i.e. William Glasser's Choice Theory), higher inclusion and appreciation of students' differences (i.e. Howard Gardner's multiintelligences, Edward De Bono's thinking hats, focus on multiliteracies) have also been taking hold in increasing numbers of educational institutions. Indeed, conflict resolution education is one of the fastest growing school reforms in countries such as the USA²⁹ and also possibly throughout the Western world. Environmental education initiatives have also been gaining in strength to the point that some authors argue that ecology is emerging as the new grand narrative.³⁰

Even though this discourse is too often coopted by, for example, being interpreted in terms of "more politically acceptable forms of education"³¹

that do not go far enough, that is, that do not incorporate a new environmental paradigm that views people and nature as interdependent,³² the potential for that to change over time is still there. This may reverse the situation in which mostly ameliorative approaches implemented because of the perceived immediacy and necessity to respond to environmental degradation dilute what environmental education is/should be about. The seeds for addressing ecological, structural and school-based violence have thus already been planted.

Of course there is a need to both nurture those seeds and also to plant new ones, so that a partnership paradigm can fully flourish. For example, while most nation-based education systems—current mainstream modern/ist education—start with patriotism and then commonly lead to nationalism, xenophobia and violence, neohumanism is potentially one road which can help us travel from nationalism, to multiculturalism, and then to internationalism, transculturalism and globalism. Embedded within the neohumanist worldview is the idea that all life should be respected and that each life has a reason for being within a wider web of interconnectedness. This makes it hard to argue for the need to control and rule over nature, animals and certain groups of people.

Sarkar's ideas about social justice move beyond a particular 'we', as represented in nationalist ideologies, to a universal 'we'. Furthermore, within this universal 'we', everything and everyone is seen as 'one', as part of the same guiding force in the universe. The importance given to service to others enables altruism to flourish, and thus some of the major obstacles (i.e. promotion of selfish, ego-centred ways of being and doing) to the creation of a compassionate, caring and peace oriented society are removed.

Part of the dominator worldview is the existence of violence against the 'other', be it in a form of other people (ethnically, racially or religiously different) or against the weaker members of the same ethnic, racial and religious group. This violence is rationalised and made normative with help from the dominant/dominator knowledge paradigm, where power over, control, egoism and selfishness take central place. Part of the partnership worldview is the attempt to minimise violence in all its forms. To do so, a supportive and functioning peace oriented worldview and cosmology are necessary.

Neohumanist cosmology enables the context for the entire learning process to become rooted in the conviction that the universe is an integrated whole, that it is a unique kind of living organism in which

everybody has an important and appreciative role to play. Thus everything we do (or don't do) matters to the whole. Such a worldview dramatically challenges the industrial, materialistic paradigm that results in alienated societies, broken communities and lonely individuals. Peaceful societies, on the other hand, are conceived and defined as integrated, harmonious and balanced. By definition they are (actual and/or imagined) placed wherein there is interconnectedness, positive relatedness and non-violent collaboration between people. A neohumanist cosmology supports this integration, harmony and interconnectedness, and thus it may facilitate the creation of peace oriented, partnership societies in numerous ways.

The features of this neohumanist worldview and cosmology are described elsewhere in this book (see Chapter 1). So are the implications of this worldview on educational philosophy and practice. Below is a summary of neohumanist social and educational reforms in terms of the connection between neohumanist education and peace promoting actions.

Promotion of inner peace

There is an acceptance within neohumanism that all knowledge pre-exists within the child and that children create their own knowledge. As the process of education comes predominantly from within, there is no pressure to adhere to externally imposed models of development and of being in the world. This minimises internal battles and enables children to develop in the direction of their 'true nature'.

The goal is the liberation of self, such a liberation brings Ananda (bliss) and the merger with the Infinite—resulting in omniscience. The final outcome of education is to facilitate emergence of a total, whole, free, happy, joyful, blissful and peaceful human being –whose body, mind and spirit are integrated and balanced. Spiritual practice facilitates these processes through the calming of the mind, increase in self-awareness and centeredness.

Violence that exists in many educational institutions, because of its disciplinary nature and industrialism is addressed through making education fun. Children learn predominantly through playful methods (fantasy, song, story, drama, play, music, dance, painting, clay modelling, water and sand, blocks, silence game, etc.). Using play to create knowledge is the core of this fun based approach to learning, and is an important teaching methodology within neohumanism.

Promotion of healthy life style (inner and outer ecology) is also to help with the 'healthy body: healthy mind' relationship. If one feels good within oneself, is not stressed and unhappy, the need to be violent towards others or towards the self disappears. Stress is also minimised due to the teachers' motto of respecting, trusting and believing in each child, rather than imposing 'power over' students and applying a control mentality in their relationship with students. The pressure to conform to externally imposed norms is also removed by the recognition that each child develops at their own pace.

Promotion of positive peace

There is a focus within neohumanism on social and economic justice, progressive utilisation of resources and ecological awareness. This focus is to address structural, economic and ecological violence. Pragmatic educational approaches are used to help students attain greater economic self-sufficiency and self-reliance. Cognitive, creative and communication skills are to be developed in the light of welfare for all. They are based on the teaching of positive local and universal cultural values. These values include the fostering in students of universal love—the feeling that 'This Universe is Ours'—ours meaning humans, animals and plants.

This means that equitable and socially just societies are the goal, wherein economic exploitation is minimised or even becomes obsolete. Universalist outlook prevents nationalism, xenophobia and 'other'-hatred, thus also preventing wars over territories, resources and identity.

There is also a focus on historical insight and predictive skills that enables a more holistic and long-term vision. This helps with understanding what type of behaviour may result in a violent outcome, what actions may lead to undesirable consequences. Or, alternatively, what types of action are necessary to build positive and peaceful futures.

Pro-active, long-term futures focuses are based on ethics that facilitate the emergence of a partnership/peace oriented society. The values of non-harming, truthfulness, non-stealing, universal love, simple living, clean and clear, happy hearted, helpful hands, inspirational study, meditation and self-improvement form the essence of the child's moral development. They are also seen as the basis of a balanced individual and a harmonious society.

Neohumanism and peace connections: summary

Levels of peace	Neohumanist response: What, Who
Outer/external Peace	
Environment/planet	Oneness of all life — focus on human and cosmic unity Non-killing of sentient beings — Vegetarianism
Global Society	Neohumanist philosophy underlying nonviolent social, educational and spiritual movements (i.e. AMURT, PROUT, PCAP, Gurukul)
Region/Nation/Local Society	Corresponds to and compliments 'adjectival education' reforms in education (human rights, development, multi/transcultural, environmental, etc.) — aimed at positive peace building A part of 'holistic and spiritual' education approaches in education Support of teachers — society values and rewards teachers
Local community zones	Whole school approaches, schools as zones of peace Support of local businesses, cooperatives and independent boards Schools located within Master units Collective meditation — <i>Dharmachakra</i>
Family	Parent, community involvement
Inner peace	
Person/Self	Emotional literacy, Use of relaxation techniques The need to embody neohumanist vision/ 'be the change you want to see', Spiritual practice/ <i>sadhana</i> /meditation, personal ethics/values based education, physical and spiritual development through Yoga The goal development of <i>Sadvipra</i> , integrated personality—i.e. a person who has a balanced mind, having dimensions of the <i>Shudra</i> (service to others), <i>Ksattriya</i> (willingness to accept great challenges), <i>Vipra</i> (intellectual development and idealism) and <i>Vaeshyan</i> (economic growth and innovation). Students, Teachers, Administrative personnel

Words of caution

One of the biggest challenges in moving towards a partnership and peace oriented society and education is to propose valuable and workable alternatives. That is, with the huge swing towards dominator models of organising human affairs and education (through both modernist, back to the basic, and Globalisation/New ICTs models),³³ one of the biggest challenges for our times is to change conceptual frames, through language, and thus change the ‘cognitive unconscious’³⁴ or ‘cognitive cultural maps’.³⁵ This cognitive unconscious can be defined as “structures in our brains that we cannot consciously access, but know by their consequences: the way we reason and what counts as common sense”.³⁶

The neohumanistic framework proposes one such cognitive framework that has great potential to address various forms of violence. But to be truly non-violent, neohumanist educators need to be aware of the dangers that even this approach may pose to the creation of peaceful, partnership societies. As Ashis Nandy argues, today’s utopias often become tomorrow’s nightmares.³⁷ Thus any alternative needs to be implemented with caution and with the least possible dogmatism. It needs to be constantly evaluated and re-evaluated in accordance with changing social context. This evaluation needs to include perspectives of epistemological minorities (those whose views differ from the ‘official’ reading of a particular belief system within which they also see themselves as belonging) and constant evaluation of existing practices—how is vision actually implemented on the ground, in everyday life. This is to be done even if one is convinced that neohumanist approaches in society and education are one of the best alternatives we currently possess. In fact, the existence of such a conviction may be one of the main reasons why it should constantly be re-evaluated. This is because, as Max Born warns as: “For the belief in a single truth is the root cause for all evil in the world”.³⁸ Or, as argued by Sarkar there must not be “the injection of *any dogma or fanaticism* or any type of geographic or racial chauvinism in the education system” (emphasis added).³⁹

Still, this cautious evaluation should not be at the expense of undermining the actual propagation of a vision, and should thus be conducted in safe (enclosed, predominantly among supporters and sympathisers) spaces. What this means is that a balance between critical engagement with the belief system and the actual devotion to this belief system is needed if one wants to use such a system as a guiding force for the creation of peaceful societies.

In addition, spiritual approaches also need to be aware of the dangers that have so far commonly arisen from religious approaches to social and educational change. As discussed earlier, these approaches have often slipped into dogmatism. There are also dangers in ‘essentialising’ here (one’s truth and spiritual realisation believed to be the universal truth and path for all humans), exclusion of the less spiritual (spiritual seen as higher than material in a hierarchy of human values) as well as the potential bias that is seen as ‘the universal fact’, but in fact reflects views of the dominant social group (i.e. The high jacking of rituals and the imposition of norms by the most powerful social/cultural groups, suppression of woman-based experiences of the spiritual, etc.). Education has too often been used to reproduce religious dogma. This frequent occurrence alone should stand as a permanent warning for any spiritually inclined educator guard against self satisfaction and too much zeal. As devotion and faith in the spiritual become paramount, this can also encourage closing the doors to inquiry.

Another warning comes from Blaise Pascal who wrote that “men never do evil so completely and cheerfully as when they do it with religious conviction”.⁴⁰ As described throughout this book, religious and spiritual approaches differ significantly. Still, spiritually inclined educators need to engage in a dialogue with their secular colleagues, informed by critical pedagogy to be able to prevent dominance of any one view as the *ultimate truth* and reality. It is possible to be a spiritually highly evolved person but yet be deeply patriarchal at the same time. If patriarchy is not challenged, and even cleared out of the way with the awareness about how it works, what it does and does not do, discrimination and even some forms of violence against women and all that is feminine may still be promoted, albeit in more subtle ways.

This is partly because the vision of the spiritual—informed by Eastern philosophies—also emerges from classical Indian episteme, where patriarchy was not contested. So although spiritual society is intended to be all-inclusive, it is clear that without engagement with feminism (women’s movements) patriarchy may still remain the dominant paradigm, and thus prevent movement towards a truly partnership, peace oriented society. Engagement with all the other social movements mentioned earlier is also needed, in order to address potential exclusion and the discrimination against, for example, sexual and other minorities.

In sum, the dystopian dangers of spiritual education practices informed by the Indian episteme, including the neohumanist alternative, may lie in

verticality (reproduction of hierarchy), dominant (gender, cultural, ethnic) group bias and essentialism. For example, given the vertical nature of the *charka* model of evolution, what of children who find themselves on the 'lower' rungs? Is not the *karma* theory of causality a determinism similar to the gene theory of causality? Will not a spiritual view of education lead to the blaming of the victim—that it is their bad *karma* or the *samskara* they are carrying which caused them to fail an exam or have an accident? What of children who are not able to meditate or experience the spiritual? While all spiritual writers call for compassion towards the Other, and state that everyone is by definition a spiritual being, the vertical nature of spiritual education may still, over time, create structures that judge negatively the spiritual-less, even if individual teachers and students exhibit compassion.

The last potential danger has already been mentioned—the essentialist nature of spirituality: spirituality is not open to negotiation, it must be experienced. Thus, it can be exclusionary for those who reject the spiritual either for *a priori* reasons or because they have no such experiences. As spirituality is seen as the ground of being this can result in non resolvable ontological debates with no possibility for pedagogical improvement or transformation.

Conclusion

Any peace oriented society needs to find ways to peacefully negotiate difference in perspectives and outlook on life. Neohumanism has a great potential to promote the knowledge, values and skills necessary for the creation of peace oriented, partnership societies. It can address all forms of contemporary violence and provide viable alternatives for peace oriented futures. In doing so, it is important to be aware of the potential dangers that even this approach may have. While such awareness is the key to nonviolent social change, so is a conviction about the wonderful potential that neohumanism can bring to our societies and education. Sharing that conviction with others can thus be done in inspiring, non dogmatic ways, through a real dialogue of various peace oriented futures visions and contemporary practices.

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Perspective 2 An Eclectic Model of Holistic Education

Shambhushivananda Avadhuta

Long before the script was invented, since the early times of RkVeda (*Veda* means knowledge) when esoteric aphorisms and rhymes called Upanishads were first composed about 10,000 years ago, there has been an urge among educators to search for a balance between Intuitive Knowledge (*Para'-Vidya*) and Mundane Knowledge (*Apara'-Vidya*).¹ The current pressures of globalisation and the need to preserve local values and culture brings this eternal conflict into even sharper focus.²

This article attempts to lay a foundation for a holistic model of education by utilizing the ancient *yogic & tantric kos'a-model* of the human personality³ and guide the development of an educational-curriculum which could lead to the all-round development of the human mind.⁴ The resulting educational program derived from this ancient paradigm shifts us to a framework of education that is “wisdom-centered”⁵ and inspired by the goal of “liberation of human intellect”.⁶ It does this without sacrificing the modern day urge for material progress.

Philosophical underpinnings

The table at **Appendix 2** presents a snap-shot, a kind of conceptual map of the different levels of consciousness wherefrom the knowledge emanates, according to an *Indo-Tantric* perspective as elucidated by Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar, the author of the philosophy of neohumanism and founder of neohumanist education. Such a vision is broad enough to accommodate both mundane and spiritual approaches to education. This table builds on the *kos'a* theory of mind where the different layers of mind are visualized sequentially like the layers of a banana flower. A short statement about *kos'as* may make it clearer:

- *Annamaya Kos'a*—Physical Body or Food layer —Awareness of inner and outer physicality.
- *Ka'mamaya-Kos'a*—Conscious Mind—The Senses—Interacting with the world through our senses.

- *Manomaya Kos'a*—Subconscious Mind—The Intellect—Conceptual and analytical ability, contemplation and recollection, includes problem solving, Cerebral Memory.
- *Atima'nasa Kos'a*—First Layer of Super-conscious Mind—Storehouse of all reactive-momenta; Layer of Imagination & deeper thoughts.
- *Vijina'maya Kos'a*—Second Layer Super-conscious Mind—Realm of Intuition, intuitional insight, Discrimination; Special Knowledge.
- *Hiran'maya Kos'a*—Third Layer Super-conscious Mind—Spirituality, Universal love, Awareness of Interconnectedness; Realization of higher consciousness.

These *kos'as* can be seen as the objectivated realm of Higher Subtler Consciousness. The snapshot of varying levels of Supreme Consciousness is summarized in **Table 1, Appendix 2**. The classification of subjective and objective mind explains the origins and different manifestations of Consciousness as understood in the Tantric-Yogic tradition. In this perspective, Knowledge may be viewed as the subjectivization of external objectivities. The level of subjectivization explains the depth & variety of the faculties of knowledge.

Wisdom through a balance between Inner and Outer

Human civilization may be compared to a wisdom-tree whose deep roots represent the invisible force of life. When the tree is cut-off from its roots, it perishes. This eternal tree of life and civilization pictures the relationship between internal and external. The roots represent the exploration of what is inside of us with its many levels of consciousness. The branches, flowers, leaves & fruits represent the social manifestations of that consciousness. The wisdom-centered holistic education must cultivate both the inner and the outer realm of human reality. Today, education is skewed towards mere cultivation of mundane knowledge with the utter neglect of spiritual knowledge. Neohumanist education corrects this imbalance.

Crude Mind refers to *Kamamaya Kosa*, Subtle Mind to *Manomaya Kosa*, and Causal Mind to *Atimanasa*, *Vijinamaya* and *Hiranyamaya Kosas* combined. Wisdom is begotten of awakened conscience (*viveka*) i.e., a rationalistic mentality arrived at by a process of study, analysis and consideration of the welfare of all. Neohumanist education is an attempt to cultivate this essential ingredient through culture of cardinal human virtues such as love, kindness, justice, truthfulness, etc.⁷

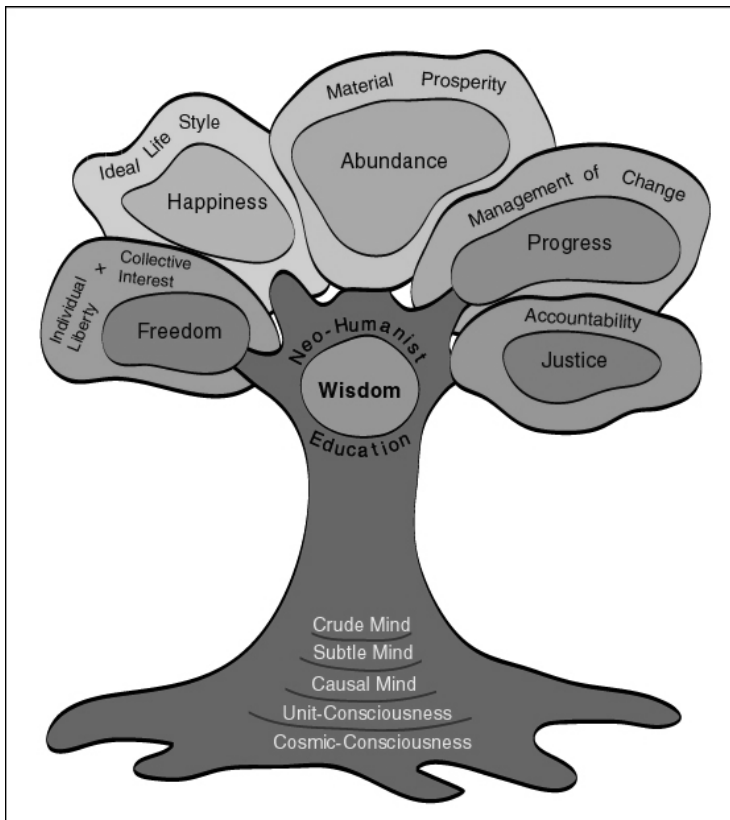


Figure 1

Redesigning curricula for a Wisdom Society

I propose that wisdom-directed curricula should involve at least the following six dimensions. These six dimensions flow from the notion of *kos'as* (layers) of mind as mentioned earlier.

Apara Vidya:

1. Subjects related to Inner and Outer Ecology
2. Practical Life Skills as a functioning modality in education
3. Use of Scientific Temper to solve real-life problems and improve decision making capabilities

Para Vidya:

1. Emphasis on Sense of Aesthetics, Imagination and Creativity
2. Deepening historical insight and predictive skills (futures as a formal study process)
3. Universal Love and Service Spirit.

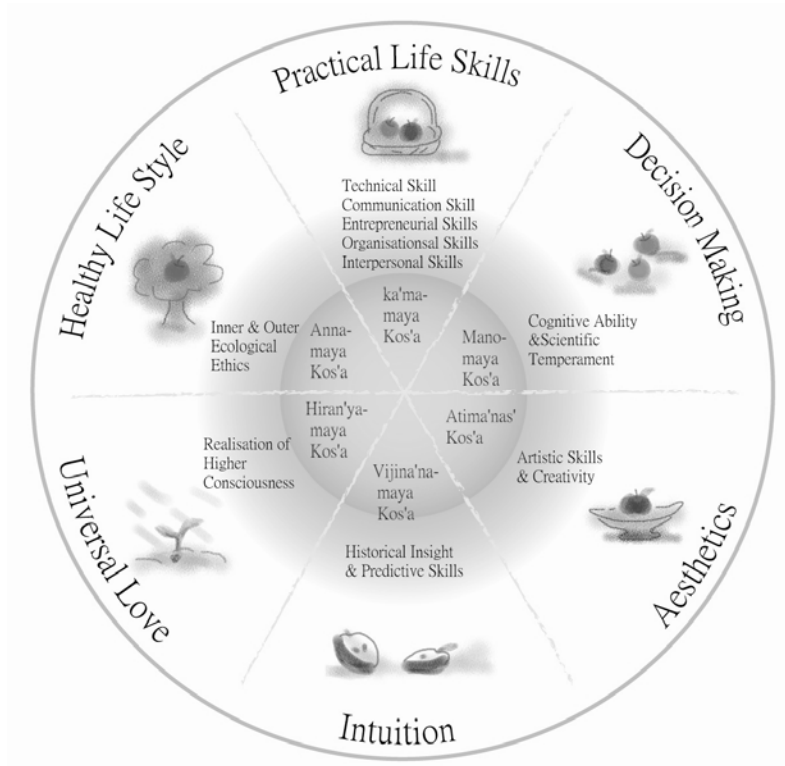


Figure 2

The redesign of curricula along these lines would facilitate bringing about a holistic development of human personality without ignoring the pressures for material development using the most modern science and technologies. Neohumanist education with its motto of “*Sa’ Vidya’ Ya’ Vimuktaye*”, i.e., ‘Education is for all round liberation’ presents a renewed attempt to remove the imbalance between *apara’-vidya’* (knowledge related to worldly subjects) and *para’-vidya’* (knowledge related to spiritual or intuitional domains); between modernity and tradition; between urban and rural education; between intuition and science; between formal and non-formal education; between globalisation and localization.

What is neohumanist education for?

Today, we need, without a doubt, a series of strong positive-institutions in the world to counteract the widespread exploitative tendencies of human beings. But in the ultimate analysis, it is not the institutions that can free us from the ills of the past but the living examples of enlightened ones; the “*bodhi-sattvas*”, the *siddhas*, the exemplary leaders. In a nutshell, we need the educational institutions which do not only produce intellectuals for

commercial use but aim to nurture and create such “wisdom-centered leaders”. We may choose to call these wisdom-centered persons as ‘*Sadvipras*’, as Sarkar calls them⁸ or enlightened persons, or just ‘good-educated’ people. The success of an educational system should be reflected in how well certain qualities are imbibed.⁹ In summary, an educated person must be knowledgeable, wise and intelligent; they must be moral and virtuous; they must be inspirational; confident and commanding; and full of dynamicity.

1. **Knowledgeable, wise and intelligent**—free from the serpentine noose of intellectual extravaganza; well-read; free thinking; pragmatic; not a mere blind follower of tradition; capable of tapping both analytical and intuitional understandings; capable of amending mistakes (*to err is human*); able to formulate and reformulate visions, ideas, plans and programs; not averse to science and technology; visionary (far-sight, foresight and insight); rational; balanced and trained in a neohumanist stance. This contributes to a high IQ (Intelligence Quotient).

2. **Moral and Virtuous**—well established in moral codes of conduct and ethical life-style. The ten moral principles as outlined in yogic scriptures can be traced to give rise to some essential cardinal virtues. For example, *ahimsa* (non-violence) gives rise to **benevolence**; *satya* (use of words with the spirit of welfare) to **truthfulness**; *asteya* (non-stealing or misuse) to **justice**; *brahmacarya* (cosmic ideation) to **love**; *aparigraha* (proper use of resources) to **magnanimity**; *shaoca* (cleanliness) to **purity**; *santos’a* (mental equipoise) to **contentment**; *tapah* (penance) to **readiness to serve and sacrifice**; *svadhaya* (study with an open mind) to **self-knowledge** and *iishvara-Pranidhana* (meditation) to **devotion**. One who becomes established in *yama-niyama* (morality) is likely to become incorruptible; humble; self-restrained; disciplined and a strong supporter of neohumanist initiatives and actions. This contributes to high EQ (Emotional Quotient). This further enhances trust, loyalty and goodwill of a wisdom-centered leader and can bring more lasting success in life.

3. **Inspirational**—the attractive stamina, charm and charisma arise from a host of attitudes and ways of living, such as, sense of humor; being easily approachable; skilled in tact, diplomacy and the art of negotiation; friendly, modest; dependable; trustworthy; living a simple lifestyle; loyal; empathetic; possessing a sweet and smiling temperament; neat and cleanly dressed; loyal; free from apathy; maintaining an empowering and nurturing attitude; hardworking and incorrigibly optimistic. All these

contribute towards increasing the **IpQ (Inspirational Quotient)** of a **wisdom-centered leader**.

4. Confident and Commanding—assertive; decisive; able to guide people and control situations; firm; communicative and articulate; skilled in administrative skills that involve use of *sha'm* (praise and flattery), *da'n* (charity), *dand'a* (punishment), *bhed* (divisive tendency), *chal* (cunningness), *bala* (show of strength), *kaoshala* (skillfulness); able to keep confidentiality in the affairs of family and society; can bring persons of diverse psychologies together; always follows a policy of inclusion and is at peace with Inner Self. This enhances the stability and level of IpQ (Inspirational Quotient).

5. Dynamic—can take others forward; has determination i.e., “do or die” spirit; fearless; courageous; free from dogma and complexes; hard working; keeps minimum gap between thought word and action; sentimentally attached to ideals—whether personified ideal (*is'ta*, *guru or master or mentor*) or impersonal ideal (*a'darsha*); can transmute negativity into positivity and willing to lead for the sake of a higher purpose. This contributes to a high PQ (Productivity Quotient) of a wisdom-centered leader.

Human civilization progresses through clashes and cohesions and the stronger tend to dominate the scene until they are replaced by still stronger ones. The strength of the leaders of an age stems from the supportive collective psychology. In the present phase of our social evolution we are facing a vacuum of wisdom-centered psychology. I believe it is one of the foremost responsibilities of each one of us to think deeply as to how we can collectively bring together teachers who can create a new generation of wisdom-centered leaders out of our children and grand children. This can be called a '*Sadvipra*' making mission. The accumulated collective knowledge of humanity could be brought to bear in hastening the advent of a society which nurtures abundance for all. When the tradition of 'evolved teachers' is established, we would have laid the foundations of a universal society based on love. The path of love is the path of interdependence, mutual understanding, cheerfulness, liveliness and joyfulness. Love would have no reason to exist if our happiness did not depend on everything around us and if our happiness could exist on its own. Creating *Sadvipras* (benevolent-*vipras*) and not mere *vipras* (intellectuals) is the primary rationale of the holistic approach of neohumanist education.

Enhancing Wisdom Quotient—the ultimate aim

Neohumanist education aims to develop the Wisdom Quotient (WQ) and not mere IQ [Intelligence or Inspirational Quotients (IpQ)] of the pupils. This indeed is the step towards building a wisdom society of the future. As postulated in **Figure 4**, the Wisdom essentially begins with rationality but culminates in Higher Spiritual awareness.

IQ (Intelligence Quotient)—Rationality (*viveka*, discriminant faculty)

PQ (Productivity Quotient)—Aesthetics (**IpQ—Inspirational Quotient**) and Dynamicity

EQ (Emotional Quotient)—Spiritual (Self Knowledge) and Equipoise

$$WQ \text{ (Wisdom Quotient)} = IQ + PQ + EQ$$

(see **Figures 3 and 4**)

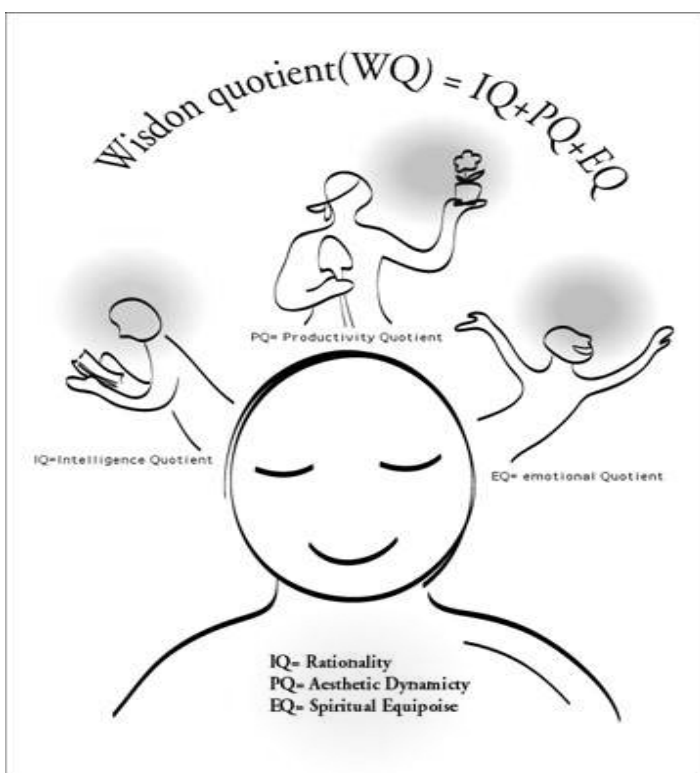


Figure 3

IQ (Intelligence Quotient)—Rationality (*viveka*, discriminant faculty)

PQ (Productivity Quotient)—Aesthetics (**IpQ-Inspirational Quotient**) and Dynamicity

EQ (Emotional Quotient)—Spiritual (Self Knowledge) and Equipoise

$$WQ \text{ (Wisdom Quotient)} = IQ + PQ1 + PQ2 + EQ1 + EQ2$$

(see **Figures 3 and 4**)

The following matrix (**Figure 4**) of cardinal values derives from the three fundamental notions:

- Information, Knowledge and Wisdom are not the same thing. Understanding coupled with a spirit of benevolence or universal welfare alone should admit us to the domain of Intelligence.
- Knowledge becomes meaningful only when it is put to some productive use, i.e., to help solve problems or for recreation and enjoyment without causing any harm to anyone.
- Pursuit of peace and lasting freedom in all strata of life are innate in all beings.




	VALUES	Inner Exression	Outer Expression	Modality
 Intelligence Quotient	Rationality	Wisdom	Justice	System
 Productivity Quotient	Sense of Aesthetics	Mysticism	Beauty	Unity in Diversity
	Dynamicity	Missionary Zeal	Abundance	Speed
 Emotional Quotient	Self-Knowledge	Devotion	Service	Discipline
	Equipoise	Inner Peace	Eco-balance	Surrender

Figure 4

Together, we have a recipe for wisdom-centered approach to life and education.

Currently, the neohumanist education movement has started over 1000 schools all over the globe and is attempting to imbibe the spirit of neohumanism (ecological/spiritual ethics) among children enrolled in its educational programs. When a sufficient number of teacher-education programs begin to imbibe the neohumanist principles in their programs, a massive shift would have begun to occur in fostering evolved leadership in society.

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ISSUES IN NEOHUMANIST EDUCATION

Chapter 9 Partnership Education: Nurturing Children's Humanity

Riana Eisler

At the core of every child is an intact human. Children have an enormous capacity for love, joy, creativity, and caring. Children have a voracious curiosity, a hunger for understanding and meaning. Children also have an acute inborn sense of fairness and unfairness. Above all, children yearn for love and validation and, given half a chance, are able to give them bountifully in return.

In today's world of lightning-speed technological, economic, and social flux, the development of these capacities is more crucial than ever before. Children need to understand and appreciate our natural habitat, our Mother Earth. They need to develop their innate capacity for love and friendship, for caring and caretaking, for creativity, for sensitivity to their own real needs and those of others.

In a time when the mass media are children's first teachers about the larger world, when children in the United States spend more time watching television than in any other activity, children also need to understand that much of what they see in television shows, films, and video games is counterfeit. They need to understand that violence only begets violence and solves nothing, that obtaining material goods, while necessary for living, is not a worthy end in itself no matter how many commercial messages to the contrary. They need to know that suffering is real, that hurting people has terrible, often life-long, consequences no matter how many cartoons and video games make mayhem and brutality seem normal, exciting, and even funny. They need to learn to distinguish between being hyped up and feeling real joy, between frantic fun and real pleasure, between healthy questioning and indifference or cynicism.

If today's children are to find faith that is grounded in reality, they need a new vision of human nature and our place in the unfolding drama of life on this Earth. If they are to retain their essential humanity, they need to hold fast to their dreams, rather than give in to the cynicism and me-firstism that is today often considered 'cool'. They need all this for

themselves, but they also need it for their children, lest they raise another generation X, a generation struggling in this uncertain time to find identity and purpose and all too often becoming lost.

Today's children

One of the greatest and most urgent challenges facing today's children relates to how they will nurture and educate tomorrow's children. Therein lies the real hope for our world.

I passionately believe that if we give a substantial number of today's children the nurturance and education that enable them to live and work in the equitable, nonviolent, gender-fair, environmentally conscious, caring, and creative ways that characterize partnership rather than dominator relations, they will be able to make enough changes in beliefs and institutions to support this way of relating in all spheres of life. They will also be able to give their children the nurturance and education that make the difference between realizing, or stunting, our great human potentials.

Early childhood education is critical, as psychologists have long known. But now this information comes to us with lightning-bolt force from neuroscience. When a baby is born, the brain continues to develop and grow. In the process, it produces trillions of synapses of connections between neurons. But then the brain strengthens those connections or synapses that are used, and eliminates those that are seldom or never used. We now know that the emotional and cognitive patterns established through this process are radically different depending on how supportive and nurturing or deprived and abusive the child's human and physical environment is. This environment largely determines such critical matters as whether or not we are venturesome and creative, whether we can work with peers or only take orders from above, and whether or not we are able to resolve conflicts nonviolently—matters of key importance for how we meet life's challenges, as well as for the postindustrial information economy.

The importance of childcare

The kind of childcare—material, emotional, and mental—a child receives, particularly during the first three years of life, will lay neural pathways that will largely determine both our mental capacities and our habitual emotional repertoire. Positive childhood caretaking that relies substantially on praise, loving touch, affection, and avoidance of violence

or threats releases the chemicals dopamine and serotonin into particular areas of the brain, promoting emotional stability and mental health. (An excellent resource for parents and teachers is Rob Reiner's video *I Am Your Child: The First Years Last Forever*.)¹

By contrast, if children are subjected to negative, uncaring, fear-, shame-, and threat-based treatment or other aversive experiences such as violence or sexual violation, they develop responses appropriate for this kind of dominator environment. They become tyrannical, abusive and aggressive or withdrawn and chronically depressed, defensive, hypervigilant, and numb to their own pain as well as to that of others. Often these children lack the capacity for aggressive impulse control and long-term planning. Neuroscientists have found that regions of the brain's cortex and its limbic system (responsible for emotions, including attachment) are 20 to 30 per cent smaller in abused children than in normal children, and that many children exposed to chronic and unpredictable stress suffer deficits in their ability to learn.²

In short, caring and nurturing childcare has a direct influence not only on children's emotional development but also on their mental development, on their capacity to learn both in school and throughout their lives.

Partnership childcare

Most parents love their children. But what makes the difference is the expression of that love through loving touch, holding, talking, smiling, singing, and warmly responding to the child's needs and cries by providing comfort, food, warmth, and a sense of safety and self-worth.³ This kind of childcare can be learned, as can an understanding of the stages of child development, of what babies and children are capable or incapable of comprehending and doing, and of the harm sometimes done to children through 'traditional' punishment-based childrearing.

Hence the pivotal importance of teaching partnership childcare and parenting based on praise, loving touch, rewards, and lack of threat. For optimal results, in addition to parenting classes for adults, the teaching of this kind of parenting and childcare should start early in our schools, as it would in a partnership curriculum. This will ensure that people learn about it while they are still young and more receptive.

But it is all of education, not only early childhood education and education for parenting, that has to be reexamined and reframed so as to provide children, teenagers, and, later, adults the mental and emotional wherewithal to live good lives and create a good society. If we change our

educational system today, we will help tomorrow's children flourish. If we prepare today's children to meet the unprecedented challenges they face, if we help them begin to lay the foundations for a partnership rather than a dominator world, then tomorrow's children will have the potential to create a new era of human evolution.

The partnership and dominator possibilities

Our biological repertoire offers many possibilities: violence and nonviolence, indifference and empathy, caring and cruelty, creativity and destructiveness. Which of these possibilities we actualize largely depends on social contexts and cues—on what we experience and what we learn to believe is normal, necessary, or appropriate.

Through partnership education, young people can experience partnership relations with their teachers and their peers. They can find in their teachers what Alice Miller called “helping witnesses” when in need.⁴ They can learn to have greater self-awareness and greater awareness of others and our natural habitat. They can be encouraged to ask questions about the narratives they are taught, to seek meaning and purpose in life, and to make healthy and informed life choices.

At the core of partnership education is learning, both intellectually and experientially, that the partnership and dominator models are two underlying alternatives for human relations. Relations based on fear, violence, and domination are a possibility. However, what distinguishes us as a species is not our cruelty and violence but our enormous capacity for caring and creativity. Constructing relations and institutions that more closely approximate the partnership model helps us actualize these capacities.

Partnership education helps students look beyond conventional social categories, such as capitalism versus communism, right versus left, religious versus secular, and even industrial versus preindustrial or postindustrial. They can instead begin to focus on *relationships*—and on the underlying question of what kinds of beliefs and social structures support or inhibit relations of violence or nonviolence, democracy or authoritarianism, justice or injustice, caring or cruelty, environmental sustainability or collapse (see **Figure 1**).



Source: John Mason

Figure 1: Paradigm shift—a new perspective changes how we see the world

Partnership-dominator continuum

Through partnership education, young people can learn to use what I have called the *partnership-dominator continuum* as an analytical lens to look at our present and past (see **Figure 2**). They will see that the degree to which a society, organization, or family orients to one or the other of these alternatives profoundly affects our lives, for better or for worse. They will be better able to decide what in our culture and society we want to leave behind and what we need to strengthen. And they will understand that, even though no society will be a utopia where there is never any violence or injustice, these do not have to be idealized or built into the social and cultural fabric.

<i>Partnership Model</i>	←————→	<i>Dominator Model</i>
Egalitarian structure with hierarchies of actualization		Authoritarian structure with hierarchies of domination
Equal valuing of females and males		Ranking of males over females
Institutionalization of mutual honoring, respect, and peaceful conflict resolution		Institutionalization of fear, violence, and abuse
High social investment in stereotypically “feminine” ^a traits and activities, such as empathy, caring, nonviolence, and caretaking		High social investment in stereotypically “masculine” ^a traits and activities, such as the control and conquest of people and nature
Myth and stories honoring and sacralizing partnership		Myths and stories honoring and sacralizing domination

^a “Feminine” and “masculine” refer to stereotypes that we inherited from more rigid dominator times, and not to any qualities inherent in women and men.

Source: Reprinted from Riane Eisler, *Redefining Destiny (work in progress)*

Figure 2: The partnership-dominator continuum: Core configurations

Societies, families, schools, and other organizations orienting primarily to the dominator model—and it is always a matter of degree—are strictly controlled from the top, with any questioning severely and often violently punished. Obviously there has already been considerable movement toward the partnership model. If there had not been, we could not be discussing fundamental educational changes today without risking severe consequences, even death—as was the case for such free thought and speech not so long ago during the European Middle Ages, and is still the case in some world regions today. However, powerful dominator elements remain in our society. And some of these dominator elements are reflected in, and perpetuated by, our education.

Although we do not usually think of education in this way, what has been passed from generation to generation as knowledge and truth derives from earlier times. This is important, since otherwise we would, as the expression goes, constantly have to reinvent the wheel, and much that is valuable would be lost. But it also poses problems.

The old educational paradigm

To begin with, during much of recorded Western history prior to the last several hundred years, most institutions, including schools, were designed to support authoritarian, inequitable, rigidly male-dominant, and chronically violent social structures. That is, they were designed to support the core configuration of the dominator model. Although this kind of education was appropriate for autocratic kingdoms, empires, and feudal fiefdoms that were constantly at war, it is not appropriate for a democratic and more peaceful society. Nonetheless, much in the present curricula still reflects this legacy.

Many of our teaching methods also stem from much more authoritarian, inequitable, male-dominated, and violent times. Like childrearing methods based on mottoes such as “spare the rod and spoil the child”, these teaching methods were designed to prepare people to accept their place in rigid hierarchies of domination and unquestioningly obey orders from above, whether from their teachers in school, supervisors at work, or rulers in government. These educational methods often model uncaring, even violent, behaviors, teaching children that violence and abuse by those who hold power is normal and right. They heavily rely on negative motivations, such as fear, guilt, and shame. They force children to focus primarily on unempathic competition (as is still done by grading on the

curve) rather than empathic cooperation (as in team projects). And in significant ways, they suppress inquisitiveness.

