IDEAS ABOUT ADULT LEARNING IN FIFTH AND FOURTH CENTURY B.C. ATHENS

DISSERTATION

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By

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The problem of this study was to determine to what extent contemporary adult education theory has similarities to and origins in ancient Athenian ideas about education. The methodology used in the study combined hermeneutics and the critical theory of Jurgen Habermas. Primary sources incuded Aristotle, Plato, Aristophanes, and Diogenes Laertius; secondary sources included Jaeger, Marrou, Dover, and Kennedy.

In the analysis of Athenian adult education, three groups of adult educators were identified--the poets, the sophists, and the philosophers. The poets were the traditional educators of the Greek people; their shared interest or way of perceiving the world emphasized the importance of community cohesion and health. In Athens in the mid-fifth century B.C., a new group of educators, the sophists, arose to fill a demand of adults for higher and adult education in the skills necessary to participate in the assembly and courts. The sophists emphasized a pragmatic human interest and taught the skill of rhetoric. Socrates and Plato created a new school of educators, the philosophers, who became vigorous ideological opponents of

both the poets and the sophists. The philosophers exhibited a transcendental interest or approach to knowledge; the purpose of life was to improve the soul, and the preferred way of life was contemplative rather than active. The philosophers taught the skill of dialectic.

Paideia was a Greek word that originally referred to childhood education but which came to mean education throughout the lifespan and the civic culture that supported education. Athenian citizens perceived their paideia to be among their greatest virtues, an attainment which could not be lost to the fortunes of time as could wealth or position.

Modern adult education lacks the concern for the communal and transcendental human interests that were important to many ancient Greeks. Modern cultures tend to promote strong individuation of personality and to idealize pragmatic and individualistic concerns. Researchers in the field of adult education often assign to human nature the pragmatic and individualistic qualities of adult learners, but fail to recognize how these features reflect ideologies peculiar to modern American society.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Adult education is a practice-oriented field of study, and, like other emerging academic disciplines intent on developing an applied behavioral science, it has adopted an empirical-analytic mode of establishing new knowledge. Whereas older social sciences such as sociology and psychology have developed rich bodies of background study on the history of their key ideas, new fields such as adult education often show a distinct lack of historical consciousness. Theories and findings of empirical studies often are generalized to all peoples of all times, and acknowledgment rarely is given that a discipline's knowledge, on the one hand, may be related and even driven by a particular historical and cultural context, and, on the other hand, may be derived from older knowledge.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was to determine to what extent contemporary adult education theory has similarities to and origins in ancient Athenian ideas about education. What comparisons can be made between modern and ancient ideas about the importance of learning throughout the lifespan, the types of educational content and methodology appropriate for different age groups, the special qualities of adulthood

as a stage of life, and the philosophical issues that underlie all educational activities?

Purposes of the Study

The purposes of this study were

1. To review selected primary and secondary sources that describe the culture of fifth and fourth century B.C. Athens.
2. To identify and categorize material from these sources that is relevant to the concerns of modern adult education.
3. To identify the particular historical and cultural forces that encouraged adult learning in Athens.
4. To make comparisons between ancient and modern knowledge about adult learning and to offer conclusions about how current knowledge is tied to ancient ideas and to contemporary social contexts.

Research Design

Due to the exploratory nature of this study, development of specific hypotheses was inappropriate. Instead, a broad theoretical framework was established, and a set of research questions was developed to focus the study.

The overall theoretical framework adopted in this study was the critical theory of Jurgen Habermas, the German philosopher and social theorist. A principal theme of Habermas's writings is that scientific knowledge is obtained

through consensus among various scientific communities and that knowledge is subject to a continuous dialectical process of change through disputation. The American experimental researcher Donald T. Campbell recently has remarked on the consensual, social nature of scientific knowledge and has endorsed the hermeneutic approach of Habermas and others:

> Such checking of other implications and the ramification extinction of rival hypotheses also characterizes validity-seeking research in the humanities, including the hermeneutics of Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Hirst Habermas, and current scholarship on the interpretation of ancient texts. Similarly, the strategy is as available for a historian's conjectures about a specific event as for a scientist's assertion of a causal law. It is tragic that major movements in the social sciences are using the term "hermeneutics" to connote giving up on the goal of validity and abandoning disputation as to who has got it right. . . . Our social science methodological armamentarium also needs a humanistic validity-seeking case study methodology that, while making no use of quantification or tests of significance, would still work on the same questions and share the same goals of knowledge.[1]

This study takes up Campbell's challenge in two ways. First, hermeneutic methods of text analysis were used to interpret the classical literature of fifth and fourth century B.C. Athens. Second, this study attempted to apply the methodology of Habermas's critical theory in interpreting the larger social and theoretical implications of conclusions about adult education in the classical period.

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[1]Donald T. Campbell, in Foreward to Robert K. Yin, Case Study Research: Design and Methods (Beverly Hills, 1984), pp. vii-viii.

Habermas is a prolific writer and theorist, and it is difficult to extract a distinct methodology from his wide-ranging explorations of modern social science. A brief summary of some principal models from his works are presented to introduce critical theory. Habermas is associated with a group of German scholars, the "Frankfurt School," which originated at the Institute of Social Research in Frankfurt, Germany, in the 1920s. These Jewish intellectuals and social critics attempted to merge the theories of Freud and Marx while working within the general philosophical background of German idealists such as Hegel and Kant. Members of the early Frankfurt School included Theodor W. Adorno, Walter Benjamin, Bruno Bettelheim, Erich Fromm, Max Horkheimer, Leo Lowenthal, and Herbert Marcuse. Nearly all of the members of the early Frankfurt School were born German Jews, and most emigrated to the United States in the 1930s with the rise of Hitler. Adorno's The Authoritarian Personality and Fromm's Escape from Freedom popularized in the United States the Frankfurt School's analysis of the roots of totalitarianism and bigotry.[2]

Habermas carries on the Frankfurt School's approach to Marxist study by continuing the shift away from economic and political analyses and toward cultural and ideological critique. Of special concern in Habermas's writings is the growing significance of science, technology, and mass communication in modern society. Bringing to his work

an encyclopedic knowledge of philosophy and social theory, as well as knowledge of recent advances in linguistics and communication theory, Habermas has constructed a theory of knowledge that incorporates three primary methods of inquiry, or cognitive interests--positivistic, interpretive or hermeneutic, and critical.

The first method of knowing, which Habermas terms the "technical" cognitive interest, seeks to predict and control events through instrumental action. The empirical-analytic sciences, which include the natural sciences and the systematic social sciences, are constituted by this technical interest. The second method of knowing, the "practical" cognitive interest, encompasses the techniques of interpretation required when dealing with social interaction and human symbolic behavior. The historical-hermeneutic sciences, such as history and anthropology, are constituted by the practical cognitive interest. The third method of knowing, the emancipatory cognitive interest, takes as its object realm the systematic distortions in learning and in communication resulting from contradictions between the technical and practical interests.[3]

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[2]Martin Jay, The Dialectical Imagination: A History of the Frankfurt School and the Institute of Social Research-1923-1950 (Boston, 1973).

[3]Jurgen Habermas, Knowledge and Human Interests, translated by Jeremy Shapiro (Boston, 1971).

Distortion in communication may occur when one party to the communicative act brings to bear a coercive or oppressive influence. Another form of distortion occurs when an attempt is made to overextend the findings from a limited domain of knowledge. For instance, in attempting to measure human social interaction using quantitative techniques, an educational researcher might ignore or misinterpret significant features of the interaction as a result of mistaking the part for the whole. Another researcher operating from the practical cognitive interest would note the failure to acknowledge the symbolic and expressive aspects of social interaction. The third cognitive interest, using critical theory, provides a method for analyzing the distortion in communication and mediating the differences.

Habermas analyzes communication acts through the identification of three levels of meaning. First is the content or report level of the communication--what "facts" are being communicated about the objective world. Second is the relational or contextual level that establishes the social relationships of the parties to the communication act. Third is the expressive level that communicates intention and feeling. Bredo and Feinberg have elaborated on this description of the speech act.

> In Habermas' view every act of communication presupposes that certain validity claims related to these three levels of communication have been fulfilled. These presuppositions form a background

> consensus within which ordinary communication is understood. When one says something in a particular situation and before a particular audience one in effect claims: (1) that the propositional content of what is said is true; (2) that one has the right to adopt the social position that one adopts (i.e., that one has the right to speak in this way in this situation); and (3) that the expressive aspects of the utterance are genuine (i.e., that one is neither self-deceived nor deceiving of others). The three validity claims, then, refer to the truth, legitimacy, and veracity of the utterance and its speaker.[4]

These claims are only implicit in normal, informal discourse, but if any level of validity is called into question, a more formal level of discourse is called for to restore consensus. Since it is through consensus of parties to a communication act that validity claims are determined, then the only method through which validity claims can be redeemed is through argumentation.

Habermas's focus on the social aspects of establishing the validity of knowledge is useful in analyzing the process through which academic disciplines such as adult education form bodies of theory. A particular theory must meet certain claims to rationality, but must also meet widely shared interests in order to be accepted by the consensus of authorities. Social contexts and sharings of interest constantly are in a state of dialectic evolution. Thus, to understand any particular theory or model, one must examine the historical and social contexts.

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[4]Eric Bredo and Walter Feinberg, Knowledge and Values in Social and Educational Research (Philadelphia, 1982), p. 282.

The method of research used in this study was made more specific through the adaptation of a series of research steps used in critical research developed by Comstock.[5] First, particular social groups are identified as subjects for study. In this case, the groups were educators of adults and adult learners in ancient Athens. The second step is to develop an interpretive understanding of the shared meanings, values, and motives held by all groups of actors in the subjects' milieu. The third step is to study the historical development of social conditions and the current social structures that constrain the participants' actions and shape their understanding. The fourth step is to develop an explanation for determinate relations among social conditions, shared interpretations of these conditions, and participants' actions. A fifth and final step is to consider the applicability of this explanation to present conditions.

Research Questions

The following research questions were investigated:

1. How did the Athenians of the fifth and fourth century B.C. conceive of childhood, youth, and adulthood?
2. How did the Athenians view education and learning for the various age groups?

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[5]Donald Comstock, "A Method of Critical Research," Knowledge and Values in Social and Educational Research, edited by Eric Bredo and Walter Feinberg (Philadelphia, 1982), pp. 370-390.

3. Were certain areas of content or teaching methodology considered appropriate for particular age groups?
4. What historical-cultural circumstances affected the Athenians' views on adult learning?
5. What significance does the ancient Athenians' conception of adult learning have for modern adult educators in the United States?

Scope of the Study

The focus of this study was the links between Athenian education and modern adult education. Patterns of adult learning in ancient Athens were compared to practices in modern American society. Key ideas concerning the theory and practice of modern adult learning were drawn from a survey of the literature of adult education in the United States, as summarized in the section titled "Synthesis of Related Literature." The term "modern" refers to theory and practice developed over the last thirty years in the literature of adult education.

The study's description of ancient Athenian education was drawn primarily from extant classical texts circulating in Athens in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. Many of these texts were written by non-Athenians; for instance, Pythagoras and Democritus were early philosophers who lived on the Ionian coast across the Aegean Sea from Athens. However, intellectual activity throughout the ancient world found a common meeting ground in Athens during this period.

Athens was the center of learning in the ancient world, and any educational or philosophical theory of significance was given a hearing there. The Athenians prided themselves on their openness to new ideas. They consciously sought a balance between conservative forces as represented by the Spartan system and the emerging and progressive educational ideas of the sophists and Ionian philosophers. Because of his city-state's ability to successfully absorb, integrate, and reassert diverse cultural viewpoints, the Athenian leader Pericles regarded Athens as the "school for Hellas." The cultural and educational achievements of Athens reflected upon Greece as a whole, and modern writers on the subject tend to identify "classical Greece" with Athens of the fifth and fourth centuries. This study, though focusing on the Athenian city-state, followed the conventional practice of regarding the classical texts emanating from ancient Athens as representative of "Greek" as well as Athenian culture.

A limitation of this study (and of all other studies of ancient Athens) is the relative paucity of historical data available for examination. Extant sources include the works of a few extraordinary figures--philosophers, artists, historians, and politicians--and a smattering of more mundane sources such as epigraphs on gravestones, fragments of speeches and official documents, and other archeological material. The temptation exists to generalize from limited evidence--for example, to conclude that Athenian and Greek

education had certain characteristics because one or two references in Aristotle or Plato describe or imply such characteristics. Generalizations from limited evidence are controversial, and the journals of classical scholarship are filled with assertions, refutations, and rebuttals concerning the meaning of evidence.

The purpose of the present study was to explore the relevance of Greek ideas to modern adult education; it was not to write a formal history of Athenian life. The interpretations made in this study are at times perhaps less rigorous than those required by the most conservative hermeneutic methodologies, but, on the whole, generalizations made about Athenian and Greek society and education are very much in the mainstream of classical scholarship conducted in this century in Europe and the United States.

Procedures for Collection of Data

The most productive procedure for gathering material about ancient Athenian perspectives on adult learning was to turn directly to the primary sources--the classics of fifth and fourth century B.C. Athens. A few secondary sources in the field of adult education consider ancient Greek ideas. Grattan[6] has provided a brief summary of Greek contributions but appears to have relied entirely on secondary sources for

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[6]C. Hartley Grattan, In Quest of Knowledge: A Historical Perspective in Adult Education (New York, 1955).

his information. Metropoulos[7] researched the application of Socratic dialogue to adult education method, using as primary sources the works of Plato, Xenophon, and Aristophanes. The limited focus of his study caused him to ignore much material relevant to the broader concerns of adult educators. The works of Davidson,[8] Marrou,[9] Clarke,[10] and Ulich[11] are representative of the many conventional histories of education that consider ancient Greek times. Each limits his discussion almost entirely to formal education for children and adolescents. Informal instances of adult learning apparently are not considered a legitimate subject for educational historians.

Among the primary sources from fifth and fourth century B.C. Athens, those that contribute most to an understanding of adult learning are the dialogues of Plato and the drama of Aristophanes. Most of the dialogues and plays are set in fifth century B.C. Athens and reveal much about daily life.

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[7]Nicholas Metropoulos, "The Relevance of the Socratic Method to Contemporary Adult Education," unpublished doctoral dissertation, Arizona State Univ., 1974.

[8]Thomas Davidson, Education of the Greek People and its Influence on Civilization (New York, 1894).

[9]Henri I. Marrou, A History of Education in Antiquity, translated by George Lamb (New York, 1956).

[10]Martin L. Clark, Higher Education in the Ancient World (Albuquerque, 1971).

[11]Robert Ulich, History of Educational Thought (New York, 1953).

Aristophanes' Clouds is a delightful introduction to the world of adult learning in Athens. The protagonist, Strepsiades, seeks instruction from Socrates on how to disentangle himself from legal action brought on by the reckless spending of his son. The Platonic dialogues reveal that adult males in fifth century B.C. Athens frequently sought instruction from the sophists on how to defend themselves in court and how to speak before the public assemblies of the city-state. The demand for instruction in oratory and disputation was brought about by democratizing political changes that required all citizens (women, slaves, and foreigners being excluded) to serve on legislative and judicial bodies and to represent themselves in civil suits.

In addition to the works of Plato and Aristophanes, the following primary and secondary sources were surveyed for material about adult learning in ancient Athens:

1. The writings of the pre-Socratics in Diels' Die Fragmente Der Vorsokratiker as selected and translated by Freeman and Sprague.
2. The standard histories of ancient Greece, Herodotus's Histories and Thucydides' Peloponnesian War.
3. Xenophon's Recollections of Socrates.
4. The works of Aristotle, focusing on Politics.
5. Biographies of Greeks in Plutarch's Lives.
6. Diogenes Laertius's Lives of Eminent Philosophers.

The last two sets of works are secondary sources to life in ancient Athens. However, these authors had access to many primary sources and lesser removed secondary sources that have since been lost. All of the sources were read in modern English translation. Because the present study has a philosophical rather than a formal historical intent, internal and external criticism of the sources was not pursued to the degree required by historiographic methodology.

Synthesis of Related Literature

An attempt is made in this section to survey the body of theory in adult education literature in the United States. This review admittedly is a brief and incomplete condensation of the literature. The purpose is to identify pivotal ideas that can serve as a background for the survey of Greek literature for related material. Six major perspectives on adult education are identified and described.

Histories of adult education, in establishing a chronology of events relevant to the field, mention such diverse people and activities as Cotton Mather's sermons, Benjamin Franklin's junto and public libraries, mechanics institutes, Chautauqua, and agricultural extension.[12] The

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[12]Malcolm Knowles, A History of the Adult Education Movement in the United States (Huntington, N.Y., 1977).

first American who wrote extensively about adult education as a field of practice was Eduard Lindeman, whose The Meaning of Adult Education [13] is a classic in the field. Lindeman viewed adult education as having a distinctly social purpose. The principal elements of his perspective can be summarized as follows:[14]

1. Adult education is a collaborative, learner-centered activity best attained through small discussion groups.
2. Adult education has a critical and social purpose--to aid the individual in developing awareness of the historicity of his individual and social existence. Worker education should lead to collective social action. Vocational education is of questionable value to workers.
3. Lindeman and Anderson first brought to the United States the European conception of "andragogy." The term is derived from a compounding of the Greek andr- "man" and agogos "leader." Thus, the study of adult learning becomes a contrasted discipline to pedagogy, from the Greek paid "child." Lindeman and Anderson develop the following distinction:

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[13]Eduard Lindeman, The Meaning of Adult Education (New York, New Republic, 1926).

[14]Adapted from Stephen Brookfield, "The Contribution of Eduard Lindeman to the Development of Theory and Philosophy in Adult Education," Adult Education Quarterly, XXXIV (1984), 185-196, and Stephen Brookfield, "The Meaning of Adult Education : The Contemporary Relevance of Eduard Lindeman," Teachers College Record, LXXXV (1984), 513-524.

> Schools are for children. Life itself is the adult's school. Pedagogy is the method by which children are taught. Demagogy is the path by which adults are intellectually betrayed. Andragogy is the true method of adult learning. In andragogy, theory becomes fact; that is, words become responsible acts, accountable deeds, and the practical fact which arises out of necessity is illumined by theory.[15]

Lindeman regarded the adult as differing from the child in the degree of his active participation in society. "The adult enters history and becomes a link in the chain of guilt, entanglement, want, and pain."[16]

Lindeman's approach to adult education reflected the rising influence of progressivism in American education in the 1920s and 1930s. During the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, adult educators also studied the eloquent proposals of liberal arts advocates such as Hutchins[17] and Adler[18], who laid out an educational curriculum for both children and adults that centered on study of the great books and ideas of western culture. Since the early 1960s, with the closing of the Center for the Study of Liberal Education of Adults, the liberal arts approach to adult education has faced increasing difficulties in maintaining influence. Several trends have contributed to its decline: the continuing

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[15]M.L. Anderson and Eduard Lindeman, Education Through Experience (New York, 1927), pp. 2-3.

[16]Ibid., p. 3.

[17]Robert Hutchins, The Great Conversation, Vol. I of The Great Books (New York, 1953).

[18]Mortimer Adler, "Adult Education," Vol. II of Great Issues in Education (Chicago, 1956), pp. 43-73.

dominance of progressive attitudes that favor vocational and practical training for adults, the funneling of nearly all government funding for adult education to these training activities, and the dominance within education of behaviorist methodologies that demand focus on measurable objectives and competencies.[19]

The desire for a science of andragogy was revived in the late 1960s and 1970s primarily through the vigorous advocacy of Malcolm Knowles. A review of adult education literature through the 1970s reveals Knowles' version of andragogy to be the dominant explanatory system. This new "art and science of helping adults learn" is contrasted to pedagogy, which Knowles characterizes as use of essentially authoritarian methods to transmit "inert" knowledge to children. According to Knowles,

> Andragogy is premised on at least four crucial assumptions about the characteristics of adult learners that are different from the assumptions about child learners, on which traditional pedagogy is premised. These assumptions are that, as a person matures, (1) his self-concept moves from one of being a dependent personality toward one of being a self-directing human being, (2) he accumulates a growing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasing resource for learning, (3) his readiness to learn becomes oriented increasingly to the developmental tasks of his social roles, and (4) his time perspective changes from one of postponed application of knowledge to immediacy of

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[19]John L. Elias and Sharan Merriam, Philosophical Foundations of Adult Education (Malabar, Fla., 1980), pp. 13-44.

> application, and accordingly his orientation toward learning shifts from one of subject centeredness to one of problem centeredness.[20]

Knowles elaborates on the distinction between andragogy and pedagogy by establishing a dichotomous set of relationships as shown in the Table 1. In his later writings, Knowles has acknowledged that some features of andragogy might be appropriate for the teaching of children and that some features of pedagogy might be appropriate for adults. By admitting that age may not be a qualifying factor, Knowles seems to contradict the basis of his earlier argument that childhood vs. adulthood is the variable that explains the dichotomy of assumptions. Another criticism of Knowles' scheme concerns whether he has a descriptive or prescriptive intent. Does he believe he is describing pedagogy as it actually exists or as it ought to be? His explanations are not clear on this point, but it appears he may have a descriptive intent regarding pedagogy and a prescriptive intent for andragogy. Many educators of children would dispute his characterization of pedagogy and

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[20]Malcolm Knowles, The Modern Practice of Adult Education (New York, 1970), p. 39.

TABLE I

ASSUMPTIONS AND DESIGN ELEMENTS OF ANDRAGOGY AND PEDAGOGY[21]

	Assumptions	
	Pedagogy	Andragogy
Self-concept	Dependency	Increasing self-direction
Experience	Of little worth	Learners have a rich resource for learning
Readiness	Biological development, social pressures	Developmental tasks of social roles
Time perspective	Postponed application	Immediacy of application
	Design Elements	
Climate	Authoritarian, formal, competitive	Mutuality, respectful, collaborative, informal
Planning	By teacher	Mechanism for mutual planning
Diagnosis of needs	By teacher	Mutual self-diagnosis
Formulation of objectives	By teacher	Mutual negotiation
Design	Logic of the subject matter; content units	Sequenced in terms of readiness; problem units
Activities	Transmittal techniques	Experiential techniques (inquiry)
Evaluation	By teacher	Mutual rediagnosis of needs; mutual measurement of program

[21]Malcolm Knowles, The Adult Learner: A Neglected Species, 2nd ed. (Houston, 1978), p. 110.

would point out that nearly all of his prescriptions for andragogy were first developed by pedagogists--Pestalozzi, Froebel, Whitehead, and Dewey, for example--for application in teaching children.

While much of Knowles' writings provides practical guidance for practitioners in institutional settings, in the 1970s many researchers in adult education focused on the activities of adult learners outside the classroom. Tough[22] used in-depth interviews to determine that nearly all adults he sampled regularly engaged in self-directed learning projects, but that only a small percentage of these active learners were enrolled in formal adult education classes. Other researchers confirmed Tough's findings among a broad range of sample populations of American adults. This emphasis on the individual psychological lives of adult learners was supported by the growing body of knowledge developed by lifespan psychologists, who in the 1960s and early 1970s developed a deeper understanding of the phases and developmental tasks of adulthood. Adult education researchers such as Aslanian, Bricknell, and Knox applied the theories of lifespan psychology to the adult education process, providing practitioners with guidance on how adult

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[22]Allen Tough, The Adult's Learning Projects: A Fresh Approach to the Theory and Practice of Adult Learning, 2nd ed. (Toronto, 1979).

development has implications for educational policy and programming decisions.[23]

K. Patricia Cross's Adults as Learners: Increasing Participation and Facilitating Learning[24] is perhaps the best synthesis of a decade of research on the individual psychological events leading up to learning activities. Cross's CAL (Characteristics of Adults as Learners) model attempts to "elucidate differences between adults and children as learners and ultimately to suggest how teaching adults should differ from teaching children."[25] Two classes of explanatory variables are posited, as shown in Table II.

Personal characteristics variables are usually continuous and aid in describing the gradual development of the individual through the lifespan. The physiological/ aging variable recognizes the gradual decline of hearing, visual, and "speed" abilities of the adult. The sociocultural characteristics/life phases continuum draws on research from Gould, Levinson, Sheehy and others, which

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[23]Carol Aslanian and Henry Bricknell, Americans in Transition: Life Changes as Reasons for Adult Learning (New York, 1980) and Alan Knox and others, Programming for Adults Facing Midlife Change (San Francisco, 1979).

[24]K. Patricia Cross, Adults as Learners: Increasing Participation and Facilitating Learning (San Francisco, 1982).

[25]Ibid., p. 234.

TABLE II

CHARACTERISTICS OF ADULT LEARNERS

Personal Characteristics
Physiological/Aging
Sociocultural/Life Phases
Psychological/Developmental Stages
Situational Characteristics
Part-Time Learning Versus Full-Time Learning
Voluntary Learning Versus Compulsory Learning[26]

identifies common phases and transitions in the life cycle. The life phases are closely tied to age and reflect social expectations regarding appropriate adult behavior. Cross distinguishes this continuum from the psychological characteristics/developmental stages continuum, which places greater emphasis on internal aspects of moral, intellectual, and ego development not necessarily tied to chronological age. Developmentalist theory attempts to define an invariable movement of the personality through succeeding stages that reflect growing complexity, integration, and maturity. Thus, the "life stages" continuum shows movement in a vertical direction upward whereas the "life phases"

[26]Ibid., p. 235.

continuum charts a horizontal path with no phase being considered higher or better than another.

The second class of variables is dichotomous and consists of (1) part time versus full time learning and (2) voluntary versus compulsory learning. These variables often are used to explain differences between childhood or youth education and adult education. Adults usually are engaged in work and families as primary activities; education typically is pursued on a part-time basis. Adults also tend to participate in learning activities voluntarily, in contrast to the compulsory nature of most childhood and youth educational activities. Cross acknowledges that these distinctions are imprecise, that exceptions can easily be put forward. Still, the fact that most adult learning is part-time and voluntary has significant implications.

The CAL model provides a framework that can be used by the adult educator to explain and influence various adult learning activities. For instance, research on life phases indicates that adults experience a "teachable moment" at various points of transition in the life cycle. A married couple expecting a first child shows an intense interest in learning about parenting. Educators should know when to capitalize on such "moments."

Cross's model regards self direction as a characteristic of developmental growth rather than a simple

adulthood-versus-childhood issue as in Knowles' scheme. Thus, many adults lack self direction in their learning because of a delay in ego development. Another of Knowles' characteristics of adult learning--problem-centeredness--is explained in the CAL model by the variable of voluntary-versus-compulsory learning. In a compulsory situation, the teacher tends to set the learning agenda. As the learning situation becomes more voluntary, the student gains control of his learning and is likely to focus on his personal concerns and needs.

Cross's emphasis on the adult learner rather than on institutional providers reflects a shift of focus in adult education literature away from more traditional practitioner concerns such as program development and teaching methodology. In Cross's book and another recent attempt to survey the field, Long's Adult Learning: Research and Practice,[27] one senses a desire to change the topic of study itself from adult education to adult learning or lifelong learning. However, Cross's book also reflects a concern for the most pressing problem of adult and continuing education practitioners--meeting institutional budget demands by attracting and retaining clientele. The act of learning, per se, is discussed only in relation to why adults are motivated to learn.

