

Summary excerpts from Sharan B. Merriam and Associates. 2007. *Non-Western Perspectives on Learning and Knowing*. Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing Company.

Authors who contributed to the book were asked to reflect on the following questions:

1. How is learning thought of and/or what is the purpose of learning from this perspective?
2. What is the nature of knowledge?
 - Is it passed down from one generation to the next? Is it constructed? Both? Is it 'spread' across the community?
 - Is there a body of knowledge to be learned? If so, where is this body of knowledge? In peoples' memories? Embedded in everyday life? In stories and myths? In books? Oral or written or both?
3. How is this knowledge learned? Through practice, memorization, apprenticeship, formal classes?
4. How is it known when one has learned? Who decides that one has learned?
5. What is the role of the teacher? Who can be a teacher?
6. What is the end result of learning? A better, more moral person? A wise person? An independent/interdependent person? A knowledgeable person? A better community? A more equitable society?
7. What is the role of society, community, and/or family in learning?
8. How does this perspective on learning manifest itself in your society to day? That is, can we see evidence of this perspective/philosophy in your society today? (Preface, ix)

Most of the influence on views of knowledge, learning, and instruction has come from scholars and researchers from North America, Western Europe, Australia, and New Zealand.

Though the authors use the device of Western/non-Western approaches, attempting to address the problem of understanding different views of learning by posing a dichotomy is unsatisfying—primarily because a dichotomy is typically a Western construct. “Also problematic is the suggestion that ‘Western’ is the gold standard against which we measure non-Western thus depriving non-Westerners of having legitimate knowledge apart from Western norms” (2-3).

“Independence, separation, and hierarchies characterize a Western perspective, a view in direct contrast to most non-Western worldviews” (3).

“The domination of Western thought is sustained through ‘scientific’ research; colonization of the world is now intellectual and conceptual” (4).

One way of understanding the Western/non-Western dichotomy is to understand what counts as legitimate knowledge, who constructs knowledge, and who communicates it. “For colonized peoples, the knowledge that counts has been the knowledge of their European or American colonizers” (4).

Western scientific method tends to preclude any other form of knowledge building and “Since changes are the result of long periods of research and testing, Western science lacks the flexibility of other systems of knowing and learning. Many other traditions have traditionally passed on knowledge orally rather than in written form . . .” (5).

In the Indian context for example, firm conclusions are not required for something to be accepted as knowledge; the word of the elders is sufficient authentication; and mystery is permitted. Western science, on the other hand, is uncomfortable with unexplained experience (5).

“The separation of knowledge from its context and its codification according to Western science has had an impact on educational thought and practice. Education has become synonymous with ‘schooling,’ such that

adult learners have a difficult time thinking of their learning in anything but participation in formal classes. Informal learning which adults engage in on a daily basis is rarely identified as important learning” (5).

Preoccupation with Western notions of learning prevents “new ways of thinking about learning and how these perspectives differ from what we have grown up believing about learning, knowing, education, the teacher-student relationship, and so on. The presentation of non-Western perspectives challenges the hegemony of Western ways of knowing” (7).

Culture and indigenous knowledge are explored. “There are hundreds of definitions of culture. Basically, culture consists of the shared behavior and symbolic meaning systems of a group of people” (7).

The use of language is a critical component of knowing. For example, Western languages tend to focus on nouns which leads to categorization or naming; Eastern languages tend to focus on verbs which encourages relationship or making connections. Western thought is more analytic; Eastern thought is more holistic (8).

“Unfortunately, Western colonizing also brought with it an educational system requiring the learning of languages of the colonizer. . . . As language is an expression of culture and of systems of thought, non-Western traditions of learning were devalued, marginalized, and often brutally suppressed” (8).

(The authors do note that while linking the terms Western and non-Western to culture is inadequate, it is a shorthand for comparison.) The various cultural designations “capture, imperfectly of course, some of the differences that in turn affect not only how we see the world, but how learning experiences are interpreted” (9).

The term “indigenous” can be identified with idealized notions that indigenous knowledge and practices are the answer to the world’s problems. Though some prefer the term local knowledge (since indigenous knowledge is that which is produced to deal with local problems and issues), the authors maintain that the term indigenous knowledge is the more commonly used designation (11).

