

Chapter 2

History and Philosophy of Values and Virtues

The Ancient Art

Confucius and Aristotle would both be bemused by the modern ‘discovery’ that good practice pedagogy possesses an inherent values dimension. Both emanating from a period approximately 500 years prior to the birth of Christianity, Confucian ethics and Aristotelian ethics sit at the heart of the Eastern and Western (including Middle Eastern) dynasties of thought that, respectively, they impelled. Confucian ethics still defines much of the idiosyncratic ways of China and the Oriental world that has spread throughout Asia and are of increasing importance to the West, the world’s future generally and to educational and pedagogical thought and practice everywhere. Meanwhile, Aristotelian ethics defines much of the thought of the Middle East, especially through Islam, and the West, especially through Judaeo-Christianity. In many ways, Aristotelian ethics may hold the greatest promise for eventual understanding between the Middle East and the West, apparently torn in the modern world by what are seen to be the conflicting ideologies of Islam and Judaeo-Christianity. A clear understanding of how these ideologies share a common basis in Aristotelian ethics would show this apparent dichotomy to be false and entirely unhelpful.

Confucian Ethics

Confucian ethics focussed heavily on the centrality of trusting relations in drawing out the best and most reliable response in people (Brooks and Brooks 1998; Riegel 2011). The heart of the stable society relied on the notion and practice of *ren*, compassion towards and practical love of others. “What you do not wish for yourself, do not do to others,” (Lun yu n.d., Chap. 12, line 2) was the Confucian Golden Rule that guaranteed that trusting relations would predominate in the communities making up a society such that it could function in an orderly and productive fashion. The idea that this fulcrum could be replaced or transposed with an instrumental or business-like approach, even of the most superior kind, was the most antithetical of all the notions that Confucian ethics set out to refute. Indeed, Confucius saves his

harshest words for those he sees as having learned the art of winning over an audience through clever rhetoric and trickery, but who in fact lack the integrity of *ren*. In spite of all the political changes wrought on China since the time of Confucius, it remains one of the fundamental principles of effective political, business or other transaction with China, that the relationship of trust be established before there can be any effective exchange.

Confucian ethics is important for educators for a number of reasons. Not only is his one of the world's oldest philosophies that has influenced countless millions, but it continues to sit at the heart of one of the current world's most crucial civilizations. Moreover, his words on education, like those of just a few people through the ages, are timeless in their pertinence and value. He emphasizes the importance of careful, disciplined study if one wishes to reach the heights of the personal and social success to which he pointed.

Moreover, it was a finely crafted study about which Confucius spoke, one characterized by a balance between learning and thinking: "He who learns but does not think is lost. He who thinks but does not learn is in great danger." (Lun yu n.d., Chap. 2, line 15). In this, Confucius seemed to suggest that it is possible both to think and to learn in isolation, but that the real goal is to do both in a way that marks out the reflective learner, the one who knows, knows oneself and knows how to continue knowing.

Confucius's was a universal pedagogy. He believed in the power of all to learn, even the most disadvantaged. The key was to have a good teacher whom, above all, one could emulate. The good teacher was not one who spoke or lectured a great deal, but one who showed others how to live through modelling. The good teacher was one who asked the kinds of questions that impelled wonder, imagination and a desire to learn.

Confucius's pedagogy centred on the 'Six Arts', including a range of practical arts but, at the centre of any content, lay morality. For him, education was about facilitating ethical judgment and practical morality. The student who thinks but does not learn, or learns but does not think is the one who ends up with a store of knowledge that has no impact at the personal level. Such education is useless in Confucian terms. The great Muslim Sufi, Abu al-Ghazali, would echo these sentiments over 1000 years later in remarking that God (*Allah*) finds nothing as distasteful as the one who stores up knowledge but does nothing with it (al-Ghazali 1991). In this remonstrance against shallow piety, this great mystic marked himself out as a 'practical mystic'.

Aristotelian Ethics

Al-Ghazali was a disciple of Aristotle, being one of the great Muslim minds of medieval times to whom the West owes the great debt of having preserved Aristotelian thought and applied it to a world about to embark on the advance of science. Aristotelian ethics lies at the heart of this thought. Like that of Confucius, it is replete with notions of the centrality of trust and care to all that we hold to be moral and humane. In contrast to the rather heady ethical notions to be found in the work of

his teacher, Plato, Aristotle's (1985) characterization of virtue was of someone who took practical action to put into effect one's beliefs about right and wrong. *Eudaimonia* (literally happiness) was the supreme good that could only come from practical action devoted to the issue of virtue and its promotion. Among such practical action, virtuous behaviour directed towards trusting relations and communal concern was paramount. For Aristotle, it might be said that there could be no individual happiness in, or effective functioning of, the human community in the absence of such virtuous behaviour.

This essential conjoining of intention with action would go on to constitute the heart of Christian ethics as defined by Aquinas (1936) in his notion of *synderesis*, that inborn facility that urges the Christian not only to seek truth but to express it in practical action. Aquinas saw the connection between Aristotle and the Pauline thesis (cf. I Cor. 13), that one who claimed to have faith in all its vast dimensions but failed to 'love' was no more than a 'noisy gong' who, by implication, could not be trusted to back their words with deeds. In turn, Aquinas owed much to the thinking of al-Ghazali whose life's work was concerned with salvaging Islamic Sufism from a spirituality based on exclusivity and pietism in favour of one based on inclusivity and engagement. As with Aristotle and St. Paul, so for al-Ghazali, the essential virtuous Muslim was one in whom one could place trust that what was said was what would be done. More (1989), similarly, saw education as being principally about achieving personal integrity and conforming one's actions to the common good. He contrasted this *true education* with the accumulation of facts and figures that was mere *instruction*. True education was 'transformative', bringing to life what was a hidden seed in each person.

