

Social Science, Philosophy, and Education: A Necessary Meeting of Disciplines

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Morality, a nearly century old approach to studying morality as a scientific enterprise, is essentially dedicated to the promotion of a peaceful, benevolent world. Its founder, Chikuro Hiroike, dedicated most of his adult life and scholarship to this enterprise. Contemporary character/moral/values/citizenship education scholars and educators around the world typically share a similar goal, namely to build a better world by nurturing morality in youth (and often in adults, as Hiroike also intended). Approaches vary widely, as do philosophical and theoretical justifications as well as pedagogical methods. Nonetheless, the common denominator in this work is the belief that a better, i.e., more moral, world is built from the fundamental building blocks of moral people, and that any rational and well-intentioned society must invest in the moral formation of people.

The enlightenment of all...in order that they may attain perfection of character...This building up of individual personality must constitute the first step toward the education of the community, the development of the nation, and the amelioration of society. (Hiroike, 1966, p. 210)

While all people are targets for such enlightenment, developmental theory suggests that the earlier one intervenes, the greater is the potential impact and the easier it is to have an effect. Hence, childhood and adolescence are fertile grounds for impacting societal and world improvement through moral education and responsible developmental parenting.

Morality is one approach among many around the world that are intended to promote the moral development of children. Morality, however, is much more than a moral education model. It is a philosophy, an attempt to create a new science (morality=moral science), a quasi-theology, and a movement. Furthermore, morality focuses heavily, although not exclusively, on adult development and on the reform of major societal forces such as economic institutions and politics. In this paper, however, it is the relevance to, and potential to impact, moral education of youth that will be the focus. More specifically, this paper is intended to explore the parallels and lacks of fit

between moralogy's approach to moral education and what currently stands as the predominant US approach to moral education; i.e., character education. In doing so, aspects of philosophy (the philosophical underpinnings of each approach), social science (the psychology and sociology of each approach), and education (the pedagogical methods enacted in each approach) will each be touched upon. This is so because a full and justifiable moral education needs sound philosophical footing (Kohlberg, 1971), must be based in empirically-grounded developmental psychology (Sokol, Hammond & Berkowitz, in press), and must rely on empirically-supported educational methods that are aligned with the developmental goals of the pedagogical interventions enacted (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005).

As this volume is focused on the work of Chikuro Hiroike, especially his founding and explication of the field of moralogy, moralogy will not be detailed here. Rather, the relevant aspects of moralogy will be introduced and explicated as they are introduced in the arguments to follow. Character education, however, is assumed to be less familiar to the readers of this volume and not covered in other chapters; hence, we will begin with a brief introduction to character education and then turn to a set of issues that serve to reveal critical points of correspondence and points of difference between moralogy and character education.

Character Education

Character education (Beland, 2004; Berkowitz & Bier, 2005; Lickona, 1991) is the *nom de jour* in the United States (and increasingly in other countries) for school-based approaches to fostering the moral development of youth. While not limited to schooling, it is primarily focused there. Before explaining character education in more detail, it is important to point out that it is fully recognized that the family is the primary and most influential player in the moral development of youth (Berkowitz, 2005; Lickona, 1983); however, schools provide much easier access to large numbers of children. Furthermore, at least in most Western cultures, families are often considered almost sacrosanct and relatively free from societal intervention, making it much more difficult to intervene widely in family practices.

Character education is a broad approach, a "big umbrella", which includes many different methods and explicit or implicit conceptual models, so generalizing is difficult. In fact, this is the first major difference between character education and moralogy. Moralogy, while a broad multi-disciplinary integrated theory is nonetheless an integrated theory. Character education is more of

a collection of often disparate theories and methods sharing a common goal but not a common conceptual scheme. As understood by Berkowitz and Bier (2005), character education is the school-based attempt to foster the development of those psychological characteristics necessary for the inclination (motivation) and capacity to act morally; i.e., to recognize, desire, and do the ethically right thing. The pedagogy behind character education therefore needs to center on what effectively promotes such development. For example, to function morally one needs to feel empathy for others. Social science has studied empathy (Gibbs, 2003; Hoffman, 1978; Sokol et al., in press) and uncovered sources of its development. Any attempt to foster the development of empathic youth therefore must build its pedagogy around the social and contextual factors that promote its development. In a parallel fashion, educational research has, to a lesser degree, uncovered effective school-based practices for promoting the development of character (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005). Together, such social science and educational research forms the basis for designing effective character education programs. This theme will be expanded later in this chapter.