Indigenous knowledge is organic “in the sense that it is generated within the daily lives of people in local context . . .” (11). Indigenous knowledge is typically passed on orally from one generation to the next. Learning is fostered differently from what is experienced typically in schools—through story, poetry, myth ritual, dreams, art and recognizing the elder as “professor” (11). “When an elder dies in Africa, it is a library that burns.” African proverb

Non-Western perspectives of learning (e.g., Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, Confucianism) may incorporate indigenous systems of knowing, but the major philosophical or religious systems of thought are described as non-Western.

For some, Western knowledge systems are a form of intellectual apartheid in that they tend to be closed systems, institutionalized, self-contained and to a certain extent project a sense of righteousness. Non-Western and indigenous forms of knowing, often based on thousands of years of experience, are dismissed as “primitive” (11-12).

Graduate education tends to privilege “Western knowledge codified in Western textbooks, academic journal, and conference proceedings. . . . The hegemony of the Western ‘scientific’ perspective is also in evidence in the schools and universities of the non-Western world where Western textbooks, theories, and research are valued over local or regional resources” (12).

“Certainly a more palatable approach would be to uncover and acknowledge what people already know, then see how exposure to another system can enhance their development and their practice” (13).

One proposal is to merge indigenous knowledge (tacit and experience-bound) with external sources of knowledge (explicit and organized) (13).

“Being open to how someone with a worldview different from one’s own learns and instructs can be rewarding” (13). For example, the Aboriginal people of Australia learn through observation and listening rather than through asking questions (13).

In an increasingly diverse society, “The purpose of examining other systems is not to replace the Western tradition, but to expand our understanding of learning and knowing so that our practice as educators can be more inclusive and effective” (14).

“Closely aligned with this purpose is that considering other ways of knowing leads us to examine how knowledge is produced, who interests are being serviced by this knowledge, and how knowledge come to be validated or ‘official’ (14). Education then becomes something more than the transmission of validated Western content. Education allows for analysis of different perspectives, interpretation, investigation of how knowledge is produced, and the structures of power inherent in knowledge.

Understanding other perspectives on learning shapes our understanding of the effect of instructional approaches. For example, for many Asians speaking out in class may cause the teacher or another to lose face. An Asian student would prefer to dialogue with the instructor outside of class. Further silence is considered a positive trait. The one who speaks is one who does not know. Silence in Asian culture is also seen as a strength, a form of power, and can be interpreted as disagreement; while in Western contexts silence is seen as shyness, or weakness (15) (or ignorance). Similarly, personal sharing is viewed by Asian students as weakness, or bad manners (16).

Chapter 2. Mazalan Kamis and Mazanah Muhammad. Islam’s Lifelong Learning Mandate. pp. 21-40

From the first word revealed by God to Muhammad that is *Iqra* meaning ‘read,’ to the name Qur’an which means ‘The Reading,’ it is a well-accepted notion among Muslims that knowledge and the pursuit of knowledge or learning are of paramount importance to Islam. In almost all the Qur’an’s 114 chapters, the concern of education, knowledge, and learning is mentioned. As evidenced in the Qur’an, Islam guides every facet of a Muslim’s life from the moment one is born until the day one departs from this world. In this respect, this chapter will show that seeking knowledge is a lifelong learning agenda ordained by Islam. (22)

Two sources of knowledge in Islam are the Qur’an (the literal words of God given to Muhammad) and the Hadith (a collection of saying and deeds of Muhammad). When Muhammad was in retreat in a cave in Mecca a presence appeared in the cave commanding him to read. Muhammad protested that he couldn’t read, but the presence persisted. The Being repeated verses to Muhammad which is memorized.

“To the Muslims, the fact that the first command God handed down an illiterate 40-year-old man is related to the act of reading and writing suggest that learning and knowledge have to become a central theme in the teaching of Islam and the life of its followers. What this suggests is that in Islam a person is never too unintelligent to seek knowledge nor too old to embark on the journey of a lifetime” (24).

For centuries, the Muslim culture produced significant advances in learning and provided centers for learning, influenced learning in Europe and contributed to the Renaissance. Unfortunately, the Crusades and later colonization of Muslim territory, led to the decline of knowledge and learning among Muslims (25).

