

Conclusion

The steps that will need to be taken in order to construct collective axiological systems under the cultural conditions imposed by our societies of knowledge, innovation and continual change have already been outlined.

The aim of this book is not only theoretical, but also practical. What would be the sense of attempting to build an axiological epistemology amounting to know-how on all human axiological phenomena, on their functions, the diverse range of how they manifest, how they were built in the past and how they can be built in the future under our own cultural conditions, the epistemological interpretations that they entail and even impose, if this attempt is only theoretical? Know-how concerning the axiological must be oriented towards practical application.

Our aim is to provide useful knowledge to diverse organisations in societies based on innovation and continual transformation. In such societies, nothing can be imposed from above. Everything must be generated by the groups that produce this constant change. This means that organisations, at their different levels and with their different aims, must be able to build their own axiological projects using general templates pertaining to globalised knowledge societies in general.

Axiological epistemology also aims to call attention to the inescapable need to expressly cultivate the absolute dimension of our access to the real. One of its goals will be to study and instruct, insofar as possible, on how to cultivate this dimension under our current cultural conditions, in the absence of beliefs, religions and gods.

Our discipline should facilitate the inheritance of the legacy of wisdom of our ancestors from all of humankind's different cultures. This is a requirement in the globalised human society.

Despite the years that we have spent studying this topic, we are aware that, what we have achieved is only an initial attempt at moving closer to some basic principles of an axiological epistemology. There is still much more work to be done.

However, as described in the introduction, building an axiological epistemology has become an urgent need, given the radical and rapid changes that the fast-paced growth of science and technology is continually producing in our way of life.

As the living creatures with needs that we are, we depend completely on our technology, but even more so on the axiological systems that keep us viable as a species in a changing environment. The axiological systems of our different communities should be our primary concern. We cannot live through a near total axiological dismantling while in possession of technological and scientific instruments, the power of which multiplies every few months.

Axiological epistemology should call attention to the need for the communities that manage, direct and use our technology and science to be people and communities that have human quality.

Axiological epistemology must make itself able to argue convincingly that our organisations will have no human quality if there are not enough people and groups that cultivate profound human quality. This profound human quality is what our ancestors, in their static societies based on beliefs and religions and in an anthropological context of body and spirit, referred to as spirituality.

If we do not learn to make use of the entire legacy of wisdom passed down to us by all of humankind's religious and spiritual traditions, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to cultivate human quality and profound human quality to the degree required in globalised knowledge societies. We cannot run the risk of having to reinvent this wisdom. This would be the height of folly and extremely dangerous.

Through the research that we have taken, it is clear that the teachings on profound human quality by the wise and by traditions can be expressed and lived either from a perspective of mythological forms and belief systems or without adherence to mythologies and belief systems.

Such a valuable legacy was lived, in the past, from the perspective of a mythical epistemology and the collective axiological projects of societies that needed to block change. However, this legacy can also be understood and lived, without losing a single drop of its wisdom, from a non-mythical epistemology and from the collective axiological projects of societies, the survival of which is based on constant change, innovation and the transformation of ways of life.

The sacred myths and narrations of the religious traditions and even the conceptual systems of spiritual traditions can be understood and lived as descriptions of the real, or as purely pointing to or symbolising what is beyond our capacities of expression and representation.

Understanding and living these in one way or another is not a question of human or spiritual quality, but depends solely on the conditions of survival.

The way in which our ancestors lived and expressed this richness was appropriate for their cultural conditions, but is totally and radically unsuitable under the cultural conditions of globalised societies of constant change.

At a time when our need for wisdom is greatest, we have discovered that we have an extremely rich treasure in the legacy of our ancestors. This legacy can be understood and lived completely if it is not interpreted as truths to which we must submit. Instead, it needs to be interpreted as indications and guidance for inquiry into the profoundness of our own condition, and, therefore, into the condition of all that is real. This legacy is not a call to submission. On the contrary, it is a call to inquiry and freedom.

The path to this inquiry can be based on data and not require a belief system to which it is necessary to submit. This is what we have attempted here. The data refer to our dual access to the real.

The guide and the teaching are within these great masters and within the innermost of our being when we inquire and listen to it.

