

# Education Letter

A publication of the Faculty of Education

Spring/Summer 2016

## In this issue...

Spiritual Wandering as an Educational Experience ..... 1

Happiness and Spirituality ..... 4

Spirituality, Education and the Second Vatican Council..... 7

Taoism and Education: Water and Wu-Wei as pedagogic inspirations..... 10

Jewish Spirituality and Education in Historical Perspective..... 14

Waldorf education: intersections of anthroposophy, the concept of *Bildung*, and New Education..... 17

Being-in-the-world as point of intersection between spirituality and education .... 20

A Spirituality of Catholic Education — Seeing Differently ..... 23

The grand narratives of modernity and the modern self: The Protestant Idea of the Soul and the Educationalization of the World ..... 27

Spirituality in Muslim Education — Reading the Self..... 30

## Spiritual Wandering as an Educational Experience

Comments from the Editor: ROSA BRUNO-JOFRÉ,  
Queen's University Faculty of Education

**W**hen discussing educational matters, we often neglect spirituality unless we have in mind confessional schools or schools with explicit spiritual underpinnings, such as those in the Waldorf system. But that should not be the case, as Nel Noddings argues in her leading essay in this issue. She writes: “When I use the word *spirituality* in education, I mean attention given to the elements of life that unite thinking, observing, believing, doing, and feeling.” The articles included here call our attention to the idea that within the realm of the spiritual, we need to be attentive to a wide range of experiences, including, but not limited to, religious spirituality. Those experiences may have complex cultural and historical roots and be part of large processes of reconstruction of collective and individual identities, as it has been in the case of identities destroyed by colonization or suppressed by patriarchal structures and discourses. Such are the stories of our Aboriginal people and of women religious in various traditions. Yet both of those found spaces to exercise agency. Illustrations of the latter can be found in feminist theologies in both Catholic and Protestant traditions, not explored here.



*The Wanderer* by Casper David Friedrich

*within the realm of the spiritual, we  
need to be attentive to a wide range  
of experiences, including, but not  
limited to, religious spirituality*

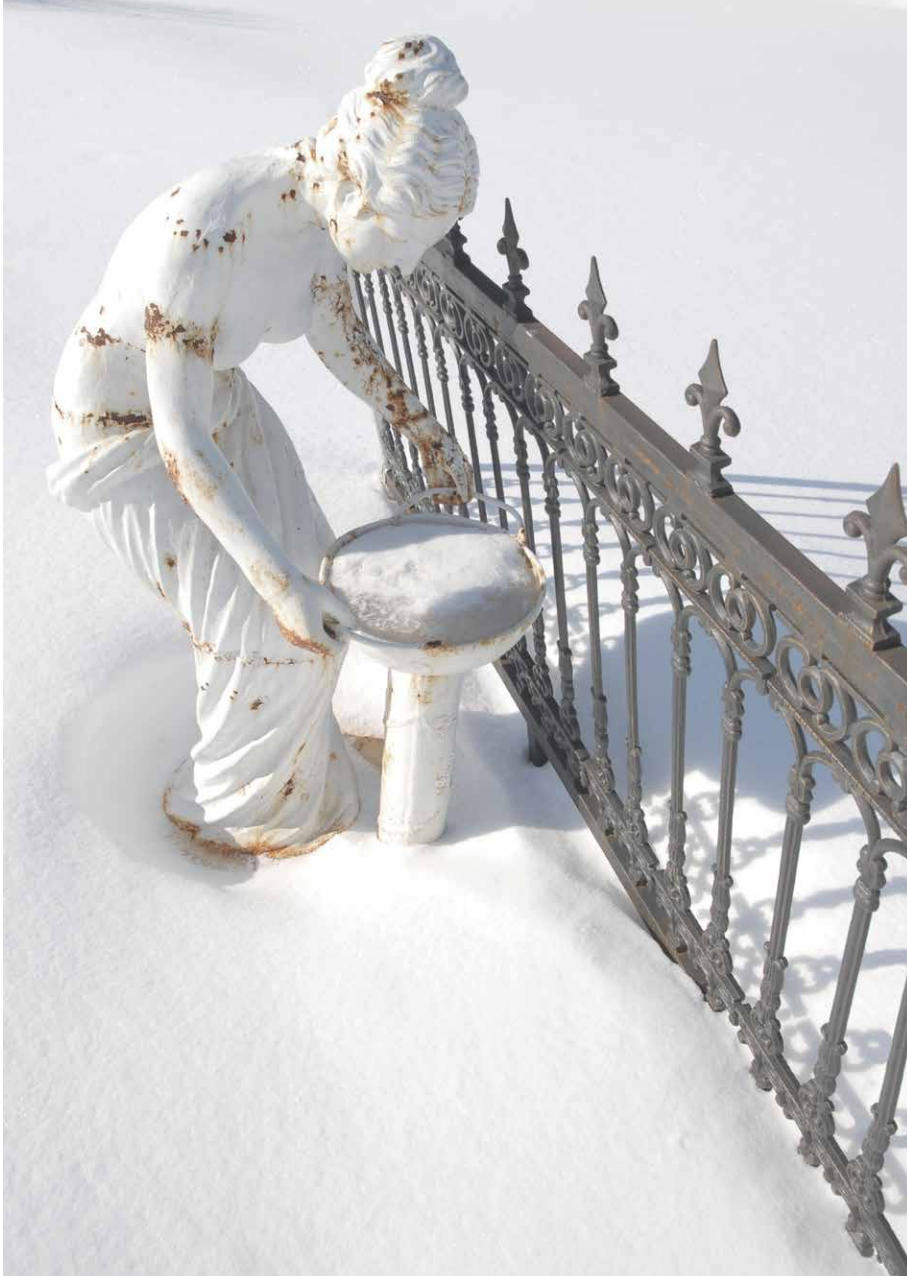
Modernity brought a major change: the co-existence, as Berger (2014) put it, of different world views and value systems in the same society, with a consequent change of the place of religion in the life of individuals and in the institutional order. Since co-existence of views and ways of being can produce “cognitive contamination,” then surely one can remain a pious religious person in many respects while embracing multiple aspects of modernity (Berger, 2014). But modernity has also generated a secular discourse, which in our Western civilization, and over various historical periods, was converted into ways of being and constructing the self without the need to be concerned with transcendence. In place of transcendence, ‘the immanent frame’, as described by Charles Taylor (2007, chapter 15), informed the buffered, disciplined self, a self that sought intimacy, construed a new ethic, and saw herself/himself as an individual in a new modern moral order.

Secularism did not obliterate religiosity, as we know well. However, not long ago, the religious crisis of the long 1960s (1958–1974) in the West shook Christian churches and revealed itself in lack of vocations and poor Church attendance. Nonetheless, Catholic schools are publicly funded and well-attended, as exemplified by Ontario. The papers dealing with Catholic education in this issue try to convey the values and principles informing Catholic education after the Vatican II Council (1962–1965).

The certainties of modernity gave way to the uncertainties of “liquid modernity,” whereby polycentrism and global interconnectedness configure our lives, our identities become malleable and self-fashioned, and fractures exist not only as intellectual features generating heuristic nuances when dealing with gender, race, or class, but as permeating our own multiple identities (Bauman, 2012). The dualism between transcendence and immanence becomes blurred. That leaves space for acknowledging ways of being that had been the target of colonization and assimilation, such as the integrated “life-lived” discussed here by Beeman and Hamilton, in reference to our Anishinaabe people.

The articles in this *Letter* address spirituality from variegated positions: spirituality in education and its link to happiness; Catholic spirituality as an inclusive spirituality, rooted in love of God and love of neighbour translated into a commitment to social justice; Taoism inspiring an educational approach that could take place in a liquid pedagogy; Jewish spirituality’s difficult journey through historical times and continuing to this day; *Anthroposophy* and the concurrent spirituality that underlies the Waldorf schools, in combination with other concepts such as *bildung* and notions from the New Education movement; a project of education rooted in Aboriginal ways of being—as lived understanding of interdependent being (*Authochthonous*); and a discussion of modernity, the Protestant idea of the soul and the educationalization of the world.

In a conception of education rooted in a pedagogy in which wondering and imagination are not obliterated in favour of an “effective education... that says nothing about the desirability of the ends in themselves” (Biesta, 2014, p. 8), spirituality has a place not far from the evoking, emotional force of contemplating nature, musing at love, praying, or struggling with inner images emerging from admiring an artistic piece.



***An Intervention Pending*** by Alan Wilkinson, Queen's Faculty of Education

#### REFERENCES

Bauman, Z. (2012). *Liquid Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity.

Berger, P. (2014). *The many altars of modernity*. Boston / Berlin: De Gruyter.

Taylor, C. (2007). *A secular age*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Biesta, G. (2014). Good Education: What it is and why we need it. *Education Letter*. Queen's University (Spring /Summer 2014).

# Happiness and Spirituality

NEL NODDINGS, Professor Emerita, Stanford Graduate School of Education

*happiness and education are  
intimately related*

Several years ago, I wrote a book arguing that happiness and education are intimately related—that happiness should be an aim of education and that the best education is accompanied by a general feeling of happiness or well-being (Noddings, 2003). This is not to say that a good education is entirely free of worry, irritation, and struggle. Nor does it suggest that education should be all fun and little work. It is to say, rather, that the point of a good education is to move students toward a good life broadly understood and that most of what goes on in its name should provide opportunities to experience something of this good life.

This message is perhaps even more important today than it was fifteen years ago. One would suppose from the way we talk about and conduct education that its primary—perhaps sole—purpose is to get all students into college and, thence, into a well-paid job. The emphasis on grade-point averages, test scores, and advanced or honors courses suggests that the main purpose of education can be described in terms of competition and financial success.

Surely there is more to a good life than a good income. Among the many elements of the good life too often neglected in our schools is spirituality. Attention to spirituality does not commit us to a study guided by formal religion, although religious views of spirituality may be discussed. When I use the word *spirituality* in education, I mean attention given to the elements of life that unite thinking, observing, believing, doing, and feeling. Consider what we might experience watching a beautiful sunrise. We often speak



***Woman Before the Rising Sun*** by Casper David Friedrich

of ourselves as “transported” by the experience. We see something beautiful, pause to attend, and feel that we are moved to a place beyond our momentary physical location. We feel part of something bigger, more important than our physical mind and body.