“In Islam, there are two major purposes of learning; the first purpose is to bring humankind closer to God, and the second is to bring humans closer to His creation or the society at large. Seeking knowledge for the sole purpose of worldly personal gain is abhorred by Islam” (25).

Learning is also considered an act of worship—only those who have knowledge will know Allah well (26).

Knowledge and learning are considered good if they stimulate virtue and enrich the community. “With the acquisition of knowledge. A person is duty bound to do something about it, and the failure to do so will incur the wrath of God” (27).

“Unfortunately, the trampling of human rights that prevail in many Islamic nations of today only shows that they fail to fully adhere to the doctrines espoused by the Qur’an” (28).

In Islam knowledge is divided into revealed knowledge (which every Muslim is obligated to gain) and acquired knowledge (which is not obligatory on individuals but rather on communities). For example, if a community doesn’t have a medical doctor, the community is obligated to send one or more of their community for medical training. Failure to do so results in each member sharing the community’s sin (28).

The Islamic view of education is that it integrates reason, spirituality, and social dimensions of a person.

The authors select four methodologies common to Islamic learning:

- Memorization—certain chapters of the Qur’an must be memorized to perform the five daily prayers.
- Knowledge circle—learners sit in a circle around the teacher listening and discussing issues.
- Modeling—Muslims learn to live by emulating what the ways in which the Prophet lived his life.
- Reflection—the Qur’an invites the use of the intellect, “to ponder, to think, to know, and to marvel of His creation, for the goal of human life is to discover the Truth which is none other than worshipping God in His Oneness” (32).

Learning in Islam is accepted as lifelong. Parents start their children on the path to learning immediately after birth. The father whispers the call to prayer in the baby’s ear so that the first thing he or she hears is of the greatness of God.

Since the knowledge of God is infinitely vast, it takes a lifetime to acquire it—and only death can stop one from learning. Then the last thing a dying person hears is the whisper in the ear that which reminds of the oneness of God and of the Prophet as His messenger.

The authors of this chapter are from Malaysia and they attest that formal and nonformal learning in rural and urban settings continues to be robust.

The Qur’an exhorts Muslims to travel the earth in search of knowledge. This is done in pilgrimages, in emigration, travel with an educational purpose, and travel to visit shrines and the sick. Muslims are taught that journeys for the sake of learning are the way to paradise (36).

In a proclamation controversial for its time, Muhammad is reputed to have said that the search for knowledge is the responsibility of all Muslims, regardless of gender (36). “Sadly, some so-called Muslim communities have been known to forbid their female populace from schooling or have access to certain fields of knowledge, an injunction that runs counter to the message brought by Islam” (36).

Chapter 3. Paula Gunn Allen. American Indian Indigenous Pedagogy.

Storytelling is a major way of assisting the young to find their place in their community. “In Indian country the story must be accompanied with actions that bespeak its underlying meanings” (44).

Much education is indirect. For example, “suppose a child is having difficulty being respectful to others . . . The conversation at the supper table can be about how disrespectful some acquaintance has been on some occasion or another and the consequences of that disrespect” (47).

“The most salient thing about ‘teaching around the edges,’ is that it rests almost entirely on showing how to function harmoniously and respectfully with integrity in what you do and the kind of person you are and you value, keeping a balance between traditional and modern ways” (50).

“... traditional educational systems, formal and informal, create a holistic mode of thinking/perception that must be integrated with experience. This in turn is exhibited in a variety of ways, ‘thinking—or talking—around the edges’ being the most evident” (51).

Indian pedagogy uses humor (a survival trait), and an interpersonal style that believes that what others do or believe is no one’s business but their own. Further, “The concept that all life is a circle, that everything has a place within, is descriptive of the thesis that underlies Indian pedagogy. If everything is connected to everything, if there is no ‘hero,’ no object or event that is foregrounded, privileged, over and above others without good, temporary reason, then learning must proceed in a cumulative and connected manner. This information must be translated into experience, and the combination built on, extended, expanded, until the student’s consciousness opens to grasp ever widening and deepening layers of comprehension and wisdom” (51).

