
**The Moral and other Educational Significance
of the Arts in Philosophy
and Recent Scottish Educational Policy**

Panagiota Sidiropoulou



A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Edinburgh, 2010

ABSTRACT

The immense value of the arts has long been recognized by diverse cultures and such recognition has mostly guaranteed their inclusion in educational and school curricula the world over. The arts are considered valuable for numerous reasons, but their inclusion depends on particular interpretations of their merits that may sometimes have failed to realise their full or real potential. Although some ways of valuing the arts date back to antiquity, debates about the value of arts certainly deserve no less consideration in the modern context. Plato was sceptical about the moral value of the arts and regarded them as of dubious educational significance. He thought the arts were more a matter of rhetoric than reason. However, taking a more positive view of the moral power of the arts, Aristotle defended both the arts and rhetoric as potentially contributory to personal formation and the development of moral virtue. At all events, if the arts are to remain educationally defensible, it is arguable that educational theorists and policy makers need to demonstrate their capacity for: (i) objective aesthetic judgement; and (ii) the communication of knowledge and/or truth. Both of these are contentious, as artistic and aesthetic value judgements have often been said to be subjective or personal. In this context, the distinction between judging something as good (which requires reasons) or simply liking it (which does not) is crucial. Here, establishing the objective rational character of the arts seems to be a precondition of demonstrating their potential for knowledge or truth. Arguably, however, there are different respects in which arts may be said to contribute to the development of understanding and appreciation in human agents of themselves, of their relationships with others and of the world, e.g.: (i) aesthetic (sensory) appreciation; (ii) development of imagination; (iii) understanding of aspects of human psychology; (iv) education of the emotions; (v) and moral understanding. In this essay, various philosophical defences of the 'intrinsic' (personally formative) educational value of the arts will be drawn from the literature of philosophy and education. Following discussions of ancient arguments for and against the arts, the thesis will discuss at some length defences of the educational value of the arts offered by the American great books tradition, British literary and cultural critics and more recent educational philosophers and theorists. In the final 'conceptual' chapter of the thesis, two contemporary works of cinema are discussed to reinforce the key arguments of the thesis. However, having explored the nature and potential of the arts and arts education from a philosophical perspective, this study then seeks to enquire into recent Scottish educational policy developments with reference to the role of arts in arts education and in education more generally through: (i) the exploration of policy documents and official guidelines; and (ii) the voices of interviewees and other research participants involved in Scottish policy making. The thesis will conclude from this enquiry that the educational value and significance of the arts is not adequately appreciated in contemporary Scottish (and perhaps other) educational policy and practice. The study concludes by advocating a return to Aristotle's conception of the arts as contributory to *phronesis* (the practical wisdom of virtue), rather than *techne* (the technical knowledge of skill). Narrow specialisation in forms of training are liable to leave people uninitiated into the wisdom and moral power of the arts –benefits that should ideally be available to all. From the perspective of this thesis, only a broad educational approach that encompasses thorough arts education will result in well-rounded, emotionally intelligent and truly educated human beings.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Professor David Carr and Dr. Pat McLaughlin for their supervision and guidance which have been invaluable and greatly appreciated.

I am also thankful to all the research participants who were interviewed or completed questionnaires. I am indebted to them due to their voluntary and altruistic contribution. I am also very grateful to Mr. Terry Harvey, Dr. Ioannis Nousias and Miss Susan Robinson for their precious help with proofreading and other advice on the thesis. Special thanks also goes to my good friends and family including Mrs Ann Harvey, Mrs (and soon Dr.) Chun Ming Tai and Mrs Lia Kotsidou Naidou for their genuine friendship and support.

Furthermore, Professor David Carr has shown great patience and understanding. I cannot thank him enough for this and also for his tremendous support, patience, advice and encouragement. This thesis would not have been possible without his contribution as a supervisor and friend.

Last but not least, I owe deep gratitude to my mother Lamprini Kotsidou who always has confidence in me and constantly encourages me. I would like to thank her for all this and for her unstinting love.

DECLARATION

I, Panagiota Sidiropoulou, hereby declare that this thesis was composed by myself and that this work is my own except where explicitly stated otherwise. I further declare that it has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

Panagiota Sidiropoulou

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Declaration	iv
Table of Contents.....	v
Table of Figures	vii
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Methodological connections	3
1.2 The chapters	5
Chapter 2	9
2. Plato on the value of the arts	9
2.1 Arguments for and against the inclusion of the arts in education	9
2.2 Platonic contradictions, compromises and suggestions.....	19
2.3 Summary and conclusion	23
Chapter 3	27
3. Aristotle's defence of the arts.....	27
3.1 The human soul: Virtue and Happiness.....	27
3.2 Tragedy in Aristotle	31
3.3 The aesthetic value of the arts	38
3.4 Concluding remarks on character and (arts) education.....	39
Chapter 4	41
4. Objectivity as a precondition of knowledge	41
4.1 Aesthetic judgements; objectivism, subjectivism and relativism	41
4.2 Subjectivism, scientism and other misconceptions.....	50
4.3 Epistemic qualities and power in the arts: concluding remarks	55
Chapter 5	57
5. Art and Knowledge	57
5.1 Nature and definition of knowledge	57
5.2 Knowledge and the arts	63
Chapter 6	79
6. The 'intrinsic' educational value of the arts and literature in Matthew Arnold and beyond	79
6.1 Two schools of thought in defence of literature	80
6.2 Economic determinism, sociological determinism and other oppositions to the literary focus of liberal education	84
6.3 Conclusion and the way forward.....	90

Chapter 7	93
7. Justification and critiques of the arts in the school curriculum	93
7.1 Clarifying 'education'	93
7.2 Traditionalism and generic arts.....	101
7.3 Form, Expression and the 'Aesthetic'	104
7.4 Educational progressivism	111
7.5 A paradox and concluding remarks	117
 Chapter 8	 119
8. Cinematography of <i>Ethics</i> in arts education; a summary of the philosophical arguments	119
8.1 <i>Il Postino</i> : a movie about poetry and a beautiful story as poem	119
8.2 <i>Take the Lead</i> : a movie about teaching for human growth.....	130
 Chapter 9	 141
9. The Scottish case	141
9.1 Methodological issues	141
 Chapter 10	 156
10. The development of Scottish education policy in and beyond the documents.....	156
10.1 The guidelines and a case for change	156
10.2 Through the eyes of the research participants	161
10.3 The role of arts.....	166
10.4 Magic and wonder in the arts: concluding remarks	189
 Chapter 11	 198
11. Closing remarks.....	198
11.1 Limitations and suggestions	198
11.2 Concluding remarks and recommendations	200
 References.....	 204
 Appendices.....	 222

Table of Figures

Figure 8.1 The postman becomes a keen learner. (Image courtesy of Cecchi Gori Group Tiger Cinematografica).....	120
Figure 8.2 Mario writes his first poem (Image courtesy of Cecchi Gori Group Tiger Cinematografica).	124
Figure 8.3 Mario's effort to impress Beatrice (Image courtesy of Cecchi Gori Group Tiger Cinematografica).....	125
Figure 8.4 Mario and Beatrice fall in love (Image courtesy of Cecchi Gori Group Tiger Cinematografica).	126
Figure 8.5 Beatrice's aunt is shocked at the news of the romance (Image courtesy of Cecchi Gori Group Tiger Cinematografica). ..	127
Figure 8.6 Aunt Rosa takes Mario's poem for Beatrice to the priest (Image courtesy of Cecchi Gori Group Tiger Cinematografica). ..	128
Figure 8.7 Mr Dulaine in front of his reluctant students (Image courtesy of New Line Corporation).	132
Figure 8.8 Mr. Dulaine wows his students (Images courtesy of New Line Corporation).	134
Figure 8.9 Rock and LaRhette become closer through dance (Images courtesy of New Line Corporation).	137
Figure 8.10 The art of dance compared to mechanical dancing (Images courtesy of New Line Corporation).	138
Figure 9.1 Basic questions of interviews.....	146
Figure 9.2 Modelling the Policy Making Process (Hofferbert, 1974, p.228 as cited in Mazmanian & Sabatier, 1980, p.441)	147
Figure 10.1 Four capacities from LTS (2010f, http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/understandingthecurriculum/whatiscurriculumforexcellence/thepurposeofthecurriculum/).....	158
Figure 10.2 The aim of skills and knowledge in and through the arts.	173
Figure 10.3 Turning the scale in favour of education through the arts.	191

Figure 10.4 Direction of Scottish education system.....	192
Figure 10.5 The mechanism of policy influences.....	194
Figure 10.6 The contribution of arts in two significant ways.	197

INTRODUCTION

The *Curriculum for Excellence* was in its formative stages when I was a studying for an MSc in Education at Moray House School of Education. My background is in studies in Philosophy and Education and at the time I was eager to learn more about the values of education systems and their impact upon policy making. The development of a new school curriculum in Scotland presented an ideal opportunity for me to question currently prevalent notions of education and to consider what I would regard as worth including if I had the power to organise a school curriculum.

This raised two key questions that would require discussion and clarification for a successful present study: (i) what does it mean to call someone 'educated'? And (ii) to what extent is schooling concerned with the promotion of educated people? Other questions also emerged from these, such as: what is the best way to cultivate and/or educate people? And what disciplines or fields of education might most effectively help such cultivation? As someone who has always regarded the arts highly, and who has written several previous essays on their value, it seemed natural to me to suppose that the various arts should occupy not just an important but a central place in any balanced educational curriculum.

From my time as a student in Scotland I realised that it is a country that celebrates arts with regular and numerous festivals (such as the world famous Edinburgh festival), exhibitions and performances. However I was also aware from reports in the press that audiences for arts events are in some decline. I thought this might mean that while Scottish people are ready to express themselves through various artistic means or performances, they are not so well equipped to appreciate the arts as audiences. This also seemed to be supported by a concern voiced by one of my MSc professors that young people do not seem to read literature for personal enjoyment as much as formerly. He illustrated this by pointing out that on public transport many (especially young) people seem to be using mobile phones or occupied with i-pods instead of reading books as they might have done in the past. My attention was also caught by my professor's criticism of the term *Expressive Arts* which is very

generally used in the Scottish 5–14 programme and *Curriculum for Excellence* to refer more to modes of creative practice than to activities of appreciation. In this light, I began to ask whether an ‘expressive’ approach to arts education was really adequate and whether perhaps a different approach might encourage a broader educational approach to the arts. Furthermore, this prompted me to question the very nature of the arts and to re-consider their full potential and educational value.

It was during this time that I also came across Hopkins (2001, p.179) who argues that

Much of the debate about education in the last twenty years has been about whether schools are getting better or getting worse. This, however, is an irrelevant question. The real issue is whether current provision is good enough for the challenges now facing us as a society.

This gave me much food for thought in so far as it seems at odds with to my own beliefs. I have always believed that the ‘education’ of young and old should be about timeless values. Many issues that have preoccupied people all over the world since ancient times remain significant to the present day. For example, moral dilemmas of love, hate, freedom, power and personal illumination and redemption are enduring themes in artworks from the beginning of recorded time. However, in contemplating these ideas, I appreciated a profound truth that (the late Professor) McLaughlin points out (2000, p.450):

Philosophy on the one hand and educational policy making on the other do not share the same aims, values, interests and priorities. One overly simple way of stating the differences here is to claim that educational policy, unlike philosophy, is not aimed at the elucidation of (say) truth or goodness but at the resolution of practical issues and problems.

This insight motivated the present attempt to undertake a critique of a particular (Scottish) educational policy regarding the nature, role and potential of arts from the philosophical perspective of regard for truth and virtue. At the same time, I hoped I might find a way of translating the philosophical aspirations for arts education of educational philosophy into the practical realities of educational policy-making and school practice (a necessity also argued for by Pring (1996) and Carr (2000)). In

short, the main motive was that this study would result in suggesting the best way in which people might be truly educated in the arts.

1.1 Methodological connections

The present thesis sets out to explore questions of the educational nature and significance of the arts from a mainly philosophical perspective. Philosophical analysis was the preferred approach in so far as the main issues and problems addressed by this thesis were perceived to be conceptual and normative. As David Carr (undated, see appendices) in his unpublished paper 'Reason and Argument' explains, human enquiry involves various sorts of arguments including: (i) logical or deductive arguments which include those of a philosophical or conceptual nature; empirical arguments or arguments from 'induction'; and (iii) normative arguments which attempt to construct a moral or evaluative case. Recognising that contested concepts and judgement of value are deeply implicated in both the philosophy and theory of education and in educational policy-making, this study was concerned to engage in a thorough investigation of the conceptual and normative questions from an (analytical) philosophical rather than an empirical point of view. Above all, however, the thesis was concerned to avoid the danger that Carr (*ibid*) highlights of mistakenly confusing issues and arguments of a conceptual character with empirical, social scientific or psychological claims and arguments. Thus, much of the focus of this thesis is upon the clarification or analysis of such key philosophically problematic terms as 'education', 'knowledge' 'value', the 'aesthetic' and 'art', and upon the complex relations between these concepts. On the other hand, the philosophical discussion has not sought to exclude useful investigation and discussion of the practical implications and possibilities of educational philosophy and theory. On the contrary, a substantial part of the present thesis (as is clear elsewhere) has been concerned to explore, by more empirical means, the state of contemporary Scottish thinking about the nature and educational place of the arts in Scotland. Nevertheless, the key methodological approach in this study is philosophical and conceptual analysis.

The spirit of this study is largely in accordance with the idea that educational philosophy is not a kind of 'pure' philosophy, but a branch of educational theory. In this light, it seemed to the present researcher that this philosophical study would probably need at different points to engage in the three principal roles of analytical philosophy of education as identified by Carr (2000, p.182):

- (i) The philosophical examination of normative or ethical justifications for particular educational policies and practice.*
- (ii) The conceptual analysis of philosophically central concepts of educational significance and relevance.*
- (iii) The critical analysis of received educational theory and policy documentation.*

Taking into consideration these different but connected educational philosophical tasks, conceptual analysis of key terms is also here linked to the exploration of different evaluative perspectives as identified in the various past and present theories of the educational significance of arts and the aesthetic and in interviews, questionnaires and policy documentation considered in the more practical (empirical) parts of this research.

But the philosophical enquiry of this study seeks above all to offer clearer insight into a variety of central concepts of arts education in order to throw light on the various philosophical and political arguments that have been given in the past and present for the value of arts in education and schooling. To this end, in particular, the thesis concludes by analyzing and criticizing the present situation of Scottish arts education (as revealed by the views of policy makers) and by suggesting the way to a broader knowledge-based educational perspective on arts education in Scottish and other education systems. Precisely, this broader view would take arts education to be concerned more with the promotion of intrinsically valuable states of personally formative knowledge and understanding on the part of pupils rather than mere instrumental or utilitarian training (Carr, 2000).

Different areas of enquiry, such as psychology, sociology and philosophy, sometimes use different terms for the same or similar things. For example, someone might claim that the second part of this thesis concerned with exploring Scottish policy developments is more a matter of social scientific enquiry: it might therefore be

described as ‘scientific substantive’ research according to the definition of Hammersley (2000). Indeed, the approach adopted at this point in the thesis may have some similarities to social scientific research. However, the present author would prefer to think of the whole research project of this thesis as philosophical in so far as the practical or empirical part of the thesis has explicitly sought to move beyond the mere description of views to the philosophical and ethical evaluation of them. All the same, the thesis has ever sought to respect the view of Carr (2000, p.189) that intelligent educational enquiry should be:

...committed to the idea of a proper division of intellectual labour in the interests of some kind of strategic and systematic advance in our understanding of important theoretical and practical issues.

1.2 The chapters

Following the introductory chapter, the second chapter is a discussion of Plato’s scepticism about the value of the arts. In summary, for Plato, the arts are a form of rhetoric and rhetoric deals in persuasion, deceit and falsehood rather than knowledge and truth (although there is a degree of ambivalence about this in some of Plato’s dialogues). Overall, however, Plato regarded the arts as morally dubious and therefore of little educational significance.

Chapter three explores Aristotle’s defence of both the arts and rhetoric: in the *Poetics* and elsewhere, Aristotle appears to have argued for the potential contribution of poetry and music to personal formation and the development of virtue. Aristotle seems to have rejected Plato’s view on the moral degeneracy of the arts and to have defended them as of both moral and educational value.

Chapters four and five explore the prospects of arts as vehicles of objective knowledge. In chapter four, the idea that arts have objective value of potential for genuine knowledge and truth is explored and defended. Briefly, if the arts are to count as any sort knowledge, there must the possibility of (i) rationally objective aesthetic judgment; and (ii) some concept of narrative or other truth. Thus, since it is often said that artistic and aesthetic value judgments are subjective or personal, much space is here devoted to exploration of how objectivity is possible in aesthetic and

artistic appreciation. This discussion turns on an all-important distinction in the context of aesthetic value between judging something to be good (which requires reasons) and simply liking it (which does not). Subjectivism, scientism and other misconceptions of arts are discussed, culminating in a defence of the epistemic qualities and power of the arts.

Chapter five starts with a discussion of the nature of knowledge, with particular reference to Plato's dialogue *Theaetetus*. Then arts are considered as potential vehicles of knowledge with regard to different respects in which they may contribute to the development of understanding and appreciation in human agents of themselves, their relationships with others and their world, in such respects as: (i) aesthetic (sensory) satisfaction (in the light of different concepts of the aesthetic); (ii) development of imagination; (iii) understanding of aspects of human experience and psychology; (iv) education of the emotions; and (v) moral understanding. Issues of relevance that are also discussed are: (i) the difference between knowledge and understanding gained from arts/poetry and (scientific empirical or other) sources of knowledge and understanding; and (ii) the relationship between art and morality.

The focus of chapter six is mainly on literature rather than art in general. This chapter looks at how philosophers, poets and literary theorists from antiquity to the present day have dealt with the question of the epistemological status and educational value of literature. Examples are drawn from such modern trends as the American Great books tradition, British cultural and literary criticism and the British liberal educational tradition to show how the 'intrinsic' personal and educational value of arts and literature has been defended by a variety of influential philosophers, theorists and poets including Matthew Arnold and T. S. Eliot.

Chapter seven explores both wider and narrower interpretations of 'education', covering a wide range of intrinsic and/or extrinsic developmental concerns and purposes. The chapter explores (amongst other things) the issue of how the post-war Scottish curriculum was formed in the light of different educationally traditionalist, and progressive influences, its philosophical orientation in general and the curricular

idea of 'generic arts' in recent educational philosophy. At this point, 'intrinsic' justification of the arts in the school curriculum is further reinforced.

Chapter eight concentrates on the narratives of two movies; *Il Postino* and *Take the Lead*. Using illustrations from these movies, the chapter attempts to underline several key points of this thesis. The main point is to demonstrate how the different arts dealt with in these movies serve to make the fundamental point of the thesis that arts provide their own distinctive (emotional or experiential) access to aspects of human life that are not available through other forms of human enquiry.

Chapters nine and ten move away from the philosophical to the more practical concerns of this thesis with educational policy and practice. Following a discussion of methodological issues in chapter nine, chapter ten first presents a review of recent Scottish educational policy documentation together with some comment on its implications for the place of arts in the school curriculum. This leads onto a presentation, analysis and evaluation of issues raised in extensive research interviews and questionnaires with Scottish educational policy makers.

The final chapter makes general recommendations for the future of Scottish (or any other) education policy. After admitting the limitations of the current study, it also makes suggestions for further research and inquiry. The thesis closes with an overall conclusion.

Chapter 2

2. Plato on the value of the arts

Plato would exclude the arts from an ideal education system since he does not think that the arts yield genuine knowledge. Art as representation (in broad terms) is mere imitation of the imitation of the Platonic Ideas/Forms. The sensible beauty that art may depict reflects mere empirical appearances without real beauty: that is to say the beauty of reason. Reason is that part of the soul which should control the other two parts: the spirit and that which involves passion, emotion and appetites. Nevertheless, irrational art has the power to move human beings. This happens because of the attractive but deceitful means that artists use and also due to its influence on the irrational part of psyche. This process leads the agent away from knowledge, truth and goodness, often resulting in immoral attitudes and behaviours. The solution appears to lie for Plato in rejection of the arts and the authority of artists; but for several reasons Plato does not fully embrace this conclusion, arguing for the controlled use of arts in education for politically prescribed moral purposes.

2.1 Arguments for and against the inclusion of the arts in education

As in the case of other school studies, rational arguments are needed for the inclusion of arts in the school curriculum. Certainly, before it is asked which of the arts should feature in the school curriculum, it needs to be asked whether the arts as such have any educational value at all. Moreover, a place to start discussing this question might well be with the arguments of Socrates in Plato's dialogues. These dialogues seem to have seriously questioned the place of arts in any ideal education for a just political order.

2.1.1 Plato's exclusion of the arts: avoiding imitation without knowledge

In Plato's *Republic*¹ (Book 10 in Cooper, 1997, pp.11–28; Hamilton & Cairns, 1961, pp.819-844; Pappas, 1995, pp.173–187), Socrates questions the educational value of arts in any preparation for citizenship in the ideal (Platonic) state. He attacks painting, music and poetry (both the epic poetry of Homer and his own tragedian contemporaries). He characterises art in terms of a concern with representation, which is certainly one of the traditional functions of art as described by Noel Carroll (1999) in his book 'The philosophy of Art'; there, Carroll (p.22) states that Platonic (and Aristotelian) representation theories had '*a pretty good fit with the data*', because the concept of representation fitted well with the general approaches to art of those times. However, Plato's idea of *representation* seems to be conceived in rather wider terms and to include elements of what might nowadays be called *non-representational* art in so far as it involves not only the representation of appearances of material objects, but also the organisation of sounds and colours which are not of clear mimetic or narrative form (Moravcsik, 1982, p.34).

In Plato's *Republic*, art is regarded mainly as the depiction of sensible parts of nature and their qualities. Plato's theory of the nature of art reflects the notion that a plurality of things with the same name constitutes a specific type: that is to say an intelligible *form* or *idea* (*Republic* 596a). The person who makes an object that embodies this idea is able to create a material representation but not the actual idea. In fact, Socrates argues that a painter is able only to paint an imitation of some appearance of a given idea: that is to say a second-hand representation. Whereas ideas themselves have a divine or 'intelligible' source, and nature or human agency brings into being material objects that reflect these ideas, the artist creates an artwork which represents ideas at an even further remove by imitating such material objects (*Rep.*596a–596d-597b). Therefore, the work of the artist is twice removed from the reality of things as they are, since he or she represents the material world only as it appears to be and not as it is (*ibid* 598a). This is due to the fact that the material

¹ References to Plato's work will refer directly to the original sources; because all the other books cite Plato's work in a similar way e.g. *Rep.*596a (*Rep.* For *Republic*), unless there is a quotation where the exact page and reference will be cited.

world and its qualities – including human physical existence and agency – as they are represented through the arts are sensible (of the senses), and their existence is only secondary to, or derivative from, the Forms/Ideas (Moravscik, 1982, p.34) that they express. From this viewpoint, it is the Forms that are the primary reality, since only these are not changeable or perishable (Stevenson, 1974, p.24). Thus, in so far as education is the process by which human agents become knowledgeable, and knowledge is a matter of the grasp of genuine truths about reality, then it is only acquaintance with the Forms that can yield educationally worthwhile knowledge. In so far as the material appearances of forms are imperfect, changeable and perishable, any and all human perception of them can count as only belief or opinion, rather than knowledge. (*Rep.* 476–480 in Stevenson, 1974, p.24). Mere artistic copies of such material objects may be even less than this. Moreover, among the Forms, the Form of Good is particularly exalted ‘*and plays an almost God-like role, being the source of all reality, truth and goodness*’ (ibid, p.25).

The (true) knowledge of the forms may also be attained only by the strict practice of the rigorous form of rational or intellectual enquiry which Plato refers to as ‘*dialectic*’, because there can be no genuine access to such abstract ideas through human sense experience of the natural material world (Carr, 1999, p.40). For Plato, agents might claim expertise in the manufacture, use and representation of material objects (*Rep.* 601d), but strictly it is only he or she who gives orders to the manufacturer who is entitled to say whether the object is manufactured correctly and therefore fit for use. Only he or she who created it in the light of an ‘*intelligible*’ idea or plan can know its true nature and purpose. Whereas the manufacturer relied on true belief (justified confidence), only the designer of the object and its user have real knowledge of it. (*Rep.* 601e). Since the artist is not even following the instructions of a knowledgeable person, he or she cannot even be said to have justified confidence (*Rep.*602a). In this light, poets are not knowledgeably inventive at all as they are just foolish mirrors of mere appearance who reflect what is around them; the role that Plato gives to the artist is what might nowadays be called *photographic realism* (*Rep.* 420c 472d 484c 500–1; also in Annas, 1982, p.21). In a metaphorical sense, the artist merely ‘*takes a snapshot*’ of what is already once removed from reality and therefore

produces a 'twice removed' shadow of the original (Rep.597e3–4 in Moravcsik, 1982, p.38). Hence, artists do not understand what their work represents for two reasons: i) they do not have genuine practical knowledge of the represented objects of their artwork, since they are not the creators of those represented objects (or those who ordered the craftsman to create them); and ii) they do not have an insight into the true meaning of what they try to represent (that is to say the Forms/Ideas). Ultimately, artists attempt to capture what they perceive as reality, only to produce an imitation of an imitation, further distancing themselves from the 'truth'.

For Plato, any possibility that artists might directly represent reality is 'out of the question': there is a qualitative difference between any representation or interpretation of the Forms by the craftsman and any representation of the objects by the artist, in so far as the first may have knowledge or good evidence but the latter has neither of these (Nehamas, 1982, p.73). To 'imitate' the Forms is a request that is logically impossible for the artist to satisfy, for in virtue of satisfying it, the artist would cease to be an artist' (ibid, pp.73–74) Even if art reflected virtuous figures and situations '*it would do no more than to create a way in which someone who seemed virtuous, but who might in no way be virtuous, would act*' (ibid, p.68). In *Phaedo* (68d–69b), Plato claims that even when an artist, such as a tragic poet, tries to present a virtuous figure, this is not genuine presentation, because such represented virtue remains merely apparent virtue. In this case, the actor merely performs a virtuous role and creates a false image of virtue of mere virtuous appearance rather than virtuous reality.

In fact, Plato uses the word *eros* to describe the aspiration to the 'intelligible world' of rational knowledge and understanding. Such intelligible knowledge and understanding is, according to Plato, the only state of a 'well-lived life' for two reasons: firstly, it has intrinsic value and is sufficient unto itself without provoking any further needs; secondly, such a state results in self-knowledge and intellectual freedom, rendering the affairs of the 'sensible world' trivial and unimportant (Moravcsik, 1982, p.29). Consequently, the objectives of a life focused on theoretical insight and understanding are of non-instrumental value, while rationality and

dialectic enquiry may be seen as means to the attainment of such objectives (ibid, p.30).

2.1.2 Doubting the beauty of objects

Despite this, some might argue that however far an artwork may be from truth and knowledge, at least it is beautiful and its value is to be found in its beauty. Although Plato takes the idea of beauty very seriously, such beauty is not just a matter of subjective sensory pleasure. It is a form that is related to such other forms such as truth and goodness: that so, it can only be grasped by the proper exercise of reason and understanding and not by the senses. In consequence, art for art's sake or for sensory pleasure for Plato does not provide a justification of the value of the arts (Barrow, 1975, p.25). Thus, such 'superficial' pleasure – whether an intentional or unintentional means or end – could not be the standard by which artworks are judged as good or bad. Similarly, artworks do not even have the extrinsic value of the 'good bed' made by the craftsman that is more pleasurable to sleep in than the bad bed (Plato, *Republic* in Cothey, 1990, pp.30–31).

Furthermore, in connection with the *beauty* mentioned above, Murdoch (1977, p.17) argues that Plato's antipathy toward art leads him to separate art from real beauty, because '*he regards beauty as too serious a matter to be commandeered by art*'. True beauty is the beauty of reason (Plato, *Symposium*, 211e–212a). Phenomenal beauty is superficial and at best an appearance of something good. Cothey (1990, p.172) explains:

On Plato's theory, beauty is the appearance of what is good; and a good table, for example, is one that serves well its purposes. Plato allowed that when a carpenter who knows what it is for something to be a good table applies his knowledge practically he makes a beautiful table. However, the problem with art is that it claims a closer relationship with beauty: works of art profess no purpose, save incidentally, but to be apprehended as beautiful. Plato believed this is absurd. If works of art had a valid function they would be capable of beauty on the same principle that beds or tables are, namely in so far as they well exemplify what it is to be good of their kind. But nothing, he believed, can have any kind of relation to beauty that art professes.

In addition (ibid, p.35):

The things that well exemplify the Form of the beauty, as opposed to well exemplifying the other Forms, are not the particular beautiful things we experience through our senses but the Forms of these things. As judged by the standards of beauty itself, the whole world of sense experience stands condemned as capable at most of an inferior or illusory beauty.

Therefore, once again, art is not capable of producing anything valuable either in ‘theory’ or practice and anyone who wishes to know what real beauty is would not be an artist in Plato’s ideal state (ibid). The appearance of beauty in an artifact is still second or third removed from the real beauty of Forms and the appreciation of this artistic beauty has nothing to do with real beauty (Moravcsik, 1982, p.31). The way that ordinary sense perception grasps beauty – according to Plato (ibid p.43) is beauty as ‘*fineness in appearance*’; but this is superficial as ‘*beauty should lead us to the contemplation of things that are not only fine in appearance*’ in the material world, but fine in the intelligible world. Even in the case of ‘good’ art, wherein art can represent the appearance of an object very well, it is still only depiction of the sensory world that is possible. There are some very rare exceptions when, under the control of reason, art might stimulate some rational reflection and therefore very indirectly have some potential for knowledge of the truth. But the true nature of the reality that an object reflects (the Forms/Ideas) still lies beyond any artistic representation (Moravcsik, 1982, p.30).

2.1.3 Immoral impacts by charming means

On such a view, art is not a vehicle of knowledge and truth. However, Plato argues that the evils of art are not yet exhausted, since the arts may have still worse effects on people who are influenced by them. Artworks clearly move people, but such affection is also potentially dangerous. Firstly, artworks employ various artifices such as similes and metaphors. Such effects may be charming but when the artworks are stripped of these, nothing is left but a potentially deluding presentation of appearance rather than reality (*Rep.*601b). Socrates gives the example of a charming but not really good-looking man. If his charm is taken from him, then he is stripped of real beauty, as the effects of charm are but a counterfeit of true beauty. Bloom

(1987, p.71) defines art as a primitive means of expression which uses its artistic adornments against 'subordinate' reason by expressing and stimulating passions.

The seductive adornments of the artist can therefore be creative, but also dangerous, as they can easily influence the audience in directions that are far from truth and reality. This is especially true of poets who use the same medium of language as truth-seeking philosophers (Annas, 1982, p.21). It is in this respect that the question of a rivalry between poetry and philosophy emerges (Plato, *Laws*, 817). However, the poet is not a genuine rival of the philosopher since he or she can only manipulate the irrational part of mind; whereas genuine truth and virtue can only be grounded in reason (Plato, *Republic*, book 3). To be sure, some poets may be regarded as serious rivals to philosophers in so far as they are inspired by gods or divine powers. Such an inspiration may be considered a unique gift of which Plato would perhaps be more tolerant (Woodruff, 1982, p.144), since divine inspiration is beyond the sphere of reason. But Plato (*ibid*) is largely consistent in maintaining that if the poet tells the truth then he or she would not be a poet but a philosopher. Moreover, on the occasions that poets do refer to something true, they may not be aware of this if they do not have knowledge of the Ideas/Forms. Furthermore, (*ibid*, p.146) '*poetry has no distinct explanatory function; consequently, poets have no skills*'. What they do is guided by inspiration rather than truth and so they do not have real knowledge of the way their artefacts are produced: '*The self-containment of poetry means that poets have neither knowledge that their products are true, nor knowledge how to produce them*' (*ibid*).

Nevertheless, Plato himself seems to adopt many poetic and literary devices. Moravcsik (1982, p.30) states that '*The contrast between aspiration and inspiration, as well as the lack of the concept of taste, help us also to understand why Plato can denounce poetry and literature and then employ so many poetic and literary devices in his own writings*'. However, Plato recognises that he uses artistic means in order to express himself, but insists that he does so only as mathematicians use diagrams, always under the control of reason (*ibid*, p.44).

2.1.4 Relation to irrational part of soul

Another Platonic objection to the arts has to do with human nature and the soul. The issues or objects described in artworks engender impressions in people's minds that may be contrary to reason because they are inconsistent or contradictory (*Rep.* 602d). Someone may accept such poetic contradictions, but it is clearly not rational to say that something is both x and not x. Plato's Socrates claimed that the human soul has three parts. The part which uses rational procedures in order to gain knowledge is the superior part of the soul (*ibid.*, 603a). Another part that consists of non-rational feelings and appetites is regarded as an inferior part or level of the soul. It is regarded as inferior, precisely because it is indifferent to the truth, and also because it is easily affected or seduced by artworks also unconcerned with truth. Thus, when someone grieves for something or somebody, even though his/her reason recognises that grief is not good, useful or proper for him/her, he or she is controlled by the affective or appetitive part of the soul (*ibid.*, 603b). Generally, Plato presents reason as stable and passion as petulant and changeable according to circumstances (*ibid.*, 604c). The representational artist aims to satisfy the latter part of the soul, because it is easier and more popular to affect people in this way rather than bring them to reason or truth (*ibid.*, 605a).

In this respect, art undermines the rational part of the soul by reinforcing the irrational and emotional (*Rep.*, 606a). Art for Plato is therefore a species of anti-rational rhetoric, which empowers emotion by reinforcing the passionate sides of people's lives and exaggerating their influence. Extrapolating the implications of this view, Plato (*ibid.*, 605b–d) believes that a society governed by its emotions, passions, appetites or desires rather than reason and rational argument will finally, through bad government, fall into chaos and disorder. In the case of humour, for example, the loss of reason that attends comic pleasure may lead to a lack of seriousness that trivialises life (606c). The Platonic account extends this point to other desires and feelings such as sexual appetite, anger and so on, which overpower reason by stirring up occasionally pleasant but nevertheless irrational feelings (*ibid.*, 606d). The creation of communities which are governed by attraction to pleasure and aversion to pain clearly has serious moral and political implications. If people are blind to the moral

implications of artistic pleasure, then they may also be blind to the social injustices of unmerited prestige, wealth, and power etc, becoming slaves to such false masters (ibid, 608b).

On such a moralistic view, art is seriously dangerous in so far as even the best characters may prove corruptible. For example, even such upright characters may experience intense negative feelings in the presence of a play that represents immoral situations. Long term exposure may result in entrenching these negative feelings in their own lives, even in the absence of immoral circumstances. But, generally, long-term exposure to art may also provoke desensitization towards immoral situations (*Republic* 605–606 in Cothey, 1990, pp.30–31). Here, there are two problems: the first concerns the probable negative content of the artefact; and the second is related to the effect of artworks on the irrational (and rational) part(s) of the human soul. It is a consequence of the first point that in Plato's ideal *Republic* no artwork of painting, sculpture or architecture that depicted such negative features as bad character, ill discipline, meanness or ugliness would be allowed (*Rep.* 401). Only characters who behave in a genuinely good, reasonable and moral way should be artistically represented (in so far as artists are to be allowed in the ideal state). And only such noble representations should be allowed to feature in the education of the citizens of the ideal state.

The second problematic feature of art that emerges here is the dangerous effect on the soul exerted by artworks that appeal to emotion or feeling rather than reason (Plato, *Republic* in Annas, 1982, p.7). Indulgence in emotions is typical of art and consequently reinforces the irrational part of the soul, which prevails over reason. But reason is the aspect of soul that should take priority as '*the capacity enabling the agent to achieve moral distance and not be dominated by his emotions at any one time*', in opposition to the human tendency to be directed by emotion, feelings, appetites and desires (ibid, p.8). Such reason, operating as a corrective capacity, '*would appear as the source of deliberated and authoritative moral views that sort out, and may conflict with, our pre-reflective intuitions, which tend to be based on the mere appeal of particular people and actions*' (ibid). In this respect, any irrational part of the soul that is opposed to reason cannot be described as a unity, but

only as a totality of tendencies to the immoral that are contrary to truth (*Rep.* 603a7–605a8–b2 in *ibid.*, p.9). Such a tendency to the irrational is reinforced by the pleasure that follows from encouragement of lower human desires. Such pleasures undermine serious life and good character (*ibid.*, p.10).

Finally, then, it seems that art is not only opposed to reason due to its connection with the irrational parts of the soul, but it reinforces the strength or power of appetite thus overwhelming the resistance of reason (*Rep.* 606 d1–7). Hence, even though the reasonable part of soul may know the correct route, it is overwhelmed by the force of ‘the horse’ of passion and appetite. Practical human examples of such a situation might be the lover who recognizes that being involved in an affair is immoral and not good for him/her; but nevertheless is disabled by appetite from refraining (*Rep.* 607e); or the person who realizes that smoking or a fatty diet are harmful, but she or he finds it difficult to stop smoking or to start slimming (Carr, 1991, p.34). Plato also introduces the example of the father whose son dies and, although he knows his grief is not positive or constructive, nevertheless cannot control his sorrow and grief. Nehamas (1982, p.68) interprets this opposition of weak and strong motives as the ‘*tendency to take as models for imitation what are merely products of imitation*’. That is to say, if art is an agent of imitation at a second remove from Forms/Ideas (as already argued), the audience will not focus on how to use reason in order to find the path to knowledge. It is a human weakness to focus on imitations, to indulge in the associated emotions and to reproduce such imitations in their own lives.

Hence, for Plato, the capacity to distinguish between knowledge of reality and the false ‘reality’ of representation is a desirable attitude and a valid educational goal. It enables agents to appreciate the traps and pitfalls of arts and to overcome them (*Rep.*, 605-6). However, there is further potential for deceit here, not least for those who think that they know art well, and this involves possible flattery of the agent. Plato (Hamilton, 2003, p.44) argues that ‘*our knowledge of art can easily flatter us into thinking it makes us morally better people. Yet insight into the suffering we cause can even make us readier to cause it: having a finer sense of what we are doing can easily trick us into thinking we are doing something different*’. This returns us to the earlier point that artistic depiction of bad character, ill discipline, meanness or

ugliness need to be avoided because they can exercise even unconscious influence on those who encounter them. It is all too easy for those who come in contact with such cases to think that they are just excusable human defects that are not so bad after all. To conclude, before turning to some of Plato's more positive views of arts, his main criticism of the arts rests on the argument that inspired (or, according to several translations, 'mad') work of arts may have little relation to rationality or *logos*(reason), and only reason can ground moral teaching. Moral understanding requires the clear thought of dialectic and rational enquiry that is needed for clear vision of truth and goodness (Nussbaum, 1982, p.84). Even when emotions and passions are controlled by reason, and arts have a didactic character, they still instruct through experience rather than theoretical understanding. That is why there can be a no real philosophy in art (Moravcsik, 1982, p.40).

2.2 Platonic contradictions, compromises and suggestions

In view of all this, it might be expected that Plato's ideal education system would be based only or exclusively on reason. In terms of Plato's distinction between *logic* and *thymic*, or the rational and irrational parts of the soul, the latter could never provide any basis for knowledge, because – as previously shown – the irrational part of soul consists of 'primitive' appetites, passions, emotions and desires that may mislead the agent into error (Nussbaum, 1982, p.86 & p.121; *Republic* 403a, 580e & 586ab, *Phaedrus* 47eff & 68a). Nussbaum (ibid) is one of several writers who claim, as a keystone of the platonic theory, that the 'blind animals' of affective human experience are the chief impediment to human education due to their insubordinate and irrational nature. However, Plato himself seems to depart from this view in some of the things that he says. The following sections present some of these apparent or real contradictions with a view to some possible re-assessment of the Platonic model of education with regard to the arts.

There are several problematic passages in Plato's works where he seems to contradict his strict position and appear more tolerant towards the arts. A key point is that even though Plato offers a morally negative view of the irrational parts of soul he does recognise some potentially positive aspects of them. Thus, although most

desires, especially erotic ones, are mainly depicted as inferior ‘animal’ pleasures – and therefore as mainly morally harmful (mostly in *Republic* and *Phaedrus* 258e) – he nevertheless takes a much more positive view of the erotic (particularly in the *Symposium*) as a sensual or temporal expression of a more transcendent or ‘divine’ form or state of love (Nussbaum, 1982, p.105).

Moreover, while Platonic theory strongly suggests that emotions and appetites should be suppressed or reined in by reason, the non-rational side of human nature is still regarded as a part of the soul that needs to be nourished and cultivated in the interests of healthy human flourishing. Thus, when properly controlled by reason, it ‘*can play a good and a necessary role in motivating the person, even in teaching the person about the beautiful*’ (ibid). This seems questionable because from one perspective the irrational elements can hardly provide any knowledge if they ‘*cannot function cognitively*’; however, platonic *eros* seems to involve some feelings that may have a (‘cognitive’) function beyond mere satisfaction of the bodily desire, and which also play a crucial role in motivating human moral and other agency (ibid, p.106).

Nussbaum argues that Plato occasionally claimed that ‘*the irrational elements have an important cognitive role to play in our aspiration toward understanding*’, as they are a motivational source of energy to the chariot (1982, p.99). The charioteer who allegorically is the *logisticon* part of the soul has a role that concerns the control of the horses it steers: that is to say, reason gives clear direction to the *thymicon* and *epithimiticon* horses. Hume regarded reason as entirely separate from desire and passion and as merely an instrumental means by which desire could achieve its ends: for Hume, reason was merely the ‘slave of the passions’. But this does not seem to have been the case for Plato who appears to have regarded the desires of the spirit as deeply informed and guided by reason (ibid, p.99).