In such moments we are receptive, open to the other, and we enter into relation with that other. Martin Buber has described ways in which we might contemplate a tree. We might study it as scientists or measure its growth in anticipation of using it as lumber, we might think about when it will bear fruit, or when it will provide shade. “But it can also happen, if will and grace are joined, that as I contemplate the tree I am drawn into a relation, and the tree ceases to be an It” (1957, p.57). The tree and I become part of an I-Thou relation. The feeling that I am more than this particular body sweeps over me, and both the tree and I are transformed.

Spiritual moments involve relation or connection. In such moments, people, other living things, works of art, lines of poetry, mathematical forms, even items of furniture or machinery—and I—become part of a vital union. One cannot deliberately invoke spiritual experience. Meditation may encourage it, but there is no guarantee. A certain amount of silence, a quieting of daily routine activity, seems to invite spiritual awakening but, more than anything else, a complete openness to the other seems to be the key. Gaston Bachelard has recounted convincingly occasions on which we experience such moments even with inanimate objects:

And so, when a poet rubs a piece of furniture—even vicariously—when he puts a little fragrant wax on his table with the woolen cloth that lends warmth to everything it touches, he creates a new object; he increases the object’s human dignity; he registers this object as a member of the human household. (1964, p.67)

Spirituality is invoked by receptivity, an openness to the other. If we want to encourage spirituality in our students, we must share potentially spirit-opening experiences with them. Current practice forces teachers to concentrate almost entirely on the pursuit of specific learning objectives that will be tested, and this leaves little space for the mental/spiritual wandering, exploring, and wondering that are rightly part of deep education. Why not pause now and then to tell a bit of biographical story, recite a few lines of poetry, stare together out of the classroom window at the world outside, sit in complete silence for a few minutes, let someone sing a lullaby, share something you’ve read recently (or long ago), invite student comments on things they have read or heard. None of this should appear on tests, but some of it will become a permanent memory for individual students.

There are other things we can do to encourage the receptivity that invites spiritual experience. Educators today are asked to put emphasis on critical thinking, and I am a strong advocate of that move. However, it can also be useful to put off critical analysis for a while and just listen or observe. I sometimes advise students—especially when they are

*if we want to encourage spirituality  
in our students, we must share  
potentially spirit-opening  
experiences with them*

*encourage the receptivity that  
invites spiritual experience*



#### REFERENCES

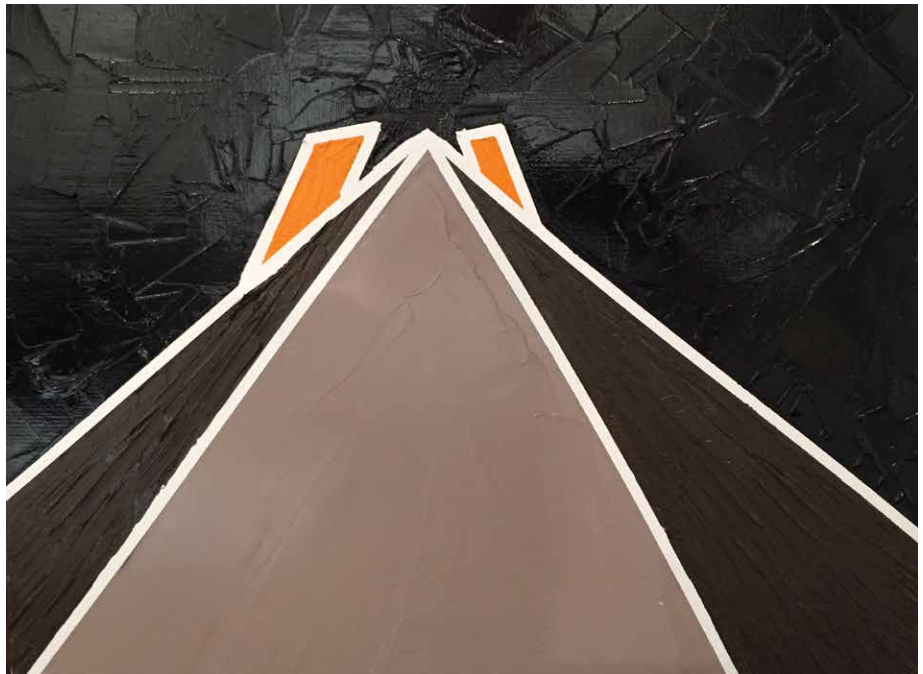
Bachelard, Gaston. (1964). *The poetics of space*. Trans. Maria Jolas. New York: Orion Press.

Buber, Martin. (1957). *I and Thou*. Trans. Walter Kaufmann. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

Noddings, Nel. (2003). *Happiness and education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

reading Dewey—to “just read and believe” for a few pages or chapters. Openness and receptivity can create waves of understanding and appreciation. Then, in tune with the author, we can begin generous, sensitive critical analysis. We may lose the desire to argue and defeat the author. Instead, our critical analysis is directed toward strengthening the author’s work. Now, of course, there are arguments with which we will always disagree but, even with these, a sensitive understanding may lead to a possible compromise or to the search for one.

Spiritual experience—that incomparable wave of relatedness or oneness—cannot be summoned, but we must be prepared for it. The practice of reading and believing or listening and believing can be enormously powerful. We do not simply buy everything “hook, line, and sinker,” but we absorb, make the material part of our own felt knowledge. As such, it becomes a basis for critical self-reflection.



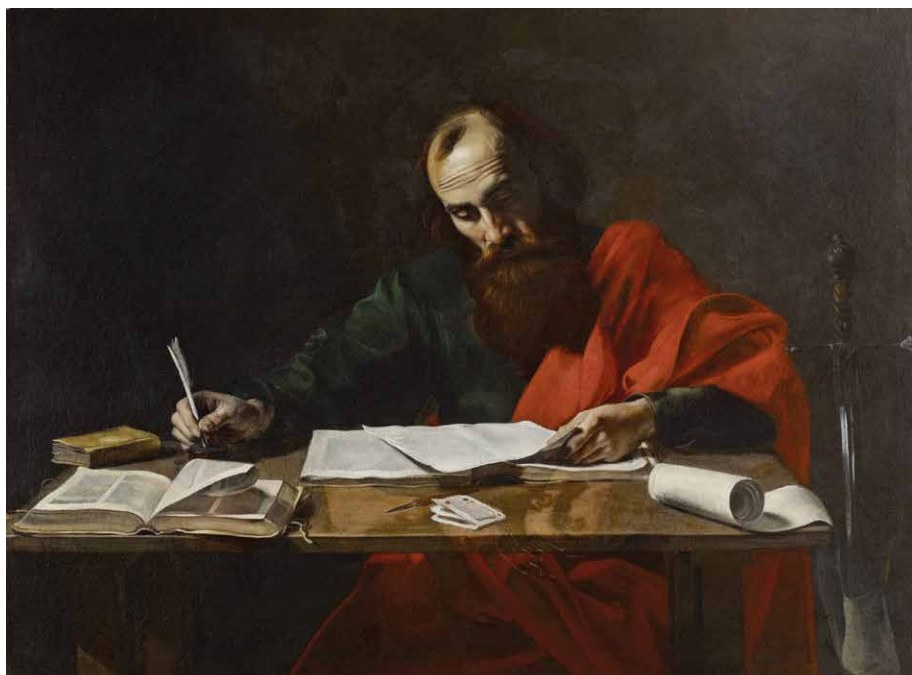
*Infinity* by Bernard Hugonnier

# Spirituality, Education and the Second Vatican Council

MICHAEL ATTRIDGE, Associate Professor, University of St. Michael's College

**T**he Catholic world has just concluded celebrating the 50th anniversary of the close of the Second Vatican Council, a world-wide gathering of Catholic leaders from 1962–1965, which modernized the Church's teachings in almost every area of its theology, life and worship. It was the first council of its kind in almost a century and the first major reform council of the Catholic Church in more than four hundred years. The significance of Vatican II—as this Council is often called—was monumental, prompting scholars to refer to it with such expressions as 'a watershed in theological thought' (Schreiter, 1999, p. 158), 'the Church's greatest reform operation' (Latourelle, 1988, p. xv), or even a 'paradigm shift' in the Kuhnian sense (Schloesser, 2015, p. xiii). In the end, the Council produced sixteen documents—four constitutions, nine decrees, and three declarations. Each of these has its own authority or relevance in relation to the other; I will not rehearse them here (cf. Morrissey, 1990, pp. 111–112). Instead, I will focus on two documents related to the theme of this issue—the 'Constitution on the Church' and the 'Declaration on Christian Education' and propose how we might think about spirituality and education in relation to Vatican II, a topic never explicitly dealt with by the Council.

*spirituality and education in relation to Vatican II, a topic never explicitly dealt with by the Council*



**Paul Writing His Epistles**, painting attributed to Valentin de Boulogne, 17th century

“Spirituality” within the Christian tradition is as old as Christianity itself. In his letter to the Romans, written sometime in the mid-50s of the first century, Paul encourages attentiveness to the Spirit of God, saying: ‘the Spirit is life and peace’ (Rom. 8.6).

Throughout the centuries, the Christian tradition has had many different spiritualities and spiritual theologians. Despite this plurality, Christian spirituality always relates back to God. Within Christianity, the source of spirituality is always the Triune God.



**Toronto** by Bernard Hugonnier

Until Vatican II, little attention was paid within Catholic theology to the spirituality of the everyday lay-person. Over the centuries, most of the attention had been given to priests and nuns. The Council, however, broadened the notion to include all people in the Church. In an important intervention in 1963 during the second session of the Council, Belgian Cardinal Joseph Suenens pointed out that the work of the Spirit is not restricted to the leadership of the Church. It is also operative in the lives of every-day people. He then added: ‘and perhaps especially to these’ (Philips, 1966, p. 121). Through his efforts and others, this wider sense of spirituality was picked up and reflected in the final documents, especially in Chapter 5 of the Council’s ‘Constitution on the Church’ (*Lumen Gentium*), entitled: ‘The Universal Call to Holiness.’ In it, the Council declared that ‘all...

*if we combine the teachings on  
education and spirituality ...  
we see a relationship*



are called to the fullness of Christian life.' Through this holiness, 'a more human way of life is promoted' (*Lumen Gentium*, 40). Vatican II embraced the plurality of spirituality of the centuries before but extended it to include all. Christian spirituality now meant to live according to the Spirit of God and make that which is given by God, present in relationships with others: mercy, love, compassion, kindness, etc. Spirituality always entails this two-fold dimension, namely: love of God and love of neighbour. The presence of both, Vatican II claims, demonstrates that someone is truly following the Spirit (*Lumen Gentium*, 42).