Again, all this was appropriate for the autocratic monarchies, empires, and feudal fiefdoms that preceded more democratic societies. It was appropriate for industrial assembly lines structured to conform to the dominator model, where workers were forced to be mere cogs in the industrial machine and to strictly follow orders without question. But it is decidedly *not* appropriate for a democratic society.

Nor is it appropriate for a world facing unprecedented environmental problems. A dominator mindset focused on control gives the illusion that we can arbitrarily control nature, promoting the short-sighted “technology will fix everything and clean up every mess we make” worldview that is leading to ever-increasing despoilation of our finite resources, mounting pollution, and the threat of unforeseen and potentially disastrous ecological consequences. Partnership education can prepare young people to more realistically address environmental issues and use new technologies in responsible and appropriate ways, focusing on long-term consequences, not just quick fixes. It will teach them to think in holistic or systemic terms—that is, in terms of relationships, including our relationship to Mother Earth.

Partnership education also better prepares young people for the new information- and service-oriented postindustrial economy. Here, as organizational development and management consultants emphasize, inquisitiveness and innovativeness, flexibility and creativity, teamwork, and more stereotypically ‘feminine’ nurturant or facilitative management styles get the best results.⁵ Whether they reside in women or men, these are all qualities and behaviors appropriate for partnership rather than dominator relations. Indeed, when we talk of stereotypically feminine or masculine traits or behaviors, we are always talking about stereotypes that are our legacy from more dominator-oriented times, and not about anything inherent in women or men.

Nurturing discrimination

By providing the partnership-dominator continuum as an analytical lens for examining all aspects of life and society, partnership education can help students develop a capacity that is essential in our age of information overload: the capacity to recognize patterns or configurations in what otherwise seems a jumble of disconnected, equally weighted data bits. This in turn can lead to an awareness of how social structures, policies, and

laws affect our day-to-day lives, strengthening young people's ability to make sounder personal, economic, and political decisions.

By facilitating a new understanding of the dynamics of social change, partnership education can also help students distinguish between surface and transformational change. This makes it possible for them to see that our time of cultural and technological ferment offers an opportunity for changes in basic assumptions and patterns of behavior—and that we can play an active role in this process. All this will engage them in learning not as a chore to be avoided but as an adventure to be enjoyed.

Partnership process

How can we build the foundations for partnership education? How can we bring the joy of learning, of exploring new possibilities, into our classrooms? What are the basic building blocks?

There are three cornerstones for partnership education. These are partnership *process*, partnership *content*, and partnership *structure*: how we teach, what we teach, and what kinds of educational structures we build.

A primary aim of partnership education is to show, not only intellectually but also experientially, that partnership relations are possible. Hence partnership process, or *how* we teach and learn, is an essential part of education.

Child-centered education, the cooperative learning movement, and other progressive educational movements are already laying the groundwork for partnership educational process. Focusing primarily on how we teach rather than on what we teach, these movements promote learning experiences in which teachers facilitate rather than control, students learn to work together, and each child is treated with empathy and caring.

Partnership process is an integrated teaching style or pedagogy that honors students as whole individuals with diverse learning styles. It focuses not only on cognitive or intellectual learning but also on affective or emotional learning. It recognizes the additional dimensions of somatic or bodily learning and of conative learning—the cultivation of *conation*, or the will to act. It recognizes what Howard Gardner calls “multiple intelligences” and what Rob Koegel calls “partnership intelligence”. It cultivates less linear, more intuitive, contextualized, and holistic ways of learning through what Mary Belenky, Blythe Clinchy, Nancy Goldberger, and Jill Tarule call “connected teaching” in their book *Women's Ways of Knowing*.⁶

Partnership process models partnership relations in day-to-day settings, showing children that their voices will be heard, their ideas respected, and their emotional needs understood. It helps counter the limitations and dysfunctions that, as psychiatrist Alice Miller and others document, are still often replicated under the guise of sound childrearing and teaching. It helps heal the psychic wounds of children at risk. By providing caring intervention shown by many studies to make the difference between a life lost to self and society and one that is productive and creative⁷—partnership process promotes not only learning and personal growth but also the shift to a less violent, more equitable and caring society.

The environment

As many teachers know, children learn better in an environment conducive to mutual caring and respect rather than punishments and controls, to open-mindedness rather than closed-mindedness, to empowerment rather than disempowerment.⁸ As teachers also know, creating this kind of learning environment requires recognizing that we all carry attitudes and behaviors that get in the way. This does not mean we should hold ourselves or others to impossible standards of perfection, much less blame or shame ourselves and others. We are all in this together, trying to help children learn to resolve conflicts nonviolently, work together in teams while still valuing each individual, and treat others, including their teachers, with consideration and respect.

Studies on various aspects of partnership educational process—for example, child-centered learning and cooperative or collaborative learning—support the conclusion that partnership process can help achieve these goals. Researchers such as David W. Johnson, Spencer Kagan, and Robert Slavin note that when students are effectively helped to work together to accomplish shared goals, they learn both the teamwork and personal accountability needed for the postmodern workplace.⁹ Researchers at the California Developmental Studies Center found that when schools become “caring communities” there are positive outcomes for both students and teachers, such as more personal motivation, nonviolent conflict resolution, and altruistic behaviors.¹⁰

A critical overview of the literature

There are many studies on the advantages of small schools and self-directed learning that also contain data supporting the conclusion that partnership process brings about good results. As Robert Gladden noted in “The Small School Movement: A Review of the Literature”, these

studies show that it is not just small size but also “the quality of relationships that existed among students, teachers, and administrators” that made the difference.¹¹ Or as a student attending an alternative small public school in New York wrote, “I feel better about school because I am learning what I want to learn. I feel more like a person. At my previous high school, they treated us like smart monkeys. Learning was not seen as being for ourselves or controlled by ourselves. We were ushered from class to class. There was no room for anything else”.¹²

Some of the data on the advantages of partnership education are qualitative rather than quantitative, but qualitative studies are today gaining wider recognition and currency. Howard Gardner’s work on multiple intelligences further supports the need to treat children as whole persons—yet another component of partnership process.¹³

Other works deal with different aspects of partnership education. For example, *In Search of Understanding* by Jacqueline G. Brooks and Martin G. Brooks and Michael Strong’s *The Habit of Thought* also show the advantages of a more dialogic or Socratic partnership approach, as opposed to what Paulo Freire called “banking education” in which teachers just deposit lessons into children’s minds.¹⁴

In addition, there is a huge body of literature from the organizational development and management field showing the advantages of both partnership process and structure for what is today sometimes referred to as “the learning organization”.¹⁵ Well-known works are those of David Bohm and Peter Senge from MIT. William Isaacs, who developed the method he calls Dialogos, has shown the advantage of partnership process in business.¹⁶ And Alfie Kohn has written on the problems of focusing solely on competition and extrinsic rewards and punishments. His work, too, is consistent with some aspects of the partnership model.¹⁷

Practicing partnership education

Teachers who use partnership process can engage young peoples’ natural curiosity, stretch their minds, and help them experientially understand democracy not only in governments and elections but in all spheres of life. Partnership teaching helps young people learn through acceptance and understanding, through rules that instill respect rather than fear, venturesomeness rather than rote obedience. Partnership teaching also relies on nonverbal experiences through art and music, drama and poetry, contact with nature, and, above all, play—whether the actual play of

younger children or the conceptual play of more mature minds exploring the rich possibilities in ourselves and our world.

This kind of learning helps young people think for themselves and trust their own observations and experiences, fosters responsibility in the classroom, and encourages students to practice caring and ethical behaviors. By cultivating personal and social creativity, it inspires and empowers them to deal with personal, social, and ecological problems in more constructive, creative ways.¹⁸

This is not to say that teaching that fosters these capacities in children will solve all their problems, particularly of young people who live in circumstances of desperate poverty, alienation, and violence. But making a child feel seen and cared for can make a big difference, particularly at this time, when so many young people feel helpless and hopeless.¹⁹

Partnership content

That so much attention is beginning to be given to partnership educational process is important. But it is not enough. Transforming *how* we teach without also transforming *what* we teach—without equal attention to curriculum content—is like trying to fly with only one wing. We may be able to get off the ground a little, but we will never be able to sustain flight, much less soar. It is like teaching children to play a beautiful instrument without paying attention to whether we provide them with melodious or discordant music to play.

Transforming curriculum content is basic to transforming education. The curriculum we teach is the food we offer children's minds: food for thought and, from there, action. It is the wherewithal out of which young people will form their views of our world and their place in it. If we focus only on partnership process, we provide an education that at best gives children conflicting messages, creating mental and emotional confusion through process-content mismatch. Most critically, we fail to provide them with cognitive maps that will help them construct a better future.

Partnership process and partnership content are the two complementary halves of partnership education in action. They are inextricably interconnected. Partnership education also deals with the need for building partnership educational structures that will support, rather than impede, both partnership process and content. But because there are already many guidelines for transforming how we teach as well as for building more participatory rather than top-down educational structures,

(Eisler, forthcoming) the materials that follow focus primarily on *what* we teach: on the basic building blocks for a new partnership curriculum.

Today, a battle over curriculum content—a battle that will decisively affect the future—is already in full gear. On one side are those who see the solution to our problems as a return to the ‘traditional curriculum’. Among them are those who advocate an end to the constitutional separation of church and state and a return to what they call “Christian values”—a term that, in this context, is often misinterpreted to mean rejection of scientific theories that do not fit with their views, as well as reimposition of more rigid controls and severe punishments, including corporal punishment in schools. On the other side are those who argue that changing times require changes in what children are taught about “reality,” and that some aspects of the traditional curriculum have never served children well. There are many strands here, ranging from those who want to modify particular portions of the existing curriculum to those with an overarching transformative vision. But in practice, these efforts have resulted primarily in add-ons ranging from black history month and women’s history month to education for emotional and environmental literacy and education for nonviolent conflict resolution.

These are all important contributions. But education for the twenty-first century requires more than add-ons. As important as they are, add-ons are like patches on an old, worn-out fabric. They only remedy a few symptoms, rather than solving the underlying problems.

Redefining education

Critical pedagogy, multicultural pedagogy, feminist pedagogy, education organized around themes of care, and other newer approaches to education highlight that we need to reexamine and redefine what we mean by *education*. As Nel Noddings writes, “All children must learn to care for other human beings, and all must find an ultimate concern in some center of care: care for self, for intimate others, for associates and acquaintances, for distant others, for animals, for plants, and the physical environment, for objects and instruments, and for ideas”. But she also notes that “today the curriculum is organized almost entirely around the last center, ideas”. And even this “is so poorly put together that important ideas are often swamped”, given the emphasis on so-called facts and a very limited set of skills.²⁰

What this calls for is a new curriculum design that provides an integrated framework for curriculum transformation.²¹ This does *not* mean that we

should discard everything we have been using. But, as we will see in the chapters that follow, it does mean that we need to start from the ground up and, out of both old and new elements, construct a curriculum that can meet the needs and challenges of our time.

Psychological research certainly supports the conclusion that what children learn, what they internalize from narratives and stories, profoundly affects their attitudes, values, and behaviors. Indeed, one of the basic tenets of Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, Alfred Adler, Karen Horney, and other founders of the field was that how we view ourselves and others is rooted in how we are taught to perceive ourselves and the world.²²

More recently, research on the effects of television violence on attitudes and behaviors, not only children's but adults', shows how cultural narratives mold attitudes and behaviors. For example, the studies done by George Gerbner and others at the Annenberg School of Communication and by David Loye and Rod Gorney at UCLA flatly contradict the assertion by some mass media executives that their programs do not influence attitudes and behavior, that somehow only purchasing choices and behaviors are affected by television.²³

The power of cultural narratives

There is also a large body of literature on the power of cultural narratives from anthropology, sociology, social psychology, the study of myth, and other disciplines. The work of scholars such as Milton Rokeach and Joan Rockwell shows that our values are largely formed through cultural narratives transmitted from generation to generation—and can be changed through new narratives. Rockwell's analysis of how the ancient Greeks used theater to instill dominator values is particularly illuminating when we apply it to contemporary entertainment.²⁴ And Milton Rokeach's work is instructive in that it demonstrates that values can be changed through the introduction of narratives that cause conflict between ostensible or consciously held values such as democracy and equality and latent or unconsciously held values such as biases against people of different races or social groups.²⁵ My own research on ancient myths shows that with the shift to a dominator model of organization there also occurred a massive transformation of both religious and secular myths; for example, in both *The Chalice and the Blade* and *Sacred Pleasure* I trace the transformation of images and narratives showing women in positions of power to images and narratives in which they are subordinate to men.²⁶

Other studies specifically focusing on education have examined the effect of narratives about gender and race on student attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors. Most of these studies date from the 1960s and 1970s, when funding was available for them, and most deal only with single interventions or, at best, interventions of just a few weeks' or months' duration. But, strikingly, many of these interventions were found to have some positive effects—indicating that a curriculum informed by gender balance and multiculturalism could indeed have lasting results.²⁷ For instance, when a group of eight- to eleven-year-old students studied a semester unit on Africa, they developed more positive attitudes toward African-Americans than did a control group who were not exposed to this curriculum. When the students were tested eight weeks later, the experimental group still scored lower in prejudice.²⁸

As James Banks writes in “Multicultural Education: Its Effects on Students’ Racial and Gender Role Attitudes”, interventions appear “to be most successful with young children, particularly preschoolers and kindergartners”.²⁹ Consider, for example, a 1979 investigation of toy choices and game preferences of nursery school, kindergarten, and first-grade children. Before they saw a film showing a model choosing non-gender-stereotyped toys, the children displayed high levels of gender stereotyping in their choices. After viewing the film, the students in the experimental groups made fewer such choices. But the older children and the boys still made more stereotyped choices than the younger children and the girls.

Picture books can also influence the kinds of toys children choose. After children were presented with books containing characters who selected either stereotypical or nonstereotypical toys, the children who were read the nonstereotypical book chose less stereotyped toys themselves.³⁰

In sum, although there have as yet been no studies specifically addressing the question of what kinds of attitudes and behaviors are fostered by an integrated partnership curriculum, a considerable body of literature supports the conclusion that partnership narratives can foster partnership attitudes and behaviors.

Moreover, data on educational outcomes from a school that has consciously used partnership education, the Nova High School in Seattle, support the conclusion that the *whole-systems* approach of partnership education has excellent results. Nova has not only ranked first among the Seattle area’s high schools in educational climate surveys; it can also boast that a high percentage of its graduates have the academic accomplish-

ments to get into prestigious universities. These young people (of mixed racial and ethnic origins, many from poor families, and some even from homeless families) also tend to have more awareness, sensitivity, and a greater sense of human possibilities—as teachers at Nova will attest and as I observed firsthand during a recent visit to this school (which is one of the Center for Partnership Studies' pilot partnership education development sites).

Partnership structure

The Nova School exemplifies the beneficial results of partnership process and content. It also demonstrates that the best results come from an approach that integrates partnership process, content, and structure.

At Nova, the primary governing body that makes school policy and rules is open to both students and faculty. At this school, students play a key role in formulating and enforcing school rules. This practice not only encourages responsibility; it also offers hands-on experience in democratic process and leadership.

As noted earlier, the core elements of partnership structure are a democratic and egalitarian rather than top-down authoritarian organizational structure, gender balance rather than male dominance, and, in contrast to the dominator-model requirement of a high level of built-in abuse and violence, emphasis on nonviolent and mutually caring and respectful relations. When educational institutions follow this template, their structure models partnership relations and supports both partnership process and content.

In schools that orient primarily to the dominator model, it is extremely difficult for students and teachers to experience democracy in action. Nor can they move toward their optimal functioning. This has been demonstrated in the business world by organization development and management research for decades.³¹ Accordingly, many successful corporations have been gradually dismantling top-down hierarchies in a process I call *debureaucratization*.

Hierarchies

The same principle applies to educational institutions. However, a partnership structure does not mean a completely horizontal organization. There is a distinction between *hierarchies of domination* and *hierarchies of actualization*. Hierarchies of domination are imposed and maintained by fear. They are held in place by the power that is idealized, and even

sanctified, in societies that orient primarily to the dominator model: the power to inflict pain, to hurt and kill. By contrast, hierarchies of actualization are primarily based not on power *over*, but on power *to* (creative power, the power to help and to nurture others) as well as power *with* (the collective power to accomplish things together, as in what is today called teamwork). In hierarchies of actualization, accountability flows not only from the bottom up but also from the top down. That is, accountability flows in both directions.

In other words, educational structures orienting to the partnership model are not unstructured or *laissez-faire*; they still have administrators, managers, leaders, and other positions where responsibility for particular tasks and functions is assigned.³² However, the leaders and managers inspire rather than coerce. They empower rather than disempower, making it possible for the organization to access and utilize the knowledge and skills of all its members.

Having said this, I want to add that partnership structures are not equivalent to consensus structures, although in certain situations the latter can be appropriate. Yet the consensus mechanism can actually lead to domination by individuals with unmet needs for attention. Although there is great emphasis on real participatory democracy in partnership structures, following interactive discussions the individual or team responsible for making something happen can proceed to see that it does.

Cooperation

Partnership school structures facilitate cooperation among different individuals and groups. But once again—and this, too, is a critical point—partnership as an organizing template is not equivalent to cooperating or working together. People also work together in societies, institutions, or organizations orienting closely to the dominator model—for example, to attack other nations, to persecute minorities, or in cut-throat competition designed to put competitors out of business.

This is not to say that there is no competition or conflict in the partnership model of relations. But in the partnership model, conflict is used not to select winners and losers, or who dominates and who is dominated, but rather to creatively arrive at solutions that go beyond compromise to a higher ideal. And competition is directed toward striving for excellence and using the achievements of the other person or group as a spur or incentive to the attainment of one's own highest potentials.

In partnership school structures, young people have responsibilities for determining some of the school rules, and for seeing that they are honored. This promotes habit patterns needed to function optimally in the postindustrial information economy, where taking responsibility, flexibility, and creativity are essential. More immediately, it contributes to a mutually respectful, undisrupted, and, of course, nonviolent school environment. Despite the assumption that adolescents naturally rebel, we may find that when students feel that they are heard and cared for and have a stake in the functioning of their school, they are less likely to do so—as in this kind of structure rebelling would be rebelling against rules in which they themselves have had a significant input.

Partnership school structures also require a much higher teacher-student ratio, not only through reduced class sizes but through innovations such as team teaching. This, in turn, requires far greater fiscal and social support for our schools. Although much good teaching goes on, it does so despite the fact that our schools are understaffed and underfunded.

(See **Figure 3** for specific examples of the partnership-dominator continuum in educational process, content, and structure.)

<i>The Partnership Model Values and Supports</i>	←————→	<i>The Dominator Model Values and Supports</i>
Teacher and student knowledge and experience are valued		Teacher is the sole source of information and knowledge
Learning and teaching are integrated and multidisciplinary		Learning and teaching are artificially fragmented and compartmentalized
Curriculum, leadership, and decisionmaking are gender balanced		Curriculum is male-centered; leadership and decisionmaking are male-controlled
Multicultural reality of human experience is valued and tapped as source of learning		One culture's worldview is the measure with which others are analyzed and evaluated
Social and physical sciences emphasize our interconnection with other people and nature		Social and physical sciences emphasize the conquest of people and nature
Mutual responsibility, empathy, and caring are highlighted and modeled		Relations based on control, manipulation, and one-upmanship are highlighted and modeled

Source: Reprinted from Riane Eisler, Redefining Destiny (work in progress)

Figure 3: Examples of the partnership-dominator continuum in educational process, content and structure

Schools as communities of learning

To create the kind of education children need, our social and economic policies cannot continue to shortchange education. We must give much greater social recognition to the value of teachers, both through better pay and through increased funding for continuing teacher development, education, and support. Teachers need more time for thoughtful preparation and assessments, for curriculum development with other professionals, and for training when new developments in education occur.

We need to pay more attention to how children can develop their unique individual potentials rather than merely focusing on standardized test scores. We need to strengthen and build on the various elements of partnership process and content already being used in many schools. And rather than dismantling our public school system, as some propose, we should debureaucratize our schools, not only making them smaller but restructuring them to more closely approximate partnership rather than dominator organizations.

Are teachers, school counselors, and other staff treated with respect by administrators? Are partnerships formed to make decisions about policy? Are students involved in this process? Are opportunities created for parent participation? Are there referral systems for parents to access social agencies and other community resources? Are there counseling and educational opportunities for parents and other caretakers that will benefit children and further their development (for example, workshops for parenting education where mothers and fathers can share challenges and appropriate solutions)? Are social agencies and other community resources enlisted to support teachers in their growing responsibilities to help children develop not only intellectually but emotionally, to ensure that basic needs such as good nutrition and health care are met, and that each child's unique talents are developed? Are efforts made to bring education into the community to meet community needs?

Much greater attention to the interactive relationship between schools and both their communities and the natural environment is needed if our schools are to support and model partnership relations. I would like to see a parent resources center at each school, and social services housed in at least some of the schools in every community. I would like to see some classrooms in buildings within the community itself, rather than tucked away from community life. I would like to see small schools, none with more than 350 students and, where possible, even fewer. These are part of

my vision for schools as communities of learning where every child can grow and flourish.

As Sheila Mannix and Mark Harris write, what is urgently needed is a school “that can be an effective antidote to the stress of the street and the hurt of the home, a haven of safety, orderly learning, and personal growth, the school as the guarantor of a child’s right to protection, education, and love”.³³ Because schools are increasingly in a position of having to meet these needs, but not equipped to do so, Mannix and Harris call for social investments that will make it possible for schools to become “the social hub of the community, a mechanism with which society can reach out to families in trouble and ensure that help is provided”.³⁴

This may sound like a tall order, but it is part of the vision of the partnership school of the future: a vision to plan and work for. It is, I believe, a vision that can gradually be realized as schools are transformed through partnership education. But it requires that society at large recognize our responsibility to all children.

We must have the courage to open our eyes to the needs, suffering, and hopes of children worldwide, to question prescribed conventions, and to become the architects of a partnership future for generations to come through an enlightened, empathic global public education. Adapted for different regions and cultures, partnership education can be a blueprint for refocusing, reframing, and redesigning education to help all children realize their full humanity and preserve our natural habitat.

Transforming education is an ambitious goal. It will undoubtedly be criticized, opposed, or dismissed as impossible by some. But by exploring, taking creative risks, and holding fast to our partnership principles and vision, we can make partnership education a reality. This is not only necessary, but doable—if we join together and, step by step, lay the foundations for the education that can make the twenty-first century a bridge into the better future for which we all yearn.

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Chapter 10 Futures Beyond Social Cohesion: Lessons for the Classroom

Marlene de Beer

A future beyond social cohesion calls for an integral, holistic, transpersonal, deeper consciousness: in other words, a new-humanistic approach and way of looking at our world and the nature of our relationships. This has radical implications for education and how we envision transformation and learning which facilitates the development of healthy local identities and global integrity. This chapter raises more questions than providing actual answers on social cohesion and education. Though education and social cohesion, in its many guises, are here to stay and hopefully serve (and evolve) policy (and practice) well into the future. I hold that the Cinderella ingredient in our education today involves the themes of spirituality, consciousness and human potential development. The question is, how can we do this more effectively in a way that honours the indigenous cultural environment of people around the world and allows a natural flow and fusion with the modern?

It will be argued that a deeper and spiritual education calls for a threshold emergence where we include and transcend narrow egocentric and ethnocentric practices and move towards a global integrity that authentically serves humanity. Therefore an educational future beyond social cohesion calls for an integral and holistic approach. In such a space we acknowledge the transpersonal and spiritual while working for a common and greater good. Through such an approach to education we hope to facilitate higher levels of consciousness and the human potential that comes from within. What are the means to this? I propose the meditative and creative practices that allow deeper transcendence into the nature of humanity and our collective purpose. Critical spirituality, neohumanism and neohumanist education support such developments.

Introduction

This chapter has three main sections.

The first part focuses on various social cohesion interpretations and metaphors, i.e. kaleidoscope; *liaison dangereuse* or *tango romantica*;

white light, the prism effect and multi-dimensional models; ubuntu; seeing with a different kind of mind; and patterns of meaning. I also include my personal karma and *our long walk to freedom*.

Part two presents broad educational models and the continual tension between various educational ideologies and approaches and the implications for social cohesion.

The final section presents spirituality, consciousness and human potential development as neglected social cohesion and educational themes and focus on critical spirituality, neohumanist perspectives and neohumanist education.

A kaleidoscopic dance of social cohesion metaphors

In my quest to understand what social cohesion might mean and how we might better 'educate' for it, I have come to draw on several metaphors that may capture an evolving potential. My journey has led me down a kaleidoscopic path: bits and pieces, fragments of 'social cohesion' interpretations, each with its own colouring, size, brightness, transparency. Their patterns, images and interpretation change as the person turns the instrument...and the play of mirrors and reflections signifies a possible new and different gaze...¹

In the above paragraph I refer to 'My journey', which assumes that this is also in some way the journey of a nation, its peoples and also of the individual. What follows is an account of this and locating myself within the exploration of social cohesion that may deepen this work.

Long Walk to Freedom²

Out of the experience of an extraordinary human disaster that lasted too long, must be born a society of which all humanity will be proud... We have at last achieved our political emancipation. We pledge ourselves to liberate all our people from the continuing bondage of poverty, deprivation, suffering, gender and other discrimination. Let freedom reign. Nelson Mandela, inaugural speech, 1994

Here Nelson Mandela expresses the spiritual genius which finds hope and strength in disaster. The "Robben Island University" in which he was incarcerated during the apartheid era, gave birth to a new kind of university (beginning to hope) where political prisoners learned from each other (through co-operative inquiry), became their own faculty, with their own professors, their own curriculum, their own courses.³ Even though

the political liberation of South Africa is now more than a decade old, the struggle for spiritual, social and economic liberation still continues.

My karma

Born in 1970 in the midst of Apartheid South Africa, I was brought up in a pathological Christian world and under the Afrikaner political system. Contrary to the popular belief that almost all whites in SA had a privileged upbringing—especially if you are from an Afrikaans speaking background, as I am—Mom only had a standard seven school level education and Dad only got his matriculation (Year 12) when my elder sister did hers. They would have loved a better and more relevant higher education for themselves in order to escape the cycle of poverty and indoctrination. They therefore dedicated their whole lives to provide that opportunity to my sister and I.

I managed to obtain a social work degree (Honours, 1992) and later specialised in community development. My first international experience, made possible by a three year international UNESCO Research Studentship to the United Kingdom, Northern Ireland (late 2000), and thereafter 18 months independent research on creativity and educational development in Ireland, expanded my views and awareness on social cohesion, identity, belonging and global citizenship. These life experiences combined deepened a new pride and urgency for my own country, African continent and global emergence for higher consciousness.

Furthermore, the collective guilt of apartheid has pushed me since the mid 1990s to explore alternative and contemplative spiritual practices, particularly drawing on Eastern traditions. The continuing journey to integrate Tai Chi, Yoga and various meditation methods, particularly Transcendental Meditation, allows my consciousness to increase and expand on deeper and more subtle levels. By also following a vegetarian diet, being committed to voluntary community and educational initiatives (i.e. CIDA City Campus, Johannesburg), and often connecting with Nature through (botanical) walks, I am working towards a more Integral Transformative Practice which increasingly allows me to creatively play with a sense of global being and becoming.

Therefore, from my experience, planetary care and citizenship spirals from the inside out and we need to work more seriously on our individual subjective transformative practices, particularly from our Spiritual Heart level. It is from this space that we can honor the Divinity in Others, sense

our interconnectedness and emerging higher Destiny through self-and-collective transcendence.

It is particularly the poems of Antjie Krog in *Down to my Last Skin*⁴ that capture the paradox of our collective grief and expanded consciousness. The following poem is a paean to the bitter sweetness of that/our time.

My beautiful land

look, I build myself a land
where skin colour doesn't count
only the inner brand of self

where no goat face in parliament
can keep things permanently verkrampt

where I can love you,
can lie beside you in the grass
without saying "I do"

where we sing with the guitars at night
where we bring gifts of white jasmine

where I don't have to poison you
when foreign doves coo in my hair

where no court of law
will deaden the eyes of my children

where black and white hand in hand
can bring peace and love
in my beautiful land

(1969)

* *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrica*, God bless Africa and from the Soul of our African Soil, a new Rainbow Nation is rising... we are globally still on a long walk to freedom, a freedom that needs to start and be challenged in the 'classroom' to allow spiritual, social and economic transformation within ourselves and amongst all of us. Hopefully my story puts this work into context.

Liaison dangereuse or tango romantica?

Is our human evolution and educational development a dance with the devil—a 'liaison dangereuse'? We need a new and beautiful dance with a partner who understands and supports our artistic and creative impulses. Therefore, if we want to have new moves we need new steps.

We need to be reflective and critical and ask if we are only acting or playing according to the rules? We need to ask: whose rules?; did we participate in developing them?; and are these perceived as legitimate? If not, then it may indeed become a 'liaison dangereuse' that will drive us into the arms of those that do not have our best interests at heart: those that do not have a holistic, integral and global integrity. Such a move is exemplified in the growing urgency to develop social cohesion indicators and measurement instruments to satisfy the strong push to quantifying social cohesion. However, as Andy Green and John Preston caution: "...quantitative approaches may well miss the key issue for social cohesion".⁵

The challenge remains to find alternative and creative ways to interpret our current state of bonding, bridging and binding ties; to understand what holds us together when everything else seems to be pulling us apart, and when so many variables infringe on our current and future quality of life and wellbeing. Whatever we devise in our search, it is imperative that we move beyond treating merely the symptoms to engagement with the root cause.

Social cohesion is a critical concept but not necessarily a forward-looking concept. It can be used to attempt to establish a link to a lost moment of social harmony. It may even be nostalgia for something that never existed. The danger is also that social cohesion is presented as the panacea for the future, which is politically and rhetorically loaded and even illusionary. Additionally, social cohesion is not always positive (e.g. youth gangs, mafia, apartheid, religious fundamentalism in Northern Ireland, Afghanistan and Israel).⁶ However, social cohesion can also be used to imagine a more positive future, one that seeks new patterns and innovation. It is this version that has the most use for thinking about the links between social cohesion and culture, but care must be taken not to fall into the trap of nostalgia.

Furthermore, the current interest in cohesion seems to be an expression of a sense that something social is wrong but we don't know exactly what. It is argued that social cohesion "deserves the actuality of the contemporary

debate” because all social problems, from unemployment to drug abuse, lead to a concern about “what keeps society together”.⁷

Additionally, as the purpose of this chapter includes establishing an array of understandings of social cohesion and linking them to emergent transformative pedagogies such as neohumanism, the purpose is not to provide any theoretical origins and explanations for social cohesion. However, Talja Blockland’s concern⁸ should be noted that the theoretical framework in current use globally seems to be inadequate for studying either cohesion or exclusion (probably because the philosophical and sociological origins have been hijacked by political, economic and policy agendas). Furthermore, these theoretical frameworks are also male-stream (patriarchal) dominated.

Typical rhetoric, slogans and jargon that infiltrated the policy and academic debate around the issue of social cohesion are:

- Glue that binds us together
- Ties that bind
- Playing by the rules of the game
- Holding the center
- Society we want
- Coping well
- Living together
- Bonding and belonging
- Fabric of society
- Solidarity⁹
- “Buying In or Dropping Out”¹⁰
- Saying social cohesion; implying social exclusion¹¹
- Saying cohesion; meaning community¹²

White light, the prism effect and multi-dimensional models

As white light disperses through a prism and produces a rainbow of colours, so there may be a ‘rainbow’ of social cohesion perspectives and interpretations. There may indeed be a variety of perspectives and interpretations on social cohesion. What are they, where do they come from, constructed by whom and what purpose and value do they have? Do we take social cohesion for granted as with white light? We might

think we know what it is (white light/social cohesion), but can we define it; really capture it completely? Furthermore social cohesion seems to be a quasi concept (like a pseudo intellectual rhetorical device) of multi-complex nature. Desmond Tutu's construction and symbolism of a South African rainbow nation may also be appropriate here.

Unfortunately, the reality is that the rainbow colour of white light falls only in a very narrow visible range of a much broader spectrum of possibilities (e.g. radio, microwave, infrared, X-ray, gamma-rays). Our sight is limited and may therefore deceive us. Similarly, social cohesion may have an easily visible nature; with the danger of limiting interpretation formed from this single sensory activity only or predominantly. So what might the broader spectrum of possibilities on social cohesion be?

Social cohesion also calls for a refined quality of transcendence. It may involve activity (or non-activity/stillness) and choices between:

- seeing, hearing and touching (physical) (sensory activities) (what about 'gut feeling?');
- communicating (listening, understanding, resolving conflict/media/rhetoric... ;
- intellectual, emotional and spiritual engagement/involvement.

There is a call to recognise and respect the fact that the development and evolution of education for social cohesion is also a unique dimension of indigenous *ubuntu* culture. We need to caution against power (plays) and political processes that could sabotage the deeper essence and sustainability of social cohesion.

Ubuntu

Ubuntu is an African word, practice and philosophy that signify 'I am because you are', or 'a person is a person through other persons'.¹³ Ubuntu involves be-ing, experience, knowledge and truth in the plurality of its voices and presents it through the voice from within. It renders a human-ness, whole-ness and flow of be-ing and becoming. It is never fixed or rigidly closed; it allows others to be, to become. There is a dialogue of mutual exposure: "To be human is to affirm one's humanity by recognizing the humanity of others in its infinite variety of content and form".¹⁴ Ubuntu substitutes "I think, therefore I am", for, "I participate, therefore I am".¹⁵

It is a process of self-realization through others; it enhances the self-realization of others; and it facilitates self-reflective multicultural contextualisation. In other words: “You cannot lead people to what is good, you only lead them to some place or other. The good is outside the space of facts”.¹⁶ Ubuntu also links very closely to the principle and practice of reconciliation and can be regarded as an African, indigenous based knowledge system and practice to promote social cohesion. Ubuntu also challenges the process of education to be more open, flexible, inclusive, participatory and tolerant of others and may therefore reveal indifference and exclusion. Johan Broodryk provides the following UBUNTU core (and associated) values:¹⁷

- humanness (warmth, tolerance, understanding, peace, humanity);
- caring (empathy, sympathy, helpfulness, charitable, friendliness);
- sharing (giving, redistribution, openhandedness);
- respect (commitment, dignity, obedience, order, normative);
- compassion (love, cohesion, informality, forgiveness, spontaneity).

How does education worldwide meet up to these values? How and why do we fall short? The South African Department of Education has also incorporated an *UBUNTU syllabuses:100* with the values of sharing, caring, kindness, forgiveness, sympathy, tolerance, respect, love, appreciation, consideration and the rights of the child as the main pillars of Ubuntu. An Ubuntu Code of Conduct was also developed, incorporating the following: integrity, incorruptibility, good faith, impartiality, openness, accountability, justice, respect, generosity and leadership.¹⁸ There is also the Ubuntu Pledge and Ubuntu Moral Regeneration Movement.¹⁹ I would also argue that this Ubuntu practice and philosophy has been a key in the internationally acclaimed magical transformation that SA has undergone and is still undergoing. Furthermore, such an icon as Nelson Mandela is a living embodiment of the Ubuntu philosophy and practice (also known as the Madiba Magic and archetype).

I further argue that this implies that social cohesion is innately about the actual practice of so-called ‘soft skills’ and living out a set of core values that include those mentioned above and is exemplified through the Ubuntu practice and philosophy described here.

Seeing with a different kind of mind...

The final separation ... where the link with the original source appears to be completely forgotten, is often illustrated by the snowflake that has crystallized from the ocean. ... (we) need ... to recognise that the snowflake is the ocean and the ocean is the snowflake. And in order to reunite with the ocean, the snowflake has to give up its structure and individuality; it has to go through an ego death, as it were, to return to its source.²⁰

The words of T.S. Elliot ring true: having gone full circle... "and in the end, we arrive back at the beginning, and know the place for the first time". Additionally, the 'mystical connotations', or profound connection between ecology and spirituality, are also explored by others such as David Bohm in *Wholeness and the Implicate Order*,²¹ J. H. Holland's *Hidden Order: How adaptation builds complexity*²² and *Emergence: From Chaos to Order* and Michael Talbot's *The Holographic Universe*.²³

We need to transcend and include the characteristic nature of Western thinking, the bipolar or binary, which develop thinking in terms of opposites and hierarchies.²⁴ The unfortunate reality is therefore that education and learning has been dominated by right brain rational thinking, analysis and development, while left-brain creative, intuitive and aesthetics learning and education are still neglected or devalued. We therefore need to become more integral in our thinking and doing and Lesley Saunders also quotes Australian poet Les Murray: "You think with a double mind. It's like thinking with both sides of your brain at once. And if you can't do that, you can't write poetry".²⁵ So what is wrong? We need to integrate two categories of knowledge, learning and wisdom (e.g. our body, care, feeding, sex, dignity; spiritual aspirations and multiple intelligence). Wisdom is a broader, more elusive, but more valuable kind of knowledge and includes everything that can help a person to live well, happily and morally.



During the 2001 World Conference against Racism (WCAR), the logo (**Figure 1**), put forward by the South African Government, is an artistic interpretation of the "Yin Yang", the traditional Chinese black and white symbol representing the two opposing but complementing fundamental forces of life. For the Durban Conference, multiple shades of grey and artistic movement were added to the traditional

Yin Yang to emphasize the diverse geographic, cultural and racial origins of human beings and to symbolize a more dynamic and evolving society. The logo was supported by an oblique as a basis to support the Yin Yang. This axis represents the traditional globe and adds the idea of a compass depicting the way forward towards a global integrity and charting a course based on the principles of non-discrimination, tolerance and diversity. It embodies the concept that diversity, rather than antagonism, is enriching, and that the different peoples of the world complement each other and symbolizing that we are all one human family.²⁶ The Eastern philosophies and traditions therefore add a uniqueness of seeing and interpreting the world and transferring these ideas to the social cohesion discourse and facilitating broader and deeper understanding.

Patterns of meaning

John O'Donohue's *Eternal Echoes: Exploring Our Hunger to Belong*²⁷ touched a resonating cord and in essence, social cohesion is about belonging and asks: What binds people together? He mentions some shadow elements that threaten our broader and deeper sense of belonging: We are on a runaway train, bedazzled by technology, a postmodern culture, consumerism and the functionalist mind. We are indeed creating and choosing our own prisons! Though, fundamentally we know: belonging is much more, deeper and profound. It is about spiritual connectedness, community and consciousness! We therefore really hear the inward music, but we are all dancing to it, nevertheless (drawing on the words of Rumi).

The above sections provide a kaleidoscopic perspective on social cohesion by means of several metaphors that explore its conceptual development. So, what do we know about social cohesion? It seems that in spite of the high profile attention and research funding that social cohesion receives it is still conceptually very vague. Social cohesion is rarely defined explicitly, but there have been some efforts to develop working definition though "conceptual unclarity reigns supreme".²⁸ Where conceptual attempts are made, identified dimensions and categories are often not explained and therefore open for individual interpretation and speculation of what is actually meant by words like trust, hope, legitimacy, etc. Thinking has therefore not developed to a point where it can be aligned /synchronised and codified as a common understanding among all. Social cohesion is therefore conceptually fused, and gets confused, with social capital, social exclusion, inclusion, community, solidarity, diversity, multi-culturalism, citizenship, human rights, discrimination, democracy, etc. As there is no

consensus on social cohesion at policy and political level, how can we install some clarity and confidence at ground level where real change and difference is needed in the lives of people?

There seems to be some parallels regarding some of the above dimensions and metaphors, especially reading social cohesion from a feminist perspective. I have to agree with Selma Sevenhuijsen,²⁹ that it is in fact a distressing activity "...not only because of its hidden suppositions, but also because there are so many silences and omissions where speech and reflection would be due. ... Among the undertheorized factors are not only the different faces of power and the role of gender and care but also the moral dimensions of trust and distrust. ... It is indeed the triangle of dependency, power and vulnerability that is conspicuously absent in dominant theories...".

The fashion of 'cohesion' instead of 'community' might be little more than the result of mere word play. The term social cohesion sounds less normative and less old-fashioned than community. Social cohesion can therefore conceal indifference. In other words, it is not conflict and antagonism, but indifference that is the threat to cohesion although conflict, hostility and antagonism might threaten solidarity.³⁰ We should no longer eschew normality at the surface and turn to the determination of what sympathetic relations look like, and "to describe the political equivalent of love".³¹ Altruism tends to disappear from the research agenda and love never entered, it might reflect much the same fear of normative concepts as of even mentioning the word 'community'.³²

Furthermore, it is clear that social cohesion is in fact nothing new; it is only packaged differently and presented with a new label. However, the thinking and research that is going into it and the dimensions and categories emerging provide us with a new angle to look at how societies' structures and processes affect us and how we respond and might engage and change policies and practices for a better and sustainable future enhancing the wellbeing of all. As a quasi-concept, social cohesion is therefore contested, though it has a utility as a framing concept for thinking through the complexity of socio-political issues.³³ The kaleidoscope metaphor also illustrates the difficulties inherent in devising narrow and inflexible educational policies and assessment criteria when the concept of social cohesion is itself unclear. Even though this should not prevent us exploring possible futures and we should not get stuck in muddled conceptualisations of social cohesion that may prevent us from imagining educational interventions.

