

What Do We Mean By “Knowledge?”

What Do We Mean By “Knowledge”? Excerpts

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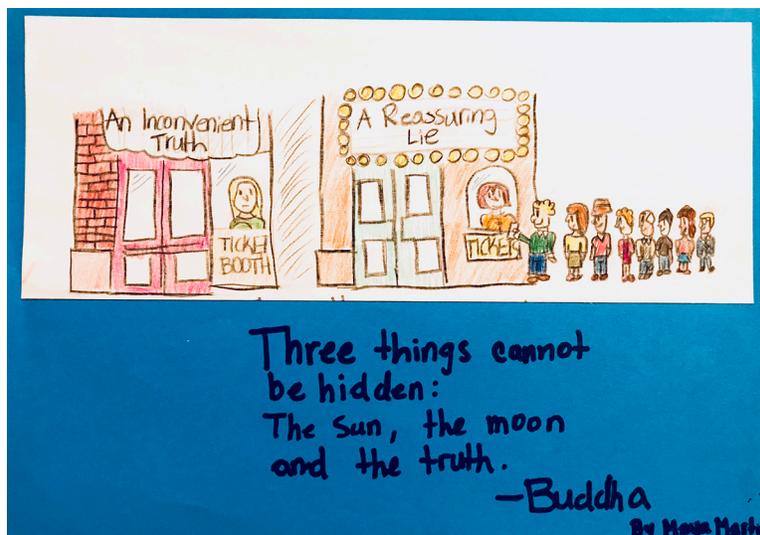
Salvatore La Marca, class 2A, Don Bosco School, Palermo, Italy

Aristotle asserts that all men naturally tend to know, therefore every man is born endowed with thought. Man by nature aspires to knowledge and establishes a kind of order, of priority of the knowledge he wants to deepen. In fact, when we are children we want to know what surrounds us and we bring objects into our mouth, we touch everything, we use our senses to get in touch with the world. Aristotle gives great importance to sensations and above all to the sight that allows us to distinguish among different things. The memory that preserves individual experiences is also important; finally, he gives importance to experience. The man who does not aspire to knowledge remains closed in false beliefs and will never be free to choose and find a solution. The man who is without knowledge acts in a wrong way; he is more inclined to violence and does not practice virtues. Ulysses, for example, is, in my opinion, an example of a man who loves discovering, who shows a real thirst for knowledge; he wants to reach unknown truths that can satisfy him. Living without the desire of knowledge can make people compare men to animals. Christopher Columbus was driven by the desire for knowledge that led him to discover a new continent. These discoveries have a relevant value for the whole of humanity. For this reason every

human being should take care of his own knowledge and understand what he wants to discover because this action benefits not only himself but the whole community.

Man cannot stop thinking. He is arranged by nature to perform logical but also instinctual actions, however dictated by the thought that is the content of knowledge. Descartes states “*Cogito ergo sum*” which means “I think and therefore I exist.” But Locke asserts that knowledge is acquired over time and not at birth. In fact, as Kant argues, thought is nourished by experience. And this is the way through which man improves, innovates and develops. Knowledge is also nourished by observation, by the senses, by imitation and by thought. As far as I’m concerned, knowledge is very conditioned by the culture of the community to which we belong. In the community we must respect the rules that establish an order but also the limits to freedom of thought and knowledge. Without these limits there would be no order and relations with others would not be stable. I think it’s essential not to invade the freedom of others. In fact, freedom is born with respect for other people and ends when the needs of others are not taken into account. Knowledge must take into account the other; it cannot be arrogant, disrespectful and offensive.

Buddha’s Truth



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