This point about the non-rational art of the soul, which when properly controlled by reason can motivate the person and teach about the beautiful (ibid), raises further questions concerning the concept of ‘beautiful’. As already shown, beauty is for Plato a two-sided term which may refer to features of the external material world or to the intellectual realm of pure ideas. Beauty is therefore problematic in so far as the

aesthetic beauty of sensible appearance may arouse primitive appetites or feelings offering sensory pleasure which in turn give rise to confusion of the 'pleasant' with the 'beautiful'. However, bearing in mind that appearances *are* imitations of Ideas, beautiful appearances may also stimulate reason to look for the Ideas behind the appearances. And, of course, contemplation of Ideas is what Plato regards as real beauty (ibid, p.100). This reflects the workings of *eros*, which has a double function with respect to two different parts of the soul: firstly, it is able to receive the stimuli of the beautiful and good through irrationally inspired emotion and appetites; but, secondly, the same *eros* may inform reason indicating to the latter the presence a higher transcendent (spiritual) beauty (ibid with references to *Republic* 250e).

In earlier parts of this discussion, a certain rivalry between poetry and philosophy emerged. At this point, however, we may question whether such rivalry is apparent or real. If it is claimed that the artist does not create at all, but that he or she just copies mere appearances, then he or she cannot be a serious rival to the philosopher as artists have no real business with truth and knowledge (Annas, 1982, p.22 with reference to books 2, 3 and 10 of *Republic*). However, if a poet is inspired by irrational (even divine) forces and creative but deceitful forms of persuasion, then he or she may reinforce the irrational part of soul and woo it away from the Forms of Good and Truth (ibid).

If the poet is truly creative, then he is a rival. Plato is split between accepting the fact of the poet's creativity at all [...] so eliminating him as a rival, reducing him to the time waster who mirrors the world.

On this view, an artist is a rival to the control of the human soul, as he or she may be able to distract it from philosophical knowledge of the truth. However, it remains questionable whether the artist is a rival with regard to perception of truth which seems more the business of the philosopher. Still, while Plato's theory seems to be generally unsympathetic to this view, there are places where he seems to think otherwise.

On one hand, Plato seems to regard art as corrupt and unproductive of anything of value; on the other hand, it may be divine 'madness' or inspiration, that drives the

artist to recognition of a spiritually transcendent beauty (Phaedrus 245a2–b1; also in Cothey, 1990, p.36). The key question therefore is whether such inspiration could be regarded as a special kind of insight which, while not strictly truthful in itself – might nevertheless support more ‘philosophical’ truth (ibid, p.36); whether, in short (and a little paradoxically), artistic falsehoods could be ‘noble lies’. In this light, art may be ‘useful’, but its value does not come from within art itself, but from the wise employment of its products. Cothey (1990, p.30) states that ‘*Plato’s view is that art has a potential for good only as a useful lie*’. Hence, in *Phaedrus* (245) and *Ion* (533) Plato entertains the value of art, even though he undermines it in the *Republic*. On the former view, the arts may be the product of divine inspiration which is genuinely sensitive to and appreciative of real beauty. However, as Moravcsik (1982, p.36) states ‘*at this point we run up against one of the cornerstones of Plato’s epistemology and ethics, for there is no room in Plato’s scheme for sensitivities that are not based on understanding*’.

On the face of it, we may seem to have contradictory strands in Plato here. From another perspective, however, some of the contradictory points might also be reconciled. For example, Plato may regard art and aesthetic experience as far too trivial to contribute seriously to the flourishing life, though it does have some motivational value under the influence of reason. Even in his *Republic*, Plato does not banish it totally from his ideal state. Morally uplifting art – representing human beings in a good light – may have beneficial moral and educative effects on young minds, and later – when these young minds become mature wise citizens – they may come to reject the lies and myths of art and aesthetic experience, having appreciated the rational knowledge and truth that underlies them (Moravcsik, 1982, p.3; Collingwood, 1925, pp.154–172).

On this view, Plato would seem to recognise that arts have some value (see Frank in Lodge, 1947, pp.287–308) in the education system he recommends in his major dialogues: in fact, this seems to be recognised in the two major stages of education that he suggests: (i) a non-logical stage which concerns vocational training for all; and (ii) a logical/intellectual education for the political rulers. During the first stage of primary and secondary education, learners are involved in music and dance for

moral and religious purposes (e.g. for the cultivation of lively and not indolent spirit). Furthermore, bearing in mind that young souls are impressionable and can be shaped by such influences (Janaway, 2005, pp.3&4), Plato (*Rep.*401b–401d trans by Hamilton & Cairns, 1961, p.646) suggests that arts and crafts managed in an educational way may aim at:

...following the trail of true beauty and grace, that our young men, dwelling as it were in a salubrious region, may receive benefit from all things about them, whence the influence that emanates from works of beauty may waft itself to eye or ear like a breeze that brings from wholesome places health, and so from earliest childhood insensibly guide them to likeness, to friendship, to harmony with beautiful reason.

In this respect, arts even with all their flaws may assist true education, though there is no doubt that a mature or wise life should not over-emphasise – or, worse still, be devoted to them (Annas, 1982, p.22). Nowadays, a common question that children are asked is what they would like to do ‘when they grow up’. Clearly, if children of the Platonic Ideal State were asked what they would like to do when they grow older, the answer ‘artist’ would not be welcome. The perfect solution for Plato would involve total exclusion of the arts from an ideal community; but Plato also recognises that such exclusion would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, and contrary to human nature. The difficulty is that art appears to be a vital part of any recognisable human culture and is deeply implicated in the formation of sensibilities, motives and attitudes that are importantly constitutive of human soul (*Rep.* 601b1–4, 605a2–6. 605c10–d5).

2.3 Summary and conclusion

Plato is arguably the first major philosopher who attributes the very special role to education of reconstructing society for the better (Stevenson, 1974, p.29). Such education involves several stages with regard to which Plato mainly distinguishes two phases: non-intellectual and intellectual. The first of these includes the arts; but it is the second one, for the intellectual elite, that puts particular emphasis on philosophy and mathematics, because through these the mind can be led to real knowledge and truth of intrinsic value. One should not ask here what the further

value of this value is, because this would be like asking what the extrinsic value of happiness is (Bloom, 1987, p.41). However, Plato supports his theory of education through a ‘dialectical’ analysis of the structure of the human soul and argues that only lives ruled by the rational part of the soul are conducive to true human fulfilment and freedom (Nehamas, 1982, pp.73–74). Such fulfilment and responsible freedom is also not merely an individual matter, but has significant implications for the flourishing of the rest of the society and good citizenship (*Laws* 644).

At all events, such an education is not one that satisfies individual personal appetites and passions, but one which reinforces ‘the reasonable self-control and discipline of the moral virtues in the light of some principled conception of how it is right and proper for an individual to live or of what lies in his true interests’ (Carr, 1991, p.31) Such education should not therefore be aimed at satisfaction of lower parts of soul, but at cultivation of rational enquiry for the pursuit of real knowledge (ibid). In fact, for Plato, the difference between reason and passion sometimes seems to be equivalent to the difference between virtue and vice (ibid). Reason and passion are opposed to each other in so far as (Carr, 1991, pp.31–32):

reason’ comprehends what modern psychologists call the ‘cognitive’ side of human mental life– understanding, rational thought, deliberation, calculation, reflection, judgement and so forth; ‘passion, on the other hand, covers the ‘affective’ or feeling aspects of human experience –passions, emotions, moods, inclinations, instincts, appetites, and so on ... [which] are regarded mainly as a source of temptation to wickedness and error and the principal function of human reason appears to be to help us avoid the various states of moral defect into which the passions would otherwise lead us.

But here, some qualification may be necessary. Even though reason encompasses what modern psychologists call cognition, for Plato (as later for Aristotle), there is not necessarily any sharp distinction between reason and affect, since he does seem to think that (at least some) passions and appetites may be cognitive. Although he does not regard passions as naturally rational/reasonable, there may be for him a cognitive dimension to their nature that renders them potentially educable. Thus, the passions and emotions of spirit may be considered cognitive in so far as they imply some measure of judgement and are not blindly affective (Carr, 2010b).

However, given the artist's main focus on affect and emotion, Plato could not really regard an artist as a teacher of virtue, in so far as his or her only aim is to provide pleasure by 'flattering' the irrational parts of the soul. For Plato, the artist employs deceitful tricks, focusing on sensible rather than intellectual reality, and producing artefacts that i) are far from real knowledge (Lodge, 1953, p.37), and ii) mislead the mind progressively further and further away from truth and knowledge (as argued before).

In the *Republic* (411e–412a; 591d1), Plato uses a term from the sphere of the arts to define the ideal citizen: it is the adjective *mousikotatos* (most musical); that is to say, one who lives a harmonious life with the help of his/her harmonious soul. This harmonious soul uses reason in order to control the spirit and the passions-appetites. However, what is 'musical' in this as well as in other contexts is not the artist who produces music, but the 'noble man' who patronizes artists and knows what to take from them (Nehamas, 1982, p.60).

Chapter 3

3. Aristotle's defence of the arts

Although much influenced by his mentor Plato, Aristotle followed his own philosophical path. Plato was more negative towards the arts, but his contribution was very important in pointing to the possible negative moral effects of the arts. Aristotle agrees that the arts have moral significance and he argues that their significance may also be educationally positive. For him, the arts may precisely contribute to the moral development and education of citizens. The ultimate goal for the latter should be virtue; virtue as good character. In Aristotle's view, emotions, passions and appetites are not inimical to moral development, but potential sources of knowledge. These parts of the soul may enter into positive co-operation with reason and moral principles. But moral principles and universal truths may well be discernible in the arts. Generally, however, arts may educate audiences through both the training of their emotions and the promotion of moral knowledge and insight.

3.1 The human soul: Virtue and Happiness

Aristotle's theory of the human soul and its flourishing differs from the Platonic rationalism and dualism described in the previous chapter. In the first place, mind-body dualism is not for Aristotle a helpful characterization of human nature. Aristotle's view of the relationship between mind and body is a functionalist one. For him, the human soul is to the body as sight is to the eye (*On the soul* 412b18–1; e.g. in Cottingham, 1996, p.134)². Body and soul do not belong to separate worlds where the first is the source of vice and irrational behaviour and the latter is the only vehicle of spiritual, mental or intellectual development (as Plato believed). Aristotle does not think that any natural human inclinations, tendencies, dispositions and powers are bad; it depends on how people express and exercise them. He argues that the body and sensory faculties of a human being are not obstacles either to knowledge or

² DA will be used in the rest of the chapter, instead of *On the Soul*. DA means De Anima (on the soul in Latin).

attainment of worthwhile human goals. Aristotle develops a naturalistic approach to the study of man in which observation and experience are important to moral learning in so far as they may provide useful knowledge of how things are that also enables human agents to conceive of things as how they should be (see Carr, 1991, p.46).

Virtues feature prominently in the Aristotelian account of human soul (*Ethics; De anima*; Carr, 1991, pp.42–60). He conceives of both intellectual and moral virtues. Intellectual virtues such as wisdom, judgement, knowledge and intuition are necessary for the discovery of various truths through scientific and other theoretical enquiry. Intellectual virtues are important for their own sake, but their exercise is also important for the development of moral virtues. Moral virtues such as courage, self-control and tolerance aim at the cultivation of natural human feelings, passions and instincts according to the principle of the mean. Such moral virtues involve a disposition, a motive or desire to act in accordance with the practical wisdom that Aristotle calls '*phronesis*' (ibid, p.57). However, a life of virtue should not only be understood as a life in conformity to reason and rational principles defined as separate from feelings, passions, instincts and appetites. Such sensory and affective qualities are natural and more or less morally neutral. It is only when the human agent does not regulate or cultivate them in accordance with the good judgements of *phronesis*, that they may become misdirected or irrational; their cultivation in the light of practical wisdom may render them morally exemplary (ibid). Consequently, such qualities are conducive to virtuous training and education. Thus, virtue as opposed to vice is not a matter of acting contrary to feelings and inclinations. To be virtuous does not mean that one has to overcome all natural appetites, feelings and passions in the interests of pure reason. Thus, although to be courageous one must feel some fear, such fear is not bad in and of itself (*Ethics 1115a–b*; Carr, 1991, p.53). Even though feelings, passions and appetites may be bad, they are not intrinsically bad, but rather natural to the human condition. Moreover, neither are moral virtues unnatural and foreign to human nature, since as social animals, '*human beings are fitted by nature to receive them*' – although they are not exactly natural and innate, in so far as they require training and education (Ross, 1923, p.28; in Carr,

1991, p.50). In fact, as Aristotle argued in *Eudemian Ethics* ((1219b1220a; in Korbilas, 2006, p.155):

The reasoning faculty is a principle controlling not reasoning but appetite and passions; therefore he [a human being] must necessarily possess those parts. And just as a good constitution consists of the separate excellences of the parts of the body, so also the goodness of the spirit, as being an End, is composed of the separate virtues...whereas the moral virtues belong to the part that is irrational but by nature capable of following the rational.

And, as body and soul do not belong to separate worlds (Carr, 1991, p.48), the physical/corporal development contributes to moral education in this way as well (*Politics* 1334b; in Korbilas, 2006, p.52):

So the irrational part of the soul is prior to the rational. And this also is obvious, because passion and will, and also appetite, (subdivisions of desire) exist in children even as soon as they are born, but in the nature of reasoning and intelligence to arise in them as they grow older. Therefore in the first place it is necessary for the training of the body to precede that of the mind, and secondly for the training of the appetite to precede that of the intelligence; but the training of the appetite must be for the sake of the intellect, and that of the body for the sake of the soul.

In this respect, Aristotle's account is evolutionary (Carr, 1991, pp.46 & 49). The training and refinement of the soul is a large task for the human agent who needs to explore, evaluate and reflect on experience. Plato would agree that the acquisition of moral wisdom is a long process that takes many years. However, the Platonic way primarily involves intellectual or theoretical enquiry in pursuit of clear understanding and knowledge of good (ibid). Aristotle regards much theoretical and intellectual enquiry as important because it may reveal truth about life and the world, but he does not conceive the wisdom of *phronesis* as concerned primarily with discovery of truth, but rather as the means to achieve virtue understood as good character; the point of moral enquiry is to make people good (*Ethics*, 1106a; in Korbilas, 2006, p.67):

Excellence of virtue in a man will be the disposition which renders him a good man and also which will cause him to perform his function well.

Such moral enquiry demands reasoning, principled judgement and evaluation, but not in the natural scientific or theoretical sense of yielding abstract, eternal and

changeless principles. Moreover, such virtuous enquiry reflects a ‘threshold concept’ that implies an ongoing and never fully concluded project (Swanton, 2003, p.3).

Human nature is also caught in a two-way relationship between the individual and society (Carr, 1991, p.45). The individual develops moral knowledge by observing, evaluating and reflecting on how virtues operate in human relationships, and this process aims towards the achievement of harmonious social relations. Thus, moral reasoning involves reflections upon moral knowledge as expressed in the practical context of human relationships, and moral wisdom assists the choice of those paths in life that promise a successful individual and social life (ibid, pp.45–50). Moral development and knowledge therefore emerge from practical contexts and social life and benefit these situations in turn. Goodness, justice and other moral qualities are intrinsic to this interpersonal world, not as objects of a scientific or theoretical enquiry, but as part of the ‘rough and tumble’ of human practical reality. This makes moral life a matter of ongoing development (ibid).

The exercise of virtue in such a life journey should result in *eudemonia*, sometimes translated as ‘happiness’ (Aristotle, *Politics* 1323b). Happiness is that state of a good life in which a human being – on both the personal and social level – is well-endowed with virtues and good fortune (ibid, also *Ethics* i 1099a 32, x1179 a4ff). Thus, Aristotelian happiness is not an inner state of good mood and pleasant feelings, but a state of human well-being or flourishing. Moreover, the happiness of wellbeing cannot be entirely dependent on external goods, for this would be like assigning ‘*the cause of a brilliantly fine performance on the harp to the instrument rather than to the skill of the player*’ (*Politics* 1331b–1332b; in Korbilas, 2006, p.49). Hence, Aristotle’s concept of *eudemonia* as the ultimate good and the moral goal of society and its citizens reflects a teleological account of human affairs, in which the purpose of virtuous actions is directly related to certain beneficial outcomes (Carr, 1991, p.45). For Aristotle, all human endeavours aim at happiness, not only for practical reasons, such as successful social life and the virtuous society, but for its own sake. However, virtuous citizens promote harmonious and co-operative relations in a civil human community, because virtue is just good agency (ibid, p.48): ‘*but then the*

virtue of the state is of course caused by the citizens who share in its government being virtuous' (Politics 1331b–1332b; in Korbilas, 2006, p.48).

To summarise in Aristotle's words, briefly (*Magna Moralia* 1184 a–b; in Korbilas, 2006, pp.271–272):

If we attain Happiness, we are wholly content. Happiness, then, is that 'best of human goods' which is the object of our inquiry. It is a complete end; and the complete end is 'The Good', and the end or goal of all good things [...]Happiness and being happy consist therefore in living well; and living well in living accordance with the virtues. This then is 'the End', and Happiness, and 'the Best'.

And (*Politics* 1323 b; in Korbilas, 2006, p.41):

'To each man there falls just so large a measure of happiness as he achieves of virtue and wisdom and of virtuous and wise action.

3.2 Tragedy in Aristotle

3.2.1 Mimesis

For Aristotle, as for Plato, *mimesis* is also a fundamental feature of tragedy and/or arts, but in a somewhat different sense. Imitation is for Aristotle (*Poetics, chapters 1–4; in Ackrill, 1987, pp.540–556; also in Ackrill, 1997, pp.29–44; also Butcher, 1902*) the common principle of the arts: what differentiates arts are the media (singly or combined: rhythm, language, harmony), the objects (higher or lower types of human characters and actions) and the manner/mode of imitation (dramatic narrative, pure narrative, pure drama). Starting with the latter, drama has to do with the involvement of the artist who: i) either narrates or becomes someone else; ii) speaks in his/her own person without change; or iii) does things with others involved in the *mimesis* (ibid). Furthermore, the media and objects of imitation determine the distinctive nature and role of the arts by contrast with, for example natural sciences and history. The person who successfully uses artistic media will be an artist (*poiete: maker*) as opposed to the scientific writer (*physiologos: scientist of nature*) who interprets the natural world through only his reason. Moreover, an essential difference between these modes of thought has to do with the involvement of moral

judgement in poetry which influences the representation and appreciation of objects of imitation – these objects being human beings and their actions, qualities and virtues or vices (ibid). The degree of moral judgement involved in *mimesis* in connection with such objects depends on the varieties of virtue in the narrative. Different kinds of narrative are concerned with human action, but the key difference is that whereas history describes ‘particular’ and ‘contingent’ facts and events, poetry reveals the ‘probable and necessary’ consequences of this or that circumstance. The latter makes general statements which help the audience to understand general truths about their nature and the moral order (*Poetics* 1451b; in Ackrill, 1997, p.30; Pappas, 2001, p.20). This sort of imitation and its claim to truth and understanding brings the poet close to philosophy and offers a positive response to Plato’s more negative and contrary view. That is to say, Plato argued that the imitation with which the artist is concerned is an obstacle to the truth and he distinguished the artist from the philosopher who pursues real knowledge. Aristotle (*Metaphysics* 982b; in Korbilas, 2006, p.241), however, makes a connection between philosophy and the arts not only in his *Poetics*, but in *Metaphysics* as well where he claims that the person who enjoys wondering in myths/plots (where myths are composed of wonders) is a kind of philosopher, because (ibid):

It is through wonder that men now begin and originally began to philosophize; wondering in the first place at obvious perplexities, and then by gradual progression raising questions about the greater matters too.

3.2.2 Objects of *mimesis*: myth, character and intellect

Myth/plot (*μύθος*; plot or ordering of particular actions) is the most important of the three internal elements of tragedy (*Poetics*; Butcher, 1902). The other two internal ones are character (*ἦθος* or *ethos*) and intellect (*διάννοια*; thought). These refer to the *mimesis* of moral characters and action and the *mimesis* of their intellect (e.g. with maxims). Therefore the quality of the authors of action has moral and intellectual significance or value (ibid). Character and intellect are the cause of every action in tragedy, as they are of any action in life. There are also three external elements of the tragedy which are spectacular presentment (*ὄψις*), lyrical song (*μελοποιίαν*) and

diction (λέξις); but the main elements which contribute to the education of the audience are the internal ones (ibid).

Myth/plot, with its unity of organically connected momentous actions and its dramatic unity, reveals the universal truth which – while far from historical truth – is nevertheless an agent of moral truth (ibid with reference to Aristotle's *Poetics*; book 9). Such myth not only conveys knowledge, but also simplifies it for the audience. Even though the plot represents the general properties of things, however, the tragedy still imitates events rather than the passions of the characters: '*tragedy represents events and not passions, somewhat as painting is more a matter of line than of colour. Plot, not character, is the soul of tragedy*' (*Poetics 1450b2–3* in Pappas, 2001, p.20). This means that one event causes another, and – in accordance with general principles – a plot is created. This plot with explanations, character development and '*general empirically grounded statements of human behaviour*' is able to communicate knowledge (ibid, p.20). The characters themselves may represent the particular, rather than the universal. But even if characters are particular and not universal, they may still conform to general causal patterns and principles and reflect an order of action that yields general or 'universal' moral values and knowledge (ibid, p.22).

On this Aristotelian view, imitation is not a process of automatic mimicry as Plato argued, but a procedure of selectively represented action with teleological moral import (*Republic 596d* in Pappas, 2001, p.21). Aristotle conceives the role of a poet as not merely a verse maker or a deceiving imitator (or imitator of the imitation according to Plato), but as a reflective person who has to select significant and well-connected actions to communicate universal knowledge to the audience (ibid). Therefore, myth-making is an active process that requires the development of both artist and audience in intellectual and moral respects (ibid). The aesthetic value of the tragedy will be explored in more detail later, but it is worth mentioning that this active conception of myth may call into question the value of 'art for the sake of art'. Indeed, poets need to be careful, because although their role as reflective artists is more responsible than that of makers of verses or deceivers, their concern is still with the primary matter of tragedy and they are not entirely free to invent their own

themes (*Poetics* 1451b15 in Pappas, 2001, p.21). Their themes should originate from tradition and a common cultural store of significant stories. Moreover, in so far as over-ingenious plot-making may distance the plot from the truth, it may make it difficult for the audience to believe, therefore undermining the moral role of the themes (ibid).

To say that the primary ingredient of tragedy is momentous tragic action, does not mean that characters are of no interest. The characters should be noble people whose dignity and moral status enhance the importance of their actions and their misfortunes (*Poetics* 1448a2, 1454a17; in Pappas, 2001, pp.22–23). Their misfortunes are not meaningless and just a matter of bad luck, but the proper consequence and meaningful punishment of their faults in life (ibid). It is not entirely clear that the Greeks always thought tragic misfortune ‘deserved’ as in the case of *Oedipus*. Mostly, however, the empathy generated in the soul of the spectator makes him or her realise that the tragic character’s mistakes and their consequences are something that could realistically happen to anyone if they do not strive to be morally virtuous (ibid). Thus, while in real life people do not always face the consequences of their actions, in tragedy they invariably do. But the moral significance here concerns not only the communication of moral knowledge; moral significance is also about moral emotions. In particular, since noble characters get punished for their immoral misdeeds, the audience feels: i) pity for the unfortunate fate of the ‘noble’ characters; ii) fear of receiving the same punishment if they themselves misbehave; and iii) the pleasure of *catharsis*/expurgation (*Poetics* 1449b; in Pappas, 2001, p.16).

3.2.3 *Catharsis* and other pleasures

Catharsis is an essential element of tragedy (*Poetics* 1449b24–28; in Pappas, 2001, p.16):

Tragedy is the mimesis of a serious and complete action of some magnitude; in language embellished in various ways in its different parts; in dramatic, not narrative form; achieving, through pity and fear, the catharsis of such passions.

Some (e.g. Else, 1957; Nehamas, 1992) believe that Aristotelian *catharsis* is mainly a narrative process; perhaps something like the logical outcome of well-linked incidents which aim at a significant plot structure (Pappas, 2001, p.19). However, it is widely argued that Aristotle's *catharsis* is not only a 'purging' of the misfortunes and incidents of the plot, but a psychological process with moral potential. It refers to the expurgation of those emotions which are aroused by the tragedy. In fact, it is clear from Aristotle's *Politics* that *catharsis* in the human soul is '*a relief, something that makes the soul settle down*' (*Politics* 1342a7–15; in Pappas, 2001, p.18). In his *Rhetoric*, Aristotle enhances this view, regarding the settling down of the soul as the pleasant return to the 'normal' state of the intellect in the light of true intellectual and moral knowledge as the result of learning (1370a; in Korbilas, 2006, p.286).

Thus, *catharsis* may be an effective psychotherapeutic means of '*providing homeopathic doses of feelings we want to get rid of*' (Cooper, 1997, p.30). Nevertheless, this process should result not only in a good mood, but also in moral effects. Art is about learning and knowledge. Pity and fear are the emotions which seem to be most educable and are those which arouse the relief of *catharsis* and moral awareness (ibid). Pity refers to what the audience may feel for characters whose lives are devastated by misfortunes. On the one hand, characters evoke pity because they are good people: on the other hand, they are as human as the audience. But such pity does not prevent the audience from feeling fear. The characters' misfortunes are not undeserved; they are often the punishment for voluntary misdeeds. Since such punishment is not undeserved, it means that the immoral actions even of good people may issue in punitive consequences. Hence the audience may fear that something similar will happen to them under similar circumstances (*Poetics* 1449b; in Pappas, 2001, p.16). This fear helps the audience to see how moral principles work. Therefore, the experience of character, virtue and vice in the arts educates an audience. Emotions are not invariably bad and their expurgation does not mean that they should cease to exist; it is just that their moral character or status needs to be clarified. But such clarification of emotions in the arts equips the audience with moral wisdom for the real world. In this respect, emotional

development contributes to moral enlightenment (Pappas, 2001, p.18; also relevant Golden 1976; Nussbaum 1986).

Another aspect of *catharsis* and of the training of the emotions through tragedy is that it refines and cultivates the perceptions of the audience, enabling them to understand the quality of their emotions and the quality of the tragedy itself. This is a kind of pleasure that has to do with the cognitive shaping of experienced feeling (Carr and Davis, 2007).

In addition to references to tragedy, Aristotle argues that music may help to educate human emotions, because it can potentially enhance character in people. It is not only beneficial to contemplate noble characters and virtuous actions as in tragedy, but also to be moved by music that expresses such qualities of character as courage and temperance. Aristotle argues (*Politics 1340a*; in Korbilas, 2006, p.55):

...(and this is clear from the facts of what occurs—when we listen to such representations we change in our soul);...and it is the case that whereas the other objects of sensation contain no representation of character.....pieces of music on the contrary do actually contain in themselves imitations of character.

It is clear that for Aristotle (as for Plato) different musical modes or rhythms could have different emotional and hence different moral characters (though these two great Greek philosophers did disagree about the moral character of the different modes and rhythms). Thus, regular or stable rhythms might express temperance and martial rhythms express courage. In this regard, rhythm could be regarded as having a similar educative role to a human action when represented in tragedy (ibid).

Music is also an art that is appealing as well as of educational value to young people. Even though moral development should be the main aim and benefit of the arts, music is also a potential source of other kinds of pleasure with regard to its means as well as its ends. Music is attractive to young people who are inclined towards pleasurable sensory experiences, but lack patience for anything not pleasant. Music offers the natural pleasant delights of melody and rhythm. Such attraction to music may reflect the harmony that the soul naturally craves. In this way, art may promote knowledge in so far as it provides pleasure through our natural instinct for harmony

and rhythm. Music and tragedy, therefore, have not only an instrumental function as means to moral character, but also a role in promoting the sensational pleasure of the audience. This shows their great potential for moral education: ‘*And we seem to have a certain affinity with tunes and rhythms; owing to which many wise men³ say either that the soul is a harmony or that it has harmony*’ (Aristotle, *Politics*, 1340b; in Korbilas, 2006, p.52).

Harmony and rhythm are two psychological sources of attraction to poetry. Another is the instinct for imitation. *Mimesis* is natural and pleasant to all people from a very young age, because imitation is a source of knowledge. Imitation is a way of learning and it is in human nature to love learning and to try to develop cognitively (*Poetics* 1448b; Butcher, 1902, p.15). Of course only the well-imitated is pleasant and of educational value; hence not all artistic creations do convey moral knowledge of educational value (*Rhetoric* 1371b; Korbilas, 2006, p.286). Here, good and bad imitation may be grounds for a distinction between bad and good art or between art and non-art. But, insofar as art i) represents moral knowledge and ii) is artistically good, it should be pleasant to the audience. In this regard, Aristotle (*Rhetoric* 1371b; Korbilas, 2006, p.286; for such a distinction see also Best, 1985 & McFee, 2005) reinforces the educational case for music and tragedy to other arts with a distinction between aesthetic and artistic value that supports the view that artworks with unattractive objects/content may nevertheless be artistically ‘pleasant’ and valuable:

And since learning and admiring are pleasant, all things connected with them must also be pleasant; for instance, a work of imitation, such as painting, sculpture, poetry and all that is well imitated, even if the object of imitation is not pleasant; for it is not this that causes pleasure or the reverse, but the inference that the imitation and the object are identical, so that the result is that we learn something.

In general, there are several pleasures in the arts, such as the delight of emotional excitement or the sense of harmony; but for Aristotle all the educational value of the arts resides in the knowledge it provides. Thus although Aristotle recognises that arts provide diverse pleasures, such as sensory pleasure and entertainment, the pleasure of educating the character and *catharsis*, is the chief end of contemplation of the arts.

³ Aristotle refers to Pythagoras and Plato accordingly. The source of Aristotle’s reference to Plato can be found in Plato’s dialogue *Phaedo* 93 (Korbilas, 2006, p.52).

That is why he suggests that the virtuous agent should not be looking for any kind of pleasure the arts can offer, but for that of educational value, which is derived from *catharsis* through pity and fear (*Poetics* 1453b).

3.3 The aesthetic value of the arts

However, the fact that Aristotle emphasises the value of cognitive and moral development through the knowledge that art may communicate, may give the impression that art's aesthetic properties are of little or no value. The artistic value of an artwork may seem for him not to be related to its aesthetic properties (Pappas, 2001, p.23). Nevertheless, a weaker position might attribute some aesthetic value, in so far as: i) the importance of the way that imitation (the basic element of art) is presented and developed does seem to matter; and ii) the way in which a piece of work shapes the quality of the experienced feeling may have moral significance (ibid). That is to say that the artistic effects contribute to the ethical effects. However, Aristotle stresses that such a contribution is subordinate, because it is the plot/myth and the internal structure of the piece that should produce the tragic emotions of pity and fear (*Poetics* 1449b; Butcher, 1902, chapter 14). The external artistic aids such as scenery and spectacle should not in themselves be intended as the artistic point by affording mere sensory pleasure (ibid). Furthermore, the mimetic skill of the artist is not enough to represent universal knowledge (*Poetics* 1451b15). Thus, the artist's activity is not reduced to automatic mimicry (*Poetics* 1451b27–29; in Pappas, 2001, p.21). True artistic activity should aim for an aesthetically harmonious sequence of actions; but since i) the artist's sources are traditional stories; and ii) he or she should not change much of their details, any valuable aesthetic effects that lie in his or her artwork are not the sole responsibility of the successful artist (ibid, p.24).

Beauty is a problematic term in aesthetics. Even though Aristotle does not much refer to the word 'beauty', he thinks of it (*Poetics* 1451b27–29; *Metaphysics* 1078a31–b5; *Politics* 1284b8–10) in terms of right size and proportion – so that, for example, tragedies should be neither too long for the memory, nor too short for the sake of seriousness. This definition seems far from Plato's account of beauty as an intelligible idea or ideal. The Aristotelian view is more naturalistic, since magnitude,

size and proportion are real/natural qualities of things and he takes beauty to be a feature of the natural world (*Categories* 5b15–29; *Parts of Animals* 645a23–25; in Pappas, 2001, p.25). But this does not really support a case for aesthetic beauty having a distinctive role in arts – bearing in mind that he recognises beauty beyond the arena of arts. In particular, he states (*Metaphysics* 1078b, in Korbilas, 2006, p.268) that:

The main species of beauty are orderly arrangement, proportion and definiteness; and these are especially manifested by the mathematical sciences.

Beauty as an aesthetic quality may not be a crucial concept in the Aristotelian theory of art as the aesthetic is not prominent in his account of art. Nevertheless, aesthetic value in arts is not excluded entirely. It could be said that to an extent aesthetics may be reconciled with Aristotelian *Ethics* in so far as successful artistic representation of moral knowledge and insight does play a role (albeit minor) in moral development and education in the course of training of the human emotions and the soul.

3.4 Concluding remarks on character and (arts) education

According to Aristotle, mind-body dualism (of the kind defended by Plato) fails to provide an adequate account of human nature. For example, the physical and sensory faculties of a human being are not obstacles either to knowledge or the attainment of right and proper human goals. Aristotle develops a naturalistic approach according to which observation and experience are important to learning – especially to the development of virtue and virtuous character (Carr, 1991, p.46). A substantial part of the Aristotelian theory is concerned with intellectual and moral ‘virtues’ as traits of the human soul. Intellectual virtues are important for their own sake, but the exercise of intellectual virtues – particularly of *phronesis* or moral wisdom – is also important for the development of moral virtues. Human agents have a natural aptitude for moral virtue, but such virtue requires lifelong training. The complete acquisition and employment of virtue is a life journey that should result in happiness for both citizen(s) and the society. Arts can significantly contribute to moral education by training the emotions and communicating moral knowledge. As seen, through the

active process of representation, art may arouse pity and fear which then results in *catharsis*, understood as a kind of emotional release and moral reconciliation. This relief contributes to knowledge in general and moral education in particular. In this light, art for its own sake would not seem to have any value for Aristotle. Still, pity and fear are not the only emotions that art engenders or excites, and to this extent some aesthetic value may be had from the arts. However, Aristotle seems to regard moral education as an important outcome of the arts. The human soul needs education, and arts may have an important contribution to make; but it would be wrong to have education in the arts without character. As Mahatma Ghandi stated (1925), one of the seven sins of life is: *Education without character* (the other six are: Politics without principle; commerce without morality; wealth without work; science without humanity; pleasure without conscience; worship without sacrifice).

Chapter 4

4. Objectivity as a precondition of knowledge

*Better than any explanation is the experience of feelings
that poetry can reveal to a nature open enough to understand it*

Neruda (Radford, 1994)

If the arts are to count as knowledge, they must surely be the possibility of: i) objective aesthetic judgement of the arts; and ii) the possibility of truth in the arts. But artistic and aesthetic value judgements have often been said (from Hume onwards) to be subjective or personal. The distinction between judging something good (which requires reasons) and liking something (which does not) is crucial here (the following discussion of 4.1 and 4.1.1 will be based on general understanding of Ward (in Cooper, 2005, pp.243–249), Whewell (in Cooper, 2005, pp.250–154) and Crawford (in Gaut & Lopes, 2001, pp.51–64) – unless referenced otherwise. David Best's (1980) work is also relevant here and will be explored later. This chapter is about objectivity in the arts as a precondition of knowledge.

4.1 Aesthetic judgements; objectivism, subjectivism and relativism

Aesthetic judgements have traditionally been held to concern appreciation of beauty or the beautiful – or qualities of natural or man-made objects (such as their satisfying form, elegance, loveliness, grace, delightful ornament and so on) in terms of which such objects may be pronounced beautiful. Judgements that a certain dance or painting is beautiful (graceful or elegant) are commonly held to be a kind of aesthetic judgements: the painting or dance is beautiful by virtue of qualities it shares with those natural objects (such as landscapes) we also find beautiful.

The main issue about aesthetic or artistic judgement is whether the properties by which we consider a landscape or painting to be beautiful are *objective* (that is, in some sense, independent of human perception or experience) properties of these

things, or just aspects of the way we perceive them or of 'affective' responses to them. In short, is beauty (or artistic significance) an actual inhering quality in or of the things perceived or merely of the experiences or perceptions of those who perceive them? To adapt a common phrase: is beauty (merely) in the eye of the beholder?

The suspicion that beauty may only be in the mind of beholders is reinforced by the general idea that aesthetic and artistic judgements are – unlike the empirical judgements of scientific enquiry, but like (in some views) moral judgements – a species of value judgement. On this view, to judge that the Venus Di Milo is beautiful (or of some artistic merit) is perhaps to say no more than that the sculpture pleases me or that 'I like this piece of sculpture'. Another way of raising this issue is to ask whether – and/or by virtue of what – aesthetic judgements or the value of artworks is of general (universal), local or (merely) personal satisfaction or interest. From this viewpoint (as in the case of moral judgements), there seem three broad possibilities (Ward, 2005, pp.243–245):

(i) Aesthetic judgements may be subjective: they are functions of largely personal affective (rather than cognitive) responses to (what are experienced as attractive) features of natural or man-made environment,

(ii) Aesthetic judgements may be relative: while aesthetic or artistic judgements may be based on human feeling or 'pro-attitude', such judgements are also often the 'educational' product of local social or cultural conditioning. On this view, a Shakespeare play may well be found aesthetically and artistically or pleasing because people have been taught in a particular context to perceive it that way.

(iii) Aesthetic or artistic judgements may be of general or universal human significance: on this view, even if they have an affective dimension or component, such judgements may also be true or false in virtue of objective features of objects or of circumstances which such judgements are 'about'. Thus, the truth of 'Macbeth is a masterly treatment of the destructive effects of ambition' would be supported by considerations about the work itself rather than in agent's subjective (emotional or other) responses to this work.

It is not clear whether these accounts of aesthetic or artistic response are mutually exclusive. The third position might not necessarily exclude the possibility of regarding expressions of personal preference or local perspective as (albeit limited) aesthetic or artistic judgements. On another hand, thorough endorsement of the first position – that aesthetic judgements are (only) expressions of subjective (affective) taste or preference – would seem exclusive of the other positions. It is also important here to see that subjectivism and relativism – though often popularly confused – are not identical positions. For example, whereas a relativist might ground his aesthetic preferences in local socially agreed rules or standards or of ‘good taste’, a subjectivist could offer nothing in way of inter-subjective rules, standards or reasons. In short, whereas objectivists need not (and usually do not) deny a role for personal or subjective affect or preference in aesthetic or artistic value and judgement, the subjectivist usually does deny that such judgement can ever rest on (objective) reason.

But the question of the objectivity or otherwise of aesthetic judgement and/or artworks is of enormous educational significance (Carr, 1999, pp.240–256). The key issue is that of whether aesthetic experiences or artworks can have any value beyond personal satisfaction or pleasure: whether, for example, aesthetic or artistic experiences can be sources of knowledge or education about the world, rather than just opportunities for private pleasure or entertainment (ibid). From this perspective, if aesthetic or artistic subjectivism is to be believed – if, that is, it is true that aesthetic judgements are no more than expressions of affectively grounded liking or preference – then it is difficult or impossible to see how there might be anything resembling real education or teaching in the arts. If what I like aesthetically or artistically is simply justified on the grounds that I like it and can give nothing in the way of objectively valid reasons for liking this or that, then no-one is in any position to try to educate someone else to their own (by definition, subjective) point of view. On this view, there can be no more to aesthetic or artistic appreciation than liking what I like, because there cannot be any such thing as knowing whether what I like is actually artistically valuable or worthwhile (ibid).

The objectivist view is arguably the ‘default’ position: on face of it, it seems plausible to suppose that a painting or the landscape is beautiful – and to be regarded so – by virtue of properties or qualities that the painting or landscape really possesses and that therefore exists as substantially independent of any perceiving mind that beholds such properties. It seems plausible to hold, for example, that natural and ‘unspoiled’ wilderness is more beautiful than a wasted stretch of scarred and polluted urban or industrial desolation. The very words we use to describe these different scenes – ‘natural’, ‘unspoiled’, ‘scarred’, ‘waste’, ‘desolate’, ‘polluted’ – would seem to indicate grounds for such objective appraisal. On this view, the job of aesthetic and arts educators would seem to be a straightforward matter of assisting pupils to recognise and appreciate artistic properties and qualities that assist judgements of beauty or ugliness (ibid).

This being said, human imagination has often clearly shaped aesthetic and artistic sensibility and perception. Artists of past and present have been able to create aesthetic and artistic pleasure from combinations of sound, and from themes and images that would previously have been thought ugly, discordant or tasteless. For one thing, although actual subjects of painting might well have unattractive qualities – a wizened old woman or man who would not normally be described as beautiful – artists may well succeed, through sympathetic depiction of the character of age, in making beautiful portraits of such subjects. But, more generally, without reference to the excesses of contemporary art, one only thinks of the violent reactions in their own time to impressionist paintings or to Stravinsky’s ‘Rite of Spring’ to see how public taste in art can change overnight from strong hostility to warm acceptance and enthusiasm. All this reinforces the idea – not usually disagreed with by either objectivists or subjectivists – that beauty is in some sense ‘in eye of the beholder’: that, in short, aesthetic and artistic responses are importantly tied to, or dependent on, personal or (in some sense) ‘subjective’ human perception, taste or experience (Ward, 2005).

Indeed, this idea is even further reinforced by observation that human aesthetic and/or artistic judgements may show extraordinary diversity and divergence between different individuals and cultures: that the landscapes, music and paintings that I like

or regard as beautiful (or are approved of in a particular context) may be regarded by you or others (or in different context) as really tasteless or ugly. Moreover, a further step that is often taken along this line of reasoning is that such wide divergence and diversity is inherently resistant to rational solution precisely because aesthetic and artistic judgements are expressions of value rather than fact. Roughly, the idea is that disagreements of aesthetic (and also, on a subjectivist view, moral) judgement cannot be resolved, because – unlike empirical scientific statements – they are not open to empirical confirmation or disconfirmation/disapproval. Thus, since there is no rational decision procedure in terms of which one aesthetic or artistic claim might be judged true and another one false, such judgments cannot properly be considered to involve reason or rationality at all (ibid).