The other document of the Council to which I would like to draw attention is the 'Declaration on Christian Education' (*Gravissimum Educationis*). One of the most profound statements of the declaration is found in its opening article. In Catholic theology, education is not just a social right. It is a foundational right that belongs to the basic nature and dignity of the human person herself/himself, regardless of race, ethnicity, age, etc. Since God is the author of all creation, everyone is endowed with the divine presence and therefore deserving of equality. Education involves two things. First, as having originated from God, people have a right to understand their origin, which is also their destiny. Education should aid them in this understanding. Second, education should form people for the purpose of peace, justice and human flourishing. These two movements are described in this first article in the following words: 'For a true education aims at the formation of the human person with respect to her/his ultimate goal, and simultaneously with respect to the good of those societies of which she/he is a member and in whose responsibilities she/he will share' (*Gravissimum Educationis*, 1). Education thus orients the person to understand themselves as created by God while at the same time sends them into the world to serve and transform it through justice. These two principles are interdependent and fundamental.

In summary, if we combine the teachings on education and spirituality according to Vatican II—something the Council itself did not do—we see a relationship. Both orient us in the same double-direction: to God and to the world. In spirituality on the one hand, one turns to God, who gives through the Spirit that which is necessary for meaningful relationships with those around them: love, mercy, compassion, kindness, etc. These are attributes that come from the divine. Through Christian education on the other hand, one learns of God as both his/her origin and end. From this, the believer then embraces God and desires to enact equality and justice in the world and to bring about social transformation. Christian education ought to make someone a spiritual person by leading him/her to God, and then forming them in such a way that they utilize the values to bring about a more just world—socially, economically, and politically. When spirituality becomes detached from worldly concerns, it becomes abstract and meaningless. When Christian education loses its connection to God, it becomes too consumed with the tangible and with its own affairs. Fifty years after Vatican II, increased attention to education and spirituality that promotes greater equality and justice in the world is something greatly needed.

## REFERENCES

- Schreier, Robert J. (1999). "The Impact of Vatican II." In G. Baum (Ed.), *The Twentieth Century: A Theological Overview*. New York: Orbis.
- Latourelle, René. (1988). "Introduction." In R. Latourelle (Ed.), *Vatican II: Assessments and Perspectives*, Vol. 1. New York: Paulist Press.
- Schloesser, Stephen. (2015). "Introduction." In D. G. Schultenover (Ed.), *50 Years On: Probing the Riches of Vatican II*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press.
- Morrissey, Francis G. (1990). Papal and Curial Pronouncements: Their Canonical Significance in Light of the 1983 Code of Canon Law. *The Jurist*, 50, 102-125.
- Philips, Gérard. (1966). "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, History of the Constitution." In H. Vorgrimler (Ed.), *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, Vol. 1. New York: Herder and Herder. For the original latin intervention of Suenens, see: *Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani II*, Vol. II, Par. III. Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1972, pp. 176-177.

# Taoism and Education: Water and Wu-Wei as pedagogic inspirations

XAVIER LAUDO CASTILLO, Universitat de València, Facultat de Filosofia i Ciències de l'Educació, Spain

**W**hy should a teacher study Taoism? Perhaps one of the Western educator's tasks is to encourage thinking, and thinking to encourage doing. To the ancient Chinese mind, there was no disassociation between theory and practice, ends and means, goals and plans. The *Tao Te Ching*, the fundamental text of Taoism, is a set of words (actually, ideograms) arranged to produce images. When an image has been captured, the words are to be forgotten. In turn, the image conjures up an idea. When the idea has been captured, we are to forget the images and live by the idea. And what is the core idea in Taoism? Even though in the strict and deep sense, nothing can be said about Tao, we can get close with the words *wei wu wei* ('doing without doing') and the paradigmatic image of water.

Water is an axial metaphor in ancient Chinese thought. Its semantic force lies in the versatility associated with water:

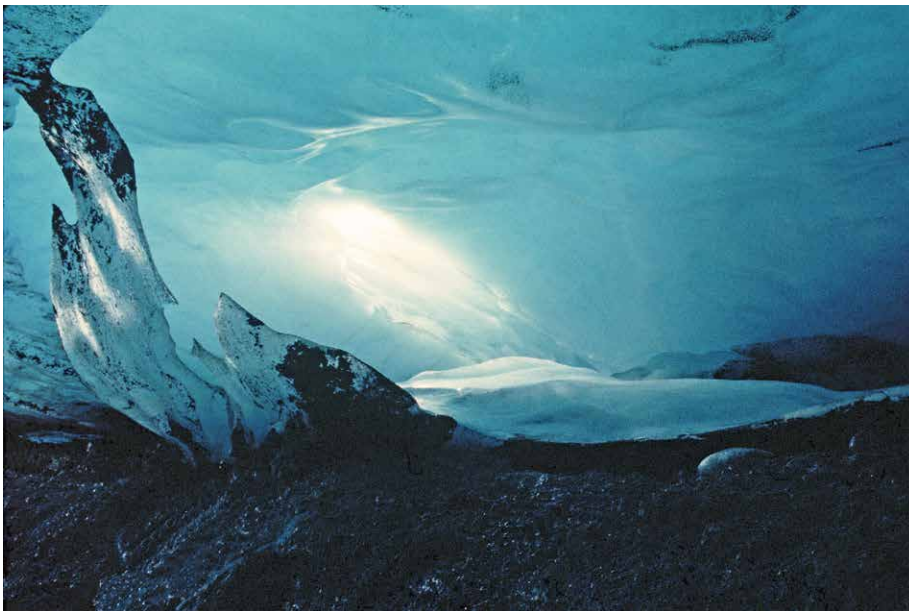
infinitely soft, fluid, and because it has no form and no sharp edges, and it flows inexhaustibly ... it takes us back toward that which is undifferentiated, that which we cannot see (in isolation) or name (separately). It is the least thing like of all things, the most alive, the most agile" (Jullien, 1999, 251).



**Vargas Island** by Katie Brailsford, Queen's Faculty of Education Alumna

Water is what is in continuous change in shape depending on its environment: it is pure transition.

“Nothing in the world is softer or weaker than water / Yet nothing is better at overcoming the hard and strong / That the weak overcomes the strong / And the soft overcomes the hard / Everybody in the world knows / But cannot put into practice” (*Tao Te Ching*, LXXVIII).



**Ice Clouds Above** by Alan Wilkinson, Queen's Faculty of Education

In the Taoist tradition, the wisest way to act, be it for the common man, the governor or the teacher, is natural action as expressed in the movement of flowing water, accepting and adapting to the demands of the terrain. The water metaphor appeals to its similarity to the properties of life, as a symbol of fluidity, flexibility and adaptation to circumstances.

*Wu wei* (not doing) is the creative non-action that can be interpreted as pure naturalness and spontaneity in action. In contrast, Western thought is characterized by *yo wei*, willful, intentional or non-natural doing, wanting to know before acting, and its method consists of arguing with reason, observing with instruments, calculating and establishing means to achieve goals. *Yo wei* is logical action “designed to control and manipulate the natural world in a drastic movement away from the order of the universe” (Miner, 2004, 31).

Taoism is based on an idea of efficiency that consist of using the least amount of energy possible, letting yourself be led by an subconscious intelligence (Watts, 1975). The idea of

*the educator need not push, nor  
guide, nor facilitate; the educator  
need only be there*

wu wei involves following the path of least resistance and waiting for the right time to act. “The great virtue is when one does not do anything, yet everything is done. A man of great humanity acts, yet he acts without purpose” (*Tao Te Ching*, XXXVIII). In the expression *wu wei*, the negation does not apply to the verb itself, but to its internal object complement: action is freed from the stiffness and constraint that it usually implies, the activity reaches its utmost output, it is mistaken for the course of things instead of upsetting it. Just as in a well-trained, concentrated athlete, the right movement occurs on its own accord, effortlessly and unhindered by the conscious will. The poem writes itself; it is impossible to separate the dance and the dancer. Nothing is done, since the actor has completely vanished in the action, the same as how a kiss between lovers is not given, but rather, emerges with the situation.



**A Taoist Monk** by Antoine Taveneraux. Wikipedia CC BY-SA 3.0. Water calligraphy evokes the ephemeral nature of physical reality.

To take the image of water pedagogically, even if we can only do so through the inseparable *logos* that has led us to codify and think about the world as we Westerners do, this approach lets us think with non-exclusive categories, ones that are not closed in the “To be or not to be” of the thing, but rather, in pedagogical thoughts that are hard to label and are close to the ideas of transition, flexibility, constant change, liquidity, and silent transformation (Jullien, 1999). “The highest goodness resembles water” (*Tao Te Ching*, VIII), change is not a breaking but an outcome of a silent transformation and a transition that imperceptibly alters, just as the course of water shapes the rock. This is how educators of Silvia Duschatzky’s “altering pedagogy” operate, without designing routines or schedules, but rather, with training for improvisation and being prepared, attentive, and willing, and with an understanding of the discipline as the capability of sustaining a presence.

It is likely that we educators have to convey to our students tradition and culture by actually “putting something on the table” and not contributing to schools devoid of contents and only centered on the processes of facilitating learning (Masschelein & Simons, 2014, 99), which Gert Biesta has called “learnification.” But for a Taoist, after putting something on the table, one has to let the unforeseeable to emerge from every situation. The educator need not push, nor guide, nor facilitate; the educator need only be there.

In some ways, *wu wei* and the Taoist metaphors help us accept that pedagogy is impossible. Freud once wrote that educating was one of the three impossible professions, and perhaps it is true that we educate when and where it is impossible to educate. Real pedagogy affirms a certain respect for the impossible. We do not know how we learn, and we never will. Once we accept this perpetual ignorance, the aim is to set a few conditions, test a few methods, to give place for the unique appearance of the mystery of the experience of learning. As Gadamer wrote in *Truth and Method*, that experience “always occurs unexpectedly, but not without preparation” and that, when it is “in accordance with the principle of Tao, it happens on its own” (Watts & Huang, 1975).

The educational approach inspired in Taoism would be one of a liquid pedagogy proposed by the water metaphor and *wu wei* as a normative value and model for living. “The sound of water says what I think,” wrote Chuang Tzú. The educator inspired in Taoism is unlikely to explain or to have a planned dialog; he simply converses and acts without acting, letting things happen. “Thanks to a combination of weakness and softness, knowledge reaches us” (Watts, 2000, 64). The child who makes an effort and tries his utmost to listen to the master is unable to hear him. These ideas are imprecise and ill-defined, but that is the philosophy of Tao, from which we educators may learn something: water and *wu wei* can be pedagogical inspirations.

