

**School as a Place of Leisure:
Reconceiving Leisure with Dewey's Qualitative Thinking**

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Abstract

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This study aims to reconceive the meaning of leisure in school using John Dewey's theory of education. Though the English word "school" and the Greek word "*scholé*," which means leisure, are etymologically related, it is almost impossible to find any relationship between them in contemporary schools. Posed differently, for modern people school is not a place of leisure any more. Modern people understand leisure as a time not to work, as an escape from work. However, for the ancients leisure was a very sacred activity through which they could find their true identity. Therefore, in considering the original meaning of the term leisure, reviving leisure in school means to make a classroom sacred. For Dewey, the necessity for the teacher to provide an appropriate educational environment for the development of a student's potential is no less sacred than the duties of a priest. This kind of inquiry can help contemporary educators revitalize the deepest meanings in the project of education.

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Acknowledgments

The main idea of my dissertation was initiated while I read John Dewey's *Art as Experience* with Professor Megan J. Lavery in my second year of doctoral study. When I read the third chapter of *Art as Experience*, I sensed some similarity between Dewey's conception of perception and leisure. In the following summer I had a chance to attend PESGB summer school with Professor David T. Hansen who was a main instructor in that program. On the last day, I presented an idea that there might be some similarities between Dewey's perception and leisure. My idea was not developed, rather it was just an undeveloped hypothesis. But Professor Hansen took hold my pedagogical babbling. In the following fall semester, he encouraged me to develop that idea. I think my brief idea might have been forsaken were it not for his suggestion. I really appreciate Professor Hansen's pedagogical insight. He took hold of my primitive babbling and directed it to become a language. As I developed my ideas, Professor Lavery always warmly encouraged me. I have learned a lot about the role of teachers from Professor Hansen and Professor Lavery. So the process of writing dissertation itself was a pedagogically meaningful journey for me.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1. Purpose and Rationale for the study

The English word “school,” which we take to mean “educational institution,” originates from the Greek word “*scholé*,” which means leisure.¹ If this etymological cue is taken, it is not implausible to consider that school and leisure are somehow related in its origin. In fact, school for the ancient Greeks was a place for the leisurely pursuit of knowledge for its own sake.² How should we respond to this etymological relationship between school and leisure? Can we still say that school and leisure are related today? Put differently, do we engage in leisure at school? Is school a place of leisure? Some might scoff at this idea and regard it as anachronistic. They might argue that the original relationship between school and leisure has long been abolished and that school is no longer a place of leisure. The plethora of advertisements placed by educational institutions on the New York City subway would strongly suggest that school is no longer a place of leisure, but a place for job preparation. Moreover, many of us might remember our days in school not as times of leisure but as times of endless assignments in the classroom, perpetual homework, and considerable stress. Based on this recognition, the purpose of this dissertation is to recapture the relationship between school and leisure and to argue that school is still a place of leisure and that it should remain one. The question is why school should be a place of leisure. Why does leisure retain significance for school today?

¹ “Old English *scōl*, *scolu*, via [Latin](#) from [Greek](#) *skholē* ‘leisure, philosophy, lecture place,’ reinforced in Middle English by [Old French](#) *escole*.” *Oxford English dictionary*. (2003). Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

² Bowen, James. *A History of Western Education*. London: Methuen, 1972, 67.

Before turning to these questions, the question of what leisure is should be answered in the first place. For the modern understanding of leisure and the ancient understanding of it are fundamentally different, and one's understanding of leisure determines the meaning of school as a place of leisure. To put it briefly, modern people view leisure as an activity to relieve stress from work. When we think of activities that provide leisure, traveling, reading, shopping, climbing, biking, watching sports, and so on come to mind. Modern people restore their exhausted bodies and minds through leisure, and companies give their employees vacation time because employers expect better productivity at work. Consequently, modern people cannot define leisure without work. The modern concept of leisure relies on the concept of work.³

In contrast, as I will explain in detail in Chapter 2, for the ancients, the purpose of leisure was not merely to relieve stress from work. If modern people engage in leisure in order to work more efficiently, the ancients, as Aristotle put it in *Nicomachean Ethics*, worked in order to have leisure.⁴ Through leisure, the ancients recognized the limits of humanity and experienced what I would call the grace of God given to human beings, even though I appreciate their views are not reducible to a Christian framing. They had a quite diverse horizon of religious beliefs, some mono- and some pantheistic. My fundamental point is that they truly 'found' themselves through leisure. I will be elucidating this claim throughout what follows.

³ The definition of leisure in dictionary is "time when one is not working or occupied; free time." *Oxford English dictionary*. (2003). Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

⁴ "We are busy that we may have leisure." Aristotle, *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1177b.

As indicated, the value of leisure for modern people is different than for ancient people. For modern people, leisure is an activity with an external purpose, i.e. work, while leisure for the ancients was an end in itself.

Further, modern people are likely to miss the significance of the distance between school and leisure. Leisurely activities – those intended to alleviate stress – can be done anywhere outside school. For instance, a student who has just taken an exam can relax from the stress of studying by shopping with friends, attending the theater, or exercising. So it is somewhat tolerable for modern people that school is not a place for leisure but a place of work; studying hard to get good grades can be endured to some extent for the sake of a better life in the future. Thus, the argument that school should be a place of leisure – that is, a place of relieving stress – might seem senseless, mere nostalgia for a past long gone. Such a perception, however, would be the result of connecting school with a modern concept of leisure.

Connecting school with leisure in its ancient sense leads to a different perception of the situation. As mentioned above, the ancients found the true self through leisure. In the ancient sense, then, the proposition that school is a place for leisure means that school is a place for the discovery of the true self. Accordingly, the fact that school is no longer a place for leisure means that it is no longer possible for a student to find a true self in school. Assuming that the discovery of the true self is unlikely to be achieved outside of school, if school and leisure as the activity of seeking true self are logically related, then the fact that the school is no longer a place for leisure becomes a very serious situation – it suggests that there are few places left to discover the true self.

To illustrate how the modern school lacks leisure, I will reflect on and critique my own education growing up in South Korea.⁵ South Korea is known internationally for its high performing students. For instance, in the 2012 Program for International Student Assessment test (PISA), South Korea ranked 7th in Science and 5th in both Math and Reading among 65 participating countries.⁶ Although the high level of performance of South Korean students is undeniable, South Korea's education system has failed to cultivate happy students.⁷ It is not surprising for me to hear that South Korean students are surveyed as the least happy or content with their lives among their peers in OECD member states.⁸ Sadly, the internationally celebrated academic achievement of South Korean students has come with a high cost: the sacrifice of the precious happiness of their youth.

For South Korean students, in general, to study means homework and preparing for exams. Problems or tasks are assigned from without, and students simply need to strive to solve them. Basically, a problem that a teacher assigns does not become their own problem; students take up the problem merely "as if it were their own."⁹ In this educational situation, skills that solve given problems quickly and correctly become highly valued, but the authentic curiosities and interests of the students themselves are not considered and esteemed. This educational

⁵ Unfortunately, modern schools lack both modern meaning of leisure (stress relieving from work) and ancient meaning of leisure (discovery of true self).

⁶ <https://www.oecd.org/pisa/keyfindings/pisa-2012-results-overview.pdf>

⁷ Students' unhappiness is also associated with a lack of leisure. First, students suffer from excessive academic stress due to the lack of modern sense of leisure. Second, because of the lack of ancient meaning of leisure, students are not given the opportunity to know themselves in school.

⁸ http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2011/04/117_65354.html

⁹ Boostrom, Robert E. *Thinking: the foundation of critical and creative learning in the classroom*. New York: Teachers College Press, 2005, 135.

culture fails to encourage students to explore who they are and what they want to be. Very few high achieving South Korean students develop their own dream of life. The basic common goal of life in school is to enter prestigious universities and attain a privileged social position. At the end of a long exhausting, and competitive education, students are asked to choose and apply for a university and a major, only to find that they lack the knowledge of themselves they need at this moment because the burden of their ‘studies’ has left them with no time to study themselves. The predominant factor that remains to help them choose their university and major is their test scores. What a cruel and miserable situation! The lives of individuals are literally determined and manufactured by social standards. Yet many contemporary competitive educational systems throughout the world share a similar educational culture.¹⁰ To solve this problem, schools should function as a place of leisure in which students explore and realize themselves.

Revitalizing the original relationship between school and leisure – making school a place of pursuing the true self – is therefore not simply a matter of nostalgia for tradition. What if the pursuit of the true self, which can only be done at school, are no longer being done at school? What if many of the mental illnesses that modern people are experiencing occur because the pursuit of a true self no longer occurs in school? To take this fact seriously means it is imperative to return school to a place of leisure, that is, to a place to pursue the true self.

As I put it previously, through this dissertation I will argue that school should be a place of leisure in its traditional sense. Put differently, I will examine the relationship between school and the pursuit of the true self. However, as I will discuss in the following chapters, I intend to

¹⁰ See Francis Schrag, *Thinking in School and Society*. New York: Routledge, 1988, 96-101. He illustrates classrooms in which thoughtfulness is absent.

reconceive the meaning of “true self” with John Dewey’s theory. Traditionally, to pursue the true self is to reveal the divine intuitive faculty that is given in human beings. But in Dewey’s theory of self, there is no true self to be sought. Rather, the true self is formed in the process of life. How we understand the meaning of the true self defines the image of school as a place for the pursuit of the true self. Through this dissertation, I will compare the process of true self-realization in the ancient sense with the process of true self-formation in Dewey’s theory, and then describe the image of the school as a place of leisure using Dewey’s concept of qualitative thinking instead of the ancient understanding of leisure.

The task I would like to accomplish through this dissertation is simple. What I argue is not that Dewey’s theory of self is superior to the traditional understanding of the true self, nor that to describe the school as a place of leisure with Dewey’s theory of self is more appropriate than interpreting the leisure of school with the traditional concept of self. My goal in this dissertation is to re-illuminate the meaning of school as a place of leisure using Dewey’s concept of self.

I do not think the traditional concept of leisure is no longer meaningful in the 21st century. I also do not think I understand the concept of traditional leisure precisely and perfectly. As Josef Pieper argues, it may be almost impossible for modern people to correctly understand the ancient concept of leisure.¹¹ Therefore, it is possible that my description in this dissertation, especially of the concept of ancient leisure in Chapter 2, may not expound the essence of ancient

¹¹ Pieper, Josef. *Leisure: The Basis of Culture*. Trans. Alexander Dru. Ontario: A Mentor Book, 1952, 22.

leisure. Thus, based on my lack of understanding, there is a limit to my ability to evaluate the traditional concept of leisure.

However, without undermining the value of the traditional concepts of leisure, I think it is possible to define the meaning of leisure by utilizing Dewey's concept of self and to describe the meaning of school as a place of leisure based on that understanding.

At face value, however, it is evident that Dewey is not favorable to the term of leisure. For instance, in chapter 19 of *Democracy and Education*, entitled 'Labor and Leisure,' Dewey criticizes the ancient concept of leisure. However, if we take a close look at Dewey's argument, it would be more appropriate to consider Dewey's criticism as one not on the concept of leisure itself, but on the monopoly of leisure by a particular group.¹² In fact, Dewey argues in the same chapter that a truly democratic society is a society in which "all enjoy a worthy leisure."¹³ It is my hope that the meaning of leisure claimed in this dissertation will shed light on discussions of the leisure worthy of modern democratic societies.

2. Literature Review

The emergence of the discussion of leisure in the academic world in the United States especially in the early 20th century is closely related to the change of technology and labor market. As scientific technology advanced, automation reduced working hours and gave ordinary people the gift of abundant time for leisure. Paradoxically, however, this time was both a

¹² Dewey, MW9, 265.

¹³ Ibid.

blessing and a curse. G. O. Mudge writes, “In the past with relatively long hours of more or less exhausting labor, the use of leisure time was not a social problem of so great significance, but with the increasing productivity of the machine and resulting shorter hours for labor, the problem becomes one that is decidedly challenging.”¹⁴ By unemployment, some people were “enforced” to have leisure.¹⁵ However, people were not prepared to enjoy leisure and had no idea how to take advantage of this unexpected gift. This became a significant social issue, one that society addressed by requiring schools to provide sound resources for citizens to fill their leisure time.

Much research has been undertaken given this situation. Most studies titled as ‘education for leisure’ focus on enumerating possible sound leisure activities to fill free time: “reading, sport, music and play”¹⁶; “Camping, sports, reading, motion pictures, concerts”¹⁷; “providing adequate recreational facilities in the form of parks, playgrounds, athletic fields, and clubs for young American”¹⁸; “the out-of-doors, cinema, radio.”¹⁹ Despite using the title ‘education for leisure,’ however, these studies have no interest in making school a place of leisure. These papers are therefore of little help in grasping the relationship between school and leisure.

¹⁴ Mudge, G. O. “Education for Leisure.” *The High School Journal*, 17, No. 2 (1934): 47.

¹⁵ Chadsey, Mildred. “Enforced Leisure.” *Religious Education*, 27, No. 8 (1932): 697.

¹⁶ Downs, Robert E. “Education for Leisure.” *The Journal of Education*, 108, No. 17 (1928): 437-439.

¹⁷ Fitzgerald, Gerald B. “Education for Leisure.” *Review of Educational Research*, 20, No. 4, Education for Work, Citizenship, and Leisure (1950): 294-298.

¹⁸ Campbell, Harold G. “Education for Leisure Time.” *The Elementary School Journal*, 36, No. 4 (1935): 257-259.

¹⁹ Mudge, “Education for Leisure,” 47-53.

A notable recent trend related to the modern concept of leisure is the effort to introduce contemplative practices such as yoga or meditation into schools. A number of schools in the United States, for instance, provide contemplative practice programs to their students.²⁰ Scholars support these programs by arguing that contemplative practices in school can contribute to reducing students' academic stress.²¹ This movement can be understood as the endeavor to bring leisure activities to relieve stress from work into schools. I do not deny the educational value of contemplative practices or that they have "a positive impact on students' self-control and attention."²² However, they do not represent specifically school-related leisurely activities because they can be practiced outside of school, such as in nature, at the yoga studio, in religious institutions, etc. Rather, in my work I would like to concentrate on the leisure which peculiarly takes place in school, in the process of teaching and learning, in the educative transaction between teacher and student.

Recently, some scholars in the field of educational philosophy have tried to revive leisure in school. Here I focus in particular on Angelo Caranfa, Kevin Gary, and Giovanni M. Ildefonso for the reason that their arguments are based precisely on the ancient concept of leisure. Caranfa has published articles emphasizing the significance of silence in education, arguing that silence is

²⁰ Comstock, Patrick W. *The Retrieval of Contemplation: Mindfulness, Meditation, and Education*. Doctoral dissertation, Columbia University, 2015: 16-18.

²¹ Shapiro, Shauna L., Kirk W. Brown, and John T. Astin. "Toward the Integration of Meditation into Higher Education: A Review of Research Evidence." *Teachers College Record*, 113 (2011); Davidson, Richard J., John Dunne, Jacquelynne S. Eccles, Adam Engle, Mark Greenberg, Patricia Jennings, Amishi Jha, Thupten Jinpa, Linda Lantieri, David Meyer, Robert W. Roeser, and David Vago. "Contemplative Practices and Mental Training: Prospects for American Education." *Child Development Perspectives*, 6 (2012); Comstock, "The Retrieval of Contemplation: Mindfulness, Meditation, and Education."

²² Comstock, "The Retrieval of Contemplation: Mindfulness, Meditation, and Education," 5.

“the very foundation of learning” and that the very problem with contemporary education is the lack of silence.²³ In his article ‘Leisure, Freedom, and Liberal Education,’ Gary criticizes our schools as “*ratio*-dominated.”²⁴ His intention is to realize the “balance between the *intellectus* and *ratio*.”²⁵ Additionally, Ildelfonso proposes a recovery of the ancient Greek ideal of leisure.²⁶ She stresses the teacher’s role in the revival of leisure in education; a teacher her- or himself has to be the model for students.

As a matter of fact, the above three scholars and I have a common sense of the problem: schools are no longer a place for pursuit true self. But where depart is on the definition of the true self. They adopt a traditional understanding of self, whereas I will attempt to reexamine what it means to pursue the true self in school by using Dewey’s concept of self. The works of these three scholars will be reviewed in more detail in Chapter 2, which explains the concept of ancient leisure.

Next, inspired by Hannah Arendt’s concept of school, Eduardo Duarte and Jan Masschelein assert the significance of school as a place of leisure. In the Arendtian school of thought, “the child is first introduced to the world.”²⁷ A child, who is a new human being, meets

²³ Caranfa, Angelo. “Silence as the Foundation of Learning.” *Educational Theory*, 54, No. 2 (2004): 211.

²⁴ Gary, Kevin. “Leisure, Freedom, And Liberal Education.” *Educational Theory*, 56, No. 2 (2006): 134.

²⁵ Ibid, p. 130. Medieval people distinguished two modes of human recognition into *ratio* and *intellectus*. This distinction will be explained in detail in the following chapter.

²⁶ Ildelfonso, Givanni M. *Recovering Leisure: Otium as the basis of Education*. Doctoral dissertation, Columbia University, 2012.

²⁷ Arendt, Hannah. “The Crisis in Education” in *Between Past and Future*. New York: Penguin, 1977, 188.

an old world, represented by a teacher, and through the teacher is prepared for the task of renewing the world.²⁸ The purpose of school is to change the two participants of education. Firstly, a child is in process of becoming a human being.²⁹ In other words, a child as a ‘new’ member of the world becomes a ‘regular’ member of the world by education. The old world, which is encountered in school, removes newness in the child and makes her or him old. Secondly, though the world in school is presented as old, the actual world is not static. The world is constantly changing, and in the future, the child becomes responsible for renewing it. Thus, the relationship between a child and the world is circular in Arendt’s argument: a child encounters the old world in school; the old world matures a child; and finally, a grown child renews the world.

For Duarte, the purpose of school as a place of leisure is to make students ‘political’ spectators. In school as a conservatory, students are protected from the current world from a distance and are encouraged “to *think* about this old world that, ultimately, they will be asked to renew and repair.”³⁰ [Emphasis in original.] The object of leisure in school is the adults who are the political actors in the old world, as well as their old world. Although students are future landlords of the world, they are not responsible for this current world. Thinking in school is simply for the activity of thinking. Put differently, school is simply a place for “imaginative speculation.”³¹

²⁸ Ibid, 196.

²⁹ Ibid, 184.

³⁰ Duarte, E. M. Educational thinking and the conservation of the revolutionary. *Teachers College Record*, 112(2), 2010: 495.

³¹ Ibid, 496.

For Masschelein, the purpose of school as a place of leisure is to make students ‘economic’ spectators. In school, “Economic, social, cultural, religious or political appropriations are suspended.”³² By suspension, the things of the world are transformed into “common things, things that are at everyone’s disposal for free use.”³³ All social values, order, and culture are nullified in school, and students are able to freely experiment on and handle them.

In the school as a conserved zone, according to Duarte and Masschelein’s arguments, students as spectators are protected or separated from the world politically and economically, and are able to think, speculate, and contemplate the neutralized or purified world. Their arguments are meaningful and significant, but my interest in this dissertation is slightly different from their account. As I understand them, Duarte and Masschelein focused more on the social aspect of leisure by contrasting school as a place of leisure in relation to the current world. I would like to expose the individual aspect of the leisure of school as it relates to self-formation.

3. Methodology

Most of my study will be devoted to reading and interpreting Dewey’s works and related articles. The main purpose of my dissertation is to interpret Dewey’s concept of qualitative thinking as a new model of leisure in the classroom and to explicate the relationship between qualitative thinking and self-formation. Therefore, although I will consult with Dewey’s monumental works such as *Experience and Nature*, *A Common Faith*, and *Art as Experience*, I

³² Masschelein, J. Experimentum scholae: The world once more...but not (yet) finished, *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, 30 (2011): 531.

³³ Ibid.

will not be engaging with his discussion of philosophy, religion, and art as such, but within a context of reconceiving the leisurely image of school. Put differently, I will interpret his texts pedagogically and utilize them in capturing the moment of leisure which occurs in the transaction between teacher and student.

Basically, my study will be conceptual and philosophical. For instance, I am not conducting interviews with educators about the idea of leisure, and I am not observing classrooms to see how leisure may be happening. But I believe that this research will help set the stage for empirical research, curriculum development, school organization, and teacher education.

And most importantly my research is self-reflective. Amelie Oksenberg Rorty states poetically that “what we read affects what we become.”³⁴ I strongly agree with Rorty’s argument because my reading of Dewey significantly has affected what I have become. When I look back on my life I was a relatively good student; it was in reading Dewey that I realized how problematic my studies were. As I reflected in the previous section, I was educated in accordance with my country’s culture of education, which begins with and is centered on externally imposed problems. This habit of studying not only makes my way of study passive but more importantly separates my study from self-formation, so that my studies have not helped me understand and realize myself. In consequence, school was not a place of leisure for me.

But Dewey taught me that study should begin with “my” problem and thus serve as an instrument of self-realization. This lesson opened my mind to think about my life and the educational culture of South Korean society. As Martin Heidegger scathingly points out, my

³⁴ Rorty, Amelie Oksenberg. “The Ethics of Reading: A traveler’s guide.” *Educational Theory*, 47, No. 1 (1997): 85.

many years of intensive study did not guarantee at all that I myself was thinking.³⁵ Reading Dewey not only changed my pedagogical viewpoint but altered my social, political, and religious viewpoint as well. In a way, I have undergone a total conversion and become a new human being. This is the power of philosophical writing. I expect my dissertation may affect what readers become.

4. Overview of Dissertation

In the second chapter I plan to investigate the ancient concept of leisure relying on Pieper's book and other related articles.³⁶ I aim to compare ancient leisure with modern leisure to show how the meaning of leisure is currently in a period of decadence. I will then focus on the medieval epistemological distinction between *ratio* and *intellectus* to discuss the dualistic aspect of ancient leisure. I will then investigate the three characteristics of ancient leisure, as well as the relationship between the ancient meaning of the true self and leisure. Finally, I will review a number of scholarly works which argue for the revival of the ancient understanding of leisure in the classroom.

In the third chapter I will explore the meaning of Dewey's concepts of self and self-formation. In order to explicate Dewey's concept of self, I will investigate his understanding of human traits, as well as his concept of interest, which expresses the subject's activeness in the

³⁵ Heidegger, Martin. *What is called thinking?*. New York: Harper & Row, 1968, 5.

³⁶ Pieper, "*Leisure: The Basis of Culture.*"

process of self-formation. Lastly, I will argue the significance of Dewey's concept of qualitative thinking in self-formation.

By summing up the arguments of the previous chapters, I will begin the fourth chapter by comparing the concept of ancient leisure with Dewey's qualitative thinking. Similarities and differences of the two concepts will be analyzed based on the three characteristics of the ancient leisure presented in Chapter 2. Next, I will compare the traditional religious view reflected in the concept of ancient leisure with Dewey's religious view reflected in his concept of self. Dewey offers a definition of God that is different from the traditional conception.³⁷ This difference leads to diverging definitions of the role of God in the process of self-realization, which I will compare. Finally, I will present the main argument of this dissertation in the last section of this chapter: Dewey's concept of qualitative thinking can be a new mode of leisure that can replace the traditional understanding of leisure, and on his conception of leisure, the meaning of school as a place of leisure can be reconceived.

In the final chapter, I will describe educational leisure based on Dewey's concept of qualitative thinking. I will adopt Dewey's educational arguments, such as the purpose of education, the role of teachers, the meaning of subject-matter, etc., and then interpret them in relation to my discussion of educational leisure. This chapter will reconceive the relationship between school and leisure, as well as maintain the educational value of the moment of qualitative thinking in the classroom.