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[27]Huey B. Long, Adult Learning: Research and Practice (New York, 1983).

Cross's approach to adult learning also can be described as humanistic in orientation, in contrast to a fifth major approach in current adult education literature, that of the behavioral change model. Although this model does not have a single, dominant spokesperson, it is pervasive in the field, especially in job and skills training settings. Learning is perceived as a change in behavior and is accomplished through a manipulation of the environment of the learner. Instructional methodology begins with the development of educational objectives in terms of measurable behaviors or competencies. Success in attainment of component objectives frequently is assessed, and positive feedback frequently provided. The behavioral model, in its use of systematic method, is closely tied to an approach to adult education research that stresses use of empirical, quantitative techniques.

A sixth major perspective in adult education, critical theory, currently has few proponents. Lindeman,[28] Freire,[29], and Mezirow,[30] as spokesmen for this view, agree

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[28]Eduard Lindeman, The Meaning of Adult Education (New York, 1926).

[29]Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, translated by Myra Bergman Ramos (New York, 1982).

[30]Jack Mezirow, "Perspective Transformation," Adult Education, XXXVIII (1978), 100-110, and "A Critical Theory of Adult Learning and Education," Adult Education, XXXII (1981), 3-24.

that adult education must be regarded as a method by which individuals and society as a whole become "emancipated" from constricting ideologies and other oppressive social forces. Lindeman, as an American writing in the 1920s and 1930s, reflected popular progressive political platforms then in currency. Freire, a Brazilian educator whose major works were written in the late 1960s, developed an application of Marxist praxis to literacy education in South America. Mezirow, an American adult education academic, recently has developed a critical theory for adult learning in contemporary American culture. He extends Habermas's three object domains of knowledge--the technical, practical, and emancipatory--to individual adult learning situations. In this model, the technical cognitive interest dominates behavioral skills approaches to adult learning and relies on empirical-analytical methods of knowing. The practical cognitive interest dominates social interaction approaches to adult learning and relies on historical-hermeneutical methods of interpretation and explanation. The emancipatory cognitive interest dominates critical approaches to adult learning that seek to raise awareness of psychocultural obstacles to growth and to encourage "perspective transformation." Mezirow's model for a critical theory of adult learning attempts to explain the entire range of adult learning activities just as Habermas's critical theory explains all human knowledge.

In summary, a major preoccupation in adult education literature has been to distinguish differences between child and adult learning. Much of this type of theorizing seems to be motivated by a desire to carve boundaries for an academic discipline and to develop an esoteric body of knowledge required before a professional group can gain legitimacy in society. Another major focus of the literature is to explain motivation for participation in adult learning activities. The emphasis is overwhelmingly on the individual psychological life of the learner.

A third dominant theme of adult education is that learning has become a lifelong activity and that institutional changes are necessary to respond to this fact. The growth of lifelong learning often is portrayed as a purely contemporary phenomenon, and the social, historical, and cultural forces affecting adult learning largely are ignored in the literature. A few humanistic scholars of adult education, such as Houle and Grattan, have attempted to create some historical perspective beyond recent American experience, and Lindeman and Freire have engaged in critiques that seek to analyze economic and political factors that affect adult education. The emerging critical theory of Habermas, which turns from economic and political features of social life to ideological, mass communication, and cultural features, has been used in a limited application to the field by Mezirow. Critical

theory holds promise as a framework to clarify, unite, and expand the various approaches now found in adult education.

Chapters II and III survey classical sources to develop a general understanding of the intellectual and cultural environment of ancient Athens. In Chapter IV, three competing interest groups are identified and compared. Each of the three--the sophists, the philosophers, and the poets--regarded adult education as an essential requirement in its mission. Chapter V applies findings about adult learning in ancient Athens to modern day adult education.

CHAPTER II

IDEAS ABOUT ADULT LEARNING IN THE WORKS OF ARISTOPHANES AND PLATO

The "Golden Age of Athens" is generally regarded as lasting from 480 to 431 B.C. The battle of Salamis, at which Athens and her allies decisively defeated the Persian forces of Xerxes, took place in 480. The year 431 marks the beginning of a thirty-year war of attrition between Athens and its neighbor to the south, Sparta. During the long peace, Athens rose to become the most powerful force in the ancient world. Through its Delian league, Athens extracted wealth from its allies and used these funds to rebuild its acropolis. The monuments of art and architecture made during this period are regarded today as being among the highest achievements of classical Greece.

Athens' newfound power and wealth also created a climate for great innovation in government, literature, and science. Athenian democracy had its beginnings in the reforms of Solon in 594 and of Cleisthenes in 508. During the peacetime years, the Athenian leader Pericles encouraged even greater civic participation by using Athens' new wealth to pay citizens for service in the assemblies or on juries or for work in military or public service. The

oppressive use of slaves also provided Athenians with the leisure they needed to engage fully in civic life.

Athenians felt great appreciation toward their gods for their growing power and wealth, and they expressed their gratitude through participation in religious festivals that covered one-third of the calendar. Activities included competition among youth in physical activities such as wrestling and chariot racing. The public theaters were sites for public lectures and choir performances, but their main activity was the competitions among poets for the best tragedies and comedies. Athenians took great pleasure in their theater and regarded their poets, beginning with Homer, as educators of the people.

Attitudes about education were in a state of great turmoil during these years. The new generation became increasingly critical of traditional education, which emphasized physical training and admonition on the virtue of aristocratic values. The rising democratic spirit carried with it a burst of intellectual growth in the form of rising literacy and interest in science and philosophy. Many Athenians saw a need for a newer kind of higher education, both for youth and adults, that taught practical skills needed by citizens engaged in civic activities. The sophists were a new breed of itinerant teacher who met this demand for higher education. Their instruction centered on developing logical and public speaking skills so important

in public life. Skill in rhetoric came to be seen by ambitious young men as the foremost requirement for gaining power in the city-state.

The comedies of Aristophanes and the dialogues of Plato are the best sources for understanding the changing educational values in Athens. Aristophanes' plays, especially Clouds, provide insight into the everyday thinking of the "man on the street." Plato approaches these issues from a more sophisticated, philosophical point of view. His ideas about the role of education in society have been of tremendous influence through the course of western civilization. Many of our current controversies in education were thoroughly explored by Plato, and his importance in shaping western values makes him relevant to issues beings discussed by adult educators today. The following sections will survey the works of Aristophanes and Plato for information on the importance of learning throughout the lifespan, the types of educational content and methodology appropriate for different age groups, the special qualities of adulthood as a stage of life, and the philosophical issues that underlie all educational activities.

Aristophanes' Clouds

The satirical comedy of Aristophanes, Clouds,[1] is a delightful introduction to the world of adult learning in fifth-century Athens. Aristophanes was a member of the

aristocratic party and was extremely conservative on matters of social change. The play is a comical but fierce attack on the emerging educational force in Athens, the sophists, who taught the new art of discourse "to anyone who will give them money; no age or want of capacity is an impediment."[2] The development of these new student-teacher relationships is commonly acknowledged to have resulted from changes in the social structure of Greek city-states. Regardless of his background, almost every citizen at some point served as a leader in a legislative body, a public official, or a juror. Of equal importance in Athens was the possibility that one would represent his own case in court, either as prosecutor or defendent. Athenians were especially dependent on the use of courts to resolve personal differences, and Athens attracted sophists from across the ancient world to practice their claim that they could teach anyone to argue his case in court.

Clouds begins with the protagonist Strepsiades pondering just such a situation--that he is likely to be sued, but lacks the skill to represent himself in court. Creditors are after Strepsiades because he is unable to make

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[1]Aristophanes, The Clouds, in Five Comedies (New York, 1948). This translation originally was published by the Athenian Society in London in 1912; the translator was not identified. In subsequent references, page numbers will be given within the text.

[2]Plato, Euthydemus, in The Dialogues of Plato, Vol. I, translated by Benjamin Jowett (New York, 1937), p. 134.

monthly payments on his debts, which have been created by his prodigal son Phidippides, who, he says, "only knows how to look after his long locks, to show himself off in his chariots and to dream of horses" (p. 123).

In the opening scene of the play, Strepsiades points out to his son a nearby house, "a school of wisdom," where "if well paid, these men . . . teach one how to gain law-suits, whether they are just or not" (p. 126). The house is occupied by Socrates and his disciples, and to modern readers of the play, the ensuing satire on Socrates' name seems callously unfair because, from reports of Plato and others, we know Socrates to have been a teacher who refused payment for his services and who himself was a bitter opponent to those who made "the worse appear to be the better cause."

In any case, Strepsiades, unable to convince his son to learn the new art of legal discourse, decides "I will enter this school and learn myself. But at my age, memory has gone and the mind is slow to grasp things. How can all these fine distinctions, these subtleties, be learned?" (p. 127). Despite his fears, Strepsiades goes to Socrates and is accepted as a student.

The play's chorus takes on the personae of a group of ethereal muses, "the clouds of heaven, great goddesses of the lazy; to them we owe all, thoughts, speeches, trickery, roguery, boasting, lies, sagacity" (p. 133), says Socrates.

These clouds promise Strepsiades that upon completion of Socrates' course of study, he too can be a sophist. "Clients will be everlastingly besieging your door in crowds, burning to get at you, to explain their business to you, and to consult you about their suits" (p. 139). But the chorus is concerned about Strepsiades' age and capacity for learning and directs Socrates to "begin the lessons you want to teach this old man; rouse his mind, try the strength of his intelligence" (p. 139). Socrates responds to Strepsiades, "Come, tell the kind of mind you have; 'tis important I know this, that I may order my batteries against you in a new fashion" (p. 139), that is, adjust his teaching to the special needs of the old man.

Strepsiades, though willing, is unable to learn because of his poor memory, and the chorus advises him to bring his son to study in his place. Phidippides grudgingly agrees, completes the course of study under Socrates, and returns home with a new skill in discourse. But instead of using it to defend his father, he physically attacks the old man and justifies the beating with an assortment of verbal tricks such as the following:

> You will tell me, that according to law, 'tis the lot of children to be beaten. But I reply that the old men are children twice over and that it is far more fitting to chastise them than the young, for there is less excuse for their faults. (p. 168)

Driven to rage by his son's insolence, Strepsiades returns to the house of Socrates and sets it afire. As the

play closes, Socrates and his disciples scream they are suffocating.

Clouds carries a clear political message. Aristophanes denounces Socrates for blasphemy against the traditional Greek gods and for corrupting youth. Twenty-four years after the play was first presented, an Athenian court formally tried Socrates on these same charges, convicted him, and condemned him to death. It is generally accepted that the trial and conviction were in political retaliation against Socrates' ties to politicians then out of power in Athens.

From the viewpoint of educational theory, the play can be seen as an allegory for some age-old notions about the relationships between adults, children, and the learning both engage in. First, the play shows how social change can affect the climate for learning activities. Adults found themselves in a new role of accusing and defending themselves in court. A new technique was developed, the art of rhetoric, which adults saw as a tool of urgent, practical use in their daily lives. The more adventuresome adults, those lacking in modesty, as Socrates says in Laches, sit before the teachers of the new technique. Parents, whether adult learners or not, ask the experts in the new technique to teach their children. The curriculum for children reflects their parents' personal insecurities about performing in adult social roles. Among the adults,

there are those who think the new teachings are foolish and dangerous. They argue for the old curriculum, which supports traditional values, and see the new trends as subversive and corrupting of youth. All of these social changes and responses to change take place in a world controlled by adults, who create new techniques, teach one another to use them, and only later, as an afterthought, instruct the teachers of the young to modify the standard curriculum for children and youth.

To present Aristophanes' position from a different perspective, the emergence of the sophists' brand of education represented the replacement of what might be called a liberal education, emphasizing development of character and virtue, with a more pragmatic, vocationally oriented curriculum. Socrates, according to Plato, was a vigorous opponent of a strictly pragmatic program of study. The only true object of education was wisdom, to "know thyself." As a topic for dialectic, Socrates continually puts forth the question, "Can virtue be taught?" The Platonic dialogues, as a source of basic philosophy on the nature and purpose of learning, are of enormous significance in the history of educational thought. Adult educators who propound on the distinct pragmatic orientation of adults to learning ought to have an awareness of this literature.

The Dialogues of Plato

The dialogues of Plato make up one of the largest bodies of literature by a single author that has survived ancient times. In Jowett's standard translation[3] are found forty-six dialogues, requiring more than 1,600 pages of printed text. Socrates is the principal speaker in most of the dialogues.

Plato, who lived from 427 to 347 B.C., was a student of Socrates, probably from about 410 B.C. to Socrates' death at age 70 in 399 B.C. Thus, Plato was distanced by a generation or so from the time when many of the dialogues between Socrates and sophists allegedly took place. Modern critics, however, generally accept the fairness and accuracy of Plato's portrait of Socrates and his contemporaries. Only in the later dialogues, such as the books of the Republic, do critics suspect that Plato presents his own viewpoints using Socrates' voice.

What follows is an attempt to identify and categorize material from the dialogues that seems relevant to the concerns of adult educators. The categories are education of the young, adult or lifelong learning, old age, and educational psychology. Much of the material, or course, overlaps categories.

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[3]Plato, The Dialogues of Plato, Vols. I & II, translated by Benjamin Jowett (New York, 1937). All subsequent quotations from Plato are translations by Jowett; references showing the title of the dialogue, the volume number, and the page number are placed within the text.

Education of the Young

Childhood and youth were the ages considered most capable of learning. The memory was thought to be at its strongest and character more malleable than in later life. As Socrates says to Cratylus,

> You are young and of an age to learn. (Cratylus, I, p. 229)

According to the Athenian Stranger, the speaker in Laws, the improvement of a child's body and mind should begin even before birth.

> Pregnant women shall walk about and fashion the embryo within as we fashion wax before it hardens, and after birth swathe the infant for two years . . . to take care that their limbs are not distorted by leaning on them when they are too young. (Laws, II, p. 545)

From the ages of three to six,

> the childish nature will require sports; now is the time to get rid of self-will in him, punishing him, but not so as to disgrace him. (Laws, II, p. 549)

After age six, it was suggested that boys and girls be separated, but their training, even in the use of weapons, should be similar.

In the Republic, Plato's speaker, Socrates, agrees that childhood is the most critical period for instruction.

> You know also that the beginning is the most important part of any work, especially in the case of a young and tender thing; for that is the time at which the character is being formed and the desired impression is more readily taken. (Republic, I, p. 640)

Education for the young is divided into gymnastics and music. Gymnastics, which improves the body, is further divided into dance and wrestling; music includes

literature and is concerned with developing balance and harmony in the soul.

While teachers play an important role in education, society as a whole is an important educational force. As Protagoras asks rhetorically,

> Who teaches Greek? (Protagoras, I, p. 98)

All members of society are teachers to some extent.

During adolescence and young manhood, Athenian youth honed their skills in sports and fighting and also in the new skills of discourse becoming so important in public life. The sophists are frequently described in the dialogues as teachers of youth, and it seems likely that most of their students were young people. Historians of education have picked up on these references and most textbooks limit sophists to the field of youth education. A closer reading of the source materials shows this conclusion to be incomplete. Adults were often the clientele of the sophists, who, after all, claimed an almost magical ability to quickly transform one into a powerful leader among men. Historians of education have failed to acknowledge the sophists' interest in adult instruction by disregarding several features of Athenian culture.

First, during its peak, Athens was an extremely wealthy society in which the basic necessities were provided to all citizens. Slaves, women, and foreigners performed most of the labor, both skilled and unskilled. Citizens thus

enjoyed an enormous amount of time in leisure pursuits and organized civic activities such as government and festivals. Youth endured a sort of extended adolescence through their twenties; they were not allowed, for example, to hold public office or to author a play for the theater until they were well into their thirties. Plato, in the Republic, advises that the privileged class not be allowed to serve in public roles until age thirty. After age forty-five, they were to return to the study of philosophy until their death. In the next chapter, evidence will be presented that the Greek term for "youth" applied at least to age thirty and possibly to age forty. Thus, many students of sophists may have been considered as "youth" although they were in their mid to late twenties or even their thirties.

Another feature of Athenian life downplayed by educational historians is the practice of pederasty, or love of boys, among Athenian men. The sophists, Socrates included, were especially inclined to forming romantic attachments with their young male students. A young man possessing both beauty and intelligence was regarded almost reverentially by men and women alike as an object of human perfection. The young people surrounding the sophists thus assumed a prominence perhaps not available to the old and wrinkled.

Another factor is that Athenians, like many persons today, would see the concept of adult education

as a contradiction in terms. As Marrou, an influential historian of classical education, has written in another context, instances of adult learning are "more a matter of culture, i.e., the intellectual life of adults, not preparatory culture, education."[4] The intellectual life of most Athenian citizens was characterized by frequent learning activities in the form of organized events (for instance, symposiums and the theater) and what we today would call self-directed learning projects. Athenians were aware of their learning, but then, as today, education was something engaged in by children and youth. Adults engaged in culture, in life.

Adult and Lifelong Learning

Except for the educational plan in the Republic, none of Plato's dialogues refers to or suggests formal, organized education for adults as we think of it today. We find, though, the continuing theme that adults should continue to learn throughout the lifespan.

In Laches two of Socrates' friends, Nicias and Laches, quote from the famed Athenian lawgiver Solon. The lines of poetry were probably memorized by all Athenian schoolboys during the first half of the fifth century.

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[4]Henri Marrou, A History of Education in Antiquity, translated by George Lamb (New York, 1956), p. 321.

> Nicias: As Solon says, he will wish and desire to be learning so long as he lives, and will not think that old age of itself brings wisdom. . . . . .
> Laches: For I too agree with Solon, "that I would fain grow old, learning many things." (Laches, I. p. 64)

Socrates, discussing with Nicias and Laches the ideal form of education for their children, expands upon this idea of Solon:

> I maintain, my friends, that every one of us should seek out the best teacher whom he can find, first for ourselves, who are greatly in need of one, and then for the youth, regardless of expense or anything. But I cannot advise that we remain as we are. And if any one laughs at us for going to school at our age, I would quote to them the authority of Homer, who says, that "Modesty is not good for a needy man." Let us, then, regardless of what may be said of us, make the education of youth our own education. (Laches, I, pp. 76-77)

Lysimachus, an elderly man participating in the discussion, agrees:

> I like your proposal, Socrates; and as I am the oldest, I am also the most eager to go to school with the boys. (Laches, I, p. 77)

Plato describes another of Socrates' explorations into adult learning in Euthydemus. At the beginning of this dialogue, Socrates excitedly tells his friend, Crito, about two famed sophists who have come to Athens, the brothers Euthydemus and Dionysodorus, who Socrates says are

> "a pair of heroes" who, besides being perfect in the use of their bodies, are invincible in every sort of warfare . . . and also they are most skilful in legal warfare; they will plead themselves and teach others to speak and compose speeches which will have an effect upon the courts. (Euthydemus, I, p. 134)

Socrates confides to Crito:

> Now I am thinking, Crito, of placing myself in their hands; for they say that in a short time they can impart their skill to anyone. (p. 134)

Crito asks Socrates if he is not too old to learn and Socrates replies:

> Certainly not, Crito; as I will prove to you, for I have the consolation of knowing that they began this art of disputation which I covet, quite, as I may say, in old age; last year, or the year before, they had none of their new wisdom. I am only apprehensive that I may bring the two strangers into disrepute, as I have done Connus the son of Metrobius, the harp-player, who is still my music-master; for when the boys who go to see him see me going with them, they laugh at me and call him grandpapa's master. Now I should not like the strangers to experience similar treatment; the fear of ridicule may make them unwilling to receive me; and therefore, Crito, I shall try and persuade some old men to accompany me to them, as I persuaded them to go with me to Connus, and I hope that you will make one: and perhaps we had better take your sons as bait; they will want to have them as pupils, and for the sake of them will be willing to receive us. (p. 134)

Crito is open to the suggestion, but first wants to hear more about the two sophists. Describing an earlier meeting with them, Socrates recounts that the brothers have given up teaching the arts of fighting and discourse. He quotes Euthydemus as saying:

> The teaching of virtue . . . is our principal occupation; and we believe that we can impart it better and quicker than any man. (p. 135)

Thus, we can gather that among the more successful and subtle of the sophists, it became fashionable to announce one's purpose in teaching to be something more profitable to the soul than merely the teaching of discourse. Socrates,

too, frequently stated that the teaching of virtue was the true purpose of education.

After a lengthy recounting of the words of the sophists, Socrates once again asks Crito to accompany him for further instruction.

> I hope that you will come to them with me, since they say that they are able to teach any one who will give them money; no age or want of capacity is an impediment. And I must repeat one thing which they said, for your especial benefit,--that the learning of their art did not at all interfere with the business of moneymaking. (p. 167)

In this dialogue, moreso than in Laches, we begin to suspect that Socrates is speaking with irony, that his motive in wanting to pay the sophists for the right to a "public discussion" is not so much to learn from them but to prove them to be frauds. In another dialogue he admits that he likens discourse to a wrestling match and that he is "even more pugnacious than the giants of old." (Theaetetus, II, p. 171)

Aside from this natural contentiousness, Socrates had a deeper purpose in confronting those who claim special knowledge. In the Apology, Socrates explains to the citizens judging him at his trial that throughout his life he has sought out conversations with those pretending to wisdom. His purpose has been to disprove the declaration of the Delphic Oracle, that Socrates himself was the wisest of men.

> The result of my mission was just this: I found that the men most in repute were all but the most foolish; and that other less esteemed were really wiser and better. . . . . .

> But the truth is, O men of Athens, that God only is wise; and by his answer he intends to show that the wisdom of men is worth little or nothing; he is not speaking of Socrates, he is only using my name by way of illustration, as if he said, He, O men, is the wisest, who, like Socrates, knows that his wisdom is in truth worth nothing. (Apology, I, pp. 405-6)

Though he admits he knows little or nothing, Socrates remained always the seeker of knowledge. In Phaedrus he explains

> I must first know myself, as the Delphian inscription says; to be curious about that which is not my concern, while I am in ignorance of my own self, would be ridiculous. (I, p. 235-6)

And in Lesser Hippias Socrates again explains the importance he attaches to learning:

> But I have one singular good quality, which is my salvation; I am not ashamed to learn, and I ask and enquire, and am very grateful to those who answer me, and never fail to give them my grateful thanks; and when I learn a thing I never deny my teacher, or pretend that the lesson is a discovery of my own; but I praise his wisdom, and proclaim what I have learned from him. (II, p. 724)

The great philosopher and sophist Protagoras concurred with Socrates that education is lifelong.

> Education and admonition commence in the first years of childhood and last to the very end of life. (Protagoras, I, p. 96)

In Protagoras' view, learning in adulthood is based on our social relationships. The laws as developed by the community are our teachers.

Socrates and Protagoras were exceptional among Athenians in their love of learning. Many others agreed

with the belief so well put by the Roman Seneca many generations later:

> An old man who has still his lessons is a shameful and ridiculous object; training and preparation are for the young, action for the old.[5]

An Athenian who shared this skepticism about the value of adult learning, especially when it involves the study of philosophy, was Callicles, who admonishes Socrates to remove his head from the clouds.

> Philosophy, if pursued in moderation and at the proper age, is an elegant accomplishment, but too much philosophy is the ruin of human life. Even if a man has good parts, still, if he carries philosophy into later life, he is necessarily ignorant of all those things which a gentleman and a person of honor ought to know. . . . . When I see a youth thus engaged,--the study appears to me to be in character, and becoming a man of liberal education, and him who neglects philosophy I regard as an inferior man, who will never aspire to anything great or noble. But if I see him continuing the study in later life, and not leaving off, I should like to beat him, Socrates; for, as I was saying, such a one, even though he have good natural parts, becomes effeminate. He flies from the busy centre and the market-place, in which, as the poet says, men become distinguished; he creeps into a corner for the rest of his life, and talks in a whisper with three or four admiring youths, but never speaks out like a freeman in a satisfactory manner. (Gorgias, I, pp. 544-5)

This attitude likely was common among older men, and yet Athenians during this period seemed to have a curiosity and a love of learning unmatched by any community before or since.

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[5]Seneca, quoted in John Amos Comenius in The Great Didactic in Great Issues in Education, Vol. I (Chicago, 1956), p. 139.

Old Age

The dialogues also provide insight into the Greeks' understanding of age as a factor in one's capacity for learning. Many of the elderly speakers in the dialogue seem to lack confidence in their ability to learn. For example, in Laches Lysimachus tells Socrates he does not want to participate in the dialogue because

> I am old, and my memory is bad; and I do not remember the questions which I am going to ask, or the answers to them; and if there is any interruption I am quite lost. (I, p. 65)

And in Theaetetus Theodorus voices a similar concern:

> I am unused to your game of questions and answer, and I am too old to learn; the young will be more suitable, and they will improve more than I shall, for youth is always able to improve. (II, p. 147)

A decline in power of memory seems to be the blame for the reluctance of these two elderly men to join in the discussions.

The mysterious sage who speaks in Laws, the Athenian Stranger, explores more deeply the differences in cognition between youth and the aged. In discussing the problem of assembling a choir of men aged thirty to sixty to train under a singing master and perform at a festival, the stranger explains:

> When a man is advancing in years, he is afraid and reluctant to sing;--he has no pleasure in his own performances; and if compulsion is used, he will be more and more ashamed, the older and more discreet he grows. (Laws, II, p. 443)

It seems, then, that as people age, they become more self-conscious; they are reluctant to perform publicly. They look to their children for vicarious experience of their competence.

> Our young men break forth into dancing and singing, and we who are their elders deem that we are fulfilling our part in life when we look on at them. Having lost our agility, we delight in their sports and merry-making, because we love to think of our former selves; and gladly institute contests for those who are able to awaken in us the memory of our youth. (p. 436)

The stranger's proposal for arousing the blood of the elderly is to give them a "potion," wine, which Dionysus

> has given men to lighten the sourness of old age; that in age we may renew our youth, and forget our sorrows; and also in order that the nature of the soul, like iron melted in the fire, may become softer and so more impressionable. (p. 443)

Wine makes one

> return to the state of soul in which he was a child. . . . Not only an old man but also a drunkard becomes a second time a child. (p. 426)

The qualities the stranger attributes to the inebriated, or youthful, state are "pleasures and pains, passions and loves." To the old and sober, he assigns "perception and memory, and opinion and prudence."

Wine is a dangerous potion for youth because "fire must not be poured upon fire, whether in the body or in the soul" (p. 442). The stranger also explains that gatherings, such as feasts and festivals, play an important role in education of both the young and the old. The gods created festivals

> wherein men alternate rest with labour . . . that they may improve their education by taking part in the festivals. (p. 432)

Learning at festivals might be active, through training and performance in dance or singing, or passive, such as watching and listening to the plays and recitations which carried the collective mores and wisdom of the community.

Such insights into the social nature of education recur today in progressivism and social learning theory. The dialogues of Plato predict other theories found in the literature of educational psychology.