The Character Education Partnership (www.character.org), the national advocacy organization in the US, has explicated 11 principles of effective practice, including a focus on cognition, emotion and behavior (the “head, heart, and hand” of character), the promotion of intrinsic motivation, providing opportunities for moral action (e.g., service to others), and a school-wide focus. Ideally character education is comprehensive school reform that focuses more on school climate, healthy relationships, integration into the academic curriculum, and moral action than on direct teaching and extrinsic rewards and recognition. However, in practice, character education tends to cover the entire array of such practices, in part because it tends to be decentralized and often “home-grown” at the classroom, school or school district level. The educational practitioners who design and implement character education programs are often disconnected from the social scientists who study character development, unfortunately.

Comparing Character Education and Moralogy

The comparison of character education with moralogy will focus on seven different but interrelated issues:

- (1) the sources of knowledge relied upon in each model;
- (2) the conception of what goodness is;
- (3) the justification for the enterprise;

- (4) the conception of basic human nature;
- (5) understandings of the sources of goodness;
- (6) the attitude toward the possibility of change; and
- (7) to what spheres each is applied.

In doing so both similarities and differences will be explored.

Before engaging in this comparison, however, it is important to consider the limitations of attempting such a comparison. First, these two approaches were formulated at different times in history. Moralogy was formulated after World War I and character education really began to thrive in the 1990s. Actually, character education has ebbed and flowed in the US for much of its history, a history that is admittedly short compared to the history of Japan. It had somewhat of a “golden era” in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, but largely disappeared during World War II, only to resurface in a significant way in the early 1990s. Second, these two approaches were born in very different cultures, moralogy in Japan and character education in the US. Third, they really are two different enterprises. Moralogy is a broad model for human flourishing at all levels (personal, familial, communal, societal, professional, government, global, etc.). Character education is an approach to public schooling, in the main. Fourth, the author, not literate in Japanese, had to read moralogy in translation into English. While the translations are impressive, and the annotations very helpful, there are always terms that do not directly translate (e.g., *makoto*). Fifth, moralogy has a strong and clear religious aspect whereas character education is largely a secular approach. Because it is enacted in US public schools, where the promotion of religion is prohibited, it must remain secular. Nonetheless, despite these limitations, it is informative to examine the ways moralogy and character education are similar and different. Such an exercise can shed light on strengths and weaknesses of both approaches, a subject that will be taken up in the final section of this chapter.

Sources of Knowledge

It is important to consider the sources of the knowledge base upon which a framework for a model of moral education is built. As character education is so diverse and encompasses so many approaches, this is a complex and elusive task. Some forms of character education are built upon social science (e.g., Child Development Project—Dalton & Watson, 1997), others on survey research (e.g., Institute for Global Ethics). Many stem merely from the intuitions and classroom experiences of practitioners (Porro, 1996). Often there is at least a minimal philosophical frame as well, most commonly virtue ethics (Lickona, 1991). So character education’s sources of knowledge vary from a

single source to a composite of science, philosophy and educational experience. Until the past decade, however, most of character education had at best a limited scientific base.