*wu wei and the Taoist metaphors  
help us accept that pedagogy is  
impossible*

#### REFERENCES

- (2006). *Tao Te Ching: Annotated & Explained*. Woodstock, SkyLight Paths Publishing.
- Masschelein, J. & Simons, M. (2014). *Defensa de la escuela. Una cuestión pública*. Buenos Aires, Miño y Davila.
- Jullien, F. (1999). *Tratado de la eficacia*. Madrid, Siruela.
- Miner, K. (2004). *Taoist pedagogy in education*. Canada, Simon Fraser University.
- Watts, A. (2000). *What is Tao?* California, New World Library.
- Watts, A. & Huang, A.C. (1975). *Tao: The Watercourse Way*. New York, Pantheon Books.



# Jewish Spirituality and Education in Historical Perspective

HOWARD TZVI ADELMAN, History/Jewish Studies, Queen's University, Kingston



**Rebecca Gratz** by Thomas Sully

*Gratz's early curriculum shows the tension in modern Jewish education between the formation of group identity... and spirituality*

**W**hen Rebecca Gratz opened the first Jewish Sunday School in Philadelphia in 1838 to strengthen Jewish identity, she used textbooks published by the Christian American Sunday School Union with small pieces of paper pasted over the Christological terminology. This raises questions of, What is Jewish spirituality and what is Jewish education? Gratz's early curriculum shows the tension in modern Jewish education between the formation of group identity, which involves ethnic particularism, and spirituality, which involves the individual's engagement with forces that transcend the group, and this can be dangerous to its solidarity.

Traditional Jewish education revolved around the Hebrew study of biblical commentary and legal codifications, for those Jews who studied. Alongside this curriculum, some Jews engaged in personal flights of spirituality. Biblical prophecy, post-biblical ecstatic experiences and magical texts, medieval mysticism—kabbalah, messianism, martyrdom. Arbiters of tradition frowned on such independent activities.

Rebecca Gratz emerged in the nineteenth century, in the context of sporadic changes among the Jews following the limited toleration offered by the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, civic emancipation, and the rise of romanticism and nationalism, as well as the ongoing Christian contempt for Jews and efforts to convert them. In response to pressure to assimilate to the surrounding society, they adopted several basic responses.

In Western Europe, Jewish leaders reformulated Judaism to the contours of Protestantism. They adjusted synagogue services to reflect the decorum of local churches, they changed the liturgy to accommodate universalistic values, and they guided Jews to behave like local Christians. The different denominations, Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox, tried to modernize Judaism according to what they understood as, respectively, the spirit of the times, the spirit of the Jewish people and the spirit of Jewish law. As Western European Jews resettled in North America, these denominations became a major vehicle for Jewish engagement, especially as Eastern European Jewish refugees joined them.

By the end of the nineteenth century, many Jews had lost faith in the universalistic reforms offered by the denominations and in the prospects of adjusting Judaism to meet the expectations of their Christian neighbors, or they were inspired by the waves of nationalism that swept through Europe. As Jews turned to particularistic, collective Jewish nationalistic identity, which included using Hebrew for political purposes, various movements offered conflicting visions of ideas of their final goals. Some looked for a Jewish homeland in Palestine, others looked elsewhere.

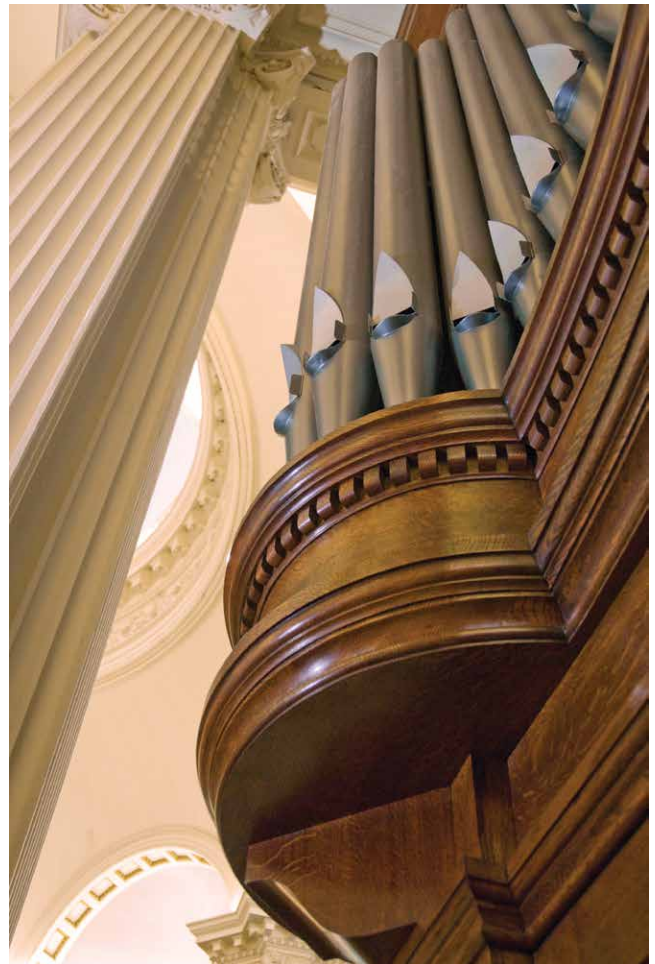
Meanwhile, in Eastern Europe, groups of Jewish pietists, Hasidim, under the leadership of charismatic rebbes, reformulated Judaism to encompass more intensive spirituality. Influenced by Jewish mystical trends from Palestine borrowed from local Sufis, these inward looking Jewish groups veered away from Jewish law, but gradually accommodated their spirituality to Jewish law. The Hasidic movements remained relatively isolated, except for some popularizers in western Europe, until after the Holocaust when their remnants resettled in major cities around the world and in the State of Israel.

Finally, also in Eastern Europe, Jews, often known as Bundists, rejected both national identity and piety. They embraced the universalism of radical, socialist, communist, sometimes anarchist, political causes, paradoxically using the Yiddish language that set them apart from their comrades. With violence in Russia at the end of the nineteenth century, millions of Eastern European Jews emigrated, mostly to cities in the West and a few to Palestine.

By the middle of the twentieth century, two events changed the nature of Jewish spirituality and education. The Holocaust buttressed Jewish lack of faith in God, and in humanity, but the trauma created a sense of spiritual awe that resonated with many Jews who had rejected religion. Jewish communities built Holocaust Centers, made pilgrimages to Holocaust sites, and supported an industry of films, literature, and commemoration. It was also on the basis of the Holocaust that Jews and Christians entered into dialogue to search for shared values.

The establishment of the State of Israel made the clash of values more pronounced for Jewish educators. Israel was an inspiration for Jewish pride, especially in militaristic terms, which increased after Israel's victory in 1967. Yet, to justify Israel to Christians—as well as to many Jews—supporters of Israel stressed the universalistic, democratic aspects of the state. This spiritual dissonance became more acute as many Israelis, usually highly secular, left Israel, not only undermining the myth of Israel as the Jewish national homeland, but they began to staff Jewish religious schools. Israel also sent emissaries to synagogues, often soldiers and diplomats, to brief congregations on the positions of the Israeli government, an image that highlights the paradoxes in the nature of Jewish spirituality in the synagogue.

For spirituality, small groups of Jews are turning away from synagogues. They are building alternative communities and seeking spirituality outside institutional and nationalistic frameworks. Jews are breaking away from the mainstream denominations and establishing

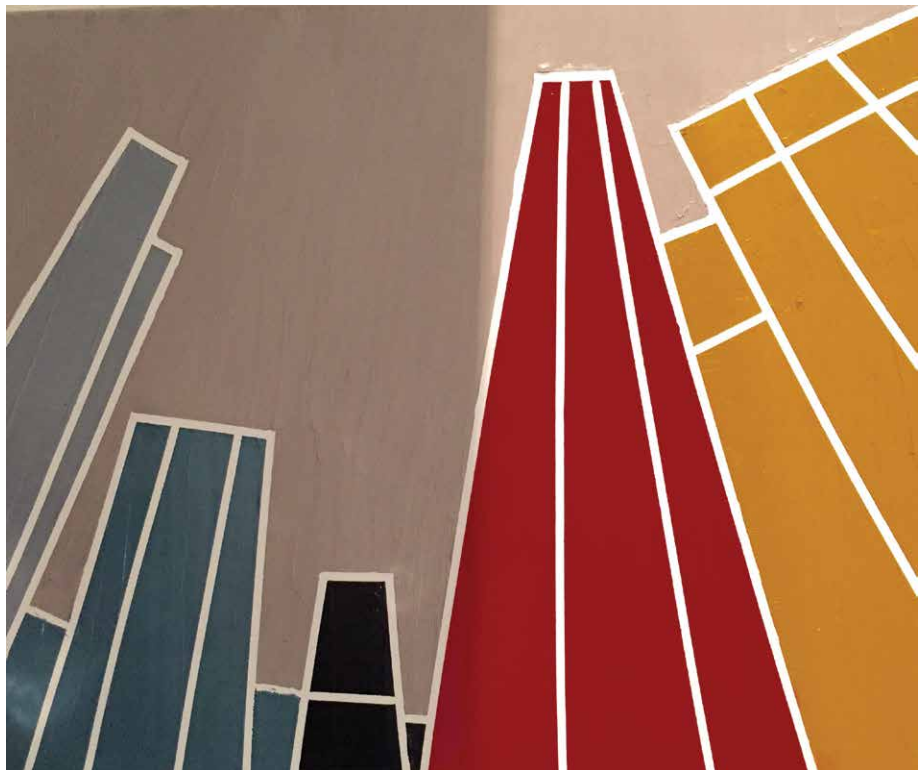


**Harmony and Counterpoint** by Alan Wilkinson, Queen's Faculty of Education

*for spirituality, small groups of Jews  
are turning away from synagogues*

independent prayer groups, often without the benefit of clergy. There are now trans-denominational rabbinic schools, a Jewish spirituality network, and a Jewish renewal movement. Jews align themselves with progressive universalistic causes, including support for Palestinian national rights, absorption of refugees, and equality for gay, lesbian, and transgender people. Jews, along with Christians, study Yiddish and play Eastern European klezmer music. Some Jews have embraced eastern religions, sometimes wryly known as JewBus. They travel to India and Nepal, even young Israelis after their military service, who then return home to hold festivals dedicated to eastern religions, often on Jewish holidays. Havurahs, groups of families who study, prayer, and celebrate together, especially on the holidays, are a growing form of spirituality and education.