Hence, from ancient and medieval times, a tradition was inherited that distinguished instrumentalist from holistic education. Central to the latter has been the notion that education is a moral quest in terms both of its addressing the full range of individual needs and of its role in enhancing the good of society. In that sense, values education has potential to go to the heart of the notion of education being ultimately for the common good, designed both to build individual character and enhance morality in the citizenry. The earliest forms of education in Islam were about creating this kind of positive and supportive learning environment geared towards redressing the natural inequities to be found in society. Christendom followed suit in the later Middle Ages with many of contemporary Europe's most exclusive schools and universities having their origins in learning centres for those with limited opportunities from birth. The origins of education are inevitably and irretrievably built on moral foundations.

Philosophy of Mind

Confucius, Aristotle and al-Ghazali are, among other things, early pioneers of the philosophy of mind, that branch of philosophy that focusses on the relationship between the mind and the body, and therefore on matters of cognition, emotion, intention and social behaviour, and the connections between them. Through these

pioneers, we learned early lessons about the importance of such connections to education. While it is an ancient art in some respects, philosophy of mind nonetheless developed a more analytical and critical focus with advances in science, including neuroscience (Armstrong 1968; Braddon-Mitchell and Jackson 2006; Chalmers 1997; Ryle 1949; Schopenhauer 1974). While modern philosophers and scientists often take issue with elements of the thinking of the ancients, they nonetheless confirm their essential postulations about the integral relationship of mind and body, the inherent connections between cognition, emotion, intention and social behaviour, and the importance of all of these phenomena for education.

In Schopenhauer (1974) and Ryle (1949), we find a firm refutation of Cartesian duality of mind and body. Both philosophers contended that this dualism had led to the fallacy of supposing that one's mental states (cognition and intention) were separable from one's practical actions and behaviours. Furthermore, they proffer that there is not so much a causal connection between the two, but rather that the two are one:

But I say that between the act of will and the bodily action there is no causal connection whatever; on the contrary, the two are directly one and the same thing perceived in a double way, namely in self-consciousness or the inner sense as an act of will, and simultaneously in external spatial brain-perception, as bodily action. (Schopenhauer 1974, p. 21)

Armstrong (1968) agrees with Ryle's refutation of Cartesian dualism in showing that an 'act of will' and 'purposive activity' do not constitute two separable phenomena but two aspects of the one phenomenon: "An act is something that we do as opposed to something that merely happens. An act springs from our will." (p. 137). Furthermore, he goes beyond Ryle in eradicating any sense in which mind can be distinguished from functions of the brain and that it is the brain that drives both introspection and purposive action. Chalmers (1997) is another philosopher of mind who rejects Cartesian dualism and hence the notion that the mind is somehow superior to the brain and so constitutes the determining agent of human behaviour. For him, behaviour is entirely and best explained in terms of functions of the brain. In a similar vein, David Braddon-Mitchell and Frank Jackson (Braddon-Mitchell and Jackson 2006) argue for a 'common-sense functionalism' as the most appropriate contemporary theoretical basis for philosophy of mind, granted where modern science and neuroscience have taken us. For them, the heart of their functionalism is in a materialist theory of mind where the "... ingredients we need to understand and account for the mental list are ... essentially the same, and the basic ones are the ones we need to account for the material or physical side of our natures." (p. 3).

Although the neural correlates of the mind can be mapped at a functional level, there are others who, while rejecting the substance dualism of Descartes, see a danger in reducing explanations of the mind solely to naturalistic descriptions of the biological functioning of the brain (e.g. Brothers 2001; Beauregard and O'Leary 2007; Changeux and Ricoeur 2002; Franks 2010). Franks (2010), citing notables like Damasio, Sperry and Edelman, argues that the mind-brain relationship cannot be understood solely in terms of the bottom-up descriptions of neurobiology, but that the mind can and does exert control on the brain, with the phenomenon of cognitive behaviour therapy being an example of the influence of thought on the

material brain. Damasio (1996) argues that explanation of human culture cannot be understood by biology alone, but requires the explanation of the social sciences as well. Nonetheless, there is no division between will and action.

The practical effect of the above postulations of philosophy of mind is to underline (perhaps accidentally) the central theses of the ethics of Confucius, Aristotle and Abu al-Ghazali that integrity and morality rely centrally on human will and action being seen as part of a unified whole. Hence, the notion that a caring and trusting relationship is at the heart of all human endeavour, including that related to effective learning, is an idea well rehearsed in the traditions that have emanated from such ethics. It is no less one of the sharpest and most evidently proven ideas to be found in the results of updated pedagogical research. Yet, much modern education has been subject to a very different and, in terms of values, more hostile influence wrought of developments in nineteenth and twentieth century philosophy going broadly by the name of 'empirical science'. We need to explore these developments before proceeding to outline ways in which such narrow forms of empirical science were finally superseded, so allowing for modern values pedagogy to be pursued as a central aim of education.