To facilitate the understanding of school as a place of Deweyan leisure I will investigate Dewey's understanding of how the innate abilities of individuals manifest themselves. So the

³⁷ Dewey, LW9 (CF), 34.

first section of this chapter will examine Dewey's view on how human natural abilities are expressed. The second section will explain the two roles of teachers in the school as a place of leisure, based on the contents of the first section. In the third section, I will try to interpret the last sentence of Dewey's Pedagogic Creed, which claims the teacher is the prophet of God, in relation to the two roles of teachers described in section 2.³⁸ Finally, in the fourth section, I will discuss the significance of school as a place of leisure for individual happiness and social prosperity.

³⁸ Dewey, EW5, 95.

Chapter 2: The Ancient Concept of Leisure and Self-Understanding

Introduction

What is leisure? When asked this question, modern people will recall activities such as reading books, watching movies, traveling, sports, mountain climbing, listening to music, and so on. In other words, leisure for modern people is a time to relieve stress from daily life. While we are not entirely pain-free in our leisure time – for example, physical and mental stress follow climbing a mountain or running a marathon – such leisure-associated pain is different from what we would consider suffering because we willingly choose and accept it.

For this reason, modern people may think it interesting that the etymology of school is leisure, but they may also regard the idea as obsolete. They would not conceive of the modern school as a place for leisure. For most of the things we do in school – taking classes, taking exams, or making presentations – do anything but alleviate our stress. It is evident that the idea that school is a place for leisure, or in other words, a place to relieve the stresses of life, is an idea with which most modern people cannot agree. Before we make such a hasty conclusion about the relationship between school and leisure, however, we need to consider leisure as it was conceived in ancient times.

A German Catholic philosopher Josef Pieper provides an excellent presentation of the ancients' answer to the question above in his book.³⁹ In brief, the ancients' conception of leisure

³⁹ Pieper writes in his book that the philosophers of antiquity always means “the philosophers of Greece and the Middle Ages.” (Pieper, “*Leisure: The Basis of Culture*,” 27.) In this writing I will follow the distinction of Pieper on the Ancient.

is quite different from that of modern people. Pieper points out that we need “an effort of thought” to understand the idea of ancient leisure.⁴⁰ The detailed answer of the ancients to the question will be discussed in the following sections of this chapter. In this introduction, I would like to explain why it is not easy for us to understand the concept of ancient leisure, and why unusual intellectual endeavor is required to understand it.

The basic reason why we cannot understand the concept of ancient leisure simply and directly is that “the value we set on work and on leisure is very far from being the same as that of the Greek and Roman world, or of the Middle Ages.”⁴¹ As mentioned earlier, modern conception of leisure is subordinated to the conception of work. Posed differently, we cannot explain the meaning of leisure without using the word work. For modern people, leisure is a time for not working; a time for relieving stress from work; or even further, a time for better work through recharging. Companies give their employees vacation time because they expect them to exert higher levels of productivity at work, by recharging their exhausted body and mind through the vacation. Modern people take leisure in order to work.

However, interestingly, the Greek and the Roman did not have an adequate word for work, so they expressed the word work negatively as “to be unleisurely.”⁴² The conception of work of the ancients was subordinated to the conception of leisure. It was impossible for the ancients to understand the meaning of ‘work’ without first thinking about leisure. Just as modern people would not easily understand the ancient meaning of leisure, it would require unusual

⁴⁰ Pieper, “*Leisure: The Basis of Culture*,” 22.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid, 21. *A-scholia* for Greek and *neg-otium* for Latin.

intellectual endeavors for the ancients to understand the meaning of the modern word “work.” As Pieper quotes Aristotle’s phrase in *Nicomachean Ethics*, the ancients work in order to have leisure.⁴³ Pieper argues that Aristotle’s claim here is not his own unique opinion, but a description of the general idea on the relationship between work and leisure at that time.⁴⁴

The leisure of the ancients was not a means for anything else. Leisure, as I will describe in the following sections, was an activity of value in itself. The status of leisure is opposite in modern society and ancient society: modern society is a work-oriented society and ancient society was a leisure-oriented society.⁴⁵ Therefore, in order to understand the ancient meaning of leisure, we should try to think the opposite of our values and this would require “an effort of thought.”⁴⁶ Likewise, understanding the etymological link between school and leisure is also an obvious challenge.

In this chapter I plan to investigate the ancient meaning of leisure, relying primarily on Pieper’s book. An explanation of the distinction between *ratio* and *intellectus*, a distinction of medieval epistemology, will facilitate understanding of the concept of ancient leisure. So in the first section of this chapter I will describe the distinction between *ratio* and *intellectus*, then in the second section I will explore the three characteristics of the ancient leisure that Pieper presents in his book. In the third section, I will explain the role of leisure in self-understanding.

⁴³ “We are busy that we may have leisure.” Aristotle, “*Nicomachean Ethics*.” 1177b.

⁴⁴ Pieper, “*Leisure: The Basis of Culture*,” 21.

⁴⁵ Of course, leisure was reserved for the economically advantaged who had the time for it in ancient society. However, what is striking about the contemporary world is that the advantaged classes do not seek leisure in the ancients’ sense, but rather often do nothing but work and then devote themselves entirely to entertainment rather than self-cultivation.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 22.

In the last section, I will introduce and review a number of articles which argue for the revival of ancient meaning of leisure in current education.

1. *Ratio* and *Intellectus*

The Middle Ages, Pieper writes, “drew a distinction between the understanding as *ratio* and the understanding as *intellectus*.”⁴⁷ As I mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, I believe that to understand the medieval distinction between *ratio* and *intellectus* is a shortcut to understand the crux of the concept of ancient leisure. So, in this section I investigate the characteristics of *ratio* and of *intellectus*. Throughout this section, I will not be offering my own personal view of *ratio* and *intellectus*, but rather my interpretation of how Pieper and other commentators characterize the terms.

Firstly, *ratio* is “the power of discursive, logical thought, of searching and of examination, of abstraction, of definition and drawing conclusions.”⁴⁸ For example, in order to have knowledge of a cup on my desk, I have to look at it with my eyes, touch it with my hands, lift it up with force to measure weight, and listen to its sound by tapping with a stick to guess what it is made of. Even more procedures are required to know its exact capacity, durability, price, where

⁴⁷ Ibid, 26. The distinction between *ratio* and *intellectus* in medieval epistemology must have been greatly influenced by ancient Greek philosophy. As is well-known, Thomas Aquinas, a medieval representative philosopher, is a renowned commentator of Aristotle, and Rik Van Nieuwenhove indicates that Aquinas’ account of the distinction between *ratio* and *intellectus* is influenced by Neoplatonist philosophers. (Nieuwenhove, Rik Van. “Contemplation, *Intellectus*, and *Simplex Intuitus* in Aquinas: Recovering a Neoplatonic Theme.” *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, 91, No. 2 (2017): 215.) But to compare and contrast the epistemology of the two epochs is not a primary concern of this dissertation. The purpose of this chapter is to understand the concept of ancient leisure by utilizing the medieval distinction between *ratio* and *intellectus*.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

it was made, its manufacturer, designer, and so on. *Ratio* is the faculty to engage in this whole process of inquiry. *Ratio* makes sure that my efforts are not scattered distractingly. In other words, the faculty of *ratio* helps me to work as logically and efficiently as possible so that my efforts can achieve their purpose. It is difficult to imagine human activities of inquiry that do not involve the faculty of *ratio*.

There are three main characteristics of the understanding as *ratio*. First, knowledge gained through *ratio* is deeply related to human effort. Consider again the case of acquiring knowledge of a cup on my desk. I have to ‘do’ something to know about the cup. In fact, generally speaking, as my actions or efforts increase, so does my knowledge of the cup. If I only use my eyes, the knowledge I can obtain are the shape and color of the cup. If I touch and lift up the cup with my hands, I may discover the surface material and weight of the cup as well. In order to gain more precise knowledge of the cup, I have to make an effort to bring it to the laboratory. I have to break the cup to discover its material composition. To know how much heat the cup can withstand, I have to expose it to heat. Gaining greater knowledge of the cup requires greater planning, effort, and action. Thus, the knowledge gained through *ratio* generally increases in proportion to human effort. It is not difficult to conceive that there is a limit to the knowledge that can be obtained without effort.

Second, the materials of thought that are used in *ratio* are basically obtained through our bodies or sensory organs. I use my body organs such as eyes, ears, hands, and legs to gain knowledge about the cup. Of course, while I use my brain to establish an experimental plan or draw conclusions, my body and sensory organs are my basic tools of inquiry.⁴⁹ A child who

⁴⁹ The brain, of course, is also one of my body organs.

observes insects in the garden, a chef that picks vegetables from the grocery store, a chemist in the laboratory, an explorer in the wild, and so on, all acquire the basic material of thought in their inquiry through their sensory organs. In this respect, the human body plays a decisive role in the knowledge gained through the faculty of *ratio*.

Third, the knowledge obtained through *ratio* is partial knowledge.⁵⁰ We gain knowledge of the object's color, weight, volume, hardness, and so on through observation. However, no matter how we synthesize the knowledge gained through such inquiry, the synthesized knowledge cannot exhaust the description of the object. There is always the possibility that a new aspect of the object will be revealed by the discovery of new methods of inquiry and the developments of science and technology. The knowledge of a cup that is attainable through the faculty of *ratio* is knowledge of the characteristics of an individual cup. Put differently, through the understanding of *ratio* we can obtain knowledge of cup A, cup B, and cup C, but we cannot obtain the essential knowledge of the cup that passes through cup A, cup B, and cup C which makes each cup a cup. In this respect, the knowledge gained through the faculty of *ratio* is partial knowledge, which can be compared with the knowledge as a whole which is acquired through the understanding as *intellectus*.

So we turn to the characteristics of the understanding as *intellectus*. The medieval believed that the knowledge acquired through *ratio* could not complete human knowledge.⁵¹ They believed that along with *ratio* as a reasoning or logical thinking power, human beings also

⁵⁰ Actually, the meaning of partial knowledge at this time can be understood only when it is contrasted with the knowledge as a whole which is obtained through *intellectus*. Therefore, the present explanation needs to be understood in conjunction with the third characteristic of *intellectus* to be described in the following parts of this section.

⁵¹ Ibid.

possessed another kind of faculty of understanding – *intellectus*. *Intellectus* is, as Pieper writes, “the name for the understanding in so far as it is the capacity of *simplex intuitus*, of that simple vision to which truth offers itself like a landscape to the eye.”⁵² I will explain the understanding as *intellectus* by contrast to the three characteristics of *ratio* described above.

First, if the knowledge gained through the understanding as *ratio* is ‘obtained’ by human actions or efforts, then the knowledge acquired through the understanding as *intellectus* is ‘given’ to human beings. Being given implies that human actions or efforts have no contribution in the understanding as *intellectus*. In the understanding as *ratio*, knowledge has increased in proportion to human efforts, but understanding as *intellectus* is given regardless of human efforts. If understanding as *ratio* requires human actions or efforts, understanding as *intellectus* demands “an effortless awareness (and) the contemplative vision.”⁵³ We are “passive, or rather receptive” in the understanding as *intellectus*.⁵⁴

The faculty of *ratio* represents human contribution in human knowledge, whereas the understanding as *intellectus* represents the grace or gift given in human knowledge. The knowledge obtained through *intellectus* is a gift of grace because it is given to human beings for free. If our actions and efforts enable the knowledge of *ratio*, our effortlessness or contemplative receptivity prepares the path of grace.

Though the understanding as *intellectus* is the gift of grace that is given regardless of human effort, human exertion is needed to recognize the gift as a gift. However, human effort at

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid, 27.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

this time is not a physical effort but a spiritual effort. For example, many of the practices performed by the monks in the medieval monastery would correspond to this effort. Human effort and the understanding as *ratio* are directly related in the sense that human endeavor can increase the understanding as *ratio*. However, the purpose of human endeavor for understanding as *intellectus* is not to increase the understanding as *intellectus* (actually, this is not possible), but to recognize the gift as a gift when the understanding as *intellectus* is given. Therefore, it can be said that human effort and the understanding as *intellectus* are not related directly; human endeavor contributes to the understanding as *intellectus* only indirectly.

Second, if the understanding as *ratio* acquires the material for thought through the human body or sensory organs, the understanding as *intellectus* is the knowledge gained in ways other than through the external body organs. At the end of Book VI of the *Republic*, Plato distinguishes between the visible world and the intelligible world.⁵⁵ The visible world, as the name indicates, is seen by our eyes. The intelligible world, in contrast, is not captured by our eyes, but is glimpsed only when we close our eyes; the world of Ideas is ‘seen’ only by the eyes of the mind. Similarly, the understanding as *intellectus* assumes the internal vision that human beings possess. And this very inner vision holds the power of simple intuition as described in the quotation above.⁵⁶

We cannot see things in the dark. But even if there is light, if we do not have an optic nerve, we will not be able to see things as well. Likewise, no matter how the light of truth shines

⁵⁵ Plato. “Republic.” Translated by G.M.A Grube, revised C.D.C Reeve. In Plato, *Complete Works*, edited by John M. Cooper and D.S. Hutchinson, 971-1223. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997, 509D-513E.

⁵⁶ There must be similarities between Plato’s understanding of *noesis* in the Analogy of the Divided Line and the medieval understanding of *intellectus*. However, as I mentioned, the comparison between two conceptions is an enterprise I cannot undertake within the confines of this dissertation.

upon us, it will not be captured by us if we do not have ‘eyes’ to see it. The Middle Ages believed that, besides various sense organs, human beings gracefully share the faculty of “spiritual vision” with higher beings and this faculty enables the understanding as *intellectus*.⁵⁷ Therefore, *intellectus* is “the activity of the soul.”⁵⁸ The external body and sensory organs do not contribute to the knowledge of *intellectus* at all.

Third, the knowledge gained from the understanding as *intellectus* enables us to grasp the objects as a whole. Pieper, in his book, uses the term “the essence of *knowledge*”⁵⁹ [emphasis in original] or “the highest form of knowledge.”⁶⁰ It is not easy to explain exactly what these terms mean, but it seems that these terms assume the metaphysical wholeness of the object and this reminds us of Plato’s conception of forms. In *Lectures on the Plato’s Republic*, Richard Lewis Nettleship explains Plato’s conception of form as “constant under variation.”⁶¹ For example, the form of cup means the element that makes all the cups of the world a cup, i.e., that is common to all cups. The knowledge of the form or essence of an object is not obtained through *ratio* as a reasoning ability, but is given to us through *intellectus* as a faculty of simple intuition. If the knowledge gained through the understanding as *ratio* is partial and variable, then the essence of knowledge gained through the understanding as *intellectus* is complete and unchangeable.

⁵⁷ Pieper, “*Leisure: The Basis of Culture*,” 27. The word spiritual here is the opposite of the word carnal.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 31.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ Nettleship, Richard Lewis. *Lectures on the Republic of Plato*. London: Macmillan and Co., 1925, 195.

The distinction between human understanding as *ratio* and as *intellectus* has implications. To regard *intellectus* as an element of human knowledge is an attitude that acknowledges human limitations. As explained previously, the knowledge gained through *intellectus* is not obtained by human efforts. It can only be acquired when given as grace. The idea that human endeavor is not able to complete human knowledge requires an attitude of humility in understanding the world around us, and leaves room for mystical power which transcends human understanding to work.

This humble attitude can also be found in Socrates in Plato's dialogue *Apology*. In order to explain his influence on the Athenians, Socrates recounts the story of the oracle of Delphi. Socrates hears from his friend Chaerephon the oracle that Socrates himself is the wisest man in the world.⁶² Upon hearing this, Socrates wonders what the oracle might mean because he knows that he is not wise at all.⁶³ So Socrates searches for a wiser person to serve as a counter-example to the oracle.⁶⁴ But his efforts fail, and Socrates realizes that the oracle's words show the limits of human knowledge, that is, God sent the oracle's message to humans in order that they would be humble.⁶⁵ Paradoxically, in discovering the limits of knowledge, that is, in knowing what he did not know, Socrates found wisdom.

I have discussed the distinction between *ratio* and *intellectus* in medieval epistemology and their characteristics. In short, the understanding as *ratio* is gained through our efforts, our body organs are the means by which we gain this understanding, and we acquire only partial

⁶² Plato. "Apology." Translated by G.M.A. Grube. In Plato, *Complete Works*, edited by John M. Cooper and D.S. Hutchinson, 17-36. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997, 21a.

⁶³ Ibid, 21b.

⁶⁴ Ibid, 21c.

⁶⁵ Ibid, 23b.

knowledge through *ratio*. In contrast, the understanding as *intellectus* is given to us through our internal vision, it is given regardless of our efforts, and through it, we acquire whole knowledge of an object. As mentioned earlier, the fact that the ancients conceived of the domain of understanding as *intellectus* is a reflection of the attitude of modesty they held in the way they apprehended the world and themselves. The three characteristics of ancient leisure and the true self-understanding of the ancients, which will be covered in the remainder of this chapter, are directly related to the characteristics of understanding as *intellectus* discussed in this section.

2. Three Characteristics of Ancient Leisure

Pieper presents three main characteristics of ancient leisure in his book *Leisure: the Basis of Culture*. In this section, I will explain and analyze each characteristic of ancient leisure in detail. The discussion of *ratio* and *intellectus* in the previous section will help us perceive the contours of the ancient notion of leisure.

Firstly, leisure is “a form of silence.”⁶⁶ Immanuel Kant writes in *The Critique of Judgment* that “We call that *sublime* which is *absolutely great*.”⁶⁷ [Emphasis in original.] For example, when a person faces a high mountain or a furious storm at sea, s/he feels the sublimity of nature because the height of the mountain or the strong power of the storm surpasses what s/he can measure. Absolutely great means “*what is great beyond all comparison*.”⁶⁸ [Emphasis in

⁶⁶ Pieper, “*Leisure: The Basis of Culture*,” 41.

⁶⁷ Kant, Immanuel. *The Critique of Judgment*. Trans. J. H. Bernard. New York: Prometheus Books, 2000, 106.

⁶⁸ *Ibid*.

original.] The object of absolute greatness completely exceeds the faculty of human understanding. The height of the mountain and the power of the storm is inexpressible, and this situation makes us feel the greatness of nature and the lack of human beings. The feeling when we face the essence of knowledge beyond human limits through the understanding as *intellectus* may be similar to Kant's conception of sublime. Absolutely great wisdom which is beyond human understanding, calculation, plans, and efforts is given to us through the understanding as *intellectus*. This great wisdom is inexpressible and is one, as Ludwig Wittgenstein claims in the last sentence of his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, "whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent."⁶⁹

However, though such silence comes from the overwhelming power of truth, the feeling it gives us is more serenity than fear.⁷⁰ In the understanding as *intellectus*, human beings find hope that we can overcome our limitations rather than despair or frustration. We behold the range of understanding expand. And this emotion allows human beings to enjoy the moments of truth peacefully. In this respect, Pieper points out that our state of mind at the moment of leisure is similar to our state of mind while sleeping: we do not actively intervene or grab hold but leave the reins loose.⁷¹ When the truth beyond my power is given to me, I cease all action and "let

⁶⁹ Wittgenstein, L. *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. Trans. C.K.Ogden. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1971, 189.

⁷⁰ Pieper, "*Leisure: The Basis of Culture*," 41. Kant also indicates that the feeling of sublime provides us pleasure and satisfaction. (Kant, "*The Critique of Judgment*," 101.)

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

things take their course”⁷²; I shut my mouth and let the truth speak; I contemplate and enjoy the truth working.

Secondly, leisure is an attitude of contemplative “celebration.”⁷³ Pieper relates that “*divine worship*” [emphasis in original] is the basis of leisure.⁷⁴ To put it differently, leisure is not derived from human beings but from God. Plato expresses this point in *Laws*, “The gods, however, took pity on the human race, born to suffer as it was, and gave it relief in the form of religious festivals to serve as periods of rest from its labors. They gave us Muses, with Apollo their leader, and Dionysus; by having these gods to share their holidays, men were to be made whole again, and thanks to them, we find refreshment in the celebration of these festivals.”⁷⁵ If there was no grace to be given regardless of human effort and if human knowledge was filled solely with human effort, human labor would have continued without rest. Consequently, a true festival originates from the unconditional grace given to human beings by God. And the only response human beings can make to the gift freely given is to celebrate it. In leisure, human beings are freed from endless labor; human beings, in festival, stretch their bent waist from excessive labor and “affirm the basic meaningfulness of the universe and a sense of oneness with it, of inclusion within it.”⁷⁶

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid, 42.

⁷⁴ Ibid, 56.

⁷⁵ Plato. “Laws.” Translated by Trevor J. Saunders. In Plato, *Complete Works*, edited by John M. Cooper and D.S. Hutchinson, 1318-1616. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997, 653c-d.

⁷⁶ Pieper, “*Leisure: The Basis of Culture*,” 43.

Therefore, we could say that leisure as contemplative celebration is a response of human beings to God's grace given to human life. To reject leisure is to reject God's gift, to refuse to recover integrity through liberation from labor, and to display an arrogance in failing to acknowledge the providence and grace of God working in human life. As I will explain in detail in the next section of this chapter, not taking leisure is one of the great sins in Christianity.⁷⁷

Thirdly, leisure stands opposed to the exclusiveness of the paradigm of work as social function.⁷⁸ In order to understand the meaning of the third characteristic of the ancient leisure, it would be helpful to compare the relationship between work and leisure in modern times and in ancient times. As I wrote in the introduction of this chapter, the modern conception of leisure is subordinated to the conception of work: modern people cannot explain the meaning of leisure without using the word work. Therefore, the modern concept of leisure is not independent from the concept of work. For modern people, leisure is a time for not working; a time for relieving stress from work; a time for better work through recharging. When the concept of leisure is understood in a modern way, work and leisure exist on the same plane. In other words, when we describe our life time as a straight line, work and leisure are successively filling the line: the cessation of work is the beginning of leisure, and the cessation of leisure means the beginning of work. (See below Figure 1.)

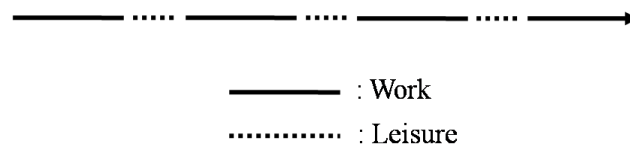


Figure 1. Modern Relationship between Work and Leisure

⁷⁷ Ibid, 39.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 43.

On the other hand, the ancient concept of leisure was not dependent on the concept of work. Posed differently, the ancients did not need the concept of work to understand the meaning of leisure. Unlike modern people, the ancients did not use leisure as an implement to work more efficiently. For the ancients, leisure was an activity of its own worth. Pieper claims that work and leisure do not exist on the same plane in the ancient understanding.⁷⁹ Once again, when expressing the time of our life in a straight line, ancient leisure and work do not fill the time of our lives sequentially. In other words, in the understanding of the ancients, the end of work did not mean the beginning of leisure, and the end of leisure did not mean the beginning of work. Rather, as Pieper demonstrates, ancient leisure “cuts right across (work), vertically.”⁸⁰ (See below Figure 2.)