Nature of Knowing and Learning

Socrates and his colleagues were very much preoccupied with questions of epistemology--how do we know and learn. The sophists were our first skeptics and relativists. Protagoras exemplifies this turning away from interest in the cosmological to interest in the pragmatic in his agnosticism and his dictum that "man is the measure of all things." Socrates too turned away from the large metaphysical questions. In his later life he had no interest in cosmology, and there is much truth to the charge that he rejected the existence of the traditional Greek gods. Socrates, thus, has come to share credit with the sophists as having diverted philosophy from cosmology to ethics. As Cicero said,

> Socrates was the first to call philosophy down from the sky and establish her in the towns and introduce her

> into homes and force her to investigate life, ethics, good and evil.[6]

Socrates was continually asking how we can know something to be true. In Theaetetus, he considers at length and finally refutes the contention that knowledge is perception. One explanation he considers for how we know and learn is that the mind is like

> a block of wax, which is of different sizes in different men; harder, moister, and having more or less of purity in one than another, and in some an intermediate quality. . . . When we wish to remember anything which we have seen, or heard, or thought in our own minds, we hold the wax to the perceptions and thoughts, and in that material receive the impression of them as from the seal of a ring; and . . . we remember and know what is imprinted as long as the image lasts; but when the image is effaced, or cannot be taken, then we forget and do not know. (Theaetetus, II, p. 195)

This approach seems to fit under the empiricist proposition that knowledge is perception; it is thus akin to Locke's theory of the tabula rasa.

Another of Socrates' explanations for how we know is that the mind is like

> an aviary of all sorts of birds--some flocking together apart from the rest, others in small groups, others solitary, flying anywhere and everywhere. . . . The birds are kinds of knowledge, and . . . when we were children, this receptacle was empty; whenever a man has gotten and detained in the enclosure a kind of knowledge, he may be said to have learned or discovered the thing which is the subject of the knowledge: and this is to know. . . . . .

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[6]Cicero, Tusculan Disputations, V., iv., 10-11, quoted in John Ferguson, Socrates: A Source Book (London, 1970), p. 193.

> And further, when any one wishes to catch any of these knowledges or sciences, and having taken, to hold it, and again let them go, how will he express himself?--will he describe the "catching" of them and the original "possession" in the same words? (Theaetetus, II, p. 202)

Thus, knowledge becomes a three-step process--acquisition, storage, and conscious possession and use. We also consider the proposal that the aviary is empty at birth and again are reminded of Locke's blank slate.

The notion that we know nothing at birth does not mesh with a more widely known theory of knowledge associated with Plato--that all knowing is recollection--which Socrates argues in Meno. Learning is simply the memory of all that we have ever known in former states of being. Recollection, Socrates explains, is the only explanation for a priori knowledge--that two times two equals four, for instance.

The most famous theory of knowing presented in the dialogues is the parable of the cave. Says Socrates:

> Behold! human beings living in an underground den, which has a mouth open towards the light and reaching all along the den; here they have been from their childhood, and have their legs and necks chained so that they cannot move, and can only see before them, being prevented by the chains from turning round their heads. Above and behind them a fire is blazing at a distance, and between the fire and the prisoners there is a raised way; and you will see, if you look, a low wall built along the way, like the screen which marionette players have in front of them, over which they show the puppets. . . . [There are] men passing along the wall carrying all sorts of vessels, and statues and figures of animals of wood and stone and various materials, which appear over the wall? . . . Like ourselves, . . . they only see their own shadows, or the shadows of one another, which the fire throws on the opposite wall of the cave. (Republic, I, pp. 773-4)

The prisoners mistake the shadows for reality since shadows are all they have ever seen. If one of them were dragged upwards out of the cave and before the sun, he would be dazzled by the light. Like the philosopher, he could now see the true essence of reality, "the beautiful and the just and the good in truth." When he returned to the cave, he would be unable to convince his fellows of the reality he had seen. In the cave,

> Men fight with one another about shadows only and are distracted in the struggle for power, which is in their eyes a great good. (p. 779)

Socrates believed it was possible to teach other men to turn from the shadows to the light. Perhaps his greatest contribution to modern education is his teaching technique. His best description of his method is found in Theaetetus where he explains to a young pupil that he carries on his mother's occupation, midwifery, except that he attends to men, not women, and to minds, not bodies. Like a midwife, he is past the age of being able to conceive. His greatest achievement is his ability to distinguish the noble and true birth from a birth that is counterfeit, a mere "wind-egg." He thus exhorts Theaetetus

> Come then to me, who am a midwife's son and myself a midwife, and do your best to answer the question which I will ask you. And if I abstract and expose your first-born, because I discover upon inspection that the conception which you have formed is a vain shadow, do not quarrel with me on the account, as the manner of women is when their first children are taken from them. For I have actually known some who were ready to bite me when I deprived them of a darling folly; they did

> not perceive that I acted from good will, not knowing that no god is the enemy of man--that was not within their range of ideas; neither am I their enemy in all this, but it would be wrong for me to admit falsehood or stifle the truth. (Theaetetus, pp. 152-3)

Using modern parlance, Socrates was a facilitator of learning. His method of teaching exhibits the following qualities prized by modern educators of both children and adults.

1. The teaching session is problem-centered. Each dialectic begins with a problem to be analyzed.
2. The student, as a women in labor, is the subject of the exercise. It is his or her active role to deliver or produce the learning.
3. The role of the teacher is to draw forth the learning, not to lecture or to inject information.
4. Learning is discovery. The student learns to use his own reasoning skills to develop new knowledge.

In cataloguing the writings of Plato on educational topics, the intent is not to imply that each thought is in some way an atomistic unit that has a life of its own and that is directly tied in a cause and effect relationship to any modern repetition of the thought. Such an approach to intellectual history, if carried to an extreme, begins to resemble Plato's theory of the ideas, that the basic structure of reality is the eternal "forms" and that any expression of these is merely a particularization of a form. An approach to the history of educational thought more

acceptable to the modern intellect is that many of the ideas found in the dialogues are simply commonplace observations that can be found in any civilized culture. For instance, the idea that adults are less able learners than children, that their responses to learning situations at times show an inflexibility and a "crystallization" of intellect, need not be argued as having its source in the Greek literature. On the other hand, debate over liberal arts versus vocational education or teaching of theory and abstractions versus practical arts seems to show a clear debt to Plato. To demonstrate this would require an exercise in historical and literary research beyond the scope of this paper, but it seems plausible to accept that generation upon generation of scholars have studied the writings of their predecessors and have been somewhat influenced by this chain of communication, despite a natural disinclination to admit such an influence. The Greek classics, in particular, were a basic source of knowledge in the West for over 2,000 years. It is only in the last century or so, with the rise of scientific thought, that the classics have been dropped from the basic readings of educational curricula.

In Chapter III, a wide range of additional classical sources will be surveyed, including the pre-Socratic philosophers and poets, the historians, the sophists, Aristotle and the Hellenistic schools of philosophy, and the Attic orators. A review of this literature provides many

insights into the unique cultural influences that made Athens a center for adult learning in the ancient world.

CHAPTER III

IDEAS FROM OTHER GREEK SOURCES

In Chapter II, ideas on adult learning from Plato, Socrates, and Aristophanes were discussed. In this chapter, the writings of other important fifth and fourth century figures will be surveyed. To provide a backgound to the period, this chapter begins by identifying some important educational ideas handed down to fifth-century Athenians from their archaic past.

Archaic Greece

Greeks of the fifth century B.C. were of mixed racial strains, sharing native, Dorian, and Ionian blood. They were aware, however, of their common traits of geography, language, culture, and religion. Thus, they were one family of peoples, Hellas. The stories of Homer, of the Mycenean heroes of Achilles and Agamemnon and their battle against Troy, were a source among the Greek peoples of their common values and heritage.

The world of Achilles was controlled by royalty. The king ruled an area through the strength of his arms, and the noblemen who made up his court were measured in large part by their skill and valor in combat. In its own way, Mycenae was a sophisticated society, with a complex chivalric code. Nobles ate at a common table, serving one another's cups at

meals. Their games and entertainment were marked by a refinement of rule and courtesy.

Male children went through a formalized training to become a part of this society. The Iliad tells that Achilles' father entrusted his son's early education to a tutor, Chiron, who later summed up his charge in this way to Achilles:

> You were only a lad; you knew nothing of warfare, which spares no one, nor of councils, in which men learn to shine. And so your father sent me with you: I was to teach you how to give good counsel and how to perform great deeds.[1]

Marrou interprets these lines as demonstrating the two ideals of the perfect warrior and the two subjects of early education: learning to be an orator and a warrior, to serve one's lord in war but also in councils where group decisions were made.[2]

Later Greek education would emphasize the intellectual above the warrior element and would lessen the importance of the individual tutor-student relationship. But during archaic times, education was very much limited to an aristocratic style of life and served to initiate young men in conventionalized codes of conduct. The teacher formed a relationship with the student because the student was worthy, due to his birth as a noble, to receive the

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[1]Translated by Henri Marrou, in A History of Education in Antiquity (New York, 1956), p. 8.

[2]Ibid.

initiatory training. Without the birthright, simply by learning, one could not attain arete, or excellence of character. The poet Pindar shows this contempt for the self-educated by calling them "those who know only because they have had lessons."[3] According to Marrou, the tradition of an intimate and highly selective relationship between tutor and student can be traced to the court life of oriental scribe cultures, which showed "a profound sense of the high dignity of culture and its necessarily esoteric character."[4]

The poets were important educators in Greek society. In archaic times, the oral storyteller was extremely influential. Not only did he teach his fellows about right conduct and the gods; through his verse, the poet also granted immortality by selecting who were to become heroes for their deeds of glory. The instructive purpose and value of the Homeric tales is frequently acknowledged throughout classical literature. Havelock has called the poetry of Homer and others a "tribal encyclopedia" that preserved in memorized verse the collective knowledge and customs of the Greek peoples. Attendance at poetic performances was primarily an adult activity; citizens listened to the poems

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[3] Ibid., p. 40.

[4] Ibid., p. 33.

frequently and they responded intensely to the emotional content of the narratives.[5]

The writings of the earliest Greek scientists and philosophers are left only as fragments or from later commentaries, and thus no systematic and unified treatises are extant for this group as we have for Plato and Aristotle. Bits of information show that throughout the ancient world in the late sixth and early fifth centuries, a spirit of scientific inquiry was growing. The early scientists began to use observation and rational speculation in search of explanations for basic cosmological problems, thereby rejecting the old mythological answers. Old social structures also were breaking down, as we see from the life and times of Solon, one of the proverbial seven sages.

Solon

The first great lawgiver and democratic reformer of Athens, Solon came into power in the mid-sixth century as a mutually chosen arbitrator for two warring factions--the landowners and the serfs. Aristocratic society had become oppressive to the growing numbers of serfs, who frequently were losing their status as freemen due to their inability to pay debts to landowners. Solon chose a middle course, forgiving all debts and establishing an assembly of

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[5]Eric A. Havelock, Preface to Plato (Cambridge, 1963), p. 37.

freeman, but not going so far as to redistribute ownership of the land.

Solon is significant in a study of the history of adult learning for several reasons. First, he was widely acknowledged throughout classical times as a great lover of learning. From him comes the verse, "I shall fain grow old, ever learning new things." His life demonstrated this love of learning. Plutarch tells us that as a young man, Solon left his native land to travel and that "he travelled to get experience and learning rather than to make money."[6] In Egypt he studied under "the most learned of all the priests." In his later life he was regarded as among the wisest teachers, not only in Athens but across the ancient world, in the courts of Croesus and Cyrus of Persia.

As a statesman, Solon enacted a law that is of particular interest to historians of education. Previous codes had required sons to support their fathers in old age, but Solon's reform prohibited this support to fathers who had not educated the son for a calling or trade. Solon's purpose was to encourage a diversification of occupations and lessen the Athenian economy's dependence on farming by serfs. His democratizing measures in expanding rights of citizenship encouraged social mobility. He clearly saw that education is necessary for classes seeking full citizenship

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[6]Plutarch, Plutarch's Lives, Vol. I, Loeb Classical Library, translated by Bernadotte Perrin (Cambridge, 1916), p. 407.

and greater affluence. Solon's laws in this area can be contrasted to those of two other great statesmen of ancient Greece, Lycurgus and Pisistratus.

Lycurgus, the great lawgiver of Sparta, forbade any learning or practice in the mechanical arts. Citizens of Sparta shared a communal life as warriors and spurned any occupations that did not contribute to their military culture. The slave population, the helots, performed menial labor for the basic necessities, and all cultural products beyond these necessities, a wide range of mechanical, artistic, and intellectual achievements available to other Greek city-states, were simply rejected and forbidden by the Spartans. Lycurgus brought to his citizens a very pure equality of rights and participation, but at the price of individual expression or achievement in any but the most prescribed areas.

Pisistratus followed Solon as ruler of Athens, but unlike Solon, he gained power through violent means. He was a benevolent tyrant, but he put a stop to the movement for social mobility and learning of new trades. Rather, he moved citizens back into the countryside from the city. He wanted people to "concentrate on their private affairs and have neither the desire nor the leisure to take an interest in public affairs."[7]

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[7]Aristotle, Athenian Constitution, translated by P.J. Rhodes (Harmondsworth, England, 1984), p. 58.

Evidence from the sixth and fifth centuries B.C. indicates that Athenian culture increased educational opportunities for children and adults during times when social class restrictions were breaking down and a new, energetic middle class was forming. Demand for educational opportunity seems to go hand in hand with a rising middle class eager to adopt new techniques and ideas.

The Historians: Herodotus and Thucydides

The two great historians of Athens, Herodotus and Thucydides, provide many insights into patterns of adult learning in the ancient Greece. Herodotus portrays the centers of power in the ancient world to be sites of great intellectual curiosity. The royal courts of the Persians at Sardis, for instance, sought out those with reputations for wisdom. The wandering sages of ancient times frequently were invited into the royal palaces, not only to teach the king's sons, but to teach the king himself.

Courts and marketplaces open to world travellers naturally developed an openness to different cultures and points of view. Herodotus agreed with the dictum that local custom is the "king of all."[8] He recounts an anecdote of Darius, king of Persia: A visiting group of Greeks was summoned to his court and asked what they would take to eat the dead bodies of their fathers. The Greeks replied they

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[8]Herodotus, Histories, translated by Aubrey de Selincourt (Harmondsworth, England, 1972), p. 220.

would not engage in such a practice for all the money in the world. Darius then brought forth a group of Indians, from the tribe called Callatiae, who, says Herodotus, in fact, ate the flesh of their dead fathers. Through an interpreter, Darius asked what they would take to engage in the Greek custom, burning the father's corpse. The Indians "uttered a cry of horror and forbade him to mention such a dreadful thing."[9] The widening recognition of the relativity of culture and belief led to an intense questioning among early philosophers of the relationship between nature and convention.

Herodotus also had some awareness of our modern understanding that new technique is diffused and adopted through an adult learning process. He explains that the Phoenicians

> introduced into Greece, after their settlement in the country, a number of accomplishments, of which the most important was writing, an art till then, I think, unknown to the Greeks. At first they used the same characters as all the other Phoenicians, but as time went on, and they changed their language, they also changed the shape of their letters. At that period most of the Greeks in the neighborhood were Ionians; they were taught these letters by the Phoenicians and adopted them, with few alterations, for their own use, continuing to refer to them as the Phoenician characters--as was only right, as the Phoenicians had introduced them.[10]

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[9] Ibid., pp. 219-220.

[10] Ibid., p. 361.

In Chapter V this particular innovation and its effect on the Greek intellect will be discussed in more detail.

Athens' other great historian, Thucydides, also had an appreciation for the role of innovation in cultural change. In a speech of a Corinthian envoy addressed to the Spartans, who are considering war against Athens, the innovative spirit of the Athenians is identified as a primary source of their strength.

> The Athenians are addicted to innovation, and their designs are characterised by swiftness alike in conception and execution; you have a genius for keeping what you have got, accompanied by a total want of invention, and when forced to act you never go far enough. Again, they are adventurous beyond their power, and daring beyond their judgment, and in danger they are sanguine. . . . It is the law as in art, so in politics, that improvements ever prevail; and though fixed usages may be best for undisturbed communities, constant necessities of action must be accompanied by the constant improvement of methods. Thus it happens that the vast experience of Athens has carried her further than you on the path of innovation.[11]

Thucydides says more about Athens' openness to change and innovation in his recounting of the famous funeral oration of Pericles. Athens is the "school of Hellas" because it has assumed a fine balance between the active, disciplined life of Sparta and a new openness to innovation and intellectual speculation. It seems that the Greeks shared with moderns an awareness that innovation can be a vital and unremitting force for social change. From a modern

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[11]Thucydides, Peloponnesian War, translated by Richard Crawley (New York, 1951), pp. 40-41.

viewpoint, it is obvious that innovation and technological change carry with them increased demands for adult learning; the experience of fifth and fourth century Athens bears out this view.

Early Scientists: Democritus and Pythagoras

Democritus and Pythagoras are representative of the growing spirit of scientific inquiry in ancient Greece. Unlike the sophists, who leaned toward skepticism and the teaching of practical wisdom, these two early natural scientists were most interested in basic questions about the material world--what is the basic stuff of matter and how do we explain change.

In his prime in the mid fifth century, Democritus is best known as one of the originators of the atomistic view of substance--that the material world is made up of tiny, indivisible particles. Though not known for his contribution to educational history, Democritus, in his fragments,[12] spoke frequently about the role of learning in human life. Consider these aphorisms:

> Nature and instruction are similar; for instruction transforms the man, and in transforming, creates his nature.
>
> Neither skill nor wisdom is attainable unless one learns.
>
> The cause of error is ignorance of the better.

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[12]Kathleen Freeman, editor, Ancilla to the Pre-Socratic Philosophers (Cambridge, 1948), pp. 91-120.

> Education is an ornament for the prosperous, a refuge for the unfortunate.
>
> The hopes of the educated are better than the wealth of the ignorant.
>
> (I would) rather discover one cause than gain the kingdom of Persia.

These fragments can be taken as representative of a growing consciousness of the role of learning in adult life.

The Greek philosophers were at this time preoccupied with the question of nature versus environment. To what degree are people influenced by nature, social norms, and their own individual wills. A commonplace assumption was that man learns by imitating nature. As Democritus says,

> We are pupils of the animals in the most important things: the spider for spinning and mending, the swallow for building, and the songsters, swan and nightingale, for singing, by way of imitation.

Human intelligence can transform nature with technique, as Democritus implies in this fragment:

> Those same things from which we get good can also be for us a source of hurt, or else we can avoid the hurt. For instance, deep water is useful for many purposes, and yet again harmful; for there is danger of being drowned. A technique has therefore been invented: instruction in swimming.

Democritus also understood that instruction through compulsion or force is not as effective as instruction through rational appeals:

> The man who employs exhortation and persuasion will turn out to be a more effective guide to virtue than he who employs law and compulsion. For the man who is prevented by law from wrongdoing will probably do wrong in secret.

Also found among Democritus's aphorisms is some shrewd advice on how wise men should move among other wise men:

> Wise men when visiting a foreign land must silently and quietly reconnoitre while they look and listen to find out the reputation of the wise men there: what they are like, and if they can hold their own before them while they secretly weigh their words against their own in their minds. When they have weighed and seen which group is better than the other, then they should make known the riches of their own wisdom, so that they may be prized for the sake of the treasure which is their property, while they enrich others from it. But if their knowledge is too small to allow them to dispense from it, they should take from the others and go their own way.

We can gather from these lines that the centers for learning in the ancient world were at least in some degree open to the public and that knowledge and understanding were shared informally through discussion in a somewhat combative atmosphere.

Democritus also describes some of the limitations of rational inquiry and learning.

> There is an intelligence of the young, and an unintelligence of the aged. It is not time that teaches wisdom, but early training and natural endowment.
>
> Many much-learned men have no intelligence.
>
> One should practise much-sense, not much-learning.

Learning is only one of many virtues that are required in the good man.

Pythagoras is best known today for his mathematical theorems and for his view that number is at the heart of the universe. A cult of followers surrounded Pythagoras not only for his deep understanding of mathematics, but also for

his teachings about religion and ethics. Pythagoras believed that the goal of life is to attain immortality for the soul through reincarnation. One gains immortality through lifelong seeking and contemplation of the scientific truths Pythagoras had discovered.

Pythagoras divided man's life into four stages:

> Twenty years a boy, twenty years a youth, twenty years a young man, twenty years an old man; and these four periods correspond to the four seasons, the boy to spring, the youth to summer, the young man to autumn, and the old man to winter.[13]

We shall consider in more depth later the Greeks' views on age classes, but this quotation seems to support the view that at least among some social classes the Greeks supported a sort of extended adolescence for males, limiting their full participation in civic life until age thirty or later. Modern writers on Athenian life and education often seem to construe the age class of "youth" to extend only to the age of 21 or so. In fact, an Athenian male may have been considered a youth well through his twenties and perhaps through his thirties.

Pythagoras believed that learning ought to be a lifelong pursuit, but he also recognized that many persons do not share this view. He categorized people into three types and showed by analogy how these types corresponded to activities of people at the Olympic games. First, and of

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[13]Diogenes Laertius, Lives of Eminent Philosophers, Vol. II. Loeb Classical Library, translated by R.D. Hicks (Cambridge, 1979), p. 329.

the lowest type are the "lovers of gain," who set up booths and attempt to profit from the festivities. Second are the "lovers of honor," the competitors in the various contests. But the highest category are the "lovers of knowledge," those who observe and contemplate the vulgar spectacle of those seeking riches and fame.[14]

The seeker of truth has several methods open to him. A fourth century follower of Pythagoras, Archytas, identified two types of learning, and in doing so foreshadowed our modern preference for "discovery" learning:

> In subjects of which one has no knowledge, one must obtain knowledge either by learning from someone else, or by discovering it for oneself. That which is learnt, therefore, comes from another and by outside help; that which is discovered comes by one's own efforts and independently. To discover without seeking is difficult and rare, but if one seeks, it is frequent and easy. If however, one does not know how to seek, discovery is impossible.[15]

Throughout the history of western educational thought, this distinction between learning from someone else and learning for oneself has been a central issue. Adult education, as represented by the theory of such writers as Knowles and Tough, reflects a continuing preoccupation with the advantages of self-directed learning.

Pythagoras's belief in the preeminence of philosophy was not shared by the mass of citizens in ancient Greece, but it was a growing point of view. The diffusion of the new knowledge of the natural philosophers like Pythagoras and

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[14] Ibid., pp. 28-29.

[15] Freeman, p. 78.

Democritus led to profound changes in patterns of adult learning among Athenian citizens.

Emerging Patterns of Adult Learning in Athens

The growth of intellectual activity in the mid-fifth century B.C., as reflected in the scientific inquiry of Democritus and Pythagoras, provided new adult learning opportunities in the last half of the fifth century B.C. First, more people learned to read and write as books and manuscripts became more accessible. Instruction also could be obtained from attendance at public lectures, an increasingly common occurrence through which sophists advertised their wisdom and authors "published" their writings. Informal discussion and symposia on abstract subjects also became more commonplace. More serious students could become disciples of a great teacher.

It is widely agreed that by the end of the fifth century, Athens enjoyed widespread literacy. For the common man, reading and writing had practical purposes. Euripides stressed everyday uses of writing such as sending letters to distant loved ones, preparing one's will, and documenting contracts, legal disputes, and other business matters.[16] The Athenian citizen had continuous responsibilities in various

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[16]Euripides, frag. 572N. Translated by Alfred Burns in "Athenian Literacy in the Fifth Century B.C.", Journal of the History of Ideas, XLII (July-Sept., 1981), pp. 376-377.

forms of civil service, for instance, as a juror, an assemblyman, or as an administrator in various bureaucratic bodies. Literacy was a necessary skill for success in these civic activities.

Aristophanes lampoons the intellectual class for its obsession with book learning, and it is likely the sophists and their followers developed a vigorous distribution network for written materials. Rhetorical handbooks were among the first do-it-yourself books for self-learners. Kennedy concludes that

> written handbooks of rhetorical theory were fairly numerous, though not necessarily that there were many different copies of each different one. Publication in the late fifth century was not a mass production process, and perhaps such a term should only be used of strictly literary works like dramas or histories or polished orations which were bought and read by the general public for entertainment.[17]

The most frequent technique for learning the art of oratory was the study of actual and model speeches. A sophist's instruction often consisted of delivering set speeches, and an industrious student of oratory might make notes for later study, as did Plato's young Phaedrus.[18]

Burns traces the rapid growth of prose writings in the fifth century, beginning with Herodotus's Histories, and including the early philosophical writings of Pherecydes,

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[17]George A. Kennedy, "The Earliest Rhetorical Handbooks, American Journal of Philology, LXXX, 2 (April, 1959), pp. 173-174.

[18]Plato, Phaedrus, in Jowett, Vol. I, p. 234.

Anaximander, and Anaximenes.[19] Socrates in Phaedo recounts how as a young man he heard someone reading out of a book by Anaxagoras, and "I seized the books and read them as fast as I could in my eagerness to know the better and the worse."[20]

The booktrade expanded through the fourth century, so that by the end of the century a young man in Athens might spend hours in a bookstore reading about philosophy. Just such a situation is described in Diogenes Laertius's account of Zeno, who as young sailor found himself at the port of Athens, Piraeus, after a shipwreck.

> He went up into Athens and sat down in a bookseller's shop, being then a man of thirty. As he went on reading the second book of Xenophon's Memorabilia, he was so pleased that he inquired where men like Socrates were to be found. Crates passed by in the nick of time, so the bookseller pointed to him and said, "Follow that man." From that day he became Crates' pupil. . . . [21]

Diogenes relates another method of distribution of written works. When Plato's writings were first compiled and edited, their possessors charged a fee to anyone who wished to consult them.[22]

Among the poets, writing begins to replace the Muses as the source of collective memories. Burns explains that to the Greek mind, coming out of an oral age, writing had an

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[19]Burns, p. 378.

[20]Plato, Phaedo, in Jowett, Vol. I, p. 482.

[21]Diogenes, Vol. II, p. 113.

[22]Ibid., Vol. I, p. 335.

almost magical power.[23] In the fragments of the pre-Socratics, one learns from Gorgias that writing was the "tool of memory"[24] and from Critias that it was an "aid to thought."[25] Other philosophers, among them Socrates and Plato, thought that writing might lead to laziness in thought and that the older practice of memorization required a virtuous application of mental discipline.[26]

Another complaint about the effects of written philosophical treatises is made by Alexander the Great, as recounted by Plutarch. Alexander takes to task his early tutor Aristotle for publishing his lectures, complaining that by making public what had been esoteric knowledge, he diluted the power of that knowledge. Plutarch himself doubts the truth of this prediction. Aristotle's Metaphysics, for instance, he says, is so abstruse that the common reader cannot understand it unless he has had substantial preparatory study.[27] Alexander, by the way, is portrayed by Plutarch as a world ruler having a violent thirst after and passion for learning which never diminished.[28] In each new occupied territory, he sought out the men of learning to discuss philosophy.

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[23]Burns, p. 376.