Empirical Science in Education

Empirical science centres on a narrow conception of what constitutes truth. Alfred J. Ayer, the British philosopher, was one of the architects of this narrow conception of knowledge. His school of thought was known as 'logical positivism', spelled out best in his famous little book, *Language, Truth and Logic* (Ayer 1936). Ayer maintained the thesis that there were only two types of genuine propositions regarding knowledge, namely, the analytic and the synthetic:

... a proposition is analytic when its validity depends solely on the definitions of the symbols it contains, and synthetic when its validity is determined by the facts of experience. (p. 105)

Analytic propositions were deemed to be true of necessity, not owing to factual content but their being built around tautologies or necessary truths. Synthetic propositions, on the other hand, are not true of necessity. They are statements about the real world, based on experience of it. The factual truth of these can only be assured by empirical verification, that is, by being able to stand up to the test of observation and experimentation. Typically, the propositions of science can be tested in this way, whereas the propositions of the arts, humanities, religion and morality cannot be tested by observation or experiment and, therefore being non-provable, cannot be true. For Ayer, this was sufficient proof that mathematics and science represented the only assured ways of ascertaining knowledge. The propositions of other subjects could not be tested and so did not represent knowledge at all. They were empty, literally meaningless. Ayer (1936) described such knowledge claims as "pseudo-propositions." (p. 48).

Ayer was not a lone figure in the pursuit of this extreme form of empirical science. Logical positivism had been fashionable for some time and, indeed, could be traced back in part to the writings of Kant (1964). By the late nineteenth and, especially into the twentieth centuries, the impact on education of this form of science and its assumptions cannot be overstated. For a start, it promoted the notion that mathematics and science were important parts of the curriculum because they constituted ‘high status knowledge’ (Apple 2004), while history and the languages were of medium importance, and art, religion, moral education and personal development were of little significance owing to the fact that there was no verifiable knowledge base to any of these disciplines, according to the criteria established by Ayer for ascertaining true knowledge. These criteria became known widely in academic circles as ‘The Verification Principle’.

The Verification Principle which, Ayer (1936) declared, provided “... a criterion by which it can be determined whether or not a sentence is literally meaningful,” (p. 7) betrayed his dependence on a particularly narrow form of empirical science, known popularly as ‘inductivism’. Inductivism, or the ‘inductive method’, represents a particular belief about knowledge and how it is attained. In simple terms, it is an approach that says: “If I can see, touch, smell, hear or taste it, I will believe; if I cannot, I will not.” This is a method that an increasing number of scholars, including natural scientists have come to question as to its sufficiency for ascertaining all knowledge, but it nonetheless maintains a certain appeal because of its simplicity and apparent surety. It can still be seen to be the basis of many knowledge claims, not only by natural scientists but by psychologists, sociologists and even many philosophers. Every now and again, the essential naivety behind forms of blind inductivism are seen in calls for ‘evidence based’ practice which invariably elevate inductivist experimentation, by those far from the coal face of practice, above the practical wisdom of those who spend their lives at the coal face. Because of the persistent ease with which naïve inductivist belief is brought forward by politicians and bureaucrats seeking to control the lives of practitioners, it is worth detailing the philosophical dismantling of inductivism’s claims to hold the keys to truth.

Dismantling Naïve Inductivism: The Taming of Empirical Science

Ludwig Wittgenstein was one of the first philosophers to begin the dismantling of inductivism. He believed that it was crucial for the scientist to note that people *did* find meaning in many of the propositions declared meaningless by the likes of Ayer. For him, it was an arrogant and poor form of science that took some human evidence seriously but disregarded other evidence. Indeed, Wittgenstein (1974) claimed that the verification principle was based on a misunderstanding of the nature of language. Language serves a multiplicity of purposes; what the logical positivist had done was simply to take the language which served the purposes of empirical science and give it guardianship over all language and all purposes. It would have been

as senseless to do the same with religious or moral language, so declaring scientific propositions to be invalid by their terms of reference.

For Wittgenstein, language can only make sense or have validity within the context of its peculiar purpose, or within a particular ‘paradigm’. So, a language that speaks of observation and empirical verification, such as that of science, should not become the overseer of all other forms of language. For him, even those forms of language that spoke of knowledge quite beyond empirical testing, such as religious, artistic or moral language, were valid as long as one understood them for what they were. For Wittgenstein (1974), any language serves to model reality, portraying a particular viewpoint or picture. Some pictures, like that portrayed by scientific language, require empirical testing, while others do not. In other words, inductivism is a fine method for ascertaining knowledge in many of the sciences but useless for ascertaining knowledge of other realities.

Frederick Ferré continued the dismantling of inductivism by calling into question the simplified way in which the logical positivists spoke of ‘facts’. For them, a fact was that which could be verified empirically. Knowledge was all about facts. Ferré (1982), however, suggests

Facts are never ‘given’ apart from the minds which receive them. (p. 160)

For Ferré, it is the human mind that translates the “... blooming, buzzing confusion of bare sensation” (p. 161) into the meaningful patterns we call ‘facts’. Without the intervention of the mind, the ‘facts’ we experience would be no more than random and unrelated happenings and sensations. It is the mind that organizes these events into apparently related and internally consistent ‘facts’. The mind serves as the theorizing force that makes sense of these events, even reifying them into ‘facts’. The mind perceives reality and organizes it according to patterns which make it understandable and meaningful. These understandable and meaningful patterns are enshrined in the notion of ‘theories’. For Ferré (1982), what people call ‘facts’ are really no more than ‘theories’:

The ‘facts’ of science are, typically, theories overwhelmingly confirmed by conceptually organized experience. (p. 761)