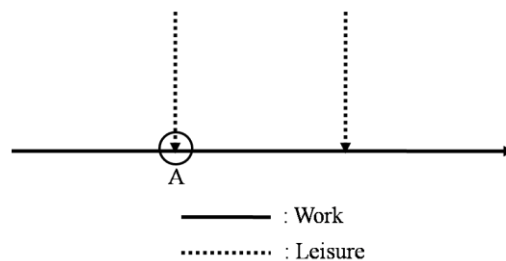


Figure 2. Ancient Relationship between Work and Leisure

Metaphorically, it can be said that the solid horizontal line, the time of life, is, for the ancients, full of work. Leisure is the dotted vertical lines that intersect with the horizontal line of work. What happens, when they intersect, as at point A? Pieper quotes Thomas Aquinas: “*ratio*

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

used to be compared to time, whereas *intellectus* was compared to eternity, to the eternal now.”⁸¹ At the intersections of leisure and work, human beings encounter eternity; eternity is present at this time. Throughout a life full of work, the ancients savored eternity through times of leisure.

Leisure as a time to encounter eternity is, Pieper emphasizes, “of a higher order than the *vita activa*. And order, in this sense, cannot be overturned or reversed.”⁸² He provides an example: no matter how prayer at night helps us to sleep well, we cannot pray at night for a good night’s sleep.⁸³ Leisure is the time to elevate our being to eternity, not the time to get new strength for work.

In conclusion, leisure was for the ancients a time of grace that intermittently enters life. This time of grace was given regardless of human effort. In this respect, human beings are totally passive. However, the ancients recognized the value and importance of leisure in life. So the ancients, as Aristotle records in *Nicomachean Ethics*, lived their lives for leisure, just as a man in war was longing for peace.⁸⁴ The ancients had endured a lowly life while expecting the time of grace. When the time of grace to savor eternity came, the ancients humbly accepted the gift and celebrated with joy. Through leisure, the ancients found real existence, which they had forgotten. As I will explain in the following section, this is linked to finding the true self.

Pieper warns that those who regard leisure as a means for work will never “discover the

⁸¹ Ibid; Aquinas, Thomas. *Summa contra Gentiles*, Trans. James F. Anderson. Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001, 328.

⁸² Pieper, “*Leisure: The Basis of Culture*,” 43.

⁸³ Ibid, 43-44.

⁸⁴ Aristotle. “*Nicomachean Ethics*,” 1177b.

fruit of leisure.”⁸⁵ Even as a researcher living in our work-oriented modern society, I cannot be an exception to this warning. Yet it is impossible for me to completely understand the concept of ancient leisure. Perhaps what is required for such an understanding is divine grace.

3. Leisure and True Self

Pieper indicates that modern people and the ancients have a different understanding of idleness, as they have a different understanding of leisure.⁸⁶ Although modern English translates the medieval word *acedia* “sloth,” the meaning of *acedia* for medieval people was quite different from the meaning of the modern word “sloth.” According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the word sloth means “reluctance to work or make an effort; laziness.”⁸⁷ The sloth is also the name of a very slow animal that lives on a tree. As we can see from the movement of this animal, an idle person in the modern sense means a person who is very slow to act, a person whose speed of work is very slow.⁸⁸ In short, an idle person in the modern sense is a person who does not work hard and quickly.

To explain the ancient meaning of laziness, Pieper points out that Aquinas regarded *acedia* as “a sin against the third commandment.”⁸⁹ In other words, the lazy person was someone

⁸⁵ Pieper, “*Leisure: The Basis of Culture*,” 44.

⁸⁶ *Ibid*, 38.

⁸⁷ *Oxford English dictionary*. (2003). Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

⁸⁸ In the animation movie *Zootopia* (2016, Walt Disney Pictures), sloths are in charge of the officers of Department of Motor Vehicles of animal-polis. As in reality, their processing speed is extremely slow.

⁸⁹ Pieper, “*Leisure: The Basis of Culture*,” 39. “Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.” (Bible. King James Version. Exodus 20:8).

who did not rest in God and who did not want to take leisure. Therefore, in relation to work, the medieval meaning of idleness and the modern meaning are diametrically opposite: a lazy person in the modern sense is a person who does not work hard, but a lazy person in the medieval sense is a person who devotes her- or himself only to work.

Sloth was one of the seven capital sins of the Middle Ages.⁹⁰ Yet sloth must not be understood as the sin of not having worked hard. Rather, as Pieper writes, idleness, in the medieval view, “means that a man renounces the claim implicit in his human dignity. In a word, he does not want to be as God wants him to be, and that ultimately means that he does not wish to be what he really, fundamentally, *is*.”⁹¹ [Emphasis in original.] An idle person was someone who renounced human dignity by immersing oneself in labor; who did not seek the will of God given to her or him through leisure; who did not pay attention to her or his true self. Medieval people believed that in *acedia*, the sin of not wanting to take leisure, many other faults found their cause.⁹² Therefore, in this section, I investigate the relationship between leisure and the true self, based on the medieval understanding of idleness.⁹³

First, leisure was a time to affirm one’s limitations. Recognizing one’s limitations is very valuable in one’s self-understanding. As we have seen in the previous example of Socrates in the

⁹⁰ Lust, Pride, Gluttony, Anger, Covetousness, Envy, and Sloth.

⁹¹ Pieper, “*Leisure: The Basis of Culture*,” 38.

⁹² *Ibid*, 40.

⁹³ In this dissertation I explain the concept of ancient self mainly based on Pieper’s book. Of course, Pieper’s arguments cannot represent the ancient self-concept. However, my main interest in this dissertation is not in the self-concept itself. In other words, how self-concept evolved historically is not the primary concern of this dissertation. My interest is to clarify the meaning of the school as a place of leisure. And since the scholars’ arguments to be reviewed in the next section, who claims the revitalization of leisure in school, are based on the discussion of Pieper, in order to compare their arguments with my interpretations that utilize Dewey’s theory, I am mainly using the discussion of Pieper.

first section of this chapter, what made Socrates wise was his recognition of the limits of human knowledge. In this sense, though it is very paradoxical, we could express the process of learning as the process of knowing what one does not know; the process of knowing how ignorant one is. In other words, learning is not, as we generally think, the task of increasing in knowledge, but the task of increasing the awareness of one's own ignorance.

In Christian history, Saint Francis of Assisi is praised as a person who lived a life most similar to Jesus Christ. He devoted his life to the poor and the weak. But according to one anecdote Saint Francis expresses himself as a great sinner and confesses that it is God's great grace that made his life so. Like the way of learning in the example of Socrates, the way of religion in this sense is also a process of knowing how much one is a sinner. As the shadow grows closer to the light, as we approach God or truth, our sinfulness or our ignorance become manifest.

Recognizing one's limitations is the first step in understanding one's true self and in itself shows a high level of self-understanding. Only those who perceive their limits can move on to a higher level of self-understanding; only those who recognize their limits can know the value of grace, and this attitude is a shortcut to opening up another dimension of self-understanding. Therefore, the process of increasing one's ignorance can be understood as the process of increasing one's limit.

An idle person who does not know the value of leisure is a person who does not recognize one's limitations, who does not even begin to explore one's being, who does not appreciate God's grace, and who does not give room for it in her or his life. Through leisure, the medieval recognized their limitations and began a true quest for their existence.

Second, the medieval perceived the gift given to them through leisure. Medieval ontology regarded human beings as half-spiritual beings, that is, as a compound of body and spirit. As physical objects are seen through one's corporeal eyes, "the highest form or the essence of knowledge" is captured through the eyes of one's spirit.⁹⁴ As explained previously, understanding as *intellectus* assumes the internal vision of human beings.

The medieval realized that they have the faculty of spiritual vision when the truth was given through the understanding of *intellectus*. It is the same as when the light is shining that our eyes begin to function and we can see that we have eyes. So basically, there were two aspects of the gifts human beings received. The first gift was the spiritual eye given in human beings. And the second gift was the light of truth that signals to the spiritual eye within human beings. The first gift was already given, and the second gift was continually given to their present life. A person who does not enjoy leisure cannot sense the spiritual eye given to her or him. In other words, the person who does not seek present grace will not even know the grace given to her or him.

Through leisure, the medieval learned of the grace given to them and they capture the truth about themselves through their spiritual vision. Those who have tasted grace will remain eager to taste it again, and even prepare to taste it again. Such preparation involves making clear the vision of the spiritual eye. Insofar as our optic nerves are working normally, we can see the light effortlessly. Effort is required in order to avoid seeing. Similarly, when one's inner spiritual sight is working, s/he intuits reality without difficulty. Unfortunately, however, this spiritual

⁹⁴ Ibid, 32.

vision – in which “the individual raises himself up to the life of the objective Spirit”⁹⁵ and which fulfills “the highest promise in man”⁹⁶ – is usually closed by our earthly enterprises.

An idle person in a medieval sense is one who does not care for the eyes of the spirit. It is necessary to wipe the eyes of the spirit continuously so that grace can be seen when grace is given. A person who lives with spiritual eyes blurred is not able to know God’s grace and cannot realize her or his true existence.

Third, leisure allowed the medieval to understand themselves as a whole. The distinction between *ratio* and *intellectus* in object knowledge applies to self-knowledge as well. As discussed earlier, the knowledge of a cup which we can obtain through *ratio* is knowledge of the characteristics of a single cup. For example, we can know about glass cups, paper cups, plastic cups, and so on, but no matter how much we synthesize that knowledge, we cannot capture the whole knowledge of the cup that makes any cup a cup. The form of a cup is captured only through the understanding as *intellectus*. Likewise, knowledge of human beings that we gain through *ratio* is limited to knowledge of person A, person B, person C, person D, and so on. No matter how we synthesize the knowledge of humans that we acquire through the faculty of *ratio*, we cannot find the element that makes a human a human.

Just as Pieper quotes Aquinas, the faculty of *ratio* is distinctively human, and the understanding of *intellectus* basically belongs to higher beings.⁹⁷ But human beings realize their

⁹⁵ Hadot, Pierre. *Philosophy as a Way of Life*. Trans. Michael Chase. MA: Blackwell Publishing, 1995, 82.

⁹⁶ Pieper, “*Leisure: The Basis of Culture*,” 27.

⁹⁷ *Ibid*; Aquinas, Thomas. *Quaestiones disputate de veritate*, 15, 1.

highest promise through *intellectus*.⁹⁸ The medieval believed that the essence of a human being, in other words, the element that makes humans human was the superhuman ability that they possessed. I argued in the previous section of this chapter that, according to the medieval point of view, human beings encounter eternity in leisure. At this moment, human beings realize true existence. In fact, eternity is not a part of this world. The essence of human beings that cannot be found in this world is discovered in encountering eternity in leisure. For this reason, “the power to know leisure is the power to overstep the boundaries of the workaday world and reach out to superhuman, life-giving existential forces that refresh and renew us before we turn back to our daily work. Only in genuine leisure does a ‘gate to freedom’ open.”⁹⁹

In consequence, firstly, in leisure the medieval recognized their limit, and such recognition of one’s limit provided the power to move on to true self-understanding. Secondly, in leisure the medieval realized the gift given to their inner self. This realization gave them a greater appreciation of their inner vision as a gift, and this was the way to prepare for grace for their present life. And thirdly, the medieval faced true humanity in leisure. By such contact, s/he was left unsatisfied with her or his fragmented self-knowledge and began to approach knowledge of self as a whole. True self-understanding was given by grace through leisure. Human effort alone cannot bring about true understanding of self.

⁹⁸ Pieper, “*Leisure: The Basis of Culture*,” 27.

⁹⁹ *Ibid*, 44.

4. Literature Review

Recently, some scholars in the field of educational philosophy have tried to revive leisure in school. Here, I focus in particular on Angelo Caranfa, Kevin Gary, and Giovanni M. Ildefonso because their arguments are based exactly on the ancient concept of leisure, especially the medieval distinction between *ratio* and *intellectus*. Basically, the three scholars' critique to contemporary education is the same as that of Pieper to modern society. That is, using Pieper's terms, the contemporary classroom is full of work, or *ratio*, and thus lacks leisure and true self-understanding.

Firstly, Caranfa argues that "Our failure to teach that there is 'more' to knowledge than what 'we can tell' is perhaps our greatest shortcoming as educators."¹⁰⁰ As explained previously through the characteristics of the ancient understanding of leisure, human knowledge was not the result of human effort alone. As a matter of fact, the essence of human knowledge was given as grace, and this part of human knowledge was inexpressible in human words. However, Caranfa is concerned that contemporary education is full of discourse, and that if this discourse is separated from silence, it only degrades into empty language and fails to become a means to self-knowledge.¹⁰¹ Thus, Caranfa argues that to reconnect discourse with silence is "the chief concern of our current educational system."¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ Caranfa, Angelo. "Voices of Silence in Pedagogy: Art, Writing and Self-Encounter." *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 40, No. 1 (2006): 98.

¹⁰¹ Caranfa, "Silence as the Foundation of Learning," 211.

¹⁰² *Ibid*, 226.

The way Caranfa proposes to reconnect discourse and silence is to utilize subject-matters as means of enhancing attention to the unspeakable. Quoting Simone Weil, Caranfa argues that all subjects are valuable in terms of allowing us to face reality, and therefore students should be taught not to focus on a particular subject, but to concentrate on all subjects.¹⁰³ We should not only teach at the level of discourse when teaching a subject, but we must also teach the reality beyond. This is a way of linking silence and discourse organically, and when taught in this way, all subjects can be instruments to train the faculty of attention.

Caranfa writes: “Teaching is a joyous activity because every time we enter the classroom we constantly create and re-create ourselves through a communion with the self that we do not know, that we have yet to bring into being. This state of creative unknowing or ignorance takes teaching out of the world of noise, profit, utility, and pretension to know, and connects learning with the silence of the origin of creation and of humanity, as though forever renewing ourselves.”¹⁰⁴ For Caranfa, the value of classroom instruction is to confront what one does not know yet. Through this way of education students learn that “the way to self-knowledge is to travel back into the unknown, the mystery, the unanswerable, silence.”¹⁰⁵ This reminds us of Socrates’ wisdom of ignorance, and the relationship between the recognition of one’s limitations and true self-understanding, as described in the previous section. Caranfa’s classroom is a place

¹⁰³ Ibid, p. 228; Caranfa, Angelo. “Contemplative Instruction and the Gifts of Beauty, Love, and Silence.” *Educational Theory*, 60, No. 5 (2010): 572.

¹⁰⁴ Caranfa, “Silence as the Foundation of Learning,” 228.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, 227.

of increasing creative ignorance and, as he argues, this is the way of renewing ourselves forever.¹⁰⁶

In his article ‘Leisure, Freedom, and Liberal Education,’ Gary criticizes our schools as “*ratio*-dominated.”¹⁰⁷ His intention is to realize the “balance between the *intellectus* and *ratio*.”¹⁰⁸ Like Caranfa, Gary’s article is also based on the medieval distinction between *intellectus* and *ratio*. He compares the method of study of monks, which represents *intellectus*, with the study of scholastics, which represents *ratio*: “While monks were fond of personal and narrative approaches to learning, scholastics favored a competitive style of learning, characterized by impersonal speculation that separated ultimate questions from one’s personal life.”¹⁰⁹ According to Gary’s contention, the primary concern of monks was “personal spiritual growth.”¹¹⁰ Literary texts, especially sacred ones, were read or contemplated as an “invitation to deeper self-understanding and self-transformation or edification.”¹¹¹ The study of scholastics, on the other hand, was impersonal. Posed differently, scholastics had no interest in their interior spiritual freedom. Their respective styles of study caused monks to cherish *intellectus* as a “gift that surpasses human limits,”¹¹² and scholastics to emphasize *ratio* as human effort.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, 228.

¹⁰⁷ Gary, “Leisure, Freedom, And Liberal Education,” 134.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, 130.

¹⁰⁹ Gary, Kevin. “Liberal Education and Reading for Meaning.” *Philosophy of Education 2010*: 244.

¹¹⁰ Gary, “Leisure, Freedom, And Liberal Education,” 127.

¹¹¹ Ibid, 126.

¹¹² Ibid, 130.

How can the balance between *ratio* and *intellectus* be attained in modern education? In order to answer this question, Gary contends that educators need to create a space for savoring the wonders of the world.¹¹³ Quoting Pieper, Gary writes, “Leisure, as noted, is a form of beholding. It is the step prior to the discursive *ratio*. Before doubting or questioning can occur, something must have been seen and observed.”¹¹⁴ When dealing with knowledge in the classroom, a student should “not rush to exploit or problematize that which is seen”¹¹⁵; “check one’s interests”¹¹⁶; and abstain from “questions or desires that demand immediate resolution.”¹¹⁷ This practice, according to Gary, makes student aware that “there is always more to see”¹¹⁸ and through this cultivation of humility a student begins “a difficult process of self-examination.”¹¹⁹

Additionally, Gary recommends that educators who aim to cultivate leisure “hold up exemplars” – such as Gandhi, Heschel, and Etty Hillesum – who embody a practice of leisure.¹²⁰ Gary also points out that even though leisure is a personal endeavor, it is difficult to maintain on

¹¹³ Ibid, 134.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, 133.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, 134.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

one's own.¹²¹ Thus, Gary argues that as medieval monks formed a community for leisure, teachers should make the classroom a community for leisure.¹²²

Thirdly, Idefonso, in her recent dissertation *Recovering Leisure: Otium as the basis of Education*, proposes a recovery of the Ancient Greek's ideal of leisure. Her argument accords with Caranfa and Gary's projects. But her work aspires to a method for reviving leisure in the classroom. Idefonso mostly agrees with Gary's contentions, but seeks to provide a different model.¹²³ Idefonso criticizes Gary's way of modelling as external to the classroom: "Gary's suggestion of educating through the lives of others (the lives of Gandhi and Etty Hillesum) becomes problematic in a different sense. As long as leisure remains in the outside, it is not truly an ideal. For leisure to be an ideal in education, it has to exist in the way of life of the teacher."¹²⁴ As quoted, Idefonso stresses the teacher's role in the revival of leisure in education; a teacher her- or himself has to be the model for students. By borrowing Yves Simon's concept of teaching as overflowing, Idefonso argues that "(a) teacher overflowing with contemplation would aspire to allow these reflections to spill on to his or her students, sharing and communicating, in this way, the value of his or her thought and contemplation."¹²⁵

¹²¹ Ibid, 135.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Idefonso, "*Recovering Leisure: Otium as the basis of Education*," 79.

¹²⁴ Ibid, 84.

¹²⁵ Ibid, 92.

Conclusion

As I have explained thus far, the ancient concept of leisure was different from the modern concept in its social and personal importance. The ancients lived a leisure-centered life. Leisure provided the true meaning of life to the ancients and enabled them a genuine understanding of the world and of oneself. I believe that this tradition of leisure is a precious heritage of humankind. The ancient understanding of leisure is still meaningful in that it allows us to think about the precious things that modern people have not found.

I fully agree with Caranfa, Gary, and Givanni's critique of modern education. Modern standardized tests and a competitive classroom environment do not give students time to truly understand themselves. In this regard, we need to reflect on the relationship between education and self-understanding that the ancient concept of leisure evokes.

However, there is one question that I would like to raise as a researcher. It relates to how the balance between *ratio* and *intellectus* is possible. Of course, I understand that our 'ratio-dominated' educational milieu provokes scholars to return to the forgotten *intellectus*. However, though it is valuable to make classroom a place of leisure, at the same time, the classroom should be the place of critical thinking. Put differently, a classroom should be the place for the *interplay* of *ratio* and *intellectus*. To replace 'ratio-dominated' classroom with 'intellectus-dominated' classroom cannot be the answer.

In order to achieve a true balance between *ratio* and *intellectus*, we need to explain how the knowledge gained through *ratio* is related to the knowledge gained through *intellectus*. For instance, true self-understanding in the concept of ancient leisure comes through the

understanding of *intellectus*. If so, can we say that one's self-understanding through the faculty of *ratio* is not true, or even false? Certainly, this true-false understanding is not the right way to comprehend the relationship between the knowledge gained through *ratio* and the knowledge gained through *intellectus*. To solve the problem of this dichotomy we must answer the question of how the knowledge of individual human beings we obtain through the faculty of *ratio* is related to the knowledge of the essence of human beings obtained through the understanding as *intellectus*. Making possible the harmony of individuality and universality is the key to explaining the interplay between the two kinds of knowledge.

This is the very point which I would like to consult with Dewey's concept of self. As I understand it, Dewey's concept of self can be explained through the relationship between the understanding of self through *ratio* and the understanding of self through *intellectus*. I will begin the next chapter with this question.

Chapter 3: Dewey's Concept of Self and Qualitative Thinking

Introduction

In the previous chapter I explained the characteristics of ancient leisure and the self-understanding of ancient people. For the medieval, especially, leisure was a moment of recognizing the limitations of human beings and of enjoying the wisdom given beyond human limits. Through leisure, the medieval discovered what they took to be the divine intuitive faculty that is given in human beings, and realized that this ability is the true humanity of human beings.

Therefore, the meaning of self-understanding for the medieval was to apprehend the divine aspect contained within human beings. Every human being is born with this spiritual faculty, so basically the process of self-understanding is the same for all human beings. Every human being has a duty to discover the true self hidden in one's body, which is the true promise of God in human. Neglecting this obligation was a great sin for medieval people.

As I indicated, the concept of ancient leisure and the self-understanding of ancient people are deeply related. And, as we shall see in this chapter, Dewey's qualitative thinking plays a decisive role in the self-formation of the individual. In other words, the concept of ancient leisure and Dewey's qualitative thinking reflect the theories of self for the ancient and for Dewey respectively. So in this chapter I would like to investigate Dewey's concept of self, contrasting it with the ancient concept of self, as well as explore the role of qualitative thinking in the process of self-formation. Based on these arguments, I will compare the concept of ancient leisure and Dewey's concept of qualitative thinking in the next chapter.

Basically, for Dewey, the self is not something that is given or hidden to be sought, as the medieval understood. Rather, the self is formed throughout life; not something to be found, rather it is created. If the medieval understanding of self is based on a religious view of humankind, Dewey's concept of self is based on a naturalistic view of humankind.¹²⁶ In other words, his self-concept derives from his understanding of the actual life of human beings. Therefore, to understand Dewey's concept of self, it is first necessary to understand his view of humankind in general. So the first section of this chapter will explain Dewey's understanding of human traits. In the second section, I will explore the meaning of Dewey's self and self-formation based on the description of the first section. And the third section will investigate his concept of interest, which expresses a subject's activeness in the process of self-formation. In the last section, I will discuss the relationship between Dewey's concepts of qualitative thinking and of self-formation.

1. Characteristics of Humankind

Dewey argues in *Democracy and Education* that what human beings originally possess are "a great number of original native tendencies, instinctive modes of action, based on the original connections of neurones in the central nervous system."¹²⁷ For instance, a newborn baby's eyes follow light; she turns her head toward sound; if she feels something in her hand, she grabs it; she spews out unpleasant substances from her mouth, and so on. In this respect, basically, although human beings possess "a greater number of instinctive tendencies than other

¹²⁶Actually, Dewey's own religious view is reflected in his theory of self. Dewey's religious view as opposed to the traditional religious view will be discussed in the next chapter.

¹²⁷ Dewey, MW9, 67-68.

animals,” human beings and other animals are not that different.¹²⁸ However, in terms of physical conditions, animals are born with greater advantages than humans: animals actualize their natural abilities more quickly than humans do. For example, the newborns of herbivores are generally able to stand within hours, whereas human babies take around one year to stand and walk on their own.¹²⁹ Further, a chick, as Dewey illustrates in his book, can pick up food with its beak with precision within hours of hatching.¹³⁰ However, the human baby takes much longer to pick up food and bring it to her or his mouth.

Dewey analyses that “the instincts of the lower animals perfect themselves for appropriate action at an early period after birth.”¹³¹ But the human condition is completely different; human activities are much more complicated and sophisticated than those of animals. For example, after passing through the lactation period, infants no longer make direct contact of their mouths with food, as chicks do. Instead, they use their hands to eat their food. There is a huge difference in the processes of eating food through direct contact with the mouth and through using the hand. Chicks are able to peck their food with precision in a matter of a few attempts. However, in order for a human infant to put food into her or his mouth, s/he needs to:

(i) measure the distance of the food and determine whether it is within reach or not; (ii) reach for

¹²⁸ Ibid, 49.