[24]Freeman, p. 137.

[25]Ibid., p. 154.

[26]Plato, Phaedrus, in Jowett, Vol. I, p. 278.

[27]Plutarch, Vol. III, pp. 241-242.

For the common people and for many of wide learning, book-learning was held suspect. The philosopher Polemo, for instance, holds in contempt the man "who has got by heart some paltry handbook on harmony but never practised" the art with skill and accomplishment.[29] The Athenians not only were skeptical about the value of books; they were not above a bookburning display to make their point. Diogenes relates that when the Athenians heard rumors of the distribution of Protagoras's famed book that begins "About the gods, I can know nothing," they searched out all copies and set them afire in the marketplace.[30] Philosophers of the sublime as well, such as Plato and Aristotle, had no scruples about censorship.

Book learning became an important force in the diffusion of new knowledge among adults in Athens, but oral instruction continued as the dominant form. Taking a place beside the poet as an instructor of the populace was the public lecturer, who used prose rather than verse and song and who considered abstract topics of popular interest such as how to be a successful speaker in court or in assembly.

Religious festivals and public games were early sites for public lectures. Herodotus probably first "published" portions of his histories by reading at festivals.[31] A

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[28] Ibid., p. 245.

[29] Diogenes, Vol. I, p. 395.

[30] Ibid., Vol. II, p. 465.

[31] Herodotus, p. 12.

follower of Socrates, Antisthenes, is said to have discoursed at the Isthmian Games on the "faults and merits of Athenians, Thebans, and Lacedaemonians."[32]

With the rise of the sophists in Athens, public lectures became more common and informal events. According to Diogenes, Protagoras and Prodicus of Ceos were among the first to give public readings for which fees were charged.[33] Diogenes also claims Protagoras's evening lectures drew six hundred persons.[34] This figure may be an exaggeration, but it also may be taken as evidence that the most famous sophists could draw large audiences made up of a wide cross section of ages and social classes. Socrates seemed to prefer small group sessions in which he could apply his dialectic method, and like many other Athenians, he enjoyed teaching and learning in simple one-to-one discussions with friends and acquaintances.

At some point, such lectures took on a classroom atmosphere, with continuing students, most of whom were young aristocrats; in most cases the teacher charged a fee. Plato's Academy and Aristotle's Lyceum are the most famed examples of early schools of higher education. From a story by Diogenes about Plato, one gathers that his lectures were held in a somewhat public and informal atmosphere.

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[32]Diogenes, Vol. II, p. 3. [33]Ibid., p. 463.

[34]Ibid., p. 335.

Diogenes relates that when Aristotle heard Plato read the dialogue On the Soul, he alone among the audience stayed until the end. "The rest of the audience got up and went away."[35] When Aristotle established his own school at the Lyceum, it appears he established a convention of giving a morning lecture on esoteric and philosophic subjects for his serious students; his afternoon lectures were on subjects of wide interest such as politics or rhetoric.[36]

Another significant adult learning practice in Athens and throughout the ancient world was discipleship--the attaching of oneself as a permanent student and follower of a great teacher. This practice often is associated with religious leaders, but in Greece, the doctrines to be followed were primarily ethical, not supernatural. Greek culture produced numerous monkish schools of philosophy, each vowing allegiance to a famed wise man--Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Pythagoras, Epicurus. Other famous schools, the cynic, the skeptic and the Stoic, also relied on the teachings of a few select masters.

The role of discipleship has not been adequately discussed in the literature of adult education. Across history, one finds numerous instances of large numbers of adults forsaking normal life for intent study of the

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[35] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 311.

[36] Aristotle, Politics, translated and introduction by Ernest Barker (London, 1958), p. xxxi.

doctrine of a great leader. Several examples other than the Greek come to mind: Buddha, in fifth-century B.C. India, whose doctrine was more concerned with ethics than with the supernatural; and Jesus, both during his lifetime and during the mass catechetical activity of the church in the fourth century A.D. Modern educators tend to mark off these instances of mass discipleship as indoctrination, not education, but they may merely be betraying a secular noninterest in common forms of moral adult education.

Discipleship was a feature of all the great philosophical schools that Hellenism gave birth to--Platonism, Peripatetic (Aristotle), Stoicism, Cynicism, Skepticism, Epicureanism. The ethical systems of several of these schools held immense sway during Roman times, and through a merging with Christianity, were important sources of belief through western history to modern times. Among the most influential of the Greek philosophers was Aristotle, the great compiler of the knowledge of the ancient world.

Aristotle

To understand the educational thought of Aristotle, one must consider many varied facets of his knowledge. For Aristotle, education was continuous with ethics and with political or civic life. "The goodness of the good man, and that of the good citizen of the best state, must be one and

the same."[37] The theory of politics and the practice of politics also must be one and the same. Education is the means of making the polis a community and giving it unity.[38] Because of his continual insistence on the relationship and dependence of politics, ethics, and education, one must consider Aristotle's general viewpoint on the nature of man and human society as a prerequisite to understanding his views on education.

Aristotle's Political Theory

In Politics, Aristotle discusses the "practical" (as opposed to the theoretical) sciences, which include politics, ethics, and education. A second Aristotelian treatise on the practical sciences is Nichomachean Ethics,[39] which treats ethics alone as a subcategory of political science. Politics analyzes the theory and practice of political organization, identifying three types of government--kingship or tyranny, aristocracy or oligarchy, and polity or democracy. Aristotle leans toward aristocracy as the most scientific or effective method of government. His disenchantment with democracy, which was shared, by the way, by nearly all the classical authors, was based in part on agreement with Socrates' view

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[37] Ibid., p. 152.

[38] Ibid. p. 51.

[39] Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, translated by W.D. Ross, in Introduction to Aristotle, 2nd ed., edited by Richard McKeon (Chicago, 1973).

on the matter. Socrates asked, if the assembly is selecting a physician or a shipwright, would they not choose the most skilled one available? Should we not also select as our statesmen those with the greatest skill and general excellence?[40] Democracy as practiced in Athens often meant a random, unselective choice of leadership. Choice of officials by lot was a democratic innovation and had the intent of insuring that every citizen had an equal chance. In Politics, Aristotle clearly associates choice by lot with democracy and choice by election with oligarchy.[41]

Another feature of democracy was that rising above the crowd in influence, in ability, or in any other noticeable way was discouraged by the threat of ostracism. In brief, ostracism was a formalized system by which the citizens could banish anyone by a simple majority vote in the assembly. The rationale was that democracy was subverted by individual displays of achievement or strength, that envy and discontent were aroused in the polity, and that for the sake of democracy, the offending party should be removed. Ostracism was not really regarded as a punishment for wrongdoing, but rather as a practical measure to relieve the community's envy and reestablish equality of influence. As Aristotle explains,

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[40]Plato, Gorgias, in Jowett, Vol. I, p. 514.

[41]Aristotle, Politics, p. 61.

> A shipwright would not tolerate a stern, or any other part of a ship, which was out of proportion. A choirmaster would not admit to a choir a singer with a greater compass and a finer voice than any of the other members.[42]

Aristotle was not opposed in theory to ostracism, or a general leveling of preeminence, but he preferred constitutions that encourage selection of best endowed leaders through election or appointment rather than choice of leaders by lot, particularly when the pool for selection is from the poor and uneducated classes.

Aristotle also was critical of democracy for its tendency to support demagogues. Toward the end of the Peloponnesian War, after the death of Pericles, the Athenian democrats were notorious for selecting leaders who simply flattered them and pandered to their selfish instincts. Aristotle saw in democracy the source of a harmful view of individual liberty, that one can simply "do what one likes" without regard for the greater needs of the polis or the sovereignty of law over individual interests:

> There are two conceptions which are generally held to be characteristic of democracy. One of them is the conception of the sovereignty of the majority; the other is that of the liberty of individuals. The democrat starts by assuming that justice consists in equality: he proceeds to identify equality with the sovereignty of the will of the masses; he ends with the view that "liberty and equality" consist in "doing what one likes." The result of such a view is that, in these extreme democracies, each man lives as he likes--or, as Euripides says, "For any end he chances to desire." This is a mean conception of liberty. To

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[42] Ibid., p. 136.

> live by the rule of the constitution ought not to be regarded as slavery, but rather as salvation.[43]

Aristotle was much concerned with the kinds of temperate and unselfish behavior required of citizens in the ideal state. He saw the concept of individual liberty as threatening to the sovereignty of law and the necessity for disciplined civic participation. As a result, Aristotle views education entirely from a social point of view--how does education contribute to the health of the polis?

The Concept of Leisure

In Aristotle's ideal state, all individual behavior is evaluated by its contribution to the state. The relationship between the state and the individual, however, is a reciprocal one. The chief end for both the community and for each individual citizen is the "good life." The state is obligated to provide citizens with the leisure necessary to live the good life--to be both a good citizen and a good man.

The good life is an ideal that most men fail to attain. Aristotle identifies three types of life--of enjoyment, of political action, and of contemplation. The mass of men, says Aristotle, "are evidently quite slavish in their tastes, preferring a life suitable to beasts," which is the life of pleasure or enjoyment. Those of "superior

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[43] Ibid., p. 234.

refinement and of active disposition identify happiness with honor" and thus pursue the civic life.[44] An overwhelming theme of both Nichomachean Ethics and Politics is that civic virtue is the absolute core of right conduct. On the matter of the political versus the contemplative life, however, Aristotle bows to Socrates and Plato on the supremacy of the contemplative. The life of "thoughts with no object beyond themselves, and speculations and trains of reflection followed purely for their own sake" provides a self sufficiency to man that approaches that of "God himself and the whole of the universe, who have no activities other than those of their own internal life."[45] The active political life, in contrast, always pursues action as a means to another end, and is therefore inferior.

On the whole, Aristotle is a somewhat less convincing advocate of the contemplative life than was Socrates or Plato. The picture we gain of Socrates from Plato and Xenophon is not one of an active statesman. Socrates' self-proclaimed mission was to be a gadfly to the state, hardly a form of activity Aristotle would endorse. In the prime of his intellectual development, Plato was a vigorous political theorist, showing optimism that a science of politics can improve political practice and human life. But Plato's final writings show a pessimism about the efficacy of

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[44]Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, p. 350.

[45]Aristotle, Politics, p. 289.

political life that may be linked to his frustration at trying to bring about improvement in government at Syracuse. According to Marrou, Plato came to see that the philosopher's life of contemplation is

> too pure for effective action, thrown defenceless into a world given over to injustice and too corrupt to trust him: if he attempts to reform the State he is sure to perish as a failure. And so the philosopher can only renounce such a useless ambition and turn "to the city he hears within himself"--a marvelously profound saying . . . full of bitter resignation. . . . [Plato] knows that the philosopher, who is led essentially by an ideal of inner perfection, is beaten before he starts. He will always be a misfit, a stranger to politics and the world; absorbed in transcendental thought, he will always seem powerless, a figure of "fun" like Thales gazing at the stars and falling into a well. And yet he alone is free. . . . The Wise Man shall spend his time "cultivating his own garden" . . . for Platonism had now achieved a personalist type of wisdom. Thus, Plato's final thought, set in motion in the first instance by the desire to reinstate the totalitarian ethic of the ancient city, finally rises far above it and lays the foundation of what will remain the personal culture of the classical philosopher.[46]

Aristotle does not endorse such a rejection of this world for another, higher one. He is very much of <u>this</u> world, the world of social relationships and obligations, a world that requires living the golden mean and avoiding excess in speculative reason as well as in activity. Perhaps a few with the necessary leisure can become absorbed in the contemplative <u>life</u>, but for most people, he only endorses contemplation as an <u>activity</u> to be pursued in the midst of the active life of the good citizen.

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[46]Marrou, p. 78.

For Aristotle, leisure is not merely relief from the activity of engagement in the polis. Men seek amusement and play as a respite from work, and these have restorative powers. But leisure is a separate and higher form of activity, pursued for its own sake. In this concept, Aristotle shows the Greeks' profound disrespect for the utilitarian aspects of life. A "mature" society provides the necessary wealth for leisure, and this leisure is in essence a freedom from concern for the menial and petty necessities of life.[47] It is a common observation that this disdain of the Greek mind for the utility of things and this ideal of the abstract and sublime explains the Greek's failure to develop practical, technological applications of their theoretical advances. A recent restatement of this view is found in an article by Lewis:

> [T]he very problems that are attacked at a particular stage in history are selected by irrational considerations or outright economic considerations, rather than in the light of eternal fitness. This statement explains why classical Greece was so sterile in useful inventions. It was certainly not because of any dearth of acute thinkers or of any ineptitude for experimentation. The reason is to be sought rather in the predominant ideology, which exalted speculative over utilitarian application. Further, the social scheme allocated manual work to slaves, of which there was an ample supply. The tone-setting classes thus had no urge to minimize human effort by labor-saving devices. Those who were mechanically gifted accordingly lavished their ingenuity upon clever but useless toys, such as wooden pigeons that flew by compressed air.[48]

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[47]Aristotle, Politics, pp. 74 and 141.

[48]Robert H. Lewis, "Religion in Human Life," American Anthropologist, 65 (1963), 532-542.

Aristotle's explanation of leisure tends to substantiate this view. In his Metaphysics, for instance, he asserts that in the prehistoric past, inventors of utilitarian devices or techniques were not held in as high esteem as the inventors of more abstract and theoretical forms of knowledge. The mathematical arts, for example, were only developed in Egypt after the creation of a priestly class allowed to be at leisure.[49] The development and understanding of the theoretical sciences, then, were regarded as a higher achievement than sciences that aimed at utility, or the provision of necessities, and this was a truth applicable to the individual and also to mankind in general.

Aristotle made open acknowledgement of the price to be paid for leisure--an imperialist polis that makes efficient use of slaves. In his discussion of household management in Politics, Aristotle explains that slavery is necessary to provide citizens with leisure. The skilled household manager not only makes efficient use of slaves, but delegates their supervision to a steward.[50] A significant deficiency of democratic constitutions is that they grant citizenship to freemen who, like slaves, must pursue mechanical or commercial activities:

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[49]Aristotle, Metaphysics, translated by W.D. Ross, in Introduction to Aristotle, 2nd ed., edited by Richard McKeon (Chicago, 1973), p. 27.

[50]Aristotle, Politics, p. 18.

> [A] state with an ideal constitution . . . cannot have its citizens living the life of mechanics or shopkeepers, which is ignoble and inimical to goodness. Nor can it have them engaged in farming; leisure is a necessity, both for growth in goodness and for the pursuit of political activities.[51]

While Aristotle expressed an aristocratic contempt for utilitarian concerns, he at the same time held in great regard the practical concerns of life. For Aristotle, the practical sciences are those that have as an end not knowledge but action, or praxis. Man, the doer, acts to change himself or others. Thus the practical sciences encompass political science, economics (or household management), ethics, and education, all considered as continuous and mutually dependent branches of knowledge.

The modern liberal mind finds repugnant the Greeks' blindness to the evils of economic exploitation and of oppression of large classes such as women, slaves, and foreigners. However, if one modifies Aristotle's theory of leisure by granting human rights and dignity to all and puts forward modern technology as the provider of leisure, a concept emerges that has explanatory power in adult education. A modern ideal of leisure and the resulting opportunity for _diagōgē_, or cultivation of the mind, may be somewhat different from the Greeks', but in both ancient and modern societies, the degree of leisure available to the populace appears to be related to the

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[51] _Ibid._, p. 301.

pursuit of adult learning activities. It is odd that with all the social science theorizing in the 1960s about the role of leisure in modern society, adult education basically has ignored leisure as a concept to be explored.

Discrimination by Age Class

Aristotle is a great promoter of equal rights for citizens in his ideal state. The only factor he will allow to be used as a basis for discrimination is age.[52] It is considered a natural function of different age groups to serve in different capacities in the state. One gathers from a close reading of Politics and the Athenian Constitution that Athens in the fifth and fourth centuries had an age-class system that had great implications for what would be acceptable adult learning activities. Other factors such as one's wealth or experience also were considered, but Aristotle places most emphasis on age as a discriminating factor.

The Athenian Constitution, which probably was written by a "research assistant" at Aristotle's Lyceum, provides detailed information about rules of social conduct in ancient Athens. Written in the late fourth century, it describes at length sections of the Athenian constitution then in effect, including statutes specifying civic responsibilities of various age groups. Other evidence leads one to assume very similar age distinctions were

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[52] Ibid., pp. 315-316.

also in effect in the fifth and early fourth centuries in Athens. Historical sections of the Athenian Constitution tell us, for instance, that as early as 621 B.C., participation in the assembly was open only to citizens of thirty and above.[53] A new constitution in 411 B.C. required assemblymen to be at least thirty and other more important office-holders to be forty or over.[54] Other references from Aristotle and Plato appear to substantiate as continuing tradition the age distinctions presented in the Athenian Constitution as being in effect in the late fourth century.[55]

In the late-fourth-century scheme, each citizen's birth date became the basis for assigning him to an age group associated with the name of an Athenian hero.[56] The ages of active public life were from eighteen to sixty, so there were forty-two "hero" groups on the public rolls at any time. The practice of using heroes' names apparently was adopted because they were easy to remember but also because Athenians did not use a sequential numbering system to identify the calendar year.

At age 18, all men eligible for citizenship were required to register in their deme, or precinct. The young

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[53]Aristotle, The Athenian Constitution, p. 43.

[54]Ibid., p. 74.

[55]See, for instance, Aristotle, Politics, pp. 309-310 and pp. 302-303.

[56]Aristotle, The Athenian Constitution, pp. 87 and 98.

men underwent a scrutiny by a local council regarding their status as freemen. The fathers of eligible youths then met in groups to select three men, aged forty or over, to act as leaders, or sophronistes, of the new groups of cadets. The training period lasted for two years. In the first year, youths were taught military techniques such as infantry skills, archery, and javelin-throwing. Early in the second year, they participated in a public ceremony and competition, at which they displayed their new skills and received a spear and shield from the state. The remainder of the second year was taken up in patrols of the frontiers of the country and stationing at guard posts.

When a youth and his cohorts reached aged thirty, it would be announced and be common knowledge that all in that hero class were new members of the Athenian assembly. Participation was required and penalties were imposed on those who failed to attend meetings.[57] Members of this hero group also became eligible for service on juries.[58] Selection for this office was determined by a complex system of appointment and lot.

Citizens had to be forty or older to serve in many higher or special offices. For instance, the wealthiest men in Athens at least forty years of age were required to serve as chorego, or financier and leader of boys' and men's choirs that trained and made presentations at festivals.[59]

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[57] Ibid., p. 76. [58] Ibid., p. 109. [59] Ibid., p. 102.

Certain councils that drafted proposals for the assembly had forty as an age requirement.[60] Men in their last year of required participation, at age sixty, were required to serve as arbitrators in the courts.[61]

In Politics Aristotle states that the age of a man's mental prime is fifty,[62] and in Rhetoric man's physical prime is said to be thirty to thirty-five.[63] In his discussion of marriage and family life, Aristotle advises that the best age for marriage for men is thirty-seven and for women is eighteen.[64] His explanation for these ages is eugenic--both men and women are in their prime for developing healthy fetuses--but Aristotle sounds like a modern pediatrician in this additional advice: "Married couples should also study for themselves the lessons to be learned from doctors and natural philosophers about the bringing of children into the world."[65]

In his ideal state, Aristotle suggests that non-citizens should provide the necessities of life but that other services of the state--defense, legislation and

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[60] Ibid., p. 74.

[61] Ibid., p. 98.

[62] Aristotle, Politics, p. 50.

[63] Aristotle, Rhetoric, Loeb Classical Library, translated by John H. Freese (Cambridge, 1926), p. 257.

[64] Aristotle, Politics, p. 325.

[65] Ibid., p. 326.

jurisdiction, and public worship--should be provided by citizens appointed to their functions on the basis of age class rather than social class.[66] Young people should provide defense, since they are physically most able. The middle aged should provide legislation and jurisdiction, and the elderly, public worship, because both have the necessary wisdom that youth does not have. The elderly, who are "already weary in their years," will find respite in their function as providers of public worship. Although Aristotle does not give specific ages, one might assume eighteen to thirty or perhaps forty as ages starting and ending youth. Old age probably would begin at sixty.

In a later section of Politics, Aristotle explains that nature divides citizens into two age groups, a younger and an older. In Aristotle's estimation, "Youth never resents being governed," and youth must at first be under subjugation to the older because "If you would learn to govern well, you must first learn how to obey."[67]

An important aspect of Aristotle's philosophy is his emphasis on the genetic or evolving aspect of nature. All living things have a potentiality when born. The life of man or animals, as well as many larger and more abstract entities such as the polis or scientific knowledge, are in a

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[66] Ibid., pp. 315-316.

[67] Ibid., p. 316.

continuous process of "becoming." Thus, Aristotle tends to focus on the development of any phenomenon as a natural and genetic movement toward its potentiality.[68]

In regard to the individual physical and psychological development of man, Aristotle sees the infant and child as dominated by the "appetitive" and "irrational" aspects of the soul and thus requiring constant attention to its physical needs and passions. In adulthood, the higher aspects of the soul, governed by rationality and a "state of pure thought," begin to take control[69]

Because of the lack of reason in childhood and its dominance in adulthood, certain educational topics are more appropriate at different age groups. "The young man is not a proper hearer of lectures on political science," says Aristotle in Nicomachean Ethics, "for he is inexperienced in the actions that occur in life" and lacks a developed faculty in the rational principle.[70] In their friendships, passion and emotion seem to dominate, and therefore youth "fall in love and quickly fall out of love, changing often

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[68]This assumption is found in many of Aristotle's writings. An explanation of the development of the human soul can be found in Aristotle, On the Soul, translated by J.A. Smith, in Introduction to Aristotle, 2nd edition, edited by Richard McKeon (Chicago, 1973), pp. 181-184.

[69]Aristotle, Politics, p. 323.

[70]Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, p. 348.

within a single day." Old people, in contrast, tend to be motivated by utility in their friendships.[71]

In his developmental outlook on human growth, Aristotle seems to foreshadow current theory on developmental stages of life. The works of Aristotle also appear to substantiate the argument that adults were actively engaged in purposeful learning activities. The understanding Aristotle gives of the functions of various age groups in the polis supports the thesis that "youth" in ancient Athens was a stage that continued through what today is considered young adulthood. Through their twenties, Athenian citizens were engaged in the polis as soldiers, workers or businessmen, but many likely recognized they could gain from additional training for the civic roles they would take on at age thirty--as assemblyman and juror--and they found the sophists and the formalized schools advertising to meet these needs. In later maturity, only the unlearned and ambitious for social status likely sought out the sophists and rhetoricians for practical training. At this age, however, according to Aristotle, it becomes the goal of life to attain leisure and diagōgē, or cultivation of the mind.[72] Contemplation of the higher forms of culture--philosophy, music, discourse with

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[71] Ibid., p. 512.

[72] See J.L. Stocks, Okole, Classical Quarterly, XXX (1936), pp. 177-187, for an extended discussion of the role of leisure and cultivation of mind in Greek adult life.

friends--served to continue learning activities throughout the lifespan.

Aristotle on Knowing and Learning

Early in Politics Aristotle makes the famous statement that man is a social (or political) animal.[73] Metaphysics begins with another pithy summary of the subject to be discussed: "All men by nature desire to know."[74] Similarly, On the Parts of Animals[75], Aristotle's treatise on biology, begins with a description of human nature that is full of implication. There are two ways, Aristotle says, that man may become proficient in any theory or method: (1) episteme, the scientific method of inquiry into the unknown, or "learning," and (2) paideia, the educational method of organizing what is already known and established, or "education." The man who has undergone a general or liberal education, an encyclopaedia, should be capable of critical judgment in all branches of knowledge, that is, "be able to criticize the method of professed exposition, quite independently of the question whether the statements made be

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[73]Aristotle, Politics, p. 5.

[74]Aristotle, Metaphysics, translated by W.D. Ross, in Introduction to Aristotle, 2nd ed., edited by Richard McKeon (Chicago, 1973), p. 277.

[75]Aristotle, On the Parts of Animals, translated by William Ogle, in Introduction to Aristotle, 2nd ed., edited by Richard McKeon (Chicago, 1973), pp. 255-266.

true of false."[76] Thus, the learned man, possessing wide knowledge and critical judgment, is proficient at inquiring into truth and at organizing and presenting knowledge.

Mundane, practical experience is an important source of knowledge, and Aristotle holds in high esteem the man of "practical wisdom," skilled in deliberation and other political activities that make up active life in the polis. "Men of experience succeed even better than those who have theory without experience," he says in Metaphysics.[77] But knowledge and understanding of theory, the underlying causes and universals behind the particulars of experience, also must be valued.

> And in general it is a sign of the man who knows and of the man who does not know, that the former can teach, and therefore we think art more truly knowledge than experience is; for artists can teach, and men of mere experience cannot.[78]

The ability to teach is an important quality of the knower of theory, the wise man. Further in his discourse, Aristotle ascribes two additional qualities to the wise man. First, he shall have knowledge of "all things, as far as possible, although he has not knowledge of each of them in detail."[79] Second, the wise man is one who "can learn things that are difficult, and not easy for man to know."[80]

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[76] Ibid., p. 255.

[77] Aristotle, Metaphysics, p. 278.

[78] Ibid., p. 279.

[79] Ibid., p. 280. [80] Ibid.

In addition, the lover of wisdom, sparked by curiosity and wonder at the world, shall hold in highest regard a pure form of theory, not a theory sought for utility or any other advantage.[81] Aristotle's disdain for the utilitarian begins to show an aristocratic flavor in his advice in Politics that education should cover all branches of knowledge and arts, but that none should be studied to such excess that one becomes sought after or gains advantage from a profession of knowledge.[82] Comparison can be made between this view and the renaissance man who preserves an amateur status in a wide range of knowledge and arts--"a dilettante, with a fine edge of appreciation, but with an edge of execution which is not too precious or virtuose."[83] Such a view of education spurns study of the "mechanical" or commercial arts and crafts; profession of knowledge in a technical art or science also is discouraged. One's goal, rather, is the good life, engaged in political life and contemplation.

Concerning the act of learning, Aristotle believes it is "not a matter of amusement. It is attended by effort and pain."[84] Learning takes place through a combination of intuition and logical mental processes. One does not know the subject matter beforehand, as in Socrates' theory of learning as recollection.

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[81] Ibid., p. 281. [82] Aristotle, Politics, p. 334.

[83] Ibid., translator's note, p. 335. [84] Ibid., 341.

> Yet all learning is by means of premises which are (either all or some of them) known before--whether the learning be by demonstration or by definitions; for the elements of the definition must be known before and be familiar; and learning by induction proceeds similarly.[85]

Thus, learning is equated with the rational processes of human thought, building upon itself through logical techniques such as deduction, induction, and definition. Aristotle also acknowledges the roles of sensory experience[86] and intuition[87] in providing the source material or first premises required by the logical operations.