From this inherently subjectivist perspective, aesthetic or artistic divergence or diversity serves to show beyond doubt that aesthetic and artistic taste or judgment is not so much, if at all, a matter of reason but of non-cognitive affect or feeling. On perhaps the best-known, most powerful and influential modern statement of this view – defended by the eighteenth century Scottish empiricist philosopher David Hume (1757; Shelley, 2001, pp.43–47; Smithurst, 2005, pp.197–199) and endorsed by his logical positivist heirs of the early twentieth century – any value claim that ‘x is good’ (beautiful, commendable, exemplary) can mean no more than that ‘x is personally pleasant, satisfying or agreeable’ to the person who makes that claim: in short, to say ‘x is good’ is to say no more than that ‘I like x’. For Hume (ibid), value claims could not be a matter of reason or argument at all, agents were entitled feel favourably or unfavourably disposed towards objects of their approval and disapproval as they pleased and there could be no rational grounds (apart from, in case of moral judgements, social convenience) for trying to convince someone of a view different from their own view around to one’s own view.

However, though it would be hard to deny the place of either feeling in aesthetic and artistic judgement – part of the importance of human aesthetic experience and artworks is that we are *moved* by them (as we are not necessarily moved by empirical facts) – and it is also true that artworks we find moving and valuable may not have same effect on others – the idea that all there is to aesthetic and artistic judgments is

a feeling of approval would seem unsatisfactory and extreme (Ward, 2001; Carr, 1999). One general objection to ideas that a value judgement is only a matter of liking something or finding it pleasurable is that we can sensibly claim to like something but simultaneously not value it or find it good; or vice versa find something valuable or good without liking it. Thus, one might say that one thinks going to dentist is good, although one doesn't like it, or that one likes smoking, although one considers it to be damaging (Carr, 1991, p.34). Moreover, the main difference here is that although one does not have to give reasons for feelings of liking (strawberries or peppermint toothpaste), one might well be expected to provide reasons for one's aesthetic (moral or other) values or artistic preferences (ibid). Thus even where we disagree, we seem to engage in endless 'rational' discussion and debate about aesthetic and/or artistic value of Picasso's painting or Schoenberg's music. On the face of it, although humans do feel differently about aesthetic experiences and artworks, such difference is not just a matter of unreasoned like or dislike, approval or disapproval; but is often enough supported by reasons of a kind.

4.1.1 Kant and Sibley; 'reconciling' different directions

One cannot doubt that aesthetic and artistic subjectivism of the kind defended by Hume (and other British 'sentimentalists') has been influential, not only on mainstream aesthetics and art theory, but also (as noted elsewhere in this thesis) on art education (Korsmeyer, 2001, pp.193–202). Undoubtedly, many modern and contemporary attempts to conceive education in the arts as a matter of the 'creative' expression of feelings and emotions owe much to the modern value subjectivism that Hume and his followers did so much to promote. All the same, much post-Humean aesthetics has focused upon the question of how to base aesthetic and artistic reasons and justifications in a more objective view of the human aesthetic and artistic value (ibid). Thus Kant (1987), reacting to the radical value subjectivism of Hume, is notable for a heroic attempt in his *Critique of Judgement* and elsewhere, to show that while judgements of aesthetic and artistic value have subjective (affective) component, they are far from reducible to that component (Crawford, 2001, pp.51–64).

Since Kant's views are complex and have generated enormous exegetic literature, their only barest outline can be considered here. Briefly, Kant (Ward, 2001; Whewell, 2005; Crawford, 2001) takes aesthetic judgements to have two main dimensions of subjectivity and universality. However, the subjective aspect of aesthetic judgement is not just simple matter of liking or agreeableness. On the contrary, for Kant, a subjective dimension of aesthetic experience is primarily characterised in terms of a certain attitude of 'disinterest' from which any simple desire for personal pleasure is absent. Thus, to take aesthetic attitude to an artwork is to value it and any properties in terms of which it may be considered valuable, entirely for *their own sake*, regardless of any feelings of pleasure or satisfaction that it might happen to arouse in one (or, more generally, for any personal or practical purpose one might find it useful for). But Kant also held that for any judgement to be genuinely aesthetic, it should be one that was also significantly *universal*: that is to say that a genuine aesthetic judgement should be one that is valid not only for the person who makes it, but for all who are perceiving the object of judgement in correct or appropriate way (ibid).

However, Kant took such judgements to be based on a kind of non-conceptual perception rather than in anything that might make up or amount to the judgement of rational knowledge (Whewell, 2005, p.253):

A pure judgement of taste is, then, one which expresses a disinterested and universally communicable pleasure in the perceptual form of an object, considered apart from any concept. The subjective principle which determines what it is about the perceptual form which pleases or displeases by feeling alone, Kant calls the 'Form of Finality'. Since the form of finality can only be felt and not known, there is very little that can be said about it apart from its effect on the subject, which is to induce an harmonious interaction between the faculties of imagination and understanding.

Kant seems to have thought that taste judgements are fundamentally resistant to conceptual expression in the manner of the rational judgements of (say) science, since there are no general rules that would insure direct inference from description or observation of the natural properties of objects to the conclusion they are beautiful (elegant, graceful etc) (ibid). The properties (spatial arrangements, organisation of sounds etc) that make one artwork beautiful may not necessarily make another so,

and it is still possible for agents to agree on natural properties of an artwork, but disagree in their aesthetic judgements. Thus, universality of aesthetic judgements is closer to the prescriptive universality of Kant's moral judgements (categorical imperatives): full subscription to an aesthetic viewpoint commits any agent to an object's universal value, but – as in case of moral judgements – such prescription does not count as knowledge in same sense as an evidence-based scientific claim (ibid).

A more recent influential attempt to defend the objectivity of aesthetic judgements that seems to reach similar epistemic conclusions to Kant's is that of Frank Sibley (Lyas, 2001) in an important series of papers on aesthetic concepts of the 1950s and sixties. Sibley is concerned with showing that basic concepts of familiar aesthetic discourse may be sensibly used only by those who have mastered the 'language game' of such discourse. He does recognise a serious problem for any such aesthetic perspective in that there is no clear logical relationship between the non-aesthetic properties of aesthetic objects and artworks and the aesthetic properties that 'supervene' on them (ibid). As noted above, it is not clear either that the same non-aesthetic properties or arrangements in different artworks would necessitate same judgements as to their aesthetic quality. Aesthetic disagreements also do not ultimately seem satisfactorily resolved by appeal to non-aesthetic evidence. This, if so, would clearly have difficult implications for aesthetic and arts education, for while Sibley – like Kant – clearly believes that there is objectivity in aesthetic and artistic judgement, it is less clear how this might be taught (like other judgement) as a form of knowledge or instruction (ibid).

Still, though Kant and Sibley seem sceptical about the possibility of genuine aesthetic or artistic knowledge, their work on objectivity of aesthetic judgement seems to have important educational implications – not least as such objectivity would seem necessary to questions of the educational status and justification of art and aesthetic experience in any school curriculum. Their work at least supports the view that aesthetic judgement and arts are of objective human importance and that there can be better or worse judgement about these important human questions of aesthetics and arts – which gives place to education in the cultivation of such

judgement. Thus, observing the distinction between value judgements (a distinction that Hume does not make) – between liking and finding good or valuable – the accounts of both Kant and Sibley give importance to reason and argument in moral matters – even if such argument cannot ultimately rest on empirical evidence. Thus, it would be possible for someone to say that while they did not personally like or derive pleasure from the music of Wagner, they could see (for this, that or the other reason) why it was great art; or that although they liked the music of Michael Jackson, they could also see (for this, that or the other reason) why it was not great art.

Moreover, while the issue of whether arts can be genuine sources of knowledge will be considered in the next chapter, it is presently worth observing that for the most part Kant and Sibley focus mainly on aesthetic concepts and neither is concerned with making much of a distinction between the aesthetic and artistic – a distinction considered vital in other parts of this thesis. Indeed, it is probably true to say that Kant – while recognising that artworks are one (lesser) species of aesthetic objects – is inclined to reduce the artistic to aesthetic (Carr, 2010a). Thus, while Kant(1956) did give an important artistic role to the expression of ‘aesthetic ideas’ – including the empirically unprovable ‘ideas of reason’ (freedom, God, immortality) in his *Critique of Practical Reason* – there is strong tendency in his philosophy to a fairly ‘formalist’ account of art as mainly concerned with the expression of aesthetic properties. However, stronger appreciation of distinction between the aesthetic and artistic might leave more room for the idea that though artworks are certainly aesthetic objects – and there cannot therefore strictly be any aesthetic ‘knowledge’ – many (though perhaps not all) artworks might still be vehicles of a distinctive kind of *artistic* knowledge (Carr, 2010a).

Further to this, it may also be said that Kant’s epistemology – unlike some ancient (e.g. Aristotelian, in for instance Carr, 1999) and more recent (e.g. Wittgensteinian for instance in Ward, 2005) theory of knowledge – carries too much unhelpful empiricist baggage for purposes of aesthetic and art theory. Although Kant (1961) tried to move beyond both rationalism and empiricism, his epistemology of *Critique of Pure Reason* is still deeply based in an empiricist theory of knowledge observing

strict distinctions between fact and value, description and prescription and evidence-based and non-evidence based enquiry widely questioned in latter day philosophy (Crawford, 2001). Indeed, it is a major aim of the present thesis to show that one unfortunate legacy of early modern and so-called ‘enlightenment’ philosophy and epistemology has been an assumption that only evidence-based claims of natural and social science can be regarded as genuine sources of knowledge: that, precisely – contrary to experience of readers of great fiction or spectators of great art – artistic insights cannot be regarded as giving genuine knowledge of the world or human condition (Carr, 2010a). A broader epistemic view of the kind taken by philosophers both before and after Kant may help to redress this defect and reclaim artistic insight as a genuine source of knowledge – and this possibility is pursued elsewhere in this thesis. For now, however, a specific defence of the idea that arts are sources of objective values and insights of major educational significance next follows.

4.2 Subjectivism, scientism and other misconceptions

‘Always you the coin and I the worship that gives it value’

(Elytis, 1998, p.23)

Both subjectivity and objectivity are slippery terms when applied to aesthetics and there have been many modern attempts to distinguish between different meanings of these expressions. However, one account of the objectivity of artistic appreciation has been extensively defended by David Best who has stressed the enormous importance of objectivity for arts education. The following discussion of this section (4.2) is based on his work and mainly his paper *The Objectivity of Artistic Appreciation*– unless stated otherwise. His work is primarily concerned with identifying a basic confusion in the arguments of subjectivists against objectivists; this fallacy, he believes, arises from a false contrast between the objectivity of science and the subjectivity of the arts. In his own words, Best (1980, p.115) considers the terms of this contrast to be two sides of the same ‘distorted coin’ that, in connection with science, reflects an:

...assumption that only its methods of substantiation are genuinely objective. Since artistic judgements are not open to scientific verification, such an assumption leads inevitably to the conclusion that they cannot be objective.

If appreciation in the arts is held to fall short of the objectivity of scientific judgement, then the view that artistic judgement is subjective is inevitable. Such subjectivism results in the misconception that the diversity of critical opinions in arts, that may reach complete disagreement, precludes objective value and truth (ibid). From this perspective, it seems to follow that 'beauty is in the eye of the beholder' or that *'Beauty is no quality in things themselves; it exists merely in the mind that contemplates them'*, as David Hume (1985, p.230) claimed. Accordingly, it seems that artworks deal only with subjective experience, and therefore, as Susanne Langer (1966, p.12) writes: *'The arts objectify subjective reality, and subjectify outward experience of nature'*. Put simply, such reasoning takes the following course: my senses, my impressions, my feelings, my appreciation and my judgements are therefore my world. If such a theory was true, then arts would have little or no function apart from such psychological or therapeutic effects as relaxation and entertainment (something that is often promoted within arts in schools and elsewhere). But, according to Best (1980), this theory has no justification, because although the arts may not use scientific methods to arrive at judgements of aesthetic or artistic value, artistic judgements may be no less objective than scientific ones. Thus, if subjectivists believe that artistic experience has value only in terms of subjective expression of inner personal feelings then they do not, from Best's perspective, realize the true nature of artistic appreciation, which is also a matter of objectivity and knowledge. Indeed, the basis of such appreciation is precisely not feeling, but knowledge and reasoning. Both artistic and scientific judgements rely on (their own) sorts of enquiry and reasoning.

As Aristotle and others have argued, reasoning can take several forms. One form is the deductive reasoning of mathematics and another is the inductive reasoning of science (though it was not Aristotle's view that science is inductive). To these, however, Best (1980) adds another kind of reasoning which he terms *interpretive*. Interpretive reasoning is intertwined with perception and therefore it is applicable to

both arts and sciences. Critical thinking in arts and science both depend upon this form of reasoning. On the other hand, however, scientific verification is not applicable to the arts or, if it were applied, it would not make the same kind of sense. It would not, for example, be very appropriate to try to appreciate the nature and value of an artwork – such as a classical symphony – in terms of variation of sonic wave pressure. The general trouble here, according to Best (ibid), is that there is a common prejudice to the effect that objects or events must be subject to scientific measurement in order to qualify as genuine knowledge or as of objective value. Hence, Best argues that since artistic/aesthetic qualities cannot be scientifically assessed, it is mistakenly assumed that they are not of objective worth. This is how what Best calls *scientism* leads to subjectivism about the arts. In conclusion, the objective nature of aesthetic and artistic appreciation rests for Best on interpretive, rather than inductive or deductive reasoning.

Best (1980, p.119) uses the following example from a cartoon to show that emotions/feelings (an essential element in the arts for various reasons explored in other chapters) and other qualities are not readily measurable in scientific terms – though they are clearly not immeasurable in so far as people can have much real insight into them:

'I can't actually tell you how much I love you—I forgot my calculator'.

As this example seems to show, scientific investigation cannot tell us many things that we may wish to know about the human condition – but that does not mean that other routes to objective knowledge are not available. Thus, in the above case, the person in love would be able to demonstrate his or her love, even if scientific calculation for this purpose would be regarded by most people as inappropriate or even as silly. In much the same way, artistic and/or aesthetic judgements are not scientific and therefore scientific methods for the assessment of works of art cannot be considered appropriate. Moreover, interpretative reasoning does seem more appropriate in the arts, though this may appear vulnerable to a subjectivist objection that interpretation leaves too much opportunity for disagreement and unlimited diversity of opinion (ibid). However, Best argues that at this point there is confusion

of 'objective' with 'absolute' (ibid, p.118) and a related confusion of 'indefinite' with 'unlimited' (ibid, p.122).

To begin with, Best refers to some artworks that stimulate several interpretations that are objectively true: for example, a particular drawing (recalling Wittgenstein's (1958, p.194) use of this image in his *Philosophical Investigations* to illustrate 'seeing-as') may be interpreted in either of two ways as representing a duck or rabbit. In perceiving one or other of these representations in the drawing, observers are at the same time interpreting. Such interpretation is likely to depend on various factors such as cultural background, level of education and individual interest. Some may fail to recognise the possibility of some particular interpretation until they appreciate the existence of alternative conceptions and different dimensions of meaning of the object. Thus, prior to such appreciation there will only have been limited interpretation, and after it a new interpretation will have opened up. In terms of the example mentioned, the drawing might first have been considered to represent a duck, but after the shift of perspective it can also be seen to represent a rabbit. (Perhaps, indeed, a person from a country where there are *no* rabbits may only be able to perceive the shape as a duck until he or she moves to a place where there are rabbits.) From this viewpoint, objective interpretation is not final or absolute. That said, the possibilities of valid interpretations are nevertheless not *unlimited*. In the given example, the drawing could be regarded as a representation of a duck or a rabbit, but – as Best says – it could hardly be seen as a clock or as any other random object. Likewise, when observing a classic presentation of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, various interpretations are possible, but there are objective criteria and artistic conventions that would seem to preclude the possibility of understanding this drama as comedy (Best, 1980). To be sure, there may be many objectively correct aesthetic judgements or critical interpretations, but there may also be many objectively mistaken ones.

According to Best (ibid), the nature of interpretive reasoning also applies to science in a similar way. Critical appreciation of the arts and scientific enquiry may use different means of judgement and measurement and/or express different sorts of knowledge (propositional knowledge in sciences, acquaintance knowledge in the arts

as argued in other chapters), but they do share some characteristics in common, such as: (i) essential use of interpretive reasoning (since experiments are not plain proof of truth themselves, but require theory and interpretation); (ii) the possibility of objective knowledge; (iii) reference to objective standards; and (iv) some tolerance to diverse interpretation of the qualities and characteristics of objects and events. The last of these features may be more common to the arts, but it applies to sciences as well. This is why scientific research does not take a fixed, final or absolute view of its findings, but is ever in search of new perspectives and theories. Thus, as already highlighted, the nature of even scientific objectivity is by no means as absolute as often mistakenly believed. Of course, there is a theoretical background to scientific enquiry and argument that involves deductive, inductive and interpretative reasoning. But such theoretical backgrounds are to be found in the arts as well and these contribute to the setting of epistemic standards and criteria for aesthetic/artistic judgements (These arguments by Best may clarify some issues that this thesis explores, but it could also be argued, as by Carr (1999), that he sometimes plays down important differences between art and science).

Indeed, Best (1980, p.124) argues that the ‘innocent eye’ – the idea that scientific observation registers directly perceivable un-interpreted facts – does not exist, since perception is inevitably mediated through interpretation. However, in light of the arguments so far, not only is an ‘innocent eye’ not possible, it is also not desirable. It is here that education is crucially concerned with providing the conceptual framework for objective aesthetic/artistic judgements that may enable spectators or audiences of artworks to ‘see’ anything at all worth regarding as artistic or aesthetic knowledge. In this regard, the objectivist perspective gives the teacher of arts a substantial educational task. On the other hand, however, subjectivism clearly undermines both the value of the arts and the role of teachers of arts education. That is to say, a subjectivist would regard an arts’ education teacher only as a provider of leisure or entertainment or of unjustified (or inadequately justified) self-expression, all of which would have to be regarded as equally subjectively worthwhile. But, then, such a view could only imply low educational status for the arts. Hence, according to Best, initiation into artistic traditions concerned with the pursuit of objective artistic

knowledge should be at the very centre of arts education. As he (1980, p.124) emphasises: *‘Just as the underlying theory determines what can count as an objective scientific fact, so the artistic tradition determines what can count as a valid artistic interpretation’*.

David Best’s arguments indicate that the problem of the low status of arts in national educational policies and practices – in which science and technology are often promoted above the arts – is not only influenced by the economic, materialistic, technological and other emphases in present day education. The low status of the arts is also fundamentally fostered by the conceptual confusions and misconception described in this chapter. To summarise in Best’s own words (1980, p.127):

An artistic judgement should certainly be personal, in the sense that one should have experienced and thought about the relevant work for oneself. But that does not preclude objectivity. On the contrary, to be intelligible at all, a personal judgement must be objective. And to be worthwhile and enriching it must be informed, educated. Education of artistic judgement consists in progressively extending and refining the capacity for discriminating interpretation. I submit, then, that an artistic judgement, in precisely the same way as a scientific judgement, can be justified or refuted only by reference to what is externally observable. From the point of view of objectivity, in the sense of accountability to reality, the two kinds of assessment are the same. A scientific statement has to be supported by objective facts. Similarly, if I make an artistic judgement it is incumbent on me, if challenged, to substantiate it by citing not my subjective feelings about it, but objective features of the work of art itself.

4.3 Epistemic qualities and power in the arts: concluding remarks

In retrospect, both objectivism and subjectivism provide important insights into the nature of aesthetic and artistic judgement. The former gives weight to the actual qualities of the artwork and to the knowledge that the artwork may contain, while the latter recognises that the personal feelings and responses of the audience/observer/learner may also be significant indicators of the artwork’s value (as an expression or celebration of such feelings). That said, the contemporary philosophical debate over the pros and cons of each philosophical perspective also appears to be endless. Still, following Best (1980), it is the conclusion of this chapter that any thoroughgoing subjectivism is prey to certain fallacies or misunderstandings concerning the nature of aesthetic or artistic appraisal. Such fallacies promote the misconception that arts are not to be considered as sources of objective knowledge

along with the sciences. Such scientism encourages subjectivism about the arts which results in a low status for the arts in education policies and for teachers of arts education. To like or approve of a work of art is not at all the same as regarding it as good or valuable – for, in order to justify judgements of value, reasons for value are required. However, it follows that in order to arrive at good reasons for approving of a work of art, one needs to appeal to criteria or standards that extend beyond subjective taste. One significant source of such standards is to be found in the artistic traditions of human cultures that enshrine collective wisdom about what is and/or is not of enduring value in human artistic endeavour. On the other hand, this argument from particular traditions or conventions may be a slippery one and requires caution: e.g. Aristotle (*Poetics, book IX*) would have held that much great art is of universal value and it does not just depend on local taste. All the same, justified aesthetic/artistic judgement may be considered a step closer to artistic knowledge/truth – though, as explored in previous chapters, such knowledge is not perhaps well or best understood in terms of the propositional or factual knowledge of natural sciences. Rather, artistic knowledge should be regarded as closer to the acquaintance knowledge (Russell, 1967) or illustrative representation (Young, 2001) that enables exploration of life issues and imaginative insight into human nature and association (Russell and Young will be discussed extensively in the next chapter). Hence, when an artwork is judged better than others, it is not merely because someone may simply like it more, but because it exhibits distinct epistemic qualities and power. Taking all this into account and to return to the sentiment expressed in Elytis' poem (in the beginning of the chapter), serious artworks may be considered as examples of highly valued tokens in a system of 'coinage' with objective value. However, as in any currency, the use of coins presupposes understanding of certain values. Consequently, to take part in this system of commerce (here a metaphor for the artworks), an individual requires an understanding of the practices, conventions and institutions that underpin these values. Accordingly, artworks do convey objective knowledge only to people who are able/educated enough to understand what determines the objectivity, value and knowledge of art.

Chapter 5

5. Art and Knowledge

Art can certainly provide ‘hedonic’ pleasure, but many past philosophers have also argued that it has the capacity to educate by conveying knowledge. This latter function may also, of course, be seen as another kind of ‘pleasure’ that the arts provide. Accordingly, some philosophers would certainly argue that knowledge and truth are distinctive features of the arts. This chapter consists of three main parts, concerned with: (i) what knowledge is; (ii) what art is; and (iii) the relationship between the arts and knowledge (including the possible moral-educational status of the arts). It is particularly concerned to examine whether the arts are ‘*candidates for truth*’ (Lamarque, 2008, p.234) or whether, at least, they have cognitive or other value of some epistemic significance. If the answer is ‘yes’, the next issues that arise are those of how such knowledge is embedded in the arts, or whether knowledge provided by the arts differs from that of (for example) sciences and history. In conclusion, the chapter seeks to explore different respects in which arts may contribute to the development of knowledge, understanding or appreciation of human agents of themselves, their relationships with others and the world. The possibilities addressed are that art involves: (i) aesthetic appreciation; (ii) development of imagination; (iii) understanding of human psychology; (iv) education of emotions; and (v) moral understanding.

5.1 Nature and definition of knowledge

This chapter on art and knowledge examines the value of art as a source of knowledge. It is also concerned with investigating whether the promotion of knowledge – is a significant (if not the only or most significant) function of art. To this end, we may begin by briefly examining the nature of knowledge itself.

‘What is knowledge?’ is a fundamental philosophical question to which philosophers have given different answers. For example, empiricism is one philosophical approach that regards sense experience as the prime source of knowledge, and any

representation or idea in the human mind as caused by experience of the physical world. Even though there are some empiricists such as Berkeley (Gersh and Moran, 2006) who are sceptical about any physical world beyond the senses, all empiricists believe that knowledge is derived from experience. The empiricist theory of knowledge may be summarised by two Latin phrases used by John Locke and other empiricists, who argued that, prior to experience, the human intellect is a '*tabula rasa*' (Locke in Uzgalis, 2007, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/locke/>), with the consequence that *nihil est in intellectu quod non prius fuerit in sensu*, or that '*Nothing is in the mind that isn't first in the senses*' (empiricist maxim quoted in Boeree, 2000, <http://webpace.ship.edu/cgboer/empvrsrat.html>). In this respect, knowledge may be thought of as written by the senses on the blank slate of the human mind or intellect. David Hume (1757) developed the empiricist view, by arguing that the ideas of intellect are no more than the product of faded sense impressions. On Hume's view, statements of facts and relations of ideas are the only meaningful forms of judgement – though only the former derives from sensory experience. Relations of ideas are merely definitions or rules for the uses of words such as 'a bachelor is an unmarried man' (Carney, 1975): only such truths may be 'known' independently of experience. Generally, however, sensory experience is the only source of genuine knowledge and true judgement, according to empiricists and ideas are mainly mental representations of objects of such experience (Shelley, 2001). This philosophical viewpoint is obviously problematic when it comes to judgements of moral, religious, aesthetic and other value, where someone might claim that he or she knows something which others disagree with.

Rationalism contrasts with empiricism, in so far as the main source of knowledge for rationalists is not sensory experience but reason; and 'the criterion of truth is not sensory but intellectual and deductive' (Bourke, 1962, p.263). There are different versions of rationalism. There are moderate rationalists who hold 'that reason has precedence over other ways of acquiring knowledge', and there are radical rationalists who insist that reason is 'the unique path to knowledge' (Garber, 1999, p.771). Plato and Socrates appear to have inclined towards such radical rationalism,

arguing that only the exercise of the rational part of the soul (reason) may result in grasping ideas of the ultimate truth.

Plato's analysis (Chappell, 2009, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/plato-Theaetetus/>⁴) of the nature of knowledge in his dialogue *Theaetetus* starts by identifying what knowledge is not. *Theaetetus* offers a definition of knowledge by providing examples (146c). Socrates rejects the examples, because, whatever their force, 'for any x , examples of x are neither necessary nor sufficient for a definition of x '. Such definition could lead to unlimited examples (an interminable diversion – in Greek: *aperanton odon*) with the inevitable result of incompleteness and circularity. *Theaetetus* is finally convinced by Socrates that his examples of knowledge fall short of identifying what knowledge is and he proceeds to define knowledge as perception-belief (151d–e). Socrates objects to this definition as well, due to the relativity or subjectivity of knowledge that it seems to imply; he argues that the definition does not work because any given claim to knowledge could be expressed as both x and not x at a given time: for example, one person may say that the wind is cold and another that it is not cold, with the result that it both is and is not the case of something at the same time. However, since the qualities of experienced things are constrained by such 'external' physical circumstances as their particular location in time and space – knowledge of them must be more than just a matter of their subjective perception by agents. There must, in short, be external or 'objective' conditions of knowledge.

Indeed, if reliable (truth-finding) sensory experience and perception are sufficient for knowledge, this would also mean that non-human animal perceptions – which also deliver true judgements – would also yield knowledge. But Socrates argues that human beings differ from other animals not in the capacity of perceiving-believing but in their power to judge in the light of reason whether a given perception-belief is *true* (161d–162c).

But perception and belief cannot be the definition of knowledge for another reason: namely, that memory allows knowing without sensory perception (163a–168c). Therefore, knowing must extend beyond sensory perception. Further, if someone

⁴ The same source is used for the rest of the references to *Theaetetus*.

cannot perceive something clearly or at all, this does not mean that they have no knowledge of it. Concepts such as difference and sameness are not known only by sensory perception. Moreover, sometimes people have certain perceptions and beliefs about things but change their minds about them with further experience. It is also not only different people who may have different perceptions, but also one and the same person at different times and in different circumstances. The ‘*peritrope*’ objection (171a–b) by Socrates also shows the inconsistency to which knowledge defined as perception leads; if it is held that all perceptions and beliefs are true, there must also be the belief that *not* all beliefs are true. In that case, not all beliefs and perceptions can be sources of knowledge. On the other hand, if it is admitted that not all beliefs are true, the conclusion is much the same. In addition, the persuasion of rhetoric may engender beliefs which are not true – or, worse still, rhetoric may persuade people to change beliefs that may be true into false ones, in which case people will then cease to have knowledge.

Following the Socratic objection to his latest definition of knowledge, *Theaetetus* suggests a new definition of knowledge: that ‘knowledge is *true* belief’ (187a10–e4). Socrates is not happy with this definition either for several reasons. Socrates argues that, for example, accidentally true belief cannot be regarded as knowledge. True belief does not count as knowledge unless it is grounded in some reasonable judgement which justifies it as true, as well as an engagement of the human mind with the true forms of things. True belief is important but mainly as a state which may lead to knowledge. Reason is necessary to establish true belief as knowledge. In this respect, the last definition of knowledge in the *Theaetetus* comes closest to the truth: that ‘knowledge is true belief with an account (*logos*)’ (201c–d) – and while this is not a completely satisfactory definition for Socrates, he is evidently sympathetic to it. To be sure, it has to be recognised that modern epistemology has seriously questioned the Platonic account of knowledge as justified true belief – particularly in the light of the ‘Gettier paradoxes’ (Gettier, 1963) – though this cannot be pursued in greater detail here. For present purposes, however, it may be enough to note that *logos* (reason) is a very important element in Socratic/Platonic rationalism (206c–210a): even though *logos* is not itself knowledge, it is the most

important means to knowledge and at the same time the spiritual goal of the human soul. Perception is important for knowledge only in so far as the human mind is able to evaluate experience in the light of reason. In this respect, true perception is not just a reflection of sensory awareness, but also a result of the rational reflection required to make sense of the world.

Although generally critical of both rationalism and empiricism, Immanuel Kant was broadly sympathetic to the empiricist idea that there can be genuine knowledge only if such concepts have empirical content. However, he also states (Kant, 1961, p.93):

*If the receptivity of our mind, its power of receiving representations in so far as it is in any wise affected, is to be entitled sensibility, then the mind's power of producing representations from itself, the spontaneity of knowledge, should be called the understanding. Our nature is so constituted that our intuition can never be otherwise than sensible; that is, it contains only the mode in which we are affected by objects. The faculty, on the other hand, which enables us to think the object of sensible intuition is the understanding. To neither of these powers may a preference be given over the other. Without sensibility no object would be given to us, without understanding no object would be thought. **Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without objects are blind.** It is, therefore, just as necessary to make our concepts sensible, that is, to add the concept to them in intuition, as to make our intuitions intelligible, that is, to bring them under concepts. These two powers or capacities cannot exchange their functions. The understanding cannot intuit nothing, the senses can think nothing. Only through their union can knowledge arise.*

Hence, Kant thought that although the content of our knowledge needs to come from experience, such experiential content needs to be made meaningful by the imposition on it of concepts that are not themselves derived from sense. In this respect, the Kantian understanding of knowledge as an amalgam of a priori structure and a posteriori content seems very much like a reconciliation of empiricism and rationalism. Kant also distinguishes between different kinds of knowledge or cognition – not all of them empirical – in ways that have been reflected in modern educational philosophy (Hirst, 1974).

One of the respects in which Kant believes there can be objective cognition and perception – though not strictly knowledge – is in the realm of the arts. In this regard, the debate between empiricism and rationalism may remind us of the discussion in the previous chapter about objectivity in the arts. There, Immanuel Kant is

sometimes regarded as an exponent of a sophisticated objectivism (Ward, 2005). He criticized sophisticated subjectivism, but agreed with the latter that feelings of contemplative pleasure or displeasure are always and essentially determinative of justified aesthetic judgements. Nonetheless, he argued that strict (not merely ‘contingent’) aesthetic universality is possible and that, under the right conditions, aesthetic judgement or taste should find everyone – without exception – in aesthetic agreement. Strict universality should be possible if two faculties of the human mind operate in the same way in all people when perceiving the same object. These two faculties, according to Kant, are understanding and imagination (ibid). If these operated in the same way in all people, they should result in the same feeling of contemplative pleasure or displeasure and in appreciation of the same objective aesthetic value. However, these *do not* operate identically in all people (ibid). This is because their activity is influenced and limited by various factors of ‘super-sensible’ experience – a dimension of practical reason that Kant distinguishes from lower sensible experience (ibid, p.246). It is impossible that the human mind can consciously have access to super-sensible experience and understand how its principles operate. At this point, human feeling intrudes to introduce the possibility of personal individual taste into aesthetic judgement. Such personal individual taste and aesthetic judgement may differ from person to person, due to the different levels that various – and probably different – factors influence the super-sensible dimension of human reasoning. Since people are not aware of how this happens (as it belongs to the super-sensible dimension), they can only control and educate understanding and imagination to a certain extent. Moreover, it is possible to predict the development over time of only some feelings and perceptions of the mind.

In this respect, someone might wonder why Kant is regarded as any kind of objectivist at all, since he agrees that personal feeling is inevitably involved in aesthetic judgement (ibid). The answer would seem to be that while Kant accepts that individual feeling is an important factor for the development of aesthetic judgement, he does not think that it is necessarily determinative of a *good* aesthetic judgement. If personal feelings were the only factor, then appreciation in the arts would be only a matter of subjective taste. But, bearing in mind that people may like something that

is of little evident value as a piece of art (and vice versa), this surely is not the case. A justified aesthetic judgement should be based upon principles that all people without exception would accept as objective independently of any subjective feelings. That said, Kant claims a very strict universality on the basis of a particular metaphysical picture of the mind and a debatable formalist conception of art and beauty. Such a theory may be considered problematic for various reasons; but it importantly raises the issue of the need for some sort of objective basis for aesthetic judgement and grounds to admit the possibility of artistic knowledge and understanding (ibid).

5.2 Knowledge and the arts

So is knowledge promoted by the arts? Both Socrates and Plato were sceptical about this, since they did not generally regard arts as reliable sources of knowledge. To this end, Plato leaves open the question, important for any present understanding of the epistemic value of the arts, of whether the source of knowledge is sensory experience or intellectual reflection (or something else). Empiricists – as already noted – insist that the source of knowledge is experience; on this view, knowledge reaches us through our senses. Rationalists, on the other hand, regarded the human intellect as the main source of knowledge. Kant tried to reconcile empiricism and rationalism by emphasising their interaction. Bertrand Russell also (1967) tries to reconcile them but does so through distinctions between different kinds of knowledge.

Russell (ibid) firstly draws a distinction between the appearances of things and their real essence; that is to say objects *seem* to be different from what they really are. Developing the Platonic insights alluded to above, Russell (1967, p.22) maintains that the characteristic appearances of objects are not inherent to them, but precisely dependent on people's perception:

The question of the distinction between act and object in our apprehending of things is vitally important, since our whole power of acquiring knowledge is bound up with it.

On this view, there may be two kinds of knowledge and truth: truth about the appearance of objects, and truth about the objects themselves. This point recalls the

Platonic forms and ideas which are the (hidden) truth behind appearance. Russell offers the example of a table and wonders whether it has any intrinsic property as a table that would persist even if no one were there to perceive it; or whether it is a table only because it is perceived as such by humans. Idealists, such as Berkeley, are in favour of the second explanation which attributes knowledge to the mental experience of human beings (in Russell, 1967). Even more radically, Berkeley would insist that all known things exist only in the mind. Russell objects to this radical view, but he still appreciates the essential contribution of the mind to the acquisition of knowledge. He understands that there are different kinds of knowledge, and as an objection to Berkeley, he introduces the idea of knowledge by acquaintance. Acquaintance knowledge departs from radical idealism, but it is also different from theoretical/propositional knowledge. In particular, Russell (1967, p.22) states that:

'The faculty of being acquainted with things other than itself is the main characteristic of a mind. Acquaintance with objects consists in a relation between the mind and something other than the mind; it is this that constitutes the mind's power of knowing things'.

Acquaintance is an important kind of knowledge, because it reminds us that the mind must engage with something other than itself in knowledge acquisition. Nevertheless, knowledge still seems to be an ambiguous term. To know something may mean that I know that it is true, but it may also mean that I am acquainted with that thing. The first case of knowing that something is the case is often described as propositional knowledge, because it involves true judgement even if there is no acquaintance with any sense-data. The second case is acquaintance knowledge or knowledge by acquaintance, which is primarily (for Russell) direct knowledge of the data of sense experience. However, this second kind of knowledge also implies the existence of something: that is to say, if someone is genuinely acquainted with an object, then such acquaintance is generally indicative of the existence of that object. On the other hand, if someone knows that something is true, they do not have to be directly acquainted with that object. Russell concludes that true judgement of something without acquaintance is *description*. He explains (ibid, p.24):

What happens, in cases where I have true judgement without acquaintance, is that the thing is known to me by description and that in virtue of some general principle, the

existence of a thing answering to this description can be inferred from the existence of something with which I am acquainted.

Knowledge by acquaintance is simpler than knowledge by description, because it is not dependent on any particular knowledge of truth, even though it is sometimes coupled with knowledge of truth (ibid, chapter 5). In fact, anything that the senses or mind are directly aware of results in knowledge by acquaintance; such as the colour of a table. Someone may see the table in the dark and think that it is black, even though under other circumstances the colour appears brown, or an animal may perceive it as grey. In this case, knowledge by acquaintance may or may not be knowledge of truth. We may only be sure that the table has some colour. In these circumstances, however, we might want to ask why Russell considers knowledge by acquaintance to be 'knowledge' at all. What does it in truth tell us about the world? Even though it seems that this part of Russell's theory is obscure, he probably justifies knowledge by acquaintance as knowledge in so far as what it tells us in truth is how the world as experienced *feels*, compared to knowledge by description, which simply describes the world (ibid).

By contrast, knowledge by description may well imply some grasp of truth (presumably if the description is true), and it can tell us something about how things are in themselves (or *a priori*). This contrast seems to be a version of the distinction between appearance and reality. Having true knowledge of a table means making and having a true judgement that tells us something about this object that has the label 'table', and not just what it looks like. However, when confronted with the appearance of an object that matches the description I had in mind for 'table', then I am acquainted with the object in a way that gives me some reason to claim that it exists (ibid). Therefore, knowledge by description and knowledge by acquaintance are two different concepts, but they do not exclude each other; sometimes they even presuppose or entail each other. Arguably, however, the concept that seems to have most bearing on the epistemic value and power of arts is knowledge by acquaintance (ibid; also Carr, 2010a).

It is apparent that objects experienced by the human senses are things that can be known by acquaintance. But, it is not only things that can be experienced in the present that can provide acquaintance knowledge. Things previously experienced by the senses can still provide acquaintance knowledge through the agency of memory. Furthermore, acquaintance knowledge by introspection is an extension of direct acquaintance; in short, human beings may be acquainted with something and at the same time be aware of their acquaintance with that thing through consciousness. This kind of self-consciousness is distinctive of humans as compared with non-human animals. As we have seen, this recalls Socrates who also argued that animals may have more vivid experiential knowledge than human beings, but lack the intellectual capacity of humans to know that they know. However, this last argument about self-consciousness indicates that even knowledge of truths other than knowledge by acquaintance is still grounded in a kind of knowledge by acquaintance. As Russell (ibid, p.26) concludes:

All our knowledge, both knowledge of things and knowledge of truths, rests upon acquaintance as its foundations.

It is worth mentioning here that knowledge of things does not always mean knowledge of particular or tangible things: that is to say, concepts such as whiteness and brotherhood imply knowledge by acquaintance, but they refer to general and universal ideas, not material things (ibid, p.28). This idea may be confusing, in so far as such knowledge is clearly also associated with the non-experiential knowledge of description. All the same, on the basis of all these observations, a fundamental principle of knowledge which associates knowledge by description and knowledge by acquaintance emerges (Russell, 1967, p.32):

The fundamental principle in the analysis of propositions containing descriptions is this: every proposition which we can understand must be composed wholly of constituents with which we are acquainted.

Therefore, acquaintance is clearly important for any sort of genuine knowledge. As we have seen, however, knowledge by acquaintance is not all there is to knowledge. While people are acquainted with objects of experience, and this is a kind of

knowledge, it is not knowledge in the fuller sense analysed in the previous paragraphs. But even though it is not full knowledge (the kind of knowledge of truth where description is also implicated), it may still count as a constituent of knowledge.

What is of direct present concern, however, is that the knowledge that the arts can provide might be regarded as a good example of *knowledge by acquaintance*. With reference to Russell's two ideas of knowledge by description and knowledge by acquaintance, it might be said that artworks communicate appreciation of (aspects of) how things are by providing a kind of acquaintance knowledge. However, to clarify the kind of knowledge in which arts deal, it is important to resist certain mistaken views about knowledge and/or meaning in the arts. For example, consider the following passage (Hirst, 1974, p.152):

But in what sense do we have artistic knowledge? There are many different senses possible, some of which are mutually compatible, others mutually incompatible, but there is one and only one sense in which I wish to pursue the matter. [...] In the arts, whether we are talking about painting, poetry, opera, sculpture, the novel or ballet, the observable features are used as symbols, have meaning, can be seen as making artistic statements and judged true or false just as words and sentences can be used to make scientific statements. This is to take 'Guernica', Middlemarch, 'Fidelio' or a Haydn symphony, as a statement expressing a truth we can properly be said to know.

Hirst takes the view in this passage that arts are vehicles of knowledge. However, under the influence of certain modern expressive theories of meaning, he takes the meaning of works of art to consist in the making of truth bearing statements about reality in the manner of scientific statements. Briefly, Hirst conflates artistic meaning and knowledge with the kind of theoretical or propositional knowledge that Russell contrasts with knowledge by acquaintance. But is this a useful way to think about artistic meaning and knowledge?

We may compare this view with that taken by Young (2001), who precisely contrasts what he calls the 'semantic representation' of propositional knowledge with what he calls the 'illustrative representation' of artistic knowledge. Certainly, many works of art exhibit the property of 'intentionality' – that is, of being *about* something – but this is also combined with the important quality of recognition. While an artwork is

often concerned with representing something or has the intention of conveying knowledge of it to an audience, it is also concerned with getting an audience to register such knowledge in a particular way. Young (ibid, p.21) gives the following general account of representation:

R is representation of an object O if and only if R is intended by a subject S to stand for O and an audience A (where A is not identical to S) can recognise that R stands for O.