¹²⁹ The newborns of herbivores are born with their eyes open, and they stand up within hours of their birth. However, the newborns of carnivores are said to take about two weeks to open their eyes and stand up. This may be the result of the evolution of the herbivores to avoid predators’ attacks. Although there is a difference in the time of standing up between the herbivores and the carnivores, it must be a very short time compared to that of human beings. I cannot confirm whether this difference is due to human upright walking (difference between balancing on two feet and balancing on four feet), the size of the brain, or by some other causes.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid.

the food by stretching her or his arms; (iii) use her or his fingers to pick up the food using appropriate force; and (iv) bring the food in hand into her or his mouth while maintaining proper strength. Needless to say, there are countless trials and errors in this process. Many infants do not succeed in correctly measuring the distance, controlling the force, and getting food into their mouth. A very typical image of an infant involves him laughing with food on his lips and cheeks. If we try to replace an infant's hand with a spoon, fork, or chopstick in the process of eating, it is doubtless the process will become much more complex and sophisticated.

The same is true of standing and walking. In order to walk, infants must be able to flip themselves from their front to their back; support their heads using their neck muscles; sit well without support; crawl; pull up; stand; cruise along furniture; and, finally, take a step without hands. This process also requires considerable trial and error, effort, and persistence. As such, humans require a great deal of time and effort to actualize their natural capabilities compared to animals. Paradoxically, however, Dewey argues that the advantage of materializing instinctive tendencies in a short period of time is actually a constraint to animals, and that it is actually a great advantage for humans to be unable to realize natural capabilities in a short time.¹³²

The fact that longer time and great effort are required to substantiate instinctive tendencies gives humans the following advantages. Firstly, physical drawbacks force human beings to have to learn.¹³³ As illustrated above, in a very short period of time and with only a few attempts, chicks are able to succeed in coordinate their vision, body, and brain, whereas it takes human babies at least six months to achieve such coordination. In the course of these months of

¹³² Ibid, 50.

¹³³ Ibid.

effort, an infant will find much failure, but s/he will learn how to reduce the rate of failure, as well as learn that s/he is able to improve her or his results through effort; that failure is not the end; that success is waiting at the end of failure. Posed differently, human infants acquire the habit of learning, that is, the enterprising habit of challenging failure without being frustrated.

Secondly, animals can be said to be born with a nearly defined purpose for each organ of the body. But human beings are not. For instance, though newborns' arms and legs are physically attached to their bodies, they do not function properly at birth. Their limbs are almost uncontrollable, and if unbound, they move chaotically and can even hurt their faces.

However, the fact that the purposes of their organs are not precisely determined at birth has allowed human beings to use their bodies for various purposes. Most animals' limbs are mainly used for walking and running. But human beings use their hands to study, write, paint, pat, hit, play, and even communicate. Using our legs, we play soccer, dance ballet, and kick. People with handicaps even draw pictures, write letters, and eat food with their toes. We use our mouths not only to eat, but also to sing, express love, kiss, swear, and so on. That the uses of bodily organs are unspecified has opened an unlimited variation of purposes for human beings.

Thirdly, their physical disadvantages give human beings great interest in their surroundings. Humans are more dependent on caregivers than are other animals because they take longer time to actualize their native capabilities. Humans do not have the capacity to protect their lives for very long periods of time. Furthermore, since the activities that humans do with their bodies are so complex and complicated, it is impossible for infants to materialize their instinctive tendencies 'humanly' independently. It is unlikely a child deserted on an island from

birth will be able to walk after a year, assuming survival is guaranteed. And a child raised among monks who have taken a vow of silence will not speak properly even after three years.

Dewey claims that in order to make up for physical drawbacks, human beings have developed social gifts.¹³⁴ Instinctively, children are very interested in what happens around them. Most of my two-year-old daughter's day involves following and imitating her brother, who is one year older than her. When her brother runs, she runs. When he sings, she sings with him. When he shouts, she shouts. If he plays with toys, she plays too. She observes her brother's doings and learns, adopts, and corrects how to materialize her native tendencies. Likewise, children learn how to use their bodies by observing how people around them use theirs. Animals need less of this social ability.

The physical weakness of human beings has permitted human adults and children to spend more time together. Such time was inevitable as survival required it, but it also enabled children to learn not only how adults used their physical bodies, but also the cultural achievements of humankind included in them. Dewey argues that this social tendency of human beings provides a driving force for social progress.¹³⁵

In this section, I have investigated the characteristics of humankind. To summarize, humans are born with many instinctive tendencies and require much time and effort to substantiate those tendencies compared to animals. Paradoxically, however, this physical weakness of humans has provided various benefits and has allowed humankind to achieve a

¹³⁴ Ibid, 48.

¹³⁵ Ibid, 50.

civilization that is incomparably superior to animals. In the following section, I will examine Dewey's theory of self based on these characteristics of humankind.

2. Dewey's Concept of Self

What is Dewey's understanding of the self? Before examining it, I would like to briefly touch upon his view of the mind. In *Art as Experience*, Dewey argues that "Mind is primarily a verb."¹³⁶ This phrase means that humans are not born with any substance of mind, but our mind is formed through the process of life. The idea that the mind as a fixed entity that performs observation, recollection, foresight, and judgment is a myth according to Dewey.¹³⁷ Perhaps the subject of the quoted sentence of Dewey can be replaced by the term "self."¹³⁸ Put differently, for Dewey, self is also primarily a verb. In contrast, for the medieval, self was primarily a noun: it was fixed and was given.¹³⁹ Thus, when we explore Dewey's concept of self, it is more appropriate to begin with a verb-form question of how the self is formed rather than beginning with a noun-form question of what the self is. How then is the human self formed? In the previous section, I have indicated that human beings need a great deal of time and efforts to actualize their natural tendencies. As I understand it, the human self is created through this process of materializing one's original capabilities.

¹³⁶ Dewey, LW10, 268.

¹³⁷ Dewey, MW14, 123.

¹³⁸ In Dewey's philosophy in general, it seems certain that the concept of mind and self are deeply related, but whether they can be used as synonyms is not a primary concern of this dissertation.

¹³⁹ As explained in the previous chapter, for the medieval, to understand the true self means to realize the gift already given in human beings. The gift as divine intuitive faculty is fixed and to be recovered.

Consider the process in which a newborn learns to walk. As described in the previous section, in order to stand and walk, a newborn must go through a process of flipping, sitting, crawling, cruising, and walking. During this process, a newborn is substantiating her possibilities, as the people around use theirs. But if we look closely at what happens in the process of learning to walk, the process is not merely about learning the physical uses of the legs.

People around a newborn actively participate in the process of learning, instead of observing passively. For example, her parents use a blanket to roll her to help her flip; help her develop muscles; watch carefully not to fall over when she is sitting alone; and hold her hands to facilitate her walking. Through all this process, parents encourage their child and applaud her achievement. Thus, her one year of learning to walk involves innumerable interactions – both physical but also psychological – with her parents. Consequently, after a year, a child not only learns to use her legs humanly, but also learns affection, interest, encouragement, and so on. And all these elements form the child's self.

This type of interaction also occurs when a child learns how to eat food using a spoon, or when she learns to speak a language. When learning to eat, a child does not simply learn to physically lift a spoon with her arm, put food on the spoon, and bring the spoon to her mouth. Through the process, a child also learns her parents' reactions to her failures. Scolding and impatience from her parents can affect her formation of self-esteem. When she begins to babble, a loving grandmother might give ten responses to her babbling, even though she cannot communicate with her. In other cases, a parent may not have any interest in the baby's babbling. The kind of response a parent has to babbling will probably affect the child's future language development, language habits, conversation style, and so on.

As a result, the process of actualizing an infant's original tendencies is not merely a process of learning how to physically utilize the infant's body organs, but it involves numerous non-physical interactions that escape conscious observation. Together, these interactions affect the infant's self-formation: she absorbs the humanity as a whole of all the people around her. This may be the basic mechanism of self-formation in Dewey's theory of self.

Similarly, Jim Garrison points out that Dewey's concept of self is socially created.¹⁴⁰ Posed differently, the self-formation of an individual and her or his environment are closely related: an individual's original tendencies are materialized differently depending on the environment or society to which s/he is exposed. For example, a human child raised among wolves will crawl and howl like a wolf, not walking or speaking like a human being. In this case, crawling and howling like a wolf are parts of the wolf-child's self. And the cases of a child learning to walk on a deserted island, or as mentioned in the previous section, a child learning to speak when raised among silent monks, are also examples that affirm the relationship between environment and self-formation.

The medieval monks spent long durations of time trying to find their true self in the monastery. From Dewey's point of view, the growth of the self may occur in the monastery, but considering the social influences present there, the growth may be very limited. In fact, Dewey emphasizes interaction with people around and expresses that extreme individualism is "an unnamed form of insanity."¹⁴¹ The sound formation of self requires the improvement of a

¹⁴⁰ Garrison, Jim. "Dewey and the Education of Eros: A Critique of the Ideal of Self-Creation." *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*, 20, No. 4 (2004): 151; "Foucault, Dewey, and Self-creation." *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 30, No. 2 (1998): 113.

¹⁴¹ Dewey, MW9, 49.

surrounding society. As David Hansen and Jim Garrison indicate, creating a sound society and creating a sound individual are logically related.¹⁴²

So far, I have emphasized the influence of the environment in the process of self-formation. I will explain the contribution of the individual in the process of self-formation in the remainder of this section. I mentioned earlier that a child ‘absorbs’ stimuli provided by the environment, but in fact the child is not a passive being who absorbs the stimuli unconditionally. Put differently, in self-formation as the process of actualizing one’s original tendencies, the uniqueness of an individual plays a considerable role.

Although we share many natural tendencies because we belong to the same species of humans, not all individuals have exactly the same tendencies. For example, all 7 billion people around the world have different appearances; no two people look exactly the same. More specifically, most humans have eyes, a nose, and a mouth, but no two people share the same eyes, nose, or mouth. This may be true not only for the external aspects of our bodies, but also our internal organs. All human beings have a heart, but the exact size, color, structure, and function of our hearts will vary. This hypothesis is also applicable to the original tendencies that we humans have in common. We are all genetically unique, and this distinctiveness creates diverse combinations of interactions with our environments.

I have two children. One is a 4-year-old son and the other is a 2½-year-old daughter. Biologically they share the same parents, so they are likely to share similar genetic traits when compared to other individuals. But it is evident that they are totally different individuals. The

¹⁴² Hansen, David. T. (Ed.). *John Dewey and Our Educational Prospect: A Critical Engagement with Dewey’s Democracy and Education*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006, 180; Garrison, “Foucault, Dewey, and Self-creation,” 126.

difference between my kids lies not only in appearance, but also in many inclinations, such as taste in food, degree of sensitivity and prudence, minor habits, and so on.

Of course, the difference of my children may be derived from their difference in gender. But I can be confident that their difference is not due solely to environmental influences because my wife and I have provided a similar environment in many respects to both of them.¹⁴³ It is clear that the two are genetically divergent, and that this genetic difference engenders a large difference in the process of self-formation, despite a similar environment.

Thus, individuals who are born and raised under the same parents show differences. If we extend this situation to the whole of humankind, genetic traits can be combined in an unlimited number of ways, and the diversity of environments that each individual experiences will be infinite. Strictly speaking, even if people live in the same society at the same time, not all individuals are exposed to the same environment. Of course, they will have many common experiences, but no environment can be exactly same. As Heraclitus argues, no man ever steps in the same river twice, for it's not the same river.¹⁴⁴ The process of self-formation occurs through a unique combination of the original tendencies of an individual and the distinct environment s/he

¹⁴³ Of course, I cannot say that my two children have experienced exactly the same environment. Though my two children share the same parent and family, it is clear that there has been a change in our home environment and in the thinking of education of my wife and myself for about 20 months between the first child and the second child. And my son has a younger sister but my daughter does not have any younger sibling.

¹⁴⁴ Heraclitus. *Fragments: The Collected Wisdom of Heraclitus*. Trans. Brooks Haxton. New York: Viking Penguin, 2001, 51.

experiences. Therefore, it can be said that all the selves created through the combination of the two are unique.¹⁴⁵

In this section I have investigated Dewey's concept of self. Briefly, the self is not given in a fixed form in us, but is rather formed in the process of realizing numerous instinctive tendencies we originally possess. The environment surrounding the individual greatly influences the process of self-formation, and the genetic characteristic of the individual also plays a significant role in interactions with the environment.

3. Self and Interest

In the previous section, I explained Dewey's concept of self and the process of self-formation. In the process of self-formation, an individual's inherent tendencies are actualized through interaction with the surrounding environment. It has also been pointed out that what kind of environment is provided to an individual and what genetic characteristics an individual is born with have great influences on the process of self-formation. As a matter of fact, however, this explanation alone does not fully reveal the active role the individual plays in the process of self-formation. The term that Dewey uses, which reveals the energy of the individual, is interest.

In chapter 10 of *Democracy and Education* entitled 'Interest and Discipline,' Dewey claims that based on etymology, interest suggests "what is *between*¹⁴⁶ – that which connects two

¹⁴⁵ Genetic characteristic of the individual and environment

¹⁴⁶ inter-esse

things otherwise distant.”¹⁴⁷ [Emphasis in original.] This raises the question, what two things does interest connect? Mark Jonas provides a clear answer that deserves to be quoted in full:

Dewey believes that students become interested in a particular object (a fact, or concept, or expression, etc.) when they regard that object as so important that if they cannot apprehend it—absorb it, so to speak, through physical or psychological interaction—they will not be able to be the individuals they desire to be. The individual longs to connect his or her incomplete being with the being of the object or idea, because the connection fulfills the missing portion of his or her own being. When this identification is not possible the individual is left frustrated and incomplete, even self-destructive, as in the case of Romeo.¹⁴⁸

In brief, individuals have a ‘desire’ to fill their own incompleteness. This aspiration is expressed externally by an energy, which we call interest. An individual’s interest in an object in her or his environment plays the role that insect’s antennae do: as an insect explores its environment and perceives prey with its antennae, so an individual encounters her or his surrounding environment and identifies an object that can fill her or his imperfection with interest. When a subject feels that an object can remedy its own imperfection, the subject becomes interested in the object. Thus, to answer the question above,¹⁴⁹ the two things that interest connects are a subject and an object; subject and object are connected by interest.

How, then, does a subject fill its incompleteness? In other words, how does an object connected to a subject by interest become part of the subject? In order to answer this question, we must understand Dewey’s understanding of the situation. Before I explain it, I will briefly discuss his understanding of surroundings and environment in general. According to Hansen,

¹⁴⁷ Dewey, MW9, 134.

¹⁴⁸ Jonas, Mark E. “Dewey’s Conception of Interest and its Significance for Teacher Education.” *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 43, No.2 (2011): 115.

¹⁴⁹ What two things does interest connect?

surroundings for Dewey include “everything and anything that may affect my existence as a living creature,”¹⁵⁰ and environment consists of “only those things that factor into a course of sustained action within my surroundings.”¹⁵¹ For example, my environment as a student includes a desk, a chair, a laptop computer, books, and so on. The furniture in my house, the trees outside, flowers, buildings, stores, cars in the nearby parking lot, and so on comprise my surroundings. But Hanson points out that the distinction between surroundings and environment is not “hard and fast.”¹⁵² Depending on the conditions, some elements of my surroundings can be incorporated into my environment. If my house does not provide me with proper study conditions, then my house also becomes a factor of my environment as a student.

Countless objects around a subject, from inanimate objects, to persons, to events and occurrences, comprise the subject’s surroundings and environment. Among them, some objects especially attract the subject’s attention. Posed differently, in particular objects the subject finds the possibility of solving its imperfection. As mentioned earlier, at this moment the subject and the object are connected by the medium of interest. Dewey’s term “situation” refers to this state of interest, this connection between subject and object.

For instance, my bookshelf contains many books related to Dewey. In fact, when these books are plugged into the bookshelf, it is difficult to tell whether they are part of my environment or my surroundings. But at some point, I find that a part of a specific book is very helpful to my current paper. I realize that this book will fill a lack in my research and open up a

¹⁵⁰ Hansen, “*John Dewey and Our Educational Prospect: A Critical Engagement with Dewey’s Democracy and Education*,” 172.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Ibid.

new path for it. Now the book has a different status from the rest of the bookshelves. The book becomes my concern. In this moment, the book and I are connected by my interest. In Dewey's terms, the book and I create and plunge into a situation.¹⁵³

Within a situation, subject and object are transformed. The book that enters the situation above is no longer simply papers bearing black letters. The letters in the book gain vitality. As subject, I also loosen my boundaries in the situation. I boldly abandon my old identity and enter a path of forming a new self. In a situation, subject and object chemically combine; they form "an unanalyzed totality."¹⁵⁴ Thus, subject and object become indivisible in a situation. By accepting new knowledge from the book, my knowledge is transformed. No matter how small the volume of new knowledge is, it is evident that my knowledge after the situation includes new knowledge. As a result, the object connected to me by the situation becomes part of my new self. In a situation, the self loses an old identity and obtains a new one.¹⁵⁵

In the first part of this section I have mentioned that Dewey's concept of interest reveals the vitality of the subject in self-formation. Not all individuals have the same interest in every object. The object of interest, that is, the object with which one feels concern, depends on the self, on the combination of an individual's uniqueness and her or his distinct environment. As explained in the previous section, all combinations of individual and environment are unique.

¹⁵³ For Dewey, experience eventually is equated with situation (Dewey, LW14, 544; Park, Chul-Hong. *Education as Living: A Re-evaluation of John Dewey's Experience-Centered Curriculum*. Doctoral dissertation, State University of New York at Buffalo, 1993: 56.) However, whether experience and situation can be used as synonyms in Dewey's philosophy in general is not the main concern of this dissertation.

¹⁵⁴ Dewey, LW1, 18.

¹⁵⁵ Hansen, "John Dewey and Our Educational Prospect: A Critical Engagement with Dewey's *Democracy and Education*," p. 175.

Therefore, the interest of the individual is distinctive as well. In other words, we all have different antennae and are actively trying to find the food uniquely appropriate for ourselves.

Only select objects from a vast surrounding come into a situation, based on a subject's interest in them. In other words, not all objects around me affect my self-formation. I have explained in the previous section that the moment of an infant's babbling can affect the process of her self-formation. Even in this process, however, the infant does not simply absorb the surrounding environment passively. For instance, it was an amazing experience to observe my daughter's babbling stage. While an adult will generally look at the eyes of a person with whom they are speaking, my daughter's eyes would remain fixed on my lips when she began to babble, and this tendency lasted for a while. My daughter's eyes would focus intently on my lips. I could sense her sincerity in achieving her goal, and it was no less intense than an adult's. Her interest was in observing my lips and my tongue. My daughter had found interest in the shape of my mouth and had created a situation with it. Thus, a subject actively chooses an object in its environment according to its interest.

Dewey writes in the last chapter of *Democracy and Education* that "self and interest are two names for the same fact."¹⁵⁶ Interest shows the state of a person's current self. What I am interested in *identifies* who I am. For instance, in writing my dissertation, I am interested in reconceiving school as a place of leisure. My regard and my concern for educational practice drive me to write this dissertation. Through this work I am expressing myself. Simultaneously, the process of writing the dissertation constitutes and forms my present self.¹⁵⁷ Therefore, as

¹⁵⁶ Dewey, MW9, 361.

¹⁵⁷ Dewey, LW7, 295.

Dewey writes, interest means “the active or moving *identity* of the self.”¹⁵⁸ [Emphasis in original.]

4. The Role of Qualitative Thinking in Self-Formation

So far, I have explained Dewey’s concept of self and the process of self-formation. The self, represented by the moving identity of interest, creates a situation with an object of interest and undergoes the process of forming a new self. In this section, I would like to investigate in detail what occurs in the encounter between subject and object by referring to Dewey’s conception of experience.¹⁵⁹ Through this inquiry, I will elucidate the role of qualitative thinking in the process of an individual’s self-formation.

The first part of this section will explain the meaning of Dewey’s qualitative thinking and the second part will describe the relationship between qualitative thinking and cognitive thinking in Dewey’s theory. The third part will argue the significance of qualitative thinking in the process of self-formation.

¹⁵⁸ Dewey, MW9, 362.

¹⁵⁹ Dewey argues that without thinking an experience cannot be meaningful (MW9, 151). Therefore, thinking is a very important element in Dewey’s concept of experience. In this section, I try to reveal the relationship between qualitative thinking and self-formation of the individual by analyzing the thoughts in meaningful experiences.

a. The Meaning of Qualitative Thinking

Dewey argues that our experience is “not primarily cognitive.”¹⁶⁰ This statement implies that our experience is initiated by the non-cognitive. For example, a man was resting under a tree after lunch. In peace, he watched sky and nature. Suddenly, an apple fell on him from the tree above him. At that moment, the man realized that the phenomenon he had experienced was related to the subject he had been observing. As anyone can guess, this anecdote refers to the incident that prompted Sir Isaac Newton’s discovery of the law of gravity. Whether this anecdote is historical fact is not a concern of this dissertation, but the story serves to illustrate and elucidate the claim that experience is primarily non-cognitive. Newton was not lying under the apple tree to observe a falling apple. In other words, Newton’s experience did not begin with his intellectual intention. Instead, he may have been there to rest for a while after wrestling with a problem he had failed to solve in his lab all morning. Perhaps he had deliberately forgotten his problem and concentrated on the beautiful scene before him. When the apple fell on him, however, he unintentionally found a clue to solving his problem. Dewey calls this mode of thinking that Newton experienced “qualitative thinking”:

But something presents itself as problematic before there is recognition of *what* the problem is. The problem is had or experienced before it can be stated or set forth; but it is had as an immediate quality of the whole situation. The sense of something problematic, of something perplexing and to be resolved, marks the presence of something pervading all elements and considerations.¹⁶¹ [Emphasis in original.]

Back to Newton’s example, what did Newton discover when the apple fell on him?

Certainly, it was neither the apple’s color, shape, flavor, and variety nor the tree’s age and height

¹⁶⁰ Dewey, MW9, 147.

¹⁶¹ Dewey, LW5, 249.

that we can know through cognitive thinking. Nor was it immediately the solution to the problem that had troubled him all morning. Rather, Newton merely sensed that the apple's fall seemed to be related to the problem he was studying.¹⁶² To put it more specifically, what Newton perceived was the *relationship* between the apple and its surrounding environment; he had captured the hidden energy that works between apples and the earth. This relationship was the 'pervasive quality' that Newton seized in that moment. Gravity, a force that relates scattered objects, was not something Newton had intended to detect. Rather, he "had or experienced"¹⁶³ it passively, and this triggered his discovery of it. Thus, experience, according to Dewey, begins passively with the non-cognitive.

Although qualitative thinking is had or experienced instantaneously, it should be differentiated from simple, low level sensory experience.¹⁶⁴ For example, a 3-year-old child is unable to perceive subtle strains in the relationship between mom and dad. But a 7-year-old child can grasp that something is problematic and respond with sensitivity to the situation. His four additional years of experience allows him to recognize the tension in the atmosphere; he can read the signs of his parents' conflict in their voices and their facial expressions.

Not everyone will sense equally the problems in a given condition, so we can say that the moment of qualitative thinking sums up all of our previous experiences.¹⁶⁵ No matter how long I lay under an apple tree, I would be unable to capture the relationship between an apple and the

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Dewey, LW1, 200.