Appeal to rational faculties is an important factor in learning, but Aristotle recognizes as well a need for external compulsion, particularly in the education of children. On the one hand, people have a capacity in their souls for obeying rational principles generated internally or by the admonitions of others such as teachers. Aristotle associates the capacity for obedience with succeedingly abstract metaphors: activity, war, and Sparta. On the other hand, the rational capacity in the soul is associated with leisure, peace, and Athens. The obedient part of the soul

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[85]Aristotle, Metaphysics, p. 306.

[86]Aristotle, Posterior Analytics, translated by G.R.G. Mure, in Introduction to Aristotle, 2nd ed., edited by Richard McKeon (Chicago, 1973), pp. 77 and 109.

[87]Ibid., pp. 110-111.

is the less mature, and by nature "the lower always exists for the sake of the higher."[88] Education, therefore, must seek a balance and an appropriate interplay of these various aspects of the soul and of human life. Overall, in Aristotle's scheme, one can see a liberal principle of education, that it should be based on self-directed rational inquiry rather than on compulsion and dogma.

Aristotle's views on knowledge, learning, and education, though immensely influential for two thousand years after his death, did not survive the attack of Renaissance humanists. According to McKeon, Aristotle's "spell" over western learning

> was broken only when men began to examine nature rather than quote physical and biological laws and principles, to look at art rather than recite rules and seek unities, and to examine the methods of scientic inquiry rather than the figures and moods of the syllogism.[89]

Aristotle's great vision of the unity of theory and practice in politics, of the ethical man sharing aims with the good citizen, likewise was lost with the rise of modern scientific thought. Habermas has traced the decline of Aristotelian political thought and its replacement by a modern political theory that emphasizes application of scientifically grounded social theory.[90] Classical

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[88]Aristotle, Politics, p. 317.

[89]Richard McKeon, editor, Introduction to Aristotle, 2nd ed.(Chicago, 1973), p. xlii.

[90]Jurgen Habermas, Theory and Practice, translated by John Viertel (Boston, 1973).

instruction on the importance of virtuous character and civic responsibility was superseded during the Enlightenment by a guiding principle that instrumental reason should be the basis for modern political and social theory. Habermas and other critical theorists support a return to recognition that theory and practice must converge and that individual behavior must be acknowledged to have political implications.

Other Schools of Philosophy

Great teachers like Plato and Aristotle present world views of such power and comprehensivity that they are able to change individual lives and social values. While they lived, they drew students from across the ancient world to their schools. Young men, and a few old, were drawn to them as disciples; in varying degrees, these new members of philosophical schools dedicated their lives to the study and contemplation of their mentor's ideas. The writings of Plato and Aristotle assumed an almost sacred value, and after their deaths their schools continued for several centuries. There were other schools of philosophy that began in Greece in the fourth century B.C. The following section will briefly survey these for ideas about adult learning.

The Cynics and Skeptics

The ascetic strain in Socrates' philosophy became especially attractive in the waning years of the fourth century, when Alexander's armies had taken control of the ancient world and Athens had declined from being at the center of the world to status as a mere province. In the philosophical writings of the Hellenistic period, one senses a feeling of resignation and desire to withdraw from a political world over which individual men can have no control. The cynics and skeptics were the most extreme of the early schools of philosophy in this negativistic outlook.

One of the first cynics, Antisthenes, was, according to Diogenes, a follower of Socrates. Each day he walked five miles from his home at Peiraeus to Athens to hear Socrates.[91] He and other cynics drew their names from the Greek cynos, dog, for like a hound they chose a simple, out-of-doors existence, with few belongings and none of the trapping of civilized life. They emphasized Socrates' teaching that virtue is the only good, that the essence of virtue is self control and that one must not surrender to any outside influences. Thus, they believed that one must reject even the simplest social customs regarding grooming, dress, courtesy and manners, as well as larger social and civic responsibilities.

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[91]Diogenes, Vol. II, p. 5.

Though serious students of philosophy, the cynics had few positive beliefs regarding the value of learning and education. Antisthenes, asked what learning is the most necessary, replied "How to get rid of having anything to unlearn."[92] In general, they ignored Socrates' teachings on the high value of logical inquiry and pursuit of truth.

Diogenes of Sinope was among the most famous of the cynics in the fourth century. Alexander the Great supposedly sought out Diogenes. According to Plutarch, he encountered Diogenes alone sunning himself and asked what of all things would he like to receive from the great conquerer. Diogenes replied, "I would have you stand from between me and the sun" and on leaving, Alexander laughed with his companions and said that if he were not Alexander he would want to be Diogenes.[93] Diogenes tells another story about the meeting between Alexander and Diogenes:

> Alexander once came and stood opposite him and said, "I am Alexander the great king." "And I," said he, "am Diogenes the [Hound]." Being asked what he had done to be called a hound, he said, "I fawn on those who give me anything, I yelp at those who refuse, and I set my teeth in rascals."[94]

Diogenes left several positive messages about the value and methods of education. He suggested that education is "a

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[92] Ibid., p. 9.

[93] Plutarch, Vol. VIII, p. 259.

[94] Diogenes, Vol. II, p. 63.

controlling grace to the young, consolation to the old, wealth to the poor, and ornament to the rich."[95] He also encouraged teachers to follow the example of trainers of choruses. "They should set the note a little high, to ensure that the rest should hit the right note."[96]

The skeptics followed the cynics in rejecting the value of positive inquiry, but in addition became preoccupied with Socrates' pronouncement that man can know nothing with certainty. The first acknowledged teacher of this school was Pyrrho, who taught in Athens in the late fourth century. Rejecting all philosophic and religious dogma, Pyrrho's extreme critical method left him always seeking truth but never finding it. The skeptic may accept that truth exists, but must also hold that man has yet to find truth and must suspend his judgment of what truth is. It follows that the skeptics would have a negative view on the ability of man to learn. According to Diogenes,

> They used to deny the possibility of learning. If anything is taught, they say, either the existent is taught through its existence or the non-existent through its non-existence. But the existent is not taught through its existence, for the nature of existing things is apparent to and recognized by all; nor is the non-existent taught through the non-existent, for with the non-existent nothing is ever done, so that it cannot be taught to anyone.[97]

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[95] Ibid., pp. 69-70.

[96] Ibid., p. 37.

[97] Ibid., p. 511.

Because of its nihilistic tone, skepticism had a short life in ancient times as a philosophical school. Prospective disciples were attracted to schools that had developed a more positive code of conduct and world view.

The Stoics

Stoicism was a new doctrine that met the growing desire for a secular philosophy that adapted the positive doctrines of Socrates and Plato to the growing feelings of alienation and powerlessness brought about by the domination of the world empires of Alexander and Rome. Zeno founded the school in the late fourth century in Athens; he had come to Athens at age thirty to study under the great philosophers and for a time had been a student of the cynics. In his philosophy, he retained the cynics' concern for self-control but also incorporated doctrine from Plato and Aristotle on the social obligations of living in a community.

Stoicism draws its name from the open colonnade, or stoa, where Zeno taught. It accepted the general educational theories of Socrates and Plato--that education consists of developing the ethical as well as the rational self. But the Stoics emphasized the rational over the contemplative; knowledge had only instrumental value to them. The Stoics also understand that man is a citizen of the world, not the city-state, and that the cosmopolis, or universal city, is ruled by natural law.

Stoicism remained an important philosophical school through Roman times; distinguished intellectual and civic leaders such as Cicero, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius adapted the teachings of Zeno to the social requirements of Roman civic life. Obligation to duty, asceticism, apathy toward personal interests, and the existence of a natural law that governed all human relations--these ideas continued as central to Stoic doctrine.

The Epicureans

Epicurus, who founded the last great philosophical school that emerged in Athens in the late fourth century, shared with the Stoics a respect for modesty and self control, but held man's central nature to be his desire for pleasure. Epicurus emphasized that the only true pleasures were simple and frugal ones, such as sleep and meals of bread and milk. He at times had difficulty in teaching his followers to distinguish between true and false pleasures, and as a result his philosophy gained a reputation for encouraging extravagance and overindulgence.

Another appeal of Epicureanism was the esteem it placed on "repose" as the object of one's efforts. People in Hellenistic and Roman times desired a philosophy that excused them from the competition of active political life. Though differing from Plato and Aristotle on this point, Epicurus shared with them a belief that the search for wisdom is a lifelong pursuit:

> Let no one be slow to seek wisdom when he is young nor weary in the search thereof when he is grown old. For no age is too early or too late for the health of the soul. And to say that the season for studying philosophy has not yet come, or that it is past and gone, is like saying that the season for happiness is not yet or that it is now no more. Therefore, both old and young ought to seek wisdom, the former in order that, as age comes over him, he may be young in good things because of the grace of what has been, and the latter in order that, while he is young, he may at the same time be old, because he has no fear of the things which are to come.[98]

Philosophers such as Epicurus were exceptional in their lifelong pursuit of wisdom. Then, as today, most people were preoccupied with more practical concerns. For this reason, the writings of philosophers provide a somewhat biased understanding of the role of adult learning in the ancient world. For a more accurate picture of everyday life in Athens, one must turn to another body of literature, that of the judicial and legislative speeches of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.

Orators of the Late Fifth and Fourth Centuries

In Greek Popular Morality in the Time of Plato and Aristotle,[99] Dover surveyed the writings of Greek orators of court and assembly to determine the popular moral presuppositions behind their arguments. The extant works of Attic orators are much less widely known than those of the

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[98] Ibid., p. 649.

[99] Kenneth J. Dover, Greek Popular Morality in the Time of Plato and Aristotle (Berkeley, 1974).

great philosophers and poets, but they provide a more accurate reflection of social mores. Throughout his book, Dover takes notice of the subservience of individual will to the needs of the polis. The supremacy of community interests in Athens is notable because it helps explain the harsh treatment Socrates and other philosophers received from the Athenian populace. A better understanding of the civic mind also helps explain the seemingly conservative and reactionary political viewpoints of Plato and Aristotle.

The speeches of prosecutors in Athenian courtrooms indicate the common man was not greatly concerned with issues of individual moral responsibility. The question which a lawsuit or indictment posed to a juror was "What action would have best consequences for the strength of the polis?" and not our modern question of "What treatment would be fair to the individual?"[100] Dover's linguistic analysis of Greek words for concepts such as law, good, and useful indicates that Athenians tended to perceive as a single, unified concept of nomos, or law, a whole range of categories we today have such as "constitutional," "legal," "religious," "moral," and "conventional."[101] Athenians also appeared to see little distinction between "good" and "useful" in the sense that good behavior was always useful to the community. According to the orator Aiskhines, it was

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[100] Ibid., p. 158.

[101] Ibid., p. 308.

"impossible that one in the same person could be bad in his private life but good in public life."[102]

One way to account for this communal, almost tribal, sense of the importance of the polis is to consider the dangers that lay outside the walls of the city-state. Athens had faced total annihilation during the attack of the Persians in the early fifth century. Its acropolis, with all its holy treasures, had been leveled. During the last thirty years of the century, Athens was engaged in another draining war with Sparta. By the mid-fourth century, it was again facing the prospect of subjugation from the rising powers in Macedon. In the ancient world, warfare was taken as a given fact of life, and the constant danger of war tended to lessen the importance of individual rights.

The fact that Athenians worshipped local gods is related to their intense communal spirit. Fustel de Coulanges points out that in the ancient city, the citizen derived all his civic rights from his participation in the religion of the city.

> At Athens, one who did not take part in the festivals of the national gods lost the rights of citizenship. . . . The stranger, on the contrary, is one who has not access to the worship, one whom gods of the city do not protect and who has not even the right to invoke them. For these national gods do not wish to receive prayers and offerings except from citizens; they repulse the

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[102] Ibid., p. 298.

> stranger. Entrance into their temples is forbidden to him and his presence during the sacrifice is a sacrilege.[103]

The great sophists and rhetoricians of Socrates' day, Protagoras, Gorgias, Thrasymachus, Lysias, all were metics, or foreigners, and it is not surprising that they often felt the scorn of the native-born.

Another aspect of Greek religious experience is that the actions of gods explained all sorts of "natural" phenomena such as the growth of corn or the blowing of the wind, but also human emotions such as love or anger. The god Eros could take control of an individual and fill him with passion. From a modern viewpoint, such externalization of emotion is regarded as a characteristic of primitive consciousness. For the Greeks, the actions of the gods were used to absolve one of moral responsibility. Such pleadings often were heard in court and appear to have been credible explanations for wrong or immoral actions.

Dover analyzes the differences between ancient and modern concepts of moral and civic responsibility and identifies three elements in modern experience that did not enter into Greek experience.[104] First is the influence of Christian doctrine, which, though at times contradictory on

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[103]Fustel de Coulanges, Numa-Denys, "The Ancient City," Reader in Comparative Religion: An Anthropological Approach, 2nd ed., edited by William A. Lessa and Evon Z. Vogt (New York, 1965), p. 94.

[104]Dover, pp. 156-158.

this point, presents a clear message that sinners will deserve eternal punishment because sin is chosen by an act of free will, for which one is truly responsible. The Greeks had no such sense of free will; a few of the emerging religious cults believed in a final judgment according to a higher law, but the belief was not widespread. Their philosophers did not consider free will a central problem in ethics.

Second, with current knowledge of behavioral psychology and its origins, according to Dover, moderns are less quick to assign blame and punishment for wrongdoing. A third element is that

> In Western Europe and America a great many people have become accustomed for a very long time to regard the law and the state as mechanisms for the protection of individual freedoms; this attitude has been reinforced by the Christian emphasis on the individual's relation to God. We do not take kindly to the notion that there is not religious, moral or domestic claim on his efforts to promote its security and prosperity vis-a-vis other communities. As states grow larger and their structure and way of life increase in complexity at a rate faster than we can adjust to, individuals, associations and areas resist integration even to the point of treating "I have a right to . . ." as a synonym of "I would like . . . ." The Greek did not regard himself as having more rights at any given time than the laws of the city into which he was born gave him at that time; these rights could be reduced, for the community was sovereign, and no rights were inalienable.[105]

Thus one sees the potential subversiveness of Socrates' injunction that salvation lies in the individual search for

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[105] Ibid., p. 157.

knowledge. The sophists as well encouraged their students to seek individual ambitions over community needs.

Another explanation Dover gives for the cohesiveness of the Athenian civic body was the unity they felt toward the ideal of arete, or excellence as a citizen. Though the existence of social classes among citizens was understood and taken for granted, there appears to have been little resentment or envy of the lower toward the higher classes. Dover explains much of this by the lack of modern conceptions of capital and labor. Few citizens worked for other citizens; rather, slaves and metics did much of the manual and mechanical work. Even the poorest citizen felt he was a member of the elite, in comparison to slaves and metics, who had practically no legal rights. Thus, when Aristophanes, the philosophers, and the attic orators, presented positions that seem grossly biased for aristocratic interests, they were apparently expressing values that were held in common by the poor as well and the rich.

> The extraordinary stability of fourth-century democracy and the apparent absence of any demand for a significant extension of the state's control over the distribution of land and wealth strongly suggest that the rich, the poor and the economically secure majority between the two extremes did not differ in their values and assumptions to a significant degree to warrant that forensic speakers and comic poets must be expressing a minority view when they extol the virtues of wealth and expensive education.[106]

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[106]Kenneth J. Dover, Aristophanic Comedy (Berkeley, 1972).

Though Dover does not find evidence for consciousness of conflicting class interests, he does admit to an ongoing conflict, or "generation gap," between age classes. In Dover's analysis, the orators' views on age differences are similar to the views of Plato and Aristotle. Growth from infancy to middle age is marked by a gradual development of rationality. Not much is said about childhood as a stage of life, but the Greeks do not seem to have acknowledged an innocent or morally guiltless quality to the very young. Young men are characterized as being bold, extravagant, pugnacious, thoughtless, excessive in drinking and sexual behavior. Unlike modern youth, they were not perceived as being idealistic. Rather, in intellectual pursuits they sought out verbal contests and criticism as an expression of their confidence and skill. Youth were regarded as the warmongers; they saw the battlefield as a place to gain honor, as well as loot and forced sex with the conquered.[107]

Dover perceives the existence of an intense generation conflict in Athens through the last half of the fifth century. In part, he explains this by the fact of rapid social and technological change during the period. "The grandson has to cope with an environment of which his grandfather had no experience at a comparable age, and nothing the old man can say seems relevant."[108] The conflict

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[107]Dover, Greek Popular Morality, pp. 102-105.

[108]Ibid., p. 106.

between generations in Athens was heightened by the rise and fall of Athenian power. The generation that fought at Marathon and Salamis proved the supremacy of their strength. In the euphoric peacetime years that followed, Pericles' generation created a society that encouraged questioning of their father's values. The youthful generation at the end of the fifth century saw the Athenian empire crumble; they were regarded by their elders as spoiled and degenerate.

The old and the new education were regarded as both an expression of and a cause for the generation gap. In the next chapter, the various social and ideological forces contributing to these conflicts are analyzed. Three ideological groups are identified: the sophists, the philosophers, and the poets.

CHAPTER IV

THE PRAGMATIC, TRANSCENDENTAL, AND COMMUNAL INTERESTS IN ANCIENT ATHENIAN AND MODERN ADULT EDUCATION

Chapters II and III surveyed classical literature for evidence regarding key ideas about adult learning and other relevant cultural values in ancient Athens. Chapter IV continues this survey, but turns the focus from review of individual writers to identification and analysis of three ideological groups--the poets, the sophists, and the philosophers. Each regarded itself as the preeminent educational force in Athens, and each looked to the adult population as a principal clientele to receive its teachings. An attempt is made at the conclusion of the chapter to discover the operation of the three interests in modern adult education.

In considering the existence and influence of ideologies as forces influencing adult educational activities and larger social trends, critical theory is being used as an approach and methodology. Adapting from Habermas's model, three human interests or preferred methods of understanding the world are identified--the communal, the pragmatic, and the transcendental. Associated with the communal view are the poets, particularly Aristophanes, who represent the didactic tradition of literature as carrier of community values and cohesion. Associated with the

pragmatic view are the sophists, whose preferred technique is rhetoric. Associated with the transcendental are the philosophers, foremost of whom is Socrates, whose method of knowing is dialectic and whose ideal is individual moral and spiritual development.

Aristotle shares with moderns a penchant for developing simple classification schemes to explain subjects. He must rank among the most prolific of categorizers. The basic role of classification in human reason was an important theme in his epistemology. Of particular interest among Aristotle's various theories are his three categories of human knowledge: the theoretic, the practical, and the productive. The theoretic sciences have as an end the pursuit of knowledge, use the method of scientific inquiry, are concerned with universal propositions, and take as subject matter branches of knowledge such as physics, mathematics, biology, and metaphysics. The practical sciences have as an end action rather than knowledge. They take as subjects human social behavior--the actions of men as they may be established or modified by forces such as nature, convention, and individual will. Included under the practical sciences are political science, ethics, household management, and education. The productive sciences consist of arts and crafts that produce or make things. Artistic and mechanical techniques modify materials with an end toward imitating

nature. Aristotle includes in this category not only painting, music, and poetry but also medicine, architecture, cobbling, and rhetoric.

As a basic scheme for how people comprehend the world, Aristotle's categories of knowledge have been widely borrowed through the course of western philosophy. Of particular influence has been his distinction between the theoretic and the practical. This dichotomy has been perhaps more successful than the three-part scheme because productive activities, in many later models and by Aristotle's own admission, can easily be seen as a subcategory of the practical.

Critical Theory As Methodology

Habermas's classification of knowledge, discussed in Chapter I, takes a slightly different approach. His technical cognitive interest employs empirical-analytic methods of inquiry. Aristotle's theoretical sciences are very closely related to this Habermas category, though modern sciences, of course, have discarded many of Aristotle's more metaphysical explanations of things. Habermas's second cognitive interest employs historical-hermeneutic techniques and is closely related to Aristotle's practical sciences. Habermas would find a place for Aristotle's productive sciences under his first two categories. Because of their emphasis on instrumental reason and technique, some of Aristotle's arts--for

instance, medicine and architecture--might be subsumed under the empirical-analytic sciences. Those arts concerned more with social relationships, communication, and aesthetics would fit under Habermas's historical-hermeneutic banner. Habermas's third cognitive interest, the emancipatory, is one not anticipated by Aristotle, though this interest has a clear debt to many ideas generated by the Greeks.

The model to be presented in this chapter, that of the communal, pragmatic, and the transcendental, takes elements from the schemes of both Aristotle and Habermas, but has a different purpose and scope. Within the framework of social life in ancient Athens, a scheme is proposed that attempts to explain the peculiar mix of conflicting ideologies then in currency. A problem addressed in the final section of the chapter is how this particular scheme relates to modern categories of knowledge and adult learning.

In keeping with the use of the methodology of critical theory, this scheme is not presented, as in modern social science methodology, as a framework of hypotheses to be tested in a program of experimentation. Rather, the development of analytic schemes serves to frame one's detachment from and reflection upon ideology. In the search for new and relevant interpretations of phenomena, critical theorists apply a critical viewpoint to existing interpretations, particularly seeking out hidden points of view or human interests that may have had a distorting

effect. By accepting this evolutionary process of knowledge development--that models of understanding are repeatedly overturned by reevaluation of the social milieu in which the actors developed their model and the resulting distortion of rationality--the critical theorist may be accused of adopting a simple, relativistic view of human knowledge. The method, however, is dialectic, not nihilistic. In the tradition of Socrates, one may admit to the possibility of an absolute, transcendent, or scientific truth, but use a technique of inquiry that emphasizes critique rather than positive data. Knowledge is perceived not as static or absolute, but rather as the result of consensus among social actors. As often as not, particularly in the social sciences, older knowledge is abandoned, not by disproof through objective experimentation, but by a new consensus that the older scheme has exhausted its usefulness and that other questions must be explored. Older knowledge, thus, is often criticized as "lacking in explanatory power." A common feature of the overturning of older knowledge is the recognition that its developers were living in a social and ideological milieu that is now outdated. Following this viewpoint, the analysis of adult learning in ancient Athens will focus on the social and historical forces that influenced development of the various schools of thought.

Poetry

In ancient Athens, poets were considered "the teachers of men."[1] Beginning with Homer, poets had served as carriers of collective mores and religious belief. Their stories had much human interest and were intended to entertain and give pleasure, but the Greeks also demanded a more serious purpose--instruction on morality and proper conduct, promotion of harmonia, or community of mind, and a general strengthening of the city against external enemies.

The didactic role of poets in archaic Greece is related to certain characteristics of preliterate societies. In an oral age, people look to storytellers to store the society's understanding of its history and place in the world. Seemingly incredible feats of memory were commonplace; for instance, in early Greek times, it was not unusual for people to have memorized the entire Iliad.[2]

Poetry commonly was performed as song. According to Plato, it consisted of words, rhythm, and harmony,[3] and these musical qualities probably aided memorization. In an oral culture, poets also could modify stories to insure that succeeding generations found the content to be in keeping with changing views of the world. With the increase

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[1]See, for example, Xenophanes' frag. 10, p. 22, in Freeman, Ancilla, and Plato, The Republic, translated by Jowett, Vol. I, p. 864.

[2]Plato, Ion, translated by Jowett, Vol. I, p. 285.

[3]Ibid., The Republic, Book III, in Vol. I, p. 660.

in writing in the sixth century B.C. and growing literacy in the fifth, the religious and moral teachings of Homer became fossilized and subject to increasing criticism and disbelief.

The Greeks placed great value on music as an instructive tool. Plato, for instance, believed only two subjects should be taught in schools--gymnastics and music.[4] Gymnastics improves the body; music, the soul. Because it encompassed language as well as rhythm and harmony, musical instruction included reading, writing, and grammar as well as singing, dancing, and playing instruments. The ultimate goal of musical instruction was to form the mind in imitation of music, just as music imitates nature. The rational faculty of the mind or soul, when developed, will exhibit the qualities of poise, balance, proportion, harmony, and beauty. Lessons and practice in music continued throughout the lifespan. Various age groups of men, including the elderly, received choral instruction from trainers in preparation for performances at festivals. In a way difficult for moderns to understand, music was a central value and activity in ancient Athens, and the poets were the chief composers and conductors.

The poets of the late fifth century were profoundly conscious of their obligation to uplift their audiences

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[4] Ibid., Laws, Book VII, in Vol. II, p. 551.

morally. Aristophanes' Frogs self-consciously considers the poet's responsibilities. In the play, the great tragedians Aeschylus and Euripides are pitted against one another in a trial, with the god Dionysus as judge, to determine who is the greater poet. Euripides lays out the criteria by which a noble poet must be judged:

> For his ready wit, and his counsels sage, and because the citizen folks he trains/ To be better townsmen and worthier men.[5]

Aeschylus acknowledges this didactic role:

> For boys a teacher at school is found, but we, the poets, are teachers of men. We are bound things honest and pure to speak.[6]

After a lengthy debate between the two, Dionysus selects Aeschylus the victor. He yields to the widespread criticism of Euripides--that he ridiculed the gods and focused on individual, psychological themes rather than the health of the community.

In the comedy of the late fifth century, the didactic tradition takes on a negative, at times savage character. The great poet of the genre, Aristophanes, attacks nearly every element of Athenian society, including political leaders, the sophists and philosophers, the pious, the rich and the poor. The viciousness of his satire is related to the conventions of the form.

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[5]Aristophanes, Frogs, in Five Comedies of Aristophanes, translated by Benjamin B. Rogers (New York, 1955), p. 121.

[6]Ibid., p. 123.

Comedy had its origins in the Dionysian festival, during which participants threw off all inhibition. Associated with the festival were phallic imagery, drunkenness, ecstatic and licentious behavior by women, animal masks, and mocking humor and taunts. Like other festivals, this one had the purpose of honoring and thanking the god for his munificence. But the origins of comedy also contained a spirit of rebellion against authority. The gods of the Greeks, like the God of Abraham, often acted in ways that seemed cruel, arbitrary, and unforgiving. They represented all the forces of nature, the evil and destructive as well as the good, and it was fitting that they not be restrained by the moral and social rules of mere humans. Their worshippers were allowed a certain freedom to rebel, however. As a subject holds resentment toward his king, so the Greeks resented the power of their gods and expressed it in stories filled with mockery toward them. A similar resentment toward social conventions explains the preoccupation with obscenities and sexuality. In comedy, rebellion toward authority was conventionalized and allowed in the spirit of the holiday revel. Political and intellectual as well as divine authorities became the subject of abuse. Within this tradition, the Athenian audiences of the late fifth century became great admirers of the comedic form; the vulgarities and mocking humor appealed to the lowest common denominator of taste, and served as a form of social release.

Comedy also had political repercussions. Aristophanes was indicted by the demagogue Cleon in 426 B.C. for ridiculing the city magistrates in front of an audience containing many foreign visitors, but the charge apparently was dropped.[7] Socrates complained in Plato's Apology about the unfair treatment he had received in Aristophanes' Clouds; unable to salvage his reputation, he was condemned to death. The antagonism between the poets and the philosophers will be explored in a later section. Among the intellectual and aristocratic classes, comedy increasingly was perceived as serving no beneficial social purpose.