The educational implications of social cohesion

The previous section dealt with various social cohesion interpretations and metaphors. This part integrates the first section by mapping some education implications of social cohesion as shown by the following chart:

Mapping Educational Implications

Liaison dangereuse or tango romantica?

- Question rules, co-create relational rules
- Develop relationship over competition
- Explore cultures in order to contrast similarities and differences in what bonds us
- Engaging in the dance—learning to participate

White light, the prism effect and multi-dimensional models

- Developing a refined quality of transcendence
- Multiple Intelligence strategies
- Develop inward vision—seeing beyond the spectrum of convention
- Strategies to reframe the debate

Ubuntu

- Finding self in Other
- Being comfortable to Be
- Care, compassion and connection
- Code of conduct
- Soft skills

Seeing with a different kind of mind...

- See pattern, feel process
- Self-organising learning systems
- Move beyond dualism—synthetic vision
- Move beyond hierarchies
- Principles of non-discrimination, tolerance and diversity

Patterns of meaning

- Belonging—eco-consciousness
 - Inward music
 - Patterns of hope
 - Patterns of belonging and becoming
 - Strategic poetic vision
 - Redefine the 'human' through identification with cosmos
-

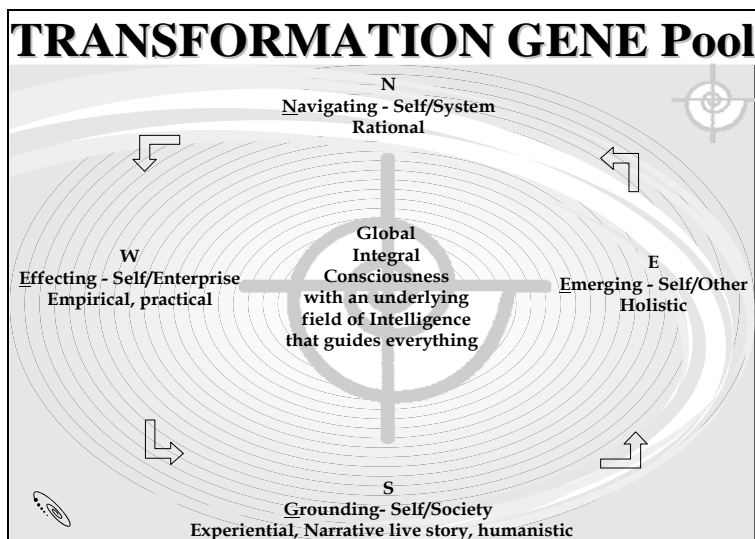
It is not the purpose of this chapter to discuss in detail the above chart, though some points will be highlighted to signify the educational challenges we face. The implications for educational processes and systems from a social cohesion perspective involves how we can transform education that honours multiple intelligences of finding the self in others. It calls for a process that includes feeling, seeing and the development of relationships through refined qualities of transcendence in the classroom. It also challenges us to redefine the human through identification with the cosmos. How can this be done and where do we need to start?

The four-worlds pooled together by the vitality of an integral centre...

(W)hat should education's role be in a fragmented society denied the cohesion required for it to realize itself? Es'kia Mphahlele³⁴

This is a central concern and phrased differently the question could be— 'How can we more effectively link social cohesion to an exploration of education as a central facilitator of this emergent and cohesive intelligence'? Es'kia Mphahlele responds that "(w)e have got to believe that while education sets up discontents, divine or otherwise, it also reconciles; it synthesizes".³⁵ He further states³⁶ that education must cut across the dividing lines that have fragmented and alienated our communities from one another and from our African roots and that "(e)ducation is a process of growth, a coming into being, into awareness of self and environment, a cultural process".³⁷

I continue by providing the following scenario: The West came to see itself as the centre of the universe. Cultural and intellectual power, just as much as political and economic power, was controlled at this centre.³⁸ We therefore need to seek an educational spirit that is concerned with moving the centre in order to contribute to the freeing of world cultures from the restrictive walls of suppressive forces of consciousness. Therefore, drawing on the work of Ronnie Lessem (and various co-authors)³⁹ we are called to a revived *grounding* (South), *emergence* (East), *navigation* (North) and *effect* (West) of our local identities that needs to include and transcend narrow ethnocentrism while also moving to embrace a sense of *global integrity* (see **Figure 2**).



Source: Adapted from Lessem⁴⁰

Figure 2

The *four-worlds* and *GENE pool* model of Lessem provide a framework to bring about transformation in educational development. In order to orchestrate a four-worldly and four-folding transformation we require deep collective engagement, what Lessem calls *Gene-i-u-s*,* operating from the vitalising Centre that entails a Consciousness with an underlying field of Intelligence that guides everything.† Moreover it is held‡ together through the *vitality* of an *integral* Centre. Important is that this transformation emerge spirally anticlockwise from the grounding South, towards the emerging East and then towards the Northern navigation and

* The overall orchestration of such transformation requires geniuses as it were, operating from the vitalising Centre. For the GENE Pool Model the word *Gene-ius* was 'formed' to imply the above. This was further 'transformed' into *Gene-i-u-s* that imply being a genius / gene-ius is a collective process between the I, you and us (i-u-s).

† Dr Taddy Blecher and Richard Peycke: CIDA City Campus Directors, CEO and Chairperson respectively and as inspired by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's Consciousness Based Education (CBE) (presentation on 3 May 2006)

‡ Lessem describes this a POOLED by which he implies an integration from the Vital Centre; integrally living and working together (pooling / POOLED). As such, and in transformative guise, we have traversed the four "moments" in our *GENE Pool*, and ended up in the Centre, with a "pool of reflection", on what has been ultimately effected. Underpinning all is a pool of "four-folding", for some God specifically, in Africa a "vital force"; from a Buddhist perspective the "Godhead" is found as easily in the gears of a motorcycle transmission as in heavens above: *integral*. Finally what is produced, either confirms or fails to *fulfil* the intentionality of you the creator, serving ultimately to pool together the whole transformative process.

Western effect. Each of the *four worlds* needs to be honored for educational transformation to take place.

The four corners of the globe, together with such an integral consciousness centre are as symbolic as they are literal. In other words, each society has its "South" and "East", "North" and "West", as well as its vital centre, though each would do well to look to those parts of the world, literally, for inspiration. For Nonaka and Takeuchi,⁴¹ knowledge creation, and therefore education, is a continuous, self-transcending process through which one transcends the boundary of the old self into a new self by acquiring a new context, a new view of the world, and new knowledge, indeed a new social construction. In short, it is a journey 'from being to becoming'. One also transcends the boundary between self and other, as knowledge is created through the interactions amongst individuals or between individuals and their environment.

Therefore, from an educational point of view, most of our education is irrelevant and often only from a Western perspective, thereby disconnecting the head (navigation and effect) from the spiritual heart (grounding and emerging). By allowing true grounding of our beings in our narrative stories we can spiritually and culturally re-new and become through imaginary emergence and therefore re-connect with a deeper rhythms and purpose in life.

Refocusing education

Novels and films such as the *Lord of the Flies*,[§] *Animal Farm*,⁴² *Dead Poets' Society*,^{**} *A Beautiful Mind*,^{††} *Dangerous Minds*,^{‡‡} etc., may indicate the need, difficulty and danger of education. In mainstream reality, education is politically and ideologically driven from the top to ensure a particular view of socialisation, social order and control. This position is contested from the bottom where there are calls for education to liberate (*conscientização* of Paulo Freire, 1970)⁴³ and from the margins where there

§ (1954/9) by William Golding. The moral is that the shape of a society must depend on the ethical nature of the individual and not on any political system however apparently logical or respectable.

** (1989), a film about Prof John Keating and his students. He urges them to "seize the day!"; to seek out their dreams and to believe in themselves. His teaching techniques are unconventional and appeal to the boys' imaginations.

†† (2001) with the leading character and Nobel Prize winner, John Nash.

‡‡ (1995), *Dangerous Minds* is based on a true story (*My Posse Don't Do Homework* [Louanne Johnson] and the cast included Michelle Pfeiffer).

are calls for holistic or spiritual education (e.g. Ron Best and Marcus Bussey)⁴⁴ or for education to transgress (bell hooks)⁴⁵ and also for us to address educational hegemony (Antonio Gramsci). Is it that it all depends on a selective few who decide what the purpose of education should be and how it should be delivered, often on the basis of their own preferred and selective views on the world? We therefore see that the ebb and flow of educational fashion statements, for example, Education for All, Peace Education, Multicultural Education, Anti Racial Education, Diversity Education, Education for sustainable development, Citizenship Education, Holistic Education, Personal Social and Health Education. All such statements are determined and dominated by who is in political power. Sohail Inayatullah has also identified some broad educational models that include Religious, National/Social Control, Bureaucratic, Market, Humanistic, Electronic Information and Spiritual models.⁴⁶

One of the central roles of education is seen as 'preparing students for the future'.⁴⁷ What does this mean? What kind of future(s) do we envisage (developed by whom and for whom?) and through which mediums/methods/approaches of education and learning might we achieve this? Does it all depend on the current ideological and political educational model reigning? Henryk Skolimowski refers to the words of Plato that "The direction in which education sets a man will determine his future life".⁴⁸ This is as true now as it was in Plato's times. He continues asking what kind or direction is our present education setting for our young people? How are they being guided and led? To what ends and to what purposes? Are they not per chance so socialized and programmed as to be good consumers and work for the glory of the consumerist ideology and the bottom line economics? Education as a social and civilisational enterprise must ultimately serve the quality of life. If education ignores or neglects this vital criterion it is not an adequate education and may indeed be a misguided one.

For example, looking at most of today's universities, Marcus Bussey indicates that we live at a time when universities have become large corporations producing and selling knowledge. He continues by referring to the postmodern philosopher Jean-François Lyotard's words: "Knowledge is and will be produced in order to be sold, it is and will be consumed in order to be valorised in a new production: in both cases, the goal is exchange".⁴⁹ Bussey views this as a natural development that reflects our culture's commercial obsession with capital:

The knowledge-power nexus transforms information into a commodity that can be exchanged in the university market place in the form of bundles of 'information'. Knowledge is exchanged for power and vice versa. In this system knowing, and its product knowledge, that does not translate into information that can be observed, measured, controlled and easily exchanged is excluded in favour of docile forms of knowledge that are more amenable to transaction.

What is significant about this development is that as power has shifted from the hands of those with an investment in culture, the liberal elite, to those who create capital, the managerial elite, the emphasis of the university has shifted to reflect these changes. Thus the university acts as a repository of socially valued knowledge forms and we can track the fortunes of ideologies by following the appearance, popularity and disappearance of subjects on the timetable.⁵⁰

These observations lend power to the Preamble of the World Declaration on Higher Education for the Twenty-first Century: Visions and Actions (1998), which urged us as follows:

Higher education itself is confronted therefore with formidable challenges and must proceed to the most radical change and renewal it has ever been required to undertake, so that our society, which is currently undergoing a profound crisis of values, can transcend mere economic considerations and incorporate deeper dimensions of morality and spirituality.⁵¹

Bussey recommends breaking with a misguided educational vision by moving from the utilitarian view of the human as a cog in the economy, beyond the humanist sense of the human as potent individual, to a neohumanist view of the human being as an interactive agent embedded in a world of mystery and power.⁵² This sense of individuality is very potent as it draws for power on our interconnectedness rather than on our ability to dominate and control. He continues stating that this means a lot when we start thinking about education. If education is about realising our potential, and our potential is defined and measured by our sense of the truth of what it is to be human, then by acknowledging and celebrating our interconnectedness with the world we inhabit—the world that is a threefold phenomenon being material, psychic and spiritual—we are greatly expanding the domain of education and its function in our society.

Spirituality, consciousness and alternative human potential development

Spirituality, consciousness and human potential development are neglected social cohesion and educational themes which are often marginalized, silenced and identified as minor-stream.⁵³ I will therefore focus on critical spirituality and neohumanism.

According to Marcus Bussey,⁵⁴ critical spirituality is concerned with the application of neohumanist methods to the analysis of 'consciousness' and offers a layered description of consciousness. The critical spiritual perspective has developed from four main areas:⁵⁵

- Postmodernist and poststructuralist thinkers;
- Feminist theory empowering postmodern discourse with value laden analysis of power;
- Post colonial thinkers with a debt to neo-Marxist and critical theorists;
- Neohumanist thinkers with an investment in all three of the above (who work from a critically spiritual perspective).

Bussey argues that a neohumanist vision can engage the human potential by activating a critically spiritual methodology that holds the less analytical, more visionary process of 'futures building' by actively involving individuals in this act. In this emerging space we find:

imaginative and creative processes that break down the intellectual prudery of those who are attached to their own discipline and have little capacity to envision beyond narrow and self imposed confines. Thus we find music and song, poetry and story, art and theatre effective vehicles for work on deeper forms of consciousness. ... Meditation and other reflective practices—the spiritual quest—seeking to plumb the depth of the human soul become relevant when seen within a broadened definition of rationality and research.⁵⁶

Critical spirituality also focuses on the connection between individual consciousness and personal and collective action and "points to the fact that it will go no where if not within, to that place—the spiritual core of humanity—that many in academia fear".⁵⁷

Neohumanism and neohumanist education⁵⁸

Neohumanism is a process of becoming consciously, self consciously, human. It recognizes that there are a variety of ways of knowing and experiencing the world that are steeped in valid and integrated knowledge systems, each with its own particular form of logic and expression, with no one way of knowing holding priority over any other. Therefore, as with social cohesion, neohumanism has a disparate and paradoxical nature and has a similar spectrum-like approach to multiple ways of knowing and experiencing the social.

Furthermore, neohumanism has a clear structure and form, combining ethical observations about the role of humanity in the maintenance of life and the evolution of consciousness on this planet, and a deep understanding about the way the human mind functions and learns both as a culturally constructed entity and as a multi-layered consciousness. Thus learning becomes both a cultural experience and an introduction into the broader and deeper issues of our humanity and its rootedness in a vibrant universe. Coherence is thus affirmed and links with social cohesion 'processes' become apparent.

Such a link is found in neohumanism's trans-disciplinary approach that honours the multiplicity that is the sum of human consciousness and experience. Traditional education has involved an attempt to strip learning down to its discrete parts and demystify knowledge. Neohumanism seeks to put the mystery back into learning by weaving the disciplines back into an holistic worldview that engages the whole of the child's spirit, mind and body in a quest of wonder and adventure. Neohumanist education unleashes infinite learning potential into our lives by expanding our understanding of our potential and ourselves. Spirituality, creativity and love are at the centre of this new force.

So what is 'wrong' with education according to a neohumanist perspective? Neohumanist education seeks to redefine the human experience. Current educational practice works on a model of the individual as a singular entity pitted against the forces of the universe. Competition and the need to dominate and control are the hallmarks of this system. The neohumanist educational agenda draws upon both Western and Eastern principles as it develops a basis for a complete and transformative learning experience. Western educators have concentrated their attention on the cognitive, social and affective domains of learning but have shown little understanding of the role or nature of consciousness as a synthesizing guide to learning. Eastern education has a deeper

appreciation of the spiritual dimension of learning and of the role of spirit in the child's life, the focus of such a perspective has been moral and ethical, and consciousness has been treated as the phenomenal expression of the spiritual domain. In bringing these two powerful traditions together, neohumanism can provide an alternative basis for education that seems both instrumentally useful and profoundly meaningful.

Some of the main neohumanist educational objectives include developing:

- the full potential of the whole child including the physical, emotional, intellectual, creative, intuitive and spiritual capacities;
- physical wellbeing and mental capabilities through yoga, meditation, sports, play and other activities;
- personal growth in areas such as morality, integrity, self-confidence, self-discipline and co-operation;
- a sense of aesthetics and appreciation of culture and to infuse the curriculum with literature, art, drama, music and dance;
- a universal outlook, free from discrimination based on religion, race, creed or sex, and to foster a respect for all cultures;
- an awareness of ecology in its broadest sense—the realization of the inter-relatedness of all things—and to encourage respect, care and universal love for all;

and to—

- apply what is learned to practical life and to encourage students to become active and responsible members of society;
- recognize the importance of teachers and parents in setting an example;
- awaken a thirst for knowledge and love of learning;
- equip students/learners with academic and practical skills necessary for life and for higher/further education.

Such objectives also link to the diverse aspects that constitute social cohesion as presented earlier and both are fostered through non-linear and affective activities. Neohumanist education therefore embraces (amongst other things) layers of mystery, awe, creativity, reflection, meditation, silence, consciousness and critical spirituality. As a model it falls within the broad spiritual model of education. Other approaches (not to be discussed in this chapter) that may fall within this spiritual model include the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's Consciousness Based Education (CBE),

Transcendental Meditation (TM) and the Science of Creative Intelligence (SCI); Maria Montessori; Rudolf Steiner, the Theosophical Society; The Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University;⁵⁸ The Bahá'í International Community;⁵⁹ The World Faith Development Dialogue (WFDD);⁵⁹ Temple of Understanding;⁶⁰ The UN Spiritual Forum & UN Earth Values Caucus;⁶¹ Home to All Campaign and the Reconciliation Labyrinth and its use in schools.⁶²

Some of the above mentioned initiatives may be identified by the mainstream to have some religious connections and could be interpreted by them as 'faith-based'. One sceptic, William Sims Bainbridge also often refers to these alternative approaches as being new social—or semi-cult/religious movements.⁶³ A closer examination shows them to be non-denominational and definitely not falling in the religious model. These alternative and spiritually inclined educational approaches can be extremely diverse in their approaches to develop social cohesion and consciousness, and in general have a more open and holistic approach to human and spiritual development.

Concluding comments: Playing with multiple intelligences

When looking at the 'story' from our current social and economic setting we miss what social cohesion and education is really all about: it is about finding, and playing the "tune beyond us, yet ourselves".⁶⁴ It challenges us metaphorically to continue to play, dance and imagine what our current and evolving educational policies and practices may achieve in and for the future, thus exploring the world with those who we educate now!

Howard Gardner⁶⁵ has opened the possibilities of what may constitute intelligence and I put forward that social cohesion has a surface intellectual /rational level and learning (left brain activity), but the profoundness of it lies beneath and being prepared to work with it on an emotional, psychological (intra and inter) and spiritual level of learning, doing, experiencing and living (right brain activity). Social cohesion also

⁵⁸ They had several initiatives at the World Summit for Sustainable Development (2002) that I attended/observed, eg: UBUNTU: Awakening the Spirit of Humanity Project; a UBUNTUScope game; Living Values Educational Programme supported by UNESCO and funded by UNICEF; workshops on Spirituality and Valued Education for Sustainable Development; also see www.bkwsu.com

⁵⁹ Focuses on values, ethics and loving education. Their main theme is Unity in Diversity and they also have a Social Cohesion Institute (27 Rutland Gate, London SW1 1PD. t: 020-7584 2566. f: 020-7584 9402.

demands a critical and reflexive solidarity, and the potential and ability for collective intelligence to improve the quality of life for all.⁶⁶

Maybe what seems like a Humpty Dumpty effect where Humpty Dumpty had a great fall and all the king's horses and all the king's men, couldn't put Humpty together again is actually an evolutionary process of building and breaking throughout our human history: "Little did we know how limited and distorted our views had become, and how much we were not seeing because of our walls".⁶⁷ We therefore need more people exploring the edges and as Marcus Bussey states: "It is from such places that our tomorrows will arise. The 'centre' is shifting, but where will it go?"⁶⁸

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Chapter 11 Schools, Speciesism, and Hidden Curricula: The Role of Critical Pedagogy for Humane Education Futures

Helena Pederson

The education discipline as we know it today recognises the importance of issues related to class, race, gender, and groups of human minorities, as well as the importance of addressing problems of unequal power relations with regard to these categories. Such approaches are undeniably crucial for the role of education today, but from a critical perspective it can also be argued that they have effects of polarisation and exclusion of yet another category from the education discourse—non-human animals.* Although education researchers and practitioners are often quick to recognise the relevance and interests of various subordinated groups in society, the problems related to the situation of other species than our own have been largely ignored. This article challenges the current order of anthropocentrism, human-centredness in education, and explores the rationales for an alternative approach to values educational research and practice that is more inclusive in character.

The anthropocentric tendency is not restricted to the education sciences. The entire divide between the natural and social sciences reflects a tradition according to which social science researchers usually leave the study of animals to the natural science domain. Humans and animals are thus normally studied within separate discourses, in separate terminology, and within separate value systems. Moreover, social scientists tend to uncritically adopt a view of animals that has been constructed by the natural sciences. This order has been criticised by the anthropologist and philosopher Barbara Noske,¹ who holds that it maintains a constructed subject-object relation between humans and other animals. The establishing of such a subject-object relation risks nurturing a reductionist view of other species, and overlooking human-animal continuities which may spark an ethical challenge to our tendency to view animals in society

* The term 'animal' refers approximately in this article to vertebrate animals with cognitive capacity, although this definition may be subject to discussion.

as commodities, renewable natural resources, production units, or research 'models' for human diseases. We have a multitude of mental strategies for keeping intact the human-animal boundary we have constructed, and for legitimating our continuous utilisation of other species for our own benefit. In so doing, the value we assign to animals is instrumental rather than intrinsic: We relate to them in accordance with their usefulness *for us*, rather than as beings living for their own sake and with their own purposes.

The scientific order supporting an anthropocentric worldview is, however, being called into question: The interdisciplinary area of *anthrozoology*^{†2} has been established as the scientific study of human-animal relations. There are several research societies and centres devoted to the study of animals in society,[‡] and journals such as *Anthrozoos* and *Society & Animals*³ deal with theoretical and empirical perspectives on anthrozoological issues. One of the most recent contributions to the field may be the establishment of an *Animals and Society* section of the American Sociological Association.⁴ These initiatives express a growing awareness of the relevance of human-animal studies to social science research. There are many reasons for education science to integrate anthrozoological perspectives as well.⁵ The school is part of a societal order in which objectification of animals to a large extent is socially accepted. The routine exercising of violence toward animals for consumption, entertainment, experimental, and a multitude of other purposes, often takes place in institutionalised forms. When a school engages, for instance, in animal experimentation for educational purposes, or allows representatives of the animal industries to display their company names or logotypes in the school's premises, it does not only as an authority legitimate the acceptability of oppressive human-animal domination structures, but also serves to sustain and reproduce a worldview of animal objectification in which the socialisation of children and youth to uncritically embrace such a view as 'normal', 'natural' or 'inevitable' plays an important part. There are several problematic implications that should be highlighted here. Regarding the situation of animals, ethical problems emerge when humans subject animals to suffering or other forms of harm. Another problem concerns the impact harmful treatment of animals has *on the human being*: An emotional

[†] The term *ethnozoology* is also used.

[‡] A few examples being Society & Animals Forum (formerly PSYETA); ISAZ (International Society for Anthrozoology); and Tufts University Center for Animals and Public Policy.

desensitisation process may be part of the short- and long-term consequences for the harm-inflicting individual.⁶

The situation also accommodates possibilities of transformation and change. Since the school is viewed in this article as an active agent in reproduction processes, rather than just passively reflecting established structures and worldviews, the school has a potential to critically re-assess its own mediation of normative value messages concerning the human-animal relation and to change its ways of dealing with these. How this may be accomplished in a manner sustainable for both humans and animals will be explored in the next sections. The discussion that follows is based on two presumptions of ontological character: 1) The human-animal relation is not predetermined; neither by force of a 'natural order' nor of a religious or other form of authority. It lies entirely within the control of human beings to change this relation. 2) This article does not embrace the Cartesian view on animals as biological automata, but considers animals as individual, sentient beings whose situation matters to them.

A place for animal ethics in the school context

In order to justify the ethical boundary between humans and animals and our continuous utilisation of them for our own ends, we need to define which individuals are entitled to moral status, and on what grounds: We thus need to pinpoint what *morally relevant* differences exist between humans and animals. The differences we tend to come up with, such as rationality, self-awareness, linguistic ability or moral agency, are usually favourable to humans. However, they also bring about a problem of inconsistency: Whatever ability no animal seems to possess, not all human beings possess it either. Or to put it in another way: Abilities that are possessed by all human beings are usually possessed by at least some other species as well. We are then facing a situation where we *either* have to exclude some members of the human species from our sphere of moral concern, such as infants or severely mentally retarded people, *or* expand this sphere to include at least some animals, such as primates.⁷ If we reject this argumentation and keep holding on to an absolute human-animal ethical boundary on the sole basis of an idea of human superiority, we display speciesist⁸ attitudes. Within moral philosophy, theories have been

⁸ Speciesism, a term analogous with racism and sexism, refers to the arbitrary oppression or discrimination of other living beings on sole basis of their belonging to another species than our own. Nibert has modified this definition from a sociological perspective and refers to speciesism as an ideology, a set of widely held, socially shared beliefs.

developed on non-speciesist grounds that ascribe moral status to animals. Two examples are utilitarianism and rights theories. These regard the traits of having *interests***⁹ and being a *subject of a life*^{††},¹⁰ respectively, as the relevant criteria for moral concern.

In education, value related messages may be mediated as explicit elements of curricula and in other formally acknowledged manners, or more implicitly, as part of the so-called 'hidden curriculum' of schools. In much the same manner as a hidden curriculum may reflect racist or sexist oppressive structures, it may be found to contain speciesist components.¹¹ Hidden curricula of speciesist character are not likely to problematise the philosophical issues that introduced this section, and thus enforce animal objectification on diffuse, arbitrary grounds. Some schools do, however, seem to initiate discussions on animal ethics, since this is a subject that seems to engage many young people today. In Sweden, such discussions have recently been encouraged by the Ministry of Agriculture, which has produced discussion material on animal ethics aimed at upper secondary school students and teachers.¹² If, however, schools adhere to the subtle messages within the directions laid out by this material, the human-animal relation is likely to be dealt with in isolation; disconnected from many other issues that are ascribed primary concern in values education and shape our understanding of what this area is about. Moreover, the discussions on human-animal relations will probably be framed within a fundamentally anthropocentric and value hierarchical discourse according to which the human species is the yardstick against which all other species are measured and valued.

There are alternative approaches to conceptualising the human-animal relation in a way that locates it in a wider societal context, in which its links with and relevance to other values education issues, such as human rights, equality, and sustainable development, appear. Such approaches make animal ethics a part of a more holistic view of patterns of oppression and exclusion in society, and contribute with new perspectives to our collective understanding of values educational practice and research. The following section outlines a proposal for a theoretical basis of such an approach.

- Based on the capacity to experience suffering.

- Based on a number of capacities such as having preferences, an emotional life, and an individual welfare in the sense of a capacity to care about one's own situation.

Expanding the scope of critical pedagogy

To shed light on the human-animal relation in an educational context, schools must critically scrutinise their own hidden curricula with regard to these issues. Such an approach implies formulating and analysing alternative worldviews to the normativity surrounding the situation of animals in our society. Although critical pedagogy does not explicitly recognise animals as part of its emancipation aims, critical pedagogy will form a general framework for my discussion, since it seems reasonable that a critical theory of education has as its core the inclusion, not exclusion, of oppressed categories. Further, a critical theory of education incorporating the human-animal relation will, as I see it, not differ in any vital manner from its basic ideas on which the aim of human emancipation is grounded; ideas characterised by a wish to make the educational system act against oppression and injustice.¹³ An important component is to view educational activities as intimately linked to ethics and power relations. These are located within a wider political framework, which means that teachers must recognise how different discourses provide students with different ethical references which structure their relations with the rest of society. Recognition of hidden curricula, resistance against dominating and oppressive structures, as well as efforts to change the situation of subordinated groups in society through critical awareness and active citizenship education are all crucial elements of a critical theory of education, behind which the school has a potential to become a driving force.¹⁴

One view of critical pedagogy shares with ecofeminism the idea of a common ideological basis for different expressions of dominance. In this sense, not only humans but the ecosystem as such, is part of a pattern of oppression.¹⁵ Ecofeminist philosophy, which has been claimed to have its origin in the Frankfurt School version of critical theory,¹⁶ is based on the idea that there are important links between ideologies that discriminate on the basis of, for instance, sex, race, and class, and ideologies that sanction exploitation of nature.¹⁷ These ideologies express themselves within oppressive societal structures linked to fundamental notions, values and attitudes that explain, sustain and legitimate relations of dominance and subordination in society. Oppressive structures comprise value hierarchical thinking and value dualistic categories (such as man/woman, human/animal, reason/emotion, culture/nature), power relationships, and privileges. An expression of this way of thinking is that the exploitation of nature has been legitimated by human beings' superior capacity to reason;

something that has been regarded as a primarily male capacity.¹⁸ Ecofeminism thus makes explicit the link between an androcentric (male-centred) and an anthropocentric (human-centred) worldview, and according to this analysis, the human-animal relation is part of a wider pattern of dominance, subjugation and exploitation in society. These connections have been explored further by a number of researchers. Congruities between speciesism and sexism have been examined by, for instance, Adams;¹⁹ between speciesism and class subordination by Noske;²⁰ and between speciesism and racism by Spiegel.²¹ Scholars such as Nibert and Patterson have also contributed to this research.²²

Kahn links environmental and critical education in his outline of recent movements and obstacles to the formation of a radical ecopedagogy.²³ Ecopedagogy goes beyond conventional environmental education as it involves a wider awareness of how to be in the world. Related to this idea is the importance of acting collaboratively and non-anthropocentrically with a diversity of others, having an openness toward different knowledge systems, involving a critical understanding in our ethics, and constantly integrating our own life practices with our ethical responsibility to act on behalf of the world. Kahn suggests that animal liberation and environmental movements must join forces, and expand their reach to include the fight for social justice, in order to transform curricula into challenging anthropocentric and technocratic paradigms. An environmental education discourse must, however, avoid reinforcing the human/animal and culture/nature dichotomies; dichotomies I would describe as the idea that 'the environment' and 'nature' is something located outside of ourselves, whereas other species are assumed to be part of it; and that 'nature' is something 'out there' for us to explore or discover, rather than a construct. Animal, environmental, and other issues of social justice should be embodied within education on equal terms and in an integrated fashion, since they are intimately interlinked.

Locating the human-animal relation within a wider conceptual framework of values education such as proposed above, by a critical pedagogical approach informed by an analysis of the similar fundamentals, dynamics and strategies uniting different manifestations of exploitation, increases our possibilities of revealing and *challenging* a speciesist hidden curriculum; not only recognising it just to substitute it for a new one. With these tools, a values education based on genuine inclusion and non-violence may be shaped; a values education that can be an empowering invitation for students to actively participate in changing society itself. As

an example of a concrete approach to values education based on these ideas, the basic principles of humane education will be presented below.

Humane education: A holistic approach to values education

Humane education (HE) is an innovative teaching and learning process that supports students in their development of empathy, responsibility, critical thinking, and active citizenship. HE can contribute greatly to the role that education must take in promoting compassion and respect for 'the other', in the broadest sense of the word. HE integrates human beings' relation with animals, the environment, and other people, in order to challenge and prevent violence, exploitation, oppression, and negative stereotyping of other people as well as of animals. HE also explores interconnections between these issues at local as well as global levels.²⁴ Zoe Weil, one of the founders of the organisation International Institute for Humane Education, which in affiliation with Cambridge College has established a Master's programme in humane education, describes the fundamental ideas behind HE as follows,

Humane education has become a holistic and comprehensive movement that draws connections between human rights, animal protection and environmental preservation. It is a field of study and method of teaching that examines what is happening on our planet, from human slavery to animal exploitation; from globalisation to ecological degradation; from media monopolies to cultural ideologies. It explores how we might live with compassion and respect for everyone: not just our friends, neighbors and classmates, but all people; not just our companion dogs and cats, but all animals; not just our school and home environment, but also the earth itself, our ultimate home. It invites students to envision creative solutions and to take individual action, so that their life choices can improve the world.²⁵

Four broad aims have been identified for HE: The development of a life-affirming ethic; consciousness of how humans, animals and nature are interconnected and mutually interdependent on each other; consciousness about different value systems and a critical discernment with regard to these; and engagement in democratic principles and processes in which active citizenship is central.²⁶ Empowering students to realise that their life style choices matter, and can contribute to improving the life of somebody else or the environment, is another important element in HE. In the

classroom HE emphasises, for instance, dialogue; the experiences and perspectives each student brings into the learning process, curiosity, interaction, participation, and self-esteem. Letting students *experience* the content of their education is as important as textbook studies and other traditional learning methods. Examples of HE inspired learning activities can be to compare different consumption products and evaluate them on the basis of their impact on the environment, human beings and animals; or to analyse learning materials produced by the animal industry in comparison with materials from animal rights and animal welfare organisations. Other HE topics may include rainforest protection, consequences of genetic engineering, alternatives to animal experiments in education, and the impact of a plant-based diet versus a meat and dairy-based diet on animal, environment, development and health issues, to name just a few examples. HE education in its many forms can be carried out as a subject in its own right, or be integrated into other subjects.

As I see it, one of the main assets of HE is its potential as a tool that allows us to conceptualise, and make explicit, speciesist hidden curricula in schools. Due to the normativity that issues of animal objectification are usually embedded in, most of us do not have our mindsets tuned into critically detecting the power structures and value systems that enforce them. At this point, speciesist issues differ in character from issues of sexism and racism, which we are now often attentive to with regard to the mediation of implicit value related messages in the school context. Special efforts may therefore be required from educators in order to raise and shed light on the complexities and problems involved when dealing with the human-animal relation in values education. Shifting the focus from dealing with this relation as a subjective moral position, to dealing with it as a part of a wider context of social justice—and as such, as a topic of our common responsibility—may not be easily accomplished for educators who themselves may have been socialised into a human-animal relation discourse in which animal objectification is normalised and naturalised; especially in a societal and educational structure that still works to uphold this discourse. Under such conditions, HE may fulfil a particularly important purpose to raise awareness about the problems involved. In the USA and in England, HE is carried out as formal as well as non-formal education up to university level. Non-formal education is carried out by a number of HE specialised NGOs that lecture and inform in schools at different levels; in the form of classroom teaching as well as teacher training activities. At present, 13 US federal states have legislated about HE programmes in school.²⁷ In California, a HE charter school has recently

been established.²⁸ South Africa will be the first country in the world to include HE in its revised national curriculum due to come into effect in 2004.²⁹

Humane education, in terms of a critical pedagogy sensitive to anthropocentric bias, speciesist hidden curricula, and normalised discourses of human-animal domination and objectification, is an instrument relevant for theoretically approaching the human-animal relation in an educational context. Can these terms contribute also to our understanding of empirical perspectives from the school arena?

The school as a research site for human-animal domination discourses. Findings of a pilot study

Between January and March 2003, I conducted a small-scale pilot study at a primary school just outside a Swedish urban area. Among the main purposes of the pilot study were to reflect the theoretical framework outlined above against an empirical material; to get some indications of how a school works with values related issues; what messages about the human-animal relation may be manifested, explicitly or implicitly, in the school context; and to get some feedback on how school staff may relate to issues of animal ethics when they are discussed within a values education framework. The empirical material is limited, and the purpose of presenting it here is solely to give a few examples of what may happen when the theoretical reflections above meet perspectives from a school.

The pilot study comprised three parts: A critical analysis of some national and local policy documents, including the national curriculum; analysis of sponsored textbook materials; and two semi-structured interviews (one with the school principal, and one with a social science teacher). The school was selected through a personal contact of mine who herself works as a teacher at this school. The interviews were structured around three main topics or themes: 1) How the school works with values related issues in general; 2) If, and how, the school deals with issues related to animal ethics; and 3) The school's co-operation with external actors such as sponsors. The interviews were tape-recorded and took about one hour each.

The interviews gave the impression that the gap between the natural and social sciences is distinct when it comes to issues regarding animals. These are dealt with almost entirely within the natural science area, where animals are studied in terms of biological facts (and possibly in terms of their role in the ecosystem). Animals are seen primarily as species

representatives, rather than as individual beings. (An exception is the pupils' own pets, who are discussed in terms of individuals.) Social science education, especially the EQ ['empathy quotient'] related sessions that had been introduced at this school as an approach to values education, is exclusively devoted to relations between humans. To the extent that the human-animal relation is raised as an ethical issue from a societal perspective, this seems to occur primarily on initiative from the pupils themselves. Such a discussion may be triggered when, for instance, media has been reporting about long-distance animal transports in the EU, which obviously may be perceived as upsetting. This way of treating issues of animal ethics contrasts sharply with other value related issues, such as human rights, tolerance for diversity, and gender equality, where both interviewees gave the impression of thinking that it is an absolute responsibility of the school to convey these values. This is an attitude in full accordance with the directions of the Swedish national curriculum, where the human-animal relation is completely absent, but the effect may be an *ad hoc* treatment of animal ethics in school: The issues may only be highlighted in case an extraordinarily engaged, and verbally active, pupil is present. From the point of view of the school, the signals will be that the issues have a very limited legitimacy, since they are not formally integrated in the regular values education scheme.

Ethical discussions concerning humans and animals respectively thus seem to be dealt with as completely disparate discourses in this school. This order is enforced by the national curriculum and the course syllabi (which the interviewees also referred to during the interviews), and appeared not to be subject to questioning or internal discussions within the school.

At this school, the pupils were also taken on study visits related to animals. The study visits appeared to be focused on local sites where animals are kept in small-scale systems, such as nearby farms and 4-H yards. Whether pupils are also taken to visits in, for instance, slaughterhouses, to experience the less idyllic aspects of the human use of animals, was not mentioned during the interviews.

Implicit messages concerning animals may also be manifested by the presence of external actors in school. In general, school sponsoring and similar forms of co-operation seem to actively engage many actors today, since children and youth, as future consumers, are obviously seen as important target groups for many companies and branch organisations. At this school, however, the interviewees expressed a view that sponsoring

activities are very limited. This notwithstanding, the school had a textbook material produced by the Swedish dairy company Arla/Mjölksfrämjandet.³⁰## The booklet is a clear example of a sponsored material imbued with messages formulated to support the profit-making aims of the producing company: The efforts to encourage schoolchildren to consume more dairy products are not subtly expressed. The result is a product in which text and pictures all work toward serving this aim; constructing an euphemistic worldview in which all welfare problems and ethical problems surrounding the situation of the animals utilised in the agricultural industry are conveniently glossed over. The last pages of the booklet display recipes designed to appeal to the primary school age group. All recipes contain dairy products.

In the Swedish national curriculum and the other documents governing the activities of the school, the human-animal relation is not referred to. The documents encourage the development of critical thinking and active participation in society, but in effect, the message is that this aim has definite limitations: The societal order that permits and legitimates a systematic exploitation of animals is not to be seriously questioned or challenged. There are, however, elements of resistance among pupils, even among the youngest, indicating that not all of them feel inclined to adjust themselves to this order. One of the interviewees recalled a discussion in a kindergarten group about animals. A little boy in the group raises the issue of what animals are eaten, and not eaten. A little girl in the group then reacts by putting her hands over her ears; repeating that she does not want to hear since she does not like the fact that animals are being killed. How the school handles such feelings among children is not explained by the pilot study, but the material available gives little support to the likelihood that this child can expect to have her feelings confirmed in a serious manner.

Another episode recalled in one of the interviews tells about a visit to a 4-H yard, when a group of pupils found that 'their' rabbits that had been kept there had been killed. This act seemed to be acknowledged by the school as an ethical problem, and was brought up for discussion with the pupils, whereas the act of systematic slaughtering of animals in the food production industry does not appear to be dealt with in a similar manner, or evoke the idea on the part of the school that it might be an ethically

It is not clear to what extent, and in what manner, the material was actually used at this school.

problematic issue. What, then, is the actual difference between these two cases of killing? Slaughtering animals in the food production industry is a normalised and socially accepted procedure, facilitated by the institutionalised and hidden conditions under which the act is carried out, as well as by the power and economical interests of the industry behind it. It is also a *continuous* process, which may contribute to the desensitised view we have constructed of it as something 'natural' or 'inevitable'. The rabbits, on the other hand, have in this case been ascribed a qualitatively different form of moral status since their role has been constructed as 'pets' for human beings.

The interpretation I have made from the findings of this pilot study is that this school seems to express, and reproduce, a view on the human-animal relation that tells us to care about the interests of animals *as long as we do not need to modify our own purposes*. Our attitude to killing animals, for instance, seems to be completely dependent on which function the animals fulfil *for us*, as dead bodies or as living beings. We thus seem to locate our relation toward animals within different discourses, following a logic of how they best serve our anthropocentric self-interests. A humane education approach would, on the other hand, examine the driving forces behind our contradictory attitudes toward animals, and discuss alternative perspectives.