The large organized Jewish movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, starting with Rebecca Gratz's Sunday School, did not foster Jewish spirituality. In fact, they served to limit it. As these institutions lose their hold on Jews, many small groups are creating options for spirituality.



**New York** by Bernard Hugonnier

# Waldorf education: intersections of anthroposophy, the concept of *Bildung*, and New Education

PATRICIA QUIROGA UCEDA, Waldorf Teacher at the Puente Azul School, Valladolid, Spain; member of the Theory and History of Education International Research Group, Faculty of Education, Queen's University

Since the founding of its first school—the Freie Waldorfschule—1919 in the German city of Stuttgart by Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925), the Waldorf School educational model has spread worldwide.<sup>1</sup> Today there are 1063 centers in 61 countries; Germany alone has 232 schools (Freunde der Erziehungskunst Rudolf Steiners, 2015). The only interruption in growth took place when the Nazi regime banned the Waldorf schools in Germany and the occupied territories because of their “esoteric” foundation. What is that foundation—*anthroposophy*—which sustains the teaching and learning model? What are the characteristics of the Waldorf schools, and how do they work?

To make sense of the conception underlying the Waldorf schools and their pedagogical proposals, we must consider the context of the New Education movement in the second decade of the twentieth century in Europe, and the links that leaders of the movement had with theosophy. Steiner was a member of the Theosophical Society. In 1913, he left it and founded the Anthroposophical Society. Thus, the Waldorf School has in common with New Education and progressive education basic pedagogical notions such as student-centered education and a conception of the teacher as a guide in the learning process. However, its anthroposophical principles make Waldorf schools unlike the others.

Anthroposophy combines principles of Christianity, theosophy, and German idealism. Steiner referred to anthroposophy as “a path in development that aims to guide the spiritual in the human being to the spiritual in the universe” (Steiner, 1973). Anthroposophy was conceived as a response to the times. It offered a perspective of life distanced from materialist conceptions that had been dominant since the end of the nineteenth century. Notably, anthroposophy contains some implausible ideas which are in contradiction with modern science. Despite that, knowledge and acceptance of the theory of anthroposophy remain a requirement for the institutions and programs (such as biodynamic agricultural programs, Waldorf schools,<sup>2</sup> and anthroposophical medicine, among others) belonging to the network of Waldorf projects.



Rudolf Steiner circa 1905

*anthroposophical principles make  
Waldorf schools unlike the others*

1 See Quiroga, P. and Girard, O. (2014). La expansión internacional de la pedagogía Waldorf: un análisis histórico, *Temps d'educació*, 48, 91-109.

2 For Waldorf Teaching Education, see Quiroga, P. (2015). Waldorf Teacher Education: Historical origins, its current situation as a higher education training course, and the case of Spain, *Encounters in Theory and History of Education*, 16, 129-145.

*Waldorf education was meant to help fulfill the main goal of human life: the development of the individual spiritual dimension that would ... lead to "the spiritual in the universe"*

The anthroposophical components of the Waldorf pedagogy are the seven-year cycle theory, the recapitulation theory underlying the curriculum, and the German notion of *Bildung*. The seven-year cycle theory is based on the idea that every seven years human beings renew all the cells in their bodies. Following it, Steiner structures education in three cycles (the first three of life): 0–7 years, 7–14 years, and 14–21 years. He structures the curriculum around the development of the soul qualities pertaining to each cycle: respectively, willing, feeling, and thinking.

The recapitulation theory assumes that there is parallelism between historical human development and the development of the individual child or young person. This notion of parallelism dictates the selection of classroom materials. The Waldorf curriculum contains a progression in content that aims at "recapitulating" different states of mind identified by Steiner as those which humanity has gone through. This approach is expected to provide mental support across the curriculum. According to it, the most appropriate content to foster the progressive growth of children has to be in tune with the cultural products belonging to the corresponding period in the development of the human race. Recapitulation theory is controversial given its Eurocentric character.<sup>3</sup> For Friedrich Herbart, advocate and source of the theory for Steiner, the goal of education was to move the child to the level of cultural perfection reached by modern civilization. Steiner, who considered that humanity was submerged in a process of evolution of their consciousness, found in Herbart's conceptions the ideal anchor for his educational theory.

A Waldorf education was meant to help fulfill the main goal of human life: the development of the individual spiritual dimension that would, in the last instance, lead to "the spiritual in the universe." It is not surprising that in Steiner's educational theory, the title role is occupied by the development of a self—a balanced and healthy spiritual substratum. That role cannot be separated from the concept of *Bildung*, rooted in German idealism, and, as it is well known, referring to an image that emerges at the end of a process in which the individual cultivates the self, within a context rich in learning situations. Steiner designed Waldorf schools and related theories of education to foster such developments of the self.

The principles of Waldorf education have hardly changed from their origins. Nonetheless, over the decades, as the schools expanded to different parts of the world, application of ideas and meanings adapted to new contexts and times and generated new processes. Currently, most of the families who send their children to these schools are not motivated by the principles of anthroposophy or by the theoretical foundations of their pedagogy, but rather by the rhythms of learning which are more organic, the centrality of

#### REFERENCES

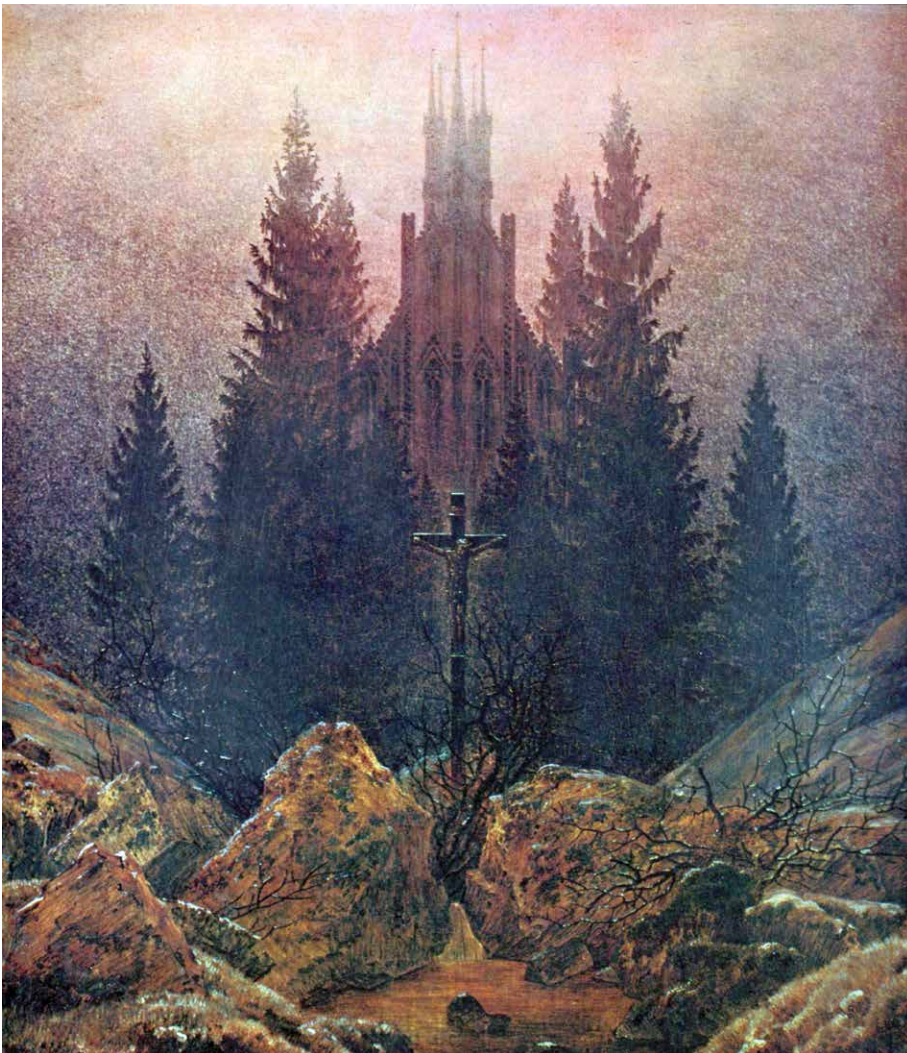
Freunde der Erziehungskunst Rudolf Steiners (2015). *Waldorf Worldwide List*. Retrieved from: [https://www.freunde-waldorf.de/fileadmin/user\\_upload/images/Waldorf\\_World\\_List/Waldorf\\_World\\_List.pdf](https://www.freunde-waldorf.de/fileadmin/user_upload/images/Waldorf_World_List/Waldorf_World_List.pdf)

Steiner, R. (1973). *Anthroposophical Leading Thoughts*. Retrieved from: [http://wn.sarchive.org/Books/GA026/English/RSP1973/GA026\\_a01.html](http://wn.sarchive.org/Books/GA026/English/RSP1973/GA026_a01.html)

3 See Peter Staudenmaier (2008). Race and Redemption: Racial and Ethnic Evolution in Rudolf Steiner's Anthroposophy. *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions*, 11 (3), 4-36. Doi: 10.1525/nr.2008.11.3.4.



the art components of the curriculum, the relationship with nature, and the cultivation of an ecological consciousness. Within the contemporary educational landscape, for a public eager for alternatives in education, Waldorf schools have found their place by distancing themselves from dominant paradigms grounded in effectiveness and measurement.



***Cross in the Mountains*** by Casper David Friedrich

# Being-in-the-world as point of intersection between spirituality and education

CHRIS BEEMAN, Assistant Professor, Department of Curriculum Foundations, Faculty of Education, Brandon University

ROBERT HAMILTON, Undergraduate Student in Education, Long Plains First Nation

*another interpretation of what is spiritual might make possible a lived interaction with the world in which different ideas as well as actions may come into play*



**Immanuel Kant**

**E**ducation intersects spirituality in superficial and deep ways; let us leave the self-evident for a moment and move to that which is less so. We can, perhaps, move past the well-known and often-interpreted notion of education as *ex ducare*: as a leading outward, of the self to greater self, or the person into society, or a youngster into knowledge. And we can note, in passing, Platonic ideas of education as birthing, with the teacher taking the place of midwife, as we move from being born in a literal sense to being born into an understanding of the Forms. We leave aside, for the time being, the contested and interpreted words *learning, teaching, studying, contemplating, thinking* and *applying*, noting how these may alter and intersect with the main ideas at issue: education and spirituality.