Aristophanes saw himself as a poet in the didactic tradition of Homer, Aeschylus, and Sophocles. In his parabases, the choral interludes in which the poet directly addressed his audience, Aristophanes frequently expressed his good intentions. In Frogs, for instance, he pleads for the re-enfranchisement of political leaders associated with the oligarchic revolution of 411 B.C. He adopts the tone of an "angry moralizer," in the tradition of poets such as Hesiod who praised the old ways and saw decay in current society, and exhorts his fellow Athenians:

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[7]Kenneth J. Dover, Aristophanic Comedy (Berkeley, 1972), p. 13.

> O unwise and foolish people, yet to mend your ways begin;/ Use again the good and the useful; so hereafter, if ye win/ Twill be due to this your wisdom: if ye fall, at least 'twill be/ Not a fall that brings dishonour, falling from a worthy tree.[8]

Aristophanes' speech was intended to unify the populace during troubled times. His call for reenfranchisement was enacted by the assembly in the following months.

Though Aristophanes and his fellow poets had great political influence, they also were the subjects of growing criticism, particularly among the aristocratic and intellectual classes. By Aristotle's time, the Greek theater had lost much of its energy and inspiration. History has preserved no complete plays between the late fourth and the late third centuries; later commentators speak only of the classical period and the great dramatists Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Aristophanes, and a few others. The influence of rhetoric was becoming apparent in many of the dialogues of dramatists in the late fifth century, and by the fourth, poetry came to be regarded as a mere subcategory of rhetorical study.[9]

Attacks on the poets had begun as early as the sixth century by the Ionian natural philosophers. Heracleitus of Ephesus, who was in his prime about 500 B.C., thought that

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[8] Ibid., p. 109.

[9] Werner Jaeger, Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture, Vol. II, 2nd ed., translated by Gilbert Highet (New York, 1943), p. 144.

> Homer deserved to be flung out of the contests and given a whipping.[10]

Another of the great poets, Hesiod, had taught that Day is the child of Night. Heracleitus regarded this as an absurdity:

> Hesiod is the teacher of very many, he who did not understand day and night, for they are one.

The fragments of Heracleitus show his adherence to rational, empirical methods of knowing the world. His comments on religion indicated a pantheistic point of view:

> God is day-night, winter-summer, war-peace, satiety-famine.
>
> That which alone is wise is one; it is willing and unwilling to be called by the name of Zeus.
>
> When you have listened, not to me but to the Law (logos), it is wise to agree that all things are one.

Heracleitus is best known for his view that all is in flux, that "it is impossible to step twice in the same river." His desire to explain change in nature reflects a rejection of supernatural explanations and their replacement by scientific inquiry that can be reviewed and criticized based on its internal consistency and empirical validity.

Xenophanes is another Ionian philosopher who had difficulty accepting the pronouncements of Homer and the other early poets.

> Since from the beginning, all men have learnt in accordance with Homer . . . .[11]

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[10]Heracleitus quotations from Freeman, pp. 24-34.

[11]Xenophanes quotations from Freeman, pp. 20-24.

> Both Homer and Hesiod have attributed to the gods all things that are shameful and a reproach among mankind. . . .
>
> They have narrated every possible wicked story of the gods: theft, adultery, and mutual deception.
>
> But mortals believe the gods to be created by birth, and to have their own (mortals') raiment, voice and body.
>
> But if oxen (and horses) and lions had hands or could draw with hands and create works of art like those made by men, horses would draw pictures of gods like horses, and oxen of gods like oxen, and they would make the bodies (of their gods) in accordance with the form that each species itself possesses.

Xenophanes' rejection of the religious beliefs of the common folk is representative of a growing questioning of moral as well as religious values. The old Greek poets had conceived of arete, or moral excellence, as consisting of the virtues and conduct expected of a warrior-knight in what was then a feudal society. The emerging Greek culture was enfranchising a growing middle class who valued individualism and rational discourse as a method of making decisions and inquiring after truth. Particularly in Athens, a demand for a new approach to education arose. The sophists met this demand.

The Sophists and Rhetoric

The sophists held many diverse and conflicting viewpoints but they shared several characteristics: all taught for pay and all emphasized the value of skill in public speaking and persuasion. Diels explains that the term "sophist" originally meant skilled craftsman or wise

man.[12] The specialized meaning of professional teacher arose in the mid-fifth century with the convergence in Athens of so many claimants to special wisdom. The term almost immediately took on a negative connotation: the sophists' art was "the appearance, not the reality, of wisdom," and the sophist was one who made money out of pretense. It was widely understood that sophists practiced the art of rhetoric. Wilcox's analysis of the literature on sophists and rhetoricians indicates the terms were used interchangeably.[13]

The sophists left few writings, and most modern knowledge of them comes from the works of Plato and Aristophanes, both of whom were vigorous opponents of the sophists' beliefs and style. As a result of this negative portrait, the sophists generally have not been given sufficient credit for their contributions to education. They were instrumental in promoting the idea of lifelong education. One's education, or paideia, was something to be cultivated throughout one's life. The sophists specialized in bringing a distinctly new form of education to young adults. As shown in Chapter III, Athenian society

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[12]Diels-Kranz, The Older Sophists, edited by Rosamond K. Sprague (Columbia, S.C.: 1972), p. 125.

[13]Stanley Wilcox, "The Scope of Early Rhetorical Instruction," Harvard Studies in Classical Philology, Vol. 53 (1942), p. 134.

placed great stress on each citizen's age ranking. Young adults, up to age thirty and in some situations to age forty or more, were not entitled to full rights of participation in civic activities. The period of young adulthood came to be seen as in need of continued preparatory instruction, and the sophists developed the first curriculum for this period of higher education. Because of their emphasis on pragmatic instruction and professional training, the sophists' philosophy of education has more similarities to modern American higher and continuing education than does the approach of Socrates and Plato, whose interests were in moral instruction and the improvement of the soul. Modern histories of education, however, tend to focus only on Plato's contribution and take his criticism of the sophists at face value.

The principal techne, or skill, taught by the sophists, rhetoric, had its origins, say early commentators, in a political revolution in Syracuse in 463 B.C. The new democrats established a judicial system for resolving disputes that required citizens to represent their own cases and defend themselves before a jury. Decisions were made by juries in an informal manner--fine points of law rarely were at issue--and the litigant's ability to speak publicly and persuade became the critical factor in many trials. Corax provided instruction to Syracusans in public speaking before the courts and assembly, and, according to Aristotle and

other commentators, he was the first teacher of persuasive skills.[14] Corax taught that the deliberative speech should be divided into three sections. He also explained how probability should be used as a basis for argument in speeches. A typical use of argument by probability is found in the situation of a small man charged with assaulting someone much larger than himself. He should argue the improbability of such an act on his part. A large man on trial for assault might turn the argument around and say it was unlikely he would attack a smaller man for surely he would be regarded as the initiator.

Such verbal tricks were an important element in sophistic instruction. A famous story in this vein was that Corax's pupil, Tisias, was taken to court by his master for refusing to pay for his lessons. Tisias argued that if he won the suit, he should not pay for the instruction on the basis of that decision. However, if he lost, he also should not have to pay because the art Corax professed to teach was ineffective. Corax replied by reversing the argument. The jury and crowd regarded both as shysters and turned them out with the epigram, "a bad egg from a bad crow" (korax).[15]

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[14]D.A.G. Hicks, "Tisias and Corax and the Invention of Rhetoric," The Classical Quarterly, XXXIV (1940), pp. 63-69, and Stanley Wilcox, "Corax and the Prolegomena," American Journal of Philology, LXIV (1943), pp. 1-23.

[15]George A. Kennedy, The Art of Persuasion in Greece (Princeton, 1963), p. 59.

Plato regarded Corax and Tisias as typical sophists in their desire to distort truth and manipulate audiences. In "Phaedrus," Plato's Socrates describes Tisias as

> not ignorant that probability is superior to truth, and who by force of argument makes the little appear great and the great little, disguise the new in old fashions and the old in new fashions, and have discovered forms in everything, either short or going on to infinity.[16]

Plato had a similar opinion of the many sophists who congregated in Athens in the mid and late fifth century. Athens like Syracuse had granted new political rights to many members of the lower classes, and with citizenship came the requirement that one must actively serve in assemblies, courts, and various bureaucratic posts. In addition, Athens used the courts to resolve all manner of personal disputes; it became fairly commonplace for a citizen to find himself in court with the responsibility personally to defend himself.

Kennedy, a historian of rhetoric, has described the many forms of instruction available to Athenian adults who desired to hone their public speaking skills:

> The references in Plato, Aristotle, and Isocrates seem to indicate that written handbooks of rhetorical theory were fairly numerous, though this does not necessarily imply that there were many different copies of each. Like the Peripatetic writings, medical works, and some sophistic treatises, they were hypomnemata, notes by a teacher or one of his pupils. They filled a specific need and were soon superseded by other handbooks. Their judicial orientation points to their function.

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[16]Plato, Phaedrus, Vol. I, p. 270.

> Men who could afford a liberal education for public life attached themselves to a sophist, practiced his commonplaces, and learned almost incidentally the techniques of court oratory. But since Greek law required every citizen to speak in his own behalf in prosecution or defense, a knowledge of judicial oratory might be a real need to anyone among the litigious Athenians. One did not after all have to speak in the assembly, and doubtless only those who felt capable of self-expression did so. On the other hand, countless circumstances could catch even the innocent in the toils of the law. Where could an inexperienced person turn? One way was to a logographos, a speech writer such as Lysias, whose published orations advertised his wares. But this was probably expensive: Lysias' customers were mostly prosperous businessmen and farmers, and Lysias and other logographers were artists from whom elegance of style as well as effective argument was to be expected. If the prospective litigant could not buy a whole speech and could not afford the time to study with a sophist, he could turn to a rhetorician and learn from him in a few hours, or perhaps even by reading a written summary of his system, the necessary parts of a speech and the chief features of each. Such instruction was cheap. When Lysias gave up theoretical instruction for speech writing, as Cicero says he did, he continued to fulfill a similar function in supplying judicial oratory to those in need, but in a different and no doubt more profitable way. Great sophists such as Protagoras or Hippias or Gorgias probably did not bother with this sort of thing; it was the work of the second-raters like Polus and Theodorus. The public for the rhetoricians would also include people not themselves involved in law suits who were guarding against the future or who were interested in the court processes because of their jury duties.[17]

In speculating on the existence of "second-raters" among the sophists, Kennedy implies that in Athens, different teaching roles carried varying levels of status. The best sophists taught deliberative speaking and statesmanship to the sons of wealthy aristocrats and to the aristocrats themselves. Protagoras, for example, was a

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[17]Kennedy, pp. 57-58.

counselor to Pericles and certainly received pay from the best families in Athens.

Kings also sought instruction from sophists. Diogenes has a typical reference describing this situation. Aristippus, a follower of Socrates who charged fees for instruction, requested such a payment after a session with Dionysius, king of Sicily, and the king replied,

> "Nay, but you told me that the wise man would never be in want." To which [Aristippus] retorted, "Pay! Pay! and then let us discuss the question; and when he was paid, "Now you see, do you not," said he, "that I was not found wanting."[18]

Teachers might themselves pay to hear other teachers. Socrates, in Plato's dialogues, on several occasions mentions that he has recently paid for instruction.[19]

In general, the sophists are portrayed as teachers of judicial oratory. Wilcox has reviewed the many references to sophists in the literature of fifth and fourth century Athens and finds misleading the impression that sophists specialized only in instructing speakers for appearance in court.[20] Teaching courtroom tactics was regarded by many Athenians as a vulgar occupation. Much of the arguing in

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[18]Diogenes Laertius, Lives of Eminent Philosophers, Vol. I., Loeb Classical Library, translated by R.D. Hicks (Cambridge, 1925), p. 211.

[19]See Plato, Cratylus, Vol. I, p. 173, and Euthydemus, Vol. I, p. 134.

[20]George A. Kennedy, "The Earliest Rhetorical Handbooks," American Journal of Philology, LXXX (April, 1959), 169-178.

courtrooms was over petty issues, and juries often encouraged emotional and rhetorical displays rather than reasoned testimony of facts. The sophists were thought to further discolor what was already a distasteful and undignified aspect of Athenian life. The ideological opponents of the sophists such as Plato and Aristophanes tended to overemphasize the sophists' judicial instruction over the more prestigious teaching of political oratory.

Teaching adults appears to have carried more prestige than teaching children. Plutarch gives evidence of such a bias in his biography of Alcibiades, the Athenian politician and student of Socrates. A lover of Homer, Alcibiades became very angry when a teacher of children bragged about correcting and improving the verse of the poet.

> "How?" said Alcibiades, "and do you employ your time teaching children to read? You, who are able to amend Homer, may well undertake to instruct men."[21]

Of course, sophists found many of their customers to be young adults. Both sophists and philosophers were notorious pederasts, and many of these teaching relationships were sexually motivated. But, then, as today, people with important and valuable knowledge to impart, especially knowledge that promises wealth and power, find other adults to be their primary clientele.

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[21]Plutarch, Plutarch's Lives, Vol. IV, Loeb Classical Library, translated by Bernadotte Perrin (Cambridge, 1916), p. 17.

The best known sophists--Protagoras, Hippias, Gorgias, and Prodicus--were foreign-born, had wide practical political experience, and became wealthy from their teaching and "consulting." Protagoras, as mentioned, was a counselor to Pericles and helped compose the constitution for the Athenian colony at Thurii. Hippias of Elias, Gorgias of Leontini, and Prodicus of Ceos all served as ambassadors or envoys from their home states and doubtless had wide experience as statesmen and orators.

The sophists' love for wealth and rich living perhaps has been overrated by their critics, but they clearly earned higher than average wages and found attachments among the wealthiest families in Athens. In various dialogues of Plato, one learns of the sophists' wealth. In Greater Hippias, Socrates says that the sophists earned more than any other professionals.[22] In Meno one learns that Protagoras was paid better than the great Athenian sculptor and architect of the acropolis, Phidias.[23] Hippias brags of his wealth and claims he makes more money than Protagoras in Greater Hippias.[24] The Eleatic Stranger in Sophist defines sophists as those who seek out students with wealth and

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[22]Plato, Greater Hippias, Loeb Classical Library, translated by H.N. Fowler (Cambridge, 1953), p. 341.

[23]Plato, Meno, translated by Jowett, Vol. I, p. 371.

[24]Plato, Greater Hippias, p. 343.

rank.[25] Socrates, in Cratylus, complains (somewhat ironically) that he has only been able to hear Prodicus's one-drachma course on grammar and language, but he is too poor to attend the fifty-drachma course and thus is not able to answer the more difficult questions about these subjects.[26] The setting of Protagoras portrays several sophists sitting in a wealthy Athenian home surrounded by influential, mature men as well as bright Athenian youth.[27]

Among the most extravagant of the sophists was a follower of Socrates named Aristippus. Diogenes claims that after Aristippus began to charge fees for his instruction, he tried to send money to Socrates to show his gratitude to his master. Socrates returned a twenty-minae payment, saying his supernatural sign would not let him accept it.[28] Diogenes gives several additional anecdotes about the sophists' preoccupation with money and rich living:

> Being reproached for his extravagance, [Aristippus] said, "If it were wrong to be extravagant, it would not be in vogue at the festivals of the gods."
>
> When Dionysius inquired what was the reason that philosophers go to rich men's houses, while rich men no longer visit philosophers, his reply was that "the one know what they need while the other do not."

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[25]Plato, Sophist, translated by Jowett, Vol. II, p. 228.

[26]Plato, Cratylus, Vol. I, p. 173.

[27]Plato, Protagoras, Vol. I, p. 87.

[28]Aristippus quotes from Diogenes, Vol. I, pp. 195-203.

> In answer to one who remarked that he always saw philosophers at rich men's doors, he said, "so, too, physicians are in attendance on those who are sick, but no one for that reason would prefer being sick to being a physician.
>
> To the accusation that, although he was a pupil of Socrates, he took fees, his rejoinder was, "Most certainly I do, for Socrates, too, when certain people sent him corn and wine, used to take a little and return all the rest; and he had the foremost men in Athens for his stewards, whereas mine is my slave Eutychides.

Aristippus believed philosophy had taught him to "feel at ease in any society." His ability to adjust to different social settings reflects a growing self consciousness among the sophists that they were citizens of the world (cosmopolis), not just the city-state (polis).

Hippias announces this sentiment in addressing a small group of sophists and noblemen at the home of Callias:

> All of you who are here present I reckon to be kinsmen and friends and fellow citizens, by nature and not by law; for by nature like is akin to like, whereas law is the tyrant of mankind, and often compels us to do many things which are against nature.[29]

The distinction between the law of the state and the law of nature was an important discovery of the sophists, with far-reaching implications. Antiphon, the sophist, concentrated in his writings on this problem. He believed that

> the edicts of laws are imposed artificially, but those of nature are compulsory. And the edicts of the laws are arrived at by consent, not by natural growth, whereas those of nature are not a matter of consent.[30]

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[29]Plato, Protagoras, Vol. I, p. 107.

Antiphon emphasized the negative force of laws, that they are "chains upon nature," and this idealization of natural law led to a widening spirit of materialism and cynicism.

Thrasymachus, for instance, took the view that "justice is nothing else than the interest of the stronger."[31] Callicles was another sophist who believed convention and nature to be irreconcilable and that nature is the superior force:

> For on what principle of justice did Xerxes invade Hellas, or his father the Scythians? (not to speak of numberless other examples). Nay, but these are the men who act according to nature: yes, by Heaven, and according to the law of nature; not, perhaps, according to that artificial law, which we invent and impose on our fellows, of whom we take the best and strongest from their youth upwards, and tame them like young lions,--charming them with the sound of voice, and saying to them, that with equality they must be content, and that the equal is the honourable and the just. But if there were a man who had sufficient force, he would shake off and break through, and escape from all this; he would trample under foot all our formulas and spells and charms, and all our laws which are against nature: the slave would rise in rebellion and be lord over us, and the light of natural justice would shine forth.[32]

Such a belief in "natural justice" helped rationalize among the Athenians a growing individualism and ambition for wealth. The sophists reflected this new skepticism about the existence of the Greek pantheon of gods and a corresponding rise in the belief that we must look inside

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[30]Freeman, p. 147.

[31]Plato, Republic, Vol. I, p. 603.

[32]Plato, Gorgias, Vol. I., p. 544.

ourselves and at our relationships to society for guidance on how to live. Protagoras's famous pronouncements on these topics must have contributed to his popularity as a leader in the new approach to education.

> About the gods, I am not able to know whether they exist or do not exist, nor what they are like in form; for the factors preventing knowledge are many: the obscurity of the subject, and the shortness of life.[33]

> Of all things the measure is Man, of the things that are, that they are, and of the things that are not, that they are not.[34]

As the authority of the gods and of the poets declined, people began to place great faith in the power of knowledge and secular wisdom. Socrates was among the most optimistic about the power of rationality with his dictum that "knowledge is virtue," that no one would do wrong intentionally but only because he lacks sufficient knowledge. The sophists adopted a more pragmatic approach to knowledge in their emphasis on rhetorical instruction. The rhetorician Gorgias understood that speech always had a powerful, almost magical, effect on the Greeks. When speech is empowered with the skill of rhetorical method, its user can attain extraordinary influence over human affairs, says Gorgias is this fragment:

> That Persuasion, when added to speech, can also make an impression it wishes on the soul, can be shown, firstly, from the arguments of the meteorologists, who by removing one opinion and implanting another, cause what is incredible and invisible to appear before

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[33]Freeman, p. 126. [34]Ibid., p. 125.

> the eyes of the mind; secondly, from legal contests, in which speech can sway and persuade a crowd, by the skill of its composition, not by the truth of its statements; thirdly, from the philosophical debates, in which quickness of thought is shown easily altering opinion.
>
> The power of speech over the constitution of the soul can be compared with the effect of drugs on the bodily state: just as drugs by driving out different humours from the body can put an end either to the disease or to life, so with speech: different words can induce grief, pleasure or fear; or again, by means of a harmful kind of persuasion, words can drug and bewitch the soul.[35]

The important influences that sophistication in language and reasoning were having on the ancient world became widely acknowledged. Aristotle went so far as to claim that oratory controlled the fortunes of the city-state in the same way that physical force had created the power of tyrants in earlier times.[36]

The sophists were perceived as leaders in these large social changes. Protagoras proclaimed that the sophists succeeded the poets as "instructors of men."[37] The content of poetry and drama became merely a tool to be used in rhetorical instruction and as a source of argument in oratory. For instance, Protagoras acknowledged the value of literary criticism--

> the power of knowing the composition, what compositions of poets are correct, and what are not, and how they

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[35] Ibid., pp. 132-33.

[36] Aristotle, Politics, translated by Ernest Barker (London, 1979), p. 216.

[37] Plato, Protagoras, Vol. I, p. 89.

> are to be distinguished, and of explaining when asked the reason for the difference.[38]

The content of poems, however, seems to be used only as a starting point for dialectic on philosophical issues. Similarly, the rhetors used the authority of the poets and mythology frequently in their arguments, but less as a matter of sincere belief than as a tool to persuade and sway emotions.

Jaeger, in his important study of paideia in Greek culture, placed the sophists as a central force that revolutionized education in Athens. Through their influence, paideia came to mean something more than childhood instruction. Paideia became an ideal that encompassed the entire intellectual and cultural wealth of the city-state, and each citizen had a lifelong obligation to cultivate his individual portion of this heritage:

> When the sophists formulated the ideal of culture [paideia], the Greek city-state reached a climax in its development. For centuries the state had prescribed the form of life which its citizens were to lead, and poets of every kind had praised its divine cosmos; but never before had the duty of the state to educate its members been formulated so authoritatively and comprehensively. Sophistic culture was not created simply to fulfil an actual political need: it deliberately took the state as the goal and the ideal standard of all education. In Protagoras' theory the state appeared to be the spring of all educational energy, or in fact one huge educational organization, impressing all its laws and all its social system with the same spirit. Pericles' conception of the state, as set forth by Thucydides in the funeral speech,

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[38] Ibid., p. 108.

> culminates similarly in the declaration that the state is the great educative force, and that the communal life of Athens is a complete and pattern fulfilment of the cultural mission of the state. Thus, the sophists' ideas penetrated the sphere of politics: they conquered the whole state. No other interpretation of the facts is possible.[39]

It was within this setting, the dominance of the sophists as intellectual and educative forces in Athens, that Aristophanes and Socrates launched their attacks. Aristophanes the poet represented the older tradition, now ineffectual against the rational power or the sophists' world view. Socrates represented development of a new ideological force, philosophy, which, from the long view of history, was able to combat successfully the more negative aspects of sophistic culture--relativism, materialism, individualism--and reinstitute a cultural ideal that acknowledged moral restraint and absolute values.

The Counterattack of Poetry and The New Synthesis of Philosophy

The poets, as represented by Aristophanes, were carriers of an ideology that idealized social integrity, harmonia in the community, and common bonds against external enemies. They employed two didactic methods. First through their stories and characters, they presented models, or paradeigmata, for others to follow. The subject matter of their poems and plays often were religious stories; everyone

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[39]Jaeger, Vol. I, p. 321.

already knew the outcomes of these retellings, and much of the interest had to do with how the poet arranged the parts, what moral significance he placed on various turns of the story, and how he might be using the story to comment on current social or political issues. The poet's art was to imitate reality; he set up a mirror that reflected back to the community various aspects of itself. The inspiration for this artistic creation was from supernatural forces, the Muses. The poet became a mere mouthpiece for the gods, who were the source of eternal rules of right conduct and society for men.

In addition to their stories, the poets used a second method to teach--direct exhortation. This method, as Isocrates realized[40], was not nearly as effective as the stories because it lacked their color and human interest. Still, the poet had the right to preach directly to his congregation, and often did so through the voice of his chorus, which always symbolized the interests of the common man or citizen. In the plays of Aristophanes, the chorus expresses concern for the community as a whole--what is in its best interests.

Because of the primacy of this communal view of the world, the poets naturally were suspicious of the rising

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[40]Jaeger, Vol. III, p. 103.

influence of the sophists and philosophers. Clouds is a basic source of material about this viewpoint. In the play, Aristophanes depicts Socrates as an amoral sophist willing to teach Strepsiades and his son how to cheat their way out of debt through eristic argument. The debate between Right, or Just, Reason and Wrong, or Unjust, Reason summarizes the tension and conflict in Athenian society between the old and new forms of education. The personification of the old education comes across as a rigid, ineffectual, tongue-tied old man, and he loses the debate by his own admission to the verbal dexterity of his younger competitor.

Clouds depicts Socrates and other sophists as immoral twisters of words, subversive to the health of the community, and because it portrays Socrates in such a negative light, the play has been a central source of information for classicists studying "the Socratic problem"--what was the true character of the historical figure Socrates. Interpreters of the play often have tried to soften the attack on Socrates by saying that Aristophanes, by lumping Socrates in with other sophists, failed to make important distinctions between Socrates' and the sophists' points of view. According to Dover, for instance, Aristophanes shows the viewpoint

> of someone to whom all philosophical and scientific speculation, all disinterested curiosity, is boring and silly. To such a person, distinctions which are of

> insignificant, incomprehensible and often imperceptible.[41]

Thus, the comic poet and many of his viewers were neither capable nor willing to make important distinctions between Socratic and sophistic methods, just as there are people today for whom the difference "between Bach and Rachmaninow, the Labour Party and the Communist Party, Oxford and Cambridge, or England and Scotland" is of no interest.

Other interpreters of the play, including Havelock[42] and Nussbaum[43], find details in the play that show Aristophanes had an intimate knowledge of Socrates and his method. Havelock concentrates on the method Socrates uses to train Strepsiades' intellect. The old man continually is instructed to concentrate on his own thought, to introspect as a method of gaining new knowledge and insight. Improving one's soul, or psyche, depends on the self-reflective capabilities of the intellect, and to Havelock this insight is distinctly Socratic. In his use of the new intellectual idiom of Socrates, Aristophanes displayed a sophisticated knowledge of Socrates, and his satire was intended to please other intellectuals aware of the new philosophy.

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[41]Kenneth J. Dover, Aristophanes' Clouds (Oxford, 1968), p. lii.

[42]Eric A. Havelock, "The Socratic Self as it is Parodied in Aristophanes' Clouds," Yale Classical Studies, Vol. XII (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 1-18.

[43]Martha Nussbaum, "Aristophanes and Socrates on Learning Practical Wisdom," Yale Classical Studies, Vol. XXVI (Cambridge, 1980), pp. 43-97.

Havelock's study ignores the issues of old versus new education and Socrates as a subversive to community values. Nussbaum addresses these issues directly and sides with Aristophanes. She disputes the interpretation of Dover and others that Aristophanes merely assimilates Socrates with the sophists. Rather, the poet had "a deep intuitive insight about the dangers" of Socrates' method.[44] Nussbaum grants that distinctions should be made, and points out that Aristophanes carefully distinguished the characters of Socrates and Unjust Reason, or Anti-Right.