“Teaching around the edges has a variety of outcomes that function over the long term. One is that such teaching yields ever deepening layers of meaning over a lifetime” (53). Receiving information is not enough. A person must live with the new information until it becomes knowledge (54).

Chapter 4. Hinduism and Learning. Swathi Nath Thaker

“The Western notions of learning have, and still, dominate the field of adult education, with noncognitive forms of learning such as somatic learning and spirituality only recently emerging. While much of Western literature on learning and knowing suggests that the mind and body are split, a number of cultures around the world do not believe in this dichotomy, and Hinduism is no exception” (58).

Hinduism is defined by the Vedas and ancient body of religious texts, largely unknown to most Hindus. However, “it is still regarded as an absolute authority which reveals the fundamental truth” (58).

“... Hinduism argues that true empowerment emerges through an understanding of the sources of knowledge, not just its components, which in turn leads to unity with the universe. Thus, life for Hindus becomes not merely about learning facts and figures, but also about developing wisdom by forming a connection between the mind, body, and spirit” (58).

There is no one founder for Hinduism, no central organization, and it holds to multiple perspectives on divinity or ultimate reality. Hindus believe this diversity contributes to their attitude of tolerance.

There are two types of learning in Hinduism: (1) That which gains knowledge from the world—the source the environment. Modes of learning include study of the sacred writings, and interaction with the world through experience. (2) That which is concerned with self-understanding—its source is the person’s spirit and its method is introspection (meditation).

Study of the sacred writings requires guidance from a wise teacher or guru. “Such knowledge is neither instinctive nor available through inward reflection. And while personal experience in daily living and in observing one’s society can furnish some of this information, much depends on formal study. For this, and other reasons, the connection between the teacher and student is critical and often one that is revered” (61). This relationship is for males.

The more complex form of learning—self-understanding—has justice at its heart. People are not simply the product of their environment; they are responsible for their own development. Learning is not measured in years but in terms of mastery (of the scriptures, of rituals, vows, duties, and so on).

The author acknowledges that the introduction of Western education to India has opened the doors for women and caused some erosion of the caste system. In the 21st century Western education continues to be dominant. But, as noncognitive modes become more evident, Eastern modes of thought are making inroads globally.

Chapter 5. Māori Concepts of Learning and Knowledge. Brian Findsen and Lavinia Tamarua.

“Traditional Māori learning has always been lifelong and lifewide, long before these concepts became fashionable in adult education circles and beyond” (75).

“. . . *ako*, the Māori word for learning, necessarily entails a historical and cultural dimension and is also the work for teaching . . . Before Freire (1972) [The Pedagogy of the Oppressed] explained the concepts of teacher-student and student-teacher, the term *ako* did not differentiate between who dispense knowledge and those who acquire it. Knowledge in Māori traditions, is always a collective entity so that any knowledge acquired by individuals also belongs to the tribe” (76).

“The Māori word *ako* literally means ‘to teach and to learn’ . . .” (87). Words which are separated in English and in many Euro-Western cultures, are literally one. Similarly, theory and practice are viewed as one entity.

Even though various forms of “ideological domination” of the Māori people persist, New Zealand is now recognized as a bi-cultural country (79).

Traditional learning, in the formal environment, the *marae* (communal meeting place) was the place where issues were discussed and the knowledge of the tribe consolidated. The *marae* is crucial to maintenance of tribal identity.

Learning is hierarchically and gender based. “Boys learned skills such as how to engage in oratory and extensive memorization related to genealogy; girls learned supportive roles such as hospitality, weaving, and caring” (81).

A strong mythology undergirds modern learning among the Māori. The mythology includes stories and beliefs about ancient heroes, ancestors and various gods. “In the traditional Māori world certain spiritual concepts relevant to all spheres of living (e.g., education, justice, and health) were emphasized and permeated all learning contexts” (82).

“Within the tribal structure, the status of elders was high, in acknowledgement of their lifelong experiences providing them with a knowledge base to be shared with younger members” (83).

Early childhood curriculum stresses four fundamental principles:

The empowerment of grandchildren’s learning and growth.

Learning is holistic.

The child is part of the wider world.