All of the terms in the preceding sentence have multiple interpretations that differ from those normally made in the modern global North and West. The project of education, itself, for example, can be viewed from the perspective of the individual growth of a student (Dewey, Rousseau), or of the creation and reproduction of ideas and relations of power (Foucault), or of the transmission of the values that a culture wants to see in its citizens (Plato).

We find ourselves balking at the term “spirituality.” This is because of the implicit use-meaning of *spirituality* currently in play in modernity: what is spiritual tends to be separate from the world, making possible, at best, an additive relationship between the two, but rarely one of integrated being. We think that another interpretation of what is spiritual might make possible a lived interaction with the world in which different ideas as well as actions may come into play.

In the traditional western ontological framework, which includes Aristotle, the scholastics, Kant and neo-liberal discourses, created intellectual agents (humans) can have an inter-subjective, person-to-person relationship only amongst themselves, and possibly with God. They cannot have an inter-subjective, person-to-person relationship with non-intellectual agents (i.e., animals, plants, and other ‘things’). For what defines a person is reason, intellect and consciousness.<sup>1</sup>

It is assumed that these other forms of existence do not have these qualities. Also according to Kant, what distinguishes a person from a non-person (i.e., from an object), is that a person has absolute value, while a non-person has only commercial or aesthetic

<sup>1</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. H.J. Paton (Harper Perennial Modern Thought, 2009), 33.

value.<sup>2</sup> An absolute value is an end in-itself; it is intrinsic. Both commercial and aesthetic values are ends for another; they are extrinsic. For Kant, the categorical imperative commands that any rational being “should treat himself and all others, *never merely as a means, but always at the same time as an end in himself.*”<sup>3</sup> Since non-persons are never ends in-themselves, they can only be treated as a means. According to the western ontological framework, created intellectual agents cannot have an inter-subjective relationship with non-intellectual agents.

But the Anishinaabe concept of *mino-bimaadiziwin* (‘living well’) not only permits inter-subjective relationships with other forms of being; it requires it. Thus, the recognized qualities of blessedness, happiness, and *eudaimonia*, all pillars of human well-being in Western philosophical approaches, may be distinct from *mino-bimaadiziwin*, which requires an inter-subjective, person-to-person relationship to the land, plants and animals.

*the Anishinaabe concept of mino-bimaadiziwin (‘living well’) not only permits inter-subjective relationships with other forms of being; it requires it*



**Trees** by Bernard Hugonnier

<sup>2</sup> Kant, *Groundwork*, 102.

<sup>3</sup> Kant, *Groundwork*, 101.



Photo by Chris Beeman

*the intersection between education  
and spirituality is not a melding  
of opposites, but a tautological  
playing out*

In other words, the idea of spirituality, as it intersects with education, can be evoked simply by being in the world differently, rather than by learning about spiritual practices. In the view of learning that we espouse, all of what is may be *spiritual* in the sense of leading to a particular kind of being; none is “spiritual” in the sense of being separate from what is not spiritual. By this we mean, that if the broad project of education is considered, all of the myriad objects of education in the global West are still similar to each other in this respect: however much the project aspires to an accommodation of difference, the project of education can only afford to produce students that are not capable of interacting with other non-human agents as ecological equals. And if the project of learning information is divorced in this way from one’s actual, lived relationship with the rest of the world—family, friends, communities of humans, all humans, plants, animals, atmospheric and geological forces, and the rest of the universe—then, from an Indigenous perspective, the project is ultimately a-spiritual. If the project of education is to be otherwise, then it must be, by definition, the coming into being of a person with an aware relationship with the rest of the world, and with the capacity to engage in inter-subjective relationships with other forms of being besides simply the human. This relationship is, by its nature, one in which the anthropocentrism of the modern, global North and West is changed to an understood and enacted life lived in the world such that the inherent interdependence of all is both understood and consciously enacted.

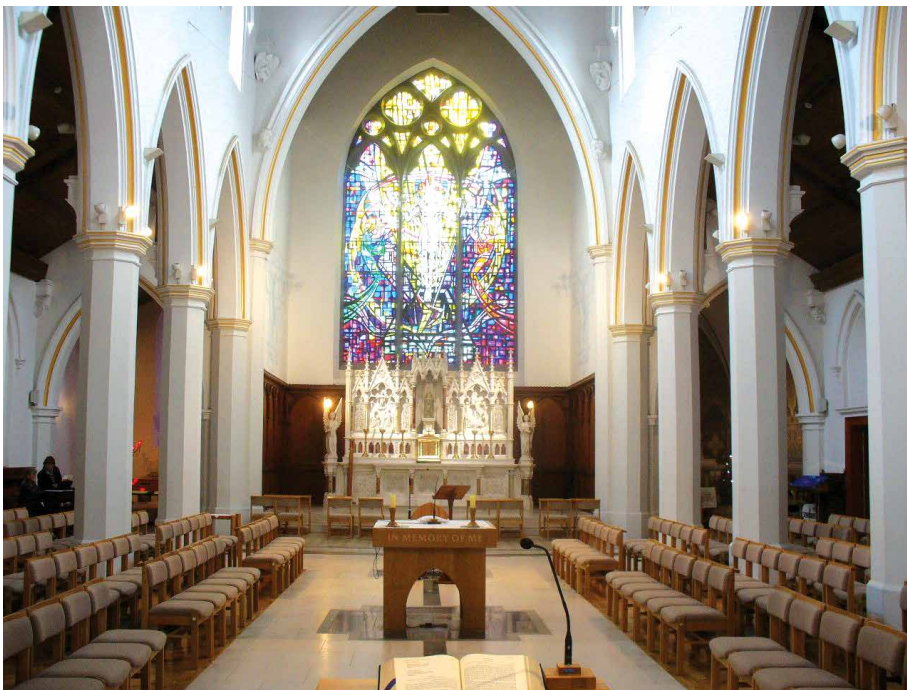
This is a very different view of what constitutes education from that of modernity’s. It is different by virtue of a different understanding what it is to be a person. Those of us who are writing this are most familiar with an Anishinaabe worldview. In this worldview, which is broadly an Indigenous one, living and being in the world are characterized by the building of relationships. This is not a kind of ecological ‘networking’ that occurs after all the humans have been networked, with all the acquisitiveness that that term may imply. It is a lived being-in-the-world through interactions with it that lead, not simply to the understanding of interdependence, but to the undeniable real-ness of interdependent relationality as the *modus operandi* of all things. We are, by virtue of the world that contains and interacts with us. We only *are*, in relationship with other things that are. And what is, is everything that is.

The project of education in this view becomes an ever broadening of the lived understanding of interdependent being. *Authochthonous* being is a kind of life lived; the education that constitutes it is more a part of the lived-ness of being than of the study of the forms of being. And the intersection between education and spirituality is not a melding of opposites, but a tautological playing out.



# A Spirituality of Catholic Education—Seeing Differently

BRONEK KORCZYNSKI, retired Catholic educator, former Coordinator of Religious Education, Adjunct and On-line Instructor at Queen's University Faculty of Education, and consultant to Catholic educational organizations.



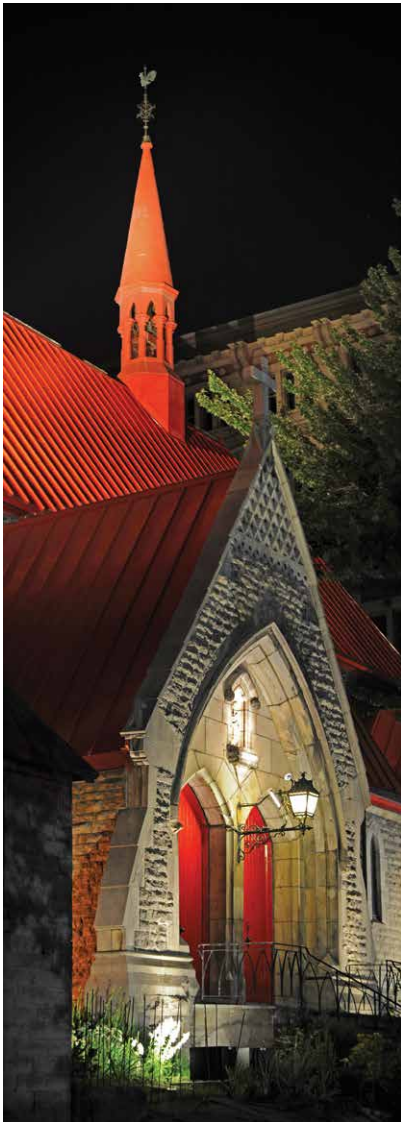
**Chapel, Abbey of St. Augustine, Galway, Ireland** (Photo by author)

*Transcendence is what is wanting—for me, the greatest crisis in education, in order that it be [truly, authentically] Christian, is this closure to transcendence.*

Pope Francis, Address to Education Congress,  
Vatican, November 21, 2015



*it is about living in “right relationship”*



**Red by Night** by Alan Wilkinson, Queen's Faculty of Education

Take a close look at the photo on page 23, taken on a recent visit to Ireland, and offered here as a useful visual metaphor for Catholic education.

Its value is to be found not so much in what initially is seen but in what, at first glance, may remain unseen. Suspended above the central ambo, seemingly invisible and defying gravity, is a large, translucent, crystal crucifix, almost obliterated by the light streaming in from the stained glass windows.

And so it is with Catholic education. That which is essential, that which lies at its heart, may be missed. And when it is, one may be left wondering if there really is any difference between education in a Catholic school and that found in any secular setting. What does it mean to say that Jesus Christ, the centre of Catholic education, accounts for that difference, for a different way of seeing and of understanding?

It is all about spirituality, a spirituality of belonging. In his proclamation of the Kingdom/Reign of God, Jesus constantly reminded those who would listen that such a Kingdom is not a place, but a way of living, of being in relationship, a lifestyle that excludes no one, that recognizes and celebrates an inclusive invitation to the banquet.

Such a spirituality of belonging suggests that not only are we called to recognize our connectedness to others, but to all of creation. It is about living in “right relationship.” In order for that to happen authentically, one has to first be convinced (i.e. “convicted” or converted) to the truth that all persons bear the dignity and spark of the Divine (*imago dei*); created from love, sustained by love, and made for love. Indeed, if the mystery of the Trinity suggests anything, it is that we are only able to discover who we are, and why we are, when we strive to be in such right relationships, sustained by and contributing to community.