¹⁶⁵ Dewey, LW5, 250.

earth the way Newton did. Put differently, I would not be able to discover the law of gravity simply by observing an apple falling. Newton's accumulated efforts, perseverance, accomplishments, failures, interest, and so on enabled him to perceive the incident as problematic. Not everyone can exclaim "Eureka!" in the bath tub as Archimedes did.

b. The Relationship between Qualitative Thinking and Cognitive Thinking¹⁶⁶

In the first part of this section I have described the meaning of qualitative thinking. In the second part, I will explain the relationship between qualitative thinking and cognitive thinking. In *Experience and Nature*, Dewey explains the relationship between primary or sensory experience and secondary or reflective experience as follows: Primary or sensory experience "sets the problems and furnishes the first data of the reflection"¹⁶⁷ and secondary or reflective experience "explain(s) the primary objects, and enable(s) us to grasp them with *understanding*, instead of just having sense-contact with them."¹⁶⁸ [Emphasis in original.] To elucidate Dewey's explanation I will continue to use Newton's example.

¹⁶⁶ I have decided to use cognitive thinking instead of reflective thinking as opposed to qualitative thinking. Because Dewey seems to use 'reflection' and 'thought' as synonyms in Chapter 11 of *Democracy and Education* (MW9, 151). Thus, the term 'reflective thinking' can be understood as a tautology. It is therefore not appropriate to classify reflective thinking into one type of thinking. In *Experience and Nature*, Dewey distinguishes between cognitive and non-cognitive, in which the characteristics of non-cognitive are similar to those of qualitative thinking (LW1, 16). So I determined to use the term cognitive thinking instead of reflective thinking as a partner of qualitative thinking.

¹⁶⁷ Dewey, LW1, 16. It may be difficult to understand that all primary or sensory experiences are related to qualitative thinking. As emphasized earlier in this section, qualitative thinking and mere sensory experience must be distinguished.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid. In this quotation, Dewey distinguishes between sensory experience and reflective experience. As for the meaning of the term reflection, Dewey's distinction may seem to contrast with my explanation of footnote 166 in this chapter. But in chapter 11 of *Democracy and Education*, entitled 'Experience and

What did Newton do when he returned to his lab after instantly sensing through qualitative thinking the association of gravity with apples falling? Perhaps he tried to clarify how his qualitative discovery related to his previous studies. Through the work of establishing and testing hypotheses he then attempted to identify the active energy between the apple and the earth. The thinking he used in this process is cognitive thinking.

Dewey demonstrates the general features of a reflective experience at the end of chapter 11 of *Democracy and Education*.¹⁶⁹ The process by which problems are discovered through qualitative thinking, and clarified and solved through cognitive thinking, is well presented as follows:

(i) perplexity, confusion, doubt, due to the fact that one is implicated in an incomplete situation whose full character is not yet determined;

(ii) a conjectural anticipation – a tentative interpretation of the given elements, attributing to them a tendency to effect certain consequences;

(iii) a careful survey (examination, inspection, exploration, analysis) of all attainable consideration which will define and clarify the problem in hand;

Thinking,' Dewey explains that experience without thinking cannot be a true experience (MW9, 151). And since the thinking at this time is reflection, the non-reflective experience cannot be called an experience; all experiences are reflective. Therefore, according to Dewey's claim in Chapter 11 of *Democracy and Education*, sensory experience that is contrary to reflective experience is not an experience. Thus, in order to solve this problem, we must think that Dewey defines the meaning of reflection differently in two parts. In Chapter 11 of *Democracy and Education*, Dewey's reflection is a broad term that encompasses all the processes of thinking. On the other hand, the reflection used by Dewey in the above distinction of *Experience and Nature* must be understood narrowly which is contrasted with the senses. In this respect, Dewey's reflection of the distinction above and cognition in this section are same.

¹⁶⁹The meaning of reflection here is the comprehensive meaning described in footnote 168. In other words, reflection at this time should be understood as synonymous with thought. Therefore, it should be considered that both qualitative thinking and cognitive thinking are included in the meaning of reflection at this time.

(iv) a consequent elaboration of the tentative hypothesis to make it more precise and more consistent, because squaring with a wider range of facts;

(v) taking one stand upon the projected hypothesis as a plan of action which is applied to the existing state of affairs: doing something overtly to bring about the anticipated result, and thereby testing the hypothesis.¹⁷⁰

The step (i) described above is related to qualitative thinking, and the rest of the steps (ii) through (v) may be considered the work of cognitive thinking. In qualitative thinking, even though we cannot express what the problem is clearly, we have a sense of something problematic. And through subsequent cognitive thinking, we clarify and solve the problem.

However, interestingly enough, the secondary or reflective phase of experience is not the final stage of Dewey's conception of experience.¹⁷¹ There exists the tertiary phase of experience. In his essay 'Qualitative Thought,' Dewey presents a different relationship between qualitative thinking and cognitive thinking: "they (ejaculatory judgments or qualitative thought) come at the beginning and at the close of every scientific investigation. These open with the 'Oh' of wonder and terminate with the 'Good' of rounded-out and organized situation."¹⁷² Posed differently, the secondary or reflective phase of experience is surrounded by qualitative thoughts before and after in Dewey's conception of experience.

I have described above the relationship between the initial qualitative thinking and cognitive thinking. Now, I will investigate how cognitive thinking and subsequent qualitative

¹⁷⁰ Dewey, MW9, 157.

¹⁷¹ I used the term secondary or reflective 'phase' of experience to describe either the primary or sensory experience and the secondary or reflective experience as a stage in one experience rather than another kind of experience.

¹⁷² Dewey, LW5, 250.

thinking are related by utilizing the concept of perception described in Chapter 3 of *Art as Experience*. Dewey argues: “A painter must consciously undergo the effect of his every brush stroke or he will not be aware of what he is doing and where his work is going. Moreover, he has to see each particular connection of doing and undergoing in relation to the whole that he desires to produce.”¹⁷³ According to Dewey, in order for our actions to have meaning, they must be evaluated in the light of the goal we are trying to achieve: the artist’s brush touch must be appreciated in relation to the entire picture in her or his head; an experiment to verify Newton’s hypothesis must also be examined in relation to the entire picture of gravity in his head. We must perceive the relationship between our present experience and our whole plan. To evaluate our actions, we must be both actors and evaluators. From a third-party perspective, we must look at our current behavior under the overall framework. As Dewey points out, to be truly artistic an artist should become a producer and an appreciator at the same time in the process of art producing.¹⁷⁴

So the last step of our experience is not our action. In other words, the step (v) of the reflective experience described above is not the final phase of our experience. An action must be appreciated in the light of the overall plan we intend to move on. Only under this relationship can action be meaningful; a haphazard action is meaningless. In the process of experience,

¹⁷³ Dewey, LW10, 52.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid, 54. Hansen indicates that “One of the French verbs for perceiving, *regarder*, evokes this point with its connotations of the English term ‘regard,’ as in having consideration for another person.” (Hansen, David T. “A Poetics of Teaching.” *Educational Theory*, 54, No. 2 (2004): 133.)

perception as the relationship between action and consequence plays a very decisive role and “determines the quality of experience.”¹⁷⁵

Dewey explains that when we perceive the relationship between our current action and our whole plan, we experience the feeling of satisfaction.¹⁷⁶ I will elaborate on where this satisfaction comes from in the next part of this section. But what I want to point out here is that what we get through qualitative thinking following cognitive thinking is also a kind of emotion. In other words, this emotion is instantly given to us and not obtained through cognitive thinking. Just as our experience is triggered by the non-cognitive, it can be said that our experience is concluded by the non-cognitive.

Consequently, in Dewey’s conception of experience, there are two types of thinking in three stages. Through the initial qualitative thinking, we immediately feel a certain sense of a problem. This sense is clarified through cognitive thinking and brings about an action. And through subsequent qualitative thinking, our current action is evaluated in the light of our overall plan, and according to the results of our evaluation, we obtain satisfaction.

c. The Significance of Qualitative Thinking in Self-Formation

In the previous section, I have explained the process of self-formation using Dewey’s concept of situation. Recalling that explanation, when a self or subject encounters an object, it senses qualitatively that the object will fill its deficit. When the apple fell, Newton sensed

¹⁷⁵ Jung, Kyung Hwa. *Moral Perception and Education in the World Today*. Doctoral dissertation, Columbia University, 2014: 74.

¹⁷⁶ Dewey, LW5, 250.

instantly that the phenomenon would provide him with a clue to the answer to his own unsolved problems. As I pointed out, not everyone would exclaim “Oh!” under the same condition.

Newton’s accumulated efforts and perseverance, accomplishments and failures, interest, and so on, enabled him to perceive the incident as problematic.

In the initial phase of qualitative thinking, we utilize all of our previous experiences. Thus, the moment of initial qualitative thinking is unique to the individual. Based on the self we have become thus far, we capture the problem. Newton might have watched the falling apple several times before. But the importance of the phenomenon, that is, the relationship between the apple and the earth, which he had not captured before, is seized at this stage of his self-formation. By enabling the self to seize the problem, the moment of initial qualitative thinking opens the door to cognitive thinking; it allows the self to fall into the situation; it loosens the boundaries of the self previously held; it permits the self to enter the path of new formation.

Next, Dewey demonstrates that the second stage of qualitative thinking appreciates the results of cognitive thinking and provides us the moment of satisfaction.¹⁷⁷ Problems captured through initial qualitative thinking are solved through the process of cognitive thinking; problems that seemed vague are clarified by cognitive thinking, and we come to know what our imperfections are, which we must resolve.

Resolving the problem provides a feeling of satisfaction in the process of inquiry. A problem has been solved and it is not a problem anymore. Thus, the limit of our understanding has extended and the mass of our experience has enlarged. However, the mere resolution of the problem is not the sole source of the feeling of satisfaction in this phase. More significantly, as I

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

indicated, the feeling arises from the perception of the relationship between current action and a desirable goal to which our experiences are proceeding.

Dewey's concept of a religious attitude broadens this discussion. In *A Common Faith* Dewey distinguishes the adjective "religious" from the noun "religion": "a religion always signifies a special body of beliefs and practices having some kind of institutional organization, loose or tight. In contrast, the adjective 'religious' ... denotes attitudes that may be taken toward every object and every proposed end or ideal."¹⁷⁸ According to Dewey, a religious attitude does not relate to a particular religious group, but denotes a desire to move toward ideals.¹⁷⁹

The desire that human beings have in relation to self-formation is to realize our natural tendencies more abundantly in our lives. Dewey maintains that "[t]he self is always directed toward something beyond itself."¹⁸⁰ Even newborns have a desire to materialize their physical possibilities. That energy is not put there by adults, it is already working in newborns. Infants do not walk or speak by adults teaching them. Rather, they learn by themselves. In this way, human beings have a desire to solve the imperfection of the self in order to gain a fuller self, and this aspiration allows us to move toward our goals.

¹⁷⁸ Dewey, LW9 (CF), 8.

¹⁷⁹ To understand the meaning of ideal, we can refer to Dewey's conception of end-in-view in *Democracy and Education*. According to Dewey, we do activities with the expected outcome in mind. This predicted outcome is an end-in-view. End-in-view is not externally-oriented, but "constantly growing as it is tested in action." Therefore it is experimental. (MW9, 112.)

¹⁸⁰ Dewey, LW9 (CF), 14.

Our ideal, which is “a possibility of the present,” controls our actuality.¹⁸¹ It works powerfully in our lives and leads our current self. As Dewey indicates, “A particular ideal may be illusion, but having ideals is no illusion.”¹⁸² In the moment of subsequent qualitative thinking, we reflect on our actual experience in light of the possible end; our present self faces our future ideal self, however imaginatively, and this encounter provides the feeling of satisfaction.

To sum up, in the first moment qualitative thinking our past encounters our current experience, and we break the boundaries of our formed selves and accept new experiences. In this way, the first stage of qualitative thinking initiates the re-creation of the self. At the moment of the second qualitative thinking our present self faces our future ideal self. We check to see if our current experience is heading towards our ideal. Thus, the second qualitative thinking maintains the continuity of self-formation. Accordingly, qualitative thinking plays a very important role in the process of human self-formation; without continuous moments of qualitative thinking, self-formation may not be possible.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed Dewey’s concept of self, the meaning of self-formation, the relationship between self and interest, and the importance of qualitative thinking in the process of self-formation. In this chapter and the second, I have explored the medieval

¹⁸¹ Alexander, Thomas M. *John Dewey's Theory of Art, Experience, and Nature: The Horizons of Feeling*. New York: State University of New York Press, 1987, 50.

¹⁸² Dewey, LW1, 57.

understanding of self and Dewey's self-concept, and I would like to conclude by pointing out the contrast of the two perspectives briefly.

First, the medieval meaning of the true self is found by the grace of God. In other words, the true self is not discovered by human effort. In fact, human effort can have a negative impact on the pursuit of the true self. If human effort accompanies the pursuit of the true self, then the endeavor will be a passive endeavor to reduce the physical task. In contrast, Dewey's self is formed in human activity; in his view, self-formation involves human effort. The human desire to complete one's self leads the process of self-formation of individuals.

Second, for the medieval, the discovery of the true self is primarily a personal, individualistic task. The life of monks in medieval monasteries is the representative activity to seek the true self. But Dewey's self-concept assumes interaction with others. As mentioned, Dewey's self is socially created. Whether it is positive or negative, normal growth of the self is impossible without the influence of a surrounding environment. In particular, human beings are required to spend a great deal of time and effort in actualizing their inherent tendencies, so it is virtually impossible for them to grow as human beings without the help of others.

Third, the subject of medieval self-discovery is the human soul. The realization of God's promise on earth is achieved by discovering one's true self that is covered by flesh, by using the vision of the soul given as the gift of God. But for Dewey, the subject of self-formation is the whole of our body. Dewey does not consent to the concept that our soul or mind is given in a fixed state within us. Rather, from the moment of birth, human beings interact with our surrounding environment by utilizing all the organs of our bodies, and, as a result, form the self. The human mind is not born with us, but formed throughout the process of life.

Fourth, medieval self-growth has a determined goal. The more we discover the true self that is concealed by the physical body, the more we can say that the human self grows. However, Dewey's self-formation does not have a defined goal. Therefore, there is no teleological criterion to evaluate that a particular self is truer than another. As Dewey argues, there is no goal other than growth in self-formation.¹⁸³

Finally, the medieval process of self-growth is basically the same for all humans. All human beings have in common the internal vision given as the gift of God, and to clarify this vision is to discover the true self. But for Dewey, the process of self-formation is a task that is unique to every individual. Because our inherited genetic tendencies are distinctive and the environment we experience is singular, the formation of the self by the combination of the two is unique to every individual.

In the following chapter, based on an analysis of chapters 2 and 3, I will compare the medieval understanding of *intellectus* with Dewey's concept of qualitative thinking. Through this process, I will maintain that Dewey's concept of qualitative thinking can serve as a modern concept of leisure in lieu of the traditional one.

¹⁸³ Dewey, MW9, 56.

Chapter 4: Dewey's Qualitative Thinking as a New Mode of Leisure

Introduction

In Chapter 2, I have examined the characteristics of ancient leisure, the ancient understanding of self-realization, and the relationship between leisure and true self-knowledge. In Chapter 3, I have investigated Dewey's concept of self and the significance of qualitative thinking in the process of self-formation. Through leisure the ancients gained a true understanding of self by using the inner eye to appreciate the grace given to them. According to Dewey's conception, qualitative thinking initiates the process of self-formation and allows that process to proceed toward the ideal. In consequence, leisure plays a crucial role in the realization of one's true self in ancient times, and qualitative thinking is a consequential element in Dewey's concept of self-formation. Based on the discussion thus far, in the first section of this chapter I will compare the concept of ancient leisure and Dewey's qualitative thinking. Similarities and differences between the two concepts will be analyzed based on the three characteristics of the ancient leisure presented in Chapter 2.

In the second section, I will compare the traditional religious view reflected in the concept of ancient leisure and Dewey's religious view reflected in his concept of self. In his book *A Common Faith*, Dewey offers a definition of God that is different from the traditional conception. The traditional view of religion and Dewey's religious view define the role of God in the process of self-realization in diverging ways. Therefore, this section will compare the role of God in the ancient view of self-realization and in the Deweyan process of self-formation.

By summing up the previous arguments, I will present the main argument of this dissertation in the last section of this chapter: Dewey's concept of qualitative thinking can be a new mode of leisure that can replace the traditional understanding of leisure, and based on Dewey's concept, the meaning of school as a place of leisure can be reconceived.

1. Ancient Leisure and Dewey's Qualitative Thinking

In Chapter 2, I described three characteristics of ancient leisure. In this section, I would like to compare the ancient understanding of leisure with Dewey's concept of qualitative thinking based on the three characteristics of ancient leisure. Through this comparison, I will analyze the similarities and differences between the two.

The first characteristic of ancient leisure is that it is a form of silence.¹⁸⁴ Through leisure, wisdom that transcends human limitations was given to the ancients. This divine wisdom could not be described in human language. So in facing this wisdom, the ancients had to keep silent. In comparison, the moment of qualitative thinking brings experiences similar to ancient leisure. Especially in the first stage of qualitative thinking described in Chapter 3, a subject merely senses that something is problematic.¹⁸⁵ The subject cannot describe the problem accurately. Human language cannot grasp exactly what is given to us in the moment of qualitative thinking.

Therefore, it is common to both ancient leisure and Dewey's qualitative thinking that the wisdom or the sense given to us in that moment is indescribable in human language. However,

¹⁸⁴ Pieper, "*Leisure: The Basis of Culture*," 41.

¹⁸⁵ Dewey, LW5, 249.

the divine wisdom obtained through ancient leisure and the problematic feelings perceived through qualitative thinking are fundamentally different. Basically, in principle, the divine knowledge of the nature of things given to us through ancient leisure cannot in any way be reduced to human language. As explained in Chapter 2, the knowledge we gain through the understanding of *intellectus* is essentially different from the knowledge acquired through the understanding of *ratio*. Only knowledge gained through *ratio* can be expressed in human language. If we attempt to indicate the knowledge gained through *intellectus* in human language, it may no longer be the wisdom of expressing the essence of things. As Lao Tzu exclaims in the first line of *Tao Te Ching*, “The Tao that can be told is not the eternal Tao.”¹⁸⁶

However, the sense of something problematic we get through qualitative thinking becomes definable in human language through the stage of cognitive thinking that follows qualitative thinking. As I will explain in the following parts of this section, the feelings that come from qualitative thinking are not in themselves worthy. The moment of qualitative thinking triggers our experience or the process of self-formation. These feelings experienced through the mode of qualitative thinking find completion and resolution in the mode of cognitive thinking.

The second characteristic of ancient leisure is that it is an attitude of contemplative “celebration.”¹⁸⁷ The only appropriate response to grace given without any human effort is to

¹⁸⁶ Lao Tzu. *Tao Te Ching*. Trans. Gia-Fu Feng and Jane English. New York: Vintage Books, 1972, 3.

¹⁸⁷ Pieper, “*Leisure: The Basis of Culture*,” 42.

commemorate and appreciate it. The moment of Dewey's qualitative thinking also brings a similar emotion, that is, satisfaction.¹⁸⁸

The sources of pleasure in these moments, are not the same, however. The emotion we gain in the moment of ancient leisure comes from the very fact that divine wisdom about the nature of things beyond our limits has come upon us. However, the satisfaction we gain in Dewey's second stage of qualitative thinking is not induced merely by the fact that the moment of qualitative thinking is permitted to us. Rather, the satisfaction comes from the fact that our experience, which was initiated by the first stage of qualitative thinking, has finished well. We appreciate the result of our cognitive thinking in relation to the ideal toward which we are proceeding. If our current experience meets our ideals, we find satisfaction. If not, we experience displeasure.

The second characteristic of ancient leisure can also be compared with Dewey's first stage of qualitative thinking. As argued previously, there is no logical relationship between the moment of ancient leisure and human effort. The divine wisdom is 'given' to us; no human effort can bring forward the moment of grace. In this respect, human beings are thoroughly passive at the moment of leisure. The grace given without consideration naturally evokes a thankful response.

As a matter of fact, the moment of qualitative thinking is also 'given' to us. As Dewey expresses it, a qualitative moment is *had or experienced*.¹⁸⁹ By no direct effort can we bring about the moment of qualitative thinking. But at the moment of the first stage of qualitative

¹⁸⁸ Dewey, LW5, 250.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid, 249.

thinking human beings are not entirely passive. Put differently, although human effort and the first moment of qualitative thinking have no direct logical relationship, they do have a close indirect relationship.

Although the first moment of qualitative thinking is passively given to us, as described in the preceding chapter, in that moment all of our previous experiences are also exercised. Not everyone can discover the law of gravity under an apple tree or shout Eureka in the bath. Thus, it can be said that Dewey's first moment of qualitative thinking is not brought on by direct human effort, but that it has been prepared indirectly by prior human effort. In this respect, human effort is not entirely meaningless in qualitative thinking as it is in ancient leisure.

Of course, even in the moment of ancient leisure, we might say that prior human effort has prepared a moment of grace. Perhaps most of what the monks practiced in medieval monasteries were human attempts to obtain a moment of grace. As mentioned earlier, a person whose inner eye is blurred by all kinds of worldly things is not likely to be blessed with grace, even if God's grace is given as a gift.

Even if we say this, however, human endeavor means something different in preparing for moments of ancient leisure than it does in preparing for Dewey's moments of qualitative thinking. It is clear that Dewey's moment of qualitative thinking and prior human effort are connected in a much more positive way. The endeavor of the ancients to prepare for moments of leisure was directed toward diminishing their physical business. In other words, it was a passive preparation for the moment of leisure.

The third characteristic of ancient leisure is that leisure “cuts right across it [work], vertically.”¹⁹⁰ (Brackets added.) For the ancients, work and leisure were activities occupying different dimensions of life. Work was time for the body, and leisure was time for the soul. In moments of leisure, the ancients encountered eternity. Through these encounters, the ancients found the true humanity hidden by flesh and experienced the uplifting of the soul. In terms of true self-realization, time spent working interrupts discovery of the true self, and only the moment of leisure makes this true self-realization possible. Work, then, is akin to knowledge gained through *ratio*, which is a result of human effort, and which cannot attain the knowledge of the essence of things. Only through understanding as *intellectus* can humans reach the essential knowledge of things. As such, work and leisure are activities with different purposes and results.

Dewey’s qualitative thinking is also different from the cognitive thinking that it surrounds. While moments of qualitative thinking are passively given to us, cognitive thinking involves our active effort.¹⁹¹ Qualitative thinking is an indeterminate thinking which is rather close in meaning to sense, and cognitive thinking is a determinate and logical mode of thinking. In this way qualitative thinking is distinguished from cognitive thinking, but the relationship between them is different from the relationship between ancient work and leisure, or between *ratio* and *intellectus*.

As mentioned earlier, both the activity of work and the understanding as *ratio* played negative roles for the ancients in the true self-realization. In Dewey’s self-formation, however,

¹⁹⁰ Pieper, “*Leisure: The Basis of Culture*,” 43.