On this view, artworks can be said to succeed or fail in representing something. Artworks can be said to fail when they do not adequately convey the knowledge intended to be transmitted to an audience. Such failure may happen when either the artist's efforts were inadequate, or because the audience was not sufficiently capable of appreciating the value of the artwork. Here a capable audience is a group of people who have a good understanding of the fundamental rules and conventions of art and also some basic knowledge about the object that is being represented (Young, 2001). If the audience meets these criteria, then it is required of a successful artwork to bring to the mind: (i) recognition of the object that is represented; (ii) its manner of representation; and (iii) the artistic meaning of that representation (ibid). One question that emerges here is whether works that are not about something can be regarded as artworks. In the light of formalist and other developments in modern art, many people would here want to say 'yes'. But from the position that only artworks with cognitive value are artworks, the answer would seem to be 'no'. Of course, even in the case of works with cognitive content, artworks are often about things that do not exist – such as fictional characters. Nevertheless, these artworks are still about something: they are about varieties, types or classes of objects with universal truth (Young, 2001, pp.34–38; also Carr, 2006b).

In this respect, art is about themes and/or topics into which human beings often have valuable insight. To have an insight into some of the themes art deals with can be educationally useful, but also pleasurable. Young (2001) justifies the significance and special pleasure of the arts in the light of the human knowledge that such experience provides. This knowledge includes insight into human agency and into the relationships of the agents with others and to the world. Art provides both

pleasure and knowledge; and since art is a source of knowledge, artworks are not merely of subjective aesthetic value to audiences and spectators. On this view, artistic merit does not depend that much – if at all – on aesthetic beauty (or how much ‘hedonic’ pleasure audiences get from it), but mainly on the extent to which it affords insight into matters of human significance. In this connection, Young suggests that an artwork has more to offer than the hedonic pleasure of (say) a glass of wine. Even when artworks evoke negative emotions, these feelings can still be accompanied by understanding and insight. Indeed, the ‘paradox of tragedy’ phenomenon supports this view (ibid, p.109), in so far as the audiences of tragedies know *a priori* that they may experience unpleasant passions, but they nevertheless find something correctly identifiable as pleasure in the aesthetic presentation of the play’s events. Tragedies seem to have that kind of beauty that Winston (2006, p.299) describes as ‘a *transformative [...] force for good*’ and which operates ‘*as a means to expand and heighten our consciousness, [one] whose moral potential is worthy of our full attention*’.

In this respect, it seems useful to draw a distinction here between the ‘artistic’ and the ‘aesthetic’ aspects of artworks. Many philosophers have discussed this issue, one of whom is David Best (1980; 1985). Best regards artistic merit as extending beyond aesthetic beauty or sensory pleasure, investing artworks with something more meaningful that he refers to as a concern with ‘life issues’. He points out that there are other natural or man-made objects that are aesthetically beautiful or pleasant to the senses without being of any artistic value, such as a beautiful sunset, a pleasant perfume etc. Young (2001) goes even further by arguing that in order to be artistically meaningful, artworks need to have some cognitive and/or epistemic value. Only artworks that possess such qualities may be considered of real artistic value or merit. As he puts it, only artworks that communicate knowledge possess ‘arthood’ and should be accepted as artworks by an ‘artworld’. From this viewpoint, the value of artworks extends far beyond their aesthetic significance (unless aesthetic value is given a broad definition to include both hedonic and cognitive value).

However, for Young (2001, p.10), ‘*arthood is not the property of having a kind of cognitive value, but all works happen to have this property relative to some*

artworlds'. This statement suggests that arthood is not an intrinsic property: that an artwork does not have artistic value by virtue of its intrinsic characteristics. Arthood is an extrinsic relational and/or perspectival property, in so far as an artwork only counts as such due to its relation to an artworld: that is, because some artworld designates it as an artwork. However, 'artwork' and 'artworld' now become rather loose terms, because there are many artworlds and anyone may be regarded as a member of an artworld in so far as he or she uses the word 'art'. But the number of artworlds could be infinite, and therefore any work may have an opportunity to be regarded as an artwork when accepted by one of these 'artworlds'. Nevertheless, an ideal artworld, for Young, would be one that only accepts artworks that possess valuable artistic properties of real cognitive value.

All the same, in Young's view, artistic value is a '*relative-to-an-artworld*' insight into truth and knowledge (2001, pp.4–10). Any given artwork, according to how well it performs this function, could be classified as good, poor etc. From this viewpoint, artworks should not be regarded as beautiful – in any artistically significant sense of 'beauty' – in so far as they arouse sensory pleasure, but only if they are able to evoke or communicate valuable cognitive states (Young, 2001, pp.17–18). This capacity to stimulate valuable cognitive states may have non-instrumental and/or instrumental value, in which case artistic knowledge can be both intrinsically and extrinsically valuable. However, even in the latter case of instrumental application, the extrinsic value of arts may still induce cognitive processes of intrinsic value. Consequently, possessing artistic knowledge may be significant for its own sake as well as a means of enhancing hedonic value or pleasure in the course of stimulating particular mental states/cognitive processes (*ibid*).

At all events, some of the mental states/cognitive processes stimulated by art are clearly affective and/or emotional, and emotions may for Young be a source of hedonic pleasure or knowledge. If emotions are enjoyable for their own sake, the artwork has hedonic value: but if artworks arouse emotions of either intrinsic or extrinsic cognitive value, then associated reflection on such emotions may directly or indirectly result in knowledge. This process could be regarded as something like Aristotelian *catharsis*, or even knowledge of emotional life (*ibid*, p.19). Moreover,

such epistemic insight into or appreciation of emotions is something that would seem to differentiate art from science: *'While science tries to exclude emotion, the emotional responses generated by artworks give them their cognitive value'* (Young, 2001, p.i).

Of course, artworks, scientific achievements and historical narratives may all provide insights into aspects of reality, but they seem to express or embody truth in different ways. For Young (2001, p.26), this means that there are different modes of representation, of which he identifies two basic types: namely, 'semantic' and 'illustrative' representations.

According to Young (ibid), semantic representations are those of scientific and historical narrative where perhaps 'literal' or factual truth is the main aim of scientific or historical claims. Illustrative representations are the business of artworks – and even though these may aim at truth, it is not the main point of artworks to make true statements about the world. Furthermore, semantic representations are entirely conventional. This means that semantic representations are constructed according to local or other conventions, in the absence of which representation would be impossible. Such conventions determine the composition of semantic representations. Semantic compositionality consists of two conditions (ibid, p.27): (i) the method of representing proceeds via the combination of basic grammatical and semantic elements that determine sense or meaning; (ii) it needs to be done in such a way as to represent objective truths about the world. Under these conditions, semantic representations facilitate knowledge in the sense that when the audience knows the semantic conventions, it is able to understand the meaning and truth of such representations. However, illustrative representations are not compositional in this sense because they are not constructed from a finite set of basic terms or elements in accordance with some specifiable set of grammatical rules (ibid, pp.28-29). On the contrary, an audience grasps the meaning of illustrative representation by appreciating the similarity between the experience of the representation and the object represented. Thus, while understanding of semantic conventions may be important for appreciating artworks, this is not enough for an audience to appreciate the full artistic meaning of such works.

To be sure, some literary artworks may certainly deal in semantic representations, insofar as the means of much literary representation is language. Thus a descriptive sentence in a story or novel may be no less a matter of semantic representation than in non-artistic contexts – such as a historical description or even a sign which says ‘toilets are downstairs’ that (as a statement about the location of the toilets) indicates where the toilets are. However, language functions in a different way for illustrative representation in literary artworks (Young, 2001, p.31 and pp.44–52). Language may well be descriptive, but the representation is illustrative only in so far as the work aims to represent an object as it might be experienced. Such representation is not just a statement about the object, it is a representation or expression of the experience of the object. Literary artworks usually represent utterances, types of utterances, characters, types of characters, states of mind, emotions and other human and natural situations (ibid. p.49). However, any attempt to understand such representations by regarding them as semantic would fall short of artistic knowledge, because literary artworks also consist of representations that are not literal truths. Thus, though semantic representations often occur in literary artworks, they are not the essence of the artwork. To put the point in reverse, illustrations (e.g. photos) may be found in historical or scientific accounts, but they are not the essence of these semantic representations (ibid, p.67).

In relation to artistic representation as illustrative, according to the account of illustration so far, someone might object that any photo could be regarded as art. In this regard, however, two further characteristics of genuine artistic representation should be noted: (i) a distinction between direct and indirect illustrations; and (ii) the affective intent of much illustrative representation (this discussion is based on Young, 2001, pp.32–33; pp.54–60; and pp.88–93). A photo exemplifies a direct illustration in which there is resemblance between the object itself and the photographic image of that object. In this respect, however, direct illustration seems closer to semantic representation, and is therefore not the illustrative representation of genuine art. But when direct representation is combined with indirect representation, even objects that cannot be semantically depicted may be represented (e.g. states of the psyche). For example, a portrait may function like a photo by virtue

of its direct representation of a person. Indeed, if the function of the portrait is practical, for example as proof that women of a certain age dye their hair, then it may be regarded as a type of semantic representation. However, many portraits are also cases of indirect illustration because they enable viewers to recognise character traits of the sitter (ibid, p.33). Indirect representation occurs in so far as human agents desire to make connections between what can be seen directly and indirectly intuited. This point is very important, because indirect representation enables artists to engage in deeper exploration of their subjects and make critical commentary on society and the world (ibid. and also p.86). This is an essential feature of an artist's work such as in Goya's portraits. In science and history, the personal view of the historian or scientist is not especially relevant to the truth or otherwise of their work since is not the main (if any at all) purpose of historical or scientific accounts to provide such personal insight. But in most if not all artistic contexts, indirect representation is very important: e.g. in music where a composer may use musical sounds to represent or mimic natural or real life circumstances (such as the ascent of a lark) with emotional associations. But, then, absence of the more personal creative perspective implied by indirect representation may rule out some (though, of course, not all) photographs from qualifying as works of art.

But a further very important type of illustrative representation is *affective* illustration (Young, 2001, pp.88–94). The objects of affective illustration are emotional states. Since the mental states stimulated by art are invariably emotional, resemblance between emotions and their expressions and representations is a fundamental feature of art. Affective illustration, according to Young, can be either *introspective* or *extrospective*. In introspective affective illustration, an emotion is represented independently of its relations to objects, e.g. in poems of lyric poetry where, for example, the poetic expression of anger may mirror the experience of anger itself. Another example of introspective affective illustration may be found in music, e.g. a joyful piece of music expresses or reflects the joy that an audience may experience in listening to that piece of music. In fact, with this kind of illustration, some actual similarity or resemblance between the emotions of the artist and the audience may be evident. In general, with introspective illustration, direct insight into how it feels to

experience the represented object may be available. A semantic representation might represent emotion, but only as a report of what happened at a particular place and time. However, with affective illustration the audience may be put in the position of experiencing the very emotions represented at a specific place and time. It is in this spirit that it is often said that ‘a picture can be worth a thousand words’.

On the other hand, extrospective affective illustration creates affective responses to the objects or situations an artwork depicts: it calls forth emotions appropriate and specific to understanding (for example) Picasso’s *Guernica* (ibid). This kind of illustration may assist spectators and audiences in so far as such emotional responses significantly reinforce cognitive appreciation of artworks. On the other hand, artists may misuse – deliberately or not – such representation for their own purposes, in order to influence the emotions of audiences in particular unfit or ‘mischievous’ directions (Young, 2001, p.97). One reason why Plato wanted to exclude artists from his *Republic* was fear of such immoral or rhetorical misuses of art. However, the possibility of such immoral misuses of art clearly does not preclude its use for more morally edifying purposes.

Moreover, the use of art for morally edifying purposes may also be a source of propositional knowledge which directly contributes to theoretical as well as practical wisdom (e.g. the moral lesson from ‘*Pride and Prejudice*’ that ‘first impressions are a poor guide to character’) (ibid pp.46 & 95). In particular, propositional knowledge of the arts may serve to enhance judgement, which is beneficial to the capacity ‘to apply concepts and knowledge of what certain mental states are like’ (Young, 2001, p.95). Kant (1961) emphasises this role of judgement in his *Critique of Pure Reason*, arguing that judgement helps agents to identify concepts of understanding even when applied to unfamiliar objects or situations. For example, though hypocrisy is widely regarded as something to be avoided, it may be less easy to identify what counts as a hypocritical attitude (Young, 2001, p.95). Art can contribute to such discernment by enabling an audience to grasp in its particularity what they had so far only known in general terms. Also artworks provide practical knowledge in the sense that they demonstrate how this or that emotion may differ from other affective states (ibid).

Such practical knowledge has some characteristics in common with acquaintance knowledge (as previously analysed).

One art form that may raise questions in this respect, however, is that of music (Young, 2001, pp.52–64). In particular, one may doubt that musical artworks are illustrative representations or more specifically involve indirect or introspective affective illustrations. However, such doubts may be overcome by recognising that music indirectly or directly represents or expresses emotions *phenomenologically*, in a similar way to that which audiences experience when they hear the piece of music. Here, the direct representation is the musical experience that provokes an affective response from the audience to the formal properties of the music. The *indirect* representation consists in the emotional identifications that an audience is able to make with the artwork. An argument against this view could be that music can often be regarded as lacking any object, and therefore any intentionality or ‘aboutness’ whatsoever. However, listeners’ responses to music do have an object – the music itself: ‘*Listeners can be pleased about, frustrated by, or have a variety of other reactions to, formal properties of compositions*’ (Young, 1991, p.63).

In conclusion, art may be credited with cognitive value, though in a different way from history or the sciences. Even though both arts and empirical sciences may be concerned with observation or description of aspects of the world, they represent the world in rather different ways. Whereas sciences produce testimony which is usually a kind of report on the data of experience, the ‘testimony’ produced by the arts is more illustrative of topics or themes of human interest (Young, 2001, p.67). Of course, no testimony or illustration is actually sufficient for knowledge, in so far as such testimony can be false or deceptive. This being the case, justification is always necessary for knowledge. In the sciences, the reliability of scientists and of scientific methodology is crucial; and of course any interpretation of such findings invites rational theory and explanation (ibid).

In the arts, on the other hand, the basic tool of interpretation is *perspective*. As Young (2001, p.68) states: ‘*A perspective is a way of conceiving of an object that can enhance the understanding of the object*’. Artworks do not normally provide rational

demonstrations of perspectives, but they can be illustrative of the truth of a perspective. Artworks may illustrate events according to a perspective and audiences/spectators can come to appreciate the rightness of that perspective. This does not necessarily mean that a perspective can be judged ultimately as true or false, since it is only a means of insight into an event. To be sure, Young (2001, p.69) says:

Readers can learn from Pride and Prejudice that 'First impressions are a poor guide to character' is true'. But the fact that perspectives can provide such knowledge is no guarantee that they are strictly either true or false. A glance at my computer provides the propositional knowledge that my computer is blue. But the glance as such is neither true nor false. It is simply a means of apprehending the truth. Perspectives, in this sense, are means of apprehending the truth of certain propositions.

But now another class of illustrations emerges: 'interpretive illustrations' (Young, 2001, pp.80–88). Interpretive illustrations may be contrasted with affective illustrations in so far as they do not provide a way of feeling about things, but a perspective on them; a way, as it were, of thinking about them. Such a perspective is not, however, an ordinary way of thinking. Rather, it adds to the knowledge of an object, by changing the way it is perceived: Consider, Young's (ibid, p.81) example of Monet's painting's of the cathedral in Rouen (in contrast to a vacation snapshot). In this regard, Young (2001) brings the following examples of interpretive and affective illustrations: amplification, connection, correlation, juxtaposition, selection and simplification – though for the purposes of this thesis these will not be pursued in any detail. However, it may be worth mentioning Lamarque's (2009, p.236) point that:

There might be disagreements about the aims of interpretation and the nature of interpretive support, but these do not challenge the fact that derived thematic content can take propositional and truth-assessable forms.

To summarise, interpretive and affective illustrations providing *perspectives* on events, can change the perspectives of audiences/spectators. That is to say, art may change the way an audience looks at the world. To this extent, this function of the arts is also a moral one, since the audience changes its vision not only by formulating general rules, but also by exploring the particularities of 'forms of life' (ibid, p.240). Following Wittgenstein in this respect, Beardsmore (1971, p.75) explains that art is

important not because it may make an audience virtuous by bringing them into *'conformity with anyone's preconceived ideas of virtue, but because it is a part of knowing what kinds of things hypocrisy and war and love are'*.

In conclusion, arts go beyond mere 'hedonic' pleasure, and education – not least general development of understanding and moral education – does seem to be possible through the arts. This is true in so far as the arts have various important functions: they can illustrate general rules, enable exploration of 'forms of life', cultivate reasoned judgement, provide conceptual clarification and insight, and instruct in forms or modes of truth. They may instruct by (Lamarque, 2009, p.220):

opening the mind to new possibilities, by developing novel perspectives on its subject matter, by 'defamiliarizing', the everyday, by training the emotions, or even just by having a serious content, worthy of serious thought.

This kind of instruction enlarges the audience's imagination. Shelley (2003, p.684) claimed that:

the imagination is enlarged by a sympathy with pains and passions so mighty that they distend in their conception the capacity of that by which they are conceived.

This may happen through the artistic exploration of narratives which give audiences/spectators the opportunity to grasp through imaginative participation how something might feel (Lamarque, 2009). However, this is not a matter of mere subjective response on the part of the audience, since good art has cognitive dimensions and connections with reality and 'truth' (ibid, p.226). What is meant here by 'truth' would include: propositional truths, new perspectives on the world, self-knowledge, self-awareness, authenticity, veracity, honesty, realistic description, ideal possibility, concrete or universal depth of meaning, thought with emotion, emotion with reason, worldly truth or artistic truth. In short, truth in the arts (as elsewhere), can have various meanings. In relation to this, Iris Murdoch (1992, p.86 and p.321) states:

Truth is not a simple or easy concept. Critical terminology imputes falsehood to an artist by using terms such as fantastic, sentimental, self-indulgent, banal, grotesque, tendentious, unclarified, wilfully obscure and so on. The positive aspect of the

avoidance of these faults is a kind of transcendence: the ability to see other non-self things clearly and to criticise and celebrate them freely and justly. [...] Truth is something we recognize in good art when we are led to a juster, clearer, more detailed, more refined understanding. Good art 'explains' truth itself, by manifesting deep conceptual connections. Truth is clarification⁵, justice, compassion.

Thus, the arts are not only about propositional truth but about truths of life and human nature. When an artist creates a piece of art, they at the same time invent *'their own relevant tests of truth'* (Murdoch, 1992, p.86), these tests are artistic forms that possess a rhetorical power that audiences/artworlds can be brought to appreciate. Meeting these tests may require that the members of an artworld become: (i) more knowledgeable; and (ii) more virtuous. That is, knowledgeable in the sense that they know more about their own nature, the world and their relationships with others, and virtuous – not only in the sense they have *'achieved a rational grasp or appreciation of certain moral truths, rules or imperatives'* – but in the deeper Aristotelian sense that they have *'come to experience, feel about and respond to the world in a particular range of morally appropriate ways'* (Carr and Davis, 2007, p.106).

In sum, art may promote moral knowledge by exploring the world of human emotions, imagination and understanding. This may result in greater insight into and/or knowledge of many aspects of human experience and psychology. Knowledge by acquaintance presupposes some aesthetic and artistic appreciation of the illustrative representations of artworks, which may thus reflect, but also greatly extend beyond, the propositional knowledge of justified true beliefs. In this respect, arts promote epistemic and moral knowledge in diverse ways, but there can be no doubt about the distinctive role that they perform in the education of human agents in rich aspects of human understanding.

⁵Clarification - as an element of the definition of truth - reminds us of what Carroll (2001, p.283; also in Lamarque, 2009, p.252) said about clarificationism: *'clarificationism does not claim that, in the standard case, we acquire interesting, new propositional knowledge from artworks, but rather that the artworks in question can deepen our moral understanding by, among other things, encouraging us to apply our moral understanding and emotions to specific cases'*.

Chapter 6

6. The 'intrinsic' educational value of the arts and literature in Matthew Arnold and beyond

In this chapter, the discussion will be mainly about literature in particular rather than art in general. The question of the epistemological status and educational value of literature has occupied philosophers, poets and literary theorists from antiquity to the present day. Some latter day trends, such as the American Great Books tradition and British Literary criticism have influenced educational policies significantly, and therefore merit special attention here.

As already shown, Plato (*Republic* 603a–b) held that imitative arts are: (i) far from real knowledge (Lodge, 1953, p.37); and (ii) mislead the mind progressively further and further away from truth and knowledge (Carr, 2007). On the other hand, as also seen, Aristotle argued that arts/poetry may educate through the training of emotions and the promotion of moral knowledge and understanding. Poetry can be also valued as a means to both entertain and educate. Again, as Horace says in *Ars Poetica*, '*Poets would either profit, or delight,/ Or mixing sweet, and fit, teach life the right [...] Sweet mix'd with sowre, to his Reader, so/ As doctrine, and delight together go.*' (Norton, 1999, p.200). The power of poetry to please, to arouse emotions, to embellish stories and to convey knowledge or information has been both appreciated and criticised throughout the history of western literature.

The educational value of literature and the arts has been acknowledged by both British educational philosophers and theorists, as well as by theorists in the American 'Great Books' tradition as having a central place in modern liberal educational thought. Arnold (1960; 1975), Eliot (1973; 1997; Reid, 2010), Leavis (1983) and Oakeshott (1981; Fuller, 1989; Williams, 2002) are examples of the former, while Hutchins (1955), Allan Bloom (1987) and E. D. Hirsch, Adler, H. Bloom (Satterfield, 2002; Carr, 2010a) represent the latter. These and other philosophers and theorists have emphasised the importance of literature and the arts, though in various and sometimes opposed ways. Some have suggested that knowledge in, through or of

literature and art is different from knowledge in other contexts of human inquiry (e.g. science or history). Some others, however, have argued that knowledge in, through, or of literature and arts is knowledge in a more standard sense and therefore not in principle different from other sorts of knowledge. In what follows, an overview is presented of some of these views as well as some assessment of the contemporary educational relevance of this debate.

6.1 Two schools of thought in defence of literature

Both the American Great Books Tradition and British cultural and literary criticism have defended the place of literature in education. Moreover, the Great Books Tradition – as well as such post war educational philosophers as Peters and Hirst (1970; 1986) – has argued for the educational parity and complementary nature of literature with science. On this view, the forms of knowledge that these apparently different types of human enquiry communicate are not just compatible, but of equal epistemic value. On the other hand, however, there is a time-honoured tradition that literature possesses a uniquely moral educational power that distinguishes it from other modes of human enquiry. Hence, literature (what sort of literature will be explored later) may convey knowledge that significantly differs from the more practical concerns of science and technology. This tradition even suggests that knowledge gained through the arts may be more educationally valuable or relevant than any knowledge gained from science.

6.1.1 American Great Books tradition

In this country and abroad there are men who see that the onset of barbarism must be met not only by programs of rearmament, but by another revival of learning. It is the fact, moreover, that after tentative beginnings in several of the American universities, Columbia, Virginia and Chicago, a revival is actually begun. (Lippman in Haarlow, 2003, p.1)

The American Books Tradition offers some of the greatest modern day support for the educational value of literature. In general, this movement has sought to defend the epistemic status and value of literature, in particular, its potential for the

cultivation of human wisdom. From this point of view, the knowledge that literature provides is of at least equal human value to scientific knowledge. The Great Books Tradition originated in debates in the '20s and '30s between American academics such as Robert Hutchins, Mortimer Adler and others, prompted by Professor John Erskine of Columbia University. The key issue was about reforming higher education in the direction of western literature and liberal arts with a view also to the promotion of cross-disciplinary learning. The perceived need for change was a reaction to the narrow specialization of modern times which results in trained people, rather than people broadly educated in the timeless treasures of western culture and civilisation. In his book *The Closing of the American Mind* Alan Bloom (1987, p.337) observes:

The university now offers no distinctive visage to the young person. He finds a democracy of the disciplines which are there either because they are autochthonous or because they wandered in recently to perform some job that was demanded of the university. This democracy is really anarchy, because there are no recognised rules for citizenship and no legitimate titles to rule. In short there is no vision, nor is there a set of competing visions, of what an educated human being is. [...] On the way the student can pick up in elective courses a little of whatever is thought to make one cultured. The student gets no intimation that great mysteries might be revealed to him, that new and higher motives of action might be discovered within him, that a different and more human way of life can be harmoniously constructed by what he is going to learn.

Before Erskine, Adler, Hutchins and others talked about the 'Great Books', otherwise referred to as 'the classics', Charles Eliot referred to something similar that he called the 'five-foot shelf' of Harvard Classics (Satterfield, 2002). What he meant by this is that a set of Harvard Classics that might fit on a five-foot shelf could be a window to liberal education. A long debate among academics resulted in the creation of a list of around one hundred essential books regarded as the greatest literary achievements of western arts and thought. This list was proposed as a literary 'canon' for the educational development of all students.

Hutchins (1955), who contributed to the construction of the canon, clearly did not believe that this list represented the definitive best works of western culture and civilization – bearing in mind, not least, the omission of other realms of art such as 'plastic arts' and music. Furthermore, many criticized this list as inadequate even

with regard to the field of literature. All the same, we might still here appreciate the general move towards a more liberal education in which literature and arts were given a central place. In general, it was held that philosophy, political thought, theological writings, poetry and other genre of literature might serve to cultivate and broaden the minds of students. Even if some of the prescribed works were written thousands of years ago they might still be regarded as of present day significance and relevance to all people in all walks of life.

Even Hutchins (1955) a leading exponent of the American Great Books Tradition, claimed that these books would not: (i) address all important human concerns; and (ii) constitute the only books worth humanly reading. However, he and others argued that such books could nevertheless cast significant light on enduring human interests and concerns. At the very least, they might generate interest in further reading as well as serving to develop some moral judgement, critical acumen and artistic and aesthetic appreciation (Hutchins, 1955, p.47).

We do not think that these books are the only books worth reading. We think that these books shed some light on all our basic problems, and that it is folly to do without any light we can get. We think that these books show the origins of many of our most serious difficulties. We think that the spirit they represent and the habit of mind they teach are more necessary today than ever before. We think that the reader who does his best to understand these books will find himself led to read and helped to understand other books. We think that reading and understanding Great Books will give him a standard by which to judge all other books.

In sum, it would appear that the American case for Great Books is grounded in a strong desire for the rounded individuals of the kind that a liberal education has been usually considered to produce.

6.1.2 British Literary Criticism

The 'intrinsic' educational value of the arts and literature has also been strongly defended by such British thinkers as Matthew Arnold, T. S. Eliot, F. R. Leavis, G. H. Bantock, Michael Oakeshott, Roger Scruton and others. The essence of such thought is located in a school of cultural and literary criticism that has long defended the educational value of cultural and artistic traditions.

As a key figure in British literary criticism, F.R. Leavis vehemently held that literature (and the arts) has an ethical purpose that is not generally shared by the sciences. In this sense, arts and sciences have different and distinct educational roles and do not share a common knowledge base: indeed, not only is the sort of knowledge they embody different, but the way in which they communicate knowledge is also different. This points to an epistemological dualism that was perhaps first recognised by ancient Greeks, but is also expressed very clearly in the writings of Matthew Arnold. In a study of his work entitled '*Literature and Science*'. Greenberg and Schachterle (1992, p.13) suggest that:

his [Arnold's] pairing of substantives reflected his belief that 'literature' and 'science' name the principal sources of knowledge about all the various parts of our experience.

However, Arnold does not leave obvious room for connections between arts and sciences. Rather, he seems to adopt the view (see Greenberg & Schachterle, 1992, p.13) that: "*literature*' represented what could be learned about human nature, while '*science*' designated the systematic investigation of the physical environment...' This would not necessarily mean that he thinks of knowledge as being of two (epistemically) different kinds, but that science and arts are just different fields of knowledge.

Arnold (see Gribble, 1967, p.150) famously defined culture as '*the best that has been thought and said in the world*'. He also argued that literature makes a major contribution to culture, and – though he did appreciate the cultural and educational (rather than merely economic) value of scientific understanding, because he saw science as contributing to an educated understanding of the world – he seems to have mainly regarded those who were primarily educated in humanities rather than in sciences as cultured (1975, p.140):

If then there is to be separation and opinion between humane letters on the one hand, and the natural sciences on the other, the great majority of mankind, all who have not exceptional and overpowering aptitudes for the study of nature, would do well, I cannot but think, to choose to be educated in humane letters rather than in the natural sciences. Letters will call out their being at more points, will make them live more.

Consequently, life and literature are inseparable since literature contributes to the development of human moral and spiritual potential and formation. It seems that Arnold and his followers do not separate culture from life, knowledge from ethical purpose, and the arts from moral significance (Thiher, 2005, p.8).

Even though this discussion could be further extended to cover other advocates of liberal education such as Eliot, Leavis, Oakeshott and Scruton, it will be limited here to the aforementioned thinkers as representatives of the prevailing spirit of this generally Arnoldian liberal tradition.

6.2 Economic determinism, sociological determinism and other oppositions to the literary focus of liberal education

There are various sources of opposition to the liberal and Great Books traditions. The main source is a contemporary utilitarian or instrumental approach to education that has focused more upon training than education. Much of this utilitarianism and instrumentalism has been driven by the modern global economic growth that Hutchins calls economic determinism. Ian Martin (2009, pp.3–5) explains:

We are increasingly exposed – and expected to conform – to the hegemony of technical rationality and narrowly conceived and economic forms of vocationalism and competence [...] To a greater or lesser extent, we are forced to operate in an educational market place in which knowledge becomes commodified and credentialised, and educational institutions and agencies exist in relationships of competition rather than co-operation or collaboration with one another[...] This market place – and, in particular, its workers – are subjected to the rigours of the new managerialism, enforcing an accountant’s view of the world in which we seem to know the cost of everything and the value of nothing.[...] There is a growing and seductive tendency to celebrate the authenticity of personal experience rather than test its social and educational significance.[...] Despite its undoubted potential, the enthusiasm for information and communication technology (ICT) as the medium of instruction in adult education/learning raises crucial, if widely neglected, questions about the authority of the text, the privatisation of knowledge, the control of learning and the autonomy of the learner.

The consequence of such a situation is the emergence of a very different kind of culture from that which Arnold describes. A more instrumental or therapeutic approach to education has emerged that seems mostly concerned with helping people ‘survive’ or cope with this economic determinism in an alternative *modus vivendi*

(Hutchins, 1955). Such culture leaves little time or space for the indulgences of liberal education. On the other hand, it also results in loss of morale, or in demoralisation in the sense of ‘stripping out morality from our lives (in a way) that leads to a loss of purpose...the loss of belief in what might yet be possible’ (Ecclestone & Hayes, 2009, pp.137–138; Martin, 2009, p.5).

Hence, with reference to the Great Books, without a liberal education that includes appreciation of great past and present artworks, not only will people lose sight of great moral and spiritual traditions, but they may also lack an important resource for the cultivation of moral sensibilities and virtues (Carr, 2005). Such a situation may have dangerous sociological consequences and result in a vicious cycle of cultural deprivation. That is to say, the aims of an instrumental education system may impede individual moral and spiritual formation. In turn, morally impoverished individuals will, as part of the wider social structure, impact upon their society with damaging effects. Eventually, such impoverished society must adversely influence the education system and its aims and processes for generations to come. If a culture excludes appreciation of great past and present artworks, then these artworks may gradually become completely unfamiliar and the role of education may change forever. Any liberal dimension of education that arts represent may come to be regarded as no more than an obstacle to the instrumental purposes of schooling. This argument is thoroughly underlined in Hutchins’s (1955) ‘*Great Conversation*’.

Furthermore, Hutchins argues that industrialization, specialisation, mechanization and technical rationality are ultimately – if not inherently – opposed to democracy, since in the conditions and process of economic determinism people may have many qualifications but are not ‘qualified to govern themselves’ (1955, p.56). While a healthy economy is inevitably the base of any successful society (as, for example, Marx forcefully argued), liberal education is needed to appreciate the true human meaning and value of prosperity, so that citizens are fit for democracy (ibid). Otherwise, economic determinism prevails, resulting in problems – such as the kind of anarchy against which Arnold, Hutchins and others have warned – that only the cultivation of moral virtue and the full development of the human spirit can effectively rectify (ibid). For ‘Great Books’ and other advocates of liberal learning,

literature and liberal arts offer a unique route to such civilised cultivation and development (see the chapter of this thesis on art and knowledge).

As previously said, economic determinism may lay behind the instrumental and vocational spirit of the contemporary social and educational system. But, in addition to this, what Hutchins (1955, pp.51–52) calls ‘sociological determinism’ reinforces a kind of alienation from full moral and spiritual potential that effective education in arts is well placed to resist. Hutchins (1955, p.51) argues:

As economic determinism holds that all activity is guided and regulated by the conditions of production, so sociological determinism claims that intellectual activity, at least, is always relative to a particular society, so that, if the society changes in an important way, the activity becomes irrelevant.

According to this view, liberal education may become irrelevant to society’s aims and, being regarded as irrelevant; it may also be given such dismissive labels as ‘elitist’.

For example, as Carr (2005, p.145) observes:

The contemporary liberal climate of suspicion of an allegedly elitist and socially exclusive traditional literary canon, combined with communitarian misappropriation of religious and other cultural narratives in the name of so-called ‘politics of recognition’ (see Taylor, 1994), has probably played a large part in reducing literature, the arts and humanities to a position of marginal educational significance in many if not most contemporary school curricula.

In this light, ‘Great Books’ are often regarded as elitist and socially exclusive – perhaps especially in contexts of oppression in which people are faced with subjection and deprivation (Hutchins, 1955). In such contexts, where it is perhaps more important task to promote basic justice and human rights and/or to raise basic standards of living, a liberal education may be considered redundant or utopian. However, as soon as people are free from economic and other burdens in these contexts, then the value of a liberal education may be more apparent, because instrumentally useful education/training is no longer so desperately required. To be sure, a liberal education cannot solve all of a society’s problems: its purpose is rather to cultivate and enhance the human perspectives and sensibilities that may promote a sane and civilised response to individual and social problems. Rousseau underlines

this point by arguing that an educator should be concerned with educating human beings as such, irrespective of the professional or vocational expectations or prospects of the pupil – precisely, because education is a more about becoming human than learning (like an animal) to ‘survive’ (from Rousseau’s *Emile* in Hutchins, 1955, p.68).

Still, some might suggest that liberal arts would consume important time that might otherwise be used to train people to earn a living. But whatever the human importance of earning a living it should not be used to warrant a narrow focus on vocational or other training that would preclude the wider (liberal) education that defines us as really human. Furthermore, the need to make a living should not be used to justify depriving those in more trying economic circumstances from exposure to the benefits of wider cultural resources that are more spiritually enriching. In this respect, Doris Lessing (Crown, 2007, Guardian news) makes an ironic plea for the importance of a liberal education, wondering: ‘*Why do wealthy students of England have less desire for books than poor students in southern Africa or other parts of the third world?*’.

Arnold (1960, p.245) might respond with the following:

I remember, only the other day, a good man [...] said to me: ‘The one thing really needful is to teach these little ones to succour one another, if only with a cup of cold water, but now, from one end of the country to the other, one hears nothing but the cry for knowledge, knowledge, knowledge!’ And yet surely, so long as these children are there in these festering masses, without health, without home, without hope, and so long as their multitude is perpetually swelling, charged with misery they must still be for us, charged with misery they must still be for us, whether they help one another with a cup of cold water or no; and the knowledge how to prevent their accumulating is necessary, even to give their moral life and growth a fair chance!

Having said this, it might be that even if all agree that an introduction to the Great Books and liberal arts is humanly beneficial, it may also be a sociological and political problem as to whether it is possible for everyone to receive or be provided with such an education (according to the democratic ideal). In past times, such education was regarded as only appropriate for those who had leisure time, political rights and power. However, if at that time it was thought that the best education was

only for the ‘best’ (elite), why should it not, in a democratic society, be thought that equal access to the best education be available to all? (Hutchins, 1955).

Still, it may also be argued that a liberal introduction to arts and Great Books is elitist due to its emphasis on classics and high arts. However, turning towards a liberal education, arts and Great Books is not necessarily about the exclusive defence of high arts and/or attacking present day popular culture – especially, bearing in mind that many high arts of the present day were formally popular culture e.g. Aristophanes’ *Frogs* or Verdi’s operas. It is perhaps more about cultivating receptivity to art and culture which connects people with all that is best about human cultural inheritance. It is upon such continuity between the past and the present that any and all true sense of human identity depends. As T.S Eliot (1986, p.16) argued:

The difference between the present and the past is that the conscious present is an awareness of the past in a way and to an extent which the past's awareness of itself cannot show.

This continuity is less likely to be preserved, if at all, through mass culture, most of which, as Peter Abbs (2003) observes, appears to serve commercial rather than educationally formative ends. Moreover, the distance between these commercial and educational ends is about as far as the distance between philosophy and entertainment. And it can hardly be denied that much of the entertainment of present day popular culture is not generally conducive to educational ends. Indeed, much of present day mass culture seems aimed mainly at promoting relatively ‘mindless’ and commercially driven consumerism, focused on spectacles of simulated sex and violence with little real human meaning or value. Peter Abbs (2003, p.39) takes the extreme view that this culture is surrogate, analgesic and deprives people of: (i) the appreciation of real art; (ii) the fulfilment of their spiritual potential; and (iii) any cultural insights that might enrich and expand their experience of the world. As he puts it (ibid):

Millions of lives are daily dissipated in the endless simulacra of manipulated desire. In the vast machine of pseudo-gratification every object becomes deprived of its intrinsic virtue: William Blake becomes a plastic bag, Van Gogh a drinking mug, Frida Kahlo a jigsaw. This massive erosion of meaning is deeply repressive of spirituality.

This cultural and artistic predicament may be exacerbated by the fact that Great Books and liberal arts have been widely identified ‘with dead languages, arid routines, and an archaic, pre-scientific past’ (Hutchins, 1955, p.59). On this view, the march of progress might be speeded up by getting rid of such outdated knowledge and by using science for the dual aim of promoting technological progress and curing the social ills that industrialisation has brought in its wake (ibid).

In addition, people may think worse of Great Books when teachers fail to uncover their magic, richness and cultural significance, focusing rather too much on the literary or grammatical technicalities of Latin, Greek or English. This may happen either because teachers have an unclear view of the educational significance of such works or because they are under pressure to prepare their pupils for the more educationally arid or pedestrian requirements of school examination and certification. Indeed, the consequences of such pressure are discernible in what Hutchins (ibid) observes of American schooling: that there is often little real difference in the final outcome between ‘uneducated’ and ‘educated’.

Moreover, another source of confusion in popular art and educational policy about the value of Great Books and liberal education is a supposed opposition between culture and the self. As argued by the likes of Eliot (Reid, 2010 p.115), true self-awareness should exhibit some continuity with cultural tradition. Real emotional, moral and spiritual development is a matter of gradual discovery of the self through the treasure-trove of cultural inheritance. However, contemporary focus on self-discovery in the arts and art education has often led to self-expressive self-indulgence with little scope for real artistic and spiritual growth. As Abbs (2003, pp.49–51) observes:

... a psychological paradigm of the present tense: of personal learning, of immediate process, of sincerity and of spontaneity with as little formal mediation as possible. According to this powerful and animating paradigm the teacher was essentially the releaser of child’s innate creativity through acts of self-expression and self-discovery [...] Consistent with this model of arts teaching nearly all the necessary resources were seen to reside in the natural self, not in the collective culture and not in the specific art form the teacher was claiming to teach. One released; one did not initiate, nor transmit. Not surprisingly in the late 1970s and early 1980’s English and drama reconceived themselves as learning media and went across the curriculum. [...] At such a point the art teacher becomes a therapist while the discipline if the art disappears

into an infinitely tolerant yet hopelessly misguided psychology. On the one side self, on the other art; on the one side expression, on the other side tradition; on the one side private, on the other public.

6.3 Conclusion and the way forward

The American and British Great Books tradition may seem outdated, but in the light of education systems which fail to develop the full moral and other potential of students, the liberal spirit of these traditions may still hold much educational promise. A look, not only directly at society and its problems, but also at current research proves that it is now more important than ever to change the direction of education. According to a recent Cambridge interim report on primary education (BBC, 2009, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/7896751.stm>), reported to be the largest independent inquiry into English primary education for 40 years, contemporary British primary education is too narrow and generally deficient in the following respects:

It [the report] calls for an urgent debate about the purpose of primary education. The report says inadequacies in the primary curriculum stem from a mistaken belief that breadth in the curriculum is incompatible with improved standards in the 'basics' of maths, literacy and numeracy. History, geography, science and the arts have been 'squeezed out', it argues. The report's authors suggest learning in primary schools is skewed towards subjects which are formally tested in the national tests, used to draw up league tables. It calls testing 'the elephant in the curriculum', noting that in Year 6 especially, the final year of primary school, 'breadth competes with the much narrower scope of what is to be tested.' Professor Robin Alexander, director of the Cambridge Primary Review, said: 'Our argument is that their [children's] education, and to some degree their lives, are impoverished if they have received an education that is so fundamentally deficient.