Recognition of “responsive and reciprocal relationships with people, places, and things” (85).

“Arising from these principles are five strands of well being, belonging, contribution, communication, and exploration” (85).

“The important point about this conceptualization of learning based on principles is that it is not exclusive to young children but encapsulates the whole of life” (85).

Learning is linked with four dimensions: the spiritual side, thoughts and feelings, the physical aspects, and emotional (85).

“There are strong links between Māori teaching/learning practices and the significance of group-oriented learning and reciprocity. Teaching/learning experiences demonstrate learning taking place with the nuclear and extended family where everyone who participates learns something new” (91).

Chapter 6. Jienshen F. Shib. Buddhist Learning: A Process to be Enlightened.

“For all Buddhists, to learn is to understand, practice, and prove the way toward obtaining enlightenment through Buddha’s teachings. . . . The teachings from the experience of countless enlightened ones, tested and taught by the Buddha, and later written down as well as transmitted by his disciples, have been the guidelines for the followers and learners of Buddhism for thousands of years” (99).

In Chinese Buddhism learning consists of three facets: reading and studying, thinking and reflection, and practicing. “Learning for Buddhists actually is an endless process of studying, reflection, and practicing” (103).

The first teaching of the Buddha has to do with Four Noble Truths: accepting impermanence and suffering, understanding the causes of suffering and how the causes lead to suffering, to learn how to demolish the cause of suffering in order to stop suffering, and finally, there are ways to stop the causes of suffering and thus to “build the possibilities to become enlightened or to achieve so-called *nirvana*” (105).

Next, there are eight paths toward attaining enlightenment: “Right View, Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Behavior, Right Livelihood, Right effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration” (105). The paths are organized under three categories: keeping precepts, concentration of mind, and acting wisely. The entire system depends on living a disciplined and ethical life.

“In Buddhism, teachers make use of scriptures, stories, and numerous dialogues between the Buddha and his disciples that are easily understood and close to the needs of the learners” (109).

Chapter 7. Gabo Ntseane. African Indigenous Knowledge: The Case of Botswana.

“given the legacy of colonialism and Western knowledge imperialism, an acute awareness has developed within nonacademic and academic circles to reclaim and explore the core essence of African indigenous knowledge and its contribution to humanity and science” (113).

“. . . in traditional societies, education, learning, and training had their own specific principles, methods, and social institutional arrangements. For example, learning by doing instead of writing has been a prominent principle in the education of many ethnic groups for training intellect, imparting technical skills as well as moral values. However, a closer look at current practices in schools and adult literacy classes easily shows that both are acting strongly against this very important principle of African pedagogy” (113).

In the oral culture that characterizes much of Africa, learning will not happen if the predominate view is to pass on useful information through books alone.

Within the African indigenous knowledge system, learning includes learning to live happily in the context of family, society, one’s community, and with spirit’s of one’s ancestors. “Another distinguishing feature of African indigenous education is that informality, collective learning, oral mode of instruction, and acquisition of revealed knowledge through the processes of dreams and visions are common instructional methods” (114).

“Education from an African perspective is in part an instrument of socializing people to their cultural heritage and value systems. . . . Education or lifelong learning is a collective activity that is supposed to help the individual in the collective to read the highest level of critically important values to the African’s way of life such as *botho* or humanism. By being *botho* or behaving with dignity . . . among the collective, the individual then becomes part of an empowering group of people who are honest, accommodating, sharing, responsible citizens who respect the young and the old” (114-115).

Children observe, imitate, and participate in activities designed to enculturate them into their heritage and to give them useful knowledge to live in everyday reality.

In African indigenous education there is little specialized training, and a distinct lack of professionalism (i.e., professional teachers); nearly every member of the community has a part to play (118).

“although this chapter advocates for the African indigenization of adult education curriculum, it by no means advocates for a complete uprooting of the other cultural aspects in the current curriculum that are good. It has to be acknowledged that African indigenous knowledge systems need to be reconstructed so that only what is good is adapted” (129).

Chapter 8. Simone C.O. Conceição and Augusto Marcos Fagundes Oliveira. Liberation Theology and Learning in Latin America.