Morality claims to be scientifically based and Hiroike indeed did an encyclopedic job of amassing and incorporating research from a wide array of disciplines into his magnum opus *A Treatise on Moral Science* (Hiroike, 2002). Yet he did not rely exclusively on science. A very significant source of knowledge for Hiroike was his study of “the sages” (Buddha, Confucius, Jesus, Socrates, and Amaterasu), bringing a strong philosophical base to his arguments. Often he relied on personal experience to justify his claims, as in his frequent invocation of his personal health crisis and ensuing enlightenment. He also relied heavily on anecdotes of historical figures to support his claims. Furthermore, much of his argument was post hoc; e.g., his unquestioned belief in the divinity of the imperial family of Japan is invoked frequently in the justification for many of his claims.

Both character education and morality therefore rely on a mix of science, philosophy, and personal experience (either the author’s experience or that from case studies presented by the author). In looking more deeply at the epistemological base for the sources of knowledge within each of the two approaches, we can see large differences. Because character education is so eclectic and varied, again it is hard to generalize. However, as science is at least assumed to be core to character education, a dialectical base (Kuhn, 1970) can also be assumed. That is, knowledge is assumed to progress and change through a constant flow of conflicting claims and ideas, leading to continuing discovery and invention of truth. Hiroike, on the other hand, while invoking science, seems to assume that truth is already known and is handed down through ortholins (superiors, mentors, exemplars, bosses, government leaders, sages, etc.). His strong claim that Supreme Morality consists of studying, understanding, and embracing the teachings of the Sages suggests that they have already discovered knowledge (truth), centuries, even millennia ago. Hence the method of scientific investigation which lies at the core of character education (when done right), really seems more a matter of affirmation in morality, and not invention or discovery of something new.

History for Hiroike seems more a matter of separating the good (supreme morality) from the bad (traditional morality, etc.), whereas for character education it is more a dialectic of increasingly creating and discovering new and better ways of being. Of course, none of this is absolute, as some of character education is “traditional” (Wynne & Ryan, 1993) and tries to build a contemporary model on its own sages (e.g., Aristotle) and Hiroike does at some

points use science as a means of discovering new truths.

Nonetheless, there seems to be a conflict between the ortholinon respect of a teacher and the dialectical nature of science in which students' challenges of a teacher leads to higher forms of knowledge (Berkowitz & Puka, 2009; Sizer & Sizer, 1999). Hiroike clearly disparages such an attitude toward the teachings of teachers: "according to [traditional learning and moral teaching], custom permits the refutation of a teacher's doctrine at will..." (Hiroike, 1966, p. 193). In fact, such a position would preclude the writing of this paper, as part of it challenges the teachings of Hiroike.

Definition of Goodness

For both moralogy and character education, there tends to be a sense that goodness is largely a set of virtues. The core virtues for moralogy are clearly specified by Hiroike: benevolence, self-examination, tolerance. They are divinely given by the Shinto goddess Amaterasu, but reaffirmed by the other sages (Socrates, Confucius, Buddha, Jesus). For character education, there is a wide range of core virtues (and in fact, many approaches that do not embrace virtue as a basis for character education). However, most character educators do tend to adopt a core set of virtues. Some try to use philosophical or empirical means to identify them. For example, the Character Counts! approach assembled 30 experts to deliberate and identify what eventually became known as the Six Pillars of Character (respect, responsibility, truthfulness, fairness, caring, civic virtue). The Institute for Global Ethics identified a very similar set of core virtues by empirically studying cultures around the world. Another common approach is to ask localities to come together and democratically identify core virtues for their own community (*Characterplus*). Regardless of the approach, the core virtues in the US most commonly are respect, responsibility, caring, fairness, and honesty.

An interesting side note is that core values or virtues may or may not actually be moral concepts. Berkowitz (1997) differentiated between moral characteristics and foundational characteristics of the moral person. Common core virtues such as diligence, courage, and loyalty are argued to be foundational in that they can serve to enhance moral functioning but are not intrinsically moral themselves; e.g., one can be courageous in the service of good or evil, and one can be loyal to ethical or unethical causes or people. In essence they are derivative goods, as their moral worth is derivative of the ends toward which they are directed. On the other hand, benevolence (caring) or justice (fairness) are moral concepts in their own right. While acknowledging that translation is critical here, the question arises whether Hiroike's chosen

virtues of self-examination and tolerance are actually moral concepts at all, or foundational concepts like diligence and loyalty. Lickona and Davidson (2005) have more recently attempted to differentiate, within character education, moral and performance character. The latter may be closer to self-examination and tolerance for Hiroike and foundational values for Berkowitz.