In the light of such evidence, lessons may be learned from the past. To be sure, one has to be careful about the spirit of past education here; much of it may have been more like that of Dickens's notorious headmaster Gradgrind than Arnold's sweetness and light. However, many past educational philosophers and theorists of note have advocated a view of education focused on the pursuit of intellectual excellence, wisdom, moral goodness and self-knowledge. Hume (1985, p.237), for example, mentions that the same treasures that Greek and Romans were able to enjoy and appreciate may still be of great moral and spiritual benefit to modern day pupils –

irrespective of the great social and technological changes that have overtaken modern cultures; so, as he (1985, p.238) states: ‘*while the world endures, they maintain their authority over the minds of men*’. In other words, great literature embodies the wisdom of the past and is fertile ground for enduring insights into the human condition. Great literature may help readers to see the world with the insight of past and present day writers and to derive inspiration from their wisdom. There is undeniable wisdom in the works of e.g. Eliot, Goethe, Shakespeare, Dante, Ovid, Sappho and Homer – as well as in the myths of antiquity on which all these authors have drawn. The benefits of such wisdom are not only, of course, to be found in the moral development of learners; but literature and arts may be expected to play a central role in such development. Such development, undoubtedly, is not an easy task, since moral learning is often – as Plato and Aristotle both argued – a difficult matter. But as Whitehead (Hutchins, 1955) and Hutchins (1955) have pointed out, if teaching wisdom from a book was an easy task, there would be a danger that the book was of no real educational value anyway. This recalls the saying ‘no pain, no gain’, and much of the same thought probably lies behind Robert Frost’s that (2002, p.219) well-known line in the poem ‘*The road not taken*’ that: ‘...*Two roads diverged in a wood, and I /I took the one less travelled by/And that has made all the difference...*’ Enjoyable or ‘fun’ learning is currently very fashionable in education. However, apart from the obvious motivational benefits of such learning, there is the ever present danger of possible curricular neglect or exclusion of those educational elements that are not so readily perceived as fun. A Shakespeare play may initially be very difficult to appreciate and not immediately fun; but this does not warrant neglect or omission of such educationally significant and powerful works (Hutchins, 1955; Russell in Hutchins, 1955). The true way forward lies in better pedagogical appreciation and cultivation of the intellectual and artistic meaning of such works (ibid). If carefully promoted, this approach may well result in radical moral and spiritual transformation of human lives (Abbs, 2003, p.83). Such transformation also probably seldom follows from latter day ‘cramming’ for examinations.

It is when arts go beyond what R. S Peters (1986, p.32 & p.71) called ‘inert’ knowledge – knowledge or information of purely ‘external’ educational value – that

they begin to have real educational impact and value. This is the power of great literature when it is well taught. This makes a case for a more central place for great literature in the curriculum of contemporary schooling. If the aim of (liberal) education is human excellence, then Great Books and liberal arts may claim to be the most precious jewel in the crown of education. Having analysed in this chapter how the lack of liberal education and the influence of socioeconomic determinism threaten to diminish human potential, the place of arts in general education becomes a matter of human urgency. In retrospect, if a society aims to be democratic, Great Books and liberal arts may offer the best means to democratic education (Hutchins, 1955, p.50):

The democratic ideal is equal opportunity for full human development, and, since the liberal arts are the basic means of such development, devotion to democracy naturally results from devotion to them. On the other hand, if acquisition of the liberal arts is an intrinsic part of human dignity, then the democratic ideal demands that we should strive to see to it that all have the opportunity to attain to the fullest measure of the liberal arts that is possible to each.

Chapter 7

7. Justification and critiques of the arts in the school curriculum

7.1 Clarifying 'education'

Education is a contested notion which may have both wider and narrower senses covering a wide range of intrinsic and/or extrinsic developmental concerns and purposes. Various distinctions – between (for example) education and learning, education and schooling, education and training, education and 'educatedness' – are helpful in clarifying the nature and meaning of those various processes generally referred to by the term 'education'.

First, it is common for the term 'education' to be used in loose ways to mean any experience that may result in some sort of learning e.g. the friends of a groom-to-be may call a 'stag-night' party a pre-marital 'education' for the groom (Carr, 2003b). On the other hand, it may be used more specifically to refer to the pursuit of certain activities of 'cultural' or value – involving knowledge of the good life – which may be concerned with (for example, according to Kant (Jesus, 2006)): discipline, civilized association and morality. Looking more closely at the looser use of 'education', it seems that it lacks much clear theoretical significance since not all that can be learned or acquired is educationally worthwhile. Such a wide definition of education seems to confuse education with learning as such; but, whereas non-human animals clearly learn many things, we would not readily speak of them as 'educated' (Carr, 2003b). Thus, narrower and more specific concepts of education may be needed to help us to be clear about the kinds of learning that schools – as well as other educational bodies and agents – should aim to provide. We may be sure that they cannot and should not promote anything and everything, and therefore the loose inclusive definition earlier described needs revising for more a more useful account of education (ibid).

The issue of what should be taught in schools raises further questions concerning the relationship of education to training (whether they are the same or different); whether

school learning can be mis-educational or educationally deficient; whose aims are served by education; whether a formal curriculum is an educational necessity; what particular subjects a curriculum should include; what the educational benefits are of particular curriculum subjects; who should determine the content of the curriculum; and so on. To address all these issues comprehensively is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, attention to two philosophical and educational approaches to these questions may serve to identify some of the crucial issues and we may refer to these as ‘instrumentalism’ and ‘non-instrumentalism’. Instrumentalism is often associated with utilitarian views, and non-instrumentalism with more liberal ones. Matthew Arnold – the founder of modern liberal educational thought – defended his explicitly liberal perspective as an alternative to the threats of utilitarianism. He argued that education should be about a broad initiation into culture defined as ‘the best that has been thought and said in the world’ (Gribble, 1967, p.150). Carr (2005, p.137) suggests that Arnold’s view is very important in so far as it addresses four key educational points:

First, his conception of education is one of wider moral formation rather than narrow vocational or other training. Second, he appears to have construed such moral education more in terms of the cultivation of refined sensibilities and attachment to civilized values than of routine conformity to extant social norms. To that extent, such education might be expected to have an affective as well as a cognitive dimension. Third, Arnold also held that a certain quality of personal regard for what is learned is presupposed to the cultivation of such sensibilities and attachments. In short, learners need to appreciate what is learned for its own intrinsic or inherent worth. But fourth, although learners may indeed come to value any form of knowledge, understanding or skill for its own sake (including scientific and technical knowledge), such inherently non-instrumental, affective and aesthetic components of the curriculum as literature and the arts (as well as such other subjects such as history and religion) have an especially privileged part to play in the formation of personally and/or morally formative values.

A modern liberal account of the meaning of education may be also found in the work of the British philosopher R.S. Peters who drew a distinction between education and other processes of human learning or formation such as socialization, therapy and training (Carr, 1988, p.155; Carr, 2003b, pp.197–198). Peters adopts a normative account of education as broad initiation into forms of objective knowledge and understanding that enable learners to make rational or ‘disinterested’ sense of the world and their place in it (ibid). Such knowledge is to be valued for its own sake

rather than for extrinsic purposes, and therefore 'education' differs from vocational and other forms of training. Whilst trained people may be trained for particular practical purposes, educated people are educated for its own sake in the view of Peters and other liberal theorists who support non-instrumental education. On this view, therefore, it may be misleading or to miss the point to ask what 'education' is for. This non-instrumental view questions the educational place of specialization, and underlines the importance of broad knowledge, implying that a person who is an expert in only one subject, but entirely ignorant of others can hardly – if at all – be regarded as really educated. In this separation of training from education, Peters affirmed the importance of academic or 'theoretical' knowledge over vocational and other skills.

This liberal non-instrumental view of education was supported by such post-war British analytical educational philosophers as Richard Peters and Paul Hirst (Carr, 1988). Paul Hirst (1986, p.8) has said that '*when Richard Peters began his outstanding work in philosophy of education the subject barely existed in Britain as a distinct academic and professional area.*' A feature of Peters' work was that '*explorations of interconnections between knowledge, belief, truth and evidence were harnessed to classroom-level issues of learning and the curriculum*' (White & White, 2001, p.17). In curriculum development, on Peters view, the aims of education were to be determined by reference to what constitutes human flourishing and good living. As for Socrates, the key question would be that of what counts as a successful, fulfilled life. While some have suggested that there are no objective standards to determine this, others have argued to the contrary. Socrates and Plato were among the first to regard the acquisition of 'rich' knowledge as the key to understanding education. Peters and Hirst (1970) broadly follow them in arguing that *knowledge* is fundamental to conceiving and pursuing any humanly worthwhile life. Hirst (1970, p.13) stated that '*educating people suggests developing in states of mind which are valuable and which involve some degree of knowledge and understanding*'. Hirst also argued that this educationally valuable knowledge might be understood in terms of seven basic forms of rational knowledge and understanding (ibid). Even though Hirst and Peters think that there is some room for other more instrumental forms of

learning, the *educational* curriculum should for them be primarily concerned with introducing students to these seven forms of knowledge – usually identified as: (i) understanding of formal logic and mathematics, (ii) understanding of the physical/natural sciences, (iii) awareness of our own and other people’s minds, (iv) moral judgement and awareness, (v) objective aesthetic experience, (vi) religious and (vii) philosophical understanding (ibid).

Such liberal views may be challenged from various perspectives, some of which question: (i) the intrinsic worth of knowledge; (ii) the objectivity of knowledge; and (iii) the idea of ‘broad initiation’ in general (see Carr, 2003b; Pring, 1995). Starting with the last challenge, Mary Warnock (1973, 1977) questions the idea of ‘broad initiation’, arguing that this may result in sterile and superficial acquaintance with a range of subjects, which of course would be useless for any practical purpose. On this view, it seems over-strict to say that the educated are only those who have been broadly initiated. Warnock (ibid; also in Carr, 2003b, p.199) concludes that it is better for pupils to leave school with a ‘genuine enthusiasm’ for some *particular* form of knowledge or learning. Such a view might be reinforced by the existence of electronic and other information ‘banks’ with endless data that might make any attempt to master a broad range of knowledge redundant (if ‘broad range’ here applies to the acquisition of propositional knowledge which may sometimes mean no more than ‘inert’ information).

However, criticisms of an account such as Peters’ may also come from instrumentalists (Carr, 2003). Whereas non-instrumentalists take a more liberal view and value education for its own sake as a process that contributes to the formation of individual personal identity and character, instrumentalists regard education in schools as a form of *training* that prepares students for their social and economic future. Whereas the former argue that initiating students into forms of knowledge is important for understanding the world and the individual’s place in it, the latter consider training students in appropriate knowledge and skills as necessary in competing for a ‘successful’ place in the world. Here, a distinction between ‘person-centred education’ which focuses on personal development, and society-centred pedagogy (Hinchcliffe, 2001, pp.34–38) may also be relevant. To be sure, this

distinction is not sharp since, for example, personal development of character and virtues may be reconciled with a more instrumentalist political emphasis on the role of humans as economically useful citizens (ibid). Again, liberal educationalists such as John White would also argue that all instrumental justifications must logically lead to some things that are valued for their own sake: that is to say that even knowledge and skills of extrinsic value may ultimately aim towards goals of intrinsic value such as pleasure, happiness or success (Carr, 2003b). But these thoughts are not exactly those of Peters who would argue that the intrinsic value of objective knowledge consists mainly in the potential of such knowledge to make students better people in some more significant moral sense (ibid). Thus, although White's argument that all knowledge may finally lead to states of intrinsic value may be true, not all intrinsic value would be necessarily of educational value in Peters' sense (ibid).

Still, Peters' distinction between education and training has also attracted criticism from Marxist, Deweyan and other philosophical and ideological quarters. As Carr (2003b, p.200) comments:

According to such philosophers, Peters' (alleged) separation of training from education has led to widespread denigration of vocational skills, a failure to recognise the rich intellectual and moral, as well as economic, contribution that such skills have to make to human flourishing, and hence also their rightful place in any well-conceived school curriculum.

However, Carr (2003b, p.201) also continues:

Indeed, idealist, pragmatist and communitarian claims that knowledge is a matter of social construction in the service of all too local human interests clearly does much to reinforce an educational instrumentalism that insists education is just a means to the achievement of particular social and cultural goods and goals. In this light, since different cultural constituencies have diverse if not incommensurable goals, any answer to the question about the meaning of education is liable to differ from one location to another: education is essentially contested and cannot have universal meaning.

Such a criticism raises the fundamental issue of whether there can be objectivity of knowledge and truth, something that will be explored more thoroughly in the next chapter in connection with the arts. However, arguments that all knowledge requires

empirical support (positivism), is a matter of social agreement (social constructivist non-realism) or of practical utility (pragmatism), are all (in different ways) vulnerable to the objection that apparent evidence, social consensus and the social character of meaning are not sufficient for truth (ibid, p.204). There are occasions on which claims are backed by interpersonal or social agreement, apparent evidence or utility but are still at odds with the truth. Indeed, arguments may be valid, but still untrue. Thus, an appropriate epistemological response to positivism and social-constructivist non-realism might be (ibid):

A critical realism that combines appreciation of the social constructedness and provisionality of our best current knowledge with due recognition that the windows of human reason and perception (when cleansed) can lead us beyond the veil of sociocultural conditioning to locally transcendent (moral as well as scientific) truth and wisdom.

Epistemic objectivism is therefore important because it recognises the significance of education for moral and spiritual emancipation beyond local cultural norms, giving a 'universal' value to education (ibid, p.205). That is to say, epistemic objectivism gives education the potential to assist learners to truths about themselves, their relationships with the others and their place in the world. In this way, education goes beyond economic utility or successful citizenship. At the same time, the fundamental goal (of truth) is not external to the person. The goal is precisely personal development in terms of development of virtue and moral understanding. Carr (ibid) criticizes a certain modern interpretation of virtue-Ethics '*influenced by a fashionable, but misguided communitarian construal of virtue, as instrumental to particular socially defined practices and purposes*' which fails to appreciate the objective nature of virtuous character. Such virtue relativism is arguably misguided, in so far as the ancients (Socrates, Plato and Aristotle) argued for the inherent and intrinsic value of virtue; that is for the value of becoming a virtuous person as such. Nevertheless, non-instrumental approaches to education do not exclude the broader or looser 'educational' value or necessity of instrumental knowledge, since education is one function of schooling, and schooling will involve forms of training as well as education (Carr, 2003b).

Indeed, in a broader sense, the term ‘education’ is often used to refer to the general process of schooling. Notwithstanding such usage, not all schooling does seem to be ‘educational’ in the ‘liberal’ sense of having ‘intrinsic’ purposes. Schooling in the familiar sense is about all the processes that take place in schools as social institutions, which may cover formal, non-formal and informal forms of learning. Again, the term ‘education’ may also be more widely employed to embrace lifelong-education, a term that is less easily used in connection with schooling (e.g. the idea of lifelong-schooling is rather odd). However, the aims of schooling usually coincide with the content and targets of established school curricula that are in turn wider than ‘education’ understood in Peters’ liberal sense. Thus, a school curriculum could include various activities and purpose such as (Carr, 2006a): (i) general care, welfare and supervision; (ii) socialization; (iii) life and coping skills; (iv) vocational education and training; (v) examinations and certification; and (vi) ‘education’ as learning for its own sake. In Pring et al’s (2009, pp.102–103) broad definition of education, a curriculum framework may consist of the following areas: knowledge and understanding of the world; practical capability and learning; community related learning; big issues such as environmental change; moral seriousness; pursuit of excellence in various areas; self-awareness; careers education and guidance. In short, schools – unlike education – are funded social institutions that are publicly accountable and serve diverse purposes including – inevitably, but still importantly – socialization, training and welfare (ibid). Nevertheless, the aims of liberal education, such as initiation into intellectual and moral commitments, should not be neglected in all of this. Such purposes should not be forgotten, not only for the sake of justice to the diverse aims of schooling, but also for their vital contribution to the wider educational development of young people. That is to say, although students should be given access to as a wide a variety of life choices and opportunities in school as possible, they should also be educated to evaluate such opportunities and choices in the light of some broader educated conception of a flourishing life. In order to clarify this point, some further attention to the concept of vocational education and the distinction between vocational training, vocational education and education (in the liberal sense) will now be given.

While vocational education is not a clear concept, it seems broader than that of vocational training (Carr, 2003b). Vocational training is necessary for the preparation and pursuit of fulfilling work, work that can be mindless and unfulfilling if students are not educated widely enough to understand the purpose of what they are doing. In any case, sterile training in skills and competences is not adequate for the acquisition of skills relevant to many forms of work. In this spirit, however, a certain ‘new vocationalism’ attempts to blur the distinction between education and vocational training. Essentially this view of vocational education aims to bridge the gap between academic knowledge and practical skills in the school curriculum – arguing that both are essential for fulfilment of the full potential of the working person (ibid, p.206). Despite this laudable aim, new vocationalism may still fail to recognise that even acquisition of such theoretical vocational understanding or expertise is not enough to call a trained individual ‘educated’. ‘Educatedness’ requires ‘broad initiation’ and ‘*intrinsic commitment to knowledge, understanding and virtue of the liberal kind that Peters identifies, and not just vocational and other training*’ (Carr, 2003b, p.206). As Peters argued, such broad educational initiation extends far beyond, and has quite different purposes from, such external vocational goals as job efficiency or satisfaction (let alone financial gain).

The distinction of education from schooling is important precisely because there is an ever present instrumentalist danger of confusing education with schooling, leading to the inclusion of only practically ‘useful’ subjects in the school curriculum. On the other hand, of course, there is also a liberal non-instrumentalist danger of confusing schooling with (liberal) education, and regarding only personally formative and non-instrumentally valuable modes of knowledge as developmentally significant (Carr, 2003b). Broad non-instrumental initiation should not preclude specialization and vocationally useful processes and purposes, or vice versa. That said, such broader liberal initiation should also be regarded as an essential ‘right’ of the many, rather than a ‘privilege’ of the few. In this regard, as Carr (2003b, p.210) says:

It is difficult if not ultimately impossible to accommodate individual educational needs entirely satisfactorily to any normative generalities of the kind dreamed up by educational theorists and curriculum policy makers. [...]. But in this respect the liberal educational strategy of broad initiation may be no worse off than any other, and it may

well be rather better placed than many of its competitors if we are seriously committed to the moral task of trying to realise the full human potential of the many rather than the few.

7.2 Traditionalism and generic arts

Often linked to liberal education, educational traditionalism is a perspective that lays considerable emphasis on the value of established traditions of thought and enquiry and on the transmission of such knowledge and values from one generation to the next (Carr, 1988, pp.152–153). Traditionalists tend to regard received forms of knowledge as objective accounts of the world. In this sense, past educational curricula in many countries have been broadly traditionalist. Hirst's own liberal traditionalist approach to the curriculum also directly influenced the subject-centred approach to the post-war Scottish secondary curriculum. Support for the secondary subject curriculum in Scotland came from The Munn Committee curriculum report (1977; 1978, p.6) which is here cited as in many respects typical of the spirit of other British reports and curriculum publications (such as Arts in Schools Project of 5–16: Curriculum framework).

The subject-based approach to the curriculum has been firmly established in Scottish secondary schools for many years. The Committee recommends that the basic unit of study remains the individual subject but with a number of qualifications [...]The recommendation of the Committee is that all pupils should undertake study in each of seven areas: English, mathematical studies, physical education, moral and religious education, science and technology, social sciences and creative arts'.

Despite a discernible 'progressive' influence on latter day Scottish primary education (from the 1965 Primary Memorandum) – and the recent Scottish *Curriculum for Excellence* developments – the Hirst-influenced Munn model still has distinct echoes in the current Scottish secondary curriculum components of languages, mathematics, health and wellbeing, religious and moral education, sciences and technologies, social sciences and *Expressive Arts* (though the key components have now become eight with the addition of technology). Having said this, it is also true that from the beginning the Munn report supported its traditional subject-centred approach to curriculum planning by appeal to rather *instrumental* justifications (regarding the use-value of knowledge to the individual and/or society).

Moreover, the general subsuming of arts education in the Munn Report and other Scottish educational developments under such generic terms as '*Expressive Arts*' or 'creative arts', whereby such diverse fields as art and design, music, drama, dance and physical education are regarded as having common epistemic or rational features, is clearly problematic (Carr, 1988). However, according to policy makers or philosophers such as Hirst, it is the *aesthetic* form of arts rather than the connection of arts with creativity that encourages curriculum planning for a general or 'generic' arts experience.

While this idea of 'generic arts' has been very influential (e.g. in educational policy documents), it has also been much criticized. Mary Warnock (1994), for example, has argued that the idea of generic - scientific and/or artistic - forms of knowledge does not adequately take into consideration the significant rational and epistemic differences between different sciences and/or art forms. However, David Best (1992) has more particularly condemned the idea of generic arts, considering the term to be an 'expedient myth' that fails to appreciate the distinctiveness and the potential power of individual arts, and also leads to dangerously confused ideas about arts on the part of students. To be sure, Best (ibid; also 1980; 1985) would agree that arts *are* forms of knowledge in which artistic form serves to illuminate knowledge of what he calls '*life issues*' (a contribution of the arts that will be discussed in due course). Moreover, in using the phrase '*expedient myth*', Best (1992, pp.27–44) appears to be suggesting: (i) that the term 'generic arts' is fallacious; but nevertheless (ii) that such fallacy could be in some way 'desirable'. With regard to the second point, Best (ibid) does seem to believe that the 'entertainment value' of much art risks undervaluing the educational status of the arts compared to 'more useful' scientific and other subjects. In short, the present day utilitarian ethos favours other disciplines that are regarded as more useful and practical for society (e.g. science and technology). At worst, this leads to the 'sidelining of arts', and at best results in use of them as tools for the promotion of 'more useful' capacities and knowledge. Furthermore, such other subjects and areas may be easier to assess than the educational outcomes of the arts. For these reasons, it does sometimes seem to Best (ibid) that it may be easier or

more convenient for policy makers to aggregate the arts, even if this is a rather superficial approach to them.

For Best (ibid), however, the notion of generic arts *is* a fallacy, as it is based on the mistaken idea that all arts share common characteristics that distinguish them from (say) scientific and other enquiries. Of course, arts do have distinctive characteristics and structures. Nevertheless, the words ‘art’ and ‘arts’ do not identify any distinctive characteristic or feature of arts taken as a whole. Indeed, there is no characteristic common to arts that cannot be found in other areas of knowledge and enquiry; either with regard to the aesthetic dimension or to the mental or other processes that are involved in artistic practice – such as imagination, or creativity. Such capacities, qualities and processes are after all central to learning across all areas of the curriculum, and are not therefore distinctive only of arts. Moreover, the term ‘art’ is for Best used far too widely and vaguely (e.g. the art of cooking or the art of breast-feeding) to be useful for generic justification of arts (ibid).

In this respect, generic justification takes a superficial view of the art experience and fails to appreciate the depth and complexity of particular arts. To be sure, Best (ibid) does recognise that co-operation between arts and/or attempts to integrate arts may be educationally beneficial; but he sees that there is nothing more to such integration and co-operation than there would be to the integration and co-operation of other disciplines within the school curriculum. Furthermore, really fruitful co-operation between art or arts and other curriculum areas could only be a secondary approach, since such co-operation or integration logically presupposes education in particular art forms such as literature, painting or dance. However, in relation to the general idea of generic arts, Best (1992, p.42) wonders: *‘do we opt for one or two arts in greater depth, or offer at most a basic introduction to all the arts, at the cost of relative superficiality?’* While Best recognises that either option has its advantages and disadvantages, he concludes that policy should advocate education in all the arts separately and in depth – since, he (ibid, p.43) argues they have the potential for *‘significant personality development and awareness of social and moral issues’*. In fact, Best (ibid) claims that the mistaken generic arts approach just noted provides no space for real arts education or for the development of true artistic appreciation.

7.3 Form, Expression and the 'Aesthetic'

Considered as one of Hirst's seven forms of knowledge, the term 'aesthetic' is problematic in its own right. It is often used widely and loosely in connection with the term 'artistic' (for distinction between these terms, see Best (1980; 1985) and/or the previous chapter of this thesis on knowledge). Conversely, it is often used in a more narrow sense to apply to the formal features of artworks. This is a narrow sense as compared, for example, to Noel Carroll's (1999) pluralistic view of art as encompassing representation, expression, form, aesthetic experience, and so on. As previously noted, Hirst seems to suggest that artworks employ artistic 'means' to the symbolic expression of propositional knowledge. This would suggest that the types of knowledge gained through, for example, reading novels and conducting scientific experiments are methodologically different, but nevertheless compatible and equally important, ways of accessing knowledge. Having said this, his position may also appear to justify arts in *instrumental* rather than intrinsic terms.

As previously explained, instrumental justifications of education concern the extrinsic or external socio-economic and other benefits of knowledge, skills and dispositions. From this perspective, arts education may aim to promote knowledge and skills that are not intrinsic to arts in themselves – such as various cognitive and social skills. However, such extrinsic positive effects of arts may often be achieved equally well or even better through other educational means and methods, suggesting that arts are not yet justified on their own terms. Thus, for example, dancing may be regarded as a pleasant form of exercise; but a team game may be considered a more effective exercise. From this perspective, the educational place of arts does not seem assured if arts are justified in extrinsic terms (Gingell, 2006).

Furthermore, as also previously seen, David Best (1980; see also McFee, 1994) underlined the important capacity of arts to convey and express truths about *life issues*. On this view, artworks may express human moral and socio-political issues that are of considerable educational significance – providing strong support for their curricular inclusion (also in Gingell 2006). But while this is an important point, it is also problematic for several reasons. First, there are many artworks that are not

exactly ‘about’ anything, but would still appear to be of considerable artistic merit. Even though Young (2001) would not entirely agree, we might think here of abstract painting or non-representational sculpture. Secondly, if the (propositional) content of works of art is of key importance, then why should we regard different artworks depicting the same subject as individually important, since they may all ‘say’ the same thing? For example, Gingell (2006, p.20) mentions that the majority of Vermeer’s valued paintings are mainly on the same topic: the sanctification of everyday life. Why then do we not only value highly this diversity of expression of common themes, but also revisit the same artworks again and again? In this light, there has to be something beyond the propositional ‘message’ of artworks, but also beyond any purely sensory pleasure in the arts that justifies their educational value. Despite this, John White (1998, p.194) seems to have agreed up to a point with Best in connection with the ethical aspect of the arts, in arguing that:

Experiences of art, in encouraging us to dwell on the springs of our ethical life, recommit us to what we value, thereby strengthening their role in our life, both individually and communally.

White, adopting elements of Hirst’s theory, has attempted to justify arts educationally on non-instrumental grounds, concluding that while people might (materially) flourish without art, they would nevertheless be culturally or educationally poorer in the absence of such acquaintance. Although Koopman (2005, p.88) criticises him for actually offering an *instrumental* justification, White (ibid) takes the view that the efforts of Osborne and Beardsley to justify the arts on aesthetic grounds is not satisfactory because: i) it is not true that aesthetic appreciation has more general appeal than the acquisition of knowledge for its own sake (as Osborne maintained) – since artworks involve more than sensuous and formal structures; and ii), engagement in artistic appreciation is not primarily aesthetic (so that, in that case, aesthetic experience cannot provide a basis for knowledge in arts). Still, White (ibid) argues that while aesthetic appreciation is not the key element of artistic experience (as Beardsley suggested), it is yet not entirely disconnected from it as he takes O’Hear to argue. White (Koopman, 2005, p.88) criticises O’Hear’s position which he identifies as making two claims as follows:

... (1) by means of its sympathetic re-enactments of anthropomorphic perspectives on the world, art can play a central role both in value enquiry and in coming to an understanding of the nature of one's own existence and the meaning available in it; (2) through its ability to resolve fundamental tensions in our existence, art can play a role in fostering harmony in one's existence (White, 1988, pp191–192).

White precisely holds that the first claim excludes the possibility of genuine aesthetic engagement with artworks above and beyond any ethical understanding and insight that artworks may provide. As for O'Hear's second claim, White is unsympathetic to the 'religious' connotations or overtones of his claim about bringing meaning and harmony into someone's life above and beyond everyday life experiences. While the religious connotations of art may be important to some people, White's criticism of O' Hear might seem fair, in so far as art could not have the form and functions of religion. In addition, art has educational value for all people irrespective of their religious beliefs (Koopman, 2005).

Still White also concludes that '*mirroring our psychic constitution, art invites ethical contemplation and enhances self-knowledge*' (Koopman, 2005, p.89). He continues that besides enlarging life options, education in the arts serves the purpose of fostering self-knowledge, reinforcing our ethical values and binding us together as members of communities. For these reasons, he believes that the arts should have a central place in the school curriculum (ibid). On the face of it, these arguments may also seem to be non-instrumental, in so far as the supposed aim of such artistic engagement is personal moral development within an aesthetic context. Further, the aesthetic appears to serve an ethical purpose in the manner of traditional educational aims of self-knowledge and moral development. Simply put, from White's point of view, form in art is a vehicle for ethical content.

However, the implied dichotomy between aesthetic form and (moral) content may be not only artificial – as will be argued shortly – but morally dangerous. For one thing, as Carr & Davis (2007, p.109) argue, it may entail failure to recognise that '*while aesthetically⁶ compelling literature and the arts is often morally unsettling in positive*

⁶ Following discussion with the author (Carr, D), the word 'artistically' would support the argument better. Otherwise, 'aesthetically' would mean here the aesthetic quality of the 'artistic'.

ways, aesthetically⁷ deficient literature and the arts can also be morally settling in negative and damaging ways'. The latter, for example, may result in the production of works which are: (i) not of high artistic value; and (ii) not morally worthwhile, but ethically deceitful – portraying, for example, the triumph of good over evil in morally shallow or trivial ways (ibid). The film of *Harry Potter* provides an example of a movie that is praised for its 'moral message' about the triumph of good over evil, but has attracted much criticism for its artistically and aesthetically shallow concept of good and evil. Superficially represented moral content may lower the artistic expectations of people who in turn will not be sensitive to complex artistic appreciation of deeper moral themes. While the distinction of aesthetic form from moral content may help us to appreciate such a danger, any over-sharp dichotomy between these may also be catastrophic for the educational appreciation of arts.

This dichotomy of form and content is also criticized by Koopman (2005), on the grounds that such dualism diminishes one aspect of the nature of arts (the form), while also taking an instrumental turn in viewing arts as merely a means to (moral or other) knowledge – even if such knowledge may be valued for its own sake. Koopman explains that the process of aesthetic experience is no less important than, or inseparable from, artistic content and he proceeds to suggest an approach for educational justification of the arts that is more clearly non-instrumental or intrinsic.

To this end, Koopman (ibid) re-introduces the idea of fulfilment as an artistic benefit sufficient for the justification of arts education. He construes fulfilment as a lifelong process that is less static and more complete than happiness or wellbeing. Koopman (ibid, p.92) combines Gadamer's with Dewey's definition of fulfilment, arguing that the one implies the other. On this view, a work of art is an episode of *fulfilled time* (Gadamer, 1977, pp.55–56) providing the possibility of systematic fulfilled or completed *aesthetic* experiences (Dewey, 1989): in sum, as a worthwhile activity that contributes to the fulfilment of someone's life. Such fulfilment is something, so Koopman argues, that policy makers neglect. As he explains (Koopman, 2005, p.93):

⁷ See footnote 6.

Educators and educational philosophers concentrate on bringing about certain states of affairs associated with happiness: possessing literacy and other basic skills, being independent economically, possessing moral virtues, being autonomous and so on. In this way, the conditions for leading a happy life tend to be reduced to a number of static factors. Life as time lived through remains outside of the picture. It is forgotten that, besides acquiring the knowledge, skills and dispositions that allow us to function normally in contemporary society, individuals will also need to develop activities that fulfil their time. Hence, educational policy makers have a wider responsibility than to secure the so-called basic subjects. They should also include in the curriculum a selection of activities that, though not necessary for subsistence, crucially can contribute to the fulfilment of one's life.

The differentiation between fulfilment and happiness here seems significant, because many activities may make people happy, without being fulfilling (Koopman, 2005). Some activities may even not make people feel happy, but may still be worthwhile as a means to fulfilment. Beyond the intense but transient satisfactions that people may find in this or that experience, there is a higher level of 'existential' fulfilment that may make life worth living (ibid, p.94): *'We experience not only intensity but feel as if we have broken through to new, superior domains of awareness [...] a strong qualitative change of consciousness'*. In addition to these worthwhile experiences, there is a further third level of fulfilment: that which is (often in religious contexts) envisaged as the ultimate aim of life (ibid). Arts may contribute, in a way that no other area of human experience can, to all three of these aspects of fulfilment. For one thing, they can certainly satisfy as creative and inspiring activities, going beyond the superficiality of sensory pleasure to affective and emotional satisfaction (ibid). Such benefit becomes more important in so far as art yields answers to, or provokes questions about, human nature and existence (that are relevant to all people). Thus great works of art touch upon people's innermost thoughts and feelings, transporting them to heights beyond the limits of ordinary experience (Koopman, 2005, p.95). In this respect, arts may contribute to a more intense appreciation or value of the mundane or ordinary events of life, or to more complex levels of metaphysical, transcendent, or redemptive awareness. While such awareness may not be explicitly 'religious', it may yet be characterised as a kind of higher spiritual appreciation of various aspects of ordinary or extraordinary human experience.

A previous chapter on knowledge explained how significant artworks may be sources of appreciation and inspiration that move and touch the human soul; in view of this, no further discussion of ‘how’ artworks succeed in doing this will be pursued at this point. However, if something like Koopman’s notion of fulfilment does provide a reasonable basis for the intrinsic educational justification of arts, then some systematic introduction to the various arts in schooling would seem to be important (ibid):

Extending and deepening their [students’] experiences can be achieved only by engaging them in activities that strengthen their acuity of perception, enhance their critical abilities and acquaint them with a wide range of art forms and styles. Initiation into artistic experience must fall within the province of well-developed education, yet many children are unlikely to receive anything very much of this other than at school. The conclusion is warranted, therefore, that arts education at school is desirable on the following grounds: (1) the arts allow for highly fulfilling experiences, (2) these experiences can be developed only through systematic training, and (3) only when such training is provided by general education can we be sure that every child will receive it.

At this point, it should be clear that such justification of the arts within school education is not only about training in capacities and skills – though the arts (as other disciplines) may be well-placed to provide this. It is rather a justification in terms of fulfilment-orientated non-instrumental values. This notion of fulfilment may sound vague or dubious, in so far as much of the school curriculum is assessment orientated. Given the difficulty of objectively assessing such potential of arts it may seem an unrealistic way to view arts education. But such criticism may also appear both irrelevant and unfair. Indeed, to question this potential of the arts might be to question life itself, in so far as art is on this view valued precisely for its power to help people understand life, and the arts are clearly themselves part of any worthwhile or fulfilling life. Gingell (2006) suggests something similar when he argues that art both constitutes and contributes to a fulfilling human life: on his view, the importance of arts lies in their contribution to human appreciation of the meaning of life as well as to the development of any skills that might be useful in life.

In this respect, the aesthetic and the ethical are certainly not unrelated. As Armstrong (2005, p.83) argues: *‘in apprehending aesthetic necessity, in giving ourselves up to it, in letting ourselves be moved by it, we are actually encountering, in the reality of*

felt experience, what it might be like to live the happy life'. Here, of course, 'happy' is used in the wide sense of 'fulfilling' already indicated in Koopman's theory. In this light, education in the arts is – ideally, according to Murdoch (1997, p.371), and contrary to the utilitarian spirit of the instrumentalist policy makers – '*a training in the love of virtue*'.

In the justification of education generally, or in the school curriculum in particular – including the arts – references to knowledge and moral value are clearly significant (Gingell and Brandon, 2001). Nonetheless, in opposition to any view of the arts as focused on knowledge and/or moral appreciation, Michael Oakeshott (1981; Fuller, 1989; Hinchliffe, 2001) argued that the world of art is not about offering wisdom but *wonder*. The world of art is *wonderful* because it is also *delightful*: art is wonderful and delightful where: (i) wonder is a feature, not an effect of contemplation; and (ii) delight is not reducible to pleasure. Thus, while Oakeshott might agree with what Koopman and Gingell suggest – that arts are part of life and constitute worthwhile activities that are intrinsically valuable and not merely means to some extrinsic end – he would disagree with Nussbaum and others in not regarding the primary significance of literature or arts as moral educational.

That said, when Oakeshott (1981, p.243) stated that '*Imaginative literature cannot offer thoughts about the world in general and about the conduct in life*'; he may not have meant that aesthetic experience is entirely irrelevant to the cultivation of moral character. Delight in the arts, and recollections of artworks that endure long after direct experience with them, may well be associated with personal moral sentiments and appreciations, even if these are not always or necessarily the intended outcomes of artistic experience. Moreover, Oakeshott admits that art has epistemic content in common with sciences and history, even though he denies that it is the main purpose of arts to contribute to inquiry about the world in the manner of these other disciplines (all involve some wonder of different nature though). Nevertheless, Williams (2002, p.169) criticises Oakeshott for failing to explain '*how the sensibility acquired through engagement within the world of aesthetic experience can inform and enrich the quality of practical experience*' – which he regards as important for several reasons. It is important, for example, because any artistic expression of

emotions, thoughts, and ideas cannot be entirely separated from the literal and narrative discourse of practical life in which such emotions, thoughts and ideas are naturally implicated. Indeed, any distinction between the emotional and aesthetic aspects of art cannot ignore their connection, especially when it comes to understanding the affective and psychological impact that aesthetic effects may have on an individual.

Oakeshott's suggestion that literature and arts should be studied for their aesthetic merit is important, however, in so far as there may be a danger in over-emphasizing the ethical aspect, and simply focusing on the propositional content of artwork (ibid). The trouble with those topic-based curriculum programmes which have this kind of emphasis is that they may result in mere social commentary that neglects the 'beauty' and real impact of the arts. As Gribble (1983, p.158) has said: *'to tear the 'thought' out of the delicate organic structure of a work of literature is to destroy it'*. What is destroyed is the aesthetic quality of the thought (Williams, 2002, p.165). Perhaps the main point here is that one cannot clearly distinguish the ideas, thoughts, emotions or other aspects of human psyche that are expressed in arts from their modes of artistic presentation: artistic form, content, activity, experience and outcome are inseparable. On this view, there is a danger in using arts as vehicles of moral and other knowledge apart from their aesthetic embodiments. To be sure, many works of literature or art do seem to set out to illuminate aspects of the human condition; but Oakeshott offers a useful corrective to liberal views on the contribution of the arts to education that over-emphasise the epistemic or moral content of artworks. However, Oakeshott's work may also offer powerful arguments against more recent 'progressive' educational trends.

7.4 Educational progressivism

From the mid-sixties onwards, 'progressive' or child-centred education changed the direction of British educational policy for decades to come (see, Plowden Report (1967), Scottish primary memorandum (1965), Cope (1983); for criticisms: Alexander Report (1975)). Such progressivism led to emphasis on qualities of self-expression, imagination, creativity, discovery learning, curriculum integration

(through themes, projects and environmental studies), open play learning contexts and more informal and personal teacher-pupil relations (Carr, Allison & Meldrum, 2006). The basic idea was that education should move away from the imparting of ‘inert’ or ‘sterile’ knowledge or information towards the promotion of the active learning of skills and capacities that might result in the production of socially and economically successful citizens. To be sure, even though there are educational progressives who also emphasized the intrinsic value of educational learning, most progressives of latter day educational policy making seem to have been more in favour of an *instrumental* conception of education (ibid).

In most respects, educational progressivism has stressed the importance of acquiring knowledge through experience and emphasised the practical utility of such knowledge. Certainly, one welcome consequence of progressive initiatives may be seen in the more relaxed, lively and attractive conditions of much contemporary (particularly primary) schooling. However, progressivism has also often promoted the following ideas – criticised and described as ‘dogmas’ by Carr (1988, p.160):

... (i) that genuine knowledge is exhibited essentially in certain capacities for practical problem solving, (ii) that interest at least in the initial stages of learning is best engaged by what falls naturally within the experience of children, (iii) that intellectual development is essentially a matter of progress through a sequence of qualitatively distinct modes of mental operation, and (iv) that the individual history of knowledge acquisition is also to be understood in terms of progress from an interest in what is concrete and particular towards what is formal and abstract.

In this progressive climate, educational policies have often proposed skills-based curricula. For example, the present-day curriculum in Scotland (which owes much to the progressive 1965 Primary memorandum) focuses on four key capacities that learners should be encouraged to develop: to be successful learners, effective contributors, confident individuals and responsible citizens (LTS, 2010f). Such focus largely emphasises the need for development of such capacities in various contexts of practical (scientific, social, economic, vocational) engagement, rather than in terms of development of knowledge for its own sake. As the curriculum has become orientated towards the development of these capacities, the arts (as one of the generic areas) have also often been given such practical or utilitarian justification. Indeed,

even where knowledge sometimes does appear to be emphasised for its own sake – through problem-solving or similar capacities and skills – such knowledge is more often scientific or other evidentially grounded knowledge rather than artistic, aesthetic and/or moral knowledge. At all events, two of the most common qualities that are used to justify arts in education/curriculum, are creativity and self-expression (Gingell, 2006).

The idea that it is the primary concern of arts to nurture creativity is regularly emphasised in educational policies – but in a very particular way. Creativity may have moral and other dimensions, but what is usually meant by the use of this term in policy making is that learning in arts is primarily a matter of active engagement in artistic and cultural activities by way of (for example) dance, music-making, painting and so on (ibid). However, such justification of the arts within education has been much criticised on various grounds. To begin with, it is not obvious that in order to be creative one needs to be educated as such. In addition, creativity may not always be educationally valuable. Furthermore, if to be creative means to be able to produce something ‘authentically’ – in so far as the process is often said to matter more than the product – then the quality of artistic processes and artworks may be seriously neglected or ignored (ibid). To be sure, focus on creativity for the sake of creative development as a (possible) skill does not exclude the possibility of producing a good piece of art, but any such quality may also be accidental (ibid).

An attempt at a more precise definition of creativity, however, was made by the report of British National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (1999): ‘All Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education’. According to this document, creative processes possess four characteristics (ibid, p.29):

First, they always involve thinking or behaving imaginatively. Second, overall this imaginative activity is purposeful: that is, it is directed to achieving an objective. Third, these processes must generate something original. Fourth, the outcome must be of value in relation to the objective.

This and other definitions (e.g. by Woods and Barrow, 1975) are rather wide and ‘inclusive’, but they also seem to set the standards excessively high with regard to originality (Gingell, 2006). First of all, the majority of learners are not gifted with the

extraordinary talents of original artists. Not many school learners are likely to become capable of producing much that is original. The same committee (Gingell, 2006, pp.9–14), recognising something of a problem here, proceeds to distinguish three different types of originality, namely: individual originality (in relation to own previous work), relative originality (in relation to peer and same age work (this category has degrees of more or less originality) and historic originality (in relation to any work of any time (which category has also degrees).

