Marta Gluchmanova

Technical University in Kosice, Faculty of Manufacturing
Technologies with the seat in Presov, Department of Humanities,
Presov, Slovakia

Knowledge ecologies and education

Abstract

The author focus on some of the most interesting papers and information which were presented during the annual Philosophy of Education Society of Australasia conference.

Key words: philosophy, education, ethics, ecology, dilemma.

The annual PESA (Philosophy of Education Society of Australasia) conference on December 8 - 12, 2016 (Fiji) the topic of which was *Knowledge Ecologies and Education* provided the major venue in Australasia for the presentation of research papers and discussions about philosophy of education. The tradition of the Society is to provide a supportive environment for the presentation of papers and the encouragement of a more profound understanding of practical and theoretical issues in education. Those new to the philosophy of education are always welcomed.

According to the organisers knowledge ecology is a term that emerges from the collaboration and file sharing of social media. But it signals something else; an ecosystem of knowledge, the rhizome of discrete and yet inter-related fields, of disciplinary depth and interdisciplinary sharing. Knowledge ecologies speaks on the intersectionality of contemporary society. It engages with the reality of new technologies, of financial collapse, of climate change, of resource exhaustion. Knowledge ecologies draws up new semiotics of epistemology that stretch concepts from one discipline area into new shapes as they re-organise and extend a field from its traditional contours, to dimensions that accommodates the demands of our rapidly changing world.

Knowledge Ecologies had a distinctly ethical dimension because knowledge tied to the ecosystem cannot generate an alienating discourse, that serves to separate and disengage communities from within the physical ecosystems they are embedded. The term is a rich playground for a new world view, where the technological,

the economic, the political, and the social all combine to think of Educational Futures as life affirming. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change had postulated four major futures scenarios. These 'future scenarios' were postulated to stimulate policy direction. There are multitudes of potential futures, and these emerge from a particular framework but the association with emissions profiles was really interesting for thinking about the role of education.

The theme of *Knowledge Ecologies* aimed to explore a diversity of cultural epistemologies, sustainability and social organisation in relation to Educational Philosophy. Ecologies of knowledge included a plethora of ways of knowing that have remained obscure to the dominant western epistemology. In the same way that Marx, for example, forgot to mention that women's unpaid work is the foundation for paid labour when he was writing on Capitalism, or the 'ecological services' of clean air and CO_2 absorption was left out of neoliberal accounts of the cost, it means benefit analysis. There are epistemological regimes that are considered on the 'margins' that are part of the overall ecology of knowledge systems. The conference call was for a reconsideration of the status of epistemology - whether it be a key figure from the Western canon, or a mode of indigenous knowledge, or a revisioning of science and evolution, or changes in the philosophy of time - that resituates knowledge in the greater context of contemporary society. Climate change, financial tremors, the end of economic growth, population saturation, and resource exhaustion are all calling us to reconsider existing epistemologies and resituate erstwhile marginalised modes of thought for the greater good.

Fiji is the first nation to sign the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. The Pacific is one of the most vulnerable areas for climate warming, and sea level rise. The future of education relies on our ability to engage with the reality of the current situation, and embrace the plethora of ideas that could affect emissions profiles, better financial management, deeper valuation of pluralist politics, and a more genuine setting for education in its role of transmission and co-creation of knowledge for future generation.

Sub-themes of the conference included the interface between knowledge and natural ecologies - emergence, self-organisation, rhizomes, ecosystem processes and digital models, grassroots participation, community knowledge networks and advocacy - Sean Blenkinsop "*Shut-up and Listen: The Implications and Possibilities of Applying Albert Memmi's Characteristics of Colonization to the Natural World*"; Tetsu Ueno "*Reconciliation between Science, Technology, and Natural Disasters based on Traditional Japanese Ideas of Ecology*"; Peter Ellerton "*The Community of Inquiry as Disruptive Pedagogy: Lessons from Disruptive Technology*"; Vasil and Marta Gluchman "*Ethics, Morality and Education: Their Roles in Cultivation of Environmental Consciousness*"; Sonal Nakar "*A critical review from a moral perspective of codes of conduct in education and the case of Australian vocational education and training*".

Collective intelligence, distributed cognition, co-production, co-creation, global public goods, collaboration, knowledge networks and network analysis, digital

learning systems - Chia-Ling Wang "*Towards symbiotic education: Opening up symbiotic learning spaces for higher education*"; Michael Peters "*Interconnectivity and New Knowledge Ecologies in the Humanities*"; Boris Handal "Digital Citizenship New Citizens"; Markus Tiedemann "*The Problem Based Approach in Education*".