Ferré delivered a substantial blow to the logical positivist’s claim to have a research methodology that provided assured knowledge, knowledge of the ‘facts’. If the ‘facts’ of science are really no more than theories, confirmed not by the apparent certainties of observation, but by the conceptual organizations of the mind, then these ‘facts’ are no different from the ‘facts’ of religion, art, morality, ethics or ballet. For Ferré (1982), all ‘facts’ compounded in this way are really theories and, as such, meaningful, valid and ‘true’ within their own appropriate contexts:

... all facts of whatever kind are relative...to the system in which they play a key role... facts...depend for their confirmation on the adequacy of the system in which they operate. (p. 161)

From the point of view of a ‘systems theory’ of the likes of Ferré (1982), it becomes nonsense to select the theories and methodologies of one system to stand guard over the meaningfulness of another systems’ theories and methodologies. For Ferré, this is precisely what Ayer had done with the system proper to empirical science.

As philosophy began to uncover the notions of ‘systems’ and the ‘theory-ladenness’ of observation, the over-simplified claim of Ayer that the ‘facts’ of science could be verified by an uncomplicated set of observations began to appear naïve and unsatisfactory as a basis for knowing and, more so, what should count as more or less important in education. The complexities and degree of theorizing involved in observation were subsequently confirmed in the writings of Imre Lakatos, James Walker, Thomas Kuhn and Paul Feyerabend.

Touchstone, Paradigm and Systems Theories: The Unlocking of Science

Lakatos (1974) employed the notion of ‘touchstone’ to describe how it is that certain theories are coagulated to create a programme, or what we might describe as a ‘discipline’. Walker (1985) also employed the notion of ‘touchstone theory’ to suggest that the very notion of an ‘area’ or ‘form of knowledge’ is somewhat of an illusion. For these writers, all that really holds a so-called ‘discipline’ together is a theory (the touchstone theory) that confirms that, among all the competing theories concerning knowledge, some are concerned with similar ideas, perspectives and methodologies, while others are different. Here, we discern a useful, though ever-tentative and changeable boundary around these ideas, perspectives and methodologies. To go further and suggest that this amounts to a ‘discipline’, a ‘form of knowledge’ different from or, worse still, superior to other ‘forms’ is to misunderstand the nature of knowledge and to risk retarding the progress of knowledge-gathering. Again, this is precisely what Ayer had done with the discipline and attached method of empirical science.

Similarly, from the perspective of Kuhn’s (1970) notion of ‘paradigm’, Ayer’s constraining of what should count as knowledge came to appear as a gross oversimplification. For Kuhn, a paradigm exists when a complex theory holds together sets of theories related by similar focus and interest. In the business of knowledge-gathering, the paradigm plays a far greater role than simple observation. In fact, it requires a consensus of observations from a majority of those who hold to a paradigm before the paradigm will change or be exchanged. For Kuhn, this is in fact the way all types of knowledge-gathering operates, whether it concerns empirical science, theology or moral education. Simple observation statements have little status in the face of the complex theory that holds the paradigm together, including the consensus about it from ‘experts’ that might well differ from the observation statements. What is especially damaging to the inductivist’s claims is the obvious inference that the paradigm referred to as empirical science is really no more directly dependent on simple observation than other paradigms, including those referred to as religion and morality.

Feyerabend (1975) illustrates well the complexity and essential non-empirical basis of empirical science. He contends that anyone who wishes to be a scientist in the modern era must undergo strict training and ultimately conform to the ideas and

standards of the scientific community. He likens this control of free thought to that exercised by the church in the Middle Ages. Because of such rigid control, most major advances in empirical science, like those wrought by Darwin or Einstein, have come as 'breaks' in the highly controlling processes that safeguard scientific orthodoxy, rather than being the natural result of scientific method.

Feyerabend takes us back to the notions of 'touchstone theory' or 'paradigm' as connoting what it is that holds empirical science together, rather than the simple observation thesis proffered by Ayer's logical positivism. As such, empirical science possesses no privileged status as the guardian of all knowledge claims. Accordingly, Feyerabend (1975) was highly critical of the way in which empirical science and its methods were imposed on students at school as though they provided the most eminent and certain of all forms of discerning truth, as well as the yardstick by which all other forms of knowledge should be judged and, in the case of religious and moral education, condemned. Feyerabend's curriculum structure would be far broader and more comprehensive than has been the norm in the modern school.

Quine (1953) in many ways completed the dismantling of the simple empiricist, or inductivist approach to knowledge-gathering. The two strategies he employed in accomplishing this dismantling concerned the rejection of what he termed the 'Two Dogmas of Empiricism'. The first 'dogma' concerned the Verification Principle, which he described as "... an unempirical dogma of empiricism." (p. 37). The second 'dogma' concerned what he termed the 'dogma of reductionism'. This dogma suggested that "... each meaningful statement is equivalent to ... terms which refer to immediate experience." (p. 20).

Quine (1953) proffered that, by means of the 'two dogmas', the logical positivist had contended that the relationship between a statement and the experiences that would confirm or disconfirm it was one of direct reports. According to this view, for every proposition, there is an immediate, external referent. To put it more simply, every utterance relates directly to something 'out there'. Hence, when a scientist says: "... there is a gravitational force between Neptune and the Sun," the scientist means there is something (called 'gravitational force') 'out there': it is real, observable and testable, at least in principle if not in practice. This is the relationship of direct report. For the logical positivist, the problem with so-called 'non-scientific' languages was that the 'direct report' relationship was absent. For instance, when the theologian says: "God loves all people," or the ethicist says: "Murder is wrong", there is nothing 'out there' that is scientifically real, observable or testable, even in principle. Logical positivism, in other words, placed enormous store on physical sensory human experience. It suggested that this sensory experience could be the arbiter of the validity of language and truth. It could tell us whether there is anything 'out there', or not, with regard to any statement.