Finally, morality seems to understand goodness as almost a dichotomy. Hiroike seems to believe that most people are in traditional morality and only an elite few have achieved supreme morality. Supreme morality seems to be an “all or none” phenomenon; i.e., one has achieved it in full or not at all. Character education is more likely to understand goodness as a complex continuum. There is an array of virtues and they are achieved to widely varying degrees. Virtue develops in small incremental steps throughout the life-span.

The justification for the enterprise

This issue has to do with why morality and character education exist, or why they are justifiable enterprises. Why study morality and/or character education? Whereas morality is very clear on this issue, that is not always the case with character education. Morality is clearly designed for a moral world. “The moral character of individuals alone can be regarded as supplying the fundamental principle on which human society should be built” (Hiroike, 1966, pp. 106-7). This perspective both undergirds Hiroike’s work and is a consistent theme throughout his writings and other teachings.

Character education, on the other hand, often is not explicit about its purpose, but it largely is to make a better world by making better people. In democratic societies, the purpose is, at least in part, to support the development of ethical citizens who will protect universal human rights through a just self-governing society.

An interesting aspect of this issue is less explicit in both models. Morality seems to have a decidedly utilitarian justification to it. While not explicitly stated by Hiroike, this theme recurs frequently in his work. One ultimate goal for morality is human happiness. Arguments and justifications frequently return to the effectiveness of human systems (government, business, economics, families). A similar argument is the demonstration that such systems ultimately fail to produce human happiness or even more concrete results (wealth, peace). This suggests a utilitarian ethical theory; i.e., that the good is that which maximally produces some good (e.g., happiness). Character education, again, is much more variable but the predominant models of ethical theory are virtue ethics and deontology.

Basic Human Nature

Western psychology has long debated whether children come into this world as fundamentally good, evil, or neutral. Three centuries ago, when Europeans first came to North America, colonial Christians often believed we are born like primitive animals and need the selfish and aggressive instincts driven out of us and replaced by faith-based morality. Psychoanalytic theory (Freud, 1977) in part reified this notion of basic human selfishness and aggressiveness needing to be subjugated by societal socialization. Romanticists and humanists later argued that humans are fundamentally good and need to be left alone to allow their goodness to ripen and flourish. Behaviorists, building on the work of the British empiricist philosopher John Locke, argue that humans are fundamentally morally neutral. It is the vagaries of experience that determine whether one becomes sinner or saint.

Character education most commonly echoes the latter argument. Children do not enter school as sinners or saints (although it is acknowledged that experience has already had its impact on a child by the time they enter school, largely from the family). School's job is to shape the child into a good person through character education.

Moralogy seems implicitly to take a different perspective. Moralogy has a somewhat negative view of human nature. Hiroike frequently describes most people as having traditional morality and as mostly self-interested. In fact, this self-interest is repeatedly cited as the source of most human ills. He does concede that all have a small spark of moral "instinct" that can be cultivated by Supreme Morality, but it requires rigorous self-examination, exposure to ortholinons, and direct teaching by those who have discovered supreme morality.

What fosters goodness?

A critical question for any approach to nurturing morality in humans is what are understood as the processes or forces that effectively promote the development of goodness in people, or in this case in children in schools. Moralogy relies on a complex set of such developmental forces.

- (1) Genetics. Hiroike refers to a moral instinct in humans.
- (2) Leaders of Supreme Morality. A major role in moral formation is played by elders who have already attained supreme morality. They may be parents, grandparents or other adults in one's family. They may be spiritual leaders or political rulers. For adults, they also may be leaders in one's workplace.