¹⁹¹ Not only the moment of the first qualitative thinking but also the moment of the second qualitative thinking is given passively to us. Just as the relationship between the object and the surrounding environment is sensed instantly in the moment of the first qualitative thinking, the relationship between present experience and future ideal is momentarily perceived in the moment of the second qualitative thinking. Therefore, the satisfaction given to us at the moment of the second qualitative thinking can also be regarded as passive one.

qualitative thinking and cognitive thinking have a collaborative relationship, even though they have different characteristics. Through the first moment of qualitative thinking, the self senses that an object might fill its imperfection. It is not confident that the object will solve a specific problem, but it feels something vaguely. It is the stage of cognitive thinking that makes the vague clear. Through the stage of cognitive thinking, the self finds clarity as to what the problem is, and how the object might satisfy its aspirations. Then, through the second stage of qualitative thinking, the self gets satisfaction by perceiving the relationship between the results obtained through cognitive thinking and its ideal. Thus, in Dewey's process of self-formation, qualitative thinking and cognitive thinking each play its respective, unique role. Cognitive thinking, which finds its counterpart in work or effort, is not an obstacle to true self-realization but an essential element of the process of obtaining it.

If for the ancients the knowledge gained through *ratio* and through *intellectus* are different kinds of knowledge, Dewey's qualitative thinking and cognitive thinking do not lead to different kinds of knowledge. Rather, they work together to generate one kind of knowledge. Thus, in Dewey's theory of self, there is no conflict between knowledge gained through qualitative thinking and knowledge gained through cognitive thinking.

Additionally, I've explained that through leisure the ancients encountered eternity. We can think of similar experiences occurring at the moment of Dewey's qualitative thinking as well. But the relationship between eternity and the present or work is different from the ancient understanding. In ancient leisure, eternity meets present vertically. (See figure 1.)

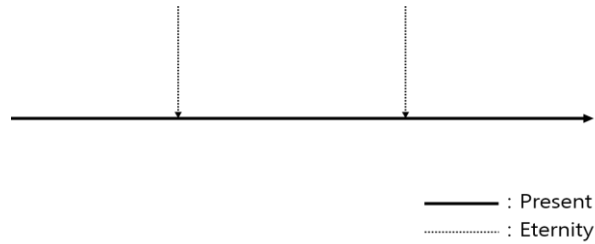


Figure 1. Ancient Relationship between Eternity and Present

As I explained previously, for the ancients, the moment of leisure was a moment of grace given intermittently in life, which is full of labor. By encountering eternity in this moment, the ancients were thrilled to discover that their true identity is not contained in the work of the flesh, but that their true humanity is found in the contemplation of the soul. In consequence, the eternity experienced in the moment of ancient leisure transcended the present life.

However, in Dewey's understanding of self-formation, eternity meets the present horizontally. (See figure 2.)

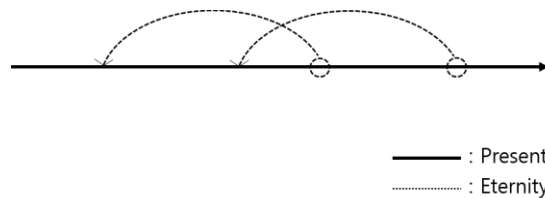


Figure 2. Relationship between Eternity and Present in Dewey's Theory of Self

In the second stage of qualitative thinking, our present experience is appreciated in light of our future ideal. If eternity in the concept of ancient leisure is completely transcendental, eternity in Dewey's self-formation, though it transcends present time, is placed horizontally in the present time. Eternity is present in the world and it leads our experience. This idea is reflected in Dewey's religious view, which will be handled in the next section.

2. Traditional Religion and Dewey's Concept of the 'religious'

In this section I will compare the traditional view of religion, especially medieval Christianity, reflected in the medieval concept of leisure with Dewey's religious view reflected in his theory of self. Although the title of this section includes the term traditional religion, my concern in this section is not in traditional religion itself, but in how it relates to the medieval conception of true self-realization. And I would like to point out that though one of the central terms of this section is God, my interest is not in God itself, but in how our understanding of God affects our lives and the practice of education. In other words, my discussion in this section is not a theological discussion but an educational philosophical discussion. The first part of this section will investigate the role of God in the process of self-realization, and the second part will elucidate the meaning of life on earth.

a. The Role of God in Self-Realization

Through leisure, the medieval found a true self. For the medieval, the true self or true humanity lay in the divine characteristic of human beings – the ability of intuitive understanding, an ability human beings share with higher beings. It was thought that this divine faculty distinguished human beings from other animals and that the true promise of God for human beings was contained in it.¹⁹² Thus, for the medieval, to discover the true self was to recognize the gift of grace given by God. Through leisure, the medieval enjoyed the faculty of divine intuition that they possessed, and were able to overcome human limits.

¹⁹² Ibid, 27.

Therefore, in the medieval understanding of self-realization, God is the conferrer of the true self or of true humanity to human beings. If God did not give this gift to humans in the first place, then the activity of seeking the true self would have no meaning. Furthermore, the grace of God is not a one-off event. By providing intermittent grace to human beings, God allows humans to live without forgetting the true self hidden within them. Therefore, the role of God in the medieval understanding of self-realization is the original provider of grace, as well as the source of continual grace so that the fountain of grace contained in human beings does not dry up.

Consequently, God's role in medieval self-realization is very crucial. The role of human beings is very limited. Rather, aggressive human effort might even get in the way of the grace of God. In order to discover the true self, humans must acknowledge their weaknesses and limitations, and wait for the grace of God, which comes to those with humble hearts. If humans obtain the essential knowledge about things or of themselves through God's grace, the requisite response is just to commemorate and appreciate it. This is the foundation of medieval leisure.

In *A Common Faith*, Dewey assigns the name "God" to the "active relation between ideal and actual," even though he is skeptical about the name must be given.¹⁹³ [Emphasis in original.] Dewey's understanding of God is quite different from the traditional understanding. Dewey's conception of God seems to mean a specific energy rather than a personal being. As I pointed out in the previous chapter, unlike traditional theories, Dewey defines the mind or the self as a verb, rather than a fixed noun. This implies that for Dewey, the mind or the self is not an entity that is given as fixed within us, but an entity formed throughout our lives. Perhaps this basic way of thinking is also reflected in his understanding of God. For Dewey, God is not a noun-like being,

¹⁹³ Dewey, LW9 (CF), 34.

but a force or an energy that acts in a dynamic way.¹⁹⁴ Based on this understanding, I would like to examine how Dewey's understanding of God can be linked to his concept of self, and what the role of God is in the process of self-formation.

In Dewey's theory of self, as described in the previous chapter, the human self is not given, but formed. Thus, for Dewey, the true self is not something to be found because hidden somewhere in us, as the medieval understood, but it is created through the life of an individual. And as I argued in the previous chapter, self-formation is closely related to the process of realizing the inherent tendencies of the individual.

To summarize the process of self-formation described in the previous chapter, first, the self-formation of an individual is triggered through qualitative thinking. A subject uses the antennae of interest to qualitatively capture an object that fills the lack in her or his self. The moment of this qualitative seizure, even if instantaneous, utilizes the entire self formed hitherto by the subject.

In the example of Sir Isaac Newton described in the previous chapter, Newton would have known from childhood that ripe fruit falls from fruit trees. So the fall of the apple itself would not have been a new fact to him. However, at the moment that his current experiences were proceeding with an interest in the earth's energy, the fall of the apple came to him with a different sense than before. The fall of the apple that afternoon was a new discovery for him.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁴ Of course, there is also a dynamic aspect of God in the traditional understanding of God. The concept of the Holy Spirit of Christianity is probably a concept that reveals the dynamic energy of God. However, the dynamic aspect of God should be understood as a supplementary concept rather than a central concept in the understanding of traditional God. One of the biblical callings of the Holy Spirit is the helper. (Bible. King James Version. John 14:16.) The Holy Spirit helps humans to understand God.

¹⁹⁵ Dewey, MW9, 166.

To use a different example, a film which previously stimulated little inspiration comes to us with great excitement one day. The contents of the movie have not changed. What has changed is the self, which seizes and utilizes the film in a new way. Or a social phenomenon that once seemed to have nothing to do with me enters my life with great relevance in a matter of a moment; scientific laws or mathematical formulas, which were once useful only for solving test questions, come to us at some point with a different sense. As the self is formed, as our experiences accumulate, objects around us come to be captured as instruments that have important meaning in our self-formation.

After such qualitative capturing, an individual's formed-self dismantles existing boundaries and researches using cognitive thinking in order to determine how present experience can solve its shortcomings. Then the results of such cognitive thinking are assessed qualitatively in relation to the future ideal. Through this process, the new object is accepted as part of the self, and the self is renewed and moves closer to the ideal. So goes the process of continual self-formation.

What role, then, does the God of Dewey play in this process of self-formation? In the earlier part of this section I pointed out that God plays a double role in the medieval understanding of true self-realization. The first role of God was to provide the true self to humans, and the second role was to confer intermittent grace upon human life so that humans can live without forgetting their true selves. In Dewey's process of self-formation, as I interpret it, we can also think of the role of God in two ways. Firstly, God gave human beings desire, which is the driving force of self-formation. This desire is the will to realize our original capabilities in our lifetime. This force can be found in newborns who practice walking, as well as

in infants who begin babbling. Children are not taught or ordered to walk or speak. By nature we possess an aspiration to materialize our potential tendencies.

I explained that the self uses the antennae of interest to capture objects that can fill one's deficit. This search, however, is not intentional. Rather, the antennae of interest function unconsciously. As I pointed out, Newton's discovery was not intentionally initiated. Rather, he lay under the tree to take a break. But as soon as the apple fell on him, the relationship between the apple and its environment, that is, the gravity of the earth, was instantly captured by him. In this way, our self moves in the direction of solving our imperfection even though we are not conscious of it. As Ralph Waldo Emerson puts in his essay, "the eternal generator" is working within us.¹⁹⁶

According to the medieval understanding of self, God has imparted his divinity to human beings. Put differently, humans possess the image of God in themselves and to discover it is to find one's true self. In Dewey's theory of self, God has provided his image to human beings as well. But Dewey's God is not a noun-form, but rather a verb-form. What Dewey's God has given to humans is dynamic energy. And the process of finding the true self is to live life actively using this energy.

Secondly, just as the traditional God constantly intervenes in human life by providing intermittent grace for the realization of the true self, Dewey's God recurrently affects human life toward continuous self-formation. To investigate this second role of God in Dewey's process of

¹⁹⁶ Emerson, Ralph Waldo. *Nature and Selected Essays*. New York: Penguin Books, 2003, 236.

self-formation, we need to look closely at what happens to us in the second stage of qualitative thinking.

In the second moment of qualitative thinking, we appreciate the outcome of cognitive thinking in light of our future ideals. In other words, we evaluate whether our current experience is moving us towards our ideals. If our present experience is moving towards them, we obtain satisfaction; if not, we find dissatisfaction and return to the process of cognitive thinking.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, in the moment of leisure, the ancients faced eternity, which transcends human life. Through this moment of encountering eternity, the ancients experienced the recovery of the soul. The eternity experienced here belonged to a dimension different from that of the life of this world. It was the rain of grace that fell upon a barren human life. This intermittent grace enabled human beings to remember their true humanity constantly, so that they did not remain completely buried in the world of labor.

In the second stage of qualitative thinking, we also confront eternity. However, the eternity in Dewey's qualitative thinking does not transcend human life vertically, but transcends it horizontally. (See figure 2 on page 82.) In the second stage of qualitative thinking, God or eternity emerges as the power to lead our present into the future. Dewey's God, as he defines it, permits our present and future to relate actively. God as an energy allows us to continue toward what is fuller, not resting in the present. This energy enables humans to continue to take account of the future and actively undertake current experiences. It enables the continual growth of human experience. If the first role of Dewey's God in the process of self-formation has to give a desire to materialize instinctive tendencies, the second role of God is to permit our self-formation process to move toward our ideals; if the first role of God is to enable us to begin self-formation

at all, the second role of God is to prevent our efforts toward self-formation from being scattered by maintaining an active relationship between our present and the future.

b. The meaning of This Life

Additionally, I would like to briefly compare the status of this life, that is, the life of the earth, in as it is conceived in the traditional view of self-realization and in Dewey's theory of self. According to the medieval understanding, work and leisure, or body and soul, are mutually exclusive. The true self is contained in the soul and is found in leisure time. Work and the body play a negative role in the discovery of the true self. Human labor and physical desire hinder the true self-discovery of humans.

This is also true of the relationship between this life and the afterlife. The true hope of human beings is not in this world but in the afterlife. In the afterlife, the soul is liberated from the body, and time is filled with only leisure.¹⁹⁷ Thus, the ultimate recovery of the true self occurs in the afterlife. To put it extremely, human life in this world is a life that must be departed from as soon as possible.

However, in Dewey's theory of self, the meaning of the present life is quite different. It is in this life that self-formation takes place. The true self is not made before the present life, nor is it restored in the next life. The human self is formed through human effort driven by God-given desire in this present life. The quality of the human self depends on how faithfully one lives this

¹⁹⁷ Plato. "Phaedo." Translated by G.M.A. Grube. In Plato, *Complete Works*, edited by John M. Cooper and D.S. Hutchinson, 49-100. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997, 67d.

life. Life on this earth is of value in itself and is a precious journey that actively utilizes the grace of God.

c. Conclusion

In the medieval understanding, the discovery of the true self is deeply related to the gift of God given in the past. In this respect, I would like to call the medieval view of religion as it relates to the theory of self *retrospective*. Although the grace of God is continually given in our present life, the purpose of that grace is to remind us of the gift that was given to us in the past.

If the traditional view of religion concentrates on the grace given in the past, Dewey's religious view in the self-formation focuses on the present and the future. Of course, Dewey's self-formation process is also attributed to the gift of grace (desire or energy) given by God. However, the way of discovering a true self is not in remembering and commemorating the grace continually, but in living well while utilizing the grace of God. God as an active relation between actual and ideal continues to guide the process of self-formation toward the ideal. In this respect, I would like to call Dewey's religious view in relation to his theory of self *prospective*.

Interestingly enough, Dewey and Pieper quote from the same biblical passage to explicate, respectively, the concept of perception (the second stage of qualitative thinking) and the concept of ancient leisure: "The process of art in production is related to the esthetic in perception organically – as the Lord God in creation surveyed his work and found it good"¹⁹⁸; "And we may read in the first chapter of Genesis that God 'ended his work which he had made'

¹⁹⁸ Dewey, LW10, 56.

and ‘behold, it was very good.’ In leisure, man too celebrates the end of his work by allowing his inner eye to dwell for a while upon the reality of the Creation.”¹⁹⁹

These quotations reflect respectively the prospective character of Dewey’s religious view and the retrospective character of the traditional understanding of religion. Firstly, Dewey’s concept of perception is “organically” related with the product of creation. In other words, perception is not separable from the process of creation; it is one process of creation. And though Pieper quotes only Genesis 1:31, which describes the sixth day of creation, to elucidate the concept of ancient leisure, there are six additional moments of leisure in Genesis 1.²⁰⁰ God contemplates and appreciates His work of creation every day. Posed differently, God perceives His work of creation as He produces it. In this respect, the purpose of perception, in Dewey’s view, is not in appreciating what is done, but in examining whether the present experience is moving toward the ideal of the future.

In contrast, leisure for Pieper seems to be separated from the process of creation. Put differently, the leisure that God takes in Pieper’s description occurs after finishing all of His work. Therefore, leisure, according to Pieper, consists of contemplation on something already accomplished. This corresponds to the ancient notion of leisure as retrospectively appreciating the grace given to us.

Based on the analysis above, I do not think that Dewey’s religious understanding is contrary to the traditional religious understanding. The traditional view of religion and Dewey’s religious view just differ in what they emphasize. The former focuses on the grace of God given

¹⁹⁹ Pieper, “*Leisure: The Basis of Culture*,” 42-43.

²⁰⁰ Bible. King James Version. Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25.

in the past, a grace that exists in static form. Dewey's religious view sees God's grace as dynamic and pays attention to how that grace works in our lives in the present.

As I indicated, Dewey distinguishes the adjective "religious" from the noun "religion." He writes, "a religion always signifies a special body of beliefs and practices having some kind of institutional organization, loose or tight. In contrast, the adjective 'religious' denotes attitudes that may be taken toward every object and every proposed end or ideal."²⁰¹ A religious attitude, for Dewey, characterizes not only persons belonging to particular religious groups, but any human being who wants to continue the growth of experience. Utilizing this attitude toward life, we are able to fully realize the power God has given to us on earth. Therefore, there is no reason to regard Dewey's religious viewpoint as less sacred than the traditional one. Dewey's prospective religious view may even allow people with a traditional religious view to live more religiously, enable them have intimate and dynamic fellowship with God on earth, and permit them to fully experience the grace of God in this life.

3. Qualitative Thinking as a New Mode of Leisure

Throughout this chapter, I have compared the ancient understanding of leisure with Dewey's qualitative thinking. I have also analyzed the religious view reflected in the two theories of self. Based on the arguments so far, I would like to assert the central theme of this dissertation: Dewey's qualitative thinking can serve as a new mode of leisure in school that can replace the ancient concept of leisure.

²⁰¹ Dewey, LW9 (CF), 8.

As indicated at the beginning of this dissertation, the English word school and the Greek word “*scholé*,” which means leisure, are etymologically related. However, the modern school is no longer a place for leisure but is filled with work.²⁰² Therefore, it is almost impossible to conceive the etymological relationship between modern schools and leisure.

As explained in the introduction, when we understand leisure in its modern meaning as an activity to alleviate stress, the fact that school is no longer a place for leisure presents no serious problem. Since leisure activities can be done at any place outside school, the school does not necessarily have to be a place for leisure. However, when we understand leisure in its ancient sense, the separation of school and leisure becomes a serious matter. The meaning of leisure in ancient times is the pursuit of the true self, and the proposition that school is no longer a place for leisure means that it is impossible for students to find their true self in school. And while modern leisure activities are likely to occur anywhere outside the school, the discovery of the true self is not an activity that can easily occur anywhere. In other words, if we cannot discover the true self in school, it means that there is little possibility of doing so in another space of society. Therefore, it is imperative that we revitalize the relevance of school to leisure in the ancient sense. In other words, teachers should help students discover their true selves in school.

However, it is still possible to ask what kind of true self to pursue in school. For example, Caranfa, Gary, and Ildefonso – whose work I reviewed in Chapter 2 of this dissertation – along with myself have all basically made the same argument that because modern schools are no longer places for genuine self-realization, we must recall the meaning of school as a place for

²⁰² Modern school is not a place for leisure in modern sense (activity for relieving stress), nor is it a place for leisure in ancient meaning (activity for pursuit of true self).

leisure, that is, the meaning of school as a place for true self-pursuit. We have different thoughts, however, on what true self students should pursue.

As I understand it, the pursuit of the true self is related to revealing the image of God in us as human beings. For example, as described in Chapter 2, the pursuit of self by the ancients was an activity that revealed the divine intuitive faculty contained in humans. Therefore, how we understand God will change how we understand the meaning of leisure as the pursuit of the true self, and the meaning of school as a place of leisure.

Caranfa, Gary, and Ildefonso interpret the school as a place of leisure based on the traditional concept of God. By the traditional way of understanding God, I denote the presumption of the existence of God in a noun-form. When we understand the existence of God as a noun, the image of God in human beings also exists in noun-form. Posed differently, the image of God, which is the true human self, is given in a fixed form to be discovered. Thus, to discover the true self is to reveal the divine character of humans, which exists in noun-form.

Accordingly, for Caranfa, Gary, and Ildefonso, the main purpose of education in school as a place for leisure is to discover the true self, that is, the divine character, of human beings. As explained in Chapter 2, this true self is not found through human effort or through bodily, sensory organs. The true self can be found only through the spiritual inner vision by the grace of God.

Therefore, what teachers need to do most at school in order to help students discover their true selves is to make students become aware that what they can tell, what they can see, and what

they can do is not the whole of the world²⁰³; students must learn that the knowledge gained through *ratio* is not all that they can know. All subjects can be instruments to train the faculty of attention. As a result, education at school as a place of leisure that assumes a concept of noun-form God is of great interest in developing a spiritual vision of human beings in order to discover a divine element in the form of a noun or a true self contained in human beings.

However, for Dewey, the activity of pursuing the true self, that is, of revealing the image of God in human beings, is different from the traditional approach. In the second section of this chapter, I have argued that Dewey's definition of God as an active relation between ideal and actual is to show that Dewey understands God in a verb-form, that is, a kind of power or energy. I also indicated that Dewey's understanding of God is reflected in his theory of the process of human self-formation.

Thus, the image of God in human beings is not contained in a noun-form but in a verb-form. Therefore, I assume Dewey's position of the activity of pursuing one's true self, of revealing the image of God in human beings, is not like the traditional way of revealing the figure of God in noun-form in human beings, but consists in living the life of this world by utilizing the energy all human beings possess. Living in a way that maintains a dynamic relationship between the present life and future ideals is true self-seeking activity for Dewey.

How we define true self-seeking activities, as described above, also changes the meaning of school as a place for leisure. The pursuit of a true self in school no longer means developing spiritual vision in order to find the image of the noun-form God within us. School should be a

²⁰³ Caranfa, "Voices of Silence in Pedagogy: Art, Writing and Self-Encounter," 98.

dynamic space for each student to fully develop her or his natural tendencies, a place for pursuing the self-formation unique to each student.

Teachers should aid students in their continuous self-development so that their current experiences move towards their ideals of the future. For this purpose, qualitative thinking plays a very important role in school as a place for Deweyan leisure, just as the understanding of *intellectus* as spiritual vision is emphasized in school as a place for traditional leisure.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have compared the ancient concept of leisure with Dewey's qualitative thinking, and analyzed the views of religion reflected in the ancient understanding of self-realization and in Dewey's theory of self-formation. Finally, based on the discussion thus far, I claimed that Dewey's concept of qualitative thinking can replace the concept of ancient leisure and can explain the school as a place of leisure in a modern sense.

To summarize, the ancient concept of leisure and Dewey's qualitative thinking have similarities and differences. First, the sense we have at the moment of qualitative thinking is not expressed in language. The divine wisdom that transcends human limits but is given to us in ancient leisure is also ineffable. However, while the divine wisdom we gain through ancient leisure is, in principle, impossible to be expressed in human language, the sense of something problematic, which we experience in qualitative thinking, can be described in human language through cognitive thinking that occurs after qualitative thinking.

Second, we experience satisfaction in qualitative thinking, especially in its second stage, according to Dewey. This emotion is similar to the second characteristic of ancient leisure, which is an attitude of contemplative “celebration.”²⁰⁴ However, there is a difference in the cause of these emotions. First of all, the appropriate response to divine wisdom given in leisure is simply to appreciate and commemorate divine grace. However, the satisfaction we find in Dewey’s qualitative thinking comes from the fact that our current experience is moving towards our future ideal.

Third, the relationship between qualitative thinking and cognitive thinking in Dewey’s theory is similar to the relationship between leisure and work in the ancient leisure concept, in that qualitative thinking indicates the passive aspect of human experience and cognitive thinking denotes the active aspects of human experience. However, while in the ancient view, leisure and labor are activities belonging to a totally different dimension, and knowledge generated through the two activities (*intellectus* and *ratio*) are of a completely different kind, qualitative thinking and cognitive thinking function in a collaborative relationship. Problems captured through qualitative thinking are solved through cognitive thinking, and the solutions are reflected on through a second stage of qualitative thinking. Thus, both activities generate one knowledge, not two different kinds of knowledge.

The concept of self-realization revealed in the ancient view of leisure is different from the concept of self-formation revealed in Dewey’s concept of qualitative thinking. True self-realization in the ancient sense is the process of discovering the divine image contained in human beings. In this process, God plays the dual role of providing the divine image to human beings

²⁰⁴ Pieper, “*Leisure: The Basis of Culture*,” 42.

and of reminding us constantly of our true humanity by intermittently breaking into our life of labor and giving grace.