The pilot study raises questions about relations of domination and power in different forms and at different levels: Who dictates what values are to be included in, and excluded from school activities, and whose interests are represented in teaching and in the policy documents? If schools prefer to focus on small-scale, local farms rather than slaughterhouses, and on pets rather than laboratory animals, why are certain practices hidden, and what actors have something to gain from this? What structures are upheld, and why? What is the level of awareness among school principals and teachers when it comes to recognising, and confronting, institutionalised exploitative practices?

This study gives a hint of how elements of a speciesist hidden curriculum may manifest themselves in a school. The absence of animal ethics in the documents, the ways in which the school separates humans and animals in values education, the choice of study visits, the messages embedded in textbook materials and other artefacts in schools, and the way of dealing with students' emotions, are all part of such a hidden curriculum. The study does not pretend to offer anything that even remotely resembles a coherent idea of all the complexities involved here. What I have attempted

to show is that the approach of a critical education theory is a useful tool with which to approach the human-animal relation in educational research. This enterprise, however, confronts critical pedagogy with the challenge to scrutinise its own delimiting tendencies to exclude the species category from its emancipatory concerns, and to redefine its language and conceptual scope in order to embrace *all* oppressed categories and to see how these are interconnected. Otherwise critical pedagogy will face a situation in which it becomes guilty of implicitly sustaining the same oppressive rationale as it seeks to abolish, and thus contradicting its own fundamental principles.

Looking forward: A Causal Layered Analysis of animal ethics in education

What can a Causal Layered Analysis (CLA) approach add to our understanding of the dynamics of the human-animal relationship as framed within a school context? CLA, a futures theory and research method seeking to create transformative spaces for the formation of alternative futures, sees the notion of reality as vertically constructed at four levels: the empirically-oriented 'litany' level (isolated events, issues and trends), the systemic/social causes level, the discourse/worldview level, and the myth/metaphor level. Research based on CLA explores issues at each level and integrates these into a network of alternative logics, in which each level deepens the understanding of the others.³¹ Since CLA is particularly suitable for critical futures research, it is applied to the topic of this article.

At the *litany* level, we have seen that a number of issues, or 'weak signals', concerning animal ethics in education have recently emerged. In Sweden, one example is the Ministry of Agriculture's discussion materials on animal ethics. It appears as if this material has been produced as a superficial response from the authorities to a driving force at the *systemic* level; namely, a growing awareness among young people about animal ethics, that may have created a pressure on schools to address the issues. At the *worldview* level, there are different competing discourses: We may consider the debate concerning the role of the school as a value fostering actor in society rather than just an institution for transmitting knowledge, and, since democratic values are highly esteemed in this context, how the position of the student has changed accordingly, making student influence an impetus for change at schools. Another discourse is a liberal market oriented ideology that places responsibility on educational institutions to educate primarily for the job market, and also to find their own sponsors;

thereby restricting the space in which paradigmatic critique can take place in schools. The animal ethics discussion material may be the compromised outcome of these two competing discourses. At the level of *myth*, underlying metaphorical statements may be constructed, such as 1) 'The School as a Panacea': The school as a main socialisation instrument by which to achieve various desirable aims (notably aims of certain powerful actors in society, be they an elitist, patriarchal church, a government, or multinational corporations); and 2) 'The Cartesian Heritage': If animal exploitation is abolished, human welfare will be jeopardised, since the advancement of humanity is, and will continue to be, built on this exploitation.

Another example of a *litany* level issue is the Humane Education charter school that has recently been established in California. At the *systemic* level, this school has been spearheaded by the animal welfare movement together with teachers. The level of *discourse* may in this case involve an increased awareness of 'the violence link' according to which animal abuse has desensitising effects and may also lead to violence also toward humans; as well as an increased awareness of relations of power and oppression related to the idea of 'the other', be they humans or animals. One possible *metaphor* here is 'The Web of Life': All beings on Earth are mutually interconnected and interdependent on one another. However, for certain parties to whom the establishment of this school is controversial, there may be a fear that the human privileges that follow from the *discourse* of anthropocentric hegemony are threatened. The dominant *metaphors* in this case may be 1) 'The Creation': Human beings' supreme role as masters of the world have been ascribed to us by some omnipotent, religious authority; 2) 'The Food Chain': Since human beings are predators at the top of the ecosystem, it is natural (or even inevitable) for us to use other species for our own purposes; or, alternatively, 3) 'The Zero-Sum Game of Ethics': Ascribing moral status to animals undermines the value of human beings proportionally.

From these sketches of CLA frameworks, different future scenarios may be constructed. Scenarios could range from shorter-term *empirical-systemic* levels, such as the widespread implementation of humane education in national curricula due to student pressure and alliances between new social movements and politics; to the longer-term levels of *worldview* and *myth/metaphor* where a 'wild card' scenario could lead to the concept of speciesism completely losing relevance and being replaced by new, hitherto unimagined forms of 'otherness', since technological development,

unexpected global disasters and evolutionary forces may result in the existence of only one single species on Earth. A relevant *myth* here may be 'Nature's Revenge': A fear that morally wrong behaviour will strike back at ourselves in the end.

Challenging anthropocentric 'comfort zones' in education: Steps toward a humane future

This article has appealed to educational researchers and practitioners to critically scrutinise and challenge what is referred to as 'dangerous memories' by Welch and McLaren,³² and as 'comfort zones' by Langley,³³ with regard to the mediation of values toward animals taking place in our schools; in explicit manners as well as through hidden curricula. The expression 'dangerous memories' denotes the way that the stories and struggles of the oppressed often are lodged in the social system's repressed unconscious, and 'comfort zones' describes the implacable resistance that people who try to change the status quo in intellectual and social cultures often meet due to the power of tradition, a lack of vision, or simple unwillingness. As an attempt to promote actions addressing anthropocentric status quo in schools, the article has explored a few paths toward an expanded notion of critical values education, in which the human-animal relation is included and linked to wider patterns of domination and subordination in society. The theoretical discussion has been reflected against the humane education approach and the findings of a pilot study.

In order to outline some factors and forces behind the transformation of anthropocentrism and speciesism in schools toward a more humane education approach, and to create platforms for the formation of alternative future scenarios, a Causal Layered Analysis has been presented. An important part of a CLA framework is measures that may be taken in order to create a preferred future. What, then, can we do in order to transform traditional curricula into humane education discourses? Here I join Kahn³⁴ and others in emphasising the urgent importance of forming alliances and shared strategies between the different agendas of the developing social movements. Since the academy, teacher training institutions, educational policy makers, and the students themselves are key actors in the process of transforming education, these groups must be involved in debates and boundary-crossing project initiatives, and in co-operation with them, innovative ideas, spaces for action and synergy effects may be generated. Compiling and spreading successful examples is another way of promoting changes at different levels. Furthermore,

including the human-animal relation in futures research and in other research projects of global concern is essential.

At university level, Andrzejewski has provided a detailed outline of how speciesism linked to other oppressive discourses may be critically contextualised within the framework of a Social Responsibility degree programme.³⁵ Selby also offers a rich and diverse amount of ideas, examples, strategies and advice for the practical integration of humane education activities at the classroom, school, curriculum, and teacher education levels.³⁶ As a first step, the overlap and connections between humane education and the 'ordinary' subjects taught in school may be explored, and the numerous pedagogical possibilities emerging from these insights can be applied by the individual teacher. What is to be done if the obstacles and resistance from the 'comfort zones' inhabitants seem insurmountable? As Shor notes, the space required for critical teachers to carry out transformative education and bring about curricular changes cannot be taken for granted in the traditional institutions where most teachers work.³⁷ This space has to be discovered and broadened in alliance with others.

Realising that humane education is part of a broader framework of global and futures oriented education, may in itself trigger incentives for educators and policymakers to initiate changes within the system. Selby describes the connections as follows;

The EarthKind classroom is, by definition, futures-oriented. Humane educators seek to promote kindness, caring, compassion, respect for all living things, human and non-human, and a commitment to justice, as a means of creating a better tomorrow. They advocate an educational process predicated upon those values and having as a principal outcome the emergence of 'practical visionaries', i.e. people with both a clear vision of a preferred future and the commitment, confidence and practical skills to go about realising that vision.

The EarthKind classroom provides a springboard for practising being a 'practical visionary'. Having identified their individually and collectively preferred futures, students can be encouraged to take steps to realise those futures through school-based social, political and environmental action projects /.../. This is what Alvin Toffler has called the process of 'anticipatory democracy'.³⁸

This article has argued why the stories about animals that are told in our schools, and the discourses within which they may be located, are matters of concern for the area of values education; by force of their own right, as well as of their potential to add new perspectives to our collective pedagogical understanding. All educators who believe that one of the most important challenges the school is facing today is to contribute to the formation of a non-violent and profoundly humane future society, should work toward the regular integration of the human-animal relation in programmes of values education, in teaching and learning materials and approaches in various subjects, in academic discussions, and in national curricula. In so doing, the anthropocentrically biased 'comfort zones' in education may be challenged, and speciesist elements in the hidden curricula of our schools may be brought to light and their ethical implications critically examined.

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²⁸ Y. Wishnik, 'Humane-Education School Set to Open', *PSYETA NEWS*, 24(Winter), 2004, 3, 5.

²⁹ The Humane Education Trust, 'A World First! Africa to hold an intra-continental INDABA on teaching kids about kindness, morals and values', 2003. Accessed 13 February 2004, from: <http://www.animal-voice.org/av/htdocs/page3.htm>

³⁰ Mjölkrämjandet, *Säg mu till livet*, Stockholm, Tryckmedia, 1996.

³¹ S. Inayatullah, *The Causal Layered Analysis (CLA) Reader. Integrating policy understandings in science, social science, philosophy and mythology*, Tamsui, Tamkang University Press, 2004.

³² P. L. McLaren, *Life in Schools. An Introduction to Critical Pedagogy in the Foundations of Education* (3rd ed.), New York, Longman, 1998.

³³ G. Langley, 'Foreword', in Nick Jukes & Mihnea Chiuia (eds.), *From Guinea Pig to Computer Mouse* (2nd ed.), Leicester, InterNICHE, 2003.

³⁴ Kahn, *op cit.*

³⁵ J. Andrzejewski, 'Teaching Animal Rights at the University: Philosophy and Practice', *Animal Liberation Philosophy and Policy Journal*, 1, 2003, 11-26.

³⁶ Selby, *op cit.*

³⁷ I. Shor, *Empowering Education: Critical Teaching for Social Change*, Chicago & London, The University of Chicago Press, 1992.

³⁸ Selby, *op cit.*, 290.

Chapter 12 Pointing toward Benevolence in Education: Indicators in the Subjunctive Mood

Vachel Miller

The great danger presented by indicators is that they narrow public discussion of the purpose and means of education to what can be measured, while ignoring those invaluable aspects that cannot.

Anthony Bryk and Kim Hermanson¹

The administrators' forest cannot be the naturalists' forest. James Scott²

Schooling has a long association with violence. One of the most common motifs in Western educational iconography, historically speaking, is not the apple or school bell, but the body striker. The feminine personification of Grammar in medieval Europe often brandished a whip or switch used to punish students.³ The task of the grammarian was to prepare students for the discipline of formal study, i.e., “whipping raw recruits into shape”.⁴ In another image of Grammar from the twelfth century, a student writes on a tablet this Latin phrase: *amara radix; dulcis fructus* (“bitter roots; sweet fruit”).⁵ This sentiment—that good character and scholarly accomplishment are best nurtured by harshness—is a strong current in the history of schooling. Schooling has significant violence embedded within its practices.⁶ In her recent book, *Happiness and Education*, feminist philosopher Nel Noddings points out how incongruous many people find the two terms: education is not supposed to be enjoyable, is it?⁷

There is no column for ‘joy’ in educational accounting. We keep no data on moments of transcendence in our classrooms. We keep no data on whether students are happy or kind. Researchers do not gauge the sweetness of learning, nor the boredom or bitterness students may feel in school. Instead, educational accountants tally enrollment rates, retention rates, percentages of students reading at ‘grade level’, percentages of students with ‘computer literacy’, etc. What counts is students sitting in classrooms;

what counts even more is the demonstration of cognitive competencies of value to global labor markets.

In this chapter I advocate for the formulation of alternative educational indicators. Such indicators would serve a progressive vision of education that more fully acknowledges the humanity of students and their belonging—to each other and to a living universe.

Educational theorists who propose radical alternatives to mainstream education do so with great passion. Yet their visions rarely, if ever, articulate indicators by which an alternative learning environment will be measured. In the diverse movement for more holistic and spirited educational forms, a missing intervention is the articulation of alternative indicators that correspond to a spiritual vision of human beings.

Writing about the emergence of sustainable communities, Jackson argues that the task begins with the invention of a new system of accounting, with new indicators about what matters.⁸ A new system of social accounting, for Jackson, must break with the exploitative value system of industrial economies and give ‘standing’ to values such as simplicity and sufficiency.*

A new mode of accounting is required if educational systems are to give standing to benevolence. As many educational critics have argued, the core practices of modern schooling remain rooted in violence, particularly in the practices of subordination and control.⁹ The foundational model of modern schooling arose in the nineteenth century as a means of spreading basic skills to a larger labor pool. Schooling continues to be embedded within an ideological framework that values human beings as servants of a healthy economy—as human capital—rather than as agents of meaning and goodness. The conventional metrics by which educational systems in Western nations are evaluated provide information to markets on student achievement, ranking students against each other in the olympic-competition of global capitalism. Learning counts, if it translates into market productivity.

* In several areas of social science, researchers are challenging dominant modes of social accounting with unconventional indicator systems. In his overview of the field, Thin (2002) counts at least fourteen major international projects designed to create unique assessments of social/economic/environmental progress. These projects range from the familiar Human Development Index of the United Nations Development Program to the Bhutanese Gross National Happiness index.

But are math and reading scores the final indicators of educational quality? Spring suggests an alternative approach:

... There are other reasons for valuing human life and education. For instance, there seems to be a universal agreement about the value of love to human life. Also social relationships seem to be important. Self-knowledge might also add worth to human life. Indeed, control over one's life might contribute to the worth of human existence.¹⁰

Like Spring, if we believe in the importance of relationships, self-understanding, and love as valid educational aims, then we must question the means by which educational systems understand themselves. Especially if we believe that human beings are born to be in love with a living universe, then what do we make of educational indicators? How do educators know that they are nurturing care and hope in students, rather than distrust, disconnection, and helplessness? What would indicators that point toward benevolence look like?

This is an important question, I believe, because of the tendency of systems to move in the direction of the questions by which they assess themselves.¹¹ Changing the indicators by which a system is measured, or better, changing the questions a system asks itself, can alter the path of a system's development.

I suggest that a framework of basic psychological needs can be a starting point for the construction of alternative indicators in education. Such a framework can illuminate the ways in which schools nurture human wellbeing and benevolence. Tempering my argument is an epistemological caution about tinkering with a technology that stands in deeper tension with the holistic, life-affirming vision of neohumanism.

What do indicators indicate?

Indicators function as signs: they point toward larger phenomena beyond themselves. Crime rates point toward social injustice; suicide rates point toward the spiritual malaise of a society. On closer inspection, however, we see that indicators also point backwards to the ideologies and political agendas of the institutions advancing those very indicators.¹² Indicators always represent choices—political choices—about what phenomena are worth counting and how that counting should be done.¹³

Indicators have been criticized, and rightly so, as an elitist tool for narrowing and controlling what slices of reality “matter” for public

understanding.¹⁴ When indicators are problematised as ideological and political choices then space opens for dialogue about the meaning of the larger phenomenon being measured.¹⁵ Proposing alternative indicators is not primarily about improving the measurability of the world, in the tradition of positivist science. Rather, the purpose is stimulating critical conversation and generating movement toward preferred futures in educational practice. Indicator construction ideally involves a negotiation of how we want to know ourselves.

Like other forms of scientific rationality, indicators are treated as tools devoid of social interests. Indicators appear to be apolitical. When indicators are accepted at face value, they turn attention toward the comparisons—of nations, of programs, of individuals—in already established categories. They do not invite deeper questions about the meaning of those categories themselves.

Fundamentally, indicators are tools that serve power: indicators enable the world to be read from a position of central authority. In an analysis of large-scale planning and social engineering efforts, sociologist James Scott explores the ways in which states have attempted to reduce complexity and increase the “legibility” of local communities.¹⁶ Making a population “legible” means holding it in place and mapping its salient characteristics in order to facilitate control. Any administrative practice that serves the agenda of standardizing, recording, and monitoring activity in local environments from a central position of power is part of what Scott terms “seeing like a state”. Such practices, *per se*, are not necessarily destructive, but they can be made to serve destructive ends.[†]

Although Scott does not discuss indicators directly, I would suggest that the development of indicators for any social reality is part of the project of making the world more legible. Indicators serve as a technology of organization, of ordering otherwise messy social phenomena into neatly packaged bits of (apparently) universally accepted meaning. The rise of indicators as a technology of knowing is embedded within a larger narrative about the possibility of progress achieved through rational planning.

[†] The practices of legibility are part of a larger pattern of state-driven attempts to improve the human condition through social engineering. Other components for Scott include a high-modernist ideology of social progress, authoritarian states willing to use power to realize the ideological vision, and lastly, a weak civil society that fails to resist state actions.

Without using the term, Scott's opening paragraph to his book speaks to the nature of indicators:

Certain forms of knowledge and control require a narrowing of vision. The great advantage of such tunnel vision is that it brings into sharp focus certain limited aspects of an otherwise far more complex and unwieldy reality. This very simplification, in turn, makes the phenomenon at the center of the field of vision more legible and hence more susceptible to careful measurement and calculation. Combined with similar observations, an overall, aggregate, synoptic view of a selective reality is achieved, making possible a high degree of schematic knowledge, control, and manipulation.¹⁷

As educational researchers build more sophisticated tests and more expansive databases, students' competencies become more legible from centers of policy making. Such legibility supports the fiction that distant observers understand what's happening in students' minds and spirits. And the desire for increased legibility results in the devaluation or displacement of that which is not easily measured.

Learning goes global

The stewards of the global market economy have a great stake in the reification of conventional educational indicators. Multinational corporations seek workers with skills in certain areas such as English, mathematical reasoning, and scientific logic.¹⁸ In the service of the global labor market, international institutions such as the OECD and The World Bank have advanced the agenda of measuring human competencies in those economically valued skill domains cross-nationally. † These organizations, according to Carnoy:

... all share an explicit understanding that 'better' education can be measured and that better education translates directly into

† This increasing emphasis on international comparisons of standard units of measurement is emblematic of a historic trend. Scott notes that standardized measures have developed in order to facilitate market exchange, especially over long distances. Earlier, traditional units of measurement were non-uniform, varying from place to place and changing in relation to local practice. But when trans-local commerce increases, measures tend to become more uniform to facilitate exchange. Nation-states have interests in the collection and control of data in a standardized manner as part of their support for markets. In the twenty-first century, processes of globalisation have continued a long shift toward standardization of measurement for the sake of commercial efficiencies.

higher economic and social productivity. With more intensive economic competition among nation-states, the urgency of improving productivity is translated by these organizations into spreading the acceptance of inter- and intra-national comparisons on standardized tests of student knowledge.¹⁹

Markets thrive on data: measuring learning is about making the 'basic skills' that students possess more legible. Not surprisingly, those are the very skills that are portable in a borderless labor market, as opposed to those kinds of knowledge that are locally anchored in place, culture, and relationships.

In 1996, the OECD published a short book entitled *Measuring What People Know*. In this book, the OECD advocates improvements in human capital accounting to promote more efficient investment in labor. The concern here is to reduce the risk to "the investor who rents human competencies in order to produce something".²⁰ Reducing that risk implies creating more detailed and comprehensive systems of measuring and monitoring human competencies. Ideally, new approaches to measuring what people know would create a standardized system to account for human competencies. Through such measures, what people know can be more easily quantified and commodified.

Measuring (re)makes reality

The ways in which a central authority chooses to represent phenomena can alter the existence of these phenomena. Scott examines how the nineteenth century Prussian state began counting its forests in terms of a standard measure of lumber content: the *Normalbaum*.²¹ Over time, the practice of measuring in this manner—understood as part of 'scientific forestry'—led to replanting forests with trees in straight rows that would produce predictable amounts of lumber. The scientifically-managed forest had less diversity and, with its straight rows of evenly-spaced trees, was much more easily measured and managed for commercial productivity. The state had reshaped the forest to look like the abstraction by which the forest had been measured.

There is a curious analogy here with the history of modern schooling: the arrangement of desks mirrors that of trees in a managed forest. One of the most characteristic features of the modern school is the orderly arrangement of desks (or pupils sitting on the floor) in rows, facilitating counting and surveillance from the central location of the teacher. It is perhaps not coincidental that the ideas of scientific forestry and the

organization of the modern school were both products of Prussian (German) culture in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, a highpoint of state-building social organization.

At that time, the pre-eminent model of military organization in Europe was Prussian. The Prussian military organized itself to be disciplined, efficient, and uniform. Soldiers were subjected to repeated drills and those who did not endure were rejected: the goal was to form a standardized product.²² The practices of 'scientific forestry' seem identical to those of mass schooling: "it was a system that promised to maximize the return of a single commodity over the long haul and at the same time lent itself to a centralized scheme of management".²³ In the case of education, the standardized commodity was human capital, the basic skills of literacy and numeracy required for industrial workers to function effectively in factory-oriented capitalist economies.

Inevitably, there is a risk in the reduction of complex phenomena for the sake of efficiency. The managed forests in Germany often showed substantial decline in the second generation of trees, due to many factors related to the destruction of bio-diversity. This points, for Scott, to "the dangers of dismembering an exceptionally complex and poorly understood set of relations and processes in order to isolate a single element of instrumental value".²⁴

Scott's warning applies to educational indicators as well. Any system of understanding, of knowing and managing, that eliminates from view those very elements essential to the long-term health of the system will ultimately prove destructive. This is a limitation in the human capital framework in education, and the resulting stress on certain inputs as well as achievement scores as the dominant educational indicators. Such indicators dismember the complexity of any healthy learning environment, reducing it to a managed forest: learners become *Normalbäume*.

Becoming capable, rather than capital

The dominant educational indicators derive from valuing education primarily as a means of human capital development. As noted above, human capital development focuses on the acquisition by individuals of economically productive knowledge and skills. The driving question an educator might ask from a human capital perspective is this: how can education meet the needs of the present and future global economy?²⁵ Here, it is the economy that has needs. Educational systems are expected to satisfy those needs through the production of workers. The economy

becomes a human subject; people become objects that support the economy's wellbeing.

The fundamental problem with human capital accounting is that it ignores and devalues much of value that falls outside the sphere of economic productivity. Economist Nancy Folbre uses the metaphor of a fruit tree to illustrate the narrow meaning accorded human competencies in the human capital framework:[§]

Human capital is not some kind of Play-Doh that arrives at school to be molded by teachers and then passed on to employers. It's more like a fruit tree that starts with a small seed that needs watering, weeding, and care... And we shouldn't measure the output of the tree purely in terms of the fruit that reaches market. Trees also provide flowers, beauty, shade, oxygen in return for carbon dioxide, and places for birds to rest.²⁶

Folbre's metaphor provides a central image for my argument: whereas traditional educational indicators have counted only the fruit that reaches market, alternative indicators are needed that value the tree aesthetically and ecologically. In other words, new indicators are needed to focus attention on how well educational structures and processes create beauty, nurture vitality (not just for an individual entity, but for the whole), and nurture empathy—that quality of being in which we allow others to rest in us.

An alternative to a human capital approach is concern for human capacity development. Beryl Levinger argues that the framework of human capacity development emphasizes “what it is that makes us human”.²⁷ She points out that the human being is distinguished from other creatures by a lifelong pursuit of meaning and our ongoing expressions of creativity and personhood. For Levinger, it is one's self development that drives learning: “people seek to become capable and not capital”.²⁸ An emphasis

[§] In his analysis of how early European states viewed forests in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Scott makes a very similar point. As suggested in an earlier discussion of the *Normalbaum*, the only indicator of official concern to governments was the revenue available from annual timber harvesting. Commercial wood counted; everything else—from bushes to pinecones, from sap to bird nests—was invisible and irrelevant. As a result, “the forest as a habitat disappears and is replaced by the forest as an economic resource to be managed efficiently and profitably” (Scott, 1998, p. 12). The human capital view of education, I would argue, has similar consequences.

on human capacities resonates more deeply with the humanities, as a mode of knowing, than it does with the traditional social sciences:

The philosopher or theologian would undoubtedly view a shift from human resources to human capacity as a cause for celebration because the latter paradigm is concerned with the very issues that most occupy center stage in the philosopher and theologian's world: relationships, creative acts, and the search for meaning that transcends the economic.²⁹

Neohumanism places such transcendent meaning at the heart of its concern in education. As outlined by Bussey, neohumanism seeks to cultivate respect and love for all life, for all things.³⁰ A neohumanist perspective is compatible with a human capacity perspective in that it is concerned with, in Levinger's phrase, "meaning that transcends the economic". However, neohumanism is a more radical position. It is not limited to building the capacities of the human person, but awakening humanity to a lifeworld that overflows with the sacred.

Starting from the basics

In education, if our objective is to support human capacities broadly and to awaken learners to the sacredness of all life, then what do our standard indicators have to tell us? How do we understand the ways in which learning environments provide conditions that nurture human goodness, growth, and wellbeing? What is the evidence that speaks to how schools promote students' capacities to care for the wellbeing of others and to act in the service of the common good?

These are questions that touch on core values of a neohumanist educational approach. To address them, I turn toward a psychological theory of basic human needs. This theory provides a framework for evaluating learning environments in terms of their contribution to some of the larger goals that neohumanist educators espouse. A basic needs approach does not fully capture the depth of the neohumanist vision, but it might serve as a bridge between conventional indicator systems and more radical visions of educational possibility.

By focusing on the nature of learning environments, I take a socialization perspective, recognizing the power of schools in shaping trajectories of human development. Eliot points out the importance of nurturing experiences in school:

School is not only a place where children accumulate facts and learn academic skills, but it is also a place in which their basic motivation toward competence and achievement is established, their affiliative tendencies and relational patterns take root, their view of themselves as persons of worth and value develops, and their sense of the world as a safe or dangerous place is formulated. What transpires at school can have a foundational impact on a child's life, serving as an impetus for or impediment to future growth and functioning.³¹

As Eliot suggests, schools are always teaching and shaping students' values and orientations toward self and other, whether or not they attempt to do so through explicit "character education" or similar programs. Consequently, I believe it is important for educators to take the quality of the learning environment more seriously. A theory of basic psychological needs is one approach to doing so.

Why basic needs matter

For many years, psychologists have posited the existence of a set of fundamental human needs. Although the specific nature of these needs has been constructed in different ways using different terms, many core elements are common. Typically, psychologists recognize that human beings require a sense of security, a sense of positive identity, a sense of affiliation with others, and a meaningful understanding of the world. These needs press for fulfillment, and they will find that fulfillment—positively or negatively—in different ways.³²

Social psychologist Ervin Staub has articulated a theory of basic psychological needs that I use as a guiding framework here.³³ The following chart (**Table 1**) provides a capsule description of the primary needs in Staub's framework:

This framework is different from the model of basic needs most familiar to educators, that of Maslow's "hierarchy of needs". A problem with a hierarchical approach to needs is that it can lead to neglect of 'higher level' needs, on the logic that the other needs are more foundational to human wellbeing and must be satisfied first. This may lead to an "indefinite postponement" of attention to higher-level needs.³⁴ More helpful for my purposes is a model of basic needs that is non-hierarchical. In models advanced by Staub and Max-Neef, among others, basic psychological needs manifest themselves simultaneously, rather than hierarchically.

Table 1: Typology of basic psychological needs

Type of Psychological Need	Explanation
Security	Perception of being free from physical and psychological harm and being able to satisfy essential biological needs
Positive Identity	Sense of having a well-developed self and a positive self-conception; involves self-awareness and acceptance of one's limitations
Positive Connection	Relationships in which a person feels close ties to other individuals or groups
Control/Effectiveness	Capacity to protect one's self from harm, fulfill important goals, and have a potential impact on society
Autonomy	Capacity to make choices and decisions, to be one's own person, the ability to be separate
Comprehension of Reality	Understanding of people, the world, and of one's place in it, a sense of meaningfulness
Transcendence	Movement beyond the self

Building the foundations for benevolence

The fulfillment or frustration of basic psychological needs can have profound consequences. Conditions which satisfy needs in constructive ways contribute to individual growth and a sense of wellbeing.^{**35} And therein lies a fundamental value of the basic needs approach: it specifies the “nutriments that the social environment must supply for people to thrive and grow psychologically”.³⁶ This connection has been affirmed by several psychologists, to the point that a basic needs model might be said to provide the basis for “an ethics of wellbeing”.³⁷

In general, progressively higher fulfillment of basic needs supports optimal human functioning or what has been called “eudaimonia”.³⁸ The notion of *eudaimonia*^{††} focuses on wellbeing in terms of full or optimal human functionality (i.e., vitality, the realization of human potential). As Staub notes, need fulfillment promotes ongoing positive human development: “When these needs are fulfilled, people are well on their way to harmonious, caring relationships with others, as well as continued growth in their lives”.³⁹

^{**} Deci and Ryan report on several studies that demonstrate a correlation between need satisfaction and wellbeing. Summarizing one study on the needs for competence and autonomy, they note that daily changes in need satisfaction for autonomy and competence predicted daily fluctuations in wellbeing, i.e., having a ‘good day’.

^{††} In ancient Greek, the term *eudaimon* literally means a “good spirit”.

Fundamental to a neohumanist agenda in education is nurturing what has been called the “spirit of benevolence”.⁴⁰ That spirit arises from experiences of a benevolent world. Institutions and social arrangements that support the satisfaction of needs provide an experiential basis in the lives of individuals for other-oriented and caring behavior. In general, experiences of need fulfillment enable people to be more open and empathetic toward others.⁴¹ Experiences of need satisfaction promote a positive view of other people and the expectation that others are well-intentioned.⁴² In contrast, the frustration of needs tends to generate a focus on the self: “when our basic psychological needs are unfulfilled, we are more likely to engage in behaviors that have *ourselves* as the focus” [italics in original].⁴³

A positive orientation toward others, coupled with a sense of personal effectiveness, makes it more likely that individuals will act in helpful, connective, and caring ways—thus contributing to the satisfaction of basic needs for others. As noted above, the constructive satisfaction of human needs leads to eudaimonia, a condition of optimal functioning. An important dimension of optimal functioning is goodness.⁴⁴ Caring about the welfare of others is intertwined with our sense of personal wellbeing and positive functioning. In her discussion of education and happiness, Noddings makes a related observation: authentic happiness requires a capacity for empathy, to recognize the unhappiness of others and act with concern for their welfare.⁴⁵

This point is a fundamental one in the practical application of a theory of basic human needs. The quality of need satisfaction in an environment will have an influence on human wellbeing in that environment as well as influence the ways human beings interact. Writing about the importance of environments that foster civic proclivities, based on his research in an ecologically-oriented city in Brazil, McKibben illustrates the issue vividly:

Can you, by changing the conditions under which people live, slowly change the character of the people? It’s a key question; any long-term hope for dealing with the massive problems of the

[#] Some recent empirical evidence affirms the relationship of need satisfaction and other-oriented behavior. In a study involving need satisfaction and prosocial engagement among college students, Gagne (2003) found that satisfaction was positively and significantly related to activities such as volunteering, voting, charitable giving, and activism (all grouped under the rubric of prosocial behavior). In a related study, Gagne concludes that “if we want people to act prosocially, social structures that fulfill basic psychological needs should be encouraged” (2003, p. 220).

environment involves changing people around the world. Or no—not *changing* them. Bringing out the *part* of them that responds to nonmaterial pleasures like painting on the sidewalk and walking in a crowd and gossiping on a bench and drinking a beer at a bar. And slowly deemphasizing the side that we know all too well: the private, muffled grabbiness, the devotion to comfort, the fear of contact that resides in each of us, side by side with the qualities we need to muster. [italics in original]⁴⁶

McKibben does not link this observation to a theory of basic human needs. But he could—from a psychological perspective, the satisfaction of basic needs is part of what enables people to move beyond “private, muffled grabbiness” and find deeper enjoyment in “nonmaterial pleasures”.

Universal needs and the evolution of the universe

The core elements of the basic psychological needs framework have parallels in investigations of the dynamics of cosmic evolution. Here I would like to suggest the relevance of principles found in discussions of psychological needs for development on a scale larger than the individual human.

In his work on transformative learning, Edmund O’Sullivan, following Thomas Berry, discusses three general principles of the evolution of life: differentiation, subjectivity, and communion.⁴⁷ The process of differentiation is about the expression of uniqueness, the creative task of expressing the specific genius of each living thing. Subjectivity involves an awakening of awareness and understanding of interiority, a sacred depth dimension, the “in-dwelling self”.⁴⁸ Communion is about the fundamental interconnectedness of life, the understanding and feeling that “nothing is completely itself without everything else”.⁴⁹ Such communion is not always harmonious, of course, since constructive conflict is a force of creative change.

These concepts closely parallel, in Staub’s framework, the needs of autonomy, positive identity, and belonging. The congruence of these principles suggests that there is a deeply fundamental process of unfolding at multiple levels of reality. The principles and processes underlying human growth are a fractal, a self-same pattern, for the principles and processes underlying the development of the cosmos. As O’Sullivan says, “personal development is integrally related to planetary development”⁵⁰ Saying this, he emphasizes that our being and destiny are intimately tied to the ecological health of the living earth, and that humans

are an integral part of the larger story of cosmic evolution. From this perspective, a framework of basic needs is not only universal for all humans, but also literally *universal* in that it speaks of the essential dynamics underlying the development of the universe itself.

For O'Sullivan and many critiques of modernity, our notions of development as the expansion of high-consumption lifestyles has been horribly destructive to global ecosystems and indigenous cultures.^{§§51} This destructive trajectory can be traced back to the rise of modern science and a mechanistic worldview in which the world was seen as dead matter, devoid of spirit, available for human exploitation. In light of the acute ecological crisis facing the planet, O'Sullivan argues that our approach to the development of human societies must be aligned with the healthy development of the planet and the larger cosmos. He writes:

Within the context of the universe story, the good or moral action is that which enhances, amplifies or completes the development of the earth and universe towards differentiation, subjectivity and community. Activities which retard, obstruct or obliterate the differentiation, subjectivity and community are considered to be actions of questionable value.⁵²

Following this logic, the “good action” in education would be teaching/learning processes that enhance differentiation, subjectivity, and communion. Using the vocabulary of basic psychological needs, it is evident that an education attuned to both the development of optimally-functioning human beings and an evolving cosmos would support autonomy, positive identity, and positive connection on multiple levels of reality.

The school, as a modern institution, tends to propagate the deep value structure of modernity: separation, efficiency, and standardization.^{***} In that sense, schooling as conventionally practiced may block the realization

^{§§} As Rist points out, capitalist societies thrive on a cycle of producing “needs” (that is, desires framed as needs), offering new products to satisfy those “needs,” and then creating a new set of “needs” at a higher level of consumption. Continued economic growth requires that the production of “needs” stays one step ahead of the production of satisfactions.

^{***} One of the aspects of modernity is the formation of institutions that specialize in a specific form of need satisfaction, to the exclusion of others. Advocates of institutional transformation—whether in education, health care, business, or other fields—often criticize modern institutions for failing to address the whole person; in other words, for failing to provide more integrative, synergistic satisfaction of basic human needs.

of more socially-, ecologically-, and spiritually-harmonious societies. Schooling which disconnects people from each other, from their own self-worth and capabilities, and from their own connection to the larger universe is ultimately violent. A way to counter-act such violence, I believe, is to advance the framework of psychological needs as a tool for educational analysis and transformation. In this sense, I agree with O'Sullivan when he writes: "an education attuned to *quality of life* must be based on the foundation of authentic human needs" [italics his].⁵³

Indicating educational transformation

Educational indicators arising from a framework of basic psychological needs would assess learning environments for the degree to which they nurture human wellbeing and openness to others. Specifically, such indicators would assess the extent to which students feel secure and connected (to each other, their community, and the natural environment). These indicators would also point toward students' sense of positive identity, effectiveness, and autonomy. In my own research, data for such indicators was drawn from a World Health Organization cross-national survey of students' experiences in school.⁵⁴ In this survey, students answered questions related to feelings of security, autonomy, and connection in school. But there are other ways that data on basic need satisfaction might be gathered.

Indicators of basic need satisfaction could be quite close at hand. For instance, an indicator of positive identity might involve the existence of student-drawn art on classroom walls. Indicators of positive connection might involve the frequency of small-group activity in class or the existence of peer-tutoring practices. The amount of time students spend outdoors is another indicator of connection, i.e., connection to the living world around them. The category of effectiveness/control is particularly powerful in opening a range of questions about students' roles as authors of their own learning agendas and as architects of their own learning environments. Such indicators might include class meetings held to discuss rules; use of classroom activities suggested by students, etc.⁺⁺⁺⁵⁵ At

⁺⁺⁺ In a discussion of the influence of physical space on the quality of learning environments, Lackney suggests a set of indicators that could be used by students themselves to assess their classrooms. Several of those indicators resonate with a basic needs approach, including the following: "I have a place of my own where I can keep my things" (security); "I get to choose where I sit" (autonomy); "The furniture in my room is arranged to help us work together easily" (connection); "I get to help decide how our room will be arranged" (effectiveness/control); "There are places for me to display my work" (positive identity).

the level of the school, related questions might be asked about the space for teachers to experience a sense of effectiveness/control in school governance.

There is one element of the basic needs framework that merits particular attention—transcendence. An experience of transcendence is perhaps the most important category of basic need fulfillment from a neohumanist perspective, yet one of the most difficult to pin down. What would the evidence of awe in the classroom look like? Evidence of reverence, of an experience of the greatness of life? For one, students would not spend much time watching the clock tick, since time would be flowing by unobtrusively. Transcendence might also be visible in moments of rapt attention or moments of jubilant laughter. Less directly, transcendence might be subtly evident in the general feeling of harmony and coherence in a school building, or perhaps in the degree of unenforced stillness students demonstrate. On the other hand, the absence of visible joy, the absence of song or stillness are negative indicators—they all point toward the lack of transcendence in the learning environment.

At one level, a basic needs approach might seem mundane. Yet indicators of basic need satisfaction have the potential to reorient learning environments toward becoming life-worlds that promote eudaimonic functioning and a sense of connection to a larger sphere of meaning. By the same token, the frustration of basic needs in education is a form of violence, mild perhaps, but violence nonetheless. Learning environments in which students feel unsafe, ill-respected, excluded, unable to express themselves, and ineffective (or any combination of these) do harm to the dignity of learners. Such environments do a disservice to human capacity development.

A theory of basic needs provides a framework for empirical analysis in the service of educators who call for the transformation of learning environments. The frustration of human needs gives a measure of dehumanization in education, the very antithesis of a neohumanist educational agenda. The fulfillment of that agenda, I suggest, involves illuminating systems and patterns of dehumanization in education. Critiquing conventional indicators is one step in that direction; advancing a basic needs-oriented approach to indicators is a further step.

One of my purposes here is to bring a theoretical framework to the surface of dialogue about what matters in education. The value of a basic needs approach is that it opens a broad dialogue about the meaning and purpose of education, while also pointing to specific practices that can make a

difference for students' sense of security, identity, connection, autonomy, effectiveness, and transcendence. Basic needs indicators can help learning communities understand key dimensions of students' experiences more clearly and take action to improve basic need satisfaction in certain need categories in ways that does not compromise the satisfaction of other needs.

The violence of our indicators

In their mood, my indicators are more subjunctive than indicative. Here I refer to mood in the grammatical sense: the indicative mood is one of certainty, of factuality, showing confidence that a certain event has happened. The subjunctive mood, on the other hand, is one of possibility. My interest in indicators arises out of my own subjunctive mood: were educators to consider how their work contributed to wellbeing and benevolence, what would the indicators look like?

I find that my indicators themselves have an air of the subjunctive mood, that it is possible to point toward basic need satisfaction, but not to do so finally, conclusively, factually. In fact, I have grown suspicious of indicators that present themselves in the indicative mood.

In the end, there is a seemingly inescapable problem with my effort to construct alternative indicators. Even alternative indicators are, well, indicators. Even indicators grounded in a framework of basic psychological needs are still indicators. The problem is that the construction of indicators is ultimately rooted in a modernist agenda of surveillance, of rational planning, of standardization. The task of indicator construction, in this paradigm, is not to engage in a deeper relationship with reality, but to make that reality more measurable, to quantify it, to make it speak. Indicators serve an agenda of controlling the world from a distance, rather than arriving at a more intimate engagement with its complexity. Centers of power desire indicators that are uniform across space, suppressing differences in meaning and making centralized management more convenient. In these ways, indicators inevitably involve a kind of violence.