For Quine (1953), this was a naïve oversimplifying of the business of knowledge-gathering. For him, experience plays only a minor part in the confirmation or disconfirmation of knowledge claims. The truly powerful forces in such confirmation are the principles, laws and beliefs of a total system of thought. These latter have been constructed over a long period of time and for a variety of reasons, only some of which are pure and unadulterated, many of which preserve vested interests:

The 'totality' of our so-called knowledge... is a man-made fabric which impinges on experience only along the edges. (p. 42)

In other words, the scientist's claim that there is a gravitational force between Neptune and the sun' is telling us a great deal about the traditions and beliefs of the scientific community with regard to Neptune and gravitational forces. In contrast to what the logical positivist suggests, however, it is telling us nothing about human experiences, least of all of 'direct report' relationships between statements and what is 'out there'. Like any other area of knowledge, empirical science is replete with beliefs, many if not most of them untested by observation, and therefore of 'heresies', beliefs that contradict the conventional beliefs of the scientific community.

Scientists are as suspicious of individual reports that contradict their 'dogmas', even when based on observation, as are the followers of other disciplines. Through this suspicion and consequent resistance to change, so Laura (1981) charges, empirical science has imposed the sort of tyranny and suppression on contemporary thought as, it is alleged, religion did in the Middle Ages. In fact, Laura suggests, empirical science and religious belief have more in common than tends to be acknowledged, and certainly than Ayer would ever have conceded. For Ayer, empirical science was about 'facts' that were observable and testable, whereas religion was about 'myths' that were neither observable nor testable. Laura (1978), on the other hand, demonstrates that, at the bases of both areas of knowledge, there lie un-testable 'myths'. In the case of religion, the myths centre on faith in a transcendent force, a god or spirits. In the case of empirical science, it concerns faith in the uniformity of nature:

Both beliefs are ... primitive in the sense that they constitute respectively what the scientist and the theist regard as reasons for their reasoned beliefs. (p. 373)

Neither belief can satisfy the criteria for truth imposed by Ayer. According to the very logic that he applied so destructively to religion and morality, the basis of empirical science is as meaningless as the basis of religion and morality.

New Philosophies of Knowledge

Just as a narrow philosophy of knowledge, like that of Ayer, can restrict a theory of what curriculum should be and how it should function, so a broad definition can open these up. Such was the definition of Paul Hirst and Richard S. Peters. For a start, they suggested that, in the recent past, education had been conceived "... too much in terms of a set stock of information, simple skills and static conformity to a code." (Hirst and Peters 1970, p. 37).

At the same time, Hirst and Peters were not ready to advocate total experience-centred learning. They believed that creativity, autonomy and critical thought required solid grounding in the various bodies of knowledge. As they saw it, there were certain 'forms of knowledge' which underlay any learning experience, and it was vital for any learner to know well which 'form' s/he was dealing with at

any given time. As far as they were concerned, there were seven obvious forms of knowledge. These comprised Mathematics and Logic, Physical Sciences, Human Sciences, Literature and Fine Arts, History, Philosophy and Religion. Each of these forms of knowledge had an appropriate procedure, or methodology, which suited it and which would render knowledge within its domain. For instance, empirical observation was the procedure most appropriate for dealing with the knowledge involved in the Physical Sciences, while the Human Sciences demanded that the learner become more closely involved with people, their feelings and dreams. Knowledge of the Fine Arts required a 'feel' for the aesthetics and knowledge of Religion demanded familiarity with the nature of symbol and myth.

According to the 'forms' theory, the most disastrous thing a learner could do was to confuse appropriate methodologies. In other words, to expect that Art could be handled in the same way as Mathematics, or that Religion should be judged by the methodologies proper to the Physical Sciences, was bound to lead to faulty judgments about knowledge. In a sense, it can be seen that this is precisely what Ayer had done. According to the Hirst and Peters' criteria, Ayer had failed to understand the comprehensiveness of knowledge types, declaring that the first two alone comprised all of knowledge; he then went on to declare all other claims to knowledge (like Religion, the Arts, Ethics, etc.) to be meaningless because they could not conform to the methodology appropriate to his privileged two forms.

Hirst's and Peters' philosophy of knowledge is important because, in contrast to a philosophy like Ayer's, it broadens the scope of knowledge to be dealt with. This is crucial to understanding the place of ethics in education, and moral education as an educational quest. The curriculum will only be constructed to deal with knowledge which is considered to be legitimate. If Mathematics and Science are regarded as the only two authentic forms of knowledge, then the curriculum will be heavily dominated by if not exclusively given over to them. Hirst's and Peters' perspective was important historically among attempts to broaden the scope of the public curriculum, and especially important in modern attempts to inculcate a values pedagogy. Other philosophies of knowledge have variously built on, and in some cases superseded, their 'forms thesis'.