The process of self-formation for Dewey is to realize our natural tendencies as fully as possible within our given environment. In this process, God in Deweyan understanding plays the dual role of providing the desire for continuous growth, and of moving our self-growth towards the ideal. I have indicated that two different understandings of God are reflected in two corresponding concepts of self.

The substitution of the ancient concept of leisure with Dewey's qualitative thinking does not deny the religious character of the classroom. As explained above, the basic concept underlying qualitative thinking is very religious. But Dewey's religious view is different from the traditional one. School is still a sacred place, a precious space in which the individual self is formed. Dewey's concept of qualitative thinking and his view of religion present an image of school as a place of leisure, a religious space. As I have investigated in the preceding sections of this chapter, qualitative thinking has many similarities to the ancient concept of leisure and, by itself, has very religious significance. Therefore, I do not think that replacing the ancient leisure concept with Dewey's concept of qualitative thinking would profane the sacredness of school. Instead, it develops a modern form of sacredness.

In the following chapter, I will describe the details of the classroom in which Dewey's concept of qualitative thinking as a new mode of leisure is realized.

Chapter 5: School as a Place of Leisure Revisited

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I asserted that Dewey's qualitative thinking can be a modern model for leisure that can replace the concept of ancient leisure. In this chapter, I will explain how school as a place of leisure can be reinterpreted based on the above argument.

Basically, the argument that school should be a place of leisure in the Deweyan sense means that the harmony and cooperation of qualitative thinking and cognitive thinking have to be realized in the classroom. Through the combination of the two modes of thinking, school becomes a place for individual students' self-formation. As described in Chapter 3, the process of self-formation is deeply related to the process of actualizing an individuals' inherent tendencies. For example, as I have already explained, an infant does not only learn to physically use her or his legs or vocal organs by learning to walk or speak. The myriad interactions with surrounding adults that occur in the process affect the infant's self-formation: the attention, support, and affection that parents give to infants through the process of learning to walk or speak have a great impact on the infant's future relationships and social life. Therefore, school as a place of leisure in Dewey's sense should be a place where each student's inherent natural tendency is realized through the interaction between students and their teachers.

Before explaining what school should look like as a space for self-formation, I will investigate Dewey's understanding of how the innate abilities of individuals manifest themselves. So the first part of this chapter will examine Dewey's view on how human natural abilities are

expressed. The second section will explain the two roles of teachers in school as a place of leisure, based on the contents of the first section. In the third section, I will try to interpret the last sentence of Dewey's Pedagogic Creed, which claims the teacher is the prophet of God,²⁰⁵ in relation to the two roles of teachers described in section 2. Finally, in the fourth section, I will discuss the significance of the school as a place of leisure for individual happiness and social prosperity.

1. On Human Natural Powers

a. How Human Natural Powers emerge

In his essay 'My Pedagogic Creed,' Dewey wrote, "It is the ability to see in the child's babblings the promise and potency of a future social intercourse and conversation which enables one to deal in the proper way with that instinct."²⁰⁶ In fact, though an infant's later stage of babbling almost sounds like human language, babbling in its earlier stages is nothing more than meaningless mumbling sound. Needless to say, the mumbling sound cannot be a means of communication at all. However, even though the sound of the infant's babbling itself is insignificant in terms of communication, we do know that the babbling stage is a very important step in an infant's language development. As the infant begins to babble, we recognize that the infant is no longer trying to express itself by crying, but that it wants to communicate with the people around it in human language. The infant's babbling has its significance as an intermediate step to human language.

²⁰⁵ Dewey, EW5, 95.

²⁰⁶ Ibid, 85.

A person who knows the importance of an infant's babbling will respond lovingly, sincerely, and carefully. But for a person who does not know the value of babbling, it will sound like meaningless noise. S/he is ignorant of what the infant's babbling means in its development process and how the babbling will develop in the future. So s/he feels frustrated that s/he cannot communicate with the infant, and s/he might want the infant to speak in human language more quickly. Unfortunately, s/he is not able to recognize that the infant is already on the path to human language. Thus, only a person who knows that the infant's babbling is an intermediate stage of human language can appreciate the value of babbling and be able to deal with it properly.

Dewey's argument about an infant's babbling can be extended to describe all human possibilities. For instance, a child born with a musical talent may at moments burst out musical "babbling." A person who has musical knowledge, that is, a person who can anticipate the future outcome of the child's musical babbling, can recognize the value of the babbling. S/he judges that the musical babbling made by the child in those moments is a musical ability that cannot be found at her age, and supposes that the child might possess musical talent. However, a person who does not have the musical knowledge to interpret the child's musical babbling will miss the value of the babbling. In other words, s/he does not know what results the child's musical babbling may bring about in the future. To her or him, the child's musical babbling is nothing more than a useless sound. Likewise, a person with knowledge of art can capture the significance of moments of a child's artistic babbling, and a person with mathematical knowledge can seize the value of a child's mathematical babbling. This applies as well to a child's scientific talent, philosophical talent, and so on.

There are lessons we can learn from the fact that individual natural powers are expressed at first in the form of babbling. First, capturing individual inherent faculties is not an easy task. If a child were to speak in a completed form of language rather than burst out in babbling, seizing its natural aptitude would be relatively easy. If one day the child were to speak in a finished form of musical language, artistic language, or mathematical language, rather than in musical, artistic, or mathematical babble, it would be easier to assume that the child has an aptitude in music, art, or mathematics. Unfortunately, however, children only babble. Put differently, a child's natural abilities are initially expressed in a very primitive form. As explained, babbling cannot establish clear communication and thus has little meaning in itself. However, it reveals its value to those who can anticipate its future outcome.

The second thing we can speculate from the theory of babbling is that parents cannot completely replace the role of teachers in finding an individual's natural ability. As indicated, only a person who knows that the babbling of an infant is an intermediate stage of development in human language can recognize its value; only a person who has knowledge of the human language can grasp the value of babbling. Similarly, only a person with knowledge of art can appreciate the value of a child's artistic babbling and only a person with knowledge of mathematics can perceive the value of a child's mathematical babbling. It is doubtless that we cannot expect that parents have as much knowledge of each of these areas as a teacher would. Thus, it is impossible for parents to completely replace the role of the teacher. There are, of course, areas more favorable to parents than teachers in conjecturing the natural instincts of a child, owing to the fact that parents and children share many traits genetically. Parents can interpret and measure their child's natural powers by reference to their own tendencies. However, in order to accurately ascertain a child's natural abilities in a given area, it is also necessary to

have professional knowledge of the area, that is, a more accurate knowledge of how the ability may emerge in the future.

Third, in principle, it is not possible for an individual to find her or his natural aptitude by her- or himself. When an infant starts to babble, surrounding adults must provide the appropriate environment for the babbling to develop into the finished form of human language. It is evident that there will be a difference in the language development processes for an infant who receives loving, careful, and sincere responses to its babbling sound and for an infant who has been abandoned or responded to indifferently. The pace of language development, the amount of vocabulary, language habits, and even sociability will differ in the two cases. In the worst case, an infant who does not receive proper attention can have many problems with language development. Likewise, a child's babblings with other natural abilities must also receive proper attention. If a child's specific natural power does not receive appropriate attention, it may not completely blossom, and wither. Therefore, when a child babbles its natural powers, adults must capture the moment and nurture it with love and attention until the ability fully develops. As Dewey puts it, educators "must observe and pay attention to the properties" of their students.²⁰⁷

Fourth, individual natural aptitude cannot be fully discovered through written aptitude tests. Of course, an aptitude test may serve as a reference, but we cannot truly know an individual's aptitude through a written test alone. Basically, a child will burst out in babbling with its natural abilities in the course of life's daily activities: the artistic babbling of a child finds expression while she is coloring with friends in kindergarten, and the musical babbling of

²⁰⁷ Dewey, LW9 (NPE), 197.

another child flows out while singing with friends in the playground. Capturing a child's natural powers requires closely monitoring the child's activities.

b. What is the Appropriate Attitude to have Regarding Human Natural Powers?

In the first part of this section, I argued that human natural abilities are expressed at first in the form of babble. I also pointed out that capturing the babblings of a child's natural powers is not an easy task, and that professional knowledge is required to interpret them. In the second part of this section, I will investigate what kind of attitude we should take toward human natural abilities. Let me begin with non-answers. Firstly, indifference to the child is not an answer. As mentioned above, it is impossible for a child to capture her natural abilities for herself. Adults around the child must capture the babblings of her natural abilities and provide an appropriate environment in order to develop the child's abilities. Therefore, adults around a child should pay close attention to the child's activities.

Secondly, at the other extreme of indifference, it is also not an answer to over aggressively determine the natural powers of a child. Parents often make various efforts to discover and develop their children's natural abilities early on. They send them to schools for art, music, and physical education in order to develop very early on the artistic, musical, and physical abilities of their children. Of course, such active efforts are not entirely meaningless. In some cases, such effort may bear fruit and produce positive results. However, when we look back on the process of how a child's natural abilities manifest themselves, infants do not start to toddle or babble by being taught by adults. At some point in development, the child's innate energy begins

to burst out naturally from within the child. In addition, children are exposed in innumerable ways to musical, art, and athletics activities, even outside of schools specializing in music, art, and physical education. For instance, while listening to music in the car, a child begins to express her musical energy; while building blocks with friends in the playground, a child's artistic energy begins to flow; or while playing with parents at home, the physical energy of a child is released. It is therefore a mistake to think that only by providing direct, specific teaching and corresponding learning environments a child's natural abilities can emerge.²⁰⁸ What attitudes should we take, then, in capturing a child's natural powers?

Although I have explained in the previous paragraph that a child's innate energies emerge naturally, in fact, however, they do not burst out unaided. Let us imagine the life of a newborn baby on a desert island over the course of a year. Although it is an impossible hypothesis, let us suppose that the baby can survive the year without observing any other human or animal. Will s/he be able to walk like a human after a year? Or will s/he crawl on all fours like an animal? It is possible that the baby will remain lying down, as it did at first. Similarly, suppose that a newborn baby is raised for three years among monks performing silence. After the three years, would s/he be able to speak human language? Probably not.

In both cases, the newborn would have been born with the abilities to walk like a human and to speak human language. However, these innate faculties exist only in the form of potentialities and are not actualized automatically. An appropriate environment must be provided

²⁰⁸ One of the various educational principles revealed in Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Émile* is that the time and place of teaching and learning are not specifically defined. Education takes place at home, in woods, and soybean field. (Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *Émile*. Allan Bloom (Trans.) New York: Basic Books, 1979, 98-99; 181.) And a teacher does not say that he starts teaching, nor is student aware that he is learning.

for these potential powers to be realized. As we can see from the example of a child raised among wolves, such a child will crawl and howl like a wolf, even though he was born with the potentiality of walking and speaking like a human being. Therefore, a human environment must be provided in order to help children develop their natural abilities in a human manner. This is the attitude that we should take regarding a child's natural abilities.

When we reflect on the process of how a child learns to walk, we recognize that the child's parents do not leave her untouched until she begins to toddle. Because her parents want to help her stand up and walk, they might use a blanket to help their child roll over, train the child's muscles, and use their hands to guide the child's cruising. Most importantly, the parents constantly show the child how to walk humanly by modeling it. Similarly, before the moment a child begins to babble, her parents will have provided endless stimuli to the child through their own conversations at home. What adults do for children in order to develop their natural powers in a human manner is in large part to simply live and interact with the children, and model for them how we live. Throughout this process, children receive endless stimulation, so that at some moment, when they are ready, their natural powers burst out in the form of babbling.

c. Educational Implication

In the first part of this section, I have explained how human natural powers are manifested, and in the second part, I have argued what attitudes we should take toward the materialization of natural abilities. In the last part of this section, I will examine what implications the claims discussed in this section have on education.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau emphasizes in his book *Émile* that early education should be purely negative.²⁰⁹ He argues, “If you could do nothing and let nothing be done, if you could bring your pupil healthy and robust to the age of twelve without his knowing how to distinguish his right hand from his left, at your first lessons the eyes of his understanding would open up to reason.”²¹⁰ This claim sounds very extreme, because Rousseau seems to argue that we should leave a child to her or his folly without teaching anything, until s/he turns twelve. Perhaps, however, Rousseau’s assertion is not literally to leave the child almost silly.

Rousseau must have recognized the spontaneous energy which flows out from within a child. As explained earlier in this section, the active force of a child is not caused by any teaching or prompting. The inherent energy bursts out naturally from the child at a certain point through the stimulation of an appropriate environment. As argued previously, human beings have an innate enthusiasm which drives them to realize their natural faculties.²¹¹ So we should not hurry to teach. Rather, external teaching is likely to suppress the child’s autonomous energy. We must give time for the child to voluntarily generate her or his own energy. This experience, that is, the realization of a child’s innate abilities, is a process that spans the whole length of childhood. Thus, as Rousseau maintains boldly, the greatest, the most important, and the most useful rule of all education is “not to gain time but to lose it.”²¹²

²⁰⁹ Rousseau, “*Émile*,” p. 93.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ Emerson, “*Nature and Selected Essays*,” p. 238.

²¹² Rousseau, “*Émile*,” p. 93.

Dewey argues in *Democracy and Education* that heredity is “a limit of education.”²¹³ As it is a vain effort to teach those who innately lack vocal apparatus to speak, it is also vain to raise as artists children who are born without artistic talents, or to train as mathematicians children without mathematical talents.²¹⁴ Therefore, in commencing the educational process, educators must consider the genetic condition of a child, that is, the spontaneous energy that flows out from the child. It is impossible for us to create the child’s energy; we can only stimulate it. In this respect, Dewey’s claim that heredity is the limit of education also means that the inherent energy of the child is the basis of education.

The propositions that active energy flows out from children and that this energy should be harnessed as the starting point of education are easily ignored in educational practice. Many parents are not interested in their children’s spontaneous energy, but rush to make their children interested in things valued by society.²¹⁵ Parents do not allow time for their children’s voluntary energy to emerge. The more unfortunate fact is that the energy of the children is wasted on giving attention to externally imposed tasks, leaving the child with insufficient energy to attend to her or his spontaneous interests.

For instance, South Korean classrooms are very efficient at conveying considerable amounts of knowledge of subject-matter and at enhancing problem-solving skills. What is considered and respected is academic performance. So students, whether academically successful

²¹³ Dewey, MW9, 80.

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Early English education, which is generally done in South Korea, can be an example. Despite the fact that in the general situation in South Korea there is little chance to communicate in English, a large number of 3 or 4 year-old kids attend kindergartens where English-only classes are offered. They are learning the English alphabet before learning Korean alphabet.

or not, pay little attention to their other natural endowments. They are kept busy developing their problem-solving skills, and so their many other abilities – poetic, musical, kinetic, social, communicative, ethical, and so on – are left neglected and undeveloped.

Unfortunately, though most of the hours South Korean students spend in school are devoted to developing their intellectual faculties, even their intellectual abilities are not correctly exercised and fully realized. The intelligence that the South Korean classroom mainly emphasizes and measures relate to the faculties of quick judgment, memory, and application – all of which are required to solve given problems. So much so that every year South Korean high school students receive highest marks in international math and science competitions. However, quite paradoxically, it is also common that many of these high-achieving high school students become average university students and researchers. Why is it that their achievement in high school fails to guarantee their future performance? It is because their intellectual abilities had little relation to their natural aptitudes, to their true and abiding interests.

To put it simply, in order to achieve genuine intellectual development, a student's intelligence must be used to develop her or his natural aptitude. Classrooms must be a place where students' cognitive thinking and their qualitative thinking cooperate, where they find synergy; students should use cognitive thinking skills in service of solving their own problems, problems that are their own concern and interest, which they discover through qualitative thinking. For example, a student with scientific talent must utilize her or his intellect to realize that scientific talent. This is also true of artistic and athletic talent. In schools that focus only on students' academic performance, the other natural abilities of students are left neglected and, in many cases, become effectively obsolete. At the same time, the students' intellectual abilities,

which should be exercised to realize their natural talents, also go to waste because they are used only to solve problems imposed on them by their teachers, a misuse of their intellect. I have observed many South Korean people spend their lifetimes without realizing their true intellectual powers. This is a tragedy, a waste of precious life. There is no doubt that vast amounts of energy are being wasted on education that does not take into account the inherent energy of children. We are wasting valuable time and money on the impossible task of forcing intellectual interest of students, and most tragically, we are sacrificing the precious youth of our children. These are just some of the implications at stake in neglecting the natural aptitudes of children.

2. Two Roles of Teachers

In the previous section I have investigated how human natural powers emerge, what attitude is appropriate to have toward human inherent abilities, and the educational implications of discussions on human innate energies. In this section, based on the previous arguments, I will examine the role of teachers in classrooms conceived as a place for the continuous growth of individual natural abilities.

Dewey presents two important tasks of education in *The School and Society*: “the question of education is the question of taking hold of his [the student’s] activities, of giving them direction.”²¹⁶ (Brackets added.) This quote explains well the role of teachers in spaces where Dewey’s conception of leisure occur, that is, in classrooms where the continuous self-formation of students takes place. Based on Dewey’s assertion, I would like to present two roles of teachers in this section.

²¹⁶ Dewey, MW1, 36.

The first task of teachers in the educational process is to “take hold” of the active energy of a student. As explained thus far, a child is not a passive being, but active energies that actualize her or his natural tendencies flow out from within her or him. And as Dewey points out, the spontaneous energy of the child is the starting point of education. Therefore, to capture the current energy flowing from within the student is the first thing an educator should do in the process of education.

However, as described previously, seizing the child’s active energy is not an easy task because that energy comes out never in finished form, but in the form of a babbling. Thus, taking hold of a child’s spontaneous energy means that a teacher grasps the value of immature energy flowing from a child in light of possible future outcomes. To do this, the teacher must make two efforts at the same time. The first is to observe the child carefully, and the second is to increase the competence of expert knowledge in order to interpret the child’s babbling.

In a traditional classroom setting, one teacher teaches a set of knowledge with a set of curriculums to a number of students. In this classroom environment, the current energy of an individual student is not an important consideration. The primary purpose of the teacher is to teach as much assigned knowledge as possible to many students in the given amount of time. Therefore, the main task of teachers in a traditional classroom is to study textbooks.

In contrast, the purpose of a classroom that emphasizes individual self-formation is different. Basically, there is no common curriculum which is applicable to all students in this classroom. Rather, in principle, there should be as many curriculums as there are students. The present energy of every student is different. Therefore, the starting point of education should be different for each student. The knowledge of subject-matter in such a place of education is not

ultimately what students need to know, but an instrument that a teacher can use in capturing, guessing, understanding, interpreting, and predicting the students' natural abilities. Thus, the main task of teachers in a classroom oriented to the continuous self-formation of individual students is to study their students as well as textbooks. As A. G. Rud and Garrison emphasize, "Educators must not only know their subject matter, but also deepen relationships with their students."²¹⁷

First and foremost, as Hansen expresses, a teacher should be "a student of students."²¹⁸ Teachers must respect students' interests; value their questions; and observe their behavior carefully. Taking hold of a student's natural active energy does not take place solely in the classroom. Rather, it may happen at any moment of stimulation. Hence, teachers must keenly observe their students' responses and look out for clues to their abilities in all situations.

A classroom designed to advance the continuous self-formation of students will also especially cherish students' questions, because behind a student's question is the entire life of the student. As I have explained previously, at the moment of qualitative thinking, that is, at the moment we feel something problematic, we exert all of our antecedent experiences.²¹⁹ Therefore, a teacher can look into the history of a student through the student's questions. In addition, through the student's question, the teacher is able to see in which direction the student's interest,

²¹⁷ Rud A. G. and Garrison Jim. "The Reverent Educator: The Call to Supporting Students' Spiritually on our Campuses." *Spirituality in Higher Education Newsletter* 5, No. 2 (2009): 3.

²¹⁸ Hansen, David T. *Exploring the Moral Heart of Teaching: Toward a Teacher's Creed*. New York: Teachers College Press, 2001, 67.

²¹⁹ Dewey, LW5, 250.

that is, “the active or moving *identity* of the self” is heading [emphasis in original].²²⁰ Posed differently, a teacher can capture the direction of the student’s present self through the student’s questions. In this way, it can be said that the student’s past and present are exposed in the student’s questions.

The second task of a teacher in the educational process is to “direct” a student’s active energy. As explained several times before, spontaneous energy flows from within students. But this energy in its early stages is expressed in only a very primitive form. As mentioned earlier, the infant’s babbling in its early stages is physically indistinguishable from simple sounds. Thus, in terms of communication, which is the main function of human language, the infant’s early stages of babbling is meaningless. Much time and effort is required to develop this early stage of babbling into communicable human language, which can be called the destination of its development.

With respect to directing a student’s spontaneous energy, a teacher must know the terminus of the energy’s development in order to direct the primitive energy. For without knowing the end point, s/he is unable to guide the student’s energy in the direction it should proceed. According to Dewey, “knowledge of social conditions, of the present state of civilization” provides the teacher with the information to predict the destination of the student’s primitive energy.²²¹ Posed differently, the society and civilization that humans have achieved so far become the terminus toward which the primitive energy of the student should be directed.²²²

²²⁰ Dewey, MW9, 362.

²²¹ Dewey, EW5, 85.

²²² Although I use the terms such as destination and terminus, the end point of the development of

Therefore, teachers should direct students' energy by referring to the 'present' state of society or civilization. For instance, a teacher's knowledge of art, music, science, and mathematics will serve as a temporary destination to guide her or his students' artistic, musical, scientific, and mathematical energies.

In relation to the first role of a teacher, I indicated that by taking hold of a student's current energy, a teacher is able to grasp the student's past and present. And through the second role, by directing the student's energy, the teacher connects the student's present and future. That is, the teacher utilizes her or his knowledge of subject-matter to predict the future outcome of the student's primitive questions. With the future outcome in mind, the teacher leads the student's current experience and allows the student's present to move toward the future²²³: the teacher maintains the active relationship between the student's current state and her or his ideal. In this respect, the teacher is like eternity manifesting in the student's present: the student experiences eternity through the teacher. Eternity here is not a completely transcendental concept as it is in ancient leisure, but a concept that transcends the present horizontally as in Dewey's second stage of qualitative thinking. (See figure 2 and explanations on page 82.)

The point that we must never forget in the course of leading the voluntary energy of the student to its final point is that the teacher can only 'direct' the energy of the student. In other words, as the initial energy of the student flows spontaneously, the energy in its later stages must also flow from within the student. In principle, a teacher cannot create a student's energy. In

student's spontaneous energy is not fixed. For, society or civilization of humans continues to evolve. There can be no finished society or civilization. The role of individuals or education for the continuous development of society or civilization will be discussed in the 4th section of this chapter.

²²³ Dewey, MW2, 18.

order to guide the student's energy, the teacher must first let the energy of the student flow continuously. Keeping energy flowing constantly means that the teacher continues to give the student opportunities to exert her or his energy.

Looking back at Dewey's process of self-formation, as described in Chapter 3, the self uses the antennae of interest to search for objects that can fill its deficiencies. When encountering an object, the self perceives qualitatively that the object can resolve its defect, and creates a situation with the object. Through the situation the self absorbs the object and renews itself. This is the basic principle of self-formation. Therefore, in order to guide a student's energy, a teacher must continuously provide objects of interest. Only then will voluntary energy flow out of the student constantly. To do this, the teacher must grasp the student's previous experiences and current energies, and select an object that the student may perceive as potentially solving her or his self-deficiency.²²⁴ If the object is too far away from the student's current stage in her or his developmental process, the student will not be able to detect the value of the object at all.