Here I follow Parker Palmer who has pointed out the violence embedded in objectivism as a form of knowing that separates the knower from the known.⁵⁶ Palmer argues that the epistemological commitment to objectivism found in science (or perhaps better, scientism, since objectivism is not the full story of science) alienates the knower from intimate participation in the world. In short, objectivism precludes

communion. And objectivism, for Palmer, promotes a relationship with the world based on manipulation and control, rather than in participation and dialogue.

The contradiction in my argument is that there is inevitably a kind of epistemological violence involved in building indicators, even when those indicators are intended to point toward a liberatory spiritual vision. How far can a technology of measuring, ordering, and ranking serve a vision of the interconnection of all life? At what point do we respect what Bussey has called “the problem of assessing the ineffable” as a problem we can not finally resolve? At what point do we stop trying to make mystery legible using the observational modes of traditional social science?

A neohumanist stance may ultimately lead to the abandonment of indicator construction as a project that cannot be rehabilitated by changing what indicators point toward. It may be more appropriate to resist efforts to measure, monitor, evaluate, and compare on standard metrics, however spiritually-informed. Yet I don't want to end there ... before indicators are rejected, I believe it is worth exploring how they might be remade in a way that begins to serve the rich vision of neohumanism.

Even if we ultimately choose not to count, can we become more conscious of how our values are manifest in our educational practice? Become more conscious of the quality of the worlds we make for children, and with children? This, ultimately, is my purpose in advocating for dialogue around indicators and their reconstruction.

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Chapter 13 Neohumanist Historiography: Reshaping the Teaching of History

Marcus Bussey and Sohail Inayatullah

every historical era is...simultaneously drawing from the obsolete, the contemporary, and the futuristic. An object, a circumstance, is thus polychromic, multitemporal, and reveals a time that is gathered together with multiple pleats. Michel Serres¹

If we need a 'wild' hunger to quench our ontological thirst, a dialogue with place that creates wholeness that we feel as ecstasy, then we also need a 'wild' history to satisfy our being in time. This is an active, living, remembered history and not a facticized accumulation of dead, inert otherness. Philip Wexler²

This chapter falls into two parts. The first is an examination of neohumanist historiography in the light of the thought of Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar. The second half consists of reflections on the teaching of history within schools and universities.

The central theme is, as Michel Serres implies above, that history can be read in many ways. We will argue that the structural elements of neohumanist historical thinking can be described and mapped to inform our teaching practice. Neohumanism acknowledges structure but also promotes an engagement with the organic texture of time and history. This multiplicity and layered reality is what brings history alive to students. It allows for an analytic engagement with history as a discipline that incorporates multiple ways of constituting the past. It simultaneously allows for an imaginative engagement with humanity and culture through and over time and into the future. Such an engagement is at the core of social theorist Philip Wexler's call for a wild history, one that is not domesticated or tamed by academics and politicians but which speaks to the human heart.

Whose history?

We live in an increasingly condensed world where time is compressed into itself and historical vision is relegated to the nationalistic, the sentimental and the spurious. It is not just the increasing rate of change that is at issue but the heterogeneous rate of change—individuals and cultures lives in different histories, presents and futures.

Some focus on the elite. For example, at the end of 1999 there was a prolific explosion of reflective media on the twentieth century—focusing on the great people—the top 20 scientists, artists, musicians, politicians, etc. There was a great deal of material extolling progress as it is perceived by the West. Linear history was seen as victorious.

In the world of the market place, history has also become a commercial product: popular history abounds in all bookshops and Hollywood is rewriting the past for entertainment and profit. Furthermore, history has become a political football. Recently John Howard, the Australian Prime Minister, railed against what he called 'the black arm band' type of history that decried the treatment of Australia's Aboriginal population by white Australians. The fact that this history—the story of white invasion of a continent and the exploitation and devaluation of indigenous culture and peoples for two centuries—was essentially true was beside the point. In his mind it was unbalanced because it failed to take into account the fact that white Australia is the result of heroic suffering and struggle of (mostly) well intentioned white settlers.*

This tension between histories is at the heart of a process of identity formation. The historical is political in this context. Australian cultural theorist, Stephen Muecke, captures the paradox well. "The question is: What kind of antiquity is Australia's modernity incorporating? This is the question that defines the very nature of Australian culture, for, if in the early years of national consciousness 'our' antiquity was clearly European, this is no longer the case. For many reasons indigenous antiquity can now make a valid counter claim. We are at a time of transition in this respect; now, the quarrel over national identity is as forceful as it will perhaps ever be".³

* John Howard recently made the following observation: "There's no such thing as a nation without a dominant culture," he says. "We have a dominant Anglo-Saxon culture. It's our language, our literature, our institutions ... You can be part of the mainstream culture and still have a place in your life and your heart for your home country". Quoted in 'Leader of the Pack' by Tom Dusevic in *Time Magazine*, 27 February, 2006.

In the Islamic world, Bin Laden's evocation of the Caliphate has captured the imagination of millions of young radicalized Muslims. It is the earlier days of imagined glory that become the present—the past is ever alive. Similarly, the BJP in India uses a mythic dimension of history—Rama Rajya (the fabled utopia of Ram) in its politics.

Finally, an attack has been made on history itself within academia and the schools. Governments world-wide are slashing funds to all humanity departments—severely curtailing historical research—and in modernist schools history is still often taught in a dry and repetitious way. The end result is we become apathetic to history; we cease to look to the past as an aid to self understanding and personal inspiration; our ability to contextualize the present is lost to a 'sweet forgetfulness'. The present is alive and well, thank you—the past is over and done with. This mono-temporalism is becoming endemic, linked as it is to the spread of Western global mono-culture.

The response as mentioned above has not been creative—but a retreat further back into history. Imagined glories are used to inspire students not to reflect on the causes of decline but to create a politics of victimhood and violence. Identity is further strengthened, not softened, as with the neohumanistic approach.

Neohumanist history

Neohumanist history seeks to address these problems by removing the distortions that have occurred as a result of the pressures of dogma (religious, class or economic) and socio-sentiment (family, tribe, nation). As was pointed out above, in the case of Australia, there has been a struggle with understanding how the Indigenous Aboriginal peoples can reclaim their identity and history without somehow compromising white egos. Compromise and transcendence is essential for reconciliation to occur. This is an emotionally charged issue⁴ as is all history-in-negotiation when images and myths are contested.

The task of neohumanist subjectivity in such a situation is to offer textured meaning that allows for the multi-layered nature of such an issue to be interacted with intellectually, emotionally, imaginatively and spiritually. Good history is always made up of such a layering and weaving. As Michel Serres observes in the opening quotation, the present casts different shadows on the past that is forever alive in the present's dialogue with it, just as the future is stretching off before us. This gives us an extended

sense of the present, the 'now' is redrawn becoming what Elise Boulding calls the 200 year present (see **Figure 1**).⁵

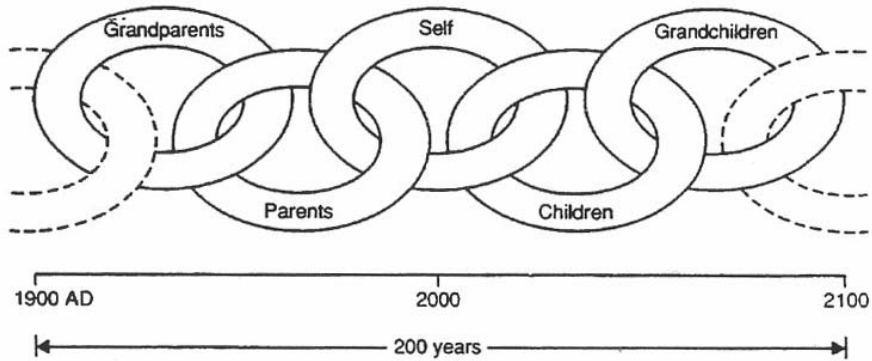


Figure 1: The extended present—a family chain

In this act of redrawing and remembering the past, neohumanist subjectivity is not neutral (that is to say, all history has subjective dimensions). It is affecting a universal and ethical stance that measures an action or event by the amount of 'good' it generated for the greatest amount of people. It takes inspiration from the human capacity to rise above obstacles and creatively engage with their environments.

History always reflects the preoccupations of its day. It draws strength from this as it becomes a major avenue for cultural self analysis. So, even though the old adage that 'History is written by the victors' most certainly holds true, the victors over time change—there is not one group (class, varna, civilization) that always wins. Moreover, it can be tempered by the compassionate heart and a critically spiritual imagination. Furthermore, the 'situatedness' of history brings to it both a shape and a form. Sarkar identifies this as reflective of the collective psychologies or epistemes (*varnas*) of those who produce it. History changes as the society moves from one stage to the next. Martin Heidegger was also aware of this contingent element in history, asserting that history only dies 'historically'.⁶ In this way he identifies how what is history and thus considered relevant and memorable is temporally and culturally bound or situated.

Sarkar provides a model for thinking about history that enables us to understand the paradigmatic structure of historical thought. Conceptual models are important when we situate ourselves ethically within the

telling. The neohumanist position is thus reflexive and tells both *a* history and *of* history.

Sarkar's historiography

The context of neohumanism is Sarkar's theory of history. Sarkar's approach is cyclical—a rotation of epistemes and varnas—and linear (an attraction to the Great, a notion of progress) and spiraled. The spiral emerges from neohumanistic leadership who intervene in the cycle. They transform the cycle into the spiral through their deeper view of self and other, and their willingness to act.

At the cyclical dimension, there are four classes: workers (*shudras*), warriors (*ksattriyas*), intellectuals (*vipras*), and accumulators of capital (*vaeshyas*). Each class can be perceived not merely as a power configuration, but as a way of knowing the world, as a paradigm, episteme or deep structure, if you will. In Sarkar's language this is collective psychology or *varna*. Each varna comes into power bringing in positive necessary changes, but overtime exploits and then dialectically creates the conditions for the next varna.

While the parallel to caste is there (*shudra*, *ksattriya*, *brahmin* and *vaeshya*), Sarkar redefines them locating the four as broader social categories that have historically evolved through interaction with the environment. Caste, on the other hand, developed with the conquest of the local Indians by the Aryans and was later reinscribed by the Vedic priestly classes.⁷

Sarkar believes that while history must always move through these four classes, through spiritual-oriented ethical leadership—neohumanism—it is possible to accelerate the stages of history and shorten, if not remove, the periods of exploitation. Thus Sarkar would place the *sadvipra*, the compassionate and courageous servant leader—the archetypal neohumanist—at the center of the cycle, at the center of society (not necessarily at the center of government).

Sarkar's theory allows for a future that while patterned, can still dramatically change. For Sarkar, there are long periods of rest and then periods of dramatic social and biological revolution. Sarkar's theoretical framework is not only spiritual or only concerned with the material world, rather his perspective argues that the real is physical, mental and spiritual. Concomitantly, the motives for historical change are **struggle with the environment** (the move from the worker-shudra era to the warrior-ksattriya era), **struggle with and between ideas** (the move from the

warrior-ksattriya to the intellectual-vipra), **struggle with the environment and/between ideas** (the move from the intellectual-vipra era to the capitalist-vaeshya eras) and **the spiritual attraction of the Great**, the call of the infinite. Thus physical, mental and spiritual challenges create change and are summarized in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Sarkar's stages

<i>Shudra</i>	Worker	Dominated by the Environment
<i>Ksattriya</i>	Warrior	Struggles with and Dominates the Environment
<i>Vipra</i>	Intellectual	Struggles with and dominates ideas
<i>Vaeshya</i>	Capitalist	Struggles with and dominates Environment/Ideas

Significantly—and this is important in terms of developing a rich theory of macrohistory—Sarkar does not resort to external variables to explain the transition into the next era. For example, it is not new technologies that create a new wealthy elite that can control the vipras, rather it is a fault within the viprans themselves.

Moreover, it is not that they did not meet a new challenge, or respond appropriately, as Toynbee⁸ would argue. Rather, Sarkar's reasoning is closer to Ibn Khaldūn's⁹ and other classical philosophers. They create a privileged ideological world or conquer a material world, use this expansion to take care of their needs, but when changes come, they are unprepared for they themselves have degenerated. While changes are often technological (new inventions and discoveries of new resources) it is not the significant variable, rather it is the mindset of the social class, individually and as a class, that leads to their downfall.

Sarkar, however, develops individual and social ways out of the cycle. In contrast Orientalist interpreters like Mircea Eliade, who believe that the theory of eternal cycles is “invigorating and consoling for man under the terror of history”,¹⁰ as no “man” knows under which eras he must suffer and he knows that the only escape is spiritual salvation. Sarkar finds this view repugnant, for people suffer differently and differentially in each era, those at the center of power do better than those outside, laborers always do poorly.

When teaching history the hope is not resignation but transformation of the cycle—it is here that Sarkar moves away from the classic Hindu model

of the real—of caste, fatalism, and mentalism—most likely influenced by fraternal Islamic concepts, liberal notions of individual will, and by Marxist notions of class struggle.

For Sarkar there are different types of time. There is cosmic time, the degeneration and regeneration of dharma. There is individual liberation from time itself through entrance into infinite time, and there is the social level of time wherein the periods of exploitation are reduced through social transformation thus creating a time of dynamic balance—a balance between the physical, social and spiritual. In this sense he agrees with the 'pleated' nature of history and time referred to by Serres. Muecke also expands on this idea as he outlines the fractures in modernity in which ancient and modern time share the same human space. What is unique about our era—as mentioned earlier—is that all times are simultaneous. They are alive at the same time, if you will.

Theories of Indian and world history

Sarkar's configuration differs significantly from other views of world history. In the Idealist view, history is but the play or sport of Consciousness, the divine drama.¹¹ In this view the individual has no agency and suffering is an illusion. In the dynastic view, history is but the succeeding rise and fall of dynasties and kings and queens; it is only the powerful that have will, agency. By contrast there is Sri Aurobindo's interpretation, influenced by Hegel, in which instrumentality is assigned to historical world leaders and to nations.¹² Successful nations are so because they express the will of the spirit, the *geist*. But for Sarkar, making nationalism into a spiritual necessity is an unnecessary reading. God does not prefer any particular structure or people over another.

Following Aurobindo, Buddha Prakash has taken the classic Hindu stages of gold, silver, copper and iron and applied it concretely to modern history. India, for Prakash, with nationhood and industrialism has now awakened to a golden age that "reveals the jazz and buzz of a new age of activity".¹³ But for Sarkar, the present is not an age of awakening, but an age "where on the basis of various arguments a handful of parasites have gorged themselves on the blood of millions of people, while countless people have been reduced to living skeletons".¹⁴

Sarkar also rejects the modern linear view of history in which history is divided into ancient, medieval, and modern. In the context of England and India, England is constituted as modern and India as backward. If only India can adopt rational, secular and capitalist or socialist perspectives and

institutions, that is, modern policies, it too can join the Western world. India then has to move from a prehistorical society—people lost in spiritual fantasy and caste but without state—to modern society.¹⁵ Sarkar's views are closer to Jawaharlal Nehru in which history is about how humans have overcome challenges and struggled against the elements and inequity.¹⁶ It is the history of the 'heart' of humanity. Sarkar's views are also similar to the recent "Subaltern" project in which the aim is to write history from the view of the dominated classes not the elite or the colonial.¹⁷ However, unlike the Subaltern project, which eschews metanarratives, Sarkar's social cycle provides a new grand theory. Finally, even while Sarkar's exalts humanity, he does not forget the role of animals and plants, indeed, he calls for a neohumanism, a deep ecology which includes the role of Gaia in human evolution.

Perspectives in history

Sarkar's social stages can be used to contextualize Indian and world history.¹⁸ Just as there are four types of mentalities, structures or types, we can construct four types of history (**Table 2**). There is the shudra history, the project of the Subaltern group. However, their history is not written by the workers themselves but clearly by intellectuals. There is then ksattriyan history; the history of kings and empires, of nations and conquests, of politics and economics. This is the history of the State. This is the history of great men and women.

Table 2: Stages of history and historiography

Shudra History	The daily struggle of ordinary women and men
Ksattriyan History	Dynastic history, of the grand and powerful
Vipran History	History of ideas, of philosophy
Vaeshyan History	Economy history, business cycles

Most history is vipran history, for most history is written and told by intellectuals, whatever their claims for the groups they represent. Vipran history is also the philosophy of history: the development of typologies, of categories of thought, of the recital of genealogies, of the search for evidence, of the development of the field of history itself. This is the attempt to undo the intellectual constructions of others and create one's own, of asking, is their one theory of history or can there be many theories?¹⁹ Finally, there is vaeshyan history. This is the history of wealth,

of economic cycles, of the development of the world capitalist system, of the rise of Europe and the fall of India. Marxist history is unique in that it is written by intellectuals for workers but used by warriors to gain power over merchants. Sarkar attempts to write a history that includes all four types of power: people's, military, intellectual and economic.

For Sarkar, most history is written to validate a particular episteme. Each varna writes a history to glorify its conquests, its philosophical realizations, or its technological breakthroughs, but rarely is history written around the common woman or man. For Sarkar, history should be written about how humans solved challenges. How prosperity was gained. "History ...should maintain special records of the trials and tribulations which confronted human beings, how those trials and tribulations were overcome, how human beings tackled the numerous obstacles to effect great social development".²⁰ History then needs to aid in mobilizing people, personally and collectively toward internal exploration and external transformation. Thus history should be a "resplendent reflection of collective life whose study will be of immense inspiration for future generations".²¹ History writing and teaching, then is an interpretive act rather than a simplistic factual account. Here Sarkar moves to a poststructural understanding of truth. Truth is interpretive, not *rta* (the facts) but *satya* (that truth which leads to human welfare).

Sarkar's own history is meant to show the challenges humans faced: the defeats and the victories. His history shows how humans were dominated in particular eras, how they struggled and developed new technologies, ideas, and how they realized the *atman*, the self, how they gained enlightenment. It is an attempt to write a history that is true to the victims but does not oppress them again by providing no escape from history, no vision of the future. His history then is clearly ideological, but not in the sense of supporting a particular class, but rather a history that gives weight to all classes yet attempts to move them outside of class, outside of ego and toward neohumanism. History thus is not about the sole great man, or great religion, or civilization but essentially about humanity and nature.

Teaching history

Thus, the teaching of history needs to be aware of the complexity of history—the episteme, the politics, the alternative shapes. It is not just that we teach the 'thinking' of history, we also teach 'thinking about' history. The imaginative faculty then moves between the frames of the historical

subject, connecting events not just within the temporal or thematic matrix of the subject but also at the meta level of the context in which the history is being shaped. This perspective enlivens the critically spiritual imagination providing it with both depth and breadth.

Such an imagination is arrived at when we combine the discriminatory wisdom of neohumanism (the critical faculty of benevolent mind) with a living connection with existence that comes as we listen to others, as we develop our sensitivity through such practices as meditation and mindfulness.

In practical terms this means that teachers need to foster critical spirituality within their lives by:

- Studying the principles of neohumanism;
- Sharing, nurturing and tempering their insights through discussions with others;
- Reflecting on their own (small) place in the flow of human civilisation—looking for physical, emotional, intellectual, ethical and spiritual connections;
- Training the imaginative faculty of entering into the lives of others;
- Meditating regularly;
- Being mindful of our own thoughts and selves—our neohumanistic self, but as well the nationalist and dogmatic in all of us.

Teachers also need to begin their own historical research. I (Bussey) am lucky to be born with a passion for history, but not everyone has such a passion. This is not to say however that it cannot be gained. It is an old spiritual truth that one may have the 'good karma' to find a Guru, but from that point on you must work to create the 'good karma' to stay with the Guru. Similarly we need to create the momentum in our lives to enter into the history of all that is around us.

The critically spiritual imagination

The following table (**Table 3**) shows how the development of a critically spiritual imagination works through a stage-wise progression. It is neither water-tight nor are the stages intended to be necessarily sequential as we try to implement all three at once, but they are helpful in understanding the way the critically spiritual imagination develops from concrete activities like reading material that contests current worldviews, collecting stories (historical, mythic) and developing the habit for meditating, through to open ended historical thinking that is as concerned with the future and the goals of human civilization, active engagement with the

creation of one human story from the many (mytho-poetic dreaming) and deep meditative practices that puts one in touch with our interconnectedness with the entire drama of existence.

Table 3: Critically Spiritual Imagination

The Critical	<i>Social Deconstruction</i>	<i>Neohumanist Theory</i>	<i>Neohumanist Goal/Futures perspective</i>
The Spiritual	Practice	Principle	Mission
The Imaginative	Reading/Collecting	Retelling/Integrating	Dreaming Generating

Everything around us has a story, a history: The light bulb, the computer and car, your favourite music and painter, your favourite sport or sporting hero, and also your favourite food.

History is all around us but it is complex and subtle and forever shifting because it requires both factual input—to structure the story—and imaginative engagement as well as a deeper understanding of the meta issues (the contextual patterns of change). It is through our shared humanity, which empowers us through an empathic link with those of the past, that we can bring history to life.

The process of historical research

When you feel this link then you are ready to teach about something, but it is important to realize that sometimes students can share their link to a bygone age with you and inspire you with their own enthusiasm. This is why it works to sometimes teach very open-ended history that allows students to seek out what inspires them and share it with the class. Structure can be brought in later to map history. At the outset, fascination is crucial.

This kind of teaching requires you to teach the process of historical research.

For children this is relatively simple:

1. Select a topic you, the students, are interested in—for example, pirates.
2. Engage the children in a conversation that maps out the knowledge they already have about the topic.

3. Find some information on the subject—books, CD roms, internet, popular anecdote, interview, etc.
4. Use this information to map out content of research—ie ‘Famous Pirate’, ‘Pirate ships’, “Pirate journeys”, etc.
5. Teacher asks one or two expansion questions like—“Why did people become pirates?”, “Did many pirates reform?”, “Do you know any good pirate stories or music?”, “Were any pirates women?” etc.
6. Teacher helps children arrange their information in an age appropriate way.
7. Structure the role of the pirate in the broad sweep of history. In Sarkar's language, the role of pirates in the warrior era (challenging the official navy), the intellectual era (challenging the orthodoxy of religion) and the? merchant (challenging the larger companies).
8. Why do we use a term like pirate—what are the historical roots of this description?
9. Then ask, who might be the future pirates?

The classroom in which such processes evolve acts as a cultural incubator. The teacher and students collectively evolve the learning. The contexts that emerge will inevitably be unique and yet all represent our human, collective, engagement with our identity as expressed through the love of story and the drama of existence.

The trans-disciplinary curriculum

History is of central importance to all academic areas as, along with the creative arts, it has a central function within the trans-disciplinary curriculum. The story of how things came to be, how ideas grew, how concepts were formulated, words created, and people propelled to change their worlds through revolutionary breakthroughs of understanding is what can bring any subject alive for a child.

In effect there are four layers of history to be taught in neohumanist schools. The first is the subject itself and the second is the culturally alive layering of knowledge that can be interspersed with stories and anecdotes to add meaning—what does the historical event mean today—and enrich the learning process. The third is the broader mapping of history, the macrohistory of stages. The fourth is the notion of history leading to a different future. Based on the history just studied and made meaning of,

what will I do different? What new conceptual and practical worlds will I create?

Story, text and fantasy

Reaching the student via the imagination is done through many media. Tell stories as anecdote—"Did you know Columbus went to the Americas a couple of times and that he died poor and almost unknown having been sacked as Governor General of Spain's growing colony?". Read historical novels to your students. Such a book as Vian Smith's wonderful story *Moon in the River* (1969) draws children right in with an explosive start and a wonderful play between creativity and culture, animal and human and the role of generosity in human evolution. And all this set in Neolithic times!

On top of this the teacher can read historical novels to keep up their own inspiration. A few books of note in recent years are Roberto Calasso's *The Marriage of Cadmus and Harmony*, Bernard Cornwell's *The Winter King* and its sequels, Rosmary Sutcliff's *The Knight's Fee*, Vikram Chandra's *Red Earth and Pouring Rain*, Eduardo Galeano's *Genesis* and Chaim Potok's *The Book of Lights*.

Another effective strategy is to get children involved in drama in which we re-enact situations from history like a Roman feast or the invasion of the Americas. Acting (role play) is a wonderful adjunct to history—but make sure that the words are ethical and humorous and do not accept the current propagandas such as the Columbus story. Ironic plots, typified by Eduardo Galeano's book *Genesis*, help to throw such myths into a light that makes them questionable and problematic.

This is very much the challenge, and central to how I (Inayatullah) teach history. Once a narrative is created, then other perspectives are brought into the story—in the case of Columbus, the view of the Native Americans. As well as the view of the Chinese—why did they stop exploring, for example, as the case with Zheng He. And then the view of nature—how did nature react to the steps of Columbus? And what of the ships themselves? I try and bring voice to the technologies as well—what did they see, feel, hear? History thus becomes contested, multifaceted, challenging.

Finally, there is also the realm of fantasy, pure and simple. Most fantasy and science fiction bring with it a history—*The Lord of the Rings* is the classic example. Such books—*The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, *The Wizard of Earthsea*, *Dune*, the *Star Trek* series especially those texts by James

Blish, etc., all bring with them a substantial historical context. By reading such works, adults and children both gain a sense of the relevance of history to story and for variables in causation and interpretation. The wonderment and power of history is laid bare through the sheer imaginative force of such works. *Star Wars* in particular is excellent to understand Sarkar's social cycle—and other macrohistories.²²

History for all ages

It is never too soon to start teaching history in pre-schools and schools. Spend some time with some 5 to 7 year olds, ask questions, tell stories. You will find that they collectively possess a vast array of historical knowledge: They will know about Egyptian pyramids, The Hanging Garden of Babylon, *The Mahabharata*, Apollo and Greek geometry, and Chinese dragons. This all comes out of conversation and story telling. And here is a key to history—the art of remembrance is linked to the human need for connection and belonging—the need for story that links. A lot of information, important cultural and historical information, is encoded in the stories we receive as children.

These stories, however, can be told to expand our awareness of others—the deeper links—or to break our links. Political leaders tell stories of the past to condense identity, to create a politics of “more of us, and less of them”, as Milojević writes.²³

Teaching history is not without its risks. Personal and community history are easy to relate to and can be used to have the student connect to the historical process. But once entered, there must be ways out, as harder forms of identity—race, religion, nation—can be reinforced. Neohumanist escape ways are needed. Without these escape hatches, history becomes a vehicle of terror—of creating self-other divisions. The local needs to be harnessed to become the humanistic—to use particular challenges as stories of all of our challenges.

Neohumanist history

At a grand level, we are the sum of our history, the collective desires of our family and civilisation. History is after all the story of the playing out of *karma*. At another level, it is merely the playing out of our genes—survival of the fittest. History can recreate our narrow identity toward a broader human—neo and even transhuman identity. We can prepare for the future by informing our selves and the children we teach of who we are through our story. We can hone discrimination and instill ethical

thought patterns and sentiments by reflecting on human action and reaction over time. History can become a vehicle for what future history we want to be remembered by—our legacy to our children and their children.

Along with a new macrohistory and a new theory of historiography, Sarkar offered many 'stories' or 'narratives'. There is for instance the *Brahma Chakra* cycle, describing the whole journey of consciousness from subtle to crude and back to subtle. There is the social cycle that takes us from shudra, to ksatria, to viipra and then to vaeshya, and then on through repeated cycles. There is the role of neohumanism in transforming the cycle. Sarkar also focused on the person, seeking to inspire each one of us to reflect on our own personal journey. In all these settings the self gains expansion by association with a larger whole that frames both the struggle and the story in such a way that we as humans find common ground in the collective endeavor to overcome our weaknesses and go forward.

In this sense as Sarkar points out history is not neutral. It must be framed from an angle that allows us to take heart despite all the tragedy that litters the human story. After all, there is also a lot of wonder and pathos, humour and excitement to be found. As adults we need to be both chastened and inspired—we can then enter the classroom wrapped in our own vulnerability and share this with students.

This may sound crazy but there are some stories I (Bussey) cannot tell children without shaking the tears from my eyes—tears of joy or awe or pain—Do you think they listen? Of course they do. It is not that stories are about concentration camps and human depravity. Simple stories about human trials are enough to move us. When the adult in the classroom is moved the children cannot help but tune in. As well with adults. When I (Inayatullah) ask individuals about their histories and how these histories can be used to create alternative futures, agency results. History ceases to be structure and then becomes an organic process of transformation. Where do we want to go becomes the question.

It may be clichéd but it is also true: To act without memory dooms us all to the same mistakes. We remain forever in the grip of our own personal and social reactive momenta—forever under the yoke of karma. For neohumanists this is not good enough. The whole purpose of our educational system is to liberate ourselves from the blind dogmas and sentiments that have held humanity in check and denied us our birthright as fully conscious and spiritually vibrant beings. However, even as we

attempt to create a new pedagogy of history, we need to be mindful that we do not become who we critique, that we do not create a new dogma called neohumanism. Neohumanism is the constant effort to challenge and transcend doxa.

The long shadow

We live in the shadow of history. It in many ways defines who we are, establishes and explains our priorities and sets our limits. It is, from a neohumanist perspective, as much about myth as reality; the causes and effects of history are as much our own retelling of the past, for the present, as they are the actual analysis of the historical events and their structural influences. Is history therefore a fiction? Ann Curthoys and John Docker agree yes and no.²⁴ They conclude it is as much about moral purpose—the recognition of a shared humanity—as about national and transnational stories.²⁵ Furthermore, as Michelle Brown observes, “A better knowledge of our own past might help to deconstruct such misplaced perception of ‘otherness’, which we have carefully cultivated over the centuries in order to justify and maintain our own privileged positions at the expense of others...”²⁶

This chapter has perhaps over-stretched itself in attempting to frame a neohumanist historiography within an emergent educative context. The long shadow of history represents the eternal fascination of humanity with its own identity, its agency in the face of all that stands both with it and against it. Much of this perception is stamped with a sense of deep struggle. This unconscious layering is embodied in our myths and aspirations. The effect of this ‘history as struggle’ worldview is that history has often conveyed toxic, limited and violence-sustaining stories of fragments of humanity. It is our job as teachers to re-establish the link between history and ethical action and spiritual mission. This can only be done through the application of a critically spiritual imagination to historical material in order that child and adult become emotionally engaged with their past in order to take responsibility for the future.

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Chapter 14 Playing the Neohumanist Game

Peter Hayward and Joseph Voros

In the Master of Science in Strategic Foresight offered at Swinburne University in Australia the first year of a student's study is concluded with the subject 'Dimensions of Global Change'. After studying the history, the methods and the use of futures methods, students are then exposed to the idea of the 'constructedness' of theories of social change. An outcome of this subject is for students to become aware of the deep macrohistorical processes that shape and contour both 'presents' and 'futures'.

P. R. Sarkar's 'Social Cycle' elegantly demonstrates how easily 'social roles' are adopted and how these roles bring forth partial and limited understandings of change and change processes. As a macrohistorical model of social change and as an embodiment the process of social construction, it is a pivotal learning element in the subject. Ken Wilber suggests that developing an 'integral' or 'meta'-perspective allows the individual to honour all participants' perspectives and can generate interventions and behaviours that can act with greater effectiveness and sustainability on a social system.¹ Here, too, Sarkar is relevant, as the role of the Sadvipra in the social cycle is both theory and action that embodies 'integrality'.

By 'creating' the experience of the social cycle in the classroom, via the playing of the 'Sarkar Game', students learn of their own social constructions and roles. They experience the frustration of how these roles and constructions limit the effectiveness of their actions. They can also recognise the qualitative difference in the potential of actions that arise from adopting an 'integral' stance in participating in social change. In this way it is argued that the playing of the game is more than an alternative to the traditional pedagogy of education. The game also acts as a developmental pacer to the establishment of neohumanistic perspectives. After briefly examining Sarkar's idea of neohumanism this chapter will explain the mechanics of how the Sarkar Game is staged and it shall then draw upon observations of participant learning in order to demonstrate the claim about developing neohumanist perspectives. Participants have

included students at Swinburne University, senior Australian executives at Melbourne Business School (Mt Eliza Centre for Executive Education) and Ananda Marga meditation teachers and practitioners.

Sarkar's neohumanism

Sarkar held an image of a positive future for humanity notwithstanding that he also saw that history tended to repeat itself in repetitive cycles. One element in Sarkar's positive image of the future was the need to ground the rationality of scientific modernity in a universal humanism—what Sarkar called 'neohumanism'.

Sarkar's project is not to leave the rationality of scientific modernity for the irrationality of the religious, rather, it is the creation of a new rationality that attempts to reconcile traditional dilemmas between spiritual and material, scientific and mystical, individual and collective, structure and agency. His rationality is centered not only on humans though, an integral part of the rational is pure, undefined and unbounded Consciousness.²

What Sarkar rejected was a rationality that both depended upon, and created, the dialectical 'other'; to him this was truly 'irrational'. "For Sarkar, the rational must be an identity that is all embracing, the ultimate real. Being itself".³ This new rationality progressed "from the crude mind (located in the senses) to the ego mind (located in the intellect) and the transpersonal causal mind (located outside of brain in the collective mind)".⁴ His agent of development was the individual first, but this individual increasingly became aware of the social realm and so consciousness became socially-aware rather than individually-focussed. Sarkar took the ontological position of Tantra—to liberate oneself from crudeness—and this struggle was both individual and social and not a merely passive spirituality.⁵

The social expression of the mystical cosmology of Tantra is Neohumanism. Sarkar's theory of Neohumanism aims to relocate the self from ego (and the pursuit of individual maximisation), from family (and the pride of genealogy), from geo-sentiments (attachment to land and nation), from socio-sentiments (attachments to class, race and community), from humanism (the human being as the center of the universe) to Neohumanism (love and devotion for all, inanimate and animate, beings of the universe). As the intellect is liberated from these bondages of ego and other identities, there arises (1) higher and higher degrees of

empathy and compassion; (2) increased commitment to social equality instead of ego-pleasure; (3) increased levels of unity with the Other, and (4) a re-identification of the self with the Cosmos.⁶

Wilber makes a similar point in his schema of human development through the self-stages, from (1) biocentric; (2) egocentric; (3) sociocentric; to (4) world-centric.⁷ He describes the developmental drive as a battle between evolution and egocentricism—between greater depth and complexity versus stability and control. It is not argued that the playing of the Sarkar Game achieves the full extent of liberation that Sarkar's neohumanism delivers or but it is argued that the learnings from the game can act as transformational events that could serve to commence the liberation of intellect and the continuing evolution of human consciousness.

Sarkar's social cycle

Sarkar's theory of the social cycle is concerned with the ways that humans, and their social organisations, have dealt with the existential problems of how their physical and social environments relate to one another. His theory of macrohistory⁸ proposes that civilisation has cycled through four major 'states': being dominated by the environment; attempting to dominate the environment with the body; attempting to dominate the environment through the mind; and, by dominating it through the agency of the environment itself. His theory defines these four 'states' as both material power structures and as epistemic or paradigmatic forms of individual and collective psychology. Further, each state has a beneficial phase (*vidya*) and a perverse phase (*avidya*); thus, even though each state is successful in managing existential problems, it also contains the seeds of its ultimate decline.

Furthermore, according to Sarkar, the development of a group of people, or their social organisation, requires six factors to be present:

- spiritual ideology of self and consciousness;
- a process by which the ideology can be realised;
- a theory of value and its distribution;
- a fraternal social outlook which would govern position and place of individuals;
- scripture or an authoritative text for inspiration of self and society; and
- a Founder or someone who can 'lead the way'.

The efficacy of each of the stages of Sarkar's social cycle could be determined by the extent to which these six factors were satisfied. Each stage would have its own distinct slant on how the group would be developed and what mechanisms might be employed. In its vidya phase a stage will meet these six factors in a beneficial form, while in the avidya phase it will become perverse.

His first state is that of the Worker or *Shudra*. The Worker is controlled by the environment, never dominant over it. The source of power for the Worker is chaotic power, and it is also the Worker who is the agent of the other stages of the cycle. The Worker lives in the present. The benign form of the Worker stage is service to the other stages, the malignant form is revolt or disruption of service. The six developmental factors for the Worker are met through giving service to the other stages and, in turn, how the forms of organisation of those stages address the developmental factors. To the extent that a stage meets developmental needs (vidya), the Worker continues to give service. Once the stage turns perverse (avidya), Workers revert to chaos or disruption until the next vidya stage arises.

The first organised stage is called the Warrior stage or *Ksatriya*. This stage struggles with and dominates the environment through its power of polity or civil order. The Warrior is materialistic and is concerned with conquering the material world. Like the Worker, the Warrior lives in the present, but also in the past (for example, stories of 'glory' days, victories, etc.). From an historic perspective this is the era of physical strength, heroes, chieftains, clans and empires. Power was created by conquest of others and appropriation of their wealth. In its vidya phase the Warrior stage would satisfy the six developmental factors by protecting the rights of Workers through an external focus on the mechanisms of civil order which would provide protection and provide for their material needs. It would define a place or role in the group and define a greater good for the Worker to serve. This order would be headed by a general, chief or king, and in history was seen as the establishment of empires and ancient nations.

In its avidya phase the mechanisms of civil order would be employed to oppress the Workers and exploit them. The Warriors would fail to provide protection and would give the Workers nothing to serve. Material satisfaction would fail to satisfy the Workers. The world would become overly centralised and culturally stagnant. The existence of the Warrior avidya phase creates the conditions for the emergence of the next stage. This next organisational stage is called the Intellectual stage or *Vipra*.

The intellectuals gradually wrested the right of controlling society from the hands of the warriors, and with the help of warrior power they established their own sway and dominance over society. They [convinced] the warriors that worshipping the intellectuals was the chief virtue and characteristic of the powerful warriors.⁹

The Vipra stage struggles with and dominates ideas through its control of the intellectual space. However it is also worth noting that the Vipra stage employs the means and structures of the previous stage to ensure its own success. The Intellectual view is ideational (non-materialistic). As the power for this stage comes from ideational/normative means, it should not be surprising that most recorded history is Vipra history, for most history is written and told by Intellectuals.¹⁰ Whereas the Ksatriya stage gave us the hero and his successful wars and conquests, in the Vipra phase the battle is fought by the undoing of the intellectual constructions of others and the creation and promotion of one's own. The Intellectual lives in past, present and future, where future is concerned with metaphysical idealism, not modernity.¹¹

In its vidya phase the Intellectual stage would satisfy the six developmental factors by use of ideational creativity to create an ideology; the value of this ideology would be truth and meaning. The process to achieve the ideology's outcome would be to ensure learning and to teach others in order for them to discover truth. The fraternal outlook would come from the culture of those who share the beliefs, the recorded intellectual construction would be the texts, and the priest or intellectual would fulfil the founder role. Political participation would be the vidya phase of the Vipra social stage, as would organised religion. In its avidya phase the Intellectuals would use their normative power to create a universe where knowledge is only available to the select few.¹² The ideologies would be used to exploit the Workers and to marginalise the 'others' (women, slaves, etc.) in the system. The material world of the Workers and marginal groups are neglected and so the conditions for the next stage are created.

The bondage of the material world keeps them so viciously in its octopus-like grip, that in spite of their intelligence, they do not have the courage to [challenge the acquirers]. The Intellectual age dies but not the intellectuals themselves. The blood-sucking acquirers get volumes of philosophical books written and truth

tactfully and artfully perverted and distorted with the help of the paid intellectuals.¹³

Thus the social stage moves to that of the acquirers or Merchants, the Vaeshya. Once again the new stage absorbs the means and methods of the previous stage to ensure its success. The needs of the material world have moved the focus from the ideational to the materialistic once again. The power for this stage comes from the market in the form of the entrepreneurial spirit. In its vidya phase the Merchant stage would satisfy the six developmental factors by use of entrepreneurship to establish an ideology of material production; the process is the application of wealth to assist the material condition of the Workers through the civil processes established by the Warriors. The value of this stage is wealth or commodification; the fraternal social outlook is that the material wealth is shared all those who create and participate in the market process. The texts would be drawn from the writings of the Intellectuals, and leader capitalists would come from the market itself.

When the avidya phase of the Merchants arises, the material wealth is accumulated by the Merchants rather than distributed—the Workers become the slaves of the Merchants and exploited through “seducing the poor and weak into believing that they all benefit from the system”.¹⁴ The ideational activities of the Intellectuals are commodified and brought into the material world, and the role of civil order to provide protection of rights instead becomes just another service, which has to be acquired rather than expected. “[T]he acquirers are the murderous parasites of the social tree who want to kill the main tree by sucking out all its sap”.¹⁵ Thus the conditions are ripe for the return of chaos through a Worker’s revolution or revolt and the cycle is completed with the time now set for the next (and higher) version of the Ksatriya stage to occur and the cycle to repeat. It is also possible that the cycle could regress to an earlier Vipralled ideational revolution.

The following table summarises the stages of Sarkar’s social cycle and shows how each of the organised forms achieves its objective—worker service—to ensure that its own focus of domination is brought about and its power source to do so. It also shows each stage in its vidya (beneficial) and avidya (perverse) forms. As each stage succeeds the earlier one it assumes the means and methods to its own aims.