“In Latin America, learning and knowledge are embedded in everyday practices . . . Learning takes place in different forms and shapes, and for the most part it is invisible because it is undocumented or because it is not clearly recognized as learning or knowledge. Learning is not confined to a particular period in life; it is lifelong. In addition, learning is not restricted to formal education, which is classroom-based and connected to recognized educational institutions; rather it focuses on non-formal and informal education offered by organized educational activities outside the established formal system, such as in after-school programs, community-based organizations, church sites, or at home” (137-138).

Liberation theology has influenced education in Latin America in that it created a consciousness that the professors were not exclusively found in schools but in among the poor and oppressed assisting them to “become the subjects of their own history” (139).

As part of their mission, church people realized that they needed to be in close contact with the poor and discover ways of sharing in their life. The first step was to live in the same situation as the poor—move to a rural area or *barrio*, live in a wooden shack, walk hours through the forest or jungle, wait in lines early in the morning to get water, tolerate dust and dirt during the dry season and mud during the rainy season, and so on. Another step included a model of engagement with the poor through grass-roots organizations or community organizingThe grass-roots community organizations, widely known as Christian base communities or base communities, involved nonformal and informal types of instruction and shaped learning for the poor in Latin America. (139)

“Liberation theology is a theology that is committed to the poor and oppressed. . . .The educational process related to liberation theology is based on actions and issues of survival. . . .The spiritual component of this process is founded on the concept of reviewing and revisiting the individual in his or her fullness as a human being. Spiritual experiences with God or the supernatural change traditional views of teaching and learning as the transmission of knowledge, and conceive knowledge as sharing, experiential, and dialogical. . . .Therefore, learning and knowledge are the result of living in society and fully experiencing the community as a lifelong undertaking, both collectively and individually” (141).

“The purpose of learning is to foster consciousness raising (or ‘conscientization’), calls for action, citizenship, and attainment of functional literacy connected to the social and political context of the learner as opposed to

objective learning or indoctrination” (142).

“In the base communities the people are the source of knowledge. Knowledge is learned informally within a one-to-one or small group exchange, through performance, experience, or by example; it is the product of beliefs passed from generation to generation, community learning, and experiences gained through struggles. The main principle is that everyone teaches and learns from and with each other” (143).

The educational work was informed by the work of Paulo Freire.

Nonformal learning may occur through advanced adult literacy classes in the base communities. Adult literacy for consciousness-raising based on Freire's (1970) methodology uses materials derived from the real lives of poor people--a small set of words and images from the adult world of the people (for peasants: crops, tools, customs, etc.). These words and images include all the letters of the alphabet and reflect important aspects of the life of the people such as work, poverty, the family, issues of conflict, the possibility of cooperation within a community, and power (such as land tenure). A session may start with a picture showing peasants harvesting a crop. Then, the facilitator may open a discussion by asking what participants see in the picture and encourage them to make observations. Discussion moves to participants' own work, its value, and the problem of making ends meet. Before learning each work in print form, learners reflect on the concept by discussing its significance for their lives. The picture is a codification (observation) of the participants' life experience decoded (reflection) through dialogue. The coding and decoding period may last 45 minutes or longer. After this type of discussion, the session moves to reading skills. The learner is an active participant in the classroom. Through observation and reflection, learners become aware of their poverty and struggles and recognize that these are not natural realities or the will of God. . . .

This methodology is so efficient that peasants to learn how to read in only a few weeks. Learning is contextual, experiential, and meaningful to them. As peasants learn how to read and write, they are able to become actively involved in their own growth, help their community come together, articulate their needs, and organize themselves into associations or unions (Berryman, 1987b). Learning is not just the acquisition of skills, but also the development of the whole person to become an independent and critical thinker. (150)

Chapter 9 Youngpha Kee. Adult Learning from a Confucian Way of Thinking

“Confucianism is part of our world cultural heritage, the cornerstone of traditional Chinese and Korean culture and an integral part of contemporary Korean life. It is a complete ideological system created by Confucius, also known as Kung-futze who lived in 551-479 BC” (153).