- (3) Studying the wisdom of the “Sages.” A central role in moral formation is the explicit study of the wisdom and teachings of the Sages. These are considered the “keepers” of the truth and learning the truths they have revealed is critical to attaining Supreme Morality.
- (4) Scientific study of morality. Hiroike himself relies heavily on academic study. His astonishingly broad and extensive and eclectic mastery of scholarly writings is a model for what he understands as another source of moral enlightenment. His explicit reliance upon science supports this theme. Hence, education and study are part of the path to goodness. Socrates (one of the Sages) said that to know the good is to do the good. Knowing is critical to moral formation.
- (5) Generational legacy of morality. There seems to be a belief that morality can be a tradition in a family lineage. One can almost “inherit” goodness, not in a genetic sense (although that may be the case for the Japanese Imperial family), but rather as a family legacy.
- (6) Transcending natural focus on self-interest. As noted above, Hiroike believed that basic human nature is selfish. Finding ways to transcend this self-interest is also a fundamental source of goodness, or Supreme Morality.

Another way to understand how moralogy looks at what fosters goodness is the five main principles of moralogy. First, in a sense of transcending the focus on self-interest (see above), one must renunciate the self. This clearly comes from Buddhist teachings. Second, one must study and understand God, which for Hiroike’s impressively ecumenical model is a shared inter-faith understanding of God (although his Shintoist roots are probably strongest). Third, one must understand and practice the concept of duty. Fourth, one must understand, learn from, respect, and follow one’s ortholinos. Lastly, one must commit to the lifelong project of nurturing the development of goodness (Supreme Morality) in both oneself and in others.

An interesting issue arises when one considers the notion of renunciation of self, and this issue is illuminating for a central difference between character education and moralogy. Like Aristotle and many other great thinkers, Hiroike’s thinking was focused more on the ideal endpoint of development than on its beginnings and hence more on adulthood and than on childhood. Character education on the other hand focuses more on children and adolescence. Developmental psychology (Sokol, Hammond, & Berkowitz, in press) suggests that what may be developmentally appropriate at one phase of the life-span, may not be applicable at another. The notion of renunciation of the self is a good example of this. For one to renounce one’s self, one first has to have

a self and then be aware of it. Infants have no true sense of self and young children have great difficulty differentiating their selves from others. Adolescents are fundamentally engaged in the developmental project of reflecting upon, understanding, and even constructing their selves. And Erik Erikson (1968) suggests that while one is forming a core psychological structure (a psychosocial crisis), one is psychologically vulnerable and hence protective of that process. Adolescence would be an unlikely time therefore to renounce oneself. Erikson further argues that in early adulthood, one's psychological "work" centers largely around learning to share one's self with others; hence, still not a time for renunciation. The developmental implication then is that such renunciation as Hiroike and Buddha endorse is probably at best a mid-life (and more typically late life) possibility. So what stands as a core principle for moralogy is largely developmentally irrelevant for character education.

So what does character education consider to be the processes that foster the development of goodness? Again, there is little clear consensus across character education, but nonetheless some common denominators can be inferred from the bulk of this field. Four will be identified here. First, parenting is a critical source of goodness (Berkowitz & Grych, 1998; Lickona, 1983; Streight, 2008). The main aspects of parenting that have been identified in research are role-modeling, love/nurturance, high expectations with support, developmental discursive discipline, and democratic family dynamics. (Note: the last of these clearly is in conflict with the notions of duty and respect for otholions in Hiroike's work). Second, cultural values are clearly important. These values can be seen in political and other social systems, media messages, faith communities and teachings, etc. Of course, they are typically complex and even contradictory and often subtle and unclear. Third, and most relevant to character education, schooling is a key player in moral formation. The social climate of a school makes a huge impact as does the explicit teachings in the curriculum. So do the adult role models in schools and the discipline and other management systems of the school. Lastly, character is also understood, at least potentially, as a self project. In other words, one can intentionally and systematically engage in building one's own character.