Table 1: The stages of Sarkar’s social cycle

<i>WORKER—SERVICE/CHAOTIC POWER—Shudra</i>			
	WARRIOR STAGE— Ksattriya	INTELLECTUAL STAGE—Vipra	CAPITALIST STAGE— Vaeshya
Focus on	Materialistic (Environment)	Ideational (Ideas)	Materialistic (Ideas and Environment)
Power from	Polity (Order)	Intellectual (Normative)	Market (Entrepreneurship)
Vidya Form	Protection of worker rights	Learn/Teach Truth and Meaning	Application of material gain
Avidya Form	Oppression of worker rights	Maintain/Enforce Truth and Meaning	Accumulation of material gain

The final point to make about Sarkar’s social cycle is that, in addition to those forces described above, he envisaged another force which operated for the benefit of the entire cycle, not simply one stage of it. That is, a force which produces the leadership type and the institutional forms necessary to enable the emergence of the vidya forms of each of the organising stages, but to also take the necessary steps to move the cycle forwards when the avidya forms becomes dominant. This force he called the Sadvipra—one with a complete and pure mind. The sadvipra form of leadership would have the characteristics of all the vidya forms of the stages, Worker (service), Warrior (protection), Intellectual (theory generation) and Merchant (entrepreneurial spirit), but it would not be a rival power to any of the organised stages, nor would it favour any one stage over another.

For Sarkar, given that these forms of power evolve historically, they are for all practical purposes natural; they cannot be eliminated or collectively transcended. The task for Sarkar is to transform this historical social cycle—labourer, warrior, intellectual, capitalist, labourer—into a social spiral thus allowing power to enable progressive forms of economy, culture and polity.¹⁶

The Sadvipra is the embodiment of an integral perspective and action and the means by which the traditional social forces can be transcended and society can evolve rather than merely change. The Sadvipra ‘transcends’ the vidya/avidya dynamic of the social cycle and, indeed, the social cycle itself. The vidya phase arises from introversion and the avidya from extroversion. The directional force of the social cycle arises from the

relativity of introversion or extroversion that is present at a given transition.

Introversion leads to increased clarity, to compassionate action that emerges from the desire for social equity. Extroversion leads to sin or the misuse of spiritual, mental or physical resources. Introversion calms the perturbations of the mind, leading to right thought and action.¹⁷

An excess of introversion leads to evolution or revolution; an excess of extroversion leads to downfall. A balance is stasis. His Sadvipra leader contains or embodies the vidya forms of each of the stages (service, protection, intellectual and innovation) so that, when an excess of extroversion begins to occur in one stage, the Sadvipra enters to return that stage to stasis. Then the Sadvipra leader creates an excess of introversion from which the evolution/revolution to the next stage will occur.

The Sadvipra is not an inactive witness. He is an active participant to see that no person or class exploits the rest. For this he may even have to resort to physical violence because the Sadvipra will have to strike at the source of power which is tending to become the exploiter. In case the Ksatriya class is becoming exploitive, the Sadvipra may have to resort to physical force and in an age where the intellectual or Vipra class is dominating, he will have to bring a revolution in the intellectual field. In case the Vaeshyas are dominating, the Sadvipra may have to contest and win elections because the Vaeshya class rule by democracy and the democratic set-up enables them to accumulate undue gains.¹⁸

Sarkar's theory underpinned the design of the experiential learning process. The participants would adopt Sarkar's social roles and experience change managed without a Sadvipra or integral perspective, and without any understanding about the social cycle (i.e. no prior knowledge).

The Sarkar Game

The class members were placed in equal groups in the four corners of the room or space. Each group was given a 'script' for their group. Each script was simply a list of three to four sentences that captured the essence of the four 'social cycle' groups (Worker, Warrior, Intellectual, Merchant) without using the name. The teachers stood in the middle of the room.

First the Worker group was asked to begin the game by making their claims of the system (Food, Shelter, Safety!) and then Warriors were invited to respond to the Workers. The interchange between those two groups was allowed to continue until the form became avidyan, at which point a teacher held up a red card (as a referee does in many international sports!) and stopped the process. The Intellectual group were invited in and asked to respond to each of the other two groups. That interchange was allowed to continue until it too turned avidyan (red card!). Then the Merchant group was invited in and the process was repeated.

The first observation from the teachers was that the process was fun and lots of energy went into the game. The groups very quickly dropped into the caste roles, even with their very simple scripts. To close the learning loop the experience was followed with a lecture—that drew out Sarkar’s theory from the experience and insight of each of the groups. The lecture is very proactive with participants invited to suggest, ‘how the cycle works’, and the observation made that the key role of the sadvipra was made very clear by the example of the teachers during the game. The lectures can go on for over two hours and have had to be ended because of time pressure, rather than any lack of participant interest.

Individual transformations through the Game

The Sarkar game experience taps into the ‘deep’ scripts that we all have; scripts that cover role, power and relationship. Our societal processes have programmed those scripts into us and they continue to operate unconsciously until an experience draws them into consciousness thereby making them accessible to inquiry and examination.

Participants experience the Shudra-ego as one of power and powerlessness. They learn that they are the energy of the system—they begin and end the game and yet they do not have a collective consciousness. Interestingly most Shudra groups tend to coordinate even though their instructions clearly state that they are individuals and not a collective. Such coordination tends to reduce the overall energy of the game and tends towards a passive Shudra. For some participants the opportunity to adopt extreme individualism is clearly liberating. Some Shudra participants have quickly cut private deals, stolen weapons from the Ksatriya and also taken the money of the Vaeshya. Shudra energy is high ego and as such is both the base of neohumanism and also the first stage of transcendence. The observation here is that without the liberation of the untrammelled

ego subsequent liberation is diminished. With the full rush of ego comes sufficient energy to give the potential of further development.

Ksatriya-ego is strongly inwardly focussed notwithstanding their power to dominate the environment. For many participants the experience holding the only weapons in the game is both visceral and powerful. It is also a strongly collective episteme with members very protective of one another. Some Ksatriya groups have deliberately hidden or refused to take up their weapons and this has the impact of denying the game its initial dramatic tension. It would seem that the game cannot start until the Ksatriya 'announce' their power to the system. The conclusion here is that the unwillingness to take up the weapons is tantamount to refusing the warrior code and strangely enough does not serve the game well. This point is made clearer in the debrief/lecture when the Ksatriya realise that the weapon is both power with responsibility and that they cannot effectively protect until they show that they accept power and that they also accept their responsibilities. In later iterations of the game the displaying of weapons has been made a mandatory element of playing that role. In terms of neohumanistic development the Ksatriya role can reach the stage of socio-sentiment, principally around race or class but cannot transcend this stage alone. A recurrent issue with this role is the taking up of arms to protect. Sarkar himself preferred non-violence but clearly foresaw the need for violent revolution in certain circumstances.¹⁹ There is a clarity and simplicity to Ksatriya that exposes the prevarication and obfuscation that is often cited in defence of protective inaction. One either protects or one does not. The good is not measured by intention but by action and within this stance is the clear impetus to transcend the pursuit of individual maximisation. Often groups taking the Ksatriya role comment on its sacrificial nature where individual nature is subsumed into social duty. Thus Ksatriya is the stage that begins to temper the excesses of Shudra-ego and the crude mind. For many participants Ksatriya is a hugely revealing social role to play. They enjoy the power that comes from being able to dominate the environment but they also become aware of the equal responsibility that comes with that power.

The Vipra role is a devastating one for many participants. Most have no idea how to operate within this episteme. It is obvious from many iterations of the game that most participants are incompetent in this role. With their felt incompetence comes impotence and Vipra generally has little, or no, influence in the game. Some participants comment that they have 'nothing, only ideas' whereas others have instrumental power and

yet participants also realise that it is ideas, more so than instrumental power, that has changed the world. Vipra also tends to try and speak directly to Shudra-ego and by doing so Ksattriya is ignored. Often the weapons of the warriors are turned towards these 'Vipra-troublemakers'. One Warrior tellingly reported in the lecture that, "I originally thought that the Shudra were the problem but then I listened to the Vipra and I realised that they wanted to change things. They were the real problem". Many participants recall that this is how it often feels when new ideas are brought to an organisation. Sarkar says that only Vipra can conquer the fear that Ksattriya have of their death by writing their history and thereby making their honour live forever. Most Vipra do not understand how they can work with Ksattriya rather than just be seen as a threat. Effective Vipra do not try to dominate the physical environment but attempt to adopt authoritative stances on the periphery. Almost no-one has played Vipra as a 'large' force—they are almost always small and come across as apologising for their 'inconvenience'. The observation here is that neohumanist development is stunted without the spiritual leadership of the Vipra. Without the Vipra ideology is non-existent and the game is imbalanced. There is a vacuum in the game and into that vacuum step the Vaeshya.

Almost always Vaeysha divide and conquer the game. They almost never operate as a collective group, instead they usually split up and try and cut deals; Ksattriya first and Shudra second. They often ignore the Vipra completely. The observation here is that Vaeysha have the simple ideology of personal gain. In the typically Vipra-less game dynamic, this ideology is quickly adopted as the default ideology for all groups. If Ksattriya demonstrate the potential to take neohumanistic development to the point of transcending socio-centric bonds then the Vaeysha almost always pull development back to the level of the crude mind again. If Vaeysha overplay their hand then they can disgust the Ksattriya for their lack of honour or they can cause Shudra to feel 'used'. Generally, however, there is usually a favourable response to Vaeysha, largely because the Vipra are usually ineffectual. In only two games have the Vaeshya failed to have impact—no one in the two games could impose Vaeshya ideology upon the game and this had the effect of removing that dynamism from the game. An observation here is that in some groups—those with social reform agendas—an inability to play this role would hinder rather than aid their overall social change agenda. Another observation is that the understanding of the power of the Vaeshya is rarely matched with an equal understanding of their responsibility, other than the responsibility to

the crude mind. The traditional ideology of the Vaeshya is just too limited to take the whole cycle very far forward.

Finally is the Sadvipra role. Most participants agree that Sadvipra is not another distinct role in the game but is a meta-perspectival stance from which any of the other stages of the game can be played. Most agree that the major challenge in taking such a stance is the adequacy of the personal ideology of the actor. The Sadvipra role would seem strongly neohumanist in ideology but, of course, no game alone is going to evoke neohumanist rationality. The Sarkar Game makes no claims in this respect other than to suggest that participants do observe the tendency of the social cycle to perpetuate suffering, rather than alleviating it, without the injection of a different level of consciousness. If the participant experience of the game is that 'something else' is needed and that individuals might then begin the search for the missing 'thing', then perhaps the game has lived up to Sarkar's intent.

Social transformation through the Game

Sarkar made the point that while the agent of transformation is the individual it is the creation of social consciousness outside the individual that enables true social justice and progress. Once individuals have played the game and they have observed the deep social structures, they can return to the game with a changed perspective. Now they are no longer actors in a drama; instead they can adopt the neohumanist perspective of the Sadvipra. The 'game space' now becomes a diagnostic space where alternative strategies can be trialled, dialectic positions can be examined and the crude mind of individual gain can be transcended. The observation here is that participants with this new perspectival knowledge can readily adopt neohumanist stances. The ego-mind and "I"-sense is replaced with the collective-mind and "We"-sense, or indeed, a synthesis of both.

In this phase senior corporate executives have been asked to describe the genealogy of their organisations by reference to the game. What stage of the cycle are they at? Is the system vidyan or avidyan? What episteme is dominant and which are repressed or ineffectual? What does the Sadvipra perspective bring to the executive? All executives were easily able to see their organisations from a collective neohumanist perspective. When they saw themselves as 'mere' actors in a drama, they saw the futility of their actions. The neohumanist perspective, however, brought forward new strategies that honoured the role that all could offer the social cycle and,

importantly, emphasised the understanding of the ideologies that drive the organisation. Most executives saw the Ksattriya and Vaeysha epistememes as dominant in their organisations, the Vipra role as being ineffectual and the Shudra either powerless or exploited by the system. The neohumanist perspective of the collective-mind challenged the ideological basis of the leader and naturally followed on to an examination of the sadvipra role again. The ideational, spiritual foundation that is shared by both Vipra and Sadvipra is a tremendous challenge to most game participants. The observation here is that the pragmatic ideology of organisational realities honours only the externally focussed epistememes and denies the ideational. Participants become aware of this and yet they are personally challenged by the idea that they need to become spiritual beings in order to become Sadvipra leaders.

As a contrast, when the game was played amongst Ananda Marga monks then the opposite realisation was made by the movement's leaders. The observation here was that as individuals they were poor at the Vaeysha episteme and this compromised the collective mind capacity of the movement. Their challenge was the opposite of that faced by the business executives—how could they become Merchant-beings in order to become the Sadvipra leaders that their circumstances required? It should also be noted that even people well schooled in the theory of Sarkar gained deep learning from this simple game. While observing the game with the Ananda Marga monks Dada Shambhushivananda, Vice-Chancellor of Gurukul University, noted how useful it was for Ananda Marga meditation teachers and practitioners, as it deepened participant's understanding of Sarkar's theory of social change. Inayatullah, a student of Sarkar for over 30 years, also commented that he "learned as much in 20 minutes of the Sarkar game as he had learned in 30 years of textual analysis". The general observation drawn from these two games was that Sadvipra social change can only eventuate when all stage epistememes are available in their vidya forms.

Conclusion

The participant experience of the traditional roles of managing and driving social change clearly demonstrates the one-sidedness of contemporary Western culture. The game dynamics clearly showed how our programmed selves are comfortable with external forms of managing social change (Ksattriya or Vaeysha). In this 'world', guns or butter make you a player. Yet Sarkar clearly demonstrates that this is only half of what is available for managing social change. The ideational realm is equally

powerful in creating and managing change, yet the observation of the game is that many appear to have forgotten how to do this. Most importantly, the game allows the demonstration of action informed from an integral perspective. The sadvipra is not merely a theoretician or an idea, but an active agent in social change. The sadvipra acknowledges the necessity and insufficiency of each of the traditional social roles. Each is an integral element (vidya) but each must be transcended to ensure the integral cycle continues. Without adequacy in all game epistemes then neohumanist change may be unlikely. The game, therefore, is a serious one. While we 'play' at learning, the consequences of not learning are serious indeed. Sarkar's social cycle at its heart is revolutionary, and thus a sadvipra is a social revolutionary operating from a neohumanistic ideology.

Readings

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³ *Ibid*, 3.

⁴ *Ibid*, 4.

⁵ *Ibid*, 8.

⁶ *Ibid*.

⁷ Wilber, *op cit.*, 165.

⁸ J. Galtung & S. Inayatullah (eds.), *Macrohistory and Macrohistorians: Perspectives on Individual, Social and Civilisational change*, Praeger, London, 1997, 132-140.

⁹ S. Inayatullah, *Situating Sarkar: Tantra, macrohistory and alternative futures*, Gurukula Press, Brisbane, Australia, 1999, 55.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, 8.

¹¹ *Ibid*, 56.

¹² *Ibid*, 3.

¹³ *Ibid*, 56.

¹⁴ Inayatullah, 2002, *op cit.*, 123.

¹⁵ Inayatullah, 1999, *op cit.*, 56.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 63.

¹⁷ Inayatullah, 2002, *op cit.*, 129.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, 165.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, 163.

Perspective 3 Educator of the Oppressed: A Conversation with Paulo Freire

Maheshvarananda Avadhuta

On May 2, 1997, a sweet, soft-spoken Brazilian teacher died of a heart attack. At Paulo Freire's funeral the next morning in Sao Paulo, I was struck by the many ironies and paradoxes of his life. Over three hundred prominent members of Brazil's Left gathered to pay their last respects to a gentle man who was known as a revolutionary. His casket was draped with both the green and yellow national flag and the red and white flag of the militant Workers Party. Members of the military police were his pallbearers because Brazilian President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, whose conservative actions Freire bitterly protested, directed that he be afforded the honor of a State Funeral.

After the Catholic priest finished saying the last rites, people quietly sang a famous Brazilian activist song that Freire loved:

*Come let us go, who hope for the unknown,
Who know what must be done and don't wait for it to happen.*

When the casket was lowered into the ground, I bent down and plucked a rose from the huge piles of wreaths. I dropped the flower on the casket with a feeling of deep gratitude.

One of the television crews asked me to explain my presence there in my orange uniform. I said, "Twenty-five years ago when I was a university student in the US, Paulo Freire's book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* was required reading in our course in peace studies. It inspired me greatly to dedicate my life to the cause of changing the world, of creating a true revolution based on love, and of doing service work with the poor. I became a monk of Ananda Marga which organizes different types of charity projects, especially kindergarten schools in poor areas. So in fact Paulo Freire is one of the reasons why I wear this uniform".

Freire began his career by teaching literacy courses to the poor working classes of Brazil's impoverished north east. He developed a system of

teaching through dialogue, recognizing and respecting the knowledge that poor people already have. He helped them to simultaneously question the reasons for their poverty. This process of 'conscientization' gradually became so successful that in 1963 he was invited to head the National Literacy Program of Brazil.

Father of all

To understand the power of Freire's humble style of work, consider a typical opening night of a course with laborers from a sugar cane plantation. As they arrived he engaged them in relaxed conversation until suddenly a disconcerting silence fell.

He too remained silent and waited. Finally one of them said, "Excuse us, sir, for talking. You're the one who should have been talking, sir. You know things, sir. We don't."

"Fine, I know some things that you don't. But why do I know and you don't?"

Suddenly curiosity was kindled. The answer was not long in coming.

"You know because you're a doctor, sir, and we're not."

"Right, I'm a doctor and you're not. But why am I a doctor and you're not?"

"Because you've gone to school, you've read things, studied things, and we haven't."

"And why have I been to school?"

"Because your dad could send you to school. Ours couldn't."

"And why couldn't your parents send you to school?"

"Because they were peasants like us."

"And what is 'being a peasant'?"

It's not having an education...not owning anything...working from sunup to sundown...having no rights...having no hope."

"And why doesn't a peasant have any of this?"

"It's the will of God."

"And who is God?"

"The Father of us all."

"And who is a father here this evening?"

Many raised their hands. Freire pointed to one and asked, "How many

children do you have?"

"Three."

"Would you be willing to sacrifice two of them, and make them suffer their whole lives so that one of them could go to school and have a good life living in the capital? Could you love your children that way?"

"No!"

"Well if you, a person of flesh and bones, could not commit an injustice like that, how could God commit it? Could the Father of all really be the cause of these things?"

A different kind of silence fell. Then: "No. God isn't the cause of all this. It's the boss!"*

From such an opening, Freire taught and discussed the words that had the most power for the group of people he was working with. For plantation workers these would include "house", "land", "well", "hunger", "school", "wages", "debt", etc. Simple pictures of people like themselves surrounded by the things of their world, interacting with others, created springboards for highly animated conversations. Education like this had great importance in their lives, and so his techniques were able to achieve functional literacy in the incredibly short span of 30 hours.

Freire's importance

The young soldiers at the funeral were much too young to remember that in 1964 the country's generals had found this "Paulo Freire Literacy Method" so dangerous to their political control of the country that they declared its author to be "an evil, dangerous subversive and an enemy of God". Imprisoned for two months, he was then sent into exile and not allowed to return for 17 long years. Ironically again, it was this very punishment that catapulted his ideas around the world.

He worked for the ministries of education in Chile and Argentina, taught for a year as guest professor at Harvard University in the US, then directed the education office of the World Council of Churches in Geneva. In 1971 his book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, was published first in English, then translated into a dozen other languages and finally republished and distributed worldwide by Penguin Books. His revolutionary approach to education to help oppressed classes recognize their exploitation became a guide to liberation movements around the world. He was awarded

* From *Pedagogy of Hope*, Continuum Publishing, New York, 1994.

honorary doctorate degrees from universities in Great Britain, Belgium, Switzerland, El Salvador, Fiji and the United States.

Dr. Sohail Inayatullah of Pakistan, explained the importance of Freire's ideas in his own work:

Paulo Freire has had such a huge influence in the last forty years that almost all progressive education uses his base... to authentically see what the needs of the other are, to experience their world. This is action learning, finding out the worldview of others and working with them at many layers. While I accept where they are, I also challenge their current belief patterns. So it is both an authentic meeting and an effort to move to a new level of understanding—conscientization as he calls it.

One month before his death, I had the honor to meet Paulo Freire in the library of his home in Sao Paulo. His soft white beard and long hair framed his beautiful Portuguese expressions of hospitality. We conversed for almost two hours in a wonderfully gracious atmosphere of mutual respect.

Discourse and practice

Paulo Freire: My fundamental question for practical education is about the relation between the educator and the educated. I give greater importance to the testimony of values. I cannot give a discourse about kindness while I am killing an animal in front of those who are listening to the discourse.

One of the major struggles in every individual is to diminish the difference between what one says and does, between the discourse and the practice.

Ethics really is fighting to decrease the distance. I think that in politicians one will encounter the maximum distance between the two. You listen to the speech of a candidate for mayor, but after being elected his or her actions do not look at all like the discourse. Like the educator and like the people, I think that one of the values that we should search for is exactly this—the value of consistence.

I remember when I started being a father. With my first wife what was important was the exercise to diminish the distance between what we did and what we dreamed. This is a fight, a daily fight, but a beautiful fight, a delicious fight. I remember that sometimes I asked forgiveness of one of my sons or daughters for the contradiction in what I taught. It is important that the child knows that the father is also incomplete, that he can make

mistakes. We should be satisfied with the knowledge that we are daily fighting for this consistency.

I always say, I like purity, but I reject Puritanism. I like morality, but I hate moralizing. I think that the daily fight of people is to reach for sincerity.

Fundamentally I am a spiritual person. I don't say that I am religious, but I am a man of faith. I consider faith not necessarily as religion. In me there is always the mixture of the mundane and the transcendental. I cannot achieve complete transcendence and not be a part of the world. It is here in history, remembering history, that I realize my infinite potential to fall. It is by living the possibility of falling that I can fall less.

For example, I used to smoke a lot until 1978. In that year I was living in exile in Switzerland and I was smoking three packs of cigarettes a day. It was absurd from a health point of view. I was destroying myself. When I reflect on this period I see that the two or three times that I thought I should stop smoking, I was fundamentally lacking in willpower. When you do not decide, you will not break through, because in the end, the decision is a rupture in lifestyle. Nobody can decide without breaking with one and staying with the other. The decision is not neutral. No decision can be neutral. And I broke the habit with anger.

I think it is very important to make decisions with the capacity to feel anger. My truth is that anger is in harmony with love, not antagonistic. Some fundamental things that I have done in my life I did because I had anger. And the anger was precisely because of love. A just anger. The young Christ that expelled the moneylenders from the temple did so with anger, a just anger.

Dada Maheshvarananda: For myself I feel a just, revolutionary anger at the heart of the book, *PROUTist Economics*, by Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar. He points out how unethical capitalism is because it does not guarantee the minimum necessities of life while it encourages the super-accumulation of wealth.

Ethics of the market

PF: At this moment in capitalism we should be explicit about what is called neo-liberalism. At its base is the ethics of the market. I would like to say our fundamental ethics should be the ethics of the human being. This is totally opposite in function from the ethics of market interests, which is a malevolent ethic that does not respect the human presence. I think that no politics of technological or scientific development that forgets the

interests of human beings has meaning for me. I do not defend the stopping or reversal of science or technology, because I think this is a reactionary posture. However I do think that the development of science and technology should not lose its vision.

Neo-liberalism is totally against this, and its concept of development is completely disinterested in humans. I am today fighting a lot against this, struggling against this. One way is my refusal to participate in any type of collaboration with the government of Brazilian President Fernando Henrique Cardoso. I did not vote for him, and I will not vote for his re-election. I will always be on this side of the fight against this man, whom I know personally and who is a great intellectual, because his sin is so serious. He was one of the major Marxists of this country who suddenly discovered that his path was on the right. I do not accept this, so I criticize him. I am very friendly with the Minister of Education, but from the point of view of Brazilian national politics, I have nothing to do with him. It is a pity because at my 75 years of age, when I could make a major contribution to this country, I am refusing to do it. The contribution that I am making instead is to write and criticize all this.

DM: Capitalism uses different terms, different forms. In prior eras, capitalism used political exploitation through imperialism and colonialism, but after the Second World War it transformed all this exploitation into economic exploitation. Currently it also uses many psychological techniques. For example, the tobacco industry spends billions and billions of dollars to convince and create new consumers among the youth. To do this it uses very psychological techniques of propaganda, such as cowboys with horses and other expressions of freedom.

PF: What the American economy fundamentally wants is to deepen and consolidate its command and domination of other economies. They call this democracy and the globalisation of the economy. And President Cardoso still says that the Brazilian people are backward and ignorant. How could it enter his mind to sell the national mining company, Vale do Rio Doce? It is the third largest company in the country, and it is honest, serious, technically efficient and competent. The country is losing all its created potential because the principle of neo-liberalism and privatization is what he thinks is correct.

DM: One thing that I am especially interested in is the concept of cultural invasion. You wrote about this idea 25 years ago in your famous book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. I worked in Southeast Asia for fourteen years,

and there it is very clear that capitalists are imposing American pseudo-culture on local cultures.

But in Brazil it is different, because, for example, the multi-billion dollar television company O Globo discovered techniques to transform propaganda from the United States and remake it in a Brazilian form. This makes it more difficult for Brazilians to realize this type of cultural imposition. I would like to know your opinion about this.

PF: The actual process of domination is a process that is necessarily very cunning. There are quite a number of tricks, because at a certain time the dominator's process is physical—that is, the exploiter takes charge. Colonialism was like this.

But later it became very expensive for the dominators to maintain a colonial structure. So it became better to remove their soldiers from invaded countries and to instead manipulate countries through the economy. Domination through the economy and politics must necessarily take the form of very refined control or a cultural invasion. At times the invaded do not perceive that they are exploited.

The development of our critical capacity is always very necessary, but also more and more difficult, too.

DM: This is also an essential part of neohumanism, a philosophy that our organisation teaches—to study and analyze different types of exploitation. “Education for liberation” is the motto of our system of education. Through our study and dialogue with others we can understand different types of exploitation. Individually and together with others we can fight against it.

People's presence

PF: Fundamentally I think that one of the things that is lacking in us in the learning experience, in both teachers and students, is what you are calling the capacity to meditate, as well as the feeling of transcendence. It is an experience of critical reflection about our presence in the world.

What is generally emphasized in Brazilian schools is the transfer of content. Teaching is reduced to techniques of transferring information of minor importance, a mechanics of knowledge of biology, geography, history and mathematics that minimizes one's presence in the world. My growth does not end with physical training, technical training of superficial knowledge of content. Yet this is today one of the characteristics of neo-liberal education, what they call pragmatism in academic practice. For me, no,

education is more than this and in my point of view it involves a way of permanent meditation.

Paulo Freire's legacy can be discovered in his two dozen books and over 900 sites on the Internet. It can also be seen in the eyes of excited children and old people who gained the power to read words that shape their lives. He was fond of quoting another famous militant, Che Guevara:

Let me tell you, at the risk of appearing ridiculous, that the genuine revolutionary is animated by great feelings of love.

As I walked away across the grass of the cemetery, I thought how fitting were the words of P. R. Sarkar in the dedication of his book, *The Liberation of Intellect: Neohumanism*:

To those who think for all. . .

Who offer others seats of honor and respect. . .

Who venerate others, instead of waiting to be venerated—

To them I dedicate this book with humble esteem and deepest salutations.

NEOHUMANISM IN PRACTICE

Chapter 15 The River School: Exploring Racism in a Neohumanist School*

Ivana Milojević

The River School, in Queensland, Australia, is located on community land which comprises 52 acres and houses several families. The school itself is located on 21 acres, with 15 acres being a rainforest. A stream ('River') runs through the property and is a "favourite spot for daily swimming in the summer and adventure play all year round". The school opened in 1994 with 23 students and now has close to 190 students who are supported by seven primary teachers, three early childhood teachers with five assistants, and other staff members. The River School is "a community of learning, including students from kindergarten to Year 7, teachers, administrators, parents, and the hinterland community".

The school began as "the vision of the people of the community" living on the land. The members of the family community who started the school belong to a socio-spiritual movement called Ananda Marga, based on the Tantric philosophy and originating in India. The motto that is part of the philosophy of the movement is 'self-realization and service to humanity'. Self-realization is practiced through meditation and yoga which can help "discover deep spiritual fulfilment, peace and wisdom". The philosophy on which the school is based also emphasizes a "non-dogmatic code of ethics and encourages a universal outlook which rises above limited sentiments of nation, race, religion, gender and social status". Service to humanity is practiced through the movement's involvement in, for example, establishing schools and kindergartens, "orphanages, disaster relief, alternative agriculture, programs for artists and scientists".

The River School is part of a network of "over 250 schools" throughout the world that are based on the same philosophy. Since the socio-spiritual movement the school is based on is international, the school has "lots of contact with people from other countries", and benefits from getting "lots of research from other [similar] schools from around the world". It also

* Material in this chapter is extracted from interviews conducted in 2000.

further tries to enhance the international 'flavour' by employment of teachers and teach aids from diverse cultural backgrounds and/or with the experience of teaching overseas and also by "registering through the government" in order to be able to receive overseas students.

The educational philosophy upon which the school is based is that of neohumanism. Neohumanism is the philosophy of the "innate oneness of all things":

Studying about the 'web of life' helps understand the interconnections between self, others and the natural environment. Neohumanist education fosters love and respect for all, regardless of culture, religion, race and nationality, and for animals and plants and the earth's ecosystems. Children learn these principles both through lessons and teacher modelling, as well as through developing their own intuitional feeling of the interconnectedness of all things.

Such philosophy is reflected in the school's relationship with its environment and with the community, in its approaches to teaching and learning as well as in the daily routine in the school. It is also reflected in how personal and cultural 'difference' is being seen and understood as well as in how the conflicts within the school are resolved.

Aims and Ideals of Neohumanist Education

- To develop the full potential of each child: physical, mental and spiritual
- To awaken a thirst for knowledge and love of learning
- To equip students with academic and other skills necessary for higher education
- To facilitate personal growth in areas such as morality, integrity, self-confidence, self-discipline and co-operation
- To develop physical wellbeing and mental capabilities through yoga and concentration techniques, sports and play
- To develop a sense of aesthetics and appreciation of culture through drama, dance, music, art
- To encourage students to become active and responsible members of society
- To promote an awareness of ecology in its broadest sense: i.e. the realisation of the inter-relatedness of all things, and to encourage respect and care for all living beings
- To encourage a universal outlook, free from discrimination based on religion, race, creed or sex
- To recognize the importance of teachers and parents in setting an example

Environment

In the River School lots of the songs and the music are about environment, they can be about caring, and can be about spirituality. So the kids are getting encouraged to be more aware on all levels. If they are more aware on all levels of caring for the environment, caring for creatures, caring for caterpillars, then they know also more about caring for each other. (Parent)

In the River School, one way of teaching children to respect each other irrespective of differences is through teaching about the respect for other species and nature. The neohumanist philosophy that is the basis of the River School takes into account “the unique oneness of everything and within that, the unity and the diversity of all of creation”. Children often sing songs that reflect this attitude towards nature and towards other species (“Feather, fur or fins, If it walks on legs, Or flies on wings, If it runs, or crawls, Or slithers or swims, Then its got its place, In the scheme of things”).

The respect for other animal species is further enhanced through a vegetarian food policy. The school believes that “food plays an important role in preventive medicine and also in good mental and emotional health”. Parents are therefore asked to respect the food policies that are in accordance to the overall philosophy of the school: “Vegetarian food”, “No junk food” and “Minimum packaging”. Food is also seen as very important for child's ability to “concentrate and learn”.

When introducing “special themes”, for example a visit to the zoo, children not only study the animals they visit, their feeding patterns, sing animal songs, etc. They also study “the maps of the zoo to plan which animals to visit, examine the zoo habitats and their appropriateness, study how a zoo is organised, do yoga postures of the different animals they've seen and write essays, poems or stories about animals in captivity, extinction of animals, etc.”.

In the classroom “we look at the map of the world, and the Earth is really so tiny, and we talk about that all the time. We also talk about how different cultures view spirits, trees, [and explore] animistic ideas”. The principle of neohumanist education is to “look at yourself, then yourself in relation to others and then looking at the bigger picture in relation to the whole world”. So “we look at respect for self, and our environment, and other countries and other people”.

During an Aboriginal reconciliation week, through the creation of Aboriginal masks of animals, dot painting and Aboriginal story telling, there was a focus on the connection between Aboriginal culture and the land, “this land that we are on right now”. And it is seen as important that “we should learn that link as well”.

Community

The school has very strong links with the local community. As previously mentioned, it was started through the efforts of several families living on communally owned and managed land. The school also consciously attempts to establish good relationships with other community members: by shopping locally or by participating in the local economy. The school accepts “bunyas” (an alternative currency within the LETS: local energy transfer system) and uses them to pay for jobs such as carpentry, teacher's aids, and elective teachers. The children are required to come to school by the school bus in order to avoid excessive traffic on the roads of the peaceful and relatively secluded neighbourhood.

The school also strongly encourages parent involvement. Parents are required to contribute, as an energy levy, eight hours of labour per month. This may be done in a variety of ways, including participation in working bees, volunteering in the classroom, serving on the parent committee, helping with festivals and fund-raising activities, volunteering to help on excursions and school camps and teaching an “elective”, these units of study are taught by local people with skills they would like to share. They meet weekly and have included topics such as: jewellery making, cooking, drama, bush dance, video making, computers, lead lighting and adventure thrills. At the beginning of each term, children chose their elective from what is being offered.

The parents are involved in aspects of planning activities for the school, as well as in behavioural management strategies:

Parents are generally, emotionally very present. There are many parents in different areas and they are very happy to help [the school]. There are lots of resources [amongst parents] and we usually use that.

Parents have lots of power here, and provided that you put the energy in you are really invited to contribute at all levels. I've lived in lots of places, my kids have been to about 8 different schools so I do know what the other schools are like, and this is the only school I've been involved with that has such parent input. In the state system I felt very disempowered. We wished very hard to change things and they did

change but it was so slow and so difficult, it was a matter of years. There are some good state schools though, some have very progressive principles, one of our teachers was in the state school before.

In order to further enhance the connection with the local community the school has received a seeder grant to:

...see if there is enough community interest, to involve the community in our art space, to allow the community artists, artisans, musicians, sculptors, to work in some space, to get the opportunity for children to see how art is produced and somehow to help the children understand what the artistic process of different artists is or can be. In one sense is the other broadening of their horizons as far as the integration with the community at large goes. The potential is very good and it will probably be developed more and more into a specific building which will allow the community to come down and interact with the school and the artists to work from here. They would not specifically work with children, but the children would be integrated, and it is expected that artists involved would also give workshops and seminars for the children to help them see the artistic processes happen.

The value system within the school and the local community is also reflected and developed in other school activities. For example, children ran a garage sale, a dinner theatre and a bake sale to raise funds to support the protest against the Jabiluka uranium mine. Other (local and international) community involvement includes, for example, teachers active in the Amnesty International organisation or teachers who used to lobby against Apartheid in South Africa. In addition, a few teachers have “brought into the school a strong focus on Aboriginal Reconciliation”:

Every year we do the Reconciliation week and we focus on Aboriginal reconciliation and the issues around that. Especially since a few new teachers have come that have taken that on board in a big way.

A parent in the school has been active in addressing racism and developing in-service activities for parents and teachers. The workshop the parent developed is called “embracing our differences” and has evolved from previous involvement in the community on similar issues:

We had this group in our community earlier, around the time of Pauline Hanson,[†] addressing racism in the community, and it went on from

[†] A conservative Australian politician who made openly racist statement in the media and create the One Nation Party.

*there, but I designed it [embracing our differences workshop]
specifically for the parents and the staff.*

Although the community in which the school is situated is generally “very white” the children in the school are “constantly seeing people from other places, with different skin colours and different accents”. As previously stated, the school is part of the network of several hundred neohumanist schools run by the same socio-spiritual movement throughout the world. It is often visited by Dadas (“brother”, a monk) and Didis (“sister”, a nun) who have dedicated their life to service and spiritual teaching and who run or help out with similar projects overseas. Dadas and Didis come from different cultures and are “walking around in orange robes” – the type of clothing traditionally worn in India:

*They come and they are regularly appearing on the scene and it is nothing that anyone stares at, they [the children] all want to know who the person behind the robe is. For example, that is the soccer Dada, he plays soccer [with the children]. They immediately have to look behind the façade of any person, behind their skin, behind what their clothes are.
(Parent/Teacher)*

Teaching and learning

Apart from there being education based on ecology, neohumanist education also favours “child-centred approaches and whole child learning”. Neohumanist education aims to “facilitate the development of all levels of the human personality: physical, cognitive, creative, communicative, spiritual, social and emotional”. In the River School, great emphasis is put on a Virtues program which helps children learn and internalise moral and personal qualities. It is integrated daily with all parts of the curriculum. Some of the ethnical concepts that are encouraged and modelled include: “non-harming, truthfulness, non-stealing, universal love, simple living, cleanliness, happy heart, helpful hands, inspirational study, meditation and self-improvement”.

Within our school curriculum we have what we call the virtues program and this virtues program touches on all the different qualities and things that are good for human beings to look at, to aspire to, to make part of themselves. For example, in dealing with these issues we have made an important aspect of our virtues program to look at differences, to look at the virtue of tolerance. Then we had children discuss differences and reflect on them, do drawings and artwork, role play...

all different ways the people can express their differences, and how can we bring everything "under one hat".

Other values that are discussed in the school at various times are: peace, tolerance, creativity, positivity, justice, respect, generosity.

It may not necessarily have to be on discrimination; it could be that we look at respect. We look at respect for self, and our environment, and other countries and other people.

But they also deal with the issue of difference directly:

The view in our school is that we should look at this aspect [differences among people] from a very rational standpoint, because [there is a rational explanation] why skin is [of different colours]. So we try to take into account having kids understand that there is a oneness between all of us... lets look at unity, lets appreciate the variety of cultural differences, physical differences. So at different times we had programs to honour the differences of the children.

In the River School diversity is seen as an extremely positive thing:

For us, the more diversity that comes to the school, the better. It gives the children an opportunity to actually integrate and to understand differences of human cultures.

And because of the nature of our society it is really important that we build the links rather they let them fall apart.

Meditation

Apart from promoting multiculturalism within the curriculum the other activity that is seen as important in addressing this issue, and that is incorporated into the routine of the River School, is regular meditation. Children do meditation three days a week and the values programme two days a week. At the beginning, the school attempted to:

join them together but we found that we'd do a little bit on values a little bit on meditation and it became a bit tokenistic. Rather than if we are really going to do meditation... we are actually going to go through the process properly. If we are going to do values we are really going to go through this process properly.

The connection between meditation and universalism is in approaching "the unity and the diversity of all of creation" not only on rational but also on spiritual and emotional levels:

In regards to meditation and yoga perhaps the children are not able to go as deep in their meditation as adults are able to, but it is setting up a habit, a neural network, brain network within the children, a habit of going inside. And I have seen some of the children being able to really quiet their minds, to sit very peacefully. And I feel that having done mediation myself for many many years, that the more we are able to go more deeply inside ourselves the more we are able to feel this neohumanistic philosophy, to feel what it means to be in unity with other personalities and other human beings. I feel, maybe because [the movement] is so much a part of myself, I feel that it is so logical, so rational and so natural that we see creation as a unity, we feel the unity, and we approach the differences from that standpoint.

Because the teaching and learning approaches focus on the “whole child”, the school tries to concentrate on the causes of racism rather than exclusively on the behaviour. It focuses on both the rational and emotional sides of the child:

It's coming from the staff, this sense that it is not just about looking at the nice things, you are not just trying to pretend that we are all just these lovely sweet people, but also realizing that we do have darker sides and that is important in regard to racism. Because there is a part of every person who will want to find why they are special and one of the ways they are going to say they are special is to make somebody else not special. And we can't pretend that that doesn't exist... and we can't tie a band aid[‡] over the top of it. We have to be able to look at it and say why? Are you fearful, are you afraid? And often this comes through when we are dealing with conflicts with kids. [We] are trying to find out what is actually working underneath it, not just punishing the behaviour. We ask why did you do that, what were you feeling, what was in your body?

For example, [they might be] feeling vulnerable, feeling trapped in a situation, feeling disempowered and that is why they might [be trying to get] the power back.

Normally we bring both children together to have them understand that such abusive language hurts, it hurts other children. We understand that it is part of the growing of children, growing up in a society which has such diverse culture and such diverse differences. It is a learning

[‡] A small adhesive cover sold to protect cuts and grazes from infection; Australian colloquialism for hiding the ugly or disturbing.

process that children also have to go through. So we don't take it as a threat to the school ... we don't see it as a negative thing. We treat it as a situation in which the children can increase their understanding and growth as far as what are racial issues, what is racism, what is being a human being in relationship to other human beings.

This attitude is in relation to the underlying philosophy, the Tantric philosophy which is...