As a great educator and educational philosopher, Confucius promoted the ideas to educate all despite their social status and to teach according to the learners' characteristics. The first of these broke with tradition as only the aristocracy had the privilege of education. In addition, he took great delight in studying and was modest enough to learn from anyone. He never got tired of teaching his disciples. Besides being a great educator and thinker, he was first of all an intellect with a noble morality. He pursued truth, kindness, and perfection throughout his life and his success and failure were largely due to his character. The essence of all his teachings may be summed under the first cardinal principle of Confucianism—humanity or love, which is represented by various social virtues . . . (154).

“There are four basic books of Confucianism on which Confucian notions and perspectives of adult learning are based: *Confucian Analects*, *Mencius*, *Great Learning* and *Doctrine of the Mean*. These four books were required reading in order to pass the civil service examinations, which were the gateway to employment in the imperial bureaucracy” (155).

“The concept of adult learning is to imitate the virtues of a person in Chu His' 12th century interpretation of *Confucian Analects*. According to Chu His, a person who does not know how to act in a situation will follow the example of a person who does know.” Imitation of the Sages is true learning, rather than gaining skills. The Chinese characters *Hak* and *Seb* can be translated into one word "learning" in English. The notion of these words is that learning is to be enjoyed in everyday life and adult learning could not be separated from daily experience (156).

“A human being should not only pursue the immediate and the practical. One should also be involved in the much larger context of culture” (157).

Confucianism is also concerned that children learn “authentic human ways of interacting” – how to greet another, how to show deference, and so on (157). It is also important for the human being to know the history of his or her community—that which has shaped the community. Then the person learns how to be a “responsible participant in the political community” (158). Finally, the learner is to recognize his or her role in the larger ecology of humanity and environment. “A main concern of Confucianism is how we learn to be human” (159).

In *Great Learning* Confucius outlined a seven step process to become fully human: investigation of things, transformation of the attitude, sincerity of will, “rectification of the mind, cultivation of the personal life, regulation of the family, national order, and world peace” (159).

It is important to note that adult learning related to Confucianism cannot be used as a tool for achieving some goals in a certain situation. The contents of learning are not related to vocational or skill requirements. Learning is totally focused on spiritual things. Cultivating ethics becomes the center of learning, and the aim of learning is not to develop the rhetorical ability of delivering one's own ideas in the Western sense, but to acquire the ability to make intuitive and holistic moral judgments. The goal of learning is to become fully human, a perfect person who does not necessarily have to master eloquence but must have good ethics. (160)

Confucius' principles of learning included
“Peer Learning and No Regular Teacher”
“Self-directed Learning and Constructive Thinking”
“Reflective Thinking”
“Putting Theory into Practice” (160-163)

The “learning process is continuous and constructed by learners through the inner self interacting with nature. It is a project that cannot be completed in a limited time frame. In fact, many Confucians contend that the process of learning to be fully human is unceasing” (165).

“Learning to be fully human is not simply learning the skills of a particular profession or becoming professional in one specific task” (166).

“In Chinese culture, an intellectual is not limited to study alone. Confucius roamed around with his disciples; he held conversations with them. . . . Confucianism postulates that an individual's cultivation of a good ethos, a lifetime process of education, is the foundation of the nation” (166).

“. . . one theme central to Confucianism is that of relationships. He put forward five basic human relationships: ruler and subject, father and son, husband and wife, older brother and younger brother, and between friends” (167).

As for the relationship between teachers and learners, the Confucian ideal is quite different from that of Western society. The relationship is based on the Confucian idea that teacher, parent, and king are treated equally and have the same importance in one's life. We know that Confucius and Confucianism attached great importance to the harmonious relationship between teachers and learning, and emphasized the dignity of teachers. Influenced by this philosophy, teachers are respected by the society and learners are asked to obey their teachers. The idea is still prevalent in Confucian educational systems in Korea and China. (167-168)

Confucianism continues to underpin the value system of the Korean people. "Related to adult learning, Confucianism has exerted influence in several ways, such as the relationship between teachers and learners, instructional methods, the centrality of education in people's lives, Korean female adult learners' status, the development of some popular adult learning programs, and the establishment of lifelong learning cities" (169).

The relationship between teachers and learners is hierarchical, like that between parent and child. Predictably, instructional methodology is teacher centered and the learning "passively receive what the teacher has told them, rarely raising questions, hindering the development of deep discussion, not to mention whether the adult learners' potential will be stimulated or not" (169).