Walker (1985) is one who partly built on but also superseded the forms thesis in proposing the view that the basic units of knowledge are 'theories', rather than forms. He employed a species of Lakatosian 'touchstone theory' to explain how it is that the essential unity of knowledge can appear to be partitioned into forms. When sets of theories appear to be addressing similar problems, it can seem as though these sets of theories comprise a separate form of knowledge, as Hirst's and Peters' theory had suggested. In fact, Walker argues, the sets of theories are only sharing a common 'touchstone' related to ideas, perspectives, types of evidence and methodologies. Knowledge is in fact one. Walker's theory is reflective of arguably the most crucial of all the unity theorists in Jurgen Habermas. Habermasian theory is also arguably the most central in positing an essential morality at the heart and core of education. Habermas's contribution to educational thought is best understood however in the context of the modern drive in education to correct the overly instrumentalist effects of an exaggerated empiricism.

Ethics, Values and Education: The Modern Quest

For Dewey (1916, 1929), education was principally a means of producing moral judiciousness and, in that sense all education was effectively moral education. Hence, moral education was seen as the means by which students could engage most effectively in the business of learning itself. Dewey spoke of the innate hazards of overly instrumental forms of education and the overarching need for a way of knowing in schooling that cultivated a mindset on the part of teachers that was, at one and the same time, self-reflective and directed towards instilling reflectivity, inquiry and moral capacity in students.

Kohlberg (1963) proposed that all of human development was impelled by and rested on the moral challenges that beset all people. His six-stage theory of moral development became a popular way in which all of human development could be conceived, taking in stages of childhood motivation via punishment, reward and instrumental purpose, through conventional stages of conformity and social maintenance, and aspiring to an ideal stage where human beings could be motivated by commitment to social contracts and universal principles. Kohlberg's influence on education and teacher education was profound, leading to moral development being seen as central to all human growth, including intellectual development. For him, it was impossible to separate the skills that lay most overtly at the heart of school goals, namely academic skills, from those related to moral development.

Like Dewey, Peters (1981) was a major force in proposing that moral education lay at the heart of all authentic education. His concern was with the notion of the 'educated man' and how this might be best conceived and safeguarded in a world of competing demands and politics. The central plank of his argument for being 'educated' in the true sense was in the conjunction of what he described as the 'knowledge condition' and the 'value condition'. In a sense, he was arguing, like many of those above, for a distinction to be made between instrumentalist education (what More would call 'instruction') and holistic education, in which the distinguishing feature was around values. It was only education related to 'what is of value' that allowed education to be of value at all:

According to R.S. Peters, education implies that something worthwhile is being intentionally transmitted in a morally acceptable manner ... despite the diversity of values and the culturally dependent interpretation of well-being, some values are conducive to and deducible from the aforementioned definition of development. These values should be present in all educational practices ... I agree with John Dewey that all education is, and should be, moral education. (Raulo 2002, p. 507)

Habermas's (1972, 1974) theory of knowing, on the one hand reminiscent of the core of Deweyan thought, has the added value of an attached theory of social engagement. Habermas (1984, 1987) spoke of authentic knowing leading to 'communicative capacity' and ultimately 'communicative action', a concept about personal commitment, reliability and trustworthiness that spills over into practical action that makes a difference, or what Habermas describes as *praxis*. This is the kind of education that aims to transform thought and practice and so make a difference to the way the human community coheres. It is a supremely moral education.

As with the educational theory of all the afore-mentioned scholars, Habermasian epistemology renders the notion of values neutrality in education inappropriate and non-viable. Habermasian epistemology challenges the authenticity of an education conceived of solely in instrumentalist outcomes-based or competencies terms. Habermasian epistemology impels for any legitimate education a values-laden pedagogy that saturates the learning experience in both a values-filled environment as well as in explicit teaching that engages in discourse about values-related content, transacts practical and personalized values, and in turn inducts students into personal empowerment over their own stated and lived out values. Habermasian epistemology also challenges therefore the notion that values education connotes merely a moral option among various approaches to education, perhaps more suitable to religious than to public systems of schooling. On the contrary, Habermasian epistemology confirms the views of all the scholars noted above that values education is best understood as holistic pedagogy aimed at the full range of developmental measures. Rather than connoting a mere moral or, least of all religious option, values pedagogy connotes an effective and indispensable way in which learning should proceed in any setting. In a word, Habermas offers a most comprehensive and convincing justification for values pedagogy, as we are defining it in this book.

In addressing the forms thesis, noted above, Habermas offers another explanation for apparent divisions in what is, for him, an essential unity of knowledge. He suggests that they arise as the result of human 'cognitive interests', the interests which are part and parcel of the human mind. These interests are three-fold. First, there is an interest in technical control which relates to an 'empirical-analytic' type of knowing. Second, there is an interest in understanding meanings which relates to an 'historical-hermeneutic' type of knowing. Third, there is an interest in being free which relates to a 'critical', or 'self-reflective' type of knowing. As far as Habermas is concerned, all three interests operate in any subject area. Whatever the subject matter, our interest in technical control will lead us to want to know all the facts and figures associated with the subject; this is where empirical-analytic knowing is of use. Similarly, our interest in understanding the meaning behind anything will lead us to explore the inner dimensions, to try to relate one factor to another; this is where historical-hermeneutic knowing is useful. Finally, our interest in ensuring our own autonomy will make us reflect critically on our subject matter, as well as on ourselves.