Often being misunderstood. Issues that we see at the school, issues and obstacles and problems are there for us to learn from, they are there not to avoid but we grow by coming in contact with these obstacles, we shouldn't avoid them. It might be more difficult this way, but growth is also ensured not only in the individual but also in collective arena.

The incidents are not only seen as the learning experience for the children involved but also as a learning experience for parents and the school in general. Even the person being bullied learns from the incident:

They understand more and more where [those who bully] are coming from. They come from perhaps, not such a broad-minded family, [specific] cultural situation and do not really understand. So for them [children being bullied] to see that other children don't have that understanding [of difference] also increases their tolerance to a certain degree.

Cooperative learning

Other aspects of teaching and learning focus not on individual achievement but on teamwork and therefore favour cooperation over competition. Students study all academic subjects in small group settings. In the Lillypillies (Year 1) and Gumnuts classes (Year 2), the school encourages learning through group "workstations" while in middle (3-5) and big family (6-7) academic work is assigned in weekly "contracts":

We really encourage cooperative learning. Basically we really try to make it like we are a big jigsaw puzzle, every person has to find their piece, work with other people, figure out how their piece work with other people's, and then find out how the whole works. We start with words, and then try to figure out how they go together, or in the art, everyone does a picture which becomes a part of a big picture. (Teacher)

The whole idea is teaching the whole child, not just looking at the academic marks or even conformity, the biggest goal is for the children to realise their own potential and that they are unique and perfect just

the way they are. They don't have to be anything else than who they are. Their job is to experience that journey of discovering who they are, in different contexts. Neohumanism looks at all the facets, for example, at how all facets of one child fit with all the facets of another child. And from this angle anti-racism and multiculturalism would be supported.
(Teacher)

The children are encouraged to actively participate in their learning and they even have had an input on the creation of school policies. For example, the children themselves created the main school policy: "Everyone to be: Safe, Happy and Free to learn". In terms of learning, children are encouraged to "take responsibility for their own learning". Learning in a cooperative fashion fosters self-esteem and leads to greater independence:

We try to mix the structure with creativity, we allow them to be individuals but we negotiate lots of things with them. This system gives children more advantages, the children who moved on to high school all do very well academically but not only that, the comments that's come back from the teachers from high school about the children from our school is that they all have this amazing ability to work independently. They don't have this need to be told what they "must do". And they are not afraid of teachers, so they don't think; Oh, I shouldn't ask that. Children here have to take responsibility for their learning. I mean we teach them and we stick by the curriculum, but we do not believe that that is all you do. If you do a quality hour of maths 3 times a week you don't have to do that every single day. Or you might do it for half an hour every day. But then you also leave time for things like meditation, creative art and formal art, plus the value discussions, so we can fit all these things in and still get kids to come out as working on their own. The whole focus is for them to take responsibility for their behaviour and for their learning. (Teacher)

The belief in the River School is that if the children learn how to be cooperative they will also be better equipped to resolve conflicts among themselves. By taking responsibility for their behaviour and through the values program they are helped to become "active and responsible members of society".

In general, the curriculum:

As far as anti-racist curriculum [goes], [is] not so much anti-racist as pro-multiculturalism. And I actually think that those two have to go hand in hand, not just for all cultures but also a specific stance against

racism. In my own classroom, I believe it is anti-racist too but in general the curriculum is more pro-multiculturalism. I focus very specifically on multicultural programmes; we all focus on different issues of reconciliation. We incorporate multiculturalism in our virtues program, and usually what we work on is non-discrimination, for any purpose, any reason... That all people are equal. Rather than specifically pulling out race or sex, we talk about all people being equal.

The school strongly supports multicultural Australia. Also:

When we look at Australian society we always incorporate Aboriginal influences and I think that is the main focus in the school. When we talk about Australia, we talk about where Aboriginal people live, we talk about different rights, which area is sacred and where each of them lived.

The evidence of this focus is found in the statement of students regarding the way life has changed for Aboriginal people since the Captain Cook landed to Australia:

The life for Aboriginal people since the Europeans came here changed heaps; sacred places for them are now private properties, there was a kind of slavery. Now their life is futuristic like, different. Their life definitely changed and it was bad for a while, and still it is bad in some things.

In the classroom the teachers are also making use of children's various cultural backgrounds and are trying to appreciate everyone's experience:

At one stage they did a map of where their family was from and that was very very interesting, someone had a Hawaiian grandmother, someone else had an Aboriginal grand grandmother, so they can see even though they are white, that we come from many different places and I think that was an incredibly valuable thing to do.

One girl is really embarrassed to use her language, I get really excited and think it is great to know other languages, and I encourage them to use it, and she does at home, but for some reason she wouldn't [in the classroom]. As a teacher I don't want to push [the girl] ... to [use her language] but I do want her to know that I do value her experience, as equally as any other experience, whether it is mono or multicultural.

Apart from the state holidays, various other holidays are celebrated in the school:

We've celebrated Chinese New Year, it was the year of the Rabbit so we celebrated that and talked about it. So they know what the dragon

represents, etc. Then Indonesian Independence Day is coming up on the 17 of August and I intend to do something about that. Even doing something as simple as cooking... what everyone can appreciate about the culture.

Behaviour management

In the River School behaviour management is seen as very important when dealing with racism: "If they are clear on all sorts of bullying they are clear on racial bullying as well". It is seen as important to teach the children:

The language to use, instead of screaming and hitting back at someone, actually saying, I don't like what you are saying, and then being able to get support from an adult around them to deal with that.

The attitude of the teachers is also seen as important in regard to the frequency and the extent of the conflicts within the school. It is believed that calling teachers (and parents) by their first name, having family feeling and being a small school all contribute to the situation in which children are feeling "quite safe" and consequently "they don't need to take aggression on each other as much":

There is lots of room to be really loving in the school, like it is OK to hug kids and it is expected that you look after the children not just teach them, but treat them as equals, it is really important in the school and across the classroom.

The discipline management policy "probably took two years to develop properly":

It was good because a lot in the State education system was happening about changing all that. It was not like we were on our own here. Changing all this punishment thing to kids taking responsibility for their actions and when they do something that is inappropriate to actually get them to work it out (how they've done it and how they could have done it differently). And a warning system (first, second, time out), pocket system (pocket moves), etc. It worked incredibly well, but it took that time.

Conflict resolution we really focused on that, we think it is really important. And we usually talk to the kids, and sometimes we send them to talk to [the school administrator] and they hate it because she makes them talk a lot. Other times they are happy to talk to her because they are hurt and want to be heard.

There are very clear boundaries [now] though, very clear what we expect from those children. Each class has its own set of rules and the children help make those rules. What do we need to do to make this class work, children together with the teacher. And you get the kids to own their rules, something which will work for everyone. They know what is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. We always explain the behaviour that is non acceptable and we are consistent. There is a list of things (basic stuff, be safe, happy and free to learn) and also respecting each other, respecting each other's property and individuality, so they are very much aware of the boundaries. And we are very consistent, and it runs through the school.

Because some younger kids “felt threatened in the bus” the buddy system was introduced:

We also buddy them up across age, we do buddy reading and buddy writing and that is older and younger kids together. Older children chose the younger kids and their job is to make sure that the person feels safe, in the school, in the park (where the bus stops) and in the bus. That seems to work really well, it seems to stop little kids being scared.

Kids in this school are really nice to each other, even with different ages they play together. The little ones are not scared of older kids. In state schools kids are a bit nervous and scared from big kids, but we actually do buddy system here, we buddied them up, they have to just say, “Hi! how are you doing”, once a day. Not a big thing, just that, they take care of each other.

It was found that the size of the school definitely helps with the behavioural management, including management of the racist incidents:

And being a small school it is difficult for the teacher to get away with being totally not caring about prejudice. We would all know pretty soon, because something would happen. In the big state school with 600 children it is so much easier to lose an individual experience.

(Administrator)

They tease much more in the state schools, there are too many kids.

Teachers can't do much. (Students)

But even in a small school like the River School it is sometimes difficult to put the “hands straight on” when the incidents happen:

There was an incident that I didn't follow up and that has bugged me a lot since then. The girl came to me during very busy time and I asked her to wait but she was gone, and the boy (saying that “his little sister

doesn't like brown people") was also gone. So I talked (later) to the girl and I talked in general in the class but I didn't talk specifically to that boy. He is very intuitive and I think he would have known what I was on about but I thought I haven't dealt with it [well] ... So I had it in my head, that if this ever happens again, that I would immediately talk to a person.

Suggestions:

- The child that has been bullied to be immediately supported.
- To immediately talk about the issue, with both sides (all the children involved).
- Teachers to very clearly vocalise that they do not approve racist and discriminatory behaviour.
- Parents to be informed so that they can deal with the issue at home, the same day.
- Parents to talk not only to the principle but also to the teacher(s) involved
- To encourage conflict resolution involving both (all of the) children and their parents.
- Parents (from diverse cultural backgrounds) to ask the school what policies they have in place and how they have dealt with racist incidents in the past.
- Children to be taught that it is not enough just not to be racist. They should be taught that they can actually stand up for the people who are being racially discriminated against.
- Children to be taught which words to use and what to say when the incidents (involving them or other children) occur.

Where to next?

The general belief in the school was that it is very important to keep the momentum:

It is a constant thing, with every year it has to be spelt out, what harassment is, what sort of harassment they might experience and what to do.

And because the members of Ananda Marga have experienced persecution and are in general concerned about harassment and prejudice, many felt that the issue was "not going to go away":

We are constantly in this state of change, everybody is stimulated, staff are empowered in what they do, it is also about caring, also teachers are here to teach, they are not here to do policies, although they are involved in that, they are not here to do other things, they are here to teach. In most other schools there is lots of administrative work. We are trying to nurture the staff and in that process we nurture the children and the parents are then nurtured as well.

One thing that happened in the process of getting ready for this interview is that we realised that this could create something that we needed to do something about. Something is going to happen and we need to go through the process, everything is timely, and out of this is going to come a policy.

It was perceived that this is a “a growing and evolving process not only for the children but also for the staff, for the administration”.

The staff believe that there is potential in the school with its emphasis on neohumanist philosophy to appropriately and effectively deal with the issue of racism:

We feel that we are on track in our approach but we still have many more skills to develop.

Chapter 16 What is Universalism Really About?

Mahajyoti Glassman

*Let us move together. Let us sing together.
Let us come to know our minds together.
Let us share, like sages of the past,
That all individuals together may enjoy the Universe.*

—Rig Veda

We are blessed with a panorama of diversity in our world. There are the legion of physical, mental, emotional, intellectual, psychic, and spiritual capabilities as well as age, religion, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, income, interests, family, education, politics, diet, and lifestyle to mention only a few. However, instead of celebrating and enjoying these differences, there are many who with determined resolve are creating factionalism, division, and mistrust.

By the same token it is perhaps because of the complexity of the physical universe that the mind strives to anchor itself by formulating opinions, beliefs, worldviews and biases. As human beings, we have a need to define our world and our place in it so we may choose how we will interact and respond in our many relationships—to ourselves; to our animal, plant, mineral ‘relations’; to other humans; to our environment; and ultimately to the Cosmic Self.

While we may consider ourselves open-minded, in reality, we all cultivate biases. A bias is nothing more than a preference, a mental inclination, a partiality. They cannot always be perceived as being negative. Take, for example, the case of spiritual bias. P. R. Sarkar has implied that even spiritual bias may be considered excessive in the case of the spiritual aspirant who is not only becoming alienated from society but is abrogating oneself from the responsibility of performing service to others. Every individual has the burdensome task of maintaining internal equilibrium. If a bias becomes too skewed in either direction, one may run the risk of becoming prejudicial. How does one ascertain that a bias is imbalanced?

When it interferes with the proper development of oneself and/or others through inflicting an injury by thought, word, or deed.

The maximum development of the society will be reached when there is balanced development in the physical, mental, and spiritual spheres.

P. R. Sarkar

Stereotypes are generalizations based on assumptions. They can frequently be based on inaccurate information and personal opinions rather than fact or experience. Consideration of the great diversity within a group is not apparent in a true stereotype or differentiations due to time, place, person or evolutionary trends.

All of these—bias, prejudice, and stereotype—are primarily learned from our parents, although they are reinforced by the media, music, school textbooks, and advertising. Prejudices seem to thrive especially in the absence of first hand experience. They can become intensely rigid stereotypes based on fear, ignorance, habit, or lack of exposure, transforming into a singularly stubborn barrier which cannot be dispelled even in the face of the most rational logic.

We limit the opportunities for expansion not only for ourselves but for the world community by adhering to or by not confronting negative bias, prejudice, and stereotypes when we encounter them in the classroom. While the educational community has been touting its 'anti-bias' curricula for some time, the pro-universal outlook is an approach which is more comprehensive and deserves serious consideration. It may not be really possible or advisable to totally eliminate personal bias, but rather to seek to synchronize our biases and opinions in order to direct ourselves toward greater horizons of open-mindedness, open-heartedness, and tolerance.

Dharma means the balanced states of all aspects of human life.

P. R. Sarkar

Bias in literature

Some of the most prevalent prejudices and stereotypes being challenged worldwide are gender and racial issues as well as ethnic discrimination. While the Checklist is primarily directed toward gender and racial bias, it can be expanded to include any targeted groupism. This guide can be applied not only when we are selecting books to read but also when we are creating or sharing stories, experiences, and songs in the classroom. When reviewing the Checklist, ask yourself these questions:

- What happens to one's self esteem when others perform all of the brave and important deeds?
- What happens to one's self esteem when restrictions are imposed on the behaviors of a particular group?

Checklist for reviewing bias in books, stories, literature, and songs

Illustrations and character development

- What are the preferences? Boys vs. girls. Thin body types vs. other types.
- Who are the active 'doers' and who are the inactive observers?
- Are the achievements of girls or women based on their own initiative and intelligence, or due to their good looks or relationships to boys?
- Are people of color, lower social status, or women in essentially supporting roles or simply observers?
- Who possesses the power, takes charge of leadership, and makes the important decisions?
- Are minorities in passive or subservient roles?
- Are people of color or certain social status depicted exclusively in ghetto-like environments?
- Are negative judgments implied of non-white or non-dominant characters?
- Whose interest is a particular character really serving?

Writing, story line, standard of success

- To gain acceptance or approval do the participants in the story have to be extraordinarily excellent or an exceptionally high achiever, such as winning in sports, getting "A's" in school, receiving awards, etc.?
- How is financial success depicted?
- Are scenes portrayed in middle class suburban-like settings?
- How are the characters dressed?

- How are family relationships depicted? (In African-American families, is the mother always dominant? In Latino families, are there always lots of children?)
- Are norms established which limit any child's aspirations and self-concept?

Resolution of problems

- How are problems presented and resolved?
- Are certain types of people "the problem"?
- Is oppression misrepresented or inevitable?
- Due to depression of economy and/or environment, is passive acceptance or active resistance preferable?*

There is one aspect for which there is no tolerance in neohumanistic education and that is for anything that hampers the development of the complete personality.

...we do not exclude anything or anyone, nor will we do so in the future, because we want to utilize the services of all.

P. R. Sarkar

Pro-active language

Attention needs to be brought to the language and words that we use in the classroom. To demonstrate acceptance of all genders, it is necessary for the teacher to make adjustments or to rotate masculine/feminine usage so that particular pronouns are not favored in songs, stories, and conversational language. Certain words may be thoughtfully modified such as fire fighters, rather than firemen.

By honoring all students unconditionally and being all inclusive, a certain dynamic element blossoms forth. When universalism is enthusiastically embraced, new attitudes begin to emerge laying the foundation for personal transformation by adding dignity to the lives of everyone. A new sense of self and community is fostered.

* Adapted from *10 Quick Ways to Analyze Children's Books for Racism and Sexism* by the Council on Interracial Books for Children.

Every individual or community will advance by virtue of its own inner vitality and assist in the collective fulfillment of the entire humanity.

P.R. Sarkar

Celebrating diversity

There have existed in some schools the tendency to be overly conscientious about what is introduced into the classroom to assure that no individual or family is offended. In one case Thanksgiving was being discounted because it was originally a religious pilgrimage. Birthdays were avoided due to the possible offensiveness to certain religious groups who do not honor birthdays. Halloween was omitted because it was originally practiced by pagans or was perceived as provoking fear. And, of course, everyone in America knows that St Patrick and St Valentine's days were perpetrated by certain religious leaders and so, one by one, every cause for celebrating unity was banished.

The greatest obstacle in the collective progress of the human race is the ignorance of the individual mind. Knowledge is for all. It should be open and free like the light and air of the sky.

P. R. Sarkar

At Morning Star Preschool this past December we celebrated Hanukkah, a Jewish holiday of miracle, commemorating determination of faith; Christmas, honoring the birthday of the spiritual leader of Christianity; and Kwanzaa, an Afro-American holiday respecting the heritage of a vital segment of our American community. All of our families loved this diversity of celebration. The students who grew up in these traditions expressed open appreciation of our respect for their specialities. Everyone in the school benefited from these experiences for in every religion or ethnic group there can be found universal elements that are inspiring for all.

Religion, in the sense of Dharma, is the unifying force in humanity.

P. R. Sarkar

To recognize and respect ethnicity in the classroom, the teacher can make enormous contributions towards maintaining an individual's healthy balance of self esteem. Differences can be acknowledged rather than ignored. Teachers can provide opportunities to enable children to appreciate and recognize their own ethnicity as well as others. These types

of activities endeavor to connect the teacher to the student as well as bonding the students to one another.

The sole cause of the internal weakness of human society is its ignorance.

P.R. Sarkar

Pro-universalism

In America there is often great national pride taken in the fact that we have become a “great melting pot” of ethnicities. However, in the process of Americanization we have all become rather like one homogenized mass. Most of us do not celebrate the customs and traditions of our ancestors, much less speak our original languages. In neohumanist education we are not seeking to maintain the melting pot analogy, but rather the “tossed salad” paradigm where it is the differences of the individuality of the ingredients that contribute to the enjoyment of the experience rather than the blending and synthetic assimilation into mono-culture.

Diversity is the law of nature; uniformity will never occur.

P. R. Sarkar

Exercises in universalism

As neohumanist educators, we guarantee that everyone’s point of view is important, allowing no one to think that they are less valuable. Dissimilarities are respected. Teachers and students work together to embark on the journey of celebrating diversity, observing and recognizing differences without judgment. How are we different? Dates of birth, food preferences, hand color, eye color, pets, hair, hand preference in writing, emotional responses to various situations, interests, favorite colors, abilities, physical height, sports activities. These opportunities afford us the understanding that we are actually a part of many groups and that membership in one group doesn’t totally explain or define who we are.

Humanity must be guided to follow the path of synthesis and not the path of analysis.

P. R. Sarkar

Teachers facilitate positive interactions between the students when remarking on our similarities and differences, focusing on the uniqueness and individuality of every person as a wonderful gift! Together we look at and change those things that prevent differences from being valued.

We must discover unity in the midst of colorful diversity.

P. R. Sarkar

Reenactments of specific historical events can help students feel the unfairness of discrimination—such as Rosa Parks’ actions which led to the ending of racial segregation on buses. Other compassion building stories and lesson plans can be found to reinforce kindness and caring: 1) Dancing to music. When the music stops, everyone gives a friend a ‘bear hug’. 2) Gently washing off the dust that has collected on leaves of indoor plants. 3) Practicing how to rescue a friend who has been hurt on the playground. 4) Not only caring for a school pet but learning when it needs something. 5) Drawing ‘get well pictures’ for another student. 6) Collecting trash and litter which has accumulated on Mother Earth in the neighborhood. 7) Having pairs of students paint a picture together. 8) Drawing a picture for a friend with the caption “I like you because -----”. 9) Saving pennies, nickels and dimes for a worthy cause. 10) Taking time to smile, laugh and have fun together.

Self actualization

Beyond ethnicity lies our emotional being. How are our students coping with fear and anxiety? Do we see inferiority complex so acute that it manifests as superiority complex? Is there defeatism, perfectionism? Complexes can be challenging to identify and assess. Frequently when there is a deficit in one area, the mind will overcompensate in the opposite direction. “I am the prettiest one here”. “Isn’t my picture the nicest one in the class?” “I’m the strongest one”. “I can’t”. Universalism includes providing an emotional safety net, replacing mental imperfections and weaknesses with positivity and encouragement. Through the application of our intellect and intuition, the neohumanist teacher seeks to understand each student, supporting them to bring feelings and insecurities into a greater balance.

Just as that little bird confined to a cage developed rheumatism in its wings, the human mind, due to constant negative thoughts, gets paralyzed.

P.R. Sarkar

In our strategies for empowering children to overcome their negative tendencies and/or complexes, simple conflict resolution skills can carry them a great distance. Instead of teachers always intervening in student conflicts and disputes, we can provide them with “tools” to support their

desire to be self sufficient and independent. We can “set the stage” for role playing to practice acceptable ways of how to respond when someone: 1) hurts your friend, 2) hits or bites you, 3) is hurt, 4) says your dress is not as pretty as hers’, 5) will not share, 6) calls you a name, 7) gets in front of you in line, 8) removes leaves from a bush, 9) says ‘he’ is stronger than you are, or 10) says ‘I don’t want to play with you’. There are many techniques that can be offered to to build a logically based foundation to cope with hurtful or painful behaviors which strengthens compassion for oneself and others.

Every human mind is but the diversified individual manifestation of that same indivisible Cosmic Mind.

P. R. Sarkar

Psychological differentiations

In the classroom the teacher distinguishes vast differences of personalities as well as learning styles. Some students will flow along quite smoothly and effortlessly. Others may seem to be an infinite source of conspiracy and mutiny with an ever increasing appetite for consuming vast quantities of the teacher’s time and energy. Still others may ever so slowly be quietly struggling to where they tenuously take that next step.

Every individual has a preferred method of learning and integrating information. For example, some are more visual, some auditory, tactile or kinesthetic. The most effective teacher applies all the sensorial avenues of experience into instruction in order to maximize the whole potential of every child. From time to time the ideal teacher researches and seeks to expand one’s knowledge of various types of physiological, psychological, and emotional difficulties that challenge learning and social situations. A brief study of diverse communication and therapeutic methodologies assists in the development of positive strategies to ensure the progressive forward movement of every student to the best of each teacher’s ability.

You should always be vigilant that not a single individual of our collective body is in the least neglected or ignored.

P. R. Sarkar

Universalism in the curriculum and in the environment

Young children are masters of keen scientific observation. By two or three years of age they have already been taking notes and are ‘testing out’ opinions, biases, prejudices, and stereotypes on their peers for validation. What steps can a teacher take to implement universalism in the classroom?

In order to promote that inner spirit of welfare and caring for the collective society, it is necessary to examine:

- What kinds of pictures do we have on our walls?
- Whose perspective is heard? Whose is silenced?
- How does the dominant culture and its biases affect our non-dominant groups?
- What are the power and equality issues?
- What multicultural units are presented?
- What kinds of festivals or events are celebrated?
- What types of music are sung and played?

While self interest is a natural development, it needs to be kept in perspective. Diversity is to be presented with sensitivity, nonjudgmental in approach, and in small bites so that it is easily digested. Teachers show by example that it is possible to honor, validate, and respect traditions that differ from one's own.

Pictures from magazines and newspapers as well as posters mounted on the walls can further advance self esteem. Some children need more positive images of themselves because such images can't be found in their home or community. Others need positive images of people who are different.

The fun of playing with multicultural materials such as musical instruments, baskets, dress, dolls, books and songs can propel students across barriers of prejudice.

The influence of the environment has a tremendous impact on the human mind.

P. R. Sarkar

Introspection

When introducing universalism in the classroom, teachers are compelled to practice constant self examination. When designating cleaning or working activities, do we have girls straightening up the dress up and dishes area while the boys are putting away the blocks? What anxieties or fears that we possess are we consciously or unconsciously transmitting to our students? These questions enable the teacher to adopt a more humble and tentative attitude about the accuracy of our own personal judgments and opinions. But to possess a truly universal outlook, we must be aware

of what Africans, Asians, Latin Americans, and Native Peoples say, and what they think which requires being open to hearing other points of view.

Bioculture and reduction of prejudice or fear

How much are we extending universalism to the environment and ultimately to the world community? For example, how do you feel about: rabbits, cats, deer, baby animals, doves, and dolphins? And then, how do you feel about: snakes, spiders, wolves, cockroaches, bees, bugs, and carnivorous animals especially when they are eating? We all subscribe to certain biocultural prejudices and biases. One of the most effective means of breaking down any extreme prejudice (especially one that is grounded in fear) is by maximizing the knowledge base. We can learn all about the subject by broadening one's informational background. Teachers and students examine how each being interacts with humans, as well as other plant and animal species, with particular emphasis on its contributions to the world society.

Real education leads to a pervasive sense of love and compassion for all creation.

P.R. Sarkar

Summary

Neohumanist schools embody the microcosmic reflection of what we feel the most ideal society can be. What is the single most important factor in the lives of children next to their parents? Teachers.

It is the teacher's responsibility to expose students to the versatility of creation. Although it may be human nature to fall back on prejudice or stereotypes when encountering circumstances beyond our experience, by constantly introducing new situations and information, we show our students how to replace fear and apprehension of differences and the unknown with logical and progressive thinking skills and practices.

The psychic environment is more powerful in human life than the physical environment.

P.R. Sarkar

At the same time we are refining and upgrading the incomplete picture of the world community which is emerging on the canvas of the student's mind eye, learning to look at things from another point of view.

Throughout this process the teacher advances concern and compassion for the well being of all.

Unite the entire humanity under one banner.

P.R. Sarkar

To remain anchored in universalism is an endless journey and relentless struggle in which conflicts are inevitable. As we continue to practice universalism in our daily lives and learn to identify bias, prejudice, and stereotypes; we are opening the windows to diversity, greater balance, and personal integrity. Fundamentally to cultivate universal outlook is to change one's perspective and extend equal respect to all differentiations existing in our world family. In the teacher's continued effort to transform our classrooms into a safe haven from the hostility of the world, we encourage and expand the understanding of universal well being and teach magnanimity of mind. The students' strengths can be supported through the emphasis of neohumanist values and building on the foundation of their relationship with the Cosmic Self, remembering that He is the starting point.

He is the originating point and He is the culminating point of all creatures. Thus there lies an inherent tie of fraternity among human beings, among all living creatures. You are all spiritual aspirants. You are all devotees. You are all going to be one with the Creator.

P.R. Sarkar

A summary of steps to implementing universalism in the neohumanist classroom

1. Make multicultural and multi-diversity displays, materials and curricula which reflect more than the local dominant culture, bioculture, race, language, ecosystems, etc.
2. Exhibit art, tools and artefacts; enjoy musical instruments, foods, costumes, and articles from other cultures.
3. Expand curriculum frontiers to address issues of bias and the joys of diversity, including the celebration of holidays and social events which grace many cultural, racial, ethnic, and other groups.
4. Present auditory experiences (via live performances, CDs, cassettes, etc.) of various cultures and indigenous peoples, languages, music, songs as well as a diversity of wildlife and sounds of nature

5. Introduce classroom activities and conversations where children may discuss similarities and differences, likes and dislikes, in a supportive, non-judgmental, and compassionate environment.
6. Design visual displays of men, women, and children in and out of the house engaged in non-traditional, non-stereotypical tasks, etc. Closely inspect our interactions with students to ensure minimization of gender stereotyping during activities and communications in the classroom.
7. Create visual displays of 'differently abled' persons; children of all ages; elderly people; and others of various backgrounds working and playing. Initiate class discussions and observations of these 'specialties'.
8. Reinforce respect for all beings, forces of nature, inanimate, mineral, plant, animal, human, Spirit.
9. Resist the tendency to discriminate against any animal, plant, or mineral because of its dharma or innate tendency. Maximize the existing knowledge and understandings.
10. Initiate and carry out activities with children that question and take action against injustice not only against humanity but the earth, various habitats, and species.
11. Use daily conversations, events, music, dramas, books, dances, and stories to better establish universalism within ourselves and our students.
12. Embrace opportunities to individually and collectively discuss remarks that are based in bias or intolerance as well as appropriate responses.
13. Practice exercises in conflict resolution and general interactive communication skills among staff as well as students.
14. Strive to continuously re-examine our personal assumptions and attitudes, to re-educate and to deepen our personal understandings of universalism for ourselves and for others.
15. Endeavor to value diverse perspectives and points of view.
16. Construct alternative strategies for accommodating students with unique learning styles and/or capabilities.
17. Assemble a plan for supporting students in achieving a stronger psycho-emotional foundation, particularly when certain complexes or imbalances become evident.

18. Develop and implement character strengthening activities with an emphasis on yama and niyama† for the staff and students.
19. Interact with children’s families in authentic, benevolent, and respectful ways.
20. Strengthen the children’s and staff’s abilities to seek shelter in the Supreme and to remember our ultimate Goal.

From this very auspicious moment, you should take a vow to progress individually and collectively and build a new society on the planet Earth. We have come to build a new society, to construct and to remain engaged in constructive works throughout our life. This would be the greatest mission in our life.

P.R. Sarkar

† *Yama and Niyama* are the ten ethical principles that underpin neohumanist practice and are described as the corner stone of human development. They are the first two steps of Astanga yoga: non-harm; benevolent truth/speech; non-stealing; identifying with the cosmic; non-acquisitiveness; purity of mind and body; mental balance; personal sacrifice for the good of all; regular reading, thinking and conversing on spiritual subjects; a meditation practice that makes Cosmic Consciousness the goal of your life.

Conclusion The Futures of Neohumanist Education

Sohail Inayatullah

Is neohumanist education a plausible future? This chapter explores this question, asking why we are optimistic, why do we believe a new educational philosophy is possible?

The weights are certainly stacked against an alternative future that challenges the *status quo* of student preparation for global competitive capitalism (or national economic development). Indeed, that education can successfully prepare students for any future other than the conservatism and standardization of the feudal and industrial templates remains a question.

Education, as Foucault and many others have argued,¹ while claiming to prepare for the future is essentially about social control, creating disciplined bodies and ordered minds to reinforce the present. And even where there is change in other parts of society, education lags behind. It does so because, among other reasons, schools, in many nations, are citizen controlled. Citizens seek to replicate their learning experiences (it was good enough for them). And even where Ministries of Education define curricula, they are still responsible to parents, who seek to influence the educational. While citizens are willing to forgo their evaluative power to experts in the areas of health, economic policy, and defense, in education, each person is an expert. Education thus has multiple stakeholders attempting to influence its content, process and structure—parents, principals, teachers, Ministries, the press and students. As Milojević argues, summarizing Cuban, schools “are multipurpose, many-layered, labor intensive, relationship-dependent and profoundly conservative”.²

The context for education, currently—the Global situation—does not look promising either—environmental catastrophes (mass species extinction; global warming with a possible Ice Age to come; massive pollution and congestion in large global, particularly, Asian cities); instability in international relations, with the relative decline of one hegemony—the USA—and the rise of another—China—with all the ensuing tensions and

deep conflicts this is likely to create; a move to the political Right throughout the world, with the 'other' increasingly being the object of fear (the politics of the gaze where those who look different are blamed for social ills); and politics moving toward border and boundary protectionism—with the nation–state as fortress.

At a macro level, I see four types of protectionism in opposition to the openness and expansion that neohumanism seeks. In the North and South—there is economic protectionism, the fear of the rise of India and China and thus loss of jobs; social protectionism, the fear of the migrant; spiritual protectionism, the Left's fear of a post-secular world; and religious protectionism—fear of other religions and the assumption that one's own is the best.

Neohumanism, in contrast, seeks to break out of current borders and boundaries creating a softer self and an ethics of love and devotion for all the inanimate and animate beings of the universe. It seeks to protect only the tender dimension of what it means to be human, to help create a gentler society, in the words of Elise Boulding and Ivana Milojević.³

Certainly a tall* order in a world where hyper-masculinity has become more of the norm.

Even futures thinking in general, without neohumanist thought, has yet to take off in educational settings.⁴ The reasons are varied but they include:

1. Educators (in common with other fields) have strong disciplinary boundaries and resist information that they did not help create. Why then would they accept anything as personally challenging as neohumanism (challenging religion, secularism, humanism in favor of spirituality and universalism)?
2. The future is discounted, and educators are overwhelmed. They seek how-to workbooks not dramatic changes in ethos. And those who do change ethos still have to negotiate the treacheries of governmental bureaucracies and university hierarchies.
3. Education infrastructure, both physically and in terms of imagined/envisioned development, is still from the nineteenth century. That is, classes are still designed with the image of teacher as a fountain of information and student as empty glass or as clay to be molded by authority. Mutual co-evolutionary learning, as in neohumanism, is considered too difficult to achieve as it requires inner

* The language of size betrays us here.

reflection and expanded responsibility by all learners (students, teachers, administrators and parents).

4. The digital era may have begun, but our organizing principles are still from the industrial era; which, while a few hundred years old, still remain dominant. Thus, even with digital technologies the structure of the classroom —desks all in a line—remains intact. If the digital revolution is considered challenging, how will neohumanism find a home (as it is Gaia spirit tech—sustainability, spirituality plus digitalization)?

But let us take some words of inspiration from Fred Polak⁵

Many utopian themes, arising in fantasy, find their way to reality. Scientific management, full employment, and social security were all once figments of a utopia-writers' imagination. So were parliamentary democracy, universal suffrage, planning, and the trade union movement. The tremendous concern for child-rearing and universal education, for eugenics, and for garden cities all emanated from the utopia. The utopia stood for the emancipation of women long before the existence of the feminist movement. All the current concepts concerning labor, from the length of the work week to profit-sharing, are found in the utopia. Thanks to the utopianists, the twentieth century did not catch man totally unprepared.

Yes, the structure of resistance to change is deep but alternative images beckon.

As Oliver Markley⁶ argued many decades ago, we are in the middle of an historical shift where the image of the future leads. The image—at least one image—is more and more about sustainability instead of industrial expansionism; global governance instead of the nation-state; gender partnership instead of male domination; respect for and the rights of nature instead of man over nature; spirituality instead of religion; communication and understanding as central to solving problems instead of the search for the techno-fix; and technology as embedded in nature and evolution instead of as a neutral tool. However, our reality remains feudal and industrial—it is this tension between the aspirational (the future we can almost see) and the unnecessary brutality of what we have that creates our current anxieties and despair.

And yet, if we wish for a different future, another vision of education is pivotal. Writes Giroux: ⁷

Radical pedagogy needs to be informed by a passionate faith in the necessity of struggling to create a better world. In other words, radical pedagogy needs a vision—one that celebrates not what is but what could be, that looks beyond the immediate to the future and links struggle to a new human possibilities. This is a call for a concrete utopianism.

Thus, while history weighs us down and globalisation, digitalization, geneticization, global demographic shifts push us into the unknown, alternative images of the future fight for our attention. Will global digitalization qua capitalism succeed? Will the current nation–state system, with education for national development and skills to compete, continue its dominance? Will we revert back to the religious protectionism of the Caliphate or the Church, or will neohumanism or other similarly different futures based on spirituality and sustainability transform the world?

These are broad issues. To return to the opening question of “is neohumanism plausible?”, in the next part of this essay, I will take one particular issue—the neohumanist focus on nature, and its rights.

Nature and its rights

Among the key tenets of neohumanism is a world where nature has rights—it is not seen as other but an integral part of who we are. How the weakest are treated is an indicator of the success of neohumanism. Will nature have rights? In what ways? This is not to argue that nature will or should be alive exactly the way humans are (although one can make that case) but that rights are epistemic and political—rights are hard fought discursive battles (as are futures).

As Christopher Stone has argued: “throughout legal history, each successive extension of rights to some new entity has been theretofore, a bit unthinkable. We are inclined to suppose the rightlessness of rightless ‘things’ to be a decree of Nature, not a legal convention acting in support of the status quo”.⁸

Our history of rights can be seen as a battle between inclusion and exclusion—between I-thou relationships and I-it relationships. The forces of exclusion have not been the same, they have changed through history—sometimes they have been centralized empires, other times centralized religious systems, and other times nation–states operating in a world-capitalist system. They have also been elders, siblings, bosses and all the other petty tyrants we must negotiate with day after day. And they have been these external forces internalized in us—the tyrant within.⁹

We have consistently defined others as less than ourselves: once done so, then every possible heinous crime can be committed against them.^{†10} Globalism (as an economic image) is the latest victory in defining others as somehow less—‘become more efficient, more productive, export more, be all that you can be’ is the narrative. You are fundamentally a producer and consumer, and unless you do the former competitively, your ability to engage in the latter will be restricted. Globalism in its economic definition merely continues the language of colonialism and developmentalism—the same sense of inevitability is there, the same recourse to the grand masters of social evolution—Comte and Darwin—is there. Many responses to globalism follow the same simplistic pattern, well seeing it as a conspiracy of the powerful, of the West, of capital, instead of understanding the deeper and more complex patterns of history.

The basic presumption of globalism is one of hierarchy, framed neutrally as comparative advantage but in fact a social-genetic-cultural model of who is civilized and who is barbaric. Education in this model is essentially about skilling individuals to compete harder and faster so they can be at the top of the chain (and thus write off other ‘races’ as naturally uncivilized). Notions hinging on the ability of education to cultivate the mind, to develop alternative futures, and to instil a mission to change the world are the casualties of this type of globalisation.

But we can take a different tack? What if we seriously took, for example, the Tantric Indian and Buddhist civilizational worldview wherein all of life, including technology, is alive? Or the American Indian, as developed by Jamake Highwater,¹¹ who reminds us that it is the collective that is alive, existing in a relationship of sharing, caring and gratitude, not dominance, or James Lovelock’s theory of Earth as a living system.¹² All these, as Eisler¹³ has argued, focus on partnership education.

Again, this alternative reading of globalisation does not necessarily mean a totally horizontal world where all have equal rights, as in the Western perspective or a collectivized “Father knows best” vertical world. Rather it means a world where there are layers of reality, where mind is in all things

[†] Milojević has the following stages: (1) You create the category of ‘the other’ (even if that other was until recently part of ‘us’). (2) You attach to ‘the other’ the attribute of ‘the less’. (3) You create the sense of threat, ‘them’ coming after ‘us’. (4) You glorify heroic fighting and sacrifice for ones own people/land. (5) You actively prosecute opinions/ideologies that are trying to resist the above process (1-4). (6) When confronted with your own deeds, you deny them or justify them with “Others are also doing it”, or “It’s a war”.

from humans to animals to plants and, even, dare we say, to technology (robots, for example).

Education in the world would be focused on the whole person—body, mind, and spirit—and on capacity: the confidence, to create alternative and desired futures within an ethical framework.

This would mean a world with some rights for animals (and even plants[‡] as well)—a vegetarian world; one cannot love the collective if one eats the individual, the tantrica might tell us. By vegetarian, we are not only situating the personal in the political, but reminding us that behind our collective food habits is an anti-ecology regime, an anti-life regime, an anti-health regime, that is, our eco-system is at stake,¹⁴ our health would all be better if we saw animals as being not part of the Darwinian chain of life, the circle of life, but as part of an ecology of consciousness.

But, you will say, this is an ethnocentric argument. We are meat-eaters. Evolution calls us to slay the weak.

Yes, rights then are ethnocentric and more often than not human-centric. The extension of rights—in this case to animals—has always been unthinkable, the impossible, and yet we have not had any level of human progress without the extension of rights to those we previously considered not-worthy. Evolution can be seen as a survival of the fittest or as enhancing our capacity for compassion.

In an essay titled, “Visioning a Peaceful World”, Johan Galtung writes: “Abolition of war is similar to what the people fighting against slavery and colonialism, abject exploitation and patriarchy were and are up against. They won, or are winning. We live in their utopia, which then proved to be a realistic utopia. So is ours: a concrete utopia for peace”.¹⁵

The context for this is a new science as well—not losing the openness of its methodology—but being critically self-reflective, exploring its assumptions, including that of openness. As well, an alternative science would have an inner dimension as well, bringing in spiritual dimensions, at least as context, if not as evidence.¹⁶ Darwin too, as in the work of David Loye, would need to be rethought, focusing less on competition and survival of the fittest and more on love as central to evolution.¹⁷ Asks Loye, why is Darwin associated with survival of the fittest when he wrote far

[‡] Should we then not eat plants becomes a key question—certainly there is some evidence that plants feel ‘pain’ but this would be qualitatively different from what humans or animals feel. Where one draws the border is crucial and as we ‘evolve’ it will keep changing.

more about love and moral sensibilities. “Could it be that Darwin had actually written that it was *caring for others, moral sensitivity and cooperation* (for they used “mutuality” in place of the word “cooperation” back then) that mainly drives ahead human evolution?”.¹⁸ While the scientific evidence for the image of the future as pulling us forward remains fleeting, for social evolution, the image of the future is pivotal. The world we imagine, we desire, plays a part in the world we create.¹⁹

This gives us grounds for cautious optimism—the past has been bleak but a new dimension of globalisation is our capacity to collectively reflect on who we are, and make wiser decisions as to where we desire to go. Indeed, biologist Elisabeth Sahtouris argues that global warming can become a global peace process, as the challenge is worldwide and it is only through cooperative scientific, social and educational cooperation that the challenge can be met.²⁰

Inclusion and rights

As much as history has been about the exclusion of rights; it has also been about the advancement of rights. Glossing human history, I argue that even while there are certainly cyclical dimensions to history (the rise and fall, the strengthening and weakening, the back and forth of class, civilization, *varna*, nation), there are downward stages (war, the planet under environmental threat), and there is also a linear movement toward more rights, towards laying bare power.