For instance, why do we teach math? Plato's answer to this question is to turn the eye of the soul toward the world of Idea.²²⁵ Dewey's answer to this question is that the student needs mathematical knowledge.²²⁶ In other words, if asked why a student should learn equations, Dewey would probably answer that the knowledge of equations is required to solve the student's current problems. As a result of the teacher appropriately guiding the mathematical interest of the child, the student will eventually come to a moment that requires the knowledge of equations. At this moment, the student's questioning of the value of equations will become meaningless

²²⁴ Ibid, 25.

²²⁵ Plato, "Republic," 525c.

²²⁶ Dewey, MW2, 30.

because equations will have become useful for solving their problems. Put differently, the student will have already experienced the value of equations for her- or himself and will be “internally motivated to learn.”²²⁷ Therefore, the teacher’s important role is to guide the student’s experience so that mathematical knowledge becomes relevant to the student’s experience²²⁸; the teacher need to create a situation in which mathematics is seen as useful and thus used for the growth of the student’s experience.

Let us observe the moment when Rousseau taught Emile geography.²²⁹ Emile asks Rousseau what the usefulness of learning geography is. To answer this question, Rousseau creates a situation in which Emile’s geographical knowledge can be utilized: Emile must escape from a forest; how will he do it? In that moment, Emile’s knowledge of geography becomes useful knowledge. Thus, when knowledge meets a student’s interests, the question of the value of knowledge disappears. For the question of why we should learn a specific piece of knowledge arises only when we cannot find an internal reason.²³⁰

In directing a student’s active energy by providing an appropriate educational environment, a teacher should not forget that s/he is “a dynamic element in the environment”²³¹: in directing the student’s energy, the teacher is not merely the director of the scene. For instance, a parent’s attitude on a baby’s babbling will have significant impact on the baby’s future

²²⁷ Garrison, Jim. *Dewey and Eros: Wisdom and Desire in the Art of Teaching*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Pub, 2010, 192.

²²⁸ Dewey, MW2, 30.

²²⁹ Rousseau, “*Émile*,” 180-181.

²³⁰ This is the opposite of the way R. S. Peters’ justification of knowledge. (Peters, R. S. *Ethics and Education*. London: Allen and Unwin, 1970, 165.)

²³¹ Hansen, “*Exploring the Moral Heart of Teaching: Toward a Teacher’s Creed*,” 72.

language development, language habits, and conversational attitudes. It is no doubt that parents who are able to see in the baby's babbling "the promise and potency of a future social intercourse and conversation"²³² will have a better effect than parents who are indifferent and apathetic to the baby's babbling. The process of language development is not a process of simply learning words and grammar. Until an infant's early stage of babbling develops into communicable human language, the culture of parents, adults, and society is also transplanted with language.

Likewise, how a teacher perceives and responds to a student's active energy is significant in the student's development. The teacher's sensitivity to, respect for, interest in, and affection for the student's natural energy permeates into the developmental process of the student's natural energy; the teacher her- or himself becomes the material of the student's growth. As a student's mathematical babbling progresses, the student not only learns mathematical formulas mechanically but s/he also learns the teacher's affection for mathematics, interest in mathematical problems, mathematical way of thinking, and so on.

In conclusion, the teacher is an important environmental factor before s/he designs and provides the rest of the environment. Metaphorically speaking, the relationship between a teacher and a student is not the relationship between an architect and a building; the teacher is not just the designer of the building but the teacher's personality itself becomes bricks in the building.

Although I have distinguished two distinct roles of a teacher thus far, they are not separate; taking hold of a student's active current energy and providing an appropriate environment for directing the student's energy do not occur separately in the actual process of

²³² Dewey, EW5, 85.

education. Rather, these two roles that teachers play in the educational process are conducted complementarily: careful observation of the student's active energy must be sustained in planning and implementing an educative environment for directing the student's energy. Further, neither role is a one-time job. Posed differently, it is impossible for a teacher to capture a student's possibility and decide the proper environment for the student's development in a single moment. The teacher's understanding may be wrong or it may have to be corrected or revised. And as the process of taking hold of a student's natural energy proceeds, the educative environment for the student's development should also be reexamined and redirected.

Educational methods that respect the inherent energy of a child and make that energy the basis of education are by no means easy to carry out in practice. No matter how a teacher tries to capture a child's voluntary energy and direct that energy until it reaches its destination, the success of the teacher's efforts cannot be guaranteed. As Dewey quotes Emerson at the closing paragraph of Chapter 4 of *Democracy and Education*, teachers even need "assistances of God" to succeed in this educational process.²³³ However, the attitude of a teacher which respects the intrinsic energy of a child and wants to make it the basis of education can be a testimony to the profundity of the teacher's personality.²³⁴

²³³ Dewey, MW9, 57.

²³⁴ Ibid.

3. Teacher as the Prophet of God

“I believe that in this way the teacher always is the prophet of the true God and the usherer in of the true kingdom of God.”²³⁵

Unexpectedly, rather surprisingly, Dewey concludes his Pedagogic Creed by making a somewhat religious declaration. It is so uncharacteristic that if I failed to provide the proper citation for the quote above, few would believe it was selected from Dewey’s work. As Eliyahu Rosenow indicates, this conclusion is puzzling because “traditional religious concepts seem to be incompatible” with Dewey’s arguments in general.²³⁶ Religion is not a significant topic in Dewey’s overall writings, and in *A Common Faith*, which is Dewey’s representative book on religion, Dewey criticizes the traditional view of religion. How then can we understand his perplexing but resolute conclusion to his Pedagogic Creed? It would be unreasonable to regard as insincere the final sentence of a work considered so significant to a philosopher of education that he would call it his pedagogic creed. Thus, in this section I hypothesize that Dewey’s naturalistic and pragmatic arguments on education are in fact consistent with the last sentence of his Pedagogic Creed, and based on this assumption I will interpret Dewey’s religious assertion concerning the role of a teacher.

Before I begin, I must indicate that it is uncertain whether or not Dewey had in mind the traditional conception of God when he concludes his Pedagogic Creed with the term “God.” As I introduced previously, in *A Common Faith*, Dewey gives the name God, though he was skeptical

²³⁵ Dewey, EW5, 95.

²³⁶ Rosenow, Eliyahu. The Teacher as Prophet of the True God: Dewey’s Religious Faith and its Problems. *The Journal of the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain*, 31, No. 3 (1997): 427.

about the name must be given, to the “*active* relation between ideal and actual.”²³⁷ [Emphasis in original.] As he did not assign personality to his God, Dewey’s conception of God is clearly distinguishable from the traditional conception. However, Dewey wrote Pedagogic Creed about 40 years earlier than *A Common Faith*. Therefore, as I stated, we cannot ascertain with certainty which conception of God Dewey had in mind when he wrote the conclusion of his Pedagogic Creed. Rosenow demonstrates that a critical attitude toward established religion is also found in Dewey’s early essays in the late 19th century.²³⁸ But I think it is more reasonable to assume that Dewey had the traditional conception of God in mind at least in his conclusion of Pedagogic Creed. The expressions he uses, such as “the prophet of God” and “kingdom of God,” seem to presuppose a personality to God, which is lacking in his definition of God in *A Common Faith*.

Consequently, it is uncertain whether Dewey had in mind the traditional conception of God or his own impersonal conception of God when he asserts “the teacher always is the prophet of the true God and the usherer in of the true kingdom of God.”²³⁹ Therefore, I would like to leave both possibilities open in linking the meaning of the last sentence of Dewey’s Pedagogic Creed with the idea of education as the process of self-formation, as discussed in this dissertation. Posed differently, my hypothesis for interpreting Dewey’s declaration on a teacher’s role is that the teacher can be called the prophet of God in both senses of God – both the traditional conception of God and Dewey’s later understanding of God in *A Common Faith*.

²³⁷ Dewey, LW9 (CF), 34.

²³⁸ Rosenow, “The Teacher as Prophet of the True God: Dewey’s Religious Faith and its Problems,” 430.

²³⁹ Dewey, EW5, 95.

First, I will interpret the final sentence of Dewey's Pedagogic Creed based on the traditional conception of God. As argued earlier, in principle, it is almost impossible for individuals to discover their natural aptitudes on their own. Primitive forms of energy flowing from individuals must be captured and directed by a teacher. And this role of teachers cannot be replaced by parents in its entirety. To "assist students in realizing their powers and potential" is the highest calling of teachers, and this task can be performed holistically only by the community of teachers.²⁴⁰

Etymologically speaking, a prophet is a spokesman of the God. Put differently, a prophet is a person who delivers the will of God to people. In Christianity, people believe that God endows a unique calling to each human being and to realize it in this world is to fulfill God's will.²⁴¹ As I explained thus far, to help a student develop and realize her or his original capabilities in the world is a teacher's role. Through education, the teacher delivers the will of God – the unique calling for an individual – to the student. Therefore, a teacher who assists a student in fulfilling God's gift within deserves to be called a prophet of God, as Dewey declares. The profession of teaching is no less sacred than the priesthood in this regard. Only the devoted enthusiasm and affection of a teacher can lead a student to a life that conforms to God's will.

Second, I will interpret the final sentence of Dewey's Pedagogic Creed based on Dewey's understanding of God in *A Common Faith*. Dewey gives the name "God," to the "active relation between ideal and actual."²⁴² [Emphasis in original.] As I have argued in the previous chapter,

²⁴⁰ Hansen, "Exploring the Moral Heart of Teaching: Toward a Teacher's Creed," 9.

²⁴¹ The Bible tells the parable of a servant who has an obligation to use the talents granted to him by his master (Bible. King James Version. Matthew 25:14-30).

²⁴² Dewey, LW9 (CF), 34.

Dewey's God is not a noun-form, but a verb-form. In other words, Dewey's God is not a being with personality, but active energy that connects actual and ideal.

As explained in the previous section of this chapter, the teacher directs the student's spontaneous energy. The teacher helps the student's primitive form of energy to develop and arrive at its final destination. To guide the student's energy, the teacher must have knowledge of how the energy will evolve. Utilizing this knowledge, the teacher assists the student's energy so that it moves toward its end. In other words, the teacher possesses knowledge of the future outcome of the student's energy and helps the student's current energy to continue in its development. The teacher, as a result, actively connects the student's actual and ideal. In this respect, the teacher can be said to be the prophet of God in Dewey's later sense of God. The teacher is a manifestation of God as active energy.

4. The Significance of Education as Self-Formation

So far I have argued that the voluntary energy of the student must be captured and directed by the teacher and that this task of the teacher is sacred. In this section, I will elucidate the personal and social significance of an education that seizes and realizes the potential of a student.

a. Individual Significance

In general, we tend to link individual aptitudes with future jobs. However, the ultimate goal of education that captures and directs a student's natural abilities is not "to prepare individuals to work at particular callings."²⁴³ As explained earlier, human beings' natural powers do not begin in completed form. Therefore, the process of examining a person's natural aptitude is not like finding the seed of a lawyer in person A, of a businessman in person B, of an engineer in person C, and of a nurse in person D, and so on. Rather, the true purpose of an education that is based on a student's natural energy is "to insure the continuance of education by organizing the powers that insure growth."²⁴⁴ Put differently, the goal of education is to teach students what faculties they have and to allow them to use their own abilities in leading their lives.

A teacher cannot live with a student for the rest of her or his life. The role of the teacher is to discover the student's abilities and to help them develop to some extent. Of course, the role of the teacher cannot be overemphasized because the student her- or himself cannot discover her or his natural powers without the help of the teacher. But life after school is up to the student. The student must live the rest of her or his life by exerting the abilities that the teacher has helped her or him to discover. Choice of job depends entirely on the student. In these days, because many jobs are disappearing due to the development of artificial intelligence, it makes little sense to educate students with a specific job in mind.²⁴⁵ The student must continue her or

²⁴³ Dewey, MW8, 364.

²⁴⁴ Dewey, MW9, 56.

²⁴⁵ One report of World Economic Forum says that "By one popular estimate, 65% of children entering primary school today will ultimately end up working in completely new job types that don't yet exist." <http://reports.weforum.org/future-of-jobs-2016/chapter-1-the-future-of-jobs-and-skills/>

his education. In other words, s/he must continue to develop her or his natural abilities. Thus, as Dewey argues in *Democracy and Education*, there is no purpose of education other than to keep growing.²⁴⁶

According to Dewey, “To find out what one is fitted to do and to secure an opportunity to do it is the key to happiness.”²⁴⁷ To help an individual know what power s/he has is a very important factor in her or his happiness. Therefore, education that assists the student to develop and realize her or his natural aptitude is the key to the happiness of the student.

For Aristotle, utmost happiness of human beings comes from contemplative activity.²⁴⁸ Thus for the ancients, leisure, self-realization, and happiness were related: through leisure, the ancients found a true self beyond the earth of the flesh, and at that moment they enjoyed true happiness. This relationship also exists in Dewey’s picture. In this dissertation, I have compared the ancient concept of leisure and Dewey’s qualitative thinking, and insisted that the concept of qualitative thinking can be a modern conception of leisure. For Dewey, leisure (the moment of qualitative thinking) is closely related to true self-formation, and self-formation is consequential to achieving happiness. Therefore, leisure, self-fulfillment, and individual happiness are deeply related in Dewey’s theory.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ Ibid, 318.

²⁴⁸ Aristotle, “*Nicomachean Ethics*,” 1179a.

b. Social Significance

In *Democracy and Education*, Dewey agrees with Plato's educational ideal that "the business of education (is) to discover these aptitudes and progressively to train them for social use."²⁴⁹ (Brackets added.) A prosperous and efficient society is achieved in large part by each member of society doing what s/he is able to do well. This is "the best service the person can render" to the other members of her or his community.²⁵⁰ Therefore, individual happiness and social prosperity are logically related.

However, this kind of social efficiency cannot be attained through education that does not take individual aptitude into consideration. In South Korea, for instance, the academic ability of a person is a crucial factor in selecting an occupation. Let us suppose that one South Korean high school student wants to be a doctor. In order to enter the medical department of a university, s/he must have an excellent GPA as well as score in the 99th percentile on the national university entrance exam. Although many universities are trying to diversify their admissions qualifications these days, it is still almost impossible for a candidate with a low GPA and test score to be admitted to the medical department of a university. This situation is effectively the same for all other socially desirable occupations as well. In order to be a lawyer, a pharmacist, a government officer, an employee of a large corporation, or even a teacher, a candidate has to prove her or his academic ability by passing specific exams. Of course, most positions interview candidates in order to evaluate their other capacities. But even a chance at an interview is usually given only to a candidate who has proven her or his academic ability. Therefore, academically unsuccessful

²⁴⁹ Dewey, MW9, 94.

²⁵⁰ Ibid, 318.

students virtually never obtain socially desirable positions. South Korean society seems to have the belief that an academically intelligent person will do her or his job well no matter where s/he is positioned in a society: as a doctor, a lawyer, a businessman, a teacher, and so on.

It seems to me that such a belief in a direct causal relationship between a person's academic intelligence and her or his job performance ignores simultaneously the various natural aptitudes that individuals can have, as well as the diverse characteristics of different professions. In response, firstly, the intelligence that can be proven by academic performance is not the only respectable and valuable natural endowment of a person. Creativity, imagination, musical ability, kinetic ability, social ability, communicational ability, political ability, and other numerous abilities, are not evaluated by standardized tests. Therefore, it is inhumane and unfair to rank or evaluate students only by their academic performances.

Further, the blind faith placed in students' academic performances results not only in a personal loss but also a social loss. Because academic ability is overtly emphasized and respected in the classroom and in society, every student in South Korea exerts her- or himself to maximize her or his academic performance. Sure enough, the private education market in South Korea is estimated to generate \$20 billion annually. While every student only concentrates on improving their academic ability in the classroom, their other natural abilities are neglected and wither away. Unwittingly, South Korean society may be ruining the future of great philosophers, scientists, artists, actors, athletes, and so on. This is a loss that cannot be measured.

Secondly, although I do not want to underestimate the importance of book-ish intelligence for every profession, it is needless to say that a good brain is not the only requisite for being a good worker. For instance, in order to be a good doctor, a doctor should possess

“kindness, compassion, humility, excellent communication skills, availability, friendliness, and a sense of humor” in addition to a smart brain.²⁵¹ Of course, such qualities of a good doctor are not assessed by standardized exams. Therefore, a doctor who has achieved high academic performance in school but lacks or has not developed the above qualifications of a good doctor may have many difficulties in carrying out the medical profession. To consider the academic ability of a person as the top priority in job selection is to disregard the original characteristics of occupations. The requirements of being a good scientist, teacher, dentist, businessperson, public officer, pilot, and so on, are peculiar to the nature of each occupation.

A classroom that cherishes the individual aptitude of a student may come with relative inefficiencies. The process of education may take a long time. It may be difficult to evaluate the end-results of education. And the total amount of knowledge acquisition for the average student may be relatively less than in a traditional classroom setting.²⁵² In these respects, the classroom that emphasizes the individual aptitude of each student may not be as efficient as the traditional classroom setting. However, we must consider whether the efficiency that is pursued at school can guarantee social efficiency.

The intelligence that is trained in South Korean education nowadays may be suitable for civil servants, who perform rigid tasks. Therefore, it would be foolish to expect students who are trained to use their intellect in passive problem-solving abilities, as they are in the classroom, to demonstrate creative intelligence in the workplace. It is highly likely that this myopic emphasis – on passive classroom intelligence, and on placing students into professions based exclusively on

²⁵¹ Shmerling, R. “What makes a good doctor?” in *Harvard Medical School commentaries on health*. Boston, MA: Harvard Health Publications. 2014.

²⁵² But I believe that the quantity of acquired knowledge which would be useful in realizing student’s natural power is not necessarily less than the amount of knowledge gained in traditional classroom setting.

academic achievement – is ignoring the inherent characteristics of each occupation, as well as reducing job performance to the mere mechanical. Therefore, we can conclude that the South Korean education system is failing to make individual students happy by neglecting to take their natural endowments into account in the process of education, and that it is also failing to attain or improve the efficiency and prosperity of society by limiting the full and healthy use of the intellect of its members. This is a tragic, double loss – both for individuals and for South Korean society.

The social utility of education that engenders self-formation may be approached from a more macroscopic perspective. In the second section of this chapter, I pointed out that a teacher interprets a student's natural powers by referring to the contents of present civilization and that the present civilization plays a role as the end point of the direction of the student's abilities. In other words, it is an important task of the teacher to develop the student's ability to the current level of human civilization. The question is, what happens after that?

As pointed out earlier, there is no such thing as the completion of civilization. Civilization will continue to change and evolve. Who is the subject of this development? Once students graduate from school, they continue to develop their abilities and become involved in the transformation of society and civilization. It is the student who becomes the subject of the development of civilization. As Michael Oakeshott claims, a student becomes an heir of human achievements.²⁵³

²⁵³ Oakeshott, Michael. *The Voice of Liberal Learning*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989, 45.

As the heirs of civilization, human beings continue the process of the development of civilization only through the continuous growth of individual experience. Newton's scientific interests and talents advanced the scientific and technological achievements of humankind. Shakespeare's literary genius helped form much of the English language, and his works are counted among the most valuable literary achievements of humankind. Mozart's musical brilliance birthed works that continue to this day to provide endless inspiration for people across the globe. What was it that led ultimately to their civilization-advancing achievements, but conditions that enabled their innate abilities to be nurtured and given freedom to develop? Therefore, what is at stake in an education that fully realizes an individual's natural tendencies is not merely individual happiness, but the welfare of the whole of human civilization.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Through this dissertation I tried to reconceive the relationship between school and leisure and to insist that the school should still be a place of leisure. For this purpose I started this dissertation from exploring the meaning of the Greek word *scholé*, the etymology of the English word school. Throughout chapter 2, I investigated the ancient's understanding of leisure and explained that through leisure, the ancients recognized the limitations of humans, enjoyed unconditional grace, and faced eternity. In other words, the ancients found the true identity of human beings through leisure. Thus, for the ancients, leisure did not simply mean rest from work, as modern people understand. Leisure was a very meaningful time to discover the true self. Therefore, according to the etymological link between school and leisure, the school as a place of leisure means that the school is a place for the true self pursuit.

However, how we understand the meaning of the true self defines differently the leisure activity pursuing the true self. Simply put, the ancients and Dewey have different answers to what the true self of human beings is. Especially for the medieval, the true self of human beings was a divine intuitive faculty that was given in humans. Thus, the medieval thought that the true self of humans was not in our flesh, but in our spiritual power, and through leisure they found this spiritual faculty.

But for Dewey, the true self of humans is different from the answer of the medieval. First, Dewey does not think that the true self of humans is given in us. Rather, he argues that the human self is formed through our lives. The human self is formed through the interaction of our

natural tendencies with the given environment. The more inherent tendencies of individual are realized through life, the self can be thought of as truer self.

When we see human true self in the eyes of Dewey, the meaning of leisure and the meaning of school as a place of leisure change. First, leisure as a true self-seeking activity is not an act of capturing the gift of God in humans through spiritual intuition. Rather, leisure is an activity in which humans continue to form their own selves. And in this process, qualitative thinking of human beings plays a very crucial role in connecting past self, present self, and future self.

And the school as a place for leisure, in other words, the school as a place for the pursuit of the true self of humans, is conceived differently. According to the ancient self-concept, the purpose of educational leisure activity is to discover spiritual true selves beyond human flesh. Thus, the curriculum is also used for this activity, that is, as a means to increase attention to the invisible. However, the school as a place of leisure that borrows Dewey's concept of self is a place where individual students strive to realize their natural tendencies as fully as possible. For this purpose, the teacher must capture and direct the energy of the student, and the subjects are used as a tool for interpreting and directing each student's natural tendency.

Therefore, the claim that school should be a place for leisure is not simply a nostalgia for ancient times, nor does it claim that the school should try to relieve students' stress. The argument that school should be a place of leisure is the claim that the active self-actualization of each student should take place in the school. In contemporary schools filled with work, it is impossible for individual students to experience self-formation. And this self-formation of the individual is possible through the help of the teacher, and it is unlikely to happen in the society

other than the school. Therefore, even in modern times, schools should be places of leisure. This plays a decisive role in individual happiness and social welfare.

In this dissertation, based on Dewey's self-concept, I tried to explain the alternative mode of leisure which is different from the leisure of ancient meaning as the discovery of the divine intuition ability in human beings and the leisure of modern meaning as the relief of stress from work. Of course, Dewey does not explain his theory as a new form of leisure. However, the alternative mode of leisure proposed through this dissertation can be regarded as a form of leisure that all citizens should enjoy in modern democratic societies.²⁵⁴ In other words, every citizen has the duty and the right to fully realize the natural tendency of the individual, and this task must begin with the help of teachers in school. Therefore, the relationship between leisure and school is still valid in modern times, and we should try to make school a place of leisure.

Aristotle argues in book X of *Nicomachean Ethics* that the activity of God is contemplative and the happiness of human being depends on how much one extends contemplative activity, i.e., leisure.²⁵⁵ In keeping with this tradition, for the medieval monks leisure was time to discover the true self that is the divinity within human being. Aristotle and the medieval monks thought that to reveal the divine character of human being is the best activity that human beings can do and that is what God wants human beings to do. However, God gave human beings a body and sent us to this world. And God also furnishes each human being with her or his own unique aptitudes, capabilities, interests, and so on. Therefore, it is not necessary to suppose that what God wants human beings to do is to imitate the divine activity. Rather,

²⁵⁴ Dewey, MW9, 265.

²⁵⁵ Aristotle. "*Nicomachean Ethics*," 1178b; 1179a.

developing and realizing the potential what God has provided to each individual in this world may be the life that satisfy God's intention. In this respect, a school where a student develops and realizes one's own powers by teacher's assistance can be a place to fulfill the will of God. As a result, the school is as sacred as a medieval monastery and the work done at the school would be as divine as the Aristotelian leisure.

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