Confucianism has influenced how Korean adults value learning as more and more are seeking a way to participate in higher education or in adult education programs. Education is seen as that which contributes to a better self esteem and to one becoming a better human being,

With regard to women, "

While there is a stereotype that Korea is a male dominated society in which females are in a relatively low position and inferior situation, the roles of females are changing rapidly. The contemporary issue of gender inequality in Korea can be found in many settings—the family, the workplace, or in higher education. For example, even though male and female workers may have the same educational background, it has become quite common for females to need more years to be promoted than male workers. Take another example, even if males and females have similar educational backgrounds and similar capabilities, when applying for one vacancy, it goes without saying that the male applicant will win. (170)

Confucianism also results in many programs that are strongly invested in the arts, poetry, floral arranging and so on. And finally, to foster the ideals of lifelong learning, the Korean government has designated over 30 cities as lifelong learning cities. "These learning cities invest in constructing lifelong learning centers and hire professionals to manage the adult education programs for the citizens in their cities including children." The notion is drawn from Confucius who asserted that if one lives among people of good virtue that person will become virtuous (171).

Chapter 10 Sharan Merriam. Broadening Our Understanding of Learning and Knowing.

Asserting that "comparing and contrasting is a particularly Western strategy" Merriam suggests three themes from the stories: "(1) Learning is a lifelong journey; (2) What counts as knowledge is broadly defined; and (3) Learning and instruction are holistic and informal" (174).

(1) Though higher education seems to be in the forefront of strategizing for lifelong learning for adults, in the US there is no public policy or consistent funding for lifelong learning. In many other countries of the world there are government policies and an acknowledgement of importance. "Lifelong learning from a non-Western perspective is truly lifelong, seamless and without institutional, age, or formal boundaries. The goals

of this lifelong learning also vary from the typical Western goals of independence and personal and economic success. Rather, learning is to lead to enlightenment, to becoming 'fully human.' And to being an ethical, informed, and caring citizen in the community" (177).

(2) What counts as knowledge worthy to be learned and who determines what counts?

"In the West, the knowledge recognized as most valid is that which has been uncovered through rigorous scientific methods, codified into disciplinary structures, presented in textbooks and scientific journals, and then studied by learners in formal educational settings" (178).

"In most non-Western traditions, knowledge is conceived of more broadly than that which is based on the scientific method and studied in formal classrooms. There are different types of knowledge equally valued, and much of this knowledge is embedded in the context of one's life" (178-179). Further, in these traditions, "sacred or revealed knowledge is on a par with knowledge acquired in everyday activity, what one might call practical knowledge. Most often this knowledge is structured by a community problem or issue needing attention, by accessing resources, including people and/or materials that can assist in the problem-solving, and by "evaluating" the learning according to the effectiveness of its application to the situation" (179).

Non-western traditions critique Western knowledge systems as fragmented, having separated secular and sacred, and so valuing abstract systems of logic and science that faith and belief become problematic (181).

(3) Although Western education is beginning to pay more attention to different modes of learning, education tends to be more cognitive and rational in nature.

For most cultures the effort is to maintain balance and harmony in the world.

Congruent with a holistic perspective of both the world and learning, the ways in which people learn are multiple and varied. Learning embedded in the context of everyday life is valued more than what is learned in formal school settings. It is in the experience that learning takes place. Active participation in the rites and rituals and daily life of the community is how knowledge is transmitted and shared. Two techniques in particular seem to be used in teaching and learning in the non-Western tradition - role modeling and storytelling. (183)

In role modeling, first a learner must ask for help and then one who is experienced models and/or discusses what needs to be learned. Storytelling has been one of the more powerful modes of communication for centuries. Stories enable a culture to make sense of life and to preserve the knowledge base. Storytelling is most common in non-Western traditions but is becoming more common in the West.

"An interesting aspect of the teaching-learning transaction in these non-Western traditions is the role of teacher. Unlike in the West where most teachers are 'trained' and certified to be teachers, in non-Western systems, it is the responsibility of all in the community to teach and to learn" (185).