One cannot desire what one does not already know at some level. Our longing to belong to family, to friends, to community, to tribe, to nation is grounded in the reality that we already belong to God. It is not something we need to accomplish, but rather to recognize and respond accordingly. But we seem to struggle with that insight through life, often taught through culture and institutions (social, political, economic, educational, and, at times, even religious) that there are insiders and outsiders; that some are not worthy unless they have earned it, whether through strict obedience to morality codes, consumer dictums, gender, race or measures of power, status and success.

Jesuit scholar Tielhard de Chardin noted that “(t)he world is in truth a holy place.” In *The Phenomenon of Man*, he asserts that “(w)e are not human beings having a spiritual journey. We are spiritual beings having a human journey.”

If God’s transcendent presence is available to us in any experience or space or time, then Catholic curriculum recognizes that there is no subject area, no teachable moment, which does not present the possibility of recognizing that grace. This principle of sacramentality suggests that all subject areas, not just religious education, must be infused with openness to the Divine.

Jesuit theologian Bernard Lonergan has observed that all education aims at obtaining a

good. This good is defined in the face of a perceived lack, limit or evil (illiteracy, poverty, lack of skills, etc.). Education is the deliberate process whereby societies work towards obtaining these goods in the full awareness of the obstacles, the deprivations of human society, the negative forces, the limitations of life and resources. Differences in philosophies of education are essentially differences in perceptions of the good and of the relationship of the good with its opposite, the evils or negative consequences which seem to invade whatever we undertake. (cited in *Curriculum Matters*, Institute for Catholic Education, pp. 19-20)

The fundamental good that anchors Catholic education is expressed by St. Augustine. "You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you." (Confessions)

The pedagogy of a Catholic education is based on a biblical anthropology in which the relationship of love and reciprocity between humanity and God is foundational.

To attend to that restlessness is to educate, a fundamentally hopeful and spiritual enterprise. Pope Francis echoed this in a recent address to youth:

You are called to this mission: to reclaim the hope in your present circumstances of being open to the wonders of living; the hope which you have to overcome the way things are; hope to prepare for the future marked by a more dignified social and human environment; hope to live in a more fraternal world which is more just and peaceful, more genuine, worthier of the measure of mankind.

Pope Francis, Sarajevo,  
Vatican Press Release, June 6, 2015

Curriculum in a Catholic setting must intentionally apply strategies that over the long haul provide opportunities to recognize and encounter the transcendent, whether through explicit integration of religious themes, infusion into pedagogy, or simple extension of experiences to address particular matters of the faith (see *Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations*, Institute for Catholic Education).

In all of these, there is no place for indoctrination. A Catholic education neither seeks nor encourages students to leave their brains at the door. Education in a Catholic setting must always be about the search for the truth. Truth is both knowable and worth knowing. The search for truth, and its understanding, is a function of both faith and reason. As St. John Paul II stated, "Faith without reason leads to superstition. Reason without faith, leads to nihilism and relativism." (*Fides et Ratio*, 1998)

Catholic educators are at their best when their use of language reflects this spiritual dimension. For example, in science one does not simply explore the nature of the global environment, but speaks of wonder in terms of both creation and the Creator. Relationships are nurtured within the school community not just out of concern for



**Pope Francis.** Wikipedia CC BY-SA 2.0

*the heart of Catholic education is  
the heart of the Catholic educator.  
And that heart must be anchored in  
a personal relationship with Jesus  
Christ*

the development of character, but speak of living the virtuous life. Solidarity with the oppressed and concern for social justice are encouraged not simply out of a sense of our shared humanity, but are seen as constituent elements of the Gospel and discipleship.

A succinct understanding of Catholic education has been expressed by Boston college professor, Tom Groome, who has noted that the heart of Catholic education is the heart of the Catholic educator. And that heart must be anchored in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Without it, Catholic education is simply another philosophy of education with its own ideological agenda, and not a missionary community, cooperating with the Church, inviting people into a living, transformative relationship with the person of Jesus Christ. And that makes all the difference both in the world and for the world.



***Saint Augustine in His Study*** by Botticelli



# The grand narratives of modernity and the modern self: The Protestant Idea of the Soul and the Educationalization of the World

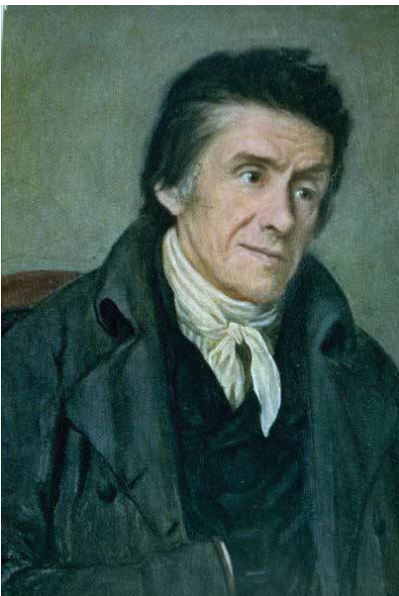
DANIEL TRÖHLER, Professor of Education Sciences, University of Luxembourg

Today it seems almost natural to assign perceived social problems to education. When, for instance, the United States of America saw their nation and the Western world at risk after the launch of Sputnik by the Soviet Union in 1957, it educationalized the Cold War by passing the very first national education law, the *National Defense Education Act* in 1958, expressing the view that “Education is the First Line of Defense” (Rickover, 1959). And when, a few years later, the environment had become an affair of public concern, for instance triggered by the book *Silent Spring* (Carson, 1962), endangered nature became educationalized, as expressed for instance in the *Journal of Environmental Education* (1969) and in educational trails teaching walkers about nature. And when again a few years later in the United States the national crises after the Vietnam War, the oil crises in the 1970s, and the near collapse of the automobile industry in the early 1980s led to the perception of *A Nation at Risk* and the conclusion of an *Imperative For Educational Reform*, this expressed the educationalization of economy and economic policy. A rising teenage pregnancy rate in the 1960s led to an educationalization of sex through the introduction of sex education in schools, which gained new urgency with the outbreak of HIV / AIDS in the 1980s. Museums were made more attractive by the invention of museum education around 1990. And when immigrant adolescents in the suburbs of Paris and Lyon protested violently in 2005, their behavior was not seen as a reaction to their poor living conditions or poor life chances but as an expression of the wrong education, as France’s Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin stated in 2005. Human life is a site of what UNESCO has called ‘lifelong learning’ and propagated since 1962, a phenomenon that was critically noticed (and explicitly labeled “educationalization”) as early as in 1929 (Fischer, 1929, p. 286).

Up to the mid-18th century, it was not at all ‘natural’ to interpret perceived problems educationally — that is, to assign the solving of problems to educational practice. The general thesis in the emergence of such a cultural shift is that the Protestant interpretation of the soul became something like the safe haven in a time when major shifts occurred that may have been advocated, but that most of all also made people fundamentally uncertain. This was the time around 1700, when people changed to think about two fundamental things in interpreting their own lives: first, in France, in the ‘quarrel of the Ancients and



**Martin Luther** by Lucas Cranach the Elder



**Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi. Painter** was probably F.G.A. Schöner.

the Moderns' and open-end idea of history and development replaced the idea of an eternal cycle of events, and second, in England, when the older idea of a strict separation between the world of economy and the world of politics became obsolete by the fact that rich people could, via the Bank of England, founded in 1694, to invest in government, transforming politics into something of economical interest and profit (Hirschman, 1977).

The idea of an open future and of the economization of politics were, for different reasons to different people, attractive but at the same time threatening; the French Revolution was, after all, a result of these transformation, fascinating and worrying. Different anti-capitalist ideals were fostered, and especially in education, and with good reason: Protestantism—withstanding its different denominations—had turned from the Catholic emphasis on the institution (the Holy Mother Church) to the individual's soul as the instance of salvation, with no fundamental need of consecrated mediators (priests) between God and the individual. This Protestant understanding of the individual's soul became the 'solution' to the problem of open progress and moral challenge of a capitalist society. The idea was to educationally strengthen the soul of the children in order to master the challenges of an undefined future and capitalist society. In that sense the educationalization of social problems, as indicated exemplarily at the beginning, are simply of examples of an educationalized world, representing thus a key concept for understanding and deciphering the grand narratives of modernity and the modern self.

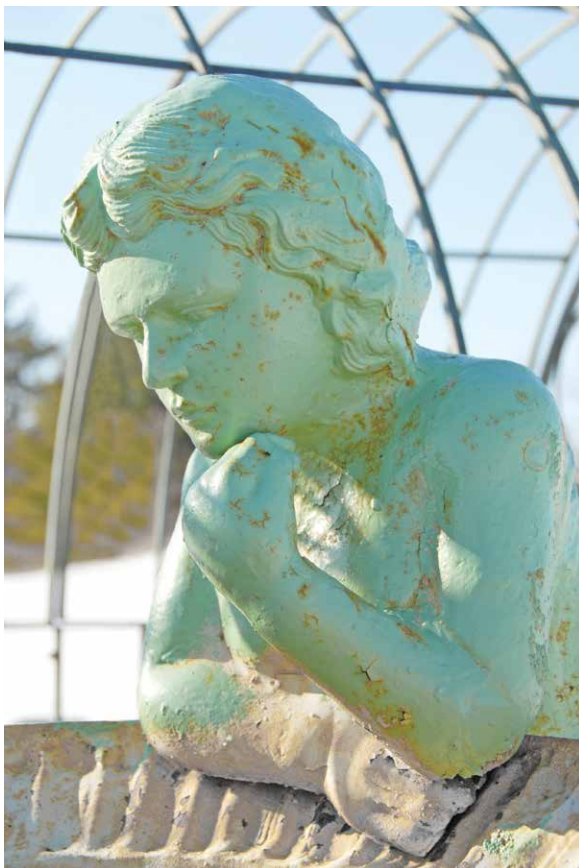
However, there were two different ways of Protestant anti-capitalist idea(l)s. In the reformed Protestant parts of Europe the idea was the ancient republican virtuous citizen-soldier with the only passion of the common good of his fatherland, and in the Lutheran parts of Europe it was the holistic-corporatist ideal of the *Ganze Haus* ('entire house'), combining different generations of masters and servants into a whole unit. Whereas the educational ideal of the former was mostly developed in Switzerland, with the overall hero Pestalozzi (Tröhler, 2013), attempting to educate holistically a virtuous future citizen able to transform the world into a virtuous republic, the later ideal refrained—in the context of the Luther's dualism—from political consequences. The ideal was thus less the strong than the beautiful soul expressed in the notion of *Bildung* (Horlacher, 2016).