Habermas's epistemology has been crucial to much of the thought that educationists have seized on in attempting to deepen our understanding of learning and stretch conceptions of the role of the teacher. Beyond the importance of empirical-analytic knowing (the knowing of facts and figures), Habermas spoke, when it was entirely unfashionable, of the more challenging and authentic learning of what he described as historical-hermeneutic or 'communicative knowledge' (the knowing that results from engagement and interrelationship with others) and of 'self-reflection' (the knowledge that comes ultimately from knowing oneself). For Habermas, this latter was the supreme knowing that marked a point of one's having arrived as a human being. One might caricature him as saying "There is no knowing without knowing the knower", and the knower is oneself. In a sense, the ultimate end of learning is to be found in knowing oneself.

It is the one who knows and, in a sense, trusts oneself, who is in the strongest position to go on to what Habermas (1984, 1987) describes as ‘communicative competence’. Beyond the technical and hermeneutic skills that one might expect to find enshrined in this Habermasian notion of the modern, global, communicating citizen, there lies a thesis about reliability, trustworthiness and personal commitment. These are the artefacts of effective communication that go beyond the best-laid training in technical and even interpretive competence. They can only come from the wellspring enshrined in the notion of self-reflectivity, from one who knows who they are, values the integrity of being authentic and commits themselves to establishing the kinds of caring and trusting relationships that bear the best fruits of human interactivity.

As has been well confirmed by the extent of his citations in educational material, these Habermasian perspectives possess huge potential to enlighten educational thought and practice. In light of the concerns of this chapter, these perspectives help to illuminate why it is that research of the kind cited in Chap. 1 (cf. Bryk and Schneider 2002; Loudén et al. 2004; Rowe 2004) has produced the results it has, and furthermore they underline why it is that the values dimension of good practice pedagogy, as articulated in this book, must be grasped by teachers, schools and systems as being central and pivotal to their endeavours, rather than being on their margins. Again, it is worth re-stating the central proposition that the consideration and incorporation of a values approach to pedagogy has the potential to go to the very heart of what it is that teachers, schools and educational systems do best.

Values, Habermasian Epistemology and Education

Habermas’s epistemology provides a particularly powerful tool for analysing the capacity of a values approach to pedagogy to transform people’s beliefs and behaviours, to make the kind of difference that would seem to be its promise. Let us take a particularly contemporary values issue, one concerned with the alleged clash of values between Islam and non-Islam, as an example. If schools really can address this potentially disastrous issue in the way our politicians seem to expect, one would think values pedagogy would have to be the primary tool for doing it. Let us sharpen the example by considering the fairly common belief throughout much of the non-Muslim population that Muslims are given to troublemaking and are potential terrorists. This is a growing belief if one can judge by the amount of media that reflects it.

Employing Habermasian theory in analysing how a learner would deal with confirming or disconfirming this belief, first one would explore the level of empirical knowing or, if you like, evidence-based knowing. Here, one would be faced with an array of facts and figures, or evidence if you like, much of which might well seem to confirm the belief. As suggested, there is currently no shortage of media that would point in this direction and one could build up a sound case with an abundance of apparent evidence confirming that Muslims are indeed troublemakers with links to

radical imams sympathetic to the cause of terrorism. There is nothing inherent in this way of knowing that would force the learner to consider seriously any amount of counter-evidence that might exist. After all, no one can sift all of the evidence so one can be excused for assembling the selective evidence that happens to confirm one's beliefs. Lawyers, politicians, journalists, teachers and even researchers are doing this all the time.

At the next level, that of communicative knowing, one could similarly choose to converse and dialogue with those who simply affirm one's own beliefs or at least do not overtly challenge them. Again, one could assemble a respectable sample of evidence from conversations and interviews that simply endorse what the selective facts and figures seemed to demonstrate and that, perhaps not coincidentally, conform with one's original beliefs anyway. In other words, even respectable and apparently objective research can be skewed to simply confirm the belief that was there in the first place. In the classroom, pedagogy that appears quite sound, objective and evidence-based can function in the same way. It would be possible to have pedagogy with rigorous appearance and purportedly evidence-based that had no greater effect than to confirm the beliefs and values of the dominant class and keep the majority of staff and students well within their comfort zone. At this point, nothing has really happened to challenge the original belief about Muslims.

It is only at the level of critical or self-reflective knowing that one is forced by the very nature of this way of knowing to consider whether one has exhausted all the evidence, including opening oneself up to the possibility that one has been on a self-confirming learning path all along, selecting the evidence that fits and filtering out the evidence that does not fit, that might invade one's own comfort zones and force some re-consideration of long-held beliefs and behaviours. At the ultimate point of this way of knowing, one is finally forced to consider oneself. Could it be that all of the beliefs I hold and the behaviours that result are not really based on evidence so much as on the preferences and prejudices of my upbringing, my family, my culture and ultimately my very self? Could it be that I take comfort in expressing the belief that Muslims are troublemakers and potential terrorists because it is a safe belief; it reinforces my place in the circles in which I move and might even constitute some of my power base in those circles, be that power base wrapped around being a community spokesperson, an outspoken media commentator, or simply being a member of a family that has a tradition of beliefs around these things? Only when I come to the point of being prepared to receive some of the challenging and discomforting evidence that the majority of Muslims are actually no different from any other population, and to engage in the inevitable struggle of changing my beliefs and behaviour, can I truly claim to 'know and understand' the truth about Muslims.