> One has scientific and contemplative interests; the other is interested only in rhetoric. One is ascetic, cheerfully enduring poverty, want and cold; the other advertises the delights of warm baths. One is chaste, the other self-indulgent. . . . The difference between a sybaritic, self-indulgent sophist and a restrained, serene, contemplative sophist was both seen and depicted by Aristophanes; but the play argues that these differences conceal a more basic sameness: an underlying intellectualism that dedicates itself to exposing the inadequacies of traditional moral justification, and argues that what cannot justify itself has no reason for being. And we see that the teachings of both have the same (or rather a cumulative) result: traditional values are undermined and nothing enduring is put in their place.[45]

The poets' criticism of Socrates, that his method was essentially a negative force, lacking in constructive value to the community, was turned back against the poets by Plato in the Republic and the Laws. In these dialogues, Plato argues for censorship of all poetry and music that is not morally uplifting.

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[44] Ibid., p. 65.

The principal limitation of poetry and all art, says Socrates in Republic, Book X, is that they are too far removed from the truth of God. The Creator first makes an image appear in nature. The artist imitates this image, thus making a copy of a copy. "The imitator or maker of images knows nothing of true existence; he knows appearances only."[46]

The poet also errs in too often appealing to the passionate and fitful temper rather than the rational principle of the soul, as does philosophy. Tragedy encourages sentimental pity, and comedy depicts men and gods as buffoons. Poetry also "feeds and waters" other passions such as lust, anger, desire, pain, and pleasure. The well-ordered state, however, requires educational forces that encourage control of emotions and cultivation of self restraint and rationality.[47]

Socrates acknowledges that the quarrel between poetry and philosophy is an ancient one, that poetry always has held philosophy in contempt,

> of which there are many proofs, such as the saying of "the yelping hound howling at her lord," or of one "mighty in the vain talk of fools," and "the mob of sages circumventing Zeus," and the "subtle thinkers who are beggars after all."[48]

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[45] Ibid., pp. 66-67.

[46] Plato, The Republic, Vol. I, p. 858.

[47] Ibid., pp. 864-865.

[48] Ibid., p. 865.

In the ideal state proposed by Socrates, poetry might be allowed to return from exile if it is able to defend itself and prove that it subordinates itself to philosophy's idealization of truth, justice, and virtue. Until such time, the guardians of the state must censor all poetry and music except for hymns to the gods and praises of famous men.[49]

Socrates warns not only that poetry is dangerous to the city-state, but also that

> he who listens to her, fearing the safety of the city which is within him, should be on his guard against her seductions and make our words his law.[50]

Socrates has announced earlier that the philosopher must be concerned with two states, that of outward reality but also of the city within himself. He can accept only those political honors that are consistent with the laws of his inner city. The utopian society established in the Republic may not serve as a blueprint for real political change, it is acknowledged, but that is of no importance, for the philosopher shall

> be a ruler in the city of which we are the founders, and which exists in idea only; for I do not believe that there is such an one anywhere on earth. . . .
>
> In heaven, . . . there is laid up a pattern of it, methinks, which he who desires may behold, and beholding, may set his own house in order. But whether such an one exists, or will ever exist in fact, is no matter; for he will live after the manner of that city, having nothing to do with any other.[51]

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[49] Ibid.

[50] Ibid., p. 866.

[51] Ibid., p. 851.

Thus Plato reveals the essentiality of transcendence in his philosophy. The elaborate political scheme described in the Republic, the rule of philosopher-kings, is not a model for real social change so much as a model to guide development of the paideia of the individual soul. The eternal ideas are the only true reality. The philosopher is impotent in bringing about large-scale social change. Like a physician, but treating the soul instead of the body, he can only diagnose ailments and prescribe treatments.

To Socrates, the sophists were a malignant disease devouring the state, and his displeasure with poetry is mild compared to the hatred and contempt with which he regarded these "prostitutors of wisdom." The dialogues of Plato demonstrate repeatedly that Socrates was obsessed with overturning the new vision of the world put forth by the sophists. They had knowledge; he had none. They were teachers; he had conversations with "friends." They liked rich living; he was ascetic. They taught by lecture and model, he by dialectic and drawing forth. They were popular merchants of wisdom in the highest aristocratic circles; he was a gadfly to the state.

In content as well as in style, they differed. The sophists gave instruction in practical, or vocational, arts. Socrates was concerned with inculcating virtue, with improving the soul. The sophists were very similar to modern legislators, jurists, or businesspersons in their

pragmatic approach to truth. One determines issues or sets a course of action based on a recognition of probabilities, common sense, everyday empirical realities, and compromise and consensus among members of an organization or community. Socrates, in contrast, sought not the expedient but an objective and absolute philosophical truth. The good, truth, beauty, justice, the eternal forms and ideas--these constitute the real stuff of the world, the ideal toward which each person must aim his development. The good life is one not of action but of contemplation. Salvation lies in turning away from the life of everyday political realities to an inner world, an eternal world of the soul, which is informed by its own gods. As Jaeger remarked, "The God in whose service Socrates performs his educational work is different from 'the gods in whom the polis believes.' The charge against Socrates was chiefly based on that point: and it was well directed."[52]

During Socrates' lifetime, the fortunes of the polis were increasingly being swayed by the arts of persuasion, taught by the sophists and practiced by the rhetors of assembly and the law courts. Socrates focused much of his enmity on the dangers of rhetoric and its inferiority to the philosopher's method, dialectic. The principal deficiency of rhetoric, according to Socrates in Gorgias and Phaedrus, is that it has no subject matter, no truth to

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[52]Jaeger, Vol. II, p. 76.

present, and is concerned solely with belief and illusion. It is merely a form of flattery, a counterfeit of justice and truth. The user of dialectic, in contrast, has a proper goal and method.

> Until a man knows the truth of the several particulars of which he is writing or speaking, and is able to define them as they are, and having defined them again to divide them until they can be no longer divided, and until in like manner he is able to discern the nature of the soul, and discover the different modes of discourse which are adapted to different natures, and to arrange and dispose them is such a way that the simple form of speech may be addressed to the simpler nature, and the complex and composite to the more complex nature--until he has accomplished all this, he will be unable to handle arguments according to rules of art, as far as their nature allows them to be subjected to art, either for the purpose of teaching or persuading.[53]

The sophist, in rejecting dialectic for rhetoric, is a dissembler, a dealer in appearances, a word-juggler.[54] "He is the money-making species of the Eristic, disputatious, controversial, pugnacious, combative, acquisitive family."[55] He is like a hunter or fisherman, but he hunts man instead of animals, and takes money in exchange for the semblance of education he provides.[56] He is a wandering merchant, much like a seller of meat and drinks, except he sells food for the soul.[57] In Protagoras, Socrates warns his young friend Hippocrates about the dangers of the sophistic wares:

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[53]Plato, Phaedrus, Vol. I, p. 280.

[54]Plato, Sophist, Vol. II, p. 280.

[55]Ibid., p. 231.

[56]Ibid., 228.

[57]Ibid., 229.

> Surely, . . . knowledge is food for the soul; and we must take care, my friend, that the Sophist does not deceive us when he praises what he sells, like dealers wholesale or retail who sell the food of the body; for they praise indiscriminately all their goods, without knowing what are really beneficial or hurtful. . . . In like manner those who carry about the wares of knowledge, and make the round of the cities, and sell or retail them to any customer who is in want of them, praise them all alike; though I should not wonder, O my friend, if many of them were really ignorant of their effect upon the soul, and their customers equally ignorant, unless he who buys them happens to be a physician of the soul. . . . O my friend, pause, and do not hazard your dearest interests at a game of chance. For there is a far greater peril in buying knowledge than in buying meat and drink. . . . When you have paid for [the wares of knowledge] you must receive them into the soul and go your way, either greatly harmed or greatly benefited; and therefore we should deliberate and take counsel with our elders.[58]

Philosophers, then, as physicians of the soul, should be acknowledged by Athenian society as the true educators of the Greek peoples, supplanting both the sophists and the rhetoricians.

In the face of these attacks, the rhetoricians of the fourth century remained an important educational force in Athens. The most successful of the rhetoricians was Isocrates, who operated one of the largest schools in the ancient world. A contemporary of Plato, Isocrates began his career as a professional speechwriter and had studied under the famed sophists Gorgias, Prodicus, and Protagoras. He taught the art of rhetoric, attracting both Athenians and

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[58]Plato, Protagoras, Vol. I, p. 86.

foreigners from across the ancient world, and his success at the school made him one of the wealthiest men in Athens.[59]

In his writings, Isocrates presents his educational method in a dignified and reasonable manner. Rhetoric trains men to occupy the highest posts in public life. It requires high moral standards and avoids argument for the sake of argument. Isocrates also promoted the ideal of panhellenism, that all Greek peoples have a common bond and must avoid warfare and competition. By seeking a middle ground between the extremely abstract and esoteric positions of philosophy and the overly practical and money-chasing approaches of some of the early sophists, he legitimized rhetoric as the central subject of ancient higher education.

In his speech Against the Sophists, Isocrates was quick to refute publicly Plato's charges in Protagoras and Gorgias against the sophists. It is the dialecticians, not the rhetoricians, who are guilty of eristic, or mere captious argumentation, says Isocrates. Jaeger finds in this speech the most concise statement of the features of Platonism that make it repugnant to common sense:

> the peculiar technique of controversy by question-and-answer, the almost mythical importance which it attributes to phronesis (or knowledge of true values) as a special organ of reason, the apparently

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[59]James L. Jarrett, The Educational Theories of the Sophists (New York, 1969), p. 104.

> exaggerated intellectualism which holds knowledge to be the cure for everything, and the quasi-religious enthusiasm with which "blessedness" is foretold to the philosopher.[60]

Isocrates shows a sure grasp of what the average Athenian would find odd or ludicrous in Platonism. He ridicules the philosophers, for instance, for claiming they can release perfect virtue in their students, but also betraying their distrust of human nature by requiring payment of fees in advance at an Athenian bank. The philosophers also demonstrate their hypocrisy in the fact that the followers of Socrates were bitterly hostile toward one another, though all claimed full possession of knowledge. Even the mob, who is guided by Opinion rather than Knowledge, has an easier time agreeing to a course of action than do the philosophers.

The rivalry between philosophy and rhetoric began to soften somewhat in the mid-fourth century as each faction found the need to adopt some of the positions and methods of the other. In Phaedrus, Plato begins to show an acceptance of what rhetoric might become, if rebuilt upon the foundation of philosophy. At the end of the dialogue, he allows a favorable comment on his now famous rival, Isocrates; Socrates is made to say he has great hopes for the young Isocrates.

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[60]Jaeger, Vol. III, p. 57.

Aristotle included rhetoric as a subject of study at his Lyceum. In Rhetoric, he presents rhetoric and dialectic not as mutually exclusive, but as complementary tools:

> It is thus evident that Rhetoric does not deal with any one definite class of subjects, but, like Dialectic, [is of general application]; also, that it is useful; and further, that its function is not so much to persuade, as to find out in each case the existing means of persuasion. The same holds good in respect to all the other arts. For instance, it is not the function of medicine to restore a patient to health, but only to promote this end as far as possible; for even those whose recovery is impossible may be properly treated. It is further evident that it belongs to Rhetoric to discover the real and apparent means of persuasion, just as it belongs to Dialectic to discover the real and apparent syllogism. For what makes the sophist is not the faculty but the moral purpose.[61]

Thus Aristotle acknowledges what Isocrates and other rhetoricians had held all along--that rhetoric is a technique that can be used both for good and evil. It is neutral in itself, and its value depends on the moral stature of its users.

The truce between philosophy and rhetoric continued, with occasional lapses, through ancient times. The Romans were attracted to rhetoric's practical application in civic life, and schools of rhetoric continued to hold a central position in higher education. In his history of rhetoric, Kennedy has summarized the continuing prominence of rhetoric as a subject of higher and adult education.

> If the concept of the bonus orator was by nature not uncongenial to the Romans, it became increasingly

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[61] Aristotle, Rhetoric, Loeb Classical Library, translated by John H. Freese (Cambridge, 1926), pp. 13-15.

> familiar to them by constant training and practice. Roman education, after primary training at the hands of the grammaticus, was even more dominated by rhetoricians than was Greek. Athletics and music were almost ignored, and the other disciplines of the liberal arts were decidedly auxiliary to the one great training in speech, which was most characteristically developed in the declamation of suasoriae and controversiae. The practice of these exercises, even in Cicero's time and much more in the age of the elder Seneca, was not simply a schoolboy exercise but a social grace, cultivated by all educated people for their delight and amusement. The world was a rhetorician's world, its ideal an orator; speech became an artistic product to be admired apart from its content or significance. The logical conclusion of such a development was reached in the rhetorical poetry of the empire, where style eclipses subject as the poet poses for himself a series of rhetorical challenges, and in the educational system of Quintilian, where the training of the bonus orator from infancy to retirement is described in the greatest detail and contemporary philosophers, in accordance with Domitian's sentiments, are scorned and dismissed.[62]

Philosophy and rhetoric, because of the linguistic and analytic power of their methods, successfully claimed a share of the age-old role of poetry as purveyor of collective ideals. The poets and dramatists of later ancient times show the increasing influence of philosophical and rhetorical method in their works, and they also tended to show excessive imitation of classical forms. Still, Roman poets such as Virgil, Ovid, Horace, and Plautus were a prominent force in Roman culture. Also, among the "People of the Book," as the Moslems called Jews and Christians, literature, both spoken and written, remained a central source of community identity and strength. The writers of the old and

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[62]Kennedy, Persuasion, pp. 22-23.

new testaments assembled a collection of lyric and narrative which continues today to have wide appeal.

Ideology and Modern Adult Education

In approaching the subject of adult learning in ancient Athens as an activity controlled by conflicting ideologies, a thesis of critical theory is applied--that systems of knowledge must be evaluated within the context of a particular historical and cultural mix. The term ideology is used to mean a knowledge system that shows the effects of distortion from human interests. Habermas uses insights from Freudian psychology to explain how ideology rationalizes and distorts knowledge.

> From everyday experience we know that ideas serve often enough to furnish our actions with justifying motive in place of the real ones. What is called rationalizing at this level is called ideology at the level of collective action. In both cases the manifest content of statements is falsified by consciousness' unreflected tie to interests, despite its illusion of autonomy. The discipline of trained thought thus correctly aims at excluding such interests.[63]

The knowledge systems of the poets, the rhetoricians, and the philosophers show the distorting effects of their respective collective interests.

The poets represent the remnants of an oral tradition in which poetry served as a receptacle for the identity and beliefs of the Greek peoples. Poetry's musical qualities as well as its distinctive ability to capture community norms

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[63]Jurgen Habermas, Knowledge and Human Interests, translated by Jeremy J. Shapiro (Boston, 1971), p. 391.

within a structure of myth and narrative contributed to its success as the chief educator of the community when all knowledge had to be memorized. An important characteristic of the poets until the end of the fifth century B.C. was the seriousness with which they performed their role as promotors of community health and cohesion.

A convergence of historical forces, including in particular the diffusion of the Phoenician alphabet and the resulting spread of literacy in the Greek world, led to a gradual displacement of the poets by the promotors of a more abstract, intellectual approach to knowledge. The sophists of Athens were exemplars of this movement. They removed the poets and the Greek pantheon of gods from rulership and replaced them with an empirical and pragmatic approach to cosmology and human relationships. A rising Athenian middle class was particularly attracted to the sophists' legitimization of materialism and individual ambition.

The critical power of the sophists' attack on traditional values, however, left Athens with a vacuum in common social standards. A native Athenian, Socrates, who Jaeger has called "the Solon of the moral world,"[64] came forward to remedy his city's social ills. But his fellow citizens were unable to make the radical change in consciousness that his philosophy demanded. In Socrates' and Plato's failure to

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[64]Jaeger, Vol. II, p. 28.

bring about real social change, one can see the basis for philosophy's turning away from the problems of social and political life and a preoccupation with the transcendence of the individual soul. The purpose of one's life is to cultivate his inner being. What is real is the abstract ideas. In a final judgment and afterlife, each person shall be rewarded.

The poets, the sophists, the philosophers--each group regarded itself as being preeminently competent to provide for the higher and adult education needs of the populace. In this chapter the struggle among the three for influence has been analyzed. Each arose to fill a particular ideological need. The poets, as carriers of oral and tribal cultural values, tended to focus on the communal interests--the content of their works served to maintain community identity and cohesion. The sophists came forward to provide for a pragmatic human interest--the need of individual citizens to obtain material and social standing and to control their environment through empirical and instrumental methods of inquiry and action. Socrates and his philosophy were needed to explain and fulfill a higher human interest--to transcend the strain of everyday social and political struggle and to lay out a moral imperative to govern communal and pragmatic interests.

The operation of these three human interests--the communal, the pragmatic, and the transcendental--can be

discovered in the field of modern adult education, but they take on different emphases because of some important differences between Athenian and modern American society. First, Athens in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. was much closer than people are today to tribal or primitive social structures. Only two centuries earlier, Athenian society had been based on kinship ties rather than organized civic and constitutional social structures. Enforcement of community mores was rigid and authoritarian, and group identity predominated over any expression of individual identity. Another primitive quality of the Greek psyche was its reliance on the concrete and superstitious rather than rational explanations for phenomena. Each Greek community had a multiplicity of gods who controlled not just the realm of external events but more importantly the realm of internal thoughts and emotions.

Modern societies, in contrast, tend to promote strong individuation of personality and a concomitant sense of individual responsibility. Rational and scientific methods of knowing tend to be prized over traditional, intuitive, or supernatural forms of knowing, and thus the communal and transcendental human interests are eclipsed by the pragmatic. Progress or human evolution comes to be seen as the result of application of instrumental reason; social governance is a technical problem for which transcendental values or social responsibility is irrelevant.

The American idealization of individualism is a complex phenomenon. The rugged individualist of the western frontier experienced relative freedom from social and institutional constraints. In contrast, modern workers are faced with a complex array of expectations regarding what is proper behavior. Cooperation with others and compliance with the rules of organizational "culture" are rewarded as much as displays of individual initiative and competence. These sometimes contradictory expectations are reinforced by the mass media, which glorify individual expression and rebellion from social constraints but at the same time enforce mass conformity into a limited range of attitudes and behaviors, most of which support corporate business interests. It is the central irony of modern life, as well as the source of much modern angst, that Americans believe so strongly in their rights of individual expression and yet live in a society whose organizational structures and cultural messages enforce a rigid conformism.

As a result of the increasing influence of individualism, rationalism, and scientism in modern life, manifestations of the pragmatic, the transcendental, and the communal interests in modern adult education take on new dimensions. Mezirow's recent attempt to construct a critical theory of adult education, described in Chapter I, reflects the modern preoccupation with pragmatic and individualistic interests; his model completely ignores the

classical notion that theory must be tied to a vision of the good life, which in turn is tied to a vision of a good society. Instead, Habermas's three cognitive interests are considered as learning domains that explain "personal learning" and the individual's learning needs. From this perspective, a modern version of the ancient sophists' pragmatic approach emerges. The technical learning domain in Mezirow's scheme follows a Tylerian model of curriculum development. Learning is associated with work activities and instrumental action. It is a technical problem of changing behavior through a sequence of activities including identifying current and desired behaviors, designing and administering a program of training activities, and evaluating gains in skills or competencies.

Manifestations of a pragmatic interest in modern adult education, however, can be considered as a much broader series of activities than Mezirow's stereotyped description of training and development for adults. The sophists have many modern counterparts who do not subscribe to the Tylerian model, but rather who employ skilled presentation (rhetorical) techniques and who promise quick solutions to practical problems. Especially in the field of business training, the marketplace is congested with professional teachers, who, like the sophists, represent a wide variety of approaches and philosophies. When viewed as providing for the pragmatic needs of the adult populace, the modern

sophists seem to share in several perspectives. First, they provide instruction in practical knowledge, not in the Greek sense of principled and skilled civic participation, but rather in a modern sense of knowledge developed for its instrumental value. Various methods of inquiry and decision making are prescribed, including use of empirical or scientific methods, but all are aimed at providing technical control rather than in fulfilling absolute values or broad social needs. In general, knowledge and reality are perceived as being temporal, relative, and contextual. Future events are measured in terms of probabilities. When human values are referenced, they tend to be humanistic and secular. Man remains the measure of all things to the modern sophists.

The learning approaches which in ancient Athens were classified as transcendental might best be categorized in modern adult education practice as those aimed at personal development. The focus on development and cultivation of individual potentials has strong parallels to the Socratic demand for improvement of the individual soul as the key aim of life. In distinguishing the pragmatic from the transcendental human interests in modern adult education, it also is helpful to consider Aristotle's concern with means and ends. Any human activity can be referenced as a means, an end, or perhaps both. Learning activities of the pragmatic sort tend to be utilitarian in function, serving

as means rather than ends. The aim of pragmatic learning activities typically is to control, to make, to change, within the environment of the material world, the marketplace, or everyday, mundane life. In contrast, transcendental learning activities tend to be ends in themselves rather than means to other ends. One studies philosophy or religion, one cultivates the intellect or soul, for instance, with no pragmatic or utilitarian function in mind. Learning is for learning's sake.

Transcendental types of learning also differ from the pragmatic in their degree of freedom. In Aristotle's philosophy, the free man engages in activities for their own sake, in contrast to the slave, whose activities are always utilitarian in function. The free man disdains activities that merely serve as means, including excessive proficiency in any skill, trade, or mechanical art. Ignoring for the moment the aristocratic and socially oppressive results of this philosophy, Aristotle maintains the relevant distinction that some activities are superior to others because they serve as ends rather than means and because they better express man's freedom from servile or utilitarian demands.

In Greek philosophy, the ultimate or final ends might be the good life, or leisure, or paideia. Individuals in modern American society have different ideals. Some modern learning activities seem clearly to reflect a transcendental

rather than a pragmatic interest; some people continue to study philosophy and religion, for instance. The Great Books program is an expression of an institutional attempt to satisfy the desire for transcendental learning. But many other, less bookish, learning activities ought to qualify as expressive of the transcendental interest. For instance, many non-vocational community education courses for adults have an element of learning for learning's sake. Self-directed learning activities of the transcendental type might include travel, various self-improvement projects, and participation in cultural and entertainment activities.

The transcendental learning approach of the Athenian philosophers had an aspect of "other worldliness" that is not so evident today. In Athens and during other periods of ancient times, warfare, natural disaster, and the basic struggle for subsistence perhaps created a greater desire for transcendence or withdrawal from worldly problems. In Hellenistic philosophies such as Platonism and Stoicism and in the emerging mystery cults that promised redemption and eternal life, one sees the influence of a widespread need to retire from the pressures of active social and political life. Life in modern societies also carries strains and warnings of apocalypse, but on the whole individuals living today seem to have less desire to transcend to another world. Rather, many people living today find more inspiring the Socratic prescription to cultivate the self in this

life. They may differ from Socrates in how they define arete, or the virtue they strive to develop; in general, they may replace the classical vocabulary that describes the human soul and its potentials with a modern clinical vocabulary that describes psychological health and dysfunction. But a basic human interest remains identifiable that honors ideals beyond the mundane and expedient and that prescribes personal development toward these ideals. It is this realm of learning activities that receives the label of the transcendental.

The communal interest in modern adult education contexts also shows the rising influence of individualism and rationalism. In contrast to modern pluralistic societies, the Athenian city-state was made of a relatively homogeneous group of citizens who saw individualistic displays as threatening to national cohesion. The poets were unanimous in regarding themselves as chief purveyors of the communal interest, but were mixed in their stances toward specific social and political issues. Modern political scientists often classify social interest groups on a continuum ranging from reactionary or conservative to liberal, progressive, and revolutionary. It is difficult to apply this type of classification to the poets and other promotors of community health and cohesion in ancient Athens. Poets such as Aristophanes at times seem blatantly reactionary by modern standards, but one also can identify a

general progressive and individualistic tone to much of the poetry and drama of the fifth century B.C.

In the literature of modern adult education in the United States, philosophies expressing a strong communal interest tend to balance this interest against a value for individual rights and freedoms. For example, in the writings of Lindeman in the 1920s, adult education is idealized as an activity that both emancipates the individual and promotes social progress. Lindeman compares adult education activities he had observed in Denmark with the ancient Greek ideal of paideia and civic participation. Danish farmers studied in people's colleges not for vocational ends but rather to make their lives "more interesting."[65] The same farmers participated in cooperative economic enterprises, thus ensuring the necessary common wealth and concomitant leisure necessary for paideia. In Lindeman's view, adult education is a process by which individuals attain the good life. But adult education must also be regarded as a collective enterprise through which workers "change the social order so that vital personalities will be creating a new environment in which their aspirations may be properly expressed."[66]

The chief promotors of the Great Books program, Hutchins and Adler, display a similar concern for

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[65]Lindeman, p. xvi. [66]Ibid., p. 14.

balancing individual emancipation with social cohesion and progress. Steeped in the tradition of Aristotle's Politics, they prescribe a liberal arts curriculum for both children and adults that prepares for the good life and good citizenship. All citizens have the right to the highest quality of education, liberal rather than vocational, an education that prepares a free man for cultivated use of leisure and for principled civic participation. Despite its equalitarian and populist perspective, the liberal arts program of Hutchins and Adler has tended to find adherents only among the more privileged social classes. Whether this reflects a failure in design remains to be seen, but the Great Books program can be criticized as being excessively preoccupied with the idea that a disciplined reading program of the great books is the only route to paideia. The Greek philosophers themselves were not particularly bookish. Plato characterizes Socrates as regarding book publishing as inferior and dangerous compared to the older habits of oral transmission and memorization. In Aristotle's Politics, paideia was to be gained from immersion in a social milieu--the practical life--but also through contemplation--a withdrawing to a state of receptivity, reflection, and wonder at the hidden world of abstractions and theory. Informal discourse with friends, as well as more organized educational activities, were to the ancient Greeks a source and expression of paideia, as were memorization of and

reflection upon poetic texts such as the Iliad. To the mass of people in modern society, the Great Books unfortunately do not appear to have the appeal that a literary text such as the Iliad had to the ancient Greeks. A modern ideal of adult paideia might better succeed that broadens its prescriptions for educative activities beyond the readings and discussion group approach of the Great Books program.

The literature of adult education in the United States during the last twenty years shows a decline in the communal interest as a source of values in the field. Mezirow's attempt at development of a critical theory of adult education is perhaps symptomatic of the unwillingness of adult educators to face the realm of social and political values. In his article, Mezirow introduces Habermas's threefold scheme of the technical, practical, and emancipatory cognitive interests. In adapting these "learning domains" to adult learning, Mezirow focuses almost entirely on individual, psychological issues. The emancipatory interest is identified with "perspective transformation," a process by which individuals become "critically aware of how and why the structure of psycho-cultural assumptions has come to constrain the way we see ourselves and our relationships, reconstituting the structure to permit a more inclusive and discriminating integration of experience and acting upon these new

understandings."[67] Habermas, unlike Mezirow, deals explicitly with not only the individual implications of critical reflection but also the larger social implications. After all, his writings aim at development of a new social theory, in which critical method seeks to explain and also to guide social processes.