Still, such definition of originality – and therefore of creativity – still seems too wide, in so far as almost any learning may require some imaginative effort and result in items to which some value may be given (ibid). Such originality may draw on home-based cultural capital (in the case of children of educated or well-to-do parents), which may have value, but does not necessarily reveal any extraordinary creative achievements on the part of learners. It might to that extent be fairly unoriginal without opening up any new artistic avenues (ibid).

Peter Abbs (2003, pp.51–55) explains how a psychological paradigm of present-tense is the result of a historical process that however overlooks the importance of the past, with the following result:

...personal learning, of immediate process, of sincerity and of spontaneity with as little formal mediation as possible. According to this powerful and animating paradigm the teacher was essentially the releaser of child's innate creativity through acts of self-expression and self-discovery. Indeed, the term 'self-expression' is one of the key concepts of the old model, as is the related notion 'child-centred' [...] The arts are committed to a general learning process related to the psychological development of the child [...] for the new paradigm there was to be no quick passing through but more often a staying in, an in-dwelling, a deepening, a cultural centring. [...] Consistent with this model of arts teaching nearly all the necessary resources were seen to reside in the natural self, not in the collective culture and not in the specific art form the teacher was claiming to teach. One released; one did not initiate, not transmit. [...] Endless self-expression with little prospect of artistic advance. The dilemma was an inevitable outcome of an approach which tended to set up the terms 'self' and culture as opposites. At such a point the art teacher becomes a therapist while the discipline of the art disappears into an infinitely tolerant yet hopelessly misguided psychology. On the one side self, on the other art; on the one side expression, on the other side tradition; on the one side private, on the other public.

The present day outcome of this process is that bonds between education and culture are loosened and drawn further and further apart. The turn towards self-expression

indicates the rise of a therapeutic education. Ecclestone and Hayes (2009) regard this rise as dangerous for some of the reasons already given by Best, Carr, Koopman, Gingell and Abbs. For not only is the truly educational potential of arts not developed, but this approach to educational practice seems actually quite anti-educational. Ecclestone and Hayes (2009) add that despite any good intentions, this creates a curriculum of the self that makes learners feel vulnerable when they are low-achievers. Given the therapeutic turn, revealing their vulnerable selves to teachers and professionals makes such learners feel even more vulnerable and lowers their expectations. Such a situation cultivates a mentality according to which people need treatment, instead of education and development of their potential. Replacing education with treatment may result in replacing real fulfilment with pleasures in accordance with today's hedonistic and materialistic spirit. In addition, formal attempts to shape appropriate emotions or to promote such conceptions of happiness create an education system driven by mass media and commerce that is more like a business selling ways to 'happiness'. In short (Ecclestone and Hayes, 2009, p. xiii):

A diminished image of human potential opens up people's emotions to assessment by the state and encourages dependence on ritualised forms of emotional support offered by state agencies. Therapeutic education replaces education with the social engineering of emotionally literate citizens who are also coached to experience emotional well-being.

Such an approach presumes to make students happier by ridding them of the problems they have inherited from their past (from childhood, family environment, stress, low self-esteem and lack of confidence). The solution to such problems comes from rejecting the idea of reflective learning in preference of engagement with an alternative pleasurable world of favourable experiences or pursuit of easy 'success' in school or wider society. It seems that much latter day formal education adopts the following scheme: people have psychological problems which render them problematic and vulnerable; consequently, people need to be 'cured' and therefore education, in from of a culture of psychotherapy or shallow self-satisfaction, is the 'cure'. According to this approach individuals are to be regarded and treated as victims of: i) their environment; and/or ii) their own emotions (Ecclestone and Hayes, 2009, p.13).

The role of arts here is therefore either that of pleasurable entertainment or of emotional therapy. Art education becomes a matter of self-obsessed personal problem solving and permanent awareness of vulnerability in a culture of therapy. Ecclestone and Hayes (2009, p.137) characterise this as a ‘demoralising’ process which actually strips morality out of people’s lives by focusing on social and individual emotional problems with little or no concern for real moral development or moral concerns. Although there is much contemporary debate on *Ethics* and rights, such debate is largely conducted at a level of pragmatic or technical rationality that does not address real moral issues. Ecclestone and Hayes (2009, p.164) conclude that educational (and other) policies unfortunately resort to the mere ‘satisfaction’ of people who are regarded as emotionally problematic and are therefore as little more than patients to be cured. Such a superficial approach to well-being is questionable as it may be better – and of even more ethical and educational value – *‘to be a human dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; Better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied’*, as Stuart Mill argued (1863, p.140). Finally, with reference to the arts, the mere externalization of psychological states is *not* to be confused with the shaping of human affect, understanding of which is a common outcome of arts education. To understand students’ problems and needs is important; but Richardson’s (1948, p.13) claim: *‘I could free it, but I could not teach it’*, when reflecting on the policies and tendencies that underline the importance of self-expression and other psychological states, points to the danger of failing to fulfil the genuine educational potential of learners. To stimulate self-expression may be valuable, but this alone is not enough to develop learners’ true educational potential. For example, if someone sketched a self-portrait in order to express themselves (either randomly or regularly/systematically), this might well yield some sort of pleasure (pleasure of achievement or pleasure of self-expression); but there is no reason to suppose that it would contribute to the self-development of genuine education. Take the community in the film *Pleasantville* (1998), in which people are content, but only because they are blissfully ignorant of anything outside their ‘safe’ and controlled environment. Similarly, the comforts of therapy may fall well short of the transformations of real education.

7.5 A paradox and concluding remarks

The arts in schools have experienced ‘*the paradox of having high esteem but low status*’ (Bell and Chisholm, 1998, p.51). The paradox can be described further (Gingell and Brandon, 2001, p.138) in that:

We belong to a culture which can boast world-class art galleries and orchestras, our twentieth-century sculptors and architects are of the first rank, the English-speaking film industry is dominant worldwide and the English philosophical literature is at least as rich and important as any found elsewhere; and yet we have a school system which, in general, does nothing to enable those being educated to appreciate any of these things.

Bearing in mind that most curriculum time at schools may be spent reading and writing (Gingell and Brandon, 2001), the arts in the school curriculum occupy a position that, in the context of largely instrumental policies, is more peripheral than central. Arts have rich and diverse human value, and recognition of this should lead to a secure educational place for them. However, such recognition should start with a proper understanding of why we need the arts in education and in the school curriculum. Moreover, while the activity of questioning and justifying may well have a worthwhile liberal character and purpose, it would be a serious political, moral and spiritual mistake to employ such questioning to the end of giving only instrumental justification and weight to the artistic and other practices which actually give human life much of its real point and significance.

Chapter 8

8. Cinematography of *Ethics* in arts education; a summary of the philosophical arguments

This chapter will concentrate on two movies. Using various illustrations from these movies, the chapter will attempt to underline several key points of this thesis. The two chosen movies address a wide variety of themes, such as friendship, love, human relationships, education, morals, and art. Taking into account that these two movies are about art as such, the main focus will be on how the different arts that these movies deal with may be seen to offer their own distinctive insights into significant areas of human experience: precisely, what these films purport to show about the distinctive artistic contribution of poetry and dance to understanding and shaping the human condition. Therefore, the general argument is arts are able to convey humanly significant moral or other knowledge.

8.1 *Il Postino*: a movie about poetry and a beautiful story as poem

'Poetry doesn't belong to those who write it; it belongs to those who need it'. This is the conclusion that the postman of *Il Postino* (Radford, 1994), Mario Ruoppolo, reaches by the end of the film. With reference to this movie and a further one, this chapter will explore the respects in which poetry in particular, and arts in general, belong to those who need them. The essence of this issue is essentially given in previous chapters. While people may fulfil their educational potential in a wide variety of knowledge and skills, the arts represent a unique source of personally formative knowledge and understanding. The importance of the arts consists in the personal development of human beings, of their appreciation of themselves, their relationships with others and their place in the world. While the postman of the movie *Il Postino* is culturally illiterate, his experience of poetry gradually enables his appreciation of aesthetic and artistic beauty, develops his imagination and educates his emotions. In this way, he comes to understand human association and relationships better and in general to make better sense of his life and the world around him.



Figure 8.1 The postman becomes a keen learner. (Image courtesy of Cecchi Gori Group Tiger Cinematografica)

8.1.1 Plot Summary

Mario Ruopollo is a poor and uneducated Italian villager who does not want to be a fisherman like his father and other men of the village. He finally finds a job as a postman, delivering letters by bicycle to only one person. The recipient is the political exile and Chilean poet Pablo Neruda, who lives a quiet life by the sea with his partner. He receives mainly love letters, and Mario – impressed with the appeal that Pablo has for women – desires to make the young and beautiful Beatrice fall for him by the same poetic means. With this dubious motive, he seeks entry to the world of poetry and his educational journey into the arts and life begins. The postman enters into a relationship with Pablo Neruda which eventually develops into real friendship as well as leading to love and a family with Beatrice, and a more meaningful life for him. Some months later, the poet is allowed to return to Chile, but it seems that his life is so busy he forgets that his former friend Mario is awaiting news or some further gesture of friendship from the poet. Years go by without significant news, and Mario comes to admonish himself as an unimportant postman who is not worthy of being remembered by the poet. As a consequence, he decides to do something worthwhile with his own life.

Not only does he develop social concerns, he also determines to show the poet that the beauties of simple experiences such as his island, his feelings and his friendship are worth remembering. Mario's own poetic gesture therefore takes the form of audio recordings of various moments reflecting the beauty that he wants Neruda to know and remember or be reminded of. He also writes a poem for Neruda, but the day he is invited to read it in public, he is tragically killed by a government attack on the communists. Neruda goes back to the Italian village to visit the postman a couple of years later, but of course his friend is longer there. The two year old son of the postman called Pablito (little Pablo), is there to welcome the poet. Beatrice is also there and she tearfully gives Neruda her husband's tape, bringing the movie to a moving and poignant end.

The film is perhaps best summarized by the words of the English trailer (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5QvYXPwF798>):

Mario was a humble postman who lived a simple life in a small Italian island. For years he loved Beatrice, but he just didn't know how to tell her, until Pablo Neruda, the famous poet, and world renowned romantic moved in. Now this great man is about to teach him that every moment has its meaning. Every word has its place. And there is a way to every woman's heart. [...] The story of one man that gave another the courage to change his life and the passion to live out his dreams.

8.1.2 An initiation into the mysteries of poetry

As already argued in this thesis, artworks may be of epistemic and educational value in so far as they convey knowledge by 'acquaintance' (Russell, 1967), often as modes (rather than forms) of knowledge (Cothey, 1990), as 'illustrative' (as opposed to 'semantic') representations (Young, 2001), or as affective presentations (Wynn, 2000; cited in Carr & Davis, 2007, p.106). Such knowledge occurs when learners appreciate and/or feel the imaginative power of artistic representations of ordinary human experiences. In this way, audiences become imaginative explorers of familiar worlds: they learn how to experience and appreciate the mundane world in new and unfamiliar ways – precisely in terms of artistic truth and aesthetic beauty. The postman of *Il Postino* is initially struck by such an appreciation in encountering Neruda's poem ('Walking around' in Neruda, 1970, p.106) which speaks of being

'tired of being a man'. Mario confesses then that he liked it when he read it because this feeling has touched him too, he just never knew how to express it himself. With these words, the poetry started speaking to Mario, but there was still so much that he could not understand in Neruda's poems – for example, why Neruda had said in a poem that the smell of barber shops makes him sob. When he asks for an explanation, Neruda explains that: *'Better than any explanation is the experience of feelings that poetry can reveal to a nature open enough to understand it'*. However, it soon becomes apparent that a nature open enough to understand poetry only means a nature potentially (rather than actually) open enough. Thus, the postman needs to take further gradual steps to unfold such educational potential. In the same way, pupils/students need to be exposed to a culture of arts, and to a good arts education based on strong foundations, in so far as superficial experiences alone cannot develop what is needed to cultivate artistic sensibility. We may recall the observation of Peter Abbs (2003, p.53) on the problem of contemporary arts education, wherein the teacher facilitates *'endless self-expression with little prospect of artistic advance'*. Such arts education *'disappears into an infinitely tolerant yet hopelessly misguided psychology'* of the teacher-therapist who does not transmit knowledge or foster appropriate appreciation of arts (*ibid*). We may also recall Aristotle who argued that releasing emotions is not enough; it is training and ethical habituation that cultivates people (e.g. in *Politics, 1339a*; in Pappas, 2001, p.18).

Mario struggles to understand poetry and is particularly confused by metaphors. He regards the term metaphor as a very complicated word with an even more complicated artistic meaning. Moreover, Pablo Neruda explains that he cannot tell him what some of his metaphors mean in words any different from those that he has used. This recalls arguments presented in other chapters of this thesis (see also Carr & Davis, 2007): namely, that content and form are very much inseparable in arts. In the arts there is a real sense in which the medium is constitutive of the message. It is the effective use of artistic means that yields the artistic truth and beauty to which human emotion responds so readily. (Although, as clarified in other chapters, such artistic beauty should not necessarily be confused with aesthetic beauty (Best, 1985; McFee, 2005). If the importance of artworks lies only in their 'message', then

propositional knowledge would be enough to convey their content or import. However, the acquaintance knowledge of illustrative representations is determined by the non-propositional artistic means used by artists to present the more ordinary or literal (propositional) meanings or messages of their artworks.

Metaphors are thus prime artistic modes of illustrative representation which may yield artistic acquaintance knowledge. They may well be vehicles of propositional knowledge also, but propositional knowledge is not the main object of communication of either artist or spectator. Hence, Mario the postman reads Neruda's poetry, but his main concern is not to know specific information about the appearance of Neruda's lovers, or about how well they treated his friend etc. He is more interested in what art has to reveal about the quality, intensity and power of human relationships, emotions and love through distinct artistic modes of representation and appreciation. Likewise, any audience who watches the movie *Il Postino* will not primarily be concerned to acquire propositional knowledge, such as demographic or geographic information about the Mediterranean island on which the story is enacted. Rather, indeed, the audience expects to be 'transferred' to other imaginative and emotional worlds that lie beyond mundane reality.

It is notable here that 'metaphor' is a Greek word that means 'transfer'. Indeed after significant exposure to poetry and the world of metaphors, the postman begins precisely to acquire insight into the artistic meaning of metaphors and to be 'transferred' to the world of poetic sensibility. He even claims to feel 'seasick' when the poet composes a poem about the sea. Mario appreciates the power of the poem and tells Pablo: *'Weird, how I felt while, you were saying it. I don't know. The words went back and forth. Like the sea. I can't explain it. I felt like, like a boat tossing around on those words'*. Pablo Neruda explains that this was a poem with metaphors and strong rhythm, and he also observes that this has inspired the postman to create his own metaphor! It is another step in Mario's gradual education and the postman ceases to be artistically illiterate.



Figure 8.2 Mario writes his first poem (Image courtesy of Cecchi Gori Group Tiger Cinematografica).

Thus, Mario now comprehends metaphors and is even able to invent his own. However, he is still not satisfied because his invention of metaphors seems not to be intentional. The poet replies that intention is not always artistically necessary since images may arise spontaneously. This may be due to inspiration, artistic talent or for other reasons. While this point recognises the distinction between the intentional and non-intentional in artistic creativity, this does not of course diminish the significance of artistic ‘intentionality’. Indeed, the poet elsewhere affirms the indispensability of such intentionality. He describes how he was moved by the suffering of a struggling coal miner and inspired to write poetry for the ‘mistreated’. Such inspiration results in poetry that is ‘intentional’ in the (philosophical) sense of being ‘about’ something. This is especially true of his love poems. For this reason, however, he refuses to write a poem for Mario’s beloved Beatrice, because he does not know the woman in question and therefore lacks inspiration from the potential subject of the poem. To be sure, poetry is not always about specific subjects. As seen in other chapters, there are artworks (often works of music) that can be regarded as lacking any subject, and therefore any such intentionality or ‘about-ness’. At this point, Young (2001, p.63) might argue that it is a delusion to think that there is no about-ness to genuine artworks, in so far as to be pleased about, *‘frustrated by, or have a variety of other*

reactions to formal properties of compositions' is to be focused on an object: the artwork itself (rather than on the content of the artwork). In this regard, Young observes another distinction between introspective and extrospective affective illustrations (already described and analysed in previous chapters). All the same, when the poet develops a friendship with the postman, and after he gets to know Beatrice, he is inspired to compose a beautiful poem for their wedding.



Figure 8.3 Mario's effort to impress Beatrice (Image courtesy of Cecchi Gori Group Tiger Cinematografica).

Furthermore, the poet is also inspired by Mario's reflection on his poems to philosophise about the nature of art. Indeed, by accepting that artworks may be serious candidates for truth, it may seem possible to say, following Plato, that a poet who tells the truth qualifies as a kind of philosopher. Plato (e.g. in *Republic*) does not, of course, himself accept that artists tell the truth; but the point here is that if poetry tells any truth and conveys knowledge, then it can be fertile ground for philosophy. To this end, philosophy and arts – as Aristotle argues (e.g. in *Metaphysics* 982b) – have at least the potential for dialectical engagement of the human mind and heart. This may happen when agents are brought to wonder at the 'probable and necessary' consequences of this or that event, revealing the universal

truths of philosophy rather than particular and contingent knowledge of sciences and history, raising difficult questions rather than providing easy answers. When the postman develops a better understanding of metaphors in poetry, he starts philosophising and pondering over the world as a sign or symbol, observing that: *'...the whole world, with the sea, the sky, with the rain, the clouds etc etc, the whole world is the metaphor for something else?'* The poet is puzzled by this, cannot easily respond, and admits that he has to ponder over this question too. The poet's reaction shows that he has a nature open enough to embrace the postman's metaphor of the world as a symbol.



Figure 8.4 Mario and Beatrice fall in love (Image courtesy of Cecchi Gori Group Tiger Cinematografica).

As already described: *'Better than any explanation is the experience of feelings that poetry can reveal to a nature open enough to understand it'*. In contrast, the one who does not seem to have a nature open enough to understand poetry is Beatrice's elderly aunt Rosa. Rosa fails to understand, for example, that when Mario says that Beatrice's breast resembles a fire with two flames, this does not necessarily mean that Mario has seen Beatrice naked. Aunt Rosa can only interpret language literally and she sees the role of poetry as potentially seductive. She senses some of the power of poetic metaphor in observing that Mario has heated her niece up *'like an oven'*,

but she cannot understand the true beauty (artistic, aesthetic or other) of poetry. On the other hand, Mario reflects on poetry more and more. He takes his education further. He can now understand life issues better through poetry, he understands love better and with this understanding he is able to express himself better and more movingly. He finally shares his insight into poetry with Beatrice and she falls for him, proving that she too is someone with a nature open enough to experience the feelings that art can reveal. Appreciating art here is a matter of sharing sensitivities. Beatrice was the most beautiful and desired young woman of the village. As the owner of a restaurant she meets many admirers and is pursued daily by rich and politically powerful suitors. However, she falls for the poor postman who wins her with a pure love inspired by and expressed through poetry.

An important point here concerns subjectivity and objectivity in the arts. Comparing: (i) Aunt Rosa who condemns poetry as falsely seductive and who cannot perceive Mario's sensitivity; and (ii) Mario who discovers the beauty of this art through gradual education, seems to confirm Kant's argument against artistic or aesthetic subjectivists (Cooper, 2005). Kant argued that there are two faculties of the human mind, though they do not operate in the same way in all people when perceiving the same object: namely, understanding and imagination (Ward, 2005, p.246). If they did operate in the same way, then strict universality of objective truth/beauty in the arts should be possible (ibid).



Figure 8.5 Beatrice's aunt is shocked at the news of the romance (Image courtesy of Cecchi Gori Group Tiger Cinematografica).

Aunt Rosa cannot appreciate poetry and/or Mario's sensitivity, not because art is of subjective value and Rosa has different taste from Mario, but because her imagination and understanding are limited. To be sure, she is biased because she loves her niece and would prefer her to marry a richer man. Thus, she is unwilling to entertain the insights of poetry that might give her any other perspective. She remains artistically illiterate (as well as educationally illiterate in general) and this makes her blind to Mario's sensitivity and poetic expression. But now, the question emerges of why Beatrice, who is also artistically illiterate, appreciates Mario's poetic overtures. One answer could be that moved and inspired by love she is sufficiently curious and willing to enrich her perspective and to cultivate her imagination and understanding. She is charmed by Mario's metaphors not only because they are beautifully arranged words – such that any linguistically educated person might also have created – but because when Mario whispers that Beatrice's laugh is a sudden silvery wave, and that her smile spreads like a butterfly, this expresses and reflects the intensity of his feelings in a way that enables her to grasp the power of his love.



Figure 8.6 Aunt Rosa takes Mario's poem for Beatrice to the priest (Image courtesy of Cecchi Gori Group Tiger Cinematografica).

Mario continues to cultivate his appreciation of poetry and its emotional power, not only to gain the hand of his beloved, but also to win the respect of Neruda who even asks him for adjectives (artistic advice) to qualify the nouns in his poems. Poetry nurtures the postman's sensibilities and sensitivities to such an extent that he is able to make better moral and political sense of his life, his family, and the world. He also composes a poem dedicated to Pablo Neruda, and creates a poetic audio-tape of the beauties of his island world as a gift of devotion to his friend. His poetic gestures are not necessarily of high artistic value, but they are from a heart rich in generous feelings and they provide a faithful mirror of Mario's soul. Before his poetic education, Mario was unable to speak even a word about his island when the poet had previously asked him. Now, however, he is bursting with enthusiasm to describe and share the beauties of his island. He records sounds that he hears around him, and while the audience (and at one point Neruda) listens to the sounds that he has artfully assembled, they are also able to hear Mario's need for emotional expression and communication. After Neruda's departure, Mario craves further contact with his new-found friend. With his friend now absent, Mario is surprised to realise that, even though he has left, Neruda has not taken with him all the beauty of their friendship. Neruda's poetry has offered him riches that cannot be taken from his life by anyone or by any circumstances. It is just this kind of bounty that the arts may provide for learners at school. That is why art does not belong only to the artist, but to those such as the postman of the movie who need the emotional and spiritual nourishment it provides.

Mario's death is poignant: he is killed in a public political attack. It is interesting to note, however, that although this attack and Mario's death contain nothing aesthetically beautiful, they are nevertheless (in a sense) artistically 'beautiful', in so far as they contribute significantly to the message and meaning of the movie. Differences between aesthetic and artistic have been highlighted in previous chapters. So the end of the movie brings out many important differences between aesthetic and artistic significance. Of course, differences do not necessarily imply opposition. To be sure, Neruda's poems about the beauty of love and the intense feelings of lovers are often aesthetically beautiful. However, lack of aesthetic beauty

may not always or necessarily undermine the artistic value of an artwork. On the other hand, lack of artistic point or beauty in the sense explored in this thesis may mean that a work is (aesthetically and otherwise) bad art or sometimes not even art at all.

The art of poetry has been explored so far with the aid of another art: that of cinema. Through this film, an audience may gain considerable insight not only into poetry, but into many life-issues with significant impact on human emotions. They may learn, for example, about education and relationships between teachers and learners, about friendship, about the connection between character and emotion, artistic inspiration and much more. To understand or appreciate via illustrative representation or by acquaintance – as a cinema audience learns with the help of the film director, or as the or the main character of the movie learns through the poetry of his teacher Pablo Neruda – is to gain knowledge that (as already stated) awakens and enhances appreciation of the world which is no less emotional than cognitive (Carr, 1997, p.359). It is important to note that as soon as we touch on the training of emotions, the shaping of experienced feeling and exploration of life issues, we are already in the territory of morality and moral education. To cultivate the human soul and ‘awaken’ its emotional and spiritual potential is a matter of clear educational value with distinctly moral implications. Such possibilities may now be investigated with help of another movie entitled *Take the Lead*.

8.2 *Take the Lead*: a movie about teaching for human growth

8.2.1 Plot Summary

The film *Take the Lead* (Friedlander, 2006) is based on the life of Pierre Dulaine, an accomplished dance teacher and owner of a dance school, largely for privileged and wealthy people in New York. One night he witnesses teenager Rock vandalise the car of the principal of his school in an outburst of anger. On visiting the school – situated in a seriously deprived area – to report the crime the next morning, he encounters a not particularly friendly head teacher and a school of students with

grave problems, such as alcohol and drug abuse, poverty, assaults and violence, among other issues. Sympathy with these issues prompts Dulaine to offer free ballroom dance classes, in so far as he believes that dance can help the school's most challenged pupils. The head teacher puts Pierre to the test by accepting his offer and leaves him in charge of the 'detention' students, generally regarded as the 'school rejects'. Pierre rises to the challenge, and despite the opposition of reluctant students, he manages to earn their respect and friendship – including that of Rock, the most alienated student of all. In due course, the students manage to secure a place in a dance competition that greatly helps to boost their sense of self-worth and confidence. More importantly however, their experience of dance with Dulaine opens up to them a world of values and possibilities that transcends their everyday struggle for survival in the face of limited opportunities. It enables them to see some beauty in the world around them, and equips them with the courage to face their difficulties and have higher aspirations.

8.2.2 An initiation into the mysteries of dance

Pierre Dulaine:	<i>I want to teach your kids to dance.</i>
Principal Augustine James:	<i>Believe me, the one thing they do know is how to dance.</i>
Pierre Dulaine:	<i>Ballroom?</i>
Principal Augustine James:	<i>What did you say?</i>
Pierre Dulaine:	<i>Waltz Foxtrot all the basics. It would be great for them.</i>
Principal Augustine James:	<i>Ok, where's the camera? Because if you're saying that you want to teach my kids the foxtrot I must be on TV.</i>

Mrs James' reaction raises many specific questions about dance, but it also introduces two general problems regarding arts and arts education that are the main focus of this thesis. Firstly, it is significant that when Mr Dulaine suggests teaching dance, Mrs James claims that her students already know how to dance. Mr Dulaine asks whether they know ballroom dance, and she then laughs at him. This is because she assumes that students at her school, especially the detention teenagers, would never tolerate this sort of dance. At first glance, this opposition may seem to reflect a

conflict between popular culture and other forms of art. However, the issue seems to be more about conceptions of art and of what art can offer to benefit students.

When Mrs James claims that if there is one thing her students do know it is how to dance, she assumes a limited view of dance. When Mr Dulaine speaks of dance, he has a broader educational experience in mind. The students have the same impression as Mrs James, that dance is about shaking their bodies rhythmically -- something that robots or trained chimpanzees might probably do equally well (Carr, 1987, p.356). Mr Dulaine asks a student, who seems very confident, whether he is a dancer and he replies '*I can shake it*'. In contrast, when Mr Dulaine teaches them, he says '*Eyes off the floor. Your soul is not in your feet*', and he will shortly defend his art by explaining that it is not only about moving the body rhythmically.



Figure 8.7 Mr Dulaine in front of his reluctant students (Image courtesy of New Line Corporation).

Mr Dulaine does not share the view of the principal and other teachers that his dance lessons might prove to be such an unpleasant punishment for the students that it would discourage them from getting into detention. He believes, on the contrary, that dance may be an antidote to bad behaviour, but for other educational reasons. His

initiation of the students into dance is part of a wider ‘dance-as-life’ philosophy. The students of course are initially uncooperative, because they think that ballroom dance is boring and out of date. They even regard the classic ballroom songs of great composers that Mr Dulaine plays as ‘noise’. However, Mr Dulaine starts by talking about the history and values of dance. He recalls ancient times when it was believed – as he states – that *‘any man who could kill with speed and accuracy should be able to dance with grace as well’*. He also adds that ballroom dancing is for kings and empresses as it expresses the depth and strength of romance and love. His words – expressed as propositional knowledge – do not convince his students at all. Nevertheless, they can dance very skilfully in the style of dance that they prefer (a sort of rap), something that gets Mr Dulaine wondering:

- Mr Dulaine: *Now guys: why can't you put that emotion and energy into my style of dance?*
- Student: *That's impossible man.*
- Mr D: *Really, why so?*
- S: *Because your music sucks. It's corny. There ain't no feeling in it.*
- Mr D: *How can you say that? Lena Horne, Joe Williams, Nat King Cole – these songs are all about love.*
- S: *Maybe you love different than we do. Look at you; you are all flowers and things. Talk to woman all sweet, saying shit trying to make her feel nice. Well we ain't got no time for that. We want to get right down to the ill na na.*
- Mr D: *Love is universal my friend. We just may look for it different ways. Hearing different songs.*

This conversation raises issues of a generation gap, conflict between popular culture and high arts, gender politics, social class and many more. For the purposes of this thesis, however, we may focus on the particular direction of Mr Dulaine’s educational efforts. Dulaine does not attack the style of music that the students like. He shows respect for the music and for them. In addition, he tries to utilise what skills and knowledge his students already have; for example, they can understand very well some internal formal characteristics of music such as harmony and rhythm. Furthermore, he emphasises some of the common values of art and the ways in which these common values may be expressed through different forms of dance. In an effort to make ballroom dances ‘speak’ to his students, he dances a passionate tango with the best dancer of his private dance school, using the previously discussed

power of art to convey knowledge by acquaintance through illustrative representation. This tango illustration is so convincing in communicating feelings of passion that the students are overwhelmed – one of them shouting ‘*Check Mr Dulaine, just getting his flirt on!!*’ Although the passionate tango is far from arousing only moral emotions in the students, this may nevertheless be regarded as a first step in their wider moral education, in so far as the dance begins to deepen their emotional appreciation of even erotic human feeling and association. This also inspires the students to compose some re-mixes of their music with Mr Dulaine’s music. This is definitely a further step in their education and may remind us of the postman from the previously discussed movie when he composed his first metaphor; a simple step, but nonetheless a step forward.



Figure 8.8 Mr. Dulaine wows his students (Images courtesy of New Line Corporation).

Mr Dulaine generally avoids mechanical teaching of meaningless movements. As Carr (1987, p.347) argues ‘*Although dance may be regarded as just ordered or organized movement in much the same way that music may be ordered or organized sound, it is not any sort of movement but human movement with which dance is concerned, and more specifically intentional human movement*’. In this respect, Dulaine’s aim is to engage the students’ reflection and understanding of the cultural and moral factors that endow dances with meaning and significance (Carr, 1984). Such teaching is clearly implicated in forms of imagination and creativity that are not just aesthetic but ethical. In short, Dulaine’s dance teaching affords insight into life-issues that Best (1985) and McFee (1994) have explicitly associated with serious art.

As Carr (1997, p.356) observes '*Dance concerns action rather than movement, because actions rather than movements are bearers of meaning*'.

In addition, he (ibid) argues that 'dances are distinguished from other physical activities by virtue of their 'intentionality' – their capacity to be 'about' something'. Moreover, 'the meaning of dance – what dances are 'about' – is largely explicable in terms of aptness for the artistic expression of ideas, themes, feelings (or what Best and McFee call 'life-issues')' (ibid). But (ibid): '*the kinetic vehicle of dance expression is internally rather than externally related to what is expressed [...] so that one could not begin to convey the distinctive meaning of a dance simply by relating (propositionally) what it is about*'.

This view clearly applies to meaning in the arts in general – though its truth needs qualification, because as Carr (1997, p.359) adds works of art, including dancing, may be meaningful even if they do not concern knowledge in any propositional sense (also in Young, 2001). The cognitive and other value of arts clearly also rests on the emotional responses that artworks may engender (Carr, 1997, p.359). But appropriate and well-formed emotional responses are also nevertheless crucial to the development of the moral sense that is inherent in Aristotelian virtue. Thus (Carr and Davis, 2007, p.106): '*a moral or virtuous agent is not just someone who has achieved a rational grasp or appreciation of certain moral truths, rules or imperatives, but one who has come to experience, feel about and respond to the world in a particular range of morally appropriate ways*'.

This Aristotelian moral journey of the soul or character through appreciation of art is what Dulaine attempts to defend when the school maths teacher attempts to enlist the support of the parent-teacher association to terminate his dance classes. The maths teacher argues that the detention students are wasting time with something impractical, since they are never likely to be involved in ballroom dancing again. Dulaine disagrees, not only because all children are entitled to a 'little culture', and no-one has the right to create a dividing line that precludes some kids from learning about art, but also because he thinks that art may assist with their real life problems. And he adds:

To do something, anything, is hard. It is much easier to blame your father, your mother, the environment, the government, the lack of money. But even if you find a place to assign the blame, it does not make the problems go away. I am trying something new. I'm trying it. [Then he dances with the principal who is entirely ignorant of dance]...You see, if she allows me to lead, she is trusting me. But more than that, she is trusting herself. Now if your 16-year old daughter is strong and secure and trusts herself, how likely is she to let some idiot knock her up? And if your son can learn to touch a girl with respect, how will he treat women throughout his life? So, ladies and gentlemen this is what I do here at this school. I teach dance. And with it a set of rules that will teach your kids about respect, teamwork and dignity. And that will help to give them a vision of the future they could have. A vision of the future they could have.

It is in this spirit that the students do, indeed, start to feel hope and the possibility of escape from their difficult lives. For example, when the boyfriend of LaRhette's prostitute mother offers to pay for sex with her, and tries to assault her when she refuses, she escapes literally to the basement of her school. However, she also escapes metaphorically by dancing in solitude to a song that she dances as a waltz. Then, when Rock – who also sleeps at school due to family problems – sees her, she again communicates her appreciation of Rock's admiration for her through dance. Soon, however, they start arguing and end up in a police station. The next day, Mr Dulaine takes responsibility for their educational 'punishment', recognising that these two students share strong negative emotions that may be channelled through art. He perceives that dance can make them realise that they have more in common than they think (e.g. more than anger) and advises them that often a good way to conquer the enemy is to 'get right up in his face' by finding ways to communicate. When LaRhette complains that Rock should not have the superior role of leader, whom she should follow when waltzing, Dulaine explains that the leader is not the boss. The leader just proposes the movement, without dominating or imposing, while skilfully and respectfully inviting the follower on a journey. It is the follower's choice to accept and follow. Both leading and following take strength, courage and trust that must be mutually earned. In the end, LaRhette confesses '*You really made me believe that magic can happen anywhere Mr D.*'. Meanwhile, in his own battle for survival, Rock risks his life by crossing some drug dealers in order to escape the criminal life into which they are trying to lead him. He arrives late at the dance competition where Dulaine and LaRhette have almost given up on him. However, following the moral journey on which Dulaine's dance teaching has led him, Rock

has clearly become a better person through a vision of the future he is now able to envisage. To be sure, it is not only dance education that educates Rock and other students, but also the values and personality of their teacher. But art nonetheless plays a powerful role.



Figure 8.9 Rock and LaRhette become closer through dance (Images courtesy of New Line Corporation).

Dance discloses possibilities and choices to all the characters in the movie narrative. As a result, friendships and romances develop. For example, Caitlin gets to know and like the young man who is called ‘Monster’ (due to his appearance); Kurd falls for the ‘Big girl’; and Sasha charms her two admirers. Although they initially fight over Sasha, Mr Dulaine persuades them to co-operate and dance together as a team. This co-operation results in a breathtaking three-way tango in the dance competition that once again celebrates the emergence of new moral characters in the co-operating students. The tango expresses their development as new moral beings – something appreciated by the audience. This contrasts with the dance of Morgan and her partner (a posh couple from the dance school) who are technically flawless, but seem showy and shallow by comparison with Sasha and her partners.



Figure 8.10 The art of dance compared to mechanical dancing (Images courtesy of New Line Corporation).

Some (for instance, students and teachers in *Take the Lead*) have argued that arts do not or cannot connect with the ‘real’ world in which pupils/students live. On this view, art is merely an irrelevant and (perhaps) elitist pastime. However, this movie seems to show the audience, in the way that Mr Dulaine shows his students, that art (cinema and dance on these occasions) may have considerable educational value – not least, moral educational value – for the real lives of students. Of course, even though there are some artworks of undoubted and timeless value and artistic beauty, not all cinema, dance and other artistic expressions are either artistically or educationally valuable (Carr, 2006b). However, both these movies raise a wide variety of morally significant issues, and only a few of these have been analysed for the sake of the purposes of this chapter.

In conclusion, *Take the Lead* and *Il Postino* explore various respects in which art can richly contribute to individual cultural capital and moral development; opening up wider perspectives and a deeper understanding on the world that can have a direct bearing on the problems of real life. The moral journeys through which art may lead us are, of course, not always comfortable or easy. However, in light of the examples considered in this chapter, it may be argued that schools should ‘*equip students with the intellectual and emotional resources to appreciate the moral and spiritual significance and value of so much great modern cinema*’ as well as dance, poetry and other arts (Carr, 2006b, p.333). The benefits of such artistic journeys are not always readily apparent or easily appreciated, since such journeys often need gradual and

even painful steps. But it should nevertheless be clear from the examples given in this chapter that arts offer infinite potential for the growth of human personality, moral character and soul.

Alasdair MacIntyre's (1981; also in Carr, 2006b) view that human beings identify themselves with the characters of (religious, spiritual, moral and artistic) narratives, in a way that may result in moral and spiritual self-understanding, is very relevant here (MacIntyre, 1981). Certainly, it is important not to construe this view of moral formation in the light of artistic narrative in simple moralistic terms. The moral power of artworks is not that they tell audiences what is morally wrong or right. This is something that they may well already know: such as, for example, that it is wrong to cheat or murder. It is rather that serious art may vividly highlight (by 'illustrative representation' in Young's (2001) term) issues with which we are already familiar in ways that may provoke deeper thought and reflection. In particular, the importance of the arts for moral and spiritual education lies in their potential for the cultivation and refinement of moral sensibilities, emotions and feelings – without which the development of virtuous character is impossible.

Chapter 9

9. The Scottish case

There has recently been significant policy development in Scottish education from the ‘5–14’ and ‘Standard Grade’ curricula to the new *Curriculum for Excellence*. Having explored the nature and the potential of arts and arts education from a philosophical perspective in the previous chapters of this thesis, this chapter explores Scottish educational policy and its recent development with reference to the role of arts in arts education and in education more generally through: i) the exploration of policy documents and official guidelines; and ii) the eyes of interviewees and other research participants who are involved in Scottish policy making.

9.1 Methodological issues

9.1.1 Research questions

The questions that emerged at the outset of this study, with regard to arts education within the Scottish curriculum and its development, were:

- Does Scottish educational policy development accord much significance (and to what extent) to the arts?
- What, according to Scottish policy, is the key role of arts education in healthy human formation?
- Does policy development in Scottish arts education recognise the educational potential (and to what extent) of the arts?

The main purpose of these questions is to discover whether contemporary Scottish educational policies take into account the full educational potential of the arts as explored in previous chapters of this thesis. From Aristotle to more modern philosophers of art and aesthetics, a strong case has been made for the intrinsic cognitive and moral benefits of arts, as well as for cultivating the moral feelings and emotions of students. On the other hand, those who uphold the instrumental role of

education may be inclined to emphasise more extrinsic and utilitarian aspects of arts education. Such instrumentalism is sometimes expressed or exhibited in an emphasis on assisting learners to acquire forms of skill or knowledge (e.g. maths through music) that are incidental to the arts being learned: on this view, the arts are mere tools for other learning. Such instrumental attitudes to arts may also be enhanced by the domination of ‘*technical rationality*’ and ‘*economistic forms of vocationalism and competence*’ (Martin, 2009, <http://www.rizoma-freireano.org/index.php/whither-adult#1>; Preece, 2006, p.318; see also Carr, 2003a, pp.10–12).

In the light of these and other educational perspectives, tension between diverse potential ‘useful’ roles of the arts in education may occur: for example, between more liberal perspectives and more utilitarian or instrumental ones. In particular, Carr (2003a, p.251) describes pragmatism as a form of instrumentalism which is:

... especially associated with John Dewey by which human knowledge is conceived as a tool for the (technical or other) management, manipulation or exploitation of experience, rather than as a form of (passive) depiction or description of it. In this work however, curriculum instrumentalists are those who would regard educational knowledge as valuable for some extrinsic (social or economic) end, rather than as worthwhile for its own sake.

Somewhat opposed to this is the view of liberal educationalists for which education has intrinsic value. Carr (ibid) explains that intrinsic educational value is:

The value that certain forms of knowledge of modes of human activity might be held to have for their own sake, rather than as means to the achievement of other externally related purposes.

On this view liberal educationalists would hold that (ibid, pp.251–252):

The school curriculum should be constructed around such intrinsically worthwhile forms of knowledge, and it seems reasonable to suppose [...] that the teaching of such subjects or activities such as history, poetry and dance is primarily justifiable in terms of the intrinsic or personally formative character of such subject.

In this regard, this study investigates what is the appropriate attitude and direction of arts education policy of a northern British education system that sets out to promote school learning under the heading of a *Curriculum for Excellence*.

9.1.2 Qualitative methods

The research questions concerning Scottish education policy with regard to arts education formed the starting point for a practical investigation employing qualitative research methods: in particular, the method of preference was that of the interview. Although extensive guidelines, policy documents and curriculum information are available from many sources (e.g. <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/>), these tend to be more descriptive than analytical. In addition, although available documents may contain explicit principles and aims, many of these also tend to be unhelpfully articulated in loose, general or vague terms. Furthermore, with the limited time available to schools, there is a question of which aims are most likely to be pursued. This being the case, questioning the precise meaning of policy or guideline aims as well as why these have been preferred may be better investigated through interviews. So while the researcher has studied and gained a good grasp of Scottish curriculum policies and guidelines this was not considered enough to give a full perspective on the current thrust of Scottish arts education policy. Indeed, the main problem was that while the researcher identified a clear emphasis on skill development in what seemed to be a capacities-led curriculum, she did not want to assume that this was the actual view taken by authors of the policies. Thus, interviews promised to provide a more adequate research method, because as Patton (1990; in Esterberg, 2002, p.87) states: *'we interview people to understand what life is from perspectives other than our own'*.