Globally, and particularly in the European context, there has been a succession of revolutions, each one granting increased rights to a group that had been exploited by the dominant social class and limiting the powers of those at the top.

(1) The revolt of the peasants against feudalism (the late middle ages, the fourteenth century)—increased rights for peasants.

(2) The revolt of aristocrats against clergy (church/state)—wherein church power was contested (modernity)—the breakdown of Church dogma and the development of scientific thinking.

(3) The revolt of aristocrats against the king, a constitutional revolution as in the English Glorious Revolution of the seventeenth century, a process started much earlier with the Magna Carta in the thirteenth century.

(3) The revolt of bourgeois against the aristocrats and clergy. This was the French revolution and gave political expression to the ideals of the

Enlightenment which saw the victory for rational humanism and science against ideational church dogma.

(4) The revolt of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. This was the Russian socialist revolution of 1917 which led to, at least in the short run, increased rights for labour. In Nordic nations this was more of a gradual evolution of labour coming and staying in power and eventually creating the welfare state.

(5) Elsewhere, there was the revolt of the peasants against the city. This was Máo Zédōng's formula (the argument that the two opposing camps are the city and the rural). Pol Pot took this view to its tragic consequence. The city, however, appears to be winning although telecommunications might allow a return to the village, but at this stage it is more the Los Angelisation of the planet than the creation of a global village.

(6) More recently (and of course, part of a long term trend) has been the revolt of women against men, against patriarchy in all its forms. This is the pivotal trend of increased rights for women.

(7) The revolt of the Third World against Europe, and centralized Western institutions. This is the decolonization process, we can consider the eighteenth century American Revolution as a much earlier example of this.

(8) The revolt of nature against industrialism. This has been the Green position calling for the limits of technocracy and the creation of a culture of deep sustainability.

(9) The revolt of the indigenous against all foreign social formations, calling for the creation of a special status for them as guardians of the planet.

(10) In the last thirty years there has also been a revolt against the worldview of the nation–state and international capital, wherein social movements are aligning themselves to create a third space that is beholden neither to the prince nor merchant, neither to the inter-state system nor to global capitalism.²¹

Define or be defined

These revolutions—especially the latter ones—have not only been about increased rights but also about defining the rights discourse, deciding what constitutes a right, who defines it, and how rights are to be protected

and implemented. This is one of the crucial battles of the near term future, to define or be defined by others.

While the general trend at one level is progressive—more happiness for more people—at another level there are exaggerations of systems. One example is the victory of the Enlightenment over religious systems and traditional society which has led to a pendulum shift back to traditional tribal systems—localisms, violent ethnicity and in many ways a pre-scientific world. This tension between the modern and tribal cannot, I would argue, be resolved by staying still or going backward but through the creation of a post-rational and post-scientific world that integrates the sensate and the ideational.

Certainly then, the advancement of rights, while progressive, does not go far enough. They need to be expanded.

1. First, following Sarkar,²² we need to expand humanism to neohumanism, which struggles against the Enlightenment's anthropocentrism and argues for increased rights for plants and animals –moving us towards towards global vegetarianism and a global ecological regime.
2. Following, numerous third world activists and federalists, what is needed is to expand the concept of the Magna Carta (against the power of the king) into a neo-magna carta and develop a world government with basic human rights; rights of language, right of religion and right to purchasing power (related to this is maxi-mini wage structure wherein minimum economic rights are guaranteed).
3. A spiritual revolution against materialism and secularism, creating the possibility of not just intellectual reflection on life but reflection on the “self” of the intellect—challenging the authority of the modern and traditional ego. This is self as conscious presence beyond the self as thinker.²³

The emergence of a neohumanist future, the expansion of rights, however, will not come about through polite conferences, but as we know, through epistemic (the language/worldview battle), cultural (through a renaissance in art, music, and thought) social (the organizations of values and institutions), political (challenging state power) struggle and inner presence (bringing awareness and consciousness to our false projections). At the centre of these sites of change is education.

The process of rights

What is the possibility that neohumanism will succeed? To understand this possibility, we borrow from the work of Neal Milner. He suggests the following social process of understanding how rights are obtained.²⁴

His first stage in this theory is imagery. Here imagery stressing rationality of the potential rights-holder is necessary. This has been part of the struggle for rights of nature, since nature is not considered a rational actor. Within the neohumanist educational framework, it is the teaching and learning of vegetarianism, for one. As well, it is the learning of deep ecology—nature as part of who “we” are thus extending the definition of rationality and linking it to the other. Third, it is the spreading of the meme²⁵ of “one human family” instead of the meme of nation or empire, as they are both governed by the discourse of the brutal tribal battle of survival.

The next stage of rights emergence requires a justifying ideology. Over time, ideologies that justify the changes in imagery develop. These, according to Milner, include ideologies by agents of social control and those on the part of potential rights holders or their representatives. This book is certainly part of the process of creating a new worldview—spiritual centred; education for liberation; education to promote human ethics (including non-killing); education from within, to cultivate inner peace, for body, mind and spirit; and linking the purpose of life with the propose of education.²⁶

The next stage is one of changing authority patterns. In this phase, authority patterns of the institutions governing the emerging rights holders begin to change. This stage has yet to occur in neohumanist education and is still emergent for the rights of nature.

Milner next sees the development of “social networks that reinforce the new ideology and that form ties among potential clients, attorneys and intermediaries”.²⁷ While there are many groups focused on spiritual education, sustainability, the rights of nature and vegetarianism, they are not linked yet as social and political networks (a global political party, for example).

[§] <http://www.scholars.nus.edu.sg/cpace/infotech/cook/memedef.html>. Meme refers to ideas that self-replicate, as with genes. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines meme as: An element of a culture that may be considered to be passed on by non-genetic means, esp. imitation”.

The next stage involves access to legal representation. This is followed by routinization, wherein legal representation is made routinely available. Finally, government uses its processes to represent the emerging rights-holders.

Neohumanist education is at the mid-way phase. The image has emerged; currently it is at the stage of justifying ideology (this book is certainly part of this phase) and next is changing authority patterns, that is, Ministries of Education and school boards adopting the neohumanist vision. Routinization is still far away, and as we will see in the next section, routinization is not the only scenario or pathway.

Framing the debate as only an issue of rights qua legal expressions is limiting; rights are nested in civilizational views of space, time and other. Moreover, while for some, a civilization's rights become real when governmentalized, in other maps, rights are part of a web of relationships between self, community and the larger collective, the state, this is especially so in collectivist societies. Rights are related to ones responsibilities, to one's *dharma*.

The main point in this narrative is to note that movements have patterns—certain stages they go through.

Another way to approach this is via Richard Slaughter's t-cycle.²⁸ This cycle has the following stages.

Stage 1: the dominant paradigm is supreme—the tensions have not yet appeared.

Stage 2: there is a breakdown of meanings, tensions appear, as the dominant paradigm which worked in one phase in history no longer meets the changing needs of the population—it has not adapted, it is unable to express the emerging alternative realities.

Stage 3: a new paradigm emerges, challenging the old. This future seeks to meet the new needs.

Stage 4: the old paradigm disappears and the new one is victorious, or far more likely, meanings are negotiated, and there is some compromise—the new paradigm includes the old, or the old paradigm appropriates features of the new (for example, teaching sustainability and nature issues in school but not the full movement to neohumanism).

Neohumanism can be seen as one of the options that is emerging as there is a breakdown in meanings with the old paradigm. Merely tinkering on the edges does not suffice—the rapid industrial rise of China and then

India will only exacerbate global warming, not reduce it. Global wealth creation, while important in reducing poverty in certain parts of the world, is simultaneously dramatically increasing world wealth disparity.**

I have attempted in this chapter to present some of the causes of optimism—largely that the present crisis cannot be solved within the current worldview—that a dramatic change in worldview is needed. Education is crucial to this change. However, it is often conservative and complex—changing its framework, even when the need is dire, is far from easy.

We have so far used the rights discourse to explicate neohumanist education; we now switch to the futures discourse.

What then are the futures of neohumanism?

Profound change

The first and most hopeful one is the basis of this book—a profound paradigm change leads to neohumanism becoming the norm. Neohumanist education would thus become desired—the yardstick by which other educational systems are measured.

One could see the visible signs of neohumanism at schools—instead of a national flag there may be a Gaian flag or a flag would not even need to be at the school entrance—as education would not be about identities that could be so easily captured.

At the systemic level, the school would be electronically linked to other schools; however, the technology would be invisible. There would not be a separate computer room rather communications technology would be invisible. Perhaps there would be webcams in the eco-gardens helping monitor the organic vegetables. Technology would not be defining—communication within, between girls and boys, between students and teachers and between students and others around the world would be far more important. Calm dynamism might be a term to describe the school.

The dominant worldview would be spiritual—not ascetic or religious but an understanding that each person had a unique relationship with a

** The UN reports these figures. **1960:** The poorest 20% of the world's population only had a share of 2.3% of the global income. The top 20% of the world's population earned 70.2% of the global income. **1998:** The poorest 20% of the world's population only had a share of 1.2% of the global income. The top 20% of the world's population earned 89% of the global income. <http://poorcity.richcity.org/entundp.htm>. See the UNDP Human development reports. http://stone.undp.org/hdr/reports/view_reports.cfm?type=1

deeper dimension of themselves or the transcendent. There may be morning meditations or prayers or perhaps just silent time for reflection. Yoga, tai-chi, martial arts would likely be part of the school as well. As would sports—sports may be traditional but generally they would be far less competitive, games designed that produced individual and collective partnership and excellence. The body, mind and spirit of each person would be the focus.

The underlying myth of the school would be a garden of many individual cultures—with teachers part of the garden, their practices perhaps analogous to nutrients, perhaps to water ...

Parents too would be part of this garden. The school would be a reflection of society, not isolated from it. The world economy would be far more cooperative (leaving out the middle man) and far less corporatist or state economy run. Productivity would flourish as individuals would be true stakeholders. The Ministry of Education would only be one node.

Niche elite school

A second, more plausible future, is that neohumanist education becomes a niche system. Particular communities prefer this type of education, but generally, the state and national levels focus more on broader secular (or religious) education. Education continues business as usual activities in support of the nation-state and global capitalism. Neohumanist education is a niche for the different (intentional spiritual communities) and for the cultural creatives²⁹—those desiring a different softer world. It is expensive and only the select few can manage it. Capitalism continues but there are pockets of different measurement regimes including Triple Bottom line (profit, social inclusion and environmentalism). The process of change is slow and painful but overtime neohumanist education filters through to public schools.

Backlash

A third future is where neohumanist type schools (Steiner, Montessori, Ananda Marga, for example) are considered detrimental to national development. They are seen as promoting values that create a fifth column, that do not train young boys and girls (but especially boys) for the tough world of capitalism and even the tougher world of a planet in strife (terrorism, ecological wars and catastrophes, China-USA wars, for example). Moreover, they challenge the national religion, be it Christianity,

Islam or ... Alternative education is seen as dangerous.^{††} Funding is not denied but systemic blocks are created so that funding is nearly impossible.

Marginalised

More likely is marginalization wherein funding is allowed as long as alternative schools, schooling and education stay restricted to a few elite schools. As part of the general debate on the nature of identity, nature of diet and nature of the good life, neohumanism does not make inroads. Neohumanism, as a broader vision of the planet stays idealistic, an ethos people discuss on list serves but know full well that it is impossible. Realism remains defining; after all it is power that matters most!

Then why stay hopeful?

Which future will result? Of course, it is impossible to predict which is more likely. Writes futurist James Dator:

At least since modern times, the “real” future has been full of what others call “wild cards” or surprise unpredictable events, so it is high time [we] recognize that there is no such thing as a “normal” or “most likely” future or any of the other variations on that once-upon-a-time notion.³⁰

Plausibility becomes far more difficult to ascertain in disturbed times. There is thus a context to these scenarios—they are part of much deeper changes.

Transformations in episteme³¹

Neohumanism is only one force that promises to change how we see ourselves and others. Genetics, multiculturalism, the women's movement, postmodernism, information and communication technologies as well, promise to alter how we see nature, truth, reality and self. There are four levels to this epistemic transformation of the future of humanity.

The first is: *transformations in what we think is the natural or Nature.*³² This is occurring as the result of the confluence of numerous trends, forces, and theories. First, there is genetics and the possibility that with the advent of the artificial womb, women and men as biological beings will be secondary to the process of creation. But it is not just genetics, which changes how we see the natural, theoretical positions arguing for the social

^{††} Recently in response to Queensland Education allowing different faiths to be taught in the religious education course, Fiona Simpson responded that this may open the door to Satanism and witchcraft. <http://christianity.rinf.com/?p=156>

construction of nature also undo the primacy of the natural world. Nature is not seen as the uncontested category, rather humans create natures based on their own scientific, political and cultural dispositions. We 'nature' the world. Nature is what you make it. What this means is that identity will be far less focused on past traumas—nation or religion, but on what we want it to be. This opens up the possibility of neohumanistic identity (as well as many other configurations). The door on the past is potentially closed or becomes at least not the only door we define our future identity through.

Related to the end of nature are *transformations in what we think is the Truth*. Religious truth has focused on the one Truth: All other nominations of the real pale in front of the eternal. Modernity has transformed religious truth to allegiance to the nation–state with science and technology as its handmaidens. However, thinkers from Marx, Nietzsche, to Foucault from the West, as well as feminists and Third World scholars such as Edward Said have contested the unproblematic nature of truth. Truth is considered class-based, gender-based, culture-based, and personality-based. Knowledge is now considered particular, its arrangement based on the guiding episteme. We often do not communicate well since our worlds are so different, indeed, it is amazing we manage to understand each other at all.

The belief in one truth held traditionally by religious fundamentalists and now by scientists is under assault. Can we move towards an ecology of mind, where many ways of knowing, where truth as claimed by differing traditions is honoured, dialogued? That is, once truth has been decentred, and all perspectives are allowed, what then? Can we create a global project that unites yet respects multiplicities? Can we create a world in the context of an ecology of rights—interpenetrating rights, their expansion enhancing each other?³³ Or are there non-negotiable fundamentals that do not allow agreement but still might allow small practical steps, taken together leading to a better world—multiple peace processes?³⁴

Again, with truth under challenge, neohumanism offers us an ethics beyond the postmodern—a way forward.

Central to the end of the modern is a *rethinking of what we consider as Real*. Our view of the real is being shaped partly by technology, specifically virtual technology and its promise, ultimately linked to the spiritual. Cyberspace has become a contender for the metaphor for the future of reality. We can enter worlds wherein the links between traditional or natural physical reality and cyber/virtual reality are blurred. Will you be

you? Will I be me? As we travel these worlds, will we lose our sense of an integrated self? Where is the reality principle in these new technologies? What of human suffering and misery?

However, as the real becomes increasingly metered and sold, as reality ceased to be embedded in sacred space, becoming instead commercial real estate space, others have begun to argue that the ideational is returning, that the pendulum is shifting again. This echoes Sorokin's³⁵ idea of the need for a balance between the sensate and the ideational and Willis Harmon³⁶ argues that the physical world is only one layer of reality. The spiritual world is another. What is needed is a balance, a move towards global mind change as imaged by Rupert Sheldrake with his idea of morphogenetic fields,³⁷ Sarkar with his ideas of microvita (providing the conscious software to the hardware of the atom), Teilhard de Chardin with his idea of a noosphere,³⁸ all of which points to the notion that we are connected at a deeper layer, perhaps at the level of Gaia. Lynn Margulis takes this to the cellular level, reminding us that it is cooperation that succeeds at this minute level..³⁹

Materialism, as the global organising principle, is under threat from post-rational spiritual perspectives, the new physics and the new biology. As well, many macrohistorians⁴⁰ believe the historical pendulum is about to shift again.

Our reality is thus possibly changing. The old view of reality as only religious or the modern view of the real as physical are under threat from the postmodern view that reality is technologically created and from the ecological view which sees the real as relational, an ecology of consciousness, where there is no one point, but all selves are interactively needed.

The final level of deep *transformation is in what we think is Man*. Whether we are reminded of Foucault⁴¹ arguing that man is a recent, a modern category, and that his image will disappear like an etching on sand, about to be wiped away by the tide; or if we focus on the emergence of the women's movement as a nudge to man as centre, man as the centre of the world is universally contested. While the enlightenment removed God from the centre of the human universe, it did not remove man from the centre. The emerging worldview of robots, cyborgs, virtual realities, cellular automata, the worldwideweb, microvita as well as the dramatic number of individuals who believe in angels, all point to the end of Man as the central defining category.

We are thus witnessing transformations coming through the new technologies, through the worldviews of non-Western civilisations, through the women's movement, and through spiritual and Gaian perspectives. Taken together, these transformations point to the possibility but not certainty of the shaping of a new world.

Let me say this in different words. We are witnessing the end of modernity. What this means is that we are in the process of changes in Patriarchy (I am male); Individualism (I win therefore I am); Materialism (I shop therefore I am); Dualism (I think therefore I am); scientific dogmatism (I experiment therefore I know better or I have no values thus I am right); Nationalism (I hate the other therefore I am); and humanism (humans are the measure of all things). This is however, a long term process and part of the undoing of capitalism. All these connect to create a new world, which is potentially the grandest shift in human history. We may be in the midst of galloping time, plastic time, in which the system is unstable and thus can dramatically transform. Education can focus only on training (but for which world, which future) and creating more strategic minds (but how can one strategize when reality is being disrupted), or it can enhance our capacity to not just survive but thrive⁴² —physically, mentally and spiritually.

In this changing world, neohumanism moves suddenly from being marginal to centre stage. It offers a way forward but not based on a particular: 'ism', rather a nested and layered approach to identity, and an integrated approach to reality.

Neohumanism reminds us that we are first humans (not nations or religions) and we are with nature (not over or against) on a collective journey toward self-realization and collective prosperity.

Readings

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⁴ Jenny Gidley, Debra Bateman & Caroline Smith, *Futures in Education: Principles, Practice and Potential*, Melbourne, Swinburne University, 2004. See the works of Richard Slaughter for more on this. For

example, Richard Slaughter, *Futures Beyond Dystopia*, London, Routledge Falmer, 2004.
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⁷ H. Giroux, *Theory and Resistance in Education: A pedagogy for the Opposition*, London, Heinemann, 1983, 242, quoted in Ivana Milojević, *op cit.*, 256.

⁸ Christopher Stone, *Should Trees Have Standing?: Towards Legal Rights for Natural Objects*, Los Altos, California, William A. Kaufman, 1974/1988.

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¹² www.ecolo.org/lovelock/

¹³ www.partnershipway.org

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¹⁵ Johan Galtung, 'Visioning a Peaceful World', in Glen Paige & Sarah Gilliatt (eds.), *Buddhism and Nonviolent Global Problem-Solving*, Honolulu, Hawaii, University of Hawaii, 1991, 61.

¹⁶ Susantha Goonatilake, *Toward a Global Science: Mining Civilizational Knowledge*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1998.

¹⁷ <http://www.deepleafproductions.com/utopialibrary/text/loye-darwin.html>. See David Loye, *The Great Adventure: toward a fully human theory of evolution*, Albany, State University of New York Press, 2004. And Elisabeth Sahtouris, *Earthdance: Living Systems in Evolution*, San Jose, Iuniverse books.com, 2000. <http://www.thedarwinproject.com/loye/>

¹⁸ <http://www.deepleafproductions.com/utopialibrary/text/loye-darwin.html>

¹⁹ Elise Boulding & Kenneth Boulding, *The Future: Images and Processes*, London, Sage, 1995. See Sohail Inayatullah, 'New Futures Ahead: Genetics or Microvita', *New Renaissance*, 9(2), 2000, 6-7.

²⁰ Elisabeth Sahtouris, 'Seven reasons why I remain an optimist', *Shift: At the frontiers of consciousness*, June-August, 2006, 35-41.

²¹ For more on this, see Boulding & Boulding, *op cit.*, London, Sage, 1995.

²² See Sohail Inayatullah, *Situating Sarkar*, Calcutta, Gurukula Press, 1998; and Sohail Inayatullah & Jennifer Fitzgerald (eds.), *Transcending Boundaries*, Calcutta, Gurukula Press, 1998.

²³ See the works of Eckhardt Tolle, including *A New Earth*, New York, Penguin, 2005.

²⁴ Neal Milner, 'The Emergence of Rights', Proposal to the National Science Foundation, Honolulu, Hawaii, University of Hawaii Department of Political Science, 1980.

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²⁶ See Milojević, *op cit.*, 205-211.

²⁷ *Ibid*, 4.

²⁸ See Richard Slaughter with Marcus Bussey, *Futures Thinking for Social Foresight*, Tamsui, Tamkang University, 2005.

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- ²⁹ see www.culturalcreatives.org. Paul Ray & Sherry Anderson, *The Cultural Creatives*, New York, Three Rivers Press, 2000.
- ³⁰ Personal email, 3 May 2006. For more on Dator's views of the future, see: www.futures.hawaii.edu/
- ³¹ This is elaborated in Sohail Inayatullah, 'Global Transformations', *Development*, 40(2), 1997, 31-37; and in 'Global Transformations and the End of the Natural: Towards a Communicative Response to the Future', *Journal of Applied Social Behavior*, 4(1), 1998, 1-14.
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- ⁴¹ Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things*, New York, Random House, 1973.
- ⁴² www.futurefoundation.org

Appendices

Appendix 1: The Six Kosas and Neohumanist Curriculum—A Pre-School Programme

The first two Kosas refer to dimensions of the physical body and are subsumed in **Figure 2** (in Chapter 1) under the word senses. Here they are separated for greater clarity.

Level 1: Anamaya Kosa

Physical growth, Energy, Large and small motor development, Movement, Posture Balance, Kinaesthetic intelligence.

- Provide space for free movement and energy
 - Provide a place for rest with pillows and cushions.
 - Provide activities for balance and strength such as balance beams
 - Provide materials and equipment for large muscle development such as: Crates, Barrels, Tents, Wagons, Tricycles, Tires, Ropes, Boards, Stick horses, Playhouses, Tree stumps, Platform to jump from onto mattress, Climbing area
 - Provide materials for small muscle development such as: Beads for beadwork, Strainers, Cups, Buckets, Spoons, Tolls, Blocks, Manipulatives, pencils, Crayons, Markers chalk, Scissors, Marbles, puppets
-

Level 2: Kamamya Kosa

The Senses and Practical Life; Visual – Spatial Intelligence

- Items from Nature
 - Sensory activities and sensory rich objects such and experiences such as pleasant and enticing aromas
 - Indoor natural materials for study, design and play
 - Sources of water – Sand or water play area or table
 - Landscaping and edible plants – with textures, colours and scents
 - Practical Life Areas and Activities, Eating, Toileting, Domestic Play, Gardening, Play store, Cars trucks and trains
-

Level 3: Manomaya Kosa

Memory, Classification, Intellectual engagement, Curiosity, Number, Time, Space, Logical-mathematical intelligence, Verbal linguistic intelligence

- Language Arts – writing, reading, books, listening skills, self-expression, pedestal to stand and present
 - Math and Science – working with light, colour, shadows, exploring sound, investigating motion and gravity
 - Blocks and Puzzles, Lego, board games
-

Level 4: Atimanasa Kosa

Aesthetics, Creativity and Imagination, Musical Intelligence, Wonder

- Stories and imaginative play
 - Music, singing & instruments.
 - Discovering “treasures” to include in play
 - Drawing, and art centre
 - Drama, dress-ups, props, and pretending
-

Level 5: Vijnanamaya Kosa

Neohumanist practice of love for all including animals, plants, earth, etc., Service, Natural Intelligence, Intrapersonal Intelligence, Personal Skills (self-identity, resilience, problem solving, emotional intelligence, predictive skills, intuition)

- Plants to tend and water
 - Pets to care for
 - Nature items (flowers, rocks, shells, etc.)
 - Aquarium or terrarium
 - Personal and Intrapersonal Skills will be developed not through learning centres per se but through meditation and teacher example and input
-

Level 6: Hiranyamaya Kosa

Spiritual Bliss, Inner Sensitivity, Intrapersonal Intelligence, Existential and Moral Intelligence, Universal Love

- Provide a quiet empty sentient space for individual or small groups to use
 - Give them access to focussed, internal, gentle, sentient music to listen to
 - Have a sufficiently large sentient space for collective spiritual practice such as singing, circle time, yoga and meditation
-

Appendix 2: Cognitive Map and Holistic Education

	Realm of Supreme Subjectivity	Realm of Subjective Mind		Realm of Objective Mind (Citta-tatva)						Realm of Physicality
Level of Consciousness	Atman	Mahataatva	Ahamtattva	Hiranmaya Kos'a	Vijnanamaya Kos'a	Atimanasa Kos'a	Manomaya Kos'a	Kamamaya Kos'a	Annamaya Kos'a	
	Consciousness (unit/cosmic)	Pure I feeling	Doer I feeling	(Causal Layer)	(Subliminal Layer)	(Supra-Mental layer)	(Subtle Mind)	(Crude Mind /Metazoic Structures)	(Protozoic Structures/ Body)	
Type of functional Knowledge	Supreme synthetic subjective propositions	Intuitional faculty	Intellectuo-actional faculty	Knowledge-causal plane	Conceptional Knowledge—subliminal plane	Reflectional-Conceptional Knowledge-supramental	Perceptional Knowledge (samska'ra-bodha)	Perceptional Knowledge (indriya-bodha)	Glandular secretions and their interplay	
	(Jinana-svarupatva)	*Focussed-Intuitional *Spirituo-Intuitional		*spontaneous awareness (Paroks'a-bodha)		(mati jinana)	Acquired habitual inborn	Sensory direct indirect		
Learning Domain and Realizations	Stance of non-attributional consciousness	Stance of attributional consciousness	Devotional sentiment & attraction for the supreme	Apexed Intellect	Wisdom traditions	Creativity Aesthetics	Scientific aptitude	Practical life skills	Physical education	
	Moksa	Mukti Prapatti-va'da	Para-bhakti		Discrimination and non-attachment					

Yogic Approach to Mundane and Spiritual knowledge	Nirvikalpa (Non-attributional) Samadhi Enlightenment Liberation	Savikalpa (Attributional) Samadhi Multi-Propensive Plexus	Samadhi Lunar Plexus	Dhyana Solar Plexus	Dha'rana Sideral Plexus	Pratyahara Igneous Plexus	Pranayama Fluidal Plexus	Yama and Niyama Terrainian Plexus	Asanas Sentient Diet Cleanliness Fasting
Supporting curriculum of Neohumanist Education	Perfect—spirituality as opposed to pseudo-spirituality Omni telepathy	Spirituality as a mission Surrender to the Supreme Omniscient Grace	Spirituality as a principle Cosmic ideation Universal-love	Spirituality as a cult Selfless Service & Sacrifice	Philosophy Neohumanist Ethics Eco-justice Peace studies Futures-Visions - Research Patterns-Lab History	Arts Architecture Design Music Literature Aesthetics Creativity	Progressive utilisation (PROUT) & Socialsciences Pure Science Nanotechnologies	Communication skills Computational skills Entrepreneurial Technical Interpersonal management skills	Martial Arts Sports, Gymnastics Health care Nutrition Safety training Stu-vol social service

Source: Shambhushivananda, In Search of Ideal Education, Anandanagar, W.Bengal, India, NERI Publication, Ananda Marga Gurukula, 1993.

Appendix 3: Definitions of basic peace oriented concepts

- Negative peace* Absence of war and physical violence. Broader definition incorporates the absence of all types of violence— structural, psychological, epistemological, ecological, as well as somatic.
- Positive peace* The introduction of politics, building of structures, nurturing of values and the creation of a culture that will prevent or minimise possibility of violence arising in the first place.
Establishment of life-affirming and life enhancing values and structures.
Harmony within oneself, within community and amongst nations.
- Peacekeeping* The processes of attempting to keep combatants from resorting to further direct violence. Intended to allow a cooling down and so enable better prospects for peacemaking. Example: activities of peacekeeping forces, policing. (Definition by Hutchinson, F. (1996). *Educating Beyond Violent Futures*. London: Routledge, 253)
- Peacemaking* The processes of seeking to resolve conflicts peacefully. These processes are intended to bring conflicting parties together by using, for example, a third-party mediator to help defuse misunderstandings and tensions and to enable a negotiated settlement to be reached. Examples: mediation and reconciliation efforts. (Definition by Hutchinson, *ibid*)
- Peacebuilding* The process of attempting to transform conflict non-violently and to construct more peaceful futures. These processes include the politics of non-violent action. There is a recognition that constructing a durable peace is likely to entail more than peacekeeping and peacemaking, especially given differential power relations and structural inequalities. Examples: work by various social justice and positive peace oriented INGOs, social movements engaged in non-violent action. (Definition by Hutchinson, *ibid*)

<i>Violence</i>	The avoidable impairment of fundamental human needs. The impairment of human life, which lowers the actual degree to which someone is able to meet their needs below that which would otherwise be possible. The threat of violence is also violence. (Definition by Johan Galtung (1993). <i>Kulturelle Gewalt. Der Burger im Staat</i> 43(2), 10). Available online at: From: http://www.dadalos.org/frieden_int_grundkurs_2/typologie.htm .
<i>Structural Violence</i>	Violence that is indirect and embedded in the systems, structures and institutions of a society. This type of violence results in the (usually significant, large scale) number of avoidable/preventable deaths which were caused by the way large scale social, economic and political structures are organised. For example, 500, 000 women dying yearly from pregnancy related deaths could be prevented if the effects of poverty and patriarchy were minimalised. Millions of people dying yearly from hunger and poverty related diseases are another example of structural violence. Any time “people start to death when there is food to feed them somewhere in the world, or die from sickness when there is medicine to cure them, then structural violence exists since alternative structures could, in theory, prevent such deaths” (Groff, L. with Smoker, P. (2002). <i>A Holistic View of Peace Education. Social Alternatives</i> , 21(1), 8).
<i>Cultural Violence</i>	Imposition of values, norms and other aspects of culture that can be used to justify or legitimate the use of direct or structural violence. “The Stars and Stripes, Hammer and Sickle, flags, hymns, military parades, portraits of the leader, inflammatory speeches and posters are all included in this category”. (Definition by Johan Galtung, 1993, op cit., 106.) Misogynia, culturally based despise of women and everything ‘feminine’ is another example of cultural violence, often resulting in wife/women and child abuse.
<i>Epistemological Violence</i>	Imposition of a worldview that is foreign and that can be used to justify or legitimate the use of direct or structural violence. Epistemic violence is precondition for the explicit, unmediated use of violence, which as such is granted a name and is addressed as a ‘conflict’ or a ‘violence’. It is realised in the formation of conceptual

apparatuses, knowledge, consciousness, ideological orientations, and consensus or self-evidence. (Definition by Ilan Gur-Ze'ev (2005). *Critical Theory, Critical Pedagogy and Diaspora Today: Toward a New Critical Language in Education*. In Ilan Gur-Ze'ev (Ed.), *Critical Theory and Critical Pedagogy Today: Toward a New Critical Language in Education* (pp.7-34). Haifa, Israel: University of Haifa.)

*Ecological
Violence*

The violence against non and sub human living beings, the violence our human systems are perpetrating towards the Earth and other species. Violence against sentient beings that is either direct or indirect. The expansion of human habitat and global warming are example of violence that occurs as a by-product of various human activities. These are examples of indirect violence by humans against non-human living beings. Some examples of direct violence include killing and torture of non-human living beings, experimentation on animals, conscious poisoning of their habitat (i.e. 'pest control'), etc.

*Economic
Violence*

Violence people experience because of economic legislations, politics and systems (e.g., policies related to international debt).

*Psychological
Violence*

A type of communication between people that carries an implied threat of physical violence, or attempts to intimidate or control the other person/group. It is connected with emotional abused—behaviours that are likely to include name-calling, negative judgments or attributions or actions [such as yelling, put downs and derogative comments] that result in causing the other person psychological pain or discomfort. Examples of psychological violence and emotional abuse may include William Glasser's seven habits that damage our relationships such as criticism, blaming, complaining, nagging, threatening, punishing, bribing/or rewarding to control (Glasser, W. (1998). *Choice Theory: A new psychology of personal freedom*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers). For psychological and emotional abuse to be minimised these should be replaced by habits that improve our relationships such as supporting, encouraging, listening, accepting, trusting, respecting and negotiating difference (ibid).

Glossary of Sanskrit Terms

<i>A'darsha</i>	ideology; like a mirror which reflects the ideal
<i>Aham</i>	doer-I feeling of the mind; a subjective portion of the mind
<i>Ananda</i>	endless bliss
<i>Annamaya kosa</i>	body layer
<i>Apara' Vidya'</i>	mundane knowledge
<i>Asanas</i>	yoga postures
<i>Atimanas kos'a</i>	first layer of the causal or unconscious mind
<i>Atman</i>	soul
<i>Avidya'</i>	ignorance
<i>Bala</i>	use of force
<i>Bhed</i>	divisiveness
<i>Brahma Chakra</i>	the wheel of Brahma, i.e. the flow of creation, which in Tantric philosophy flows out from Supreme Consciousness (God) to ever cruder expressions and finally inert matter and then returns back to Supreme Consciousness through ever subtler expressions of life and consciousness
<i>Brahmin</i>	member of educated caste, a priest, often an intellectual (<i>vipra</i>)
<i>Chal</i>	cunningness
<i>Chit</i>	existence
<i>Citta</i>	ectoplasmic portion of the mind responsible for imagery in the brain; objectivated mind
<i>Da'n</i>	charity

<i>Dand'a</i>	punishment/rectification
<i>Dharmano</i>	clear English equivalent: roughly it means, 'natural propensity' or 'essential characteristic'
<i>Guna-samaha'r</i>	collection of virtues
<i>Guru</i>	teacher; the one who liberates the disciple from darkness
<i>Hiranmaya Kos'a</i>	golden layer; third layer of the causal or unconscious mind
<i>Indriya-bodha</i>	sensory experiences
<i>Is'ta</i>	one who embodies the ideal; Personification of an Ideal
<i>Jinana-svarupatva</i>	embodiment of omniscient knowledge
<i>Kamamaya kos'a</i>	conscious or crude mind
<i>Kaoshala</i>	skill
<i>Karma</i>	universal law of cause and effect; works across life times and accounts for the apparent vulnerability of us all to 'accidents' that are re-read as 'incidents' resulting from past actions
<i>Kos'as</i>	layers or sheaths (of the mind)
<i>Ksattriya</i>	warrior, one who sees the world as a battlefield, solves problems through the use of force
<i>Kurukshetra</i>	the battle field in the <i>Bhagavad Giita</i> on which Krishna reveals to Arjun the deep spiritual nature of the Cosmos; metaphorically, a field of struggle in which the human fights against the illusions and attachments that limit consciousness of who we truly are
<i>Mahat</i>	pure 'I' feeling, giving a sense of existence or 'i-am'
<i>Manomaya kos'a</i>	subconscious or subliminal mind

<i>Mati-jinana</i>	conceptional knowledge; a periphery of perception
<i>Maya</i>	that aspect of the world which most people take to be the sole reality; in dualist Hindu traditions it is equated with unreality, the realm of the pain of attachment
<i>Moks'a</i>	liberation of permanent nature
<i>Mukti</i>	liberation of temporary nature
<i>Nirguna</i>	the un-manifest corollary of <i>saguna</i> —the dormant unexpressed aspect of Supreme Consciousness; the unqualified, non-attributional aspect of Godhead
<i>Nirvikapa Samadhi</i>	trance which lies beyond any semblances
<i>Para-vidya</i>	intuitional knowledge
<i>Paroks'a bodha</i>	spontaneous awareness arising from causal plane
<i>Pranayama</i>	control of life-force that lies within
<i>Prapatti-va'da</i>	idea that everything happens as per the will of a Higher force
<i>Rk Veda</i>	ancient scripture of Aryans composed probably about 10,000 years ago
<i>Rta</i>	the facts, the hard truth
<i>Sa'Vidya Ya Vimuktaye</i>	knowledge for liberation-physical, mental and spiritual
<i>Sadvipra</i>	wisdom-centered leader; benevolent leader
<i>Saguna</i>	manifestation of supreme consciousness—can be used to describe the physical universe as the active expression of the cosmic principle; the active principle that sustains creation
<i>Sama'dhi</i>	a state of equipoise or blissful transcendental trance
<i>Samska'ra bodha</i>	experiences which are the inevitable results of our past actions (<i>karmas</i>)

<i>Sat</i>	truth as benevolence
<i>Satya</i>	benevolent truth
<i>Savikalpa Sama'dhi</i>	trance which comes from having omniscience
<i>Sha'm</i>	praise
<i>Shudra</i>	worker, one who creates the world through labour, and who struggles on the physical plain to survive; proletariat
<i>Stu-Vol</i>	students volunteers - a program of neohumanist education
<i>Tantra</i>	an ancient science of liberation developed by Shiva around 5000 BC
<i>Vaeshya</i>	merchant class, one who sees the world as a market place and all things in it as commodities; capitalists
<i>Varna</i>	mental colour, correlates with class, the episteme or worldview shaped by one's position in society
<i>Vidya'</i>	knowledge, understanding
<i>Vijinamaya kos'a</i>	second layer of the causal or unconscious mind
<i>Vipra</i>	intellectual, one who understands reality through theory and academic processes
<i>Viveka</i>	sense of discrimination
<i>Yama-Niyama</i>	a code of conduct guiding actions for the good of body, mind and spirit
<i>Yoga</i>	a practical approach to unify unit-consciousness with supreme consciousness; usually refers to a set of bodily exercises; sometimes used synonymously with meditative practices

About the Contributors

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Marcus Anthony is an Australian educator who has lived and worked throughout the greater China region for the last seven years: first in Taiwan, and then in Beijing and Sichuan provinces in mainland China before making his current home in Hong Kong. Marcus has also lived and worked in New Zealand, as well as in his native country of Australia.

Currently Marcus is finalising a PhD candidature at the University of the Sunshine Coast, QLD, Australia. His thesis topic is a comparison of mainstream and alternative mystical depictions of intelligence, and their educational implications. His research interests include the futures of intelligence, Chinese history and the futures of China, educational futures, and human consciousness evolution. He can speak Chinese just badly enough to amuse his Chinese wife and friends, and to offend people in the disorderly 'queues' at train stations in mainland China.

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Marlene de Beer is a South African national, researcher and registered Social Worker (BA Soc.Sc. honours). She specialised in community development (MA Soc.Sc.), lectured in community policing (1994-2000), has a Diploma in Disaster Management and Certificate: Play Therapy; ~ Spiral Dynamics Integral I & II. She also received a UNESCO Research Studentship to study in Northern Ireland (2000-2003); recent voluntary involvement included the coordination of a Meditation Group in Northern Ireland. Her latest commissioned research was with the Pushkin Trust, and focused on the emergence of a Pushkin Model on creativity and imagination in education and community development in Ireland (2004-2005). Marlene is now working for CIDA City Campus (www.cida.co.za) as Co-Director—Consciousness Based Education (CBE); Co-Head—Consciousness Development Academy (CDA); Research Fellow—Global School for African Leadership and Transformation (GSALT); and Faculty member for the Masters of Management in Social and Economic Transformation (MSET).

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Joseph Voros

Dr Joseph Voros began his career as a physicist—he holds a PhD in theoretical physics, during which he worked on mathematical extensions to the General Theory of Relativity—followed by several years in Internet-related companies, including a stint at Netscape Communications Corporation, before becoming a professional futurist. He has been associated with Swinburne since early 2000, initially as a project consultant in the former Australian Foresight Institute.

In mid 2000 he was appointed as a foresight analyst in Swinburne's own top-level strategic planning unit, and in that practitioner role he was involved in the building of a practical organisational strategic thinking capacity based on the use of foresight concepts and methodologies. During this time he continued to maintain strong links with the strategic foresight

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In 2003 he joined the faculty of the strategic foresight teaching program where he now lectures on the theory and practice of foresight in organisations and society. He has presented at conferences both nationally and internationally, including keynotes, and his journal article 'A generic foresight process framework' won an excellence award from the journal's international editorial advisory board.

Dr Joseph Voros' professional interests are broadly multi-disciplinary, and his main research interest is the emerging field of Integral Futures Inquiry. He has a strong belief in the need for both rigorous intellectual discipline as well as practical pragmatic utility in 'real world' contexts, and this belief lies at the heart of his approach to futures studies and strategic foresight. He is a member of the World Futures Studies Federation.

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