While it has to be tailored to the particular age group in question, this is precisely the task of values pedagogy. The task is two-fold. First, it is to establish an environment of respect, trust and care that, before a word is said, challenges the pre-conceived beliefs and consequent behaviours that many will bring with them from their heritage and wider cultural 'life-world', in Habermasian phraseology. Ideally, through this process, students will see people that they might have come to regard as not worthy of respect in fact being respected by a whole school community. This

is the most powerful lesson of all. So, to further the Muslim example, a teacher and school that goes out of their way to accommodate Muslim expression, be it in terms of dress, food or prayer, not in a grudging politically correct but celebrating way, is providing an environment that makes it very difficult for anti-Muslim prejudice to go unchallenged. This is the implicit modelling, ‘putting one’s money where one’s mouth is’ dimension of an authentic values pedagogy. When a whole school embraces this modelling research suggests that transformation of belief and behaviour is most likely to occur (Lovat 2010; Lovat et al. 2010).

Beyond the implicit modelling, the task is to make explicit why the environment of respect, trust and acceptance is so vital to the human community. This is the teaching or curriculum dimension of values pedagogy. At any age or stage of education, its essential focus must be to raise those questions that characterize Habermas’s critical and self-reflective way of knowing. It is to ensure that the evidence of facts and figures, as well as of human interactions and conversations, is of the broadest and most challenging kind. Ultimately, its task is to push student learning towards self-reflectivity, that knowing of self that allows one to step out of the shadow of one’s upbringing and cultural heritage, to challenge not only the preconceived beliefs and behaviours of this upbringing and heritage but, more painfully, one’s own deep seated comfort zone of beliefs and behaviours. The task, in other words, is to transform. It is to do the very opposite of what Jencks (1972) held to be the truth about the school. It is to take the input of the entering children and to transform the output. The importance of school-based values pedagogy in undertaking this task cannot be overstated.

Transforming beliefs and behaviour does not mean imposing a different set of beliefs and values on students from those with which they entered the school. Imposing someone else’s comfort zone would be a contradiction of everything implied by critical and self-reflective knowing. It does however mean challenging students to see that whatever beliefs and values they brought with them are but one set, one life-world, and to consider the life-worlds of others and the rights of those others to their life-worlds. This is the hallmark of what Habermas (1984, 1987) describes as ‘communicative capacity’ and, beyond that, ‘communicative action’. Communicative capacity is when the self-reflective knower comes to see his or her own life-world as just one that needs to function in a myriad of life-worlds, and so comes to possess communicative capacity. In a sense, this is a formula for the modern, globally competent, intercultural communicator. Beyond this, however, is the notion of communicative action. Here, the self-reflective knower takes a step beyond mere tolerance to take a stand both for justice and for oneself because one’s new found self, one’s own integrity, is at stake. This is a concept about personal commitment, reliability and trustworthiness that spills over into practical action that makes a difference, or what Habermas (1972, 1974) describes as *praxis*. It is the kind of action that can only come from the wellspring enshrined in the notion of self-reflectivity, from one who knows who they are, values the integrity of being authentic and commits oneself to establishing the kinds of caring and trusting relationships that bear the best fruits of human interactivity.

What is important to say, in many ways against the conventional wisdom, is that school is clearly the best place where this transformation can occur. While this is not to pit the school against the other social agencies of home, peers, religion, media, etc., it is to boldly assert that, for most people, these agencies tend towards a narrowing of life-worlds and towards pressure to conform to those life-worlds, to compound the sense that “we’ve got it right!”. The school’s bolder role should be to stretch the comfort implied by this and to open minds to the breadth of life-worlds. Ideally, this will be done carefully and with the support of other agencies, especially the home, but one should not be surprised if there are occasional tensions between the role of the school and the other agencies. Like the other agencies, the school’s role is a distinctive one and much of the substance of this role is to be found in comprehensive and authentic values pedagogy.

Perspectives like that of Habermas help to illuminate why it is that issues of trust, care, respect and acceptance are so vital if teaching is to have its optimal effects. Furthermore, these perspectives underline just why it is that values pedagogy must be grasped by teachers, schools and systems as being central and pivotal to their endeavours, rather than being on their margins. Again, it is worth re-stating the central proposition of this book, namely that values pedagogy has the potential to go to the very heart of what it is that teachers, schools and educational systems aim to achieve.

Conclusion

As suggested in Chap. 1 and illustrated further in this chapter, the notion of the centrality of morality and its relationship to effective education is one found commonly in the thinking of a number of traditions. While roundly challenged by philosophical developments in the early part of the twentieth century, more recent epistemologies have brought us back to the essential morality that lies at the heart of education, and hence to the crucial nature of values pedagogy. In this movement, the work of Habermas is seen to be central. Furthermore, one is reminded of the strong and much heralded caution against instrumentalist approaches to education that was provided by the eminent John Dewey in the early days of public education. He said that to depend overly on subject knowledge and methods would be fatal to the best interests of education, speaking rather of the imperative for any authentic education to instil moral judiciousness on the part of students. In that sense, education was inherently moral and would lose its way and effectiveness in all domains if this were to be forgotten. Dewey, it would seem, was very much in tune with the Confucian and Aristotelian sentiments noted above, as well as with the epistemology of Habermas.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, values education and its component forms of character education, social and emotional learning, etc. represent a unification of these ideals. As will be discussed throughout the remainder of this book, while the evidence about the effects of these forms of emancipatory education does not always meet the rigours of inductivist scientific methods, the research and en-

quiry into the inculcation of values and morals, quality teaching and the processes and contexts of learning, have yielded an abundance of ‘observation statements’ and theories that are coalescing to provide a defensible and indisputable paradigm, known as values pedagogy, a pedagogy that has the potential to optimize educational attainment for all students, not just those who are ‘destined’ to achieve.

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