Furthermore, semi-structured interviews were preferred, because *'the semi-structured interview has the advantage of being reasonably objective while still permitting a more thorough understanding of the respondent's opinions and the reasons behind them'* (Borg & Gall, 1989, p.452). Semi-structured interviews allow the researcher and the interviewees to interact and to shape the interview accordingly, even if the researcher had in advance a rough plan of the interview and its basic ideas and questions. The process resembled the dance of a couple that Esterberg (2002, p.87) describes as: *'a dance in which one partner (the interviewer) must be carefully attuned to the other's movements'*. It is worth mentioning that in the wording of this metaphor the term 'carefully' is very important, and the interviewer on the occasions

of interview sought to be sensitively receptive to interviewees' responses with a neutral attitude. While aware of postmodernist or critical-theoretical caveats, the interviewer sought to avoid presenting her own opinions and beliefs. Even when the interviewee asked personal questions of the interviewer, she tried either to deflect the question or occasionally to answer it only after the interviewee had offered his or her own view. In addition, the interviewer's questions were open-ended and dichotomies or leading questions were avoided. However, given the special interest of this thesis in the distinctive role of the arts and their moral implications, two of the research questions were slightly more critically focused.

Interviews were not the only method used, however, because while three of the people whom the researcher had approached were willing to contribute, they suggested that due to personal time constraints they would prefer to fill in a questionnaire. To be sure, such a method may have several disadvantages, such as the lack of opportunity to know not only what is said but how something is said, less human interaction and therefore less flexibility, less adaptability and clarity, insufficiently deep exploration of a topic, and lack of opportunity for the participant to reveal more information etc (Borg & Gall, 1989, p.445). In addition, the mailed questionnaire is better used for the collection of more factual and less ambiguous information (ibid); something that is less applicable to this study, since it seeks to analyse more than to describe. On the other hand, the mailed questionnaire has some advantages over the interview, such as that (what is called) 'response effect' is more likely to happen in an interview than with mailed questionnaires. Response effect is defined by Borg & Gall (1989, p.448) as the difference between true information and the inaccurate or misleading response to interview questions given possible hidden agendas on the part of the interviewee or interviewer. Such tendencies may take several forms such as: i) predispositions of the interviewee e.g. they may be suspicious of or wish to please the interviewer; ii) predispositions of the interviewer e.g. certain a priori expectations or prejudices; and finally iii) errors related to research procedures e.g. arising from time available for interview.

In such circumstances, interviews may be affected by degrees of subjectivity. The researcher took into account all these and other advantages and disadvantages of the

various methods employed and decided to accept mailed questionnaires with an eye to both the advantages and disadvantages of both adopted methods. The adoption of such methodological pluralism (i.e. i) study of policy documents; ii) interviews; and iii) mailed questionnaires) reflects what Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2000) describe as ‘triangulation’, defined as the multi-method approach to a problem which is held to ‘*increase validity, reduce bias or bring objectivity*’ (ibid, p.115). However, it is also worth mentioning here that triangulation usually refers to the combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, unlike the present research that has used only qualitative methods. In this regard, Cohen, Manion & Morrison (ibid) argue that there have been researchers such as Silverman (1985), Fielding and Fielding (1986) who do not consider triangulation to be a necessarily successful approach. Still, the present researcher used the methods so far mentioned with the intention of increasing validity, enriching the enquiry and bringing as much credibility to the findings as possible.

Prior to conducting the interviews, the researcher had constructed two interview formats: the first contained seven general questions about the main topics, expecting them to provide effective stimuli for interviewees to talk about those issues of most significance to them; the second containing more detailed questions for more thorough follow-up. The first interview format was also the one that was mailed as a questionnaire to the three participants who elected to contribute in this way. The relevant questions can be seen in Figure 9.1 as follows.

During the interview, the interviewer allowed interviewees to speak fairly freely, not always keeping them firmly on track. Just a few written notes were taken, but all interviews were recorded with the permission of interviewees. It is interesting that all interviewees, without exception, seemed well at ease with the use of recorders. A possible reason for this might be that due to their public roles they would have been used to such recording. Such evident ease with recording reduced the interviewer’s anxiety that recording might intimidate interviewees.

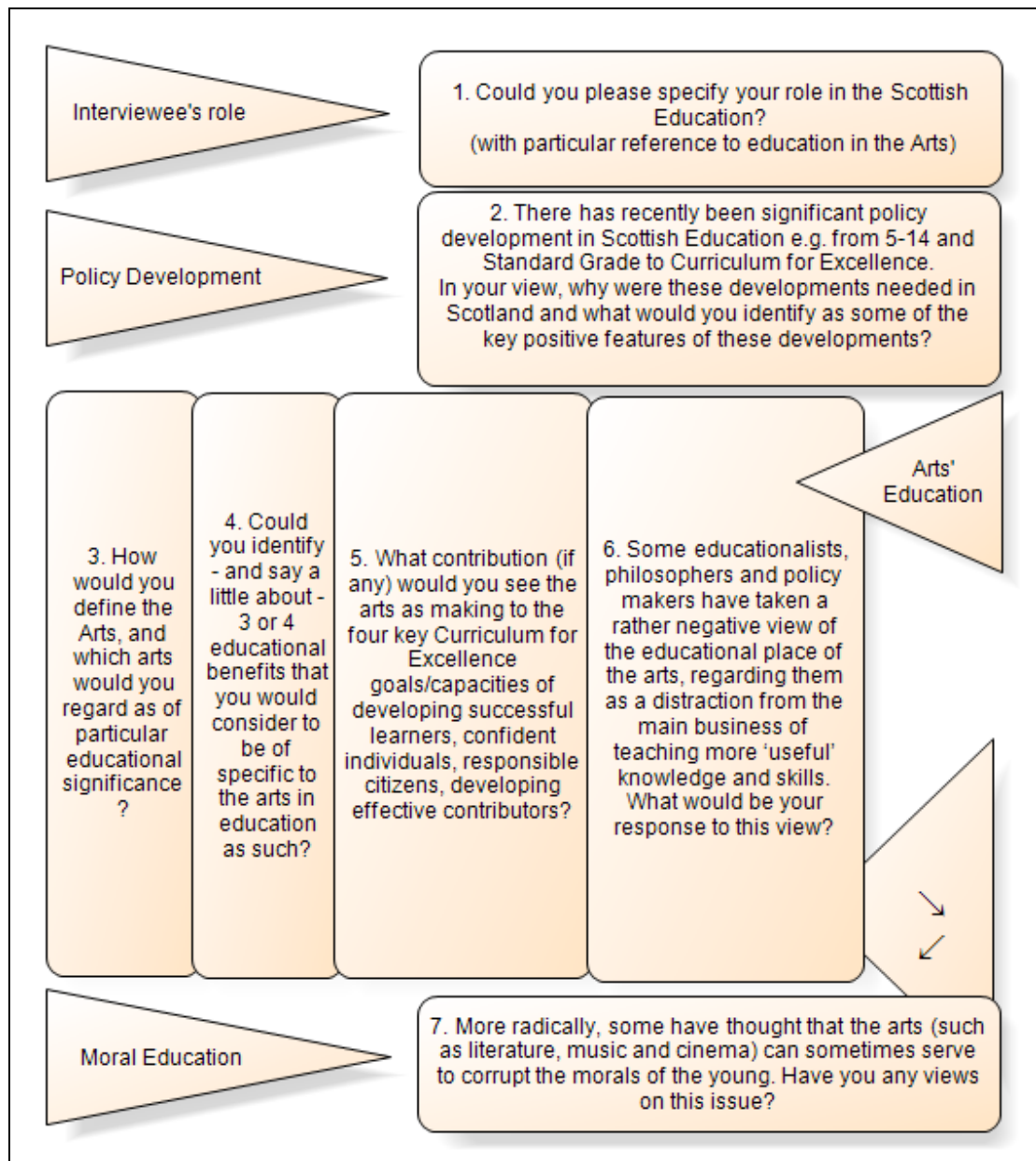
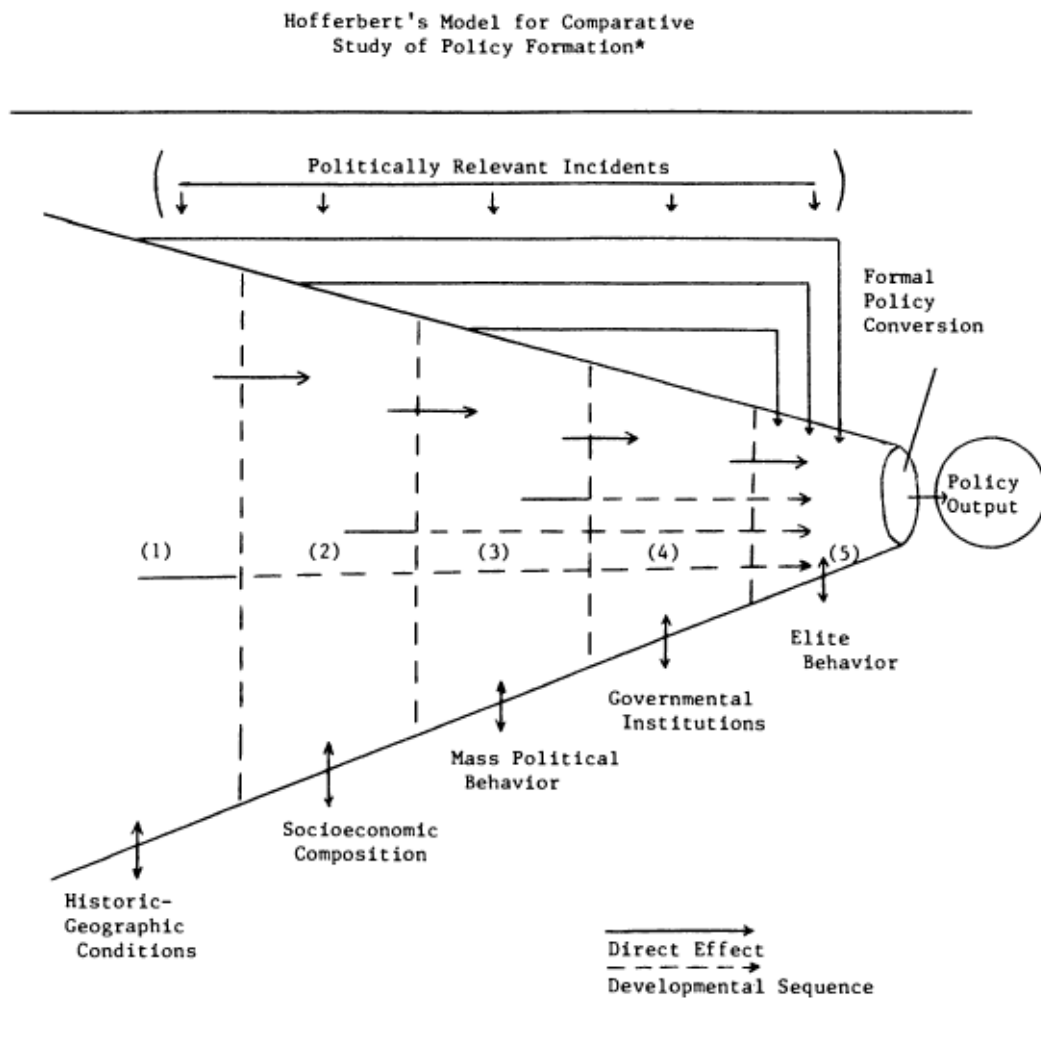


Figure 9.1 Basic questions of interviews

9.1.3 The sample

One example of a holistic approach to the study of the various influences on policy making may be found in the work of Hofferbert (1974, p.228) who used a funnel diagram to represent diverse influences on the policy making process, such as historic/geographic conditions, socio-economic composition, mass political behaviour and governmental institutions. At all events, following some initial

acquaintance with the world of education policies through exploration of educational policy documents and curriculum guidelines, the researcher decided to interview those with managerial and other influential roles in governmental institutions and who appeared to have contributed to the formation of the new Scottish curriculum in some significant way.



*This is a slightly truncated reproduction of the model. The numerous direct and indirect paths between sectors 2 - 5 have been deleted (Hofferbert, 1974, Figure VII-1).

Figure 9.2 Modelling the Policy Making Process (Hofferbert, 1974, p.228 as cited in Mazmanian & Sabatier, 1980, p.441)

In the context of this research, 30 Scottish policy makers and/or other influential agents of Scottish arts policy education contributed their views. That said, these people may be said to represent the wider population of Scottish policy making as influential on Scottish arts education; and/or they may be responsible for the policy that influences the whole population of Scottish schools and therefore the wider society of Scotland (in the recent past and/or currently).

According to Esterberg (2002, p.93) research participants should be chosen ‘for the specific qualities they can bring to the study’ and for the fact they are those who ‘can give the greatest possible insight’ into the relevant issue. The interviewer tried to identify key policy makers in Scotland with influence on arts education policy by searching the official governmental websites of education such as that of *Learning and Teaching Scotland* (LTS) which ‘*is committed to providing world-class teaching and learning experiences for Scotland’s children and young people*’ (Mearns Castle High School, 2008, <http://www.ea.e-renfrew.sch.uk/mearnscastle/parents/usefulLinks.asp>). In addition, ‘*as the lead organisation for curriculum development in Scotland, LTS provides advice, support, resources and staff development to the education community, creating a culture of innovation, ambition and excellence throughout Scottish education*’ (ibid).

In the light of what Esterberg (2002) calls ‘purposive strategy’, the researcher made a deliberate attempt to approach a wide range of policy makers in order to open up several different aspects of a given topic. Bearing in mind that some policy makers were elected or may have been appointed by elected people, and therefore that politics and policy may sometimes be intertwined, as many research relevant people as possible were approached for the sake of a wide sample, a wide range of views and objective findings. For example, with regard to members of the Scottish Parliament, all eight members of the committee that considers and reports on: ‘*i) further and higher education, lifelong learning, schools, pre-school care, skills and other matters falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning; and ii) matters relating to culture and the arts falling within the responsibility of the Minister for Europe, External Affairs and Culture*’, were approached for potential interview.

(SPCB, 2008, <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/committees/ellc/index.htm>)

The breakdown of the 30 research participants is as follows. Twenty policy makers or other influential agents of policy were interviewed and another two contributed with responses to mailed questionnaires. These 22 research participants held a wide range of posts. It is worth clarifying that in the context of this research ‘policy maker’ means not only those who officially ‘make policy’ but also those who in various other ways influence strongly the development of official policy. In addition to the 22 ‘policy makers’, four cultural coordinators (who are not policy makers but influence implementation of policy) were interviewed and a further one contributed with answers to the mailed questionnaire⁸. While cultural coordinators may not be policy makers they may also influence educational policy in so far as their own creative ideas play an important role in supporting the work of schoolteachers. In particular, the cultural co-ordinators are expected to (Scottish Arts Council, 2005, p.4):

Encourage and facilitate cultural participation through a wide variety of projects, visits, productions and performances; liaise with artists and the education officers of cultural organisations at both local and national levels; develop local authority and

⁸ The first interview was conducted on the 11th of February 2008 and the last one on the 15th of July 2008. The research participants who contributed with letters/emails did so during that period as well. Although there may be some good reasons for including a list of research participants, following discussions and consultation with various people, such as my supervisor Dr Patrick McLaughlin and Dr Ken McCulloch who is Chair of the Moray House School of Education Ethics Committee, I decided that the names of the research participants should not appear in this thesis in order to follow the University of Edinburgh Ethics Policy and the British Sociological Association guidelines. For example, Section 37 of the British Sociological Association Statement of Ethical Practice states that: ‘Guarantees of confidentiality and anonymity given to research participants must be honoured, unless there are clear and overriding reasons to do otherwise, for example in relation to the abuse of children.’ (www.britisoc.co.uk/equality/Statement+Ethical+Practice.htm#_anon). There might also be an issue with Personal Data in terms of the Data Protection Act. If a list of names was provided, the anonymity of individuals could not be maintained; especially in some cases, given explanation of their educational role, the source of a particular quotation would be obvious. As I also mention on page 152 of this thesis, the research participants were identified as people holding high official positions, and as such likely to give responsible answers to the researcher’s questions. The researcher assured research participants of the anonymity of the data, so that they could be as open and honest as possible. In this way, it was hoped that the research participants would not feel pressure to represent any particular group or party and might contribute to the research with an unbiased view. Taking into account that people who hold key positions of high (Scottish) policy influence are not numerous and widely known to the public, if names were provided, it might be easy to link some quotes to some of the research participants. Furthermore, some of the research participants are politicians and therefore some quotes might be correctly or mistakenly attributed to political parties and also thereby linked to some names on any included list. All the same, the research design and data collection methods used were open to scrutiny to academic supervisors and examiners as part of the supervision and examination process of this thesis.

school awareness of the potential contribution of culture to young people's learning and development – both within and outwith the curriculum.

Furthermore, an academic and a head of education in a major Scottish performing arts organisation whose views and educational activities may have had some influence on policy-making were also interviewed. Regardless of the latter's influence on policy, the researcher considered academia and major performing arts organisations as affording significant potential insight into the present enquiry. Finally, the First Minister of Scotland kindly contributed to the research with personal correspondence to the researcher by answering the questions of the questionnaire. Teachers and head teachers, however, were not interviewed, because the researcher thought that their practices would have been mainly influenced by those represented in the sample of policy-makers finally consulted in this research.

Something that was evident from the earliest stages of this research is what Biernacki and Walford (1981) have called 'snowball sampling' or 'chain referral' sampling. In this regard, either some of the people that the researcher approached at an early stage would recommend some others to be interviewed, as more familiar with or relevant to the research topic, or later on such further interviewees might recommend yet others to be interviewed as also potentially informative to the research. Many of the people that first approached interviewees recommended were already in the researcher's list for future interview in a way that reinforced confidence in the initial research design of the investigator. Apart from 'snowball sampling', the interviewing for this research reflects what Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2000, p.104) have called 'dimensional sampling' and 'multiphase sampling'. Sampling was dimensional by virtue of having at least one representative of each major governmental institution, as not many people occupy key positions and such people are invariably very busy. However, there is no Scottish governmental institution that this research did not approach without gaining interviews from some of its representatives. By 'representatives', moreover, the researcher does not mean junior assistants of key policy makers, but *the* key people as such. Finally, the sampling was 'multiphase', in so far as the researcher realized that the research might benefit variously from a wider range of people, such as cultural-coordinators, as already explained. Those

who were interviewed or who participated in this research with completed questionnaires were key people from Scottish government, as well as the following organisations: *Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS)*, *Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)*, *HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE)*, *Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS)*, *Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE)*, *Association of Scotland's Colleges (ASC)*, *Association of Head-teachers and Deputies in Scotland (AHDS)*, *School Leaders Scotland (SLS)*, *General Teaching Council Scotland (GTCS)*, *Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association (SSTA)*, *Deans of Universities' Faculties of Education*, *Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES)*, *Skills Development Scotland (SDS)* and *Creative Scotland*.

9.1.4 More on Validity, Reliability and Reflexibility

Validity, reliability and reflexivity are all features of successful quality research – especially with regard to the accuracy of its procedure, analysis and findings. However, as Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2000, p.47) suggest: *'All are complex in nature, for there is no singular or exclusive version of reliability, validity, or what constitutes an acceptable sample'*. They also add that researchers should approach research in an open-eyed and open-minded spirit.

For qualitative research, Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2000, p.107) note that Hammersley (1992, p.144) and Silverman (1993, p.153) think that 'intensive personal involvement and in-depth responses of individuals' are not adequate indicators of validity and reliability, in so far as the interpretative role of the interviewer should reflect what Blumenfeld-Jones (1995) refers to as the fidelity and honesty of the researcher. The researcher did not have any hidden political agenda and, as already explained, she tried to approach as many relevant people from as a wide range of posts and opinion as possible. In addition, she always sought to be informed about the backgrounds of interviewees and about the relevance of such background to their roles: e.g. which political party an interviewed member of the parliament might represent. This strategy promised what Burgess (1989; also Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2000) calls *'catalytic validity'* by taking into account the

political or other ideological agendas of those involved in the research (either researcher, interviewer or interviewees). Moreover, even though the research proceeded in a critical and philosophical spirit, it sought to avoid any such external ideological influences: e.g. it was not commissioned to produce specific data in support of any political agenda or commercial contract and therefore the research entertained no intentions of directly ‘transforming the world’ in any overtly ‘interested’ way. The researcher sought to be neutral between such partisan viewpoints and that is precisely why the research adopted a holistic approach. Nevertheless, as Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2000, p.111) state: ‘*the research might focus on what might be (the leading edge of innovations and future trends) and what could be (the ideal, possible futures)*’ (also in Schofield, 1993, p.209). For such focus, policy requires vision; and vision invariably means perspective. However, even if some of the interviewees were politically motivated in their policy-making role, this need not necessarily diminish the research validity. Indeed, on the other hand: i) this might more truly reflect human nature and education policy, which cannot be entirely apolitical (since, as Aristotle (*Met.*1253a in Korbilas, 2006, p.2) argued, ‘*Man is by nature a political animal*’); and ii) researchers may strive to be neutral while remaining sensitive to data that intertwines politics with policies. Overall, the issue of validity was addressed by making sure that the discussion of the data would be a discussion of representative items of both the sample and the whole set. The interviewees were identified as people holding high and responsible positions, and as such likely to give responsible answers to the researcher’s questions. In addition to this, however, the researcher assured interviewees of the anonymity of the data, so that they could be as open and honest as possible. In this way it was hoped that the research participants would not feel any pressure to represent any particular group or party, and might contribute to the research with an unbiased view.

Moreover, as Campbell & Fiske (1959) and Brock-Utne (1996) suggest, ‘*convergent validity implies that different methods for researching the same construct should give a relatively high inter-correlation*’ (cited in Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000, p.110). Thus, the use of interviews to research Scottish education added to and

reinforced knowledge gained from the review of policy documents and curriculum guidelines. This double means of researching the same constructs, employing comparison between interviews and documents aimed to capture the spirit of Scottish educational policies more accurately (ibid).

This approach aimed to address the issue of reliability in the way that Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2000) and other researchers suggest: that is to say, by the use two or more methods of data collection to secure different dimensions of validity. As already stated in a previous section, the methods used for data collection in this study briefly were: i) reviewing policy documents and the government database of curriculum guidelines; ii) exploring the outcomes of pilot implementation of the new curriculum as described in the electronic government database; iii) interviewing the policy-makers who influence policy-making and/or people who know the policy making process; and iv) distributing questionnaires to people who could not be interviewed but were happy to participate otherwise. Reliability was also assisted by the researcher's preliminary research into the background of these key policy players or 'powerful' people – as Walford (1994, p.225) calls them – and also by research on the context and the content of the new curriculum. The interviewees often assumed the interviewer's up-to-date knowledge of the contemporary Scottish policy documentation existing in the public domain (something also mentioned by Walford, ibid); but such preliminary research aimed to secure reliability and avoid misconceptions of the part of the interviewer and misunderstandings of the part of interviewees. Beyond attention to preparation reliability and interview reliability, the researcher also sought to achieve maximum analysis reliability by fully transcribing all interviews in order to avoid what Lee (1993) and Kvale (1996, p.163) refer to as 'transcribers' selectivity'. In addition, a diary of fieldwork notes with various comments on the interviews played an important role, in so far as transcriptions might sometimes appear to be de-contextualized. However, this diary helped the researcher to keep all needed verbal and non-verbal information in fairly clear view. This diary was systematically divided into two parts: i) neutral descriptive comments; and ii) some interpretive comments. This division/clarification also aimed to assure appropriate awareness of reflexivity.

This research also obviously employs much philosophical reasoning. However, the researcher aimed at all times to avoid any philosophical bias in the sense of ideological or political prejudice. While the researcher was certainly not oblivious to the potential reflexivity issues that philosophical reasoning might sometimes involve, she appreciated that she herself should be a ‘research instrument’ (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000, p.141) or looking ‘glass self’ (Cooley, 1902 cited in *ibid*). Hence, she aimed to avoid: i) ambiguous and leading questions; ii) expression of her own feelings, fears and ideas; iii) selectivity of only data in accordance with particular trends; and iv) use of unsystematically interpreted data. Finally, it is important to say that the researcher was not trying to prove any particular point by this research, only to discern the spirit and direction of the new Scottish *Curriculum for Excellence*. Moreover, such knowledge would not in itself either confirm or contradict the findings and conclusion of the philosophical part of this thesis.

Chapter 10

10. The development of Scottish education policy in and beyond the documents

10.1 The guidelines and a case for change

A review of the contemporary policy documents relevant to Scottish curricula as appearing on the explicit online resources of *Learning and Teaching Scotland* (LTS) – which is the principal and largest public body responsible for the development and transformation of Scottish curriculum and education – made apparent that curriculum change was regarded as important in order to meet the needs of young Scottish people in the 21st century (LTS, 2010b, <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/understandingthecurriculum/whatiscurriculumforexcellence/howwasthecurriculumdeveloped/caseforchange/index.asp>). For example, two reports (ibid) by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) stressed the importance of such change in order to redress present weaknesses of the education system as well as to improve its strengths. 'Confidence' and 'skills' are immediately conspicuous words in key elements of the new curriculum. In this respect, the following words of the LTS website aptly express the spirit of the new Scottish curriculum (ibid):

Scotland's future economic prosperity requires an education system within which the population as a whole will develop the kind of knowledge, skills and attributes which will equip them personally, socially and economically to thrive in the 21st century. It also demands standards of attainment and achievement which match these needs and strengthen Scotland's position internationally.

In this context: confidence, lifelong skills and attributes, professionalism and qualifications are among the first words to appear as key elements of the new curriculum. According to LTS (2010e, <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/understandingthecurriculum/whatiscurriculumforexcellence/howwasthecurriculumdeveloped/processofchange/index.asp>), this process of change was developed over approximately eight years following a national debate on education in 2002. The debate resulted in a variety of conclusions, the main one of which was that Scottish

children and young people need an education that will equip them with skills and qualifications needed for life and work in an age of globalization. Thus, Scottish Executive ministers and a Curriculum Review Group worked towards a new curriculum, a first draft of which was published in 2004 under the title ‘*A Curriculum for Excellence*’. Since then, more publications, research, proposals and reviews have followed to build a more detailed curriculum with guidance on various aspects of school learning. After trialling activities, draft experiences, published first outcomes, analysis of feedback and further quality assurance processes, the new curriculum guidelines were published in 2009 allowing scope for planning and implementation up until 2011 (LTS, 2010c, <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/understandingthecurriculum/whatiscurriculumforexcellence/howwasthecurriculumdeveloped/index.asp>).

According to the LTS definition of the Scottish curriculum (2010f, <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/understandingthecurriculum/whatiscurriculumforexcellence/thepurposeofthecurriculum/index.asp>), the latter functions as a means to implementation of educational policy through planned experiences for children and young people during their schooling. These are claimed to be the fundamental principles that govern curriculum design and that should inform its guidelines (LTS, 2010d, <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/understandingthecurriculum/howisthecurriculumstructured/principles/index.asp>).

The first of these mentioned is that challenging and enjoyable activities should enable learners to achieve their potential through developing and expressing their creativity. Breadth and coherence of experiences, progression, depth and relevance to learners’ lives, personal support and equal opportunities and choices are also intended to apply to the learning of all children and young people. The basic principles of *Curriculum for Excellence* aim to promote flourishing life, learning and work, through the development of four capacities that may enable children and young people to become: successful learners, effective contributors, confident individuals and responsible citizens. In the key policy documents of *Curriculum for Excellence*, it is suggested that through the achievement of these four capacities, Scottish education might achieve a society in accordance with four fundamental

values of wisdom, justice, compassion and integrity. For a detailed account of these four capacities, see Figure 10.1.

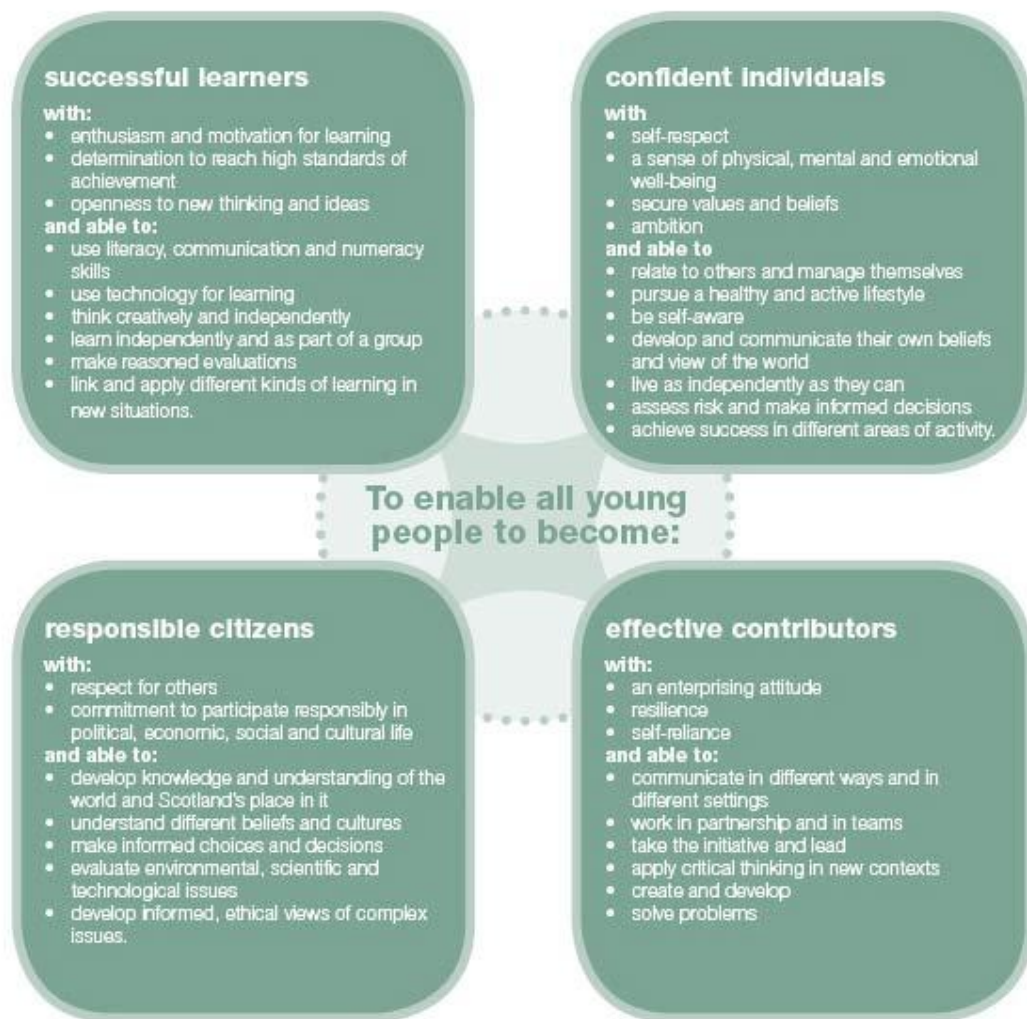


Figure 10.1 Four capacities from LTS (2010f, <http://www.ltsotland.org.uk/understandingthecurriculum/whatiscurriculumforexcellence/thepurposeofthecurriculum/>)

In this regard, arts along with the other areas of the curriculum, should aim at the cultivation of these four capacities. Arts are described as ‘*Expressive Arts*’ and include mainly art and design, music, dance and drama. In an interdisciplinary and cross-curricular form, or individually, arts should build on these capacities in pursuit of agents who are expressive, imaginative, skilful in crafts and technologies,

confident, self-aware and self-disciplined, critical thinkers, humane, cooperative, good communicators, creatively driven, capable of participating in collective activities, and of showing initiative, dependability, leadership and enterprise.

The key elements of artistic endeavour as presented in the guidelines are creativity and self-expression. These are to be achieved through participating in a variety of artistic forms and activities. By the term ‘*Expressive Arts*’, it is clear that the emphasis is on activities that provide opportunities for learners to express themselves and to develop skills of so-called ‘self-expression’. Such activities mostly involve the creation, presentation and performance of their work, and then probably the evaluation of their work and that of their peers. The following words of the curriculum guidelines appear to summarize the proposed connection of the four capacities with the arts (The Scottish Executive, 2006, p.7):

In developing expressive and aesthetic experiences from the early stages, the emphasis should be on enjoyment, expression and development as well as on the quality of any product. As they grow older, young people should continue to experience, explore and experiment while further developing knowledge and specific skills to encourage their progress in the arts. These skills include presenting ideas and emotions as individuals or in groups and commenting on their own work and that of others. Through activities of this kind they can be encouraged to develop their powers of observation, personal response, critical analysis, evaluation, and communication.

In addition, arts may play a major role in learning about and using new technologies and therefore help learners to acquire relevant life skills. Finally, not only may the skills acquired in the arts help learners to perform better in other areas of the school curriculum, but arts can also be used as a tool to make teaching of other, often less popular, subjects more enjoyable. As such, teachers of the arts should work in partnership with artists, co-ordinators (so far called cultural coordinators), culture and arts organisations, and teachers of other subjects as well as the school’s larger community of parents and staff in order to organise collaborative activities that keep the arts relevant to the everyday lives of children and young people.

The identified levels of learning in, through and about the arts, suggest that the first three levels will focus on enjoyable activities that involve presenting, performing and developing relevant skills for all. The fourth later level of arts education is reserved

for young people who may choose to specialise in the arts and it seems to involve education and training for development of enhanced artistic skills and understanding. Such opportunities have been provisionally available in some schools in recent years and there is a published report of such experiences and outcomes in *Expressive Arts* (by Learning and Teaching Scotland). The report describes approximately 70 experiences/outcomes from the arts, which involve creating, performing/presenting personal artwork; and at later stages evaluating own and peer work (LTS, 2010a, <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/myexperiencesandoutcomes/expressivearts/alloutcomes.asp>).

All in all, however, the main emphasis in *Curriculum for Excellence* seems to be on practical creativity and/or skill development. Only once or twice is *appreciation* of the work of past or present professional artists mentioned.

In general, the aim of *Expressive Arts* teaching in schools could be summarized as providing pupils with opportunities to (LTS, 2009, p.2):

- *experience enjoyment and contribute to other people's enjoyment through creative and expressive performance and presentation*
- *develop important skills, both those specific to the expressive arts and those which are transferable*
- *develop an appreciation of aesthetic and cultural values, identities and ideas and, for some:*
- *prepare for advanced learning and future careers by building foundations for excellence in the expressive arts.*

From this viewpoint, the new Scottish *Curriculum for Excellence* would appear to be a capacities and/or skills-led curriculum that aims to develop competent Scottish individuals for the globalised culture, economy and needs of the 21st century. '*Expressive Arts*' can contribute alongside other curricular areas to such development by 'inviting' pupils to be successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective social contributors, who are also creative, expressive and imaginative. Curriculum guidelines emphasize some aspects of development more than others. Rather than analyzing the weaknesses and strengths of such emphases,

what follows is some relevant discussion of the interviews with policy-makers for the sake of a clearer view of the policies and aspirations of the new Scottish curriculum.

10.2 Through the eyes of the research participants

All participants in this research agreed that arts have great value and should play a major role in *Curriculum for Excellence* or any other curriculum. All, without exception, disagreed with any educationalists, philosophers or policy makers who in the past have taken a more negative view of the educational place of the arts, regarding these as a distraction from the main business of teaching more economically ‘useful’ knowledge and skills. Their response to this view was generally that arts are important for all individuals for a wide variety of reasons that will be described more clearly further on. Before describing in detail why arts are regarded as important, however, it may be advisable to explain what interviewees meant by using the word ‘arts’. Thus, regardless of the researcher’s own view, the next part of this chapter will focus on attempts of research participants to define the arts.

10.2.1 Defining and describing the arts

Defining the arts was not perceived as easy, and of course there have been a wide range of past definitions. For contemporary Scottish educators, arts tended to be understood mainly as the four ‘*Expressive Arts*’ included in the curriculum guidelines: namely, art and design, drama, music and dance. However, research participants invariably made clear that the arts are not strictly reducible to these four. They would therefore usually refer to any visual, performing, technology-based and/or other creative expression that displayed some artistic aspect as arts. Moreover, the arts were never regarded as an isolated autonomous area of school learning, but always in connection with other fields of knowledge and skill. Descriptions of the arts were therefore *inclusive* rather than exclusive, and would generally recognise various aspects, relating arts to: i) culture; and/or ii) creativity. Accordingly, culture was generally regarded as rather wider than arts and as meaning anything produced

by a particular people or nation – though cultural arts would often be related more specifically to popular culture or Scotland’s culture. For example, Highland folk dances would be an example of expressing national identity through dance. With regard to creativity, the arts would be connected to any creative learning. In this sense, arts would often be applauded for their capacity to make a lesson fun, and consequently were generally valued across the curriculum as an effective means of teaching other subjects. Creativity and creative learning/expression tended to feature in most definitions of arts and were often associated with the development of life-skills, such as those involved in craft and technology-based activities. Overall, then, there were four general approaches to defining arts: i) in terms of art subjects; ii) in connection with creativity; iii) with reference to culture; and iv) as anything of supposedly aesthetic or artistic value.

10.2.2 A wider approach: moving from art subjects to letting creativity take the lead

Defining arts in terms of art subjects was a common initial reaction to the question: ‘How would you define the arts, and which arts would you regard as of particular educational significance?’ However, this was also commonly only an initial answer, since – as already indicated – there would also often be some further reference to culture and creativity. The commonly mentioned art subjects, as already said, would be those of the curriculum guidelines: art and design, music, drama and dance. In addition, other categories of arts might be mentioned, such as the performing or visual arts, sometimes including photography and cinema. ‘Moving image’ was another term used in connection with new media visual arts. Art and design was also frequently said to ‘include’ sculpture, two and three dimensional modelling, observed work, painting, computer graphic work and similar forms. And, of course, literature and poetry were often regarded as arts, though these are not included under ‘*Expressive Arts*’ as defined in *Curriculum for Excellence*.

Even though research participants would commonly start with reference to the official curriculum guidelines and the four *Expressive Arts*, they would soon move to

broader definitions, regarding arts in terms of arts subjects as limiting, exclusive and restricted. A common reason given for this might be, for example, that dance could be regarded as both art and sport, as argued in the following:

We're using that [definition] in Scotland at this time to help define the fact that there will be boundaries but you don't want to make them too closed. So, for example, the dance, they will see that, I mean they'll have quite strong links with physical education and sport, because of the training that goes into dance as an art form. So they won't separate out that dance as an art form needs to progress and develop and take risks. But they will see it as part of an education system in terms of physical education. So we're at that stage where there are traditional art forms and we may have defined Art through those art forms, but those definitions are over sixty years old now – dance, drama, music, literature, crafts, visual arts. So we are adopting this creative industries definition for the moment, to include advertising, architecture, other broad areas.

Consequently, a new definition of the arts tended to emerge that gave a central role to creativity. According to this definition, arts as subjects are not at the centre, but creativity, and creative learning takes the lead role. Thus, although there may still be different departments in arts councils and governmental institutions, such as a dance department, a drama department, a literature department, a visual arts department, a crafts department, a music department, and so on, this was also considered by some to be an 'old-fashioned way of working'. As one interviewee stated:

I don't think it's very profitable to spend time worrying about which pigeonhole we're in. Rather, I would think, if we're talking about artistic and creative practice – how do we network and join up and feed other people that are doing creative practice? And I mean people like scientists and mathematicians and all the rest of it because I think we have a lot to learn from each other, and we have certain ways of working in common. So I prefer to think of it in terms of creative learning, and creative learning, of course, also helps in terms of education; creativity is reasonably high up the agenda now. Creative industries are very high up in the economic sector, they're a huge growing part of the economy and even non-creative industries want employees that are creative. They want people that can think creatively, that can collaborate with other people, that can move on and be flexible and all that kind of stuff, problem-solving, all the creative attributes. So I think creative learning is really what we're about.

Quite a few research participants highlighted that moving from more standard categories of art towards a definition of creativity was strongly influenced by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in England and the UNESCO (2007) definition of creativity that includes activities from a variety of creative sectors.

Such sectors are: advertising; architecture; crafts; designer furniture; fashion clothing; film, video and other audiovisual production; graphic design; educational and leisure software; live and recorded music; performing arts and entertainment; television, radio and internet broadcasting; visual arts and antiques; and writing and publishing (UNESCO, 2006, p.1).

These ‘creative sectors’ and the associated creative mentality seems to have persuaded many policy makers in this research to relate creativity to wider culture. References to Scottish heritage were frequent, and again a definition of arts very much departing from subjects has been reinforced. For example, one interviewee stated:

I would have a broad definition of the arts and culture. I think they're truly important because, that way, you don't tend to go down a very narrow field that perhaps is exclusive. So the arts, for me, in education certainly would include music, certainly would include art, certainly would include drama, but I would also include a whole range of other things. For example, in the arts there's an element of language, particularly, for example, our native language. There would be elements, for me, in the arts of our heritage and our history. As opposed to a very narrow definition that some people would say, well, the arts are just about music, and they're just about the stage, and theatre and drama. Let's have a much broader definition of the arts.

This view represents the great majority of participants in the research and suggests that for them arts and culture go hand in hand: that, therefore, an interest in the arts will stimulate interest in culture. However, it can also be confusing when people try to define arts in this way. Indeed, some interviewees identified the equal difficulty of defining ‘culture’. They said that even this is dangerous because culture may mean *anything* – and, if people start defining it, they tend to narrow it and perhaps the term then loses much of its common meaning: namely everything that a nation or people produces or represents. For the majority of policy-makers interviewed, however, it was the beauty of the term ‘culture’: to be so inclusive. For example, one interviewee cited the instance of a street festival that is a mixture of cultural events, and yet of aesthetic or artistic value. This person, and other interviewees, mentioned that there is so much now which happens across art-forms that is representative of both arts and culture. Therefore, the general view of the relationship of art to culture could be summarised as follows:

I like the word culture better than the word art. And I think it was maybe one of the Greek philosophers, and I can't remember which one – it may have been Aristotle – said that culture was the whole experience of human existence. Everything you do is cultural; it's the whole experience of human existence. So it is broader, it's the whole thing; the whole of life is culture. And to try and pigeonhole, put it into a slot of theatre or drama or drawing or painting, is a mistake.