How to harness and enable existing knowledge, integrate scientific and indigenous systems, develop action-oriented strategies of the kind that are required by small states and research communities to connect with and leverage knowledge - Frances Koya "*Being and Belonging: Rethinking Pacific Citizenship for Quality Sustainability Education*"; Peter Roberts "*Education, Faith and the Limits of Knowledge: Tolstoy's Confession*"; Daniella Forster "*Teaching under tension: (mis)recognitions of justice in contexts of moral uncertainty*".

Fruitful and redundant aspects of Western onto-epistemology in the context of climate change, overpopulation, peak oil, resource exhaustion, and ecological collapse – Gerald Argenton "*Consuming Places: 'Enjoyment by Design' and its Eco-systemic Consequences*"; Maurice Alford "*Theorising Language and conversation*"; Laura d'Olimpio "*The ethics of engaging with narratives: teaching philosophy and 'critical perspectivism'*"; Ruveni Tuimavana "*iTaukei Self Concept before Western Education and Economic Development*"; Tina Besley "*Visual Pedagogies, visuality and ecologies of mind*"; David Cole "*A Pedagogy of Cinema*"; Sean Blenkinsop "*Becoming Teacher/Tree and bringing the natural world to students: An educational examination of the influence of the other-than-human world and the great actor on Martin Buber's concept of the I/Thou*"; Catherine Legg "'*Diagrammatic Teaching': The Role of Iconic Signs in Meaningful Pedagogy*"; Shin'ichi Sohma "*The Acceptance of Comenius to Modern Pedagogy of Japan*"; Ren-Jie (Vincent) Lin & Chi-Yang Chung "*From Utilitarianism, Herbartianism, to Pragmatism: A comparison of the dissemination route of Western educational philosophies in modern China and Taiwan*".

Futures education, transformative education, digital education, the role of educational institutions in rapid environmental change, the Knowledge Society, and Lifelong Learning – Brian Mooney "*Aquinas on Education*"; Arik Segev "*The last leaf: On knowledge and moral knowledge*"; Neal Haslem "*Alternative worldmaking through design: Reflecting on potentials for contemporary design education*"; Shalendra Kumar Singh "*Classroom Assessment Practices in Fiji; How does the Current Assessment Regime Impact on Pedagogy and Practice*?"; David Marshall "*Educational Systems, (Non-) Communication, and the University*"

Rigieta Lord "*Hidden Curriculum in Fiji*"; Daniella Forster "*Progressive Education Futures: Five crises and a Deweyean response*"; Andrew Thomson "*Growth and Degrowth: Dewey and Self-Limitation*"; Sanjaleen Prasad "*The Demands of Future Education*"; Kyung-hwa Jung & Jina Bhang "*Ambivalent receptions of Dewey's educational philosophy in modern Korea: enthusiastic embrace and outright rejection*"; Liz Jackson "*Exploring the Role of Moral Feelings in Social Justice education*"; Janis (John) Ozelins "*The Failure of Secularism; Why Democracy needs Religion in the*

Public Square and in the Classroom"; Russell McPhee "*The Virtues of Intellectual Autonomy*"; Trish McMenamin "*Justice and Education for Disabled Students in the Era of Inclusion*"; Jean-Michel David "*Steiner Education: Philosophical Underpinnings And Development Across A Century*".

Climate change in the Pacific, coral reef biology, Community engagement, Ridge to Reef, governance and climate change, climate change and education, globalisation and the Pacific, sea level rise and villages, food sustainability, species and climate change – Atelini Bai "*A Critical Analysis of Fiji's Knowledge Based Society*"; Keola Silva & Ka'imi Watson "*Aloha ʻĀina Philosophy: The Heart of Holistic Health for the Hawaiian People and Humanity*"; Akato Galuvao "*Samoan students in New Zealand schools*"; Yoshifumi Nakagawa "*Post-critical posthuman knowledge in environmental education research: Paul James's constitutive abstraction*"; Temalesi Maiwaikatakata "*Perceived weaknesses to student involvement at a university in the South Pacific*"; Jacoba Matapo "*Becoming Posthuman: Navigating Pacific epistemology in Pasifika research*"; Aleksandra Kelly "*The various concepts of freedom within current Western philosophy of education in juxtaposition with epistemologies of Indigenous Knowledges*".

These themes were by no means exhaustive and all papers engaging with philosophy and philosophy of education were accepted for very interesting presentations at the conference.