Mezirow's "charter for andragogy" depicts an essentially passive stance for the adult educator in regard to political or social action. The adult educator avoids "indoctrination" because he respects "the moral distinction between helping the learner understand his/her full range of choices and how to improve the quality of choosing vs. encouraging the learner to make specific acts."[68] It could be argued that adult educators need not feel bound by any such obligation to remain neutral in regard to choices of political action. However, the point here is that in the tradition of the Greek poets, Aristotle, and Habermas's new Marxist synthesis, theory must be regarded as continuous with action. Social obligations exist and they take various ideological positions. Adult educators who so desire may attempt to avoid injection of political stances in their professional activities, but that does not prevent them from encouraging active civic or political participation, just as

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[67] Mezirow, Critical Theory, p. 6.

[68] Ibid., p. 22.

they encourage individual growth and development or vocational success.

One of the reasons adult educators have difficulty finding a place for the communal interest is that they live in such a large, fragmented society. In the small, ancient city-state, poets operated in the sacred arena of the gods, as did the democratic assembly in which all citizens could participate. Civic life, entertainment, religion, and education had a unity in the Greek city-state that can never be matched in a large, pluralistic society. Though individuals continue to attach to group identities, they take diverse forms--the nuclear family, the local church, the corporation, ethnic groups. For many, no expression of the communal interest seems available, and the result is the modern state of anomie. The educative presentations of the Greek poets have been replaced in modern life by electronic mass media that appeal to the lowest common denominator of taste, projecting continuous messages that encourage incessant consumption, fashion, and arrogance toward authority.

In the coming decade, the most likely expression of individual and group social action by adult educators will be in the area of literacy education. Public awareness of the extent of the illiteracy problem is growing, and time is ripe for an expansion of the resources adult educators need to develop effective literacy programs.

Aside from this opportunity for adult educators to take an active role in both local and national development, most adult educators likely will continue to serve more pragmatic interests of their clientele--providing the kinds of technical and vocational skills training that dominate the adult education marketplace. Like Plato's sophists, they are skilled at listening to the demands of the beast, public opinion, and satisfying its hungers. Many adult educators also are not unlike T.S. Eliot's Prufrock in their acceptance of the role of

> An attendant lord, one that will
> do to swell a progress, start a scene or two,
> Advise the prince; no doubt, an easy tool,
> Deferential, glad to be of use,
> Politic, cautious and meticulous.

But adult educators also are concerned with the individual psychological lives, if not the souls, of their clients. The theoretical models that they subscribe to, such as Knowles' andragogy, reflect what is essentially an ideological position that places ultimate value on the individual will of the client. It is their aim to help individuals realize their capacity for autonomy and personal development Adult educators want to service not only their clients' pragmatic learning needs but also their need to transcend the mundane, to establish and strive for an ideal of moral or spiritual or "psychological" perfection. If Socrates were alive today, he might diagnose educators as having gone too far in this direction, that they have become so

preoccupied with individual health that they have lost sight of the need for health in their communities.

In attempting to apply the three categories of learning interests to modern adult education, the purpose is not to present a theoretical model to be used in further research. An understanding of the various forces and issues that affected adult learning in ancient Athens is relevant today because adult educators continue to discuss the same philosophical issues discussed by the Greeks. The literature is filled with soul-searching articles about whether the profession ought to be meeting social needs or practical needs or the needs of clients for individual growth. The fact that these writings absent-mindedly repeat so many of the educational discussions held 2,500 years ago by the Greeks is no accident; the literature of this period forms an important part of the core of our cultural heritage. To speak intelligently about our values and ideals we must be aware of this heritage.

CHAPTER V

IMPLICATIONS FOR MODERN ADULT EDUCATION

A continuing observation of this study has been that there are continuities between the past and the present. In the educational theories and practice of fifth and fourth century B.C. Athens, one finds much that resembles current theory and practice. But the intent of searching out this evidence is not merely to prove that there is nothing new under the sun--that modern adult education derives from Greek philosophy. Modern American society is different from that of ancient Athens in important ways. Modern explanations and prescriptions for adult learning also differ. Historical and comparative approaches to research are valuable because they help one to see not only continuities but also what is distinctive about one's culture.

In this concluding chapter, an attempt will be made to sort out the old from the new. First, certain concepts important to the ancient Athenians will be tested for applicability to modern adult learning. Second, certain concepts in modern adult education will be analyzed for their applicability to fifth and fourth century B.C. Athens.

The Greek Idea of Leisure

Aristotle believed leisure was a necessary condition for paideia and the good life. Leisure was not contrasted with activity but rather was considered the highest form of activity, an activity of the part of the soul that possesses speculative reason. The opposite of leisure (scholia) can be translated as occupation (ascholia), or the type of activity pursued not for its own sake but for the sake of something else. Aristotle also contrasts leisure with recreation and amusement or play, which merely offer rest from occupation. Leisure is an activity in its own right, the highest form of activity, which is spent in diagoge, or cultivation of the mind.

The concept of leisure through history has been associated with learning for its own sake and would thus seem to have pointed application in the field of adult education. The term suffered something of a setback in its use by Veblen at the turn of the century to describe an advantaged social class lacking in discipline and productive activity. More recently, social critics and "leisure studies" academics[1] have explored the concept of leisure with mixed reviews of its applicability to modern society. A continuing criticism of the concept is that it encourages a

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[1]For a modern Thomist view, see Josef Pieper, Leisure: The Basis of Culture (New York, 1952). The perspectives of "leisure studies" academics are surveyed in Thomas L. Goodale and Peter A. Witt, editors, Recreation and Leisure: Issues in an Era of Change (State College, Pa: 1980).

split between the individual's work life and his private life that is destructive to psychological health. In this view, modern industrial society has alienated the individual from his work. Unable to express himself and find identity in his worklife, the individual finds limited compensation in the idea that leisure can replace work as a source of individual expression.

Aristotle, however, saw leisure not as encouraging a sort of schizophrenia but as an expression of autonomous, self-directed activity, gained at the expense of work for other ends. Above all, Aristotle's vision of man was of a whole being, for whom political life was continuous with ethical life and who attained happiness through exercise of moral virtue. Leisure was a goal that allowed man to engage in his most sublime activities--learning and self-reflection.

Under the influence of andragogy, adult educators too often ignore that it is adults, not children, who most often pursue learning for learning's sake, and not merely to solve problems or improve performance in social roles. It is adults who support and seek out the many aspects of culture that provide continuing cultivation of the intellect. Aristotle's concept of leisure helps modern adult educators understand the continuous desire of many adults to learn in areas that provide no practical benefit.

The Greek View of the Teacher-Student Relationship

During the fifth century B.C., children began to receive instruction in classroom settings, but youth and young adults continued most often to learn in the older tradition of a one-to-one relationship with an elder. This idea that education operates within the framework of a loving, paternal, but also passionate, relationship between an older and a younger man continued to hold strong influence in the schools for higher education in Athens in the fourth century. We find continuities between this Greek understanding of education and the modern recognition that learning and personal development in adulthood are often tied to a mentor relationship.

In Athenian life, the glorification of the love and learning relationship between an older and younger man had its source in the social patterns of feudal society. The aristocracy formed a warrior club in which masculine virtues such as strength, valor, and loyalty were idealized. Homosexuality came to be legitimized, but only under the conditions of a complex set of rules in many ways similar to the code of chivalric love in the middle ages. Carnal passion was de-emphasized and in its place was put forth an idealization of a loving relationship that brought out the highest virtues in both parties. The older man took on the role of model, guide, and initiator; the romantic nature of the relationship created in him a desire to "shine" before

the eyes of his beloved. The younger man, in turn, desired to show himself worthy of his lover. During this feudal time, education was concerned with teaching youth to become aristocrats and knights. It had no technical content, but rather consisted of initiation into the codes and rites of a closed society. Individual youths were invited into these romantic and educational relationships as a result of their birth and personal characteristics. These esoteric and aristocratic qualities of education continued to be prized in the fifth and fourth centuries in Athens; it is understandable that the sophists, who took on any customer for a fee, would have been perceived by the Athenian populace as decadent.

Plato's Symposium and other philosophical literature of the fourth century B.C. display the highest expression of the dignity and morality of the mentor relationship. Socrates is portrayed as the epitome of the loving teacher, though he denies that he has pupils or engages in education. The personal and informal nature of his teaching is evident in his careful choice of terms to describe his relationships. He speaks of the "association" of the teacher and the learner, who engage in "conversation." "Leisure" becomes a euphemism for school and "pastime" for lecture. After Socrates' death, these subtle expressions were adopted by the academic establishment from which Socrates had tried so hard to disassociate himself.

Though, in idealized form, the parties to the mentor relationship were an elder man and an adolescent, one can assume that elements of the same psychology controlled many other teacher-student relationships. In all human societies, modern as well as ancient, it is commonplace for individuals to enter into a personal, learning relationship with a mentor. In recent years, lifespan psychologists have recognized the importance of these relationships to adults of all ages. In American society, adults in their twenties, thirties, and even forties are considered "young" in many contexts, and during these years they often experience career growth through relationships with mentors. The case likely was similar in Athenian society in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.

The Greek Disdain for Technical and Vocational Education

Another feature of Greek education that carries over into modern society is the desire to make education something more than mere training in technical or vocational skills. In previous sections, some of the roots of this perspective have been considered--the interests of an aristocratic, leisured class, the emphasis placed on civic participation, and the belief in the superiority of the abstract and theoretical over the concrete and practical. This view is succinctly stated in Plato's Laws:

> Then let us not leave the meaning of education ambiguous or ill-defined. At present, when we speak in terms of praise or blame about the bringing-up of each person, we call one man educated and another uneducated, although the uneducated man may be sometimes very well educated for the calling of a retail trader, or of a captain of a ship, and the like. For we are not speaking of education in this narrower sense, but of that other education in virtue from youth upwards, which makes a man eagerly pursue the ideal perfection of citizenship, and teaches him how rightly to rule and how to obey. This is the only education which, upon our view, deserves the name; that other sort of training, which aims at the acquisition of wealth or bodily strength, or mere cleverness apart from intelligence and justice, is mean and illiberal, and is not worthy to be called education at all.[2]

Through ancient times and the middle ages, the liberal arts were developed to provide the true paideia Plato describes. In modern education, particularly within the universities, this view of education continues to be influential.

If the Greeks were fairly united in their view of the value of liberal studies, they were at times in conflict as to what kind of life that it should lead to. The writings of Plato and Aristotle provide a full expression of the conflict and tension between the active life and the life of contemplation, the obligation to serve one's polis and the obligation to serve the city within oneself. Aristotle makes the firm prescription that ethical life is continuous with political life. Moral excellence is expressed in one's virtue and skill in public affairs. Individualism is a danger to the polis, and must be

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[2]Plato, Laws, Jowett translation, Vol. II, pp. 424-425.

subservient to constitutional law and the interests of the larger group.

Socrates and Plato display a continuing ambivalence for the obligation toward the active life. To be a good citizen, one must begin by perfecting one's individual souls. The commotion and strife of the assembly, the strains of everyday living, even death itself, all are mere illusions. What is real are the eternal ideas--truth, beauty, goodness.

Aristotle's conception of a balance between the active and the contemplative life lost ground with the rise of Christianity in the dark ages. The split has been made even more complete in modern life from developments such as bureaucratization, alienation, and the dominance of instrumental reason over moral or ethical values. In adult education, however, in debates over issues concerning social responsibility and individual development, there remain echoes of the Greek belief in the whole person, actively engaged in his community but also striving for the perfection that lies in contemplation.

Paideia as a Greek Ideal

The concept of paideia lies at the heart of the Greeks' understanding of education as a lifelong activity. In its early usage, in the fifth century B.C., the term refers to child-rearing. A related term, paidia, shares the root pais, meaning child. In the writings of Plato, a distinction between the two terms begins to emerge. Paideia

comes to mean education, while paidia is associated with the relaxed play of children.

The Greek concept of education also comes to mean something more than preparatory instruction. It becomes a central ideal within its ethos, an ideal which, according to Jaeger, sought

> the creation of a higher type of man. They believed that education [paideia] embodied the purpose of all human effort. It was, they held, the ultimate justification for the existence of both the individual and the community. . . . It was ultimately in the form of paideia, "culture," that the Greeks bequeathed the whole achievement of the Hellenic mind to the other nations of antiquity.[3]

Paideia was the result of the individual's associations within the city-state. The laws of the polis, one's participation in political activities, the enjoyment of drama and other events at festivals, all of these environmental influences were recognized as educative forces that continued to operate on the individual throughout his life.

In Plato, paideia begins to take on a meaning that transcends the individual's relationship to civic culture. The philosophical man has clear sight of another principality, the realm of the divine. It is through obedience to the laws of the state within himself that man unfolds to his true nature. His life is aimed toward a target, a telos or purpose, a gradual working out.

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[3]Jaeger, Vol. I, p. xvii.

Paideia thus becomes the lifelong pursuit of one's true nature, the "city within" that is modeled in the "imitation of God."

Athenian educators of the fourth century B.C. appear to have been unanimous in their support of the ideal of paideia. In contrast, modern educators seem sorely lacking in a similar ideal to guide their work. Among the many causes of the lack of common goals and conceptions is the analytic effect of academic disciplines, which force educators to separate theory from practice, to divorce the individual student from his social context, and to splinter his education among specialties such as elementary, secondary, higher, and adult education.

Many educators seem to have lost sight of what the Greeks saw clearly--the need to see individuals as whole beings, with social as well as personal responsibilities, immersed within the influences of a cultural milieu, and moving with purpose toward an ideal.

Modern Ideas About Adult Learning Applied to Ancient Athens

One of the most commonplace assumptions in the literature of adult education is that in modern society, because of the rapid rate of change and technological progress, learning has become a lifelong process. In order to cope successfully with the successive shocks of changing life, each individual must be a proficient learner

throughout the lifespan. Ancient Athens also experienced a period of rapid social and technological change in the fifth century, and its citizens were pressed to adapt and learn new ways of thinking and coping. In both this country and in ancient Athens, a major victory in war was followed by rapid economic expansion and distribution of wealth. A rising middle class both created and sought to learn new technologies, and also sought meaningful ways to use their newfound wealth and leisure.

The Greeks also were explicitly aware of the need for lifelong learning. The 6th century B.C. maxim of Solon, for instance, recommends that "I would fain grow old, learning many things." In the mid-fifth century B.C., the famed dramatist Aeschylus said, "Learning is ever in the freshness of its youth, even for the old." In Plato's dialogues, Socrates and his companions frequently and unashamedly admit to a compulsion to lifelong learning. Then as today lifelong learning was more an ideal than a wide practice. Most Athenian citizens probably did not actively and continously pursue purposeful learning projects thoughout the lifespan. But there is clear evidence that the ideal was explicitly stated and was widely shared.

Andragogy is an important source of modern ideas about adult learning that has applicability to fifth and fourth century B.C. Athens. As it has been defined by Malcolm Knowles, andragogy is based on four assumptions about the

characteristics of adults, as distinguished from children, as learners. As each individual matures, (1) his self concept moves from one of being dependent toward one of being a self-directing human being, (2) he accumulates a growing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasing resource for learning, (3) his readiness to learn becomes oriented increasingly to the developmental tasks of his social roles, and (4) his time perspective changes from one of postponed application of knowledge to immediacy of application, and accordingly his orientation toward learning shifts from one of subject centeredness to one of problem centeredness.

In Aristophanes' Clouds, the satirical attack on the sophistic movement in Athens, and in other texts that depict the educational activities of the sophists, some confirmation is found that andragogy accurately defines the nature of adult learning. Strepsiades entered a course of learning to solve an immediate problem, how to cheat his creditors in court. His readiness to learn was strong because of a new social role he was pressed to take on--speaking publicly in court and in the assembly. His learning was in some degree self-directed; he voluntarily entered Socrates' school, and through Socrates' teaching technique, he was pushed to draw from within himself new philosophical understandings. He obviously was a man of

mature age and experience, and his experience contributed to his motivation for and approach to learning.

The Athenians also might agree in principle with the andragogical assumption that adults differ from children in important ways and that their methods of teaching and learning also should differ. Children were perceived as undeveloped in the rational principle and controlled by appetites and emotions. Use of forceful direction and compulsion were seen as more appropriate for the younger ages. Adults were regarded as being more capable learners because of their greater experience and reasoning ability. Evidence also suggests that the Greeks believed that experiential and discovery techniques were more effective for older learners. Aging was seen as having some negative implications for learning. The old have inadequate memories for learning and often are too cautious and "modest" to take advantage of learning opportunities.

There are, however, many aspects of Athenian culture that worked against widespread acceptance of the assumptions to which modern adult educators give credence. First was the point of view that one's birth determined his status in society and that noblemen should have personal instruction to learn the ways of society. The self-learned man was held suspect. The Athenian approach to democracy also discouraged individual ambition and desire for preeminence. Particularly during the wartime years,

collective values and interests suppressed much individual desire for what moderns today prize as individual autonomy and self-direction. The strong collective identity of the city-state encouraged a wide range of communal and transcendental values, and within such an environment the pragmatic and individualistic assumptions that Knowles makes about adult nature simply do not hold. If Knowles' assumptions are considered one-by-one, one finds strong confirmation from the classical texts that Athenian adults learned as they were motivated by their social roles. Less evidence is available that their learning was accompanied by a strong desire for self-direction or to solve only immediate, personal problems. Concerning the role of experience in adult learning, the ancient Greeks had much to say, some of which is contradictory to Knowles' assumption about the centrality of experience to adult learning.

In the writings of Plato and Aristotle, one sees a growing self-consciousness about the existence and nature of experience. Aristotle perceived humans as differing from animals not only because they can perceive and remember, but also because their experience of these faculties helps establish higher mental functions such as reason. The philosophers recognized that perceptions of the world form the experiences through which people gain knowledge, and, particularly in the practical as opposed to the theoretical sciences, knowledge gained through experience

was more effective than knowledge gained from book learning or theoretical speculation. In Aristotle's view, however, theory was far superior to practical experience in the sense that an individual who understands the principles underlying his knowledge or skill is the best teacher of that area of knowledge and thus is wiser than the skilled actor who has no theoretical understanding.

Aristotle recognized that adults, because of their experience, are better students of some subjects--politics, for example. He also admits that the young are better students of abstract subjects such as mathematics. One can infer from these statements the argument that Mortimer Adler has made, that only adults are capable of becoming educated, in the sense of becoming fully developed human beings, aware of their cultural heritage, and capable of making cultivated use of their leisure. One does not find in the classical sources, however, a clear expression of Knowles' idea that as the human moves through the lifespan, he accumulates a growing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasing resource for learning.

The Greek sources also do not reveal much speculative effort on developing a dichotomy between child and adult human nature. The great Greek philosophers might share in a growing consensus among adult educators that the distinction andragogy makes between childhood and adulthood is an artificial one that too often distorts an understanding of

adult learning. The CAL model of Cross discussed in Chapter I, for example, points out that important personal characteristics of individuals--physiological aging, sociocultural life phases, and psychological developmental stages--are continuous variables. The Greeks would seem to agree that growth through the lifespan is a single, unified, developmental process. In Aristotle in particular is found the beginnings of an organic view of human nature, that each individual is unfolding in a gradual movement toward his inborn potentialities.

Distinct social roles were assigned in Athenian society based on the citizen's age ranking. That various public offices and duties carried age requirements of thirty, forty, and even sixty years indicates the Greeks, like modern Americans, saw adulthood not as a single class but as a progression in competency and experience. Early adulthood, the period between twenty and thirty, was in Athenian society apparently a period of extended adolescence, allowing time for experimentation and higher education.

Adult educators today are very aware that political, social, and technological change has profound effects on patterns of adult learning. The ancient world of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. also was subject to social and technological upheavals. Modern students of technology, in looking back on ancient Greece, tend to see the adoption of

the Phoenician alphabet as the most important technological change taking place in the Greek world. According to Havelock, the new alphabet came into use after 700 B.C. and "was an explosive technology, revolutionary in its effects on human culture, in a way not precisely shared by any other invention."[4] By modifying the Phoenician alphabet to include new characters for vowel sounds, the Greeks developed a maximum economy in transcription of human speech.

The spread of this new, efficient form of writing led to a profound change in human consciousness, says Havelock; the "alphabetic mind" emerged, which was able to convert

> the Greek tongue into an artifact, thereby separating it from the speaker and making it into a "language," that is, an object available for inspection, reflection, analysis. Was this merely a matter of creating the notion of grammar? It is true that Greek originally had no word for a word singly identified, but only various terms referring to spoken sound, and that syntactical categories and parts of speech first became subjects of discourse toward the end of the fifth century, after nearly three hundred years of alphabetic usage. But something deeper was going on. A visible artifact was preservable without recourse to memory. It could be rearranged, reordered, and rethought to produce forms of statements not previously available because not easily memorizable. If it were possible to designate the new discourse by any one word, the appropriate word would be conceptual. Nonliterate speech had favored discourse describing action; the postliterate altered the balance in favor of reflection. The syntax of Greek began to adapt to

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[4]Eric A. Havelock, The Literate Revolution in Greece and its Cultural Consequences (Princeton, N.J., 1982), p. 6.

> an increasing opportunity to state propositions in place of describing events; This was the "bottom line" of the alphabetic legacy to postalphabetic culture.[5]

During the time of Socrates and Plato, the pace of change increased, as the oral culture, with its emphasis on aural sensation and memorization, gave way to the new habits of visual communication and reflection on linear sequences of words.

The writings of Plato document the struggle taking place in ancient Athens to develop a new vocabulary to express the growing intellectual abilities that accompanied literacy. Old words took on new, abstract meanings. The new intellectuals were preoccupied with distinctions, categories, universal truths. Whereas in the oral age, social and cosmological truths were best preserved in the narrative structure of epic poems, the new age had the linguistic tools to state its propositions directly. The abstract categories that held truth themselves came to be worshipped as the Ideas or Forms, and thus the Greek philosophers came to see their own rationality as infinite in capability--that knowledge leads surely to virtue.

The Greeks' inebriation with the power of rationality was shortlived. The remainder of ancient times offered many hardships to the mass of humans, and most found ample evidence to support the belief of the apostle Paul, "The good that I would, I do not; the evil that I would not, that I do."

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[5] Ibid., p. 7.

In modern times, many observers sense that technological change is again bringing about profound alterations in human consciousness. McLuhan and others have pointed to the inevitability of changes in how people look at the world as a result of the new forms of electronic communications. These changes are perhaps still too recent to allow a real understanding of their nature and significance. The experience of fifth and fourth century B.C. Athens, however, seems to bear out the view that technological change creates corresponding changes in the role and content of a society's educational system. Adults are first in line to learn to use each new technology.

With some exceptions, current theory in adult education seems to hold up fairly well when applied to the experiences of adult learners in ancient Athens. The ancient Athenians agreed that learning should be a lifelong activity. Their learning was tied to new social roles being thrust upon them. Their learning also at times seems to follow Knowles' assumptions of being problem-centered, self-directed, and influenced by their reservoir of experience.

Athenian daily life, however, was in many essential ways different from life in modern American society. Athens in fifth and fourth century B.C. was a small city-state in which all citizens could belong to and actively participate in the governing assembly. It practiced democracy in a pure form and demonstrated many of the weaknesses of the

democratic form, including a tendency to support demagogues, a quickness to exile and even execute fellow citizens who excelled, and a collective unwillingness to forgo various personal and political gratifications. The Athenian state also depended on an economic system repugnant to modern tastes. It depended on slavery, subjugation of women, and imperialist expansion. The masses remained under the belief that supernatural forces controlled both nature and human destiny. A visitor from modern times could not ignore in ancient Athens the violence, the irrationality, the primitiveness of the way of life. And it is to our society's credit that social classes refused citizenship in ancient Athens have the ability here to make significant advances toward emancipation. Yet the achievements of the Golden Age continue to have much relevance and appeal today.

This study has used a historical approach to test some of the prevailing ideas in modern adult education and has encountered some difficulty in documenting the validity of these ideas or assumptions about adult learning in the ancient Greek experience. It is likely that modern adult education researchers making a similar attempt using comparative approaches would encounter similar problems--that the assumptions of andragogy might not meet strong confirmation when applied in the modern cultures of, for example, China, Japan, Russia, India, or the Moslem countries. The American conception of adult learning is

strongly influenced by some peculiar elements of American cultural experience, including the idealization of values such as self-reliance, individualism, pragmatism. Other societies, as well as other periods of history, encourage greater expression of communal and transcendental interests and values, for instance, community and family cohesion, religious authority, or development of the soul for an afterlife. In American social sciences such as adult education, too often what is presented as scientific fact about human nature is in fact a reflection of prevailing ideologies. The propensity of adult education researchers to overgeneralize from the evidence and to ignore how much their theories are controlled by cultural values is in part caused by a misuse of methodology. The quantitative, empirical techniques of inquiry so highly prized in adult education caution against overgeneralization, but the generals always are fighting a losing battle in disciplining their troops. Those methods of inquiry that employ hermeneutics and critical theory also must guard against overgeneralization. A problem with the empirical-analytic approaches is that they promise nomological truth; the scientific method when used correctly bears absolute and eternally true laws and facts. In contrast, the hermeneutical researcher begins with the understanding that his individual, cultural experience profoundly influences his interpretation of data, and, more importantly, that

whatever interpretations he makes are likely being distorted by his desire to apply his interpretations in a new context. For example, the biblical scholar using hermeneutic technique recognizes that intense reflection is necessary to discover the personal, philosophical, and religious presuppositions he brings to the text. He also acknowledges that he distorts in order to make relevant the interpretations he makes.

> Descriptive exegesis tries to state what the text said to its original readers. But the very act of description is also a new creation. At the most obvious and fundamental level, the exegesis of a biblical text involves explaining a passage written in Greek most likely by a Jewish-Christian author under the sway of the Hellenistic culture of the Roman empire to a twentieth-century audience of Americans (or whatever other national group) who speak English and live in what is variously described as the post-enlightenment age or the atomic age. The literary form in which the descriptive exegesis is presented may be a commentary or an article in a scholarly journal and differs radically from that of the original text, which may be a parable or a miracle story or letter. The concerns of the exegete are objectivity, clarity, logical consistency, and precision in expression--not necessarily the primary concerns of the religious writers in antiquity. The point is that even the most apparently objective and unbiased exegesis necessarily involves translation into a different language, a different literary genre, and a different framework of thought.[6]

Attempts to convert human experience into scientific data suffer from similar distortions of meaning. Critical reflection is an aid in sorting out which findings seem to hold truth and which are reifications--for example, which

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[6]Daniel J. Harrington, Interpreting the New Testament: A Practical Guide (Wilmington, Del., 1979), p. 131.

assumptions of andragogy seem to describe human nature and which merely reflect prevailing ideologies.

In this study, the categories of the pragmatic, the transcendental, and the communal interests were used as a heuristic tool to discover how prevailing ideologies might have influenced the climate for adult learning in ancient Athens. In the sophists, the philosophers, and the poets, each interest found a strong proponent. In modern adult education, the pragmatic interest seems to dominate. Communal and transcendental motives for learning appear to be in decline because of their lack of instrumental value in modern life. The Greek classics remind us of the many values and ideals that constitute our humanity. Paideia, the lifelong pursuit of learning, is a Greek ideal that has particular relevance to students of adult learning.

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