Furthermore, the overall trend was towards yet wider and wider definitions. The alleged multifaceted nature of arts resulted in even more inclusive responses by research participants, many of whom seemed to regard anything as art or at least as potential art. There was a strong tendency to view art in the widest possible sense: for example, cookery was sometimes mentioned as an art form. Such inclusiveness could also be considered to represent the flexibility of *Curriculum for Excellence* itself, as greater flexibility might be hoped to introduce extended educational opportunities and experiences for children and young people. Examples of the broadest definitions of arts may be seen in the following responses:

I find it difficult to think about defining art. You could start by saying art might be painting, it could be music, it could be what you traditionally think of as the arts. But it could be a lot more. I think I've a bit more sympathy with the idea that the arts can be anything at all. Planting flowers in a nice way, landscaping areas. I think that's a creative thing as well. So I think there's arts everywhere and I think it's about how you ensure that you're engaging properly, I think it's about ... you know, PE could be quite a creative and expressive form, or expressive subject. It could be about dance...or...I really like football and sometimes I watch a player play football and I think wow: that's incredible, that's just beautiful what he's just done, I respect the way he's moved, so graceful. But I think ... definitely I think I've much more sympathy with they're being arts and the potential for there being an element of the arts in every subject that we do. And I think that kind of echoes what the Curriculum for Excellence should be about. It's about liking everything that we do and seeing the benefit of everything.

And similarly:

Personally I would be looking at a broad definition of the arts. I referred earlier on to grace and movement in the athletics arena. I remember for example one of the big influences that I had in the 1970s was a Russian athlete called Ludmilla Tourischeva who was the most graceful gymnast that you could see. Just a wonderful gymnast, and she opened up a whole new dimension of grace and beauty and elegance to my life because I had never really been interested in gymnastics before, but when I saw Ludmilla Tourischeva performing, then it just gave me a new dimension. When I saw the Brazil football team play in the World Cup of 1970 – one of the greatest communal expositions, exhibitions, of grace on a football pitch that you could ever see. In cinema, recently I went to a film by the Coen brothers called 'No Country for Old Men'. And you couldn't watch that film and not be blown away by the artistry of the directors, of

the actors, by the cinematographers. So yes, art. I mean some people would say there is art in ice sculpture, flower arranging, gardening – I say yes.

Such perspectives on culture and creativity suggest that arts may be identified as any form of creative and cultural learning or enhancement of people's skills and capacities through such activities as festivals organised by local authorities. Such definitions do not limit arts education only to schools and school learning, but apparently embrace a wider social spectrum and range. Nevertheless, on this view, it would seem that it is not education or schooling that serves the arts *for their own sake*, but that arts serve education more instrumentally. In this way, education serves to develop creativity and relevant skills: meanwhile creativity serves a society which is conceived of as a body of skilful citizens. In short, the focus is not on arts education *as such*, but on capacities and skills that might be developed through the arts, that are not now defined (in the manner of recent educational policy and cultural development) as subjects, but rather in relation to their role in socially 'creative' productivity.

10.3 The role of arts

This section of the thesis began with the claim that any effort to define or identify the arts is not an easy task. The interviews quoted thus far seem to confirm this view. However, accounts given so far given of the arts do make a little clearer how the role of arts might be educationally conceived in the new Scottish curriculum. Thus, all research participants appear to agree on the dual educational role of arts: i) on its cross-curricular role in promoting wider knowledge and skills; and ii) on its contribution to activities in creative sectors that develop certain socially valued capacities. The role of arts in education will shortly be explored in more detail; but before that, it is important to identify what kinds of values appear to have influenced such accounts and definitions of the arts.

10.3.1 Values that are reflected in Scottish educational concepts of art

Some policy makers described Scotland as ‘creative’ (there also is a homonymous body called *Creative Scotland*) and they emphasised that the Scottish government is keen for businesses and educational services to interact more closely so that teaching in the educational sector might reinforce business skills across the artistic and creative board. That is to say, government feels that creativity is not being sufficiently encouraged through schooling as strongly as it could be. There seems to be much concern that creativity is not being promoted enough. It seems to be a common view that creativity is to some extent nurtured in early school years, but when children get older, perhaps in later years of their secondary schooling, there is less focus on creativity. In later stages the focus appears to be more upon the academic learning of history, maths, English and other exam-assessable subjects. The new *Curriculum for Excellence* therefore seeks to develop creativity throughout the whole educational spectrum. The vast majority of interviewed policy-makers therefore stressed that ‘*the most important thing is interactivity between business and education*’: namely, between education, creative businesses and the creative industries. Communication skills and creative skills therefore seem to be regarded as more important than in the past. Creativity and innovation, enterprise and culture are all to be viewed by *Curriculum for Excellence* as means to enhance Scottish education – so that, in turn, creative educational development may stimulate business and economic development.

Thus, the general focus of Scottish education appears to be on developing the four mental and social capacities that the curriculum guidelines identify. It seems therefore widely accepted by Scottish education authorities that the new curriculum is a capacities-led curriculum. The four main capacities, as already identified, are intended to produce confident individuals, responsible citizens, successful learners and effective contributors. The first question that now emerges is: what spirit lies behind the policy making that promotes the values underpinning the key capacities of *Curriculum for Excellence*? In private correspondence with the researcher, the First Minister for Scotland (2009, p.1) made clear that:

As a country, we must maximise the economic potential of all our citizens. As a caring society, we must make sure that we are getting it right for every child. We need a 21st century education system for a 21st century society. That is the justification for the

positive process of change imbued in Curriculum of Excellence. It is a highly ambitious programme of reform and has a vital role to play in preparing our young people to take their place in a modern society and economy.

Without exception, all research participants stressed the importance of the Scottish economy and how much this should influence educational thought and policy-making. Their references to the importance of such influence were not vague or ambiguous, but very specific and similar between them. Thus, for example:

The economies in China, in India and in Brazil are growing rapidly. What kind of young person do we need to develop in Scotland who will have the understanding and the ambition and the drive to work not just around the corner here, but to realise that their work probably impacts on China, or some other country, and actually they could be trading, they could be working, with people in those countries? So, what we need to develop are people with the right skills to learn throughout their lives.

Such references to economy and working life seem to have influenced not only *Curriculum for Excellence* in general, but thinking about arts education in particular. From this perspective, arts education would not add value to education by virtue of its own distinctive character and potential, but because of its contribution to more general educational aims and objectives. It would be the role of arts, like other subjects, to promote the generally desired skills, capacities and outcomes of successful education. A policy maker stated:

What I can see within the Curriculum for Excellence and the advantages that the Curriculum for Excellence can bring to arts education, you see, is that it will allow arts education to become much more central and important for the young person's experiences. Because through the arts you can make them very confident, because of public performance. You can make them interested in life-long learning because of for example photography. You see, of all the arts the one element that probably everybody uses nowadays is photography. Because they will take a digital photograph and if they don't like it they will throw it away. Some people put it onto their desktops, on computers, create their own photographs...

However, this view – connecting education with everyday life, business with training, knowledge with skills, useful production with consumerism, arts experience with active learning – seems to promote a certain *instrumental* or utilitarian spirit whereby all school learning should have practical benefit and serve the interests of

everyday living. Thus, policy makers often represented creativity in the arts in terms of the following examples:

You can also then learn through it, so you are learning about creativity. You're learning to be creative. You're learning to take chances. You're learning to explore. You're learning to take something and through the use of computer, with technology, turn it into something else. So you can download a tune from iTunes onto your telephone, take it into the classroom, put it onto the computer programme, and sample one small bit of it and turn it into a new pop song for yourself, and then use that as a backing track for your pop group performance at a school show [...] We want people to go to pop concerts, we want people to go to opera, we want people to go to art galleries and appreciate, and criticise. Because that helps everybody to feel that they are contributing to society. They have a voice, and they have an interest. They're not just a consumer of pop music. They're not just a consumer of paint and they go along and paint everything white. But they actually have a view. They have their own view about something, and that's very important. We want people to be motivated, ambitious and actually have a business mind, because they might well go to IKEA and say 'I can design better than that. You know, I can design better furniture than IKEA'. And so that will drive them to maybe choose a particular career pathway, you see. So there are a lot of long-term benefits and the arts are something that are round about all of us all of the time.

What is interesting about the data from this research is that many of the stated views of research participants so far gathered would appear to be largely in accord with the general thrust of recent Scottish education policy documentation. Whether all participants agree with them completely is another issue. But from the tone, the examples given and their precise words, the majority of participants would seem to be happy enough with their main import. However, there was a small minority who seemed to be less in agreement, in so far as they could see too much emphasis on developing individuals for current economic needs in changing economic circumstances. Moreover, according to the view of this minority, such economic focus diminishes the value and potential of the arts. That is to say that the arts become a mere tool of the utilitarian spirit of present times. Furthermore, by diminishing genuine aesthetic and artistic aspects of development, learners may also be diminished as people. So, according to a few research participants, much current policy making seems to be following a direction that – while understandable – is in danger of moving away from the more general and broad education within schools and universities that might produce more well-rounded individuals. Thus, a councillor stated that:

The more you learn about a range of subjects in a general degree the better you are equipped to deal with the world. If you just go down and want to be an accountant, you end up being a boring accountant with no understanding. What do they say about boring accountants who understand the price of everything but the value of nothing? So what we're teaching in the education system is value. It's the values that are important in transmitting from one generation to the other. And the values we're transmitting now seem to be purely economic-based and not the broader cultural artistic ones that make a full person and fuller rounded society.

Now, having indicated how research participants attempted to understand the nature of arts, and following some reflection on the possible spirit behind such views, something needs to be said about implications of these various perspectives for education. While there is clearly significant agreement among policy makers on the important role of arts in education, this part of the thesis will try to explore further the practical implications of such 'importance'.

10.3.2 The educational meaning of the 'important role of the arts'

One main aim of *Curriculum for Excellence* is to encourage young people to see connections between different subjects or areas of the school curriculum. There is evident sympathy here with the idea of cross-curricular links. In this regard, a policy maker who has long been working in this direction and who has contributed to both the 5–14 guidelines and Curriculum of Excellence stated:

My concern is, in the past, you had the curriculum, all the curriculum subjects. And then here you had the young person. The young person went to that subject, and then went to that subject, and then went to that subject and that subject, and so on, and never made the connections. The cross-cutting of the Curriculum for Excellence – which is quite a new way of thinking – I think it's a good way of thinking. Science, if you're learning science, if you're learning about what the scientists hold, if you're learning about some of their input into life, if you're learning about some of the... if you're learning history ... about the history of Science, you're learning all these different things, then I think the arts, culture, different things, can have an input into what you're doing all through the different subjects. I don't think ... if you want to have a truly creative nation as well, then I don't think you can just make the arts and culture an aside. I think, if you're going to talk about making arts and culture important, then it has to be done properly and it has to be done on a level playing-field.

According to many research participants, the new policy guidelines allow more flexibility in the curriculum and more opportunity for cross-cutting thematic

approaches in which the arts can play a valuable part. A key question that emerges here, however, is that of what such policy makers may have meant by ‘valuable’. In fact, in terms of their examples, they often seemed to mean that arts may offer a useful tool for the effective delivery of other subjects and fields of knowledge. Of course, utilising the arts in this way has often been regarded as challenging for schools, teachers, and educational authorities, in so far as teachers need to feel confident that they can teach the tools of music, art and design, dance, drama, as well as to use the arts in a cross-curricular way that supports the teaching of other subjects or themes. But here, it is interesting to note that while the arts were often appreciated for their potential to assist other forms of learning, only a small minority of participants entertained the reverse possibility. Thus, common examples of cross-curricular learning with reference to the arts were the promotion of environmental studies, maths or history *through* painting, drama or music (rather than vice versa). In the words of a policy maker (in connection with dance education):

Now numeracy is the responsibility of all teachers. Mathematics in terms of calculus, algebra, and so on is for the mathematics specialist, but everybody should be contributing to numeracy. So when you are in the dance classroom with young children, they can be learning to count-count by counting dance steps. They can be learning to speak and to read through rhythmic activities. If the teacher wants to take, for example, a Highland dance and links the Highland dance to Highland music and links that to a story of either cultural and economic prosperity in the Highlands of the 21st century. Or maybe links it back to the tragic circumstances of the Highland Clearances in the late 18th and early 19th century and builds it into geography and history and social and economic change— there are plenty of ways of doing that [...] One of the challenges that we have in Scotland is our health, our nation has got a bad reputation for bad health. Our diet and the lack of physical activity, exercise. Within schools there is one particular group that’s worrying us and that’s teenage girls. Because very often teenage girls, by the time they’re into second year, let’s say in secondary school, teenage girls turn off physical education. They don’t want to do physical education, games and so on. But what they have developed a real active interest in is dance, in modern dance particularly – and through modern dance many young girls are actually getting an opportunity to both be physically active, and be creative as well. And that’s very helpful for them physically, but also educationally and spiritually.

Indeed, it is interesting that when a policy maker was asked what the educational value of dance is, he referred to contestants in the BBC’s ‘Strictly Come Dancing’ show. He underlined ‘*how toned they are now, and how fit, and how they’ve lost weight and so on. It’s an extremely healthy thing for children to do*’.

This example of the cross curricular function of arts does not have only theoretical implications, since projects are constantly promoted, such as ‘Arts across the curriculum’, with a view to teaching subjects that would not readily have been linked to the arts in the past (e.g. learning physics through music in connection with notes and pitches). ‘Arts across the curriculum’ is a very fashionable idea and plausibly supported by the thought that arts and artistic means may make lessons in other subjects more attractive and enjoyable. In addition, a recent popular Scottish scheme has been that of ‘cultural coordinators’ who are invited to schools in order to facilitate arts projects. These projects usually have a cross-curricular function. An example of this was given by a cultural coordinator responsible for a group of schools:

So, for example, we did one where ... with primary children ... where they were evacuated for the day to the local castle basically. So they were asked to come in with a toothbrush and a cup and a pair of pyjamas and they were then informed that there was a war going on. They met Winston Churchill and Neville Chamberlain, you know actors; they met American paratroopers, and they got driven from their school out to the country with an American armed convoy, big vehicles, trucks and jeeps and things. And then they spent the day out in the park, writing postcards home about what life is like, learning semaphore on the fields with the big flags. And they also had a 1940s school classroom lesson where they did geography and maths from the day, with little slate boards and things. So we turned that whole day into a World War Two experience for primary children. We did the same thing for secondary schools where we turned their day into an Army boot camp, because in the Second World War the men would have gone to a local high school to sign up. So we actually signed all the kids up at the start of the day, put them into platoons. And, instead of English, they did code-breaking; instead of science, they did how to escape from a prisoner-of-war camp with explosions and invisible ink; instead of PE, they had a Sergeant-Major with a moustache screaming at them, and they did lots of different activities to do with the War. And at the end of the day they were all given a name, and some of them were given stripes so they were given a rank, and at the end of the day we had a Wall of Death where we announced that we'd put the names up of the people who had fallen during the War and some of the kids, that was their names so they had to sit down – so there were kids crying. It was very emotional, it was really good. And we also did the same for ship-building.

To be sure, there is a role for the arts that *is* conducive to the teaching and learning of other subjects. Arts can provide various types of knowledge. Thus, there is real possibility of movement from knowledge *in* the arts to knowledge *through* the arts. But in moving away from a knowledge-led curriculum, policy-makers who have contributed to *Curriculum for Excellence* have been particularly proud of its skills-

led conception of arts learning. In this regard, however, there is clearly a distinction between two categories of artistic skills: precisely skills *in* the arts and skills *through* the arts.

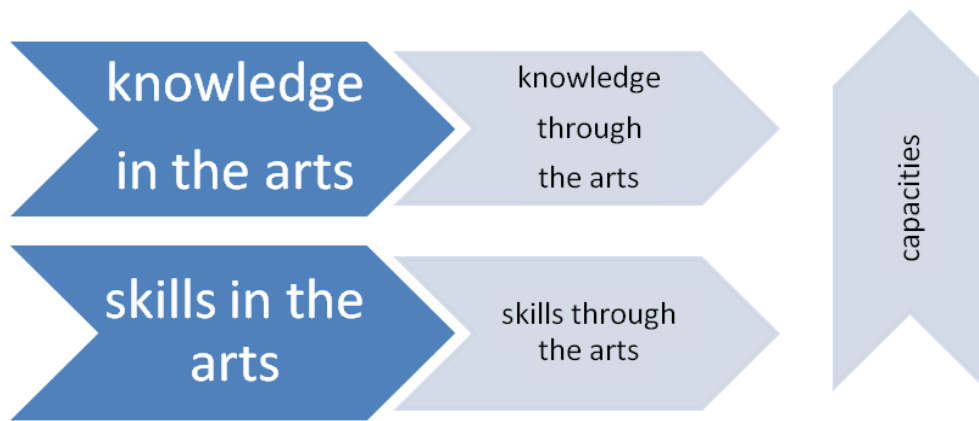


Figure 10.2 The aim of skills and knowledge in and through the arts.

Skills in the arts seemed to be regarded as very important by some policy makers who underlined the importance of e.g. musical culture in Scotland. A project that offered free access to music tuition for a year in Scotland was recently launched that reflected how valuable this art is regarded. This project is called ‘Youth Music Initiative’. But concerns were also raised about this project by some policy makers who had reservations about such projects in so far as they are not an in-built feature of formal education. It has been argued that the Youth Music Initiative has been delivered in too many different ways by different local authorities and has not therefore reached every child as originally intended. For example, a research interviewee stated that:

The Youth Music Initiative is sometimes been offered as an after-school or a try-if-you-want. I spoke to somebody whose child had had two lessons in something, that’s nothing. That’s like saying here’s a carrot and then taking it away. You know, dangling a carrot. So I think it’s not as clear cut as every child in Scotland has had an opportunity, a year of music. I’m not sure that has been the case

Thus, some research participants argued that arts are only theoretically, but not practically, a priority, given that the government tends to assume that arts will be delivered anyway. And indeed, if someone looks, for example, at the national educational outcomes that the Scottish Government wants to achieve, there are 45 indicators that are meant to identify educational achievement, but none of these seem specific to the arts. According to the Scottish Government (2009, <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/scotPerforms/indicators>):

National Indicators enable the Scottish Government to track progress towards the achievement of its National Outcomes and ultimately the delivery of its purposes'.

Out of 45 indicators, some are about crime: e.g. Reduce overall conviction rates by two percentage points by 2011; and one is even about tooth decay: 60% of school children in primary education will have no signs of dental disease by 2010. Not one of them is about arts or even culture.

Research participants generally held that all young people should have the opportunity to learn in all of the arts areas. However, some of them raised concerns about the few projects available (e.g. projects facilitated by cultural coordinators). They were regarded as not enough to provide adequate arts education, since they do not offer sufficiently systemic exposure to the arts. In addition, financial implications may also affect learning in the arts. In other words, it costs much more to invite an arts team to perform for the children than to ask children to draw pictures for themselves. Similar concerns were expressed by other policy makers who understood the spirit of the new curriculum and the economic realities it seeks to address, but did not seem to think that provision of a few art experiences in schools are enough; what they regard as more important is to get young people engaging with arts on a regular basis from early years, because a true understanding of the arts cannot be gained from limited exposure. As one interviewee said, it could not be supposed that someone might become a great football player from having played football only once. Take, for example, the problem of how to interest young people in opera. If a

school invites Scottish Opera only once – despite the wide range of education programme provided by Scottish Opera – this is unlikely to be enough to engage the interest of young people in the rich range of artistic experience available through opera. On the other hand, if opera has become part of the learners’ habitual vocabulary, then he or she may engage with it on the same terms as the rest of their educational and cultural experience. So it is not enough to provide children with random experiences at a particular age: e.g. one trip to the theatre between the ages of 12 and 14. It is not about ticking boxes. Thus, research participants who were less optimistic about the art educational prospects of *Curriculum for Excellence*, and who recognised how important to self-development an educated appreciation of arts is, also feared that occasional or superficial exposure to arts is insufficient for such purposes. In particular, one policy maker argued:

I think it's important that we start to embed an appreciation of the arts, an understanding of the arts, as young as possible. We encourage children to draw from a very early age and possibly dance and other things; use music, musical instruments. But we never seem in the primary school anyway, maybe even secondary school, to put that in context and say what it is the arts are about. What's the culture of the arts, what's the history of the arts, why is it important to you, what do you enjoy about it. There's no debate for that, there's no space for that. And then we wonder why we haven't got audiences, necessarily the numbers we'd like, or an appreciation of culture and arts generally in our society. But we've not put any space.

In brief, this research participant says that current educational policies have not provided enough space for the appreciation of the arts and education in the arts. A related question, then, is that of what *Curriculum for Excellence* has provided space for. The answer seems to be, as already indicated, that educational space has mostly been devoted to the alleged economic needs of society, as many research participants emphasised. It would therefore once again seem that arts education has come to mean education *through* the arts: indeed, not even so much education through arts education, but *training* in or through artistic skills. As already suggested, in line with the views of many research participants, arts might well have a cross-curricular function by assisting knowledge of other kinds; but it should not be concluded from this that arts should be mainly focused on the promotion of skills out-with artistic knowledge, or exclusively on the development of useful artistic or other skills.

The four capacities that *Curriculum for Excellence* is constructed around and seeks to promote –namely, successful learning, individual confidence, responsible citizenship and effective contribution– were regularly cited as key benefits or products of participating in the arts. The policy-makers interviewed seemed confident that these four capacities could be effectively promoted by arts in Scottish education, providing an efficient way of getting the most out of the various arts. One policy-maker even regarded such potential benefits of arts as distinctive of them. Precisely, it was held that arts might promote *all four* capacities at the same time (whereas other subjects may only contribute to only one or some of these capacities, or have to be delivered in an artificial way in order in order to bring out the other capacities). A director of education expressed sympathy with the role of arts in promoting the aims of *Curriculum for Excellence* capacities in the following words: *‘if we concentrate in terms of those four capacities and how we deliver those four capacities, then I think there’s an excellent future for the arts’*. However, when the researcher asked research participants to offer examples of what they had in mind in this respect, they invariably came up with examples that reflected the instrumental spirit so far identified. In this view, arts may be practically useful in helping learners develop e.g. their social, teamwork, presentation and public performance skills through taking part in choirs, performing on the stage or playing in an orchestra. Quite a few policy makers referred to the work of cultural coordinators who tried to inspire pupils to take part in artistic competitions and exhibitions as potential competitors or exhibitors. As a councillor said:

I think it [arts] can create confidence in children. We did an interesting project with arts. We have five cultural arts co-ordinators who work in our schools and we had the travelling bus exhibition. And we had a number of primary schools who, over a period of months and led by the arts cultural co-ordinators did an exhibition. They actually created the artworks – and this was printing and this was drawing and this was painting and this was sculpture. It was very interesting talking to the children as to what effect this project had had on them. And quite a number said ‘we didn’t think we could even paint, we didn’t even think we could do art’. So they gained enormous self-confidence by the end of the project that it was something they could achieve, and they could get a lot of pleasure from a feeling of great self-fulfilment and this was something which would last them and could last them all their lives, it was a lesson learnt which was life fulfilling not just something which happened in a month or two months.

In this regard the *Curriculum for Excellence* capacity of ‘confident individuals’ tended to be the most highlighted, because getting involved in a whole range of the arts, or arts involvement as such, might help people become increasingly more confident, either individually or collectively, by expressing themselves through aesthetic experience and artistic creativity. An important focus here is on the satisfaction of achievement, either in connection with a piece of work produced by the pupil, or through a good relationship built up with peers. As a policy maker stated:

It's to do with this confidence-based experience and that is so important. And having an encouragement to do a task is really important as well. So having a child who thinks they can't do a piece of sculpture and they're taken away and given some papier-mâché and given lots of ideas and given the confidence that they can actually create something. And then they create something and then they paint and they think 'gosh that does look like a bird, I could do that, that's a bird'. And that makes them a successful learner, successful in their own eyes and successful in their teacher's eyes, and successful in their peers' eyes. Very important.

Thus, this ‘satisfaction’ of achievement in arts apparently builds general self-esteem or confidence in addition to any successful learning, and hopefully generates interest in other subjects as well. This capacity of successful learning was also the one most closely associated with the cross-curricular function of the arts. Claims for this potential of the arts have already been cited; but another example comes from those policy makers who argued that a big educational benefit from literature is literacy, mainly through increase of vocabulary. Such broadening of linguistic knowledge was held to increase the general capacity to learn and the confidence to express one’s ‘self’. Reference to Scots as tending to be ‘*very reticent or shy about expressing themselves*’ was frequent. It was often claimed that being encouraged to express themselves would make Scots feel better about themselves, irrespective of their intellectual or other abilities.

A few policy-makers referred to another aspect of being a successful learner through the arts: that being a successful artistic learner should involve having an appreciation of the arts, given the connection between learning of the arts and arts appreciation. Thus, the emphasis seemed to be on artistic learning that was *not* just a matter of ‘hands-on’ activity. However, when interviewees were asked to suggest some

examples of this they would usually just state how pleasant appreciation of arts can be, and would eventually refer back to participation in arts and other aesthetic activities – finally returning to the connection of arts to other non-artistic knowledge and to the cross-curricular function of arts. A typical example of this from the interviews is as follows:

***Interviewer:** Could you bring an example? How by appreciating a piece of art we make a learner successful? And what is the benefit of this?*

***Interviewee:** Yes. One way of doing it is by listening to music. This could be a symphony orchestra; it could be a small group of musicians who are rooted in the local culture. I would say, start with what you know and then eventually develop to the orchestra and see if people will want that. In terms of appreciation of pictures, paintings and architecture, start with your local community. Look at the architecture of your local community; find out more about why buildings have been built in a kind of particular way; look at the relationship between function and form; start to get people interested in these kind of things. Get people to appreciate dance. Again when it comes to dance it is probably better for them, instead of standing back and admiring, in the first instance it's better for them to become directly involved. And I would go as far as to say that appreciation of, for example, athletic movement – and speaking to someone from Greece for whom the history of athleticism should be part of your, is part of your culture – I'm thinking of the relationship between, for example, playing football gracefully and appreciating football. But I believe that you can look at football and the way people play football, and see art, appreciate art. For example, you just need to look at someone like Thierry Henry, who is the most graceful athlete. Look at someone like, for example, Carl Lewis, the athlete, and again appreciate movement. But in order to develop that in a young person, probably the quickest way is to get them to participate themselves, so that it's not at a distance, but that it's relevant to their experience.*

Successful artistic learning experience was also described as the experience of appreciating or critiquing, not only of performing. For example, it was claimed that a song about Nelson Mandela could be the stimulus for discussion of peace and human rights. Again, role-playing in drama classes could give learners the opportunity to discuss topics such as bullying or drugs or gender. The arts were sometimes described by research participants as good stimuli for discussion and debate amongst pupils. Various arts might encourage them to think about the subjects and themes of art, the reasons why artworks were created and the contexts in which they were created. Such reflection may develop appreciation of a range of social and cultural themes and therefore some sense of social and political responsibility. This was one suggested explanation of the meaning of (the capacity of) 'responsible citizenship'.

In connection with this capacity, it was noted that many public arts projects had engaged with children and young people, giving them some insight into what citizenship might mean. When these young people were next creating e.g. a flower bed in a housing scheme, or painting a mural on a wall, they might feel responsible for it, since they've had an input; in which case it is less likely to be vandalized, because they might well feel more protective and responsible. So, such 'artistic' projects might well provide a way of creating 'responsible citizens'. Such projects are about making young people aware of their social or cultural surroundings in ways that might instil a sense of community pride.

Another interesting perspective on the capacity of 'responsible citizen' was that of developing 'diplomatic' skills through the arts. Multicultural schools and societies may discover a common language through the arts that will allow learners to exchange cultural experiences. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds within a particular school might learn from each other by sharing the arts of their respective cultures. This potential of the Arts was often described by participants as a 'soft diplomatic skill' that might serve to break down social barriers in an educationally significant way. And, of course, such exchange of cultural experiences is not only about the development of skills, but a way of appreciating the history and heritage of other nations and countries. Folk dance was frequently cited as a means of learning about other cultures.

Another frequently mentioned way of developing the capacity of 'responsible pupil', and perhaps eventually citizen, would be through collective activities. Being a member of a team means that one has to co-ordinate one's activities with those of others: for example to co-operate in projects, by acting for the good of the team rather than selfishly and so on. In this respect, collective activities may build a variety of social skills and capacities. By way of example, a policy maker stated:

Absolutely, and that's very much the case in drama isn't it? And there's something for everyone in drama; you don't have to be on the stage, you can be backstage. There's a whole range of skills that you learn there... so creativity and both individual creativity, but also group, collective creativity is probably the biggest thing.

And, as already mentioned, creativity may also engender confidence – in which case effective contribution, complements the idea of confident individuals. As the majority of the research participants argued, if children are confident they can readily take part in debates, in music, or in drama festivals. As a result, they can also contribute to their community, or their society, or their country. Another policy maker added:

Well, stimulating creativity to make pupils more creative in education, there's a school of thought that considers enhanced creativity in pupils as a stepping-stone to creating adults more developed for entering the working world. A more creative person is considered to be a more efficient person.

To be sure, developing a creatively active role for pupils was not considered an easy task. Research participants thought that the best way to do this is to relate arts and other subjects to the every-day experiences of children. Creating the right context for learning in and through the arts is clearly very important. It enables pupils to make clear connections between their experiences and may effectively stimulate them towards fresh or novel experiences. That is why two already mentioned aspects of experience were so important to the interviewees: popular culture and technology. Everyday situations may also involve relationships with other people or situations like the following:

Active role in the school but everyday situations. You know, designing an office, designing a school. Use of colour, use of space, use of shape. All these kind of things, very important. You could say the same about mathematics, of course, that's very important. So if they learn about art and how to design something new, when they have finished being a student and they are buying a house, they're going to decorate it better. They're going to choose more adventurous colours, they're going to have a critical eye for pattern, for putting furniture in certain places, for choosing furniture, because they have an understanding of design and the look that they want. So these things are actually helping people to use these skills throughout their lives, and that's part of a life-long learning.

To develop skills that contribute to life-long creative learning was said to be very important, especially in modern societies in which life, working and economic situations are prone to rapid change. One example suggested by a policy maker was that people may start off on one job, perhaps working in a supermarket, but then change to something else entirely. Or they may start off in construction work and

then, in five years' time, construction becomes more efficient, because everything is made in a factory and assembled on site by machines. Under such circumstances, people need to demonstrate creative adaptability or retrain in order to acquire the knowledge needed in the new working environment. Thus, interviewees were generally of the view that teachers faithfully following *Curriculum for Excellence* guidelines ought to try to develop adaptable young people who are also ambitious, confident, and in possession of the required skills and personal qualities for effective performance of their jobs. Indeed, it was emphasised that such essential skills and attributes as ambition, self-respect, drive – qualities that arts may help to build – were closely connected, if not actually presupposed by the four capacities of *Curriculum for Excellence*.

In general, communication and creative skills do seem to be regarded as more important than they were in the past. Creativity and innovation, enterprise and culture are all viewed by *Curriculum for Excellence* as ways of stimulating and enhancing the quality and relevance of Scottish education. In this way, educational emphasis on creative development may therefore serve to stimulate business and economic development. Moreover, a more creative person is considered to be a more efficient and thoughtful person. In the words of a policy maker:

Creativity and education could stimulate an entrepreneurial atmosphere in Scotland and stimulate the small to medium-sized enterprises in Scotland at the moment, of which there is quite a strong base. The key thing is to get Scotland competing at an international level. So by ensuring that creativity is stimulated in education, through the Arts, it will impact upon other aspects of the pupils' lives, either if it's dance or physical education they're taking part in, so long as their creative mindset is being developed and stimulated. Then it is thought, and I would tend to agree with it, that it will, as I say, impact upon other aspects of their lives and determination to succeed. The way in which they approach problems, find solutions for them, the way they interact out-with the educational environment, in society as a whole. So that's the most important thing.

To this extent, the four capacities of Scottish *Curriculum of Excellence* do seem to focus on educational achievements beyond mere qualifications and on ways to educate and/or train young people for life and work. Thus, contemporary Scottish education appears to be making a serious effort to lay the foundations of an education that promotes all the skills that pupils may need in the future – whether

these belong the world of work, to their family lives or to their leisure time. Whether such ambition is feasible or not is another issue. What this part of the thesis has sought to explore is the spirit and the motives behind the new curriculum policy. In this respect, creative industries, technology, skills and socially valued capacities were described by many interviewees as ‘the single key priority area’ of a creative Scotland for arts and all other areas of the curriculum.

10.3.3 Arts and moral power

However, given this representation of arts as having such an instrumental and versatile role, and in light of the researcher’s research interests, research participants were also asked whether arts might have any potential for moral education. The researcher did not want to influence the research participants by leading them to a necessarily positive answer. In consequence, she asked interviewees to respond to the more radical claim that arts (such as literature, music and cinema) may sometimes – if not always – serve to corrupt the morals of the young.

In this regard, some research participants focused on popular art, defending it as a way in which young people might achieve identity and expression, allowing them to form groups of like-minded peers. Such groups could enable valuable feelings of ‘belonging’ to social groups that had their own identities and cultures. Many research participants also claimed that society cannot prevent the more popular modes of expression of young people:

You will never stop young people wanting to express their view, wanting to have something that belongs to them. And that’s why art, fashion, music, films, have always developed because young people want their own identity. Rock ‘n roll, heavy metal, punk rock, all the disco music, eh, house music, garage music, all these things are young people wanting their own identifiable art. OK? So that will always happen. In terms of morals, in terms of the content, I would have said that throughout history art has been pushing morals – it’s been pushing the boundary of morals.

But it was also pointed out that pushing moral boundaries does not necessarily mean moral corruption. With regard to school there would seem to be a degree of censorship already in the kinds of art to which young people are exposed. In addition, it was regarded as important to recognise that various arts may provide

ways of expression for young people that are not just a matter of peer pressure or following the *status quo*. Indeed, popular and other arts may well enable critical questioning of the social and other circumstances in which young people find themselves, even of challenging their own popular cultures. It was often argued by the research participants that such artistic questioning is a vitally important part of learning, growing up and developing one's own ideas, values, and philosophies. That said, people are often presented with opposing viewpoints in the arts. Since the morally good and bad may be both present in the same works, who is to decide what's good and what's bad? Are young people capable of discerning this for themselves or do they need to be taught? Interestingly, research participants claimed that arts, no less than other curriculum subjects – contain or lay down certain (objective?) values and standards for flourishing lives, which young people may discover either by careful instruction or through exercise of their own critical faculties. Thus, what some research participants advocated for Scottish arts education is a general widening of learners' opportunities and perspectives – including moral perspectives.

To be sure, it was recognised that there must be some 'censorship' in schools, in so far as it was generally felt (for example) that 'filth and pornography' are not conducive to educational flourishing. In addition, artistic portrayal of excessive violence was regarded by some research participants as unhelpful to the development of young people; not least visually depicted violence on film or television. It was sometimes claimed that such depictions can lead to a desensitisation of younger and older people alike. In this respect, a councillor argued:

You stop feeling, you stop reacting, it becomes normal, average, it doesn't feel painful any longer and I think that is a very dangerous state to be in, and I think that children are very vulnerable indeed, and I think it can be harmful to them. So I think the portrayal of violence has to be used in a very careful and disciplined way with young people.

However, the majority of the research participants were reluctant to deny young people – in the name of censorship – exposure to anything worth calling art, arguing instead that education should help them judge the difference between morally good and bad content. Thus, a policy maker commented that:

I'm sure if you were to go back and look at what the church said about the arts – perhaps a couple of centuries ago – they would be worried that by reading certain texts and getting involved in certain pursuits, the morals of young people would be corrupted. I think there are much, much broader – what's the best word? A much broader approach to these things these days.

A balanced exposure to artistic expression is an important part of education because the morally good and the morally bad are integral to any experience of human life that inevitably includes both. Such exposure may indeed assist young people to cope with morally bad things, as well as to reject them. The general view of participants seemed to be that cinema, literature etc, are not in themselves bad or good: rather, they are opportunities to be used in either morally educational positive or negative ways. To be sure, it was also admitted that it might be better to provide young people with artistic experiences that are not overly distressing or shocking, especially since some of them – in terms of their psychological and emotional development – may be ill-equipped to deal with these. Children may come from back-grounds which are fragile and dysfunctional, so that they should not be presented with images that may exacerbate their already damaged emotional and psychological condition. In this respect, a policy maker stated

Now, can I think of images which would be shocking? Yes I can. Can I think of images that can corrupt? I think you're then into a philosophical discussion about whether the image has the power to corrupt or whether the response from the individual is that which corrupts.

The same policy maker referred to films by directors Scorsese and Tarantino that he/she considered to be artistic masterpieces and to have many commendable qualities – but which also, on the other hand, contained scenes of sex and violence that might have some potential to de-sensitise or 'corrupt'.

Overall, however, when research participants were asked if and how artworks might assist students' moral education, or help to make them critical moral thinkers, the general answer was mainly in the terms of promotion of the four *Curriculum for Excellence* capacities, and in turn through offering pupils opportunities to take part in various artistic performances. Since some critical discussion of this perspective has previously been offered in this chapter, nothing further will be said on this at this

point. However, a suggested general argument that the arts may nurture the creative spirit of children or young people is clearly an interesting one here, given it may have significant moral educational implications beyond those generally entertained by research participants. For example, one policy maker did suggest that such artistic creativity is what an arts programme should be doing and that this is the important and essential contribution of arts, given that it is *not* necessarily – or in the same way – encountered in the study of science, history or maths. Moreover, this was suggested as central to what it means to be artistically creative. To create effective and affecting art, someone needs to be very sensitive to human emotion. Both the ‘artist’ and the audience need to be able to empathise and understand how they conceive and react to the world. The role of art in understanding and exploring human relationships would sometimes be stressed in this respect. For example, one policy maker mentioned that many of the operas of Mozart and his contemporaries profoundly explored moral issues around human relationships, freedom, sexuality and so on. Nevertheless, when the researcher asked this policy maker to give a realistic present-day educational example of this and to say how this might be a consequence of witnessing an artwork such as opera, he answered:

If you are studying a play for the theatre, you’re studying that in English, and you’re looking at how that writer produced the dialogue, produced the situations. You’re learning how to communicate, how to use language, how to write language in a way that communicates particular feelings. The educational value is in terms of how people can develop characters through what they say, what they do. How do people construct a novel, now that’s a very important skill to learn The ways that what people say and do are connected and how, if you’re writing a play or writing a film script, the way that people say things and the language that they use, the actual words that they use, can tell you a lot about a person. It can infer a lot about a person. You can draw a conclusion about a person. Now I have seen very interesting learning and teaching through a class watching ‘Friends’, the television programme ‘Friends’. So children watch it daily, but what they can learn if the English teacher talks about it? What they can learn is how does Joey’s character, how is it developed by what he says, what he does – and because of the way Joey acts, what might you think his past life was? What might you think he will do next? A young person should be able to imagine that kind of thing based on the character of Joey or the character of Monica. What has made Monica so tidy? So demanding in terms of a clean, tidy house. Why is she like that? What maybe happened in her past life? That’s quite important for young people to be able to think through these things.

And when the researcher asked whether ‘Friends’ the soap opera could be considered an artwork, the interviewee answered that it *is* also art, since a learner can look at it

from a dramatic point of view or from an artistic perspective: in this way, yes, it can be art. And with particular reference to 'Friends' he added:

So it is, it's a piece of art from there, because you have a situation, you have characters, you have scenery, you have the clothes that they wear. Why do they choose these clothes? The costume designer looks at the character of Monica and says what kind of clothes would that person wear? So you're right. That's where art and design can meet the English department.

At all events, the majority of the research participants were inclined to say at some point that arts do have some moral educational significance. Many said that the arts can take audiences to more 'elevated' places and to heights of delight and mystery: they spoke of an 'awakening' that may happen when people encounter great arts. It was often particularly said that people can be moved by arts to great emotion – and that arts may be underused in this role. However, one policy-maker put this point as follows:

There is also a dimension that I would like to raise, and that is that in my opinion the arts are under-used in their capacity to influence positively disturbed and vulnerable young people. And again, I would argue that rather than promoting an appreciation, you know, art appreciation, in the first instance what I would be doing is trying to get young people to express themselves. In other words to do, to be involved in drama, to be involved in physical activity, to be involved in the use of the voice.

This view was again common amongst those interviewed and seems once again to accord with the capacities-led spirit of *Curriculum for Excellence*. Thus, once again, it seemed that for many of those interviewed, the way to stimulate discussion of morally significant issues in schools was to make an issue the subject of a piece of drama or role-playing and to use the arts merely as a vehicle for moral discussion. By and large, interviewees seemed to suppose that the point of arts is that pupils might learn better about a moral or other issue in an artistically active way rather than through passively reading about it. Furthermore, using drama and role play was argued to help children appreciate better what it would have been like in another era, country, or in a particular culture that artistic representation can bring to life. Still, although this perspective *may* seem to resemble the view of arts as morally educational that has been defended elsewhere in this thesis, there are clearly important differences. While many interviewees may have recognised the potential

of arts to communicate significant ideas about or aspects of human life, the prevailing tendency was to see life relevant art-forms as only contingent vehicles for the expression of such themes and ideas, rather than as the essential forms or embodiments of intrinsically significant artistic content. But it is surely not, as argued elsewhere, that a Wilfred Owen (1920) poem expresses some war theme that might be expressed in other terms elsewhere; but that the theme or experience of war in the poetry of Owen is one that could only be expressed in that form by that particular poem. In fact, a favourite example of research participants was Second World War themes in which children might take on different historical roles of the time and act out what it would be like to be an evacuee sent away from home to live with strangers, to carry your gas mask, and so on. But such role-play is used only to illustrate information available in other forms (perhaps in a history