*Bildung* is the aesthetic harmony defined as a means of the true education of the human mind. "The true purpose of man—not the one changing inclinations prescribe, but the eternally unchanging reason—is the highest and harmonious *Bildung* of his powers to one whole", Humboldt said (Humboldt, 1792/1960, p. 64), and: "Perfection is not limited (Humboldt, 1797/1960, p. 512) and represents the "inward spiritual vitality" (p. 513). But "*Bildung*," Humboldt says, is only to be found "in one self" (p. 507), whereby this spiritual inwardness was defined, for instance by Kant, as "invisible church", "the mere idea of the union of all upright human beings under direct and moral divine world-governance" (Kant 1793/1996, pp. 135). The idea of the "invisible church"—*ecclesia invisibilis*—lies in the center of the a-political but cosmopolitan Lutheran Protestantism, and it had been advocated already by Luther (based on this reading of St. Augustine) in his treaty against



Papacy in Rome, whereby the invisibility was understood as “spiritual” (*geistlich*) and inwardly (*innerlich*): “Then what one believes, one does not see or feel, in turn, what one sees or feels, one does not believe” (Luther, 1520, quoted in Manole, 2004, p. 49).

It is obvious that not the Lutheran ideal, limited to Germany and the Nordic countries in Europe, became dominant in the course of the history, but the idea of enabling and strengthening the soul in order to cope morally with the challenges of the world, whereby the success of dealing with the challenges seems to have lost the moral impetus in taming the capitalist world. It might be called an irony that those people feeling alienated through these developments do no often refer to *Bildung*, but in any case the critique is still within the frame of an educationalized world, that seems to have found its favorite pastime with reforming education in order to erect the kingdom of God on earth.



**Interruption and Patination** by Alan Wilkinson, Queen's Faculty of Education

## REFERENCES

- Carson, R. (1962). *Silent spring*. Greenwich, CT: Fawcett.
- Fischer, A. (1929). Germany. In *Educational yearbook of the international institute of Teachers College Columbia University* 6, <https://www.tcrecord.org/edyearbook/Content.asp?ContentId=14761>
- Hirschman, A. O. (1977). *The passions and the interests: Political arguments for capitalism before its triumph*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Horlacher, R. (2016). *The Educated Subject and the German Concept of Bildung. A Comparative Cultural History*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Humboldt, W. v. (1792/1960). Ideen zu einem Versuch, die Grenzen der Wirksamkeit des Staates zu bestimmen. In: *Wilhelm von Humboldt. Werke in fünf Bänden. Band I* (pp. 56-233). Darmstadt, Germany: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- Humboldt, W. v. (1797/1960). Über den Geist der Menschheit. In: *Wilhelm von Humboldt. Werke in fünf Bänden. Band I* (pp. 506-518). Darmstadt, Germany: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- Kant, I (1793/1996). Religion within the boundaries of mere reason. In: *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant—Religion and Rational Theology* (39-216). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Manole, N. (2004). *Ekklesiologische Perspektiven im Dialog zwischen den orthodoxen und reformatorischen Kirchen*. Münster, Germany: Lit Verlag.
- Pocock, J. G. A. (1975). *The Machiavellian moment. Florentine political thought and the Atlantic republican tradition*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Rickover, G. H. (1959). *Education and Freedom*. New York, NY: Dutton & Co.
- Tröhler, D. (2013). *Pestalozzi and the educationalization of the world*. New York, NY: Palgrave Pivot.

# Spirituality in Muslim Education—Reading the Self

SYED ADNAN HUSSAIN, Assistant Professor—Department of Religious Studies:  
Saint Mary's University and Co-Chair Religion, Colonialism, and Postcolonialism  
Group—American Academy of Religion

You have learnt so much  
And read a thousand books.  
Have you ever read your Self?  
You have gone to mosque and temple.  
Have you ever visited your soul?

— Bulleh Shah (1680–1757) (Jamal 2010: 309)

I was first introduced to the above stanzas performed by the inimitable Abida Parveen. I wanted to show students an example of a sufi mystic at the height of her powers, flaying the book—learned—a favourite subject for South Asian sufis. Likely targeted at members of the *ulema*, or traditional *madrassa* trained scholars, it works equally well to humble



**Abida Parveen in concert.** Wikipedia. (CC BY 2.0)

their book-learned professor. The verse provides an opportunity to begin discussing questioning the appropriateness of orthodoxy and heterodoxy in Islam. It invites them to engage in a critique of the textual learning and its limits—including an assessment of the place of spirituality in a religious studies classroom. In this brief comment, for which I am grateful to Professor Bruno-Jofré, I wanted to explore some of the ways that spirituality works in my classroom.

Spirituality proves a vexatious term in religious studies. On the one hand religion remains a doggedly difficult thing to define without resort to claims of a *sui generis* nature. Jonathan Z. Smith, religious studies doyen, famously claimed that “‘Religion’ is not a native term; it is a term created by scholars for their intellectual purposes and therefore is theirs to define” (Smith 1998: 281). I use Smith’s definition in most of my classes, but it effectively rips “religion” out of the realm of common-speak and thereby out of the experience of my students. Does the term spiritual create a less hegemonic space? Or to push further, what ways can we explore spirituality as a category for consideration in our classrooms which will allow our students to bring the authority of their own experiences to our discussions without sacrificing the seriousness of religious studies as a discipline.

Spirituality, the term, has a distinct history. Rather than plumb its origins for its ‘true’ or ‘authoritative’ meaning Jeremy Carrette and Richard King (Carrette and King 2005) identify it as a catchall term, which facilitates consumerism through the commodification of religious concepts—take for example the glut of texts on spiritual easement, sufi spiritual workshops for corporate workplaces or yoga classes offering reasonably priced wellness. In true neoliberal fashion an existential crisis can be commodified, and treated with retail therapy. But if this is the dominant discourse of spirituality, there must be a similar discourse of resistance.

Farid Esack, a brilliant Qur’an scholar and anti-Apartheid activist, commented that there is no such thing as “innocent scholarship” on the Qur’an (Esack 2007: 9). Esack forces us to ask—if there is no objectivity in the ways that we teach the Qur’an or Islam, then what is the most responsible way to teach it? My response to this concern, as I have outlined previously (Hussain 2016) is to play with bell hooks’s notion of wholehearted teaching (hooks 1993).

In law-school I was taught to appear honest by standing before a jury with my hands at my sides palms open facing slightly forward. It forces you to stand in a way that appears vulnerable, because it actually is vulnerable. You are on full-frontal display for the scrutiny of your audience. I use a similar strategy in sharing my experiences of Islam growing up in Pakistan, the UAE, and North America, including the nuances of a family filled with religious, political, sexual and racial complexity. If my students looked me up on the internet they could easily find out more than I may be comfortable sharing in class. I beat them to the punch by being open and vulnerable about my politics which in turn invites discussions about the place of liberal ideals in university faculties. My commitment to imagining the classroom as a liberatory space privileges social justice oriented topics such



**Syed Adnan Hussain**

*My commitment to imagining the classroom as a liberatory space privileges social justice oriented topics*

*I encourage the classroom to operate as a space of both creativity and conflict*



## Queen's Education Letter

Queen's *Education Letter* is a thematic annual publication of the Queen's Faculty of Education.  
© 2016 Queen's University, Faculty of Education.  
Special permission is required to reproduce in any manner, in whole or in part, the material contained herein.

### Founding Senior Editor

**Rosa Bruno-Jofré, Ph.D.**

Professor, Graduate Faculty  
Queen's Faculty of Education

### Managing Editor

**Vicky Arnold**

Marketing and Communications Coordinator  
Queen's Faculty of Education

### Board of Editors

Stephen Elliott, Queen's Faculty of Education  
LeRoy Whitehead, Queen's Faculty of Education  
Joan Jardin, OSSTF Limestone District 27  
Valerie Fisher, R. G. Sinclair Public School  
Monsignor Joseph Lynch, Archdiocese of Kingston  
Brenda Reed, Queen's Education Library

### Subscription

Print copies will be delivered to select locations free of charge. If you would like to receive print copies, please contact **Vicky Arnold** (613-533-6000 ext 74305, [vicky.arnold@queensu.ca](mailto:vicky.arnold@queensu.ca)).

Queen's *Education Letter* is also available online at [www.educ.queensu.ca/education-letter](http://www.educ.queensu.ca/education-letter)

The Queen's *Education Letter* is supported by annually-pledged donations from alumni and friends as well as matching funds from the Office of the Dean of Education.

ISBN # 978155339157-9



FACULTY OF EDUCATION  
Duncan McArthur Hall  
Queen's University  
511 Union St.  
Kingston, Ontario Canada  
K7M 5R7  
[www.educ.queensu.ca](http://www.educ.queensu.ca)

as colonialism, Orientalism, the politics of belonging or sexual or gendered justice. I tend to give students articles by scholars that profoundly disagree and explore the disagreements in class. This avoids claims of being an apologist for Islam (Hughes 2012) by exploring the politics of our choices and choosing complexity over a myopic approach to Islam as a religion of peace.

In my Qur'an class we map past concerns onto similar questions in the present. For example, a way that Muslims often frame the so-called pre-Islamic "period of ignorance" is in terms of a lack of "God consciousness." This is captured in an early Surah in which states that, "man exceeds all bounds when he sees himself self-sufficient" (Q 96:6), students will read this statement in different ways based on whether they are Muslim, otherwise religious, spiritual or irreligious. Allowing them to explore the ways we resolve existential crisis in the present or contemplate what justice beyond mere fairness looks like, allows us to contemplate anti-establishment spirituality.

I encourage the classroom to operate as a space of both creativity and conflict. I often encourage students to rotate through different perspectives frequently in small groups. For me, the key to negotiating classroom conflict is to encourage the student to explain their own perspectives by orienting themselves historically. As an example, I share my own experience of being Muslim in a time where Islam is transformed by colonialism, defined by petrodollars and locked in a struggle to give Muslim lives meaning beyond commodity fetishism. This multivalent approach must also encourage a critique and contextualization of the present neoliberal transformation of our universities. By dealing with the elephant in the room we are in a stronger position to push for the need for nuanced thinking to overcome the crisis of confidence in the humanities.

Bulleh Shah's words from the epigraph speak powerfully to me. The reading of self in this case was giving my students the tools to read me. Encouraging them to read in ways which validate and complicate their own-selves is my way of illustrating the heart of my understanding of Bulleh Shah's caution to not ignore the self while reading books.



**Beech Grove** | by Gustav Klimt