It is now time to cultivate profound human quality based on difference, but with an easily recognisable common background, because this is the appropriate way for societies, living in constant change, to undertake inquiry with free creativity. As creative societies, they burst with difference, but always within a common globalised society.

Religious and cultural conflict needs to end. It is time for complementarity, mutual respect, and everyone's help, for the new industrial societies to have a solid basis in human quality and profound human quality, so that the life of our species, and of the entire planet, is not seriously threatened and damaged.

We could have studied many more texts. These texts and the accompanying considerations demonstrate that profound human quality, the spirituality of our ancestors, is subject matter for axiological epistemology.

This type of epistemology is able to provide a reasoned basis for all the axiological phenomena in our species, including the particular phenomena cultivated by the religions of the past and the great eastern spiritual traditions.

This discipline is able to address all that is axiological and demonstrate its rational foundation. It is able to point to why these phenomena appear, their purpose in the structure of our species, the possibilities they create, the level of formality they require, and the relationship they have had with the ways of survival of human groups.

This discipline is able to explain: what profound human quality consists of, on which anthropological factors it depends, its function, the specific features that it offers to our condition as living beings that speak, why this dimension that this condition opens up is, at the same time, necessary for our survival as a species, and is completely free.

It has been possible to demonstrate that the cultivation of spirituality, of profound human quality – using our terminology – is perfectly possible without submission, and as free inquiry, in the absence of beliefs, religions or gods, without this way of cultivating it involving any loss of the richness of our ancestors' traditions.

The way our ancestors cultivated this human quality is not better than the way that we are forced to adopt under the new cultural conditions. The difference in method does not necessarily affect the quality.

Recognising this is of great importance for our cultural situation, in order to be certain that we can inherit the past without loss, to safeguard the essential features of our specific nature as human beings, and finally, for the survival of our species and all of life on our small planet.

Axiological epistemology, as the study of the two branches of the axiological (that relative to our needs and the absolute) is an extremely important and essential discipline in knowledge societies. Nevertheless, axiological epistemology is a scientific, abstract discipline and, therefore, totally insufficient for the cultivation of

the axiological, which, itself, is sensitive. It should never be forgotten that the wisdom of which the masters speak is aimed at our mind and feelings.

However, this discipline tells us how the axiological functions, and with which rules and formalities, so that we can manage and create it appropriately. Architects require much scientific knowledge for their artistic creations. Similarly, abstract know-how is now required to create collective axiological projects.

In the same way that architecture is not possible without scientific-technical know-how, there will be no way to create collective axiological projects appropriately without know-how on axiological epistemology, or to cultivate profound human quality appropriately, the spirituality of our ancestors, under the new cultural conditions. However, know-how on axiological epistemology is not sufficient for the creation of axiological projects or to cultivate human quality, and even less so, profound human quality.

In our study of the texts, it is clear that the teachings of the great texts that gather and transmit the wisdom of the masters and the traditions of wisdom, regarding the cultivation of human quality and profound human quality, can be expressed and lived from mythological perspectives and belief systems, or without adhering to mythologies or belief systems.

We have also seen the profound overlap of the great traditions in their messages about profound human quality, within a great diversity of expression and access points. We have seen this profound overlap when it has been possible to interpret them without using mythical epistemology, and not as descriptions of this subtle reality.

We have seen, equally, that the great universal legacy of our ancestors can be inherited by societies of change and for societies of knowledge.

We can inherit, with certain ease, the teachings on human quality and profound human quality, while remaining free from their ways of thinking, believing, feeling, behaving and organising themselves.

We can even inherit their myths, narrations and symbols without losing anything from them, if we are capable of interpreting them, not from a mythical epistemology, which claims that reality is as described by these narrations and myths, but from a non-mythical epistemology. This non-mythical epistemology is capable of seeing this legacy as extremely rich ways of pointing to and symbolising the real, rather than as descriptions guaranteed heteronomously by the gods, by sacred ancestors, or simply by the very nature of things.

It is clear that axiological epistemology is an essential discipline for societies in transition to function well, as they move from certain collective ways of survival to others, and for societies of knowledge, in particular, to function well. The aim of our work has been to lay the foundations for this discipline. We hope to have achieved this to some extent.

In societies with powerful science and technology in continuous and rapid growth, how we control the axiological elements that need to govern and manage this know-how is a key question, if not the most important and urgent.

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