As one compares these two approaches both similarities and differences in the fostering of goodness become apparent. Both are heavily cognitive in nature; i.e., they rely heavily on learning, thinking, awareness, reflection. Character education, however, seems more focused on affective education and direct training of socio-moral competencies. There is more of a concern with feelings, relationships, and with direct teaching of social and emotional skills and techniques. Moralogy seems more Socratic ("to know the good is to do

the good”) whereas character education seems more Aristotelian, as it focuses on development of psychological character. For moralogy, moral development seems to also have an adult “born again” awakening source. Hiroike describes the typical selfish adult (traditional morality) and the possibility of an awakening to Supreme Morality. To support this he frequently invokes his own awakening (rebirth, meta-morphosis) on his own deathbed. It is this event that both saved his life and caused his discovery of Supreme Morality.

I have recently introduced a summary model of character education that is build around five fundamental principles. The model is called PRIME, with each letter standing for one of the principles: **P**rioritizing character in schools, **R**elationships as foundational goals of character education methods, **I**ntrinsic motivation (rather than extrinsic rewards and punishments), **M**odeling of good character by significant others, and **E**mpowerment of students and others in schools. Prioritizing morality is a clear priority for moralogy too. Similarly, the internalization of moral motivation (intrinsic motivation) is core to morality. Similarly, modeling of morality (Sages, Ortholinons) is central principle of moralogy. While relationships are important in both models, hierarchical relationships take precedence in moralogy with the focus on duty to and respect for elders, ortholinons, etc. Character education focuses equally on the development of both horizontal and vertical relationships. The only major are of difference concerns the notion of empowerment. It seems unlikely that a focus on flattening governance structures, empowering the disempowered, and creating democratic classrooms and schools could be accommodated in a moralogy inspired school. It is worth noting that, at least in the US, a pedagogy of empowerment does not come easily to most educators and schools and is not commonplace.

Possibilities for Change

An interesting question is how each model understands the likelihood of success. How likely is it that people achieve Supreme Morality or develop moral character? Character education tends to see great potential for change in all youth. Schools, families, and other adults always impact the character development of youth; hence, character change (and ideally progress) is inevitable. The challenge is more in getting educators to understand the ubiquitous power and influence they have, as they often tend to think they have little or no impact on student character.

Moralogy, on the other hand, offers a decidedly more mixed message about the likelihood of success in promoting the development of Supreme Morality. Studying morality scientifically is the path to Supreme Morality. However,

people are seen as mostly selfish and there is frequently an elitist message that most are unlikely to become fully moral. Hiroike expounds upon the genetic basis for one's development and this can be seen as ultimately limiting one's moral potential. Family lineage similarly operates as a gate-keeper for Supreme Morality. In a similar way moral superiors are necessary to tutor us toward Supreme Morality.

Spheres of Applicability

Moralogy and character education tend to be applied to quite different aspects of human experience. Moralogy is applied to almost all human endeavors and institutions (e.g., business, law, government, family). Hiroike's vast expertise in business and economics clearly led him to deep reflection on the role and relevance of moralogy in those domains and his extensive study of other spheres (e.g., politics) had a similar effect. Character education is focused mainly on impacting the development of individuals, and its only real sociological aspect is in the consideration of school reform and school climate. Both however understand that moral world depends on more moral people.

Cross-fertilization between moralogy and character education

Having explored these areas of overlap and difference between moralogy and character education, we will now turn to a consideration of what each model has to offer the other; in other words, how moralogy can benefit from studying character education and how character education can benefit from studying moralogy.

What character education can learn from moralogy

Interdisciplinary influences. Moralogy relies on social science, physical science, theology, philosophy, business, and other disciplines to build both its theory and its applications. Character education tends to rely more heavily on a mix of education and psychology, but could benefit from casting its net more broadly. For example, sociology has much to offer character education in understanding the influence of school climate on student development.

Search for universal truths from global philosophical sources. Moralogy anchors its notion of goodness (Supreme Morality) in theological and philosophical understandings from a range of historical and cultural sources. This method of looking for common denominators in moral truths across classical Greek philosophy (Socrates), Buddhism, Confucianism, Christianity (Jesus), and Shintoism (Amaterasu) is an excellent model for identifying core

ethical values that character education often depends upon.

Articulate as a source of, and model for, universal goodness. Hiroike's boldness in searching for a basis on which to identify (see above) and advocate for a universal vision of goodness is a good model for justifying why this project is so important to the worlds. Character education more typically argues for helping individuals develop and not for healing the world.

Focus on morality of leaders and organizations. An interdisciplinary, global view of moral formation, as moralogy presents, inevitably leads to analyzing, critiquing, and challenging the morality of social institutions and their leaders. Character education rarely serves as social conscience or a social barometer.

What moralogy can learn from character education

Developmental perspective. In large part because Hiroike was focused on adults and adult institutions, and character education is focused more on children and child-serving institutions like schools, the notion of a gradual development of human goodness tends to be more richly played out in character education. Considering the life-span trajectory of the capacity for and development of character could enrich moralogy, especially as it has become focused more recently on children's schooling.

Openness to innovation. Character education is an evolving field. The interest in the moral formation of youth is certainly not a recent one, but the application of social science to educational structures, methods and systems is. As a more nascent field, there is much openness to learning what actually works (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005). Moralogy has a tradition of enacting the seminal and brilliant works of its creator, Chikuro Hiroike, who presented a remarkably detailed and extensive treatise at the inception of the model. The degree to which moralogy can respect the source and yet understand that it needs to move forward, is the degree to which the learnings of the 20th and now 21st centuries will be able to inform best practices and enrich theory.

Constructivism. Admittedly only some in the field of character education are informed by constructivist theories like those of Piaget (1970) and Kohlberg (1984). But those influences are nonetheless very important as they suggest a different view of the child, the person, and development in general. Constructivism suggests that humans are evolving organisms who play an active role in creating their experiences and in interpreting them as well. This is in contrast to more behavioral models that see the individual as a blank tablet upon which the world writes, or as passive recipients of veridical knowledge dispensed by the world around them. Moralogy has a tendency to

be closer to a “revealed truth” model than a constructed meaning model, and this misses much of basic human nature and growth.

Secularism. From an American, perhaps Western, perspective, spirituality and perhaps religion are tightly woven in the fabric of moralogy. American education cannot explicitly rely on religious or theological concepts to justify or teach morality. Hence character education has found ways to promote moral development without relying on particular or even a set of religious concepts. This allows its methods to be widely distributed across quite different cultures and settings.

Applied, practical strategies. Character education is first and foremost a practical model for school and classroom reform. It seeks and develops educational methods that are designed to be practical and effective at promoting the development of morality. If the methods are not effective, or if educators reject them, then they are not useful. Character education can offer many effective strategies for the promotion of moral development.

Closing Remarks

Chikuro Hiroike was truly an intellectual pioneer. The breadth of his scholarship is remarkable, especially given the challenges in accessing scholarly materials during his era and given his health challenges. Furthermore, his passion for serving to promote a more moral world should stand as model for all who call themselves responsible citizens.

There is much overlap between moralogy, even as it was initially described by Hiroike, and contemporary character education in the United States. The focus on promoting virtuous individuals is one such parallel. Both also rely on a wide range of influences and sources for enlightening and furthering their methods and goals. And the ultimate aim of both is essentially the same; i.e., to improve the level of morality across the world.

Nonetheless there are challenges in bridging the world of moralogy and world of Western character education. They are challenges but they are likely not insurmountable. So it is well worth attempting to resolve those challenges. For integrating social science, ethical philosophy, and pedagogy to improve the morality of people, social institutions, nations and the world may be the highest calling. And Chikuro Hiroike is a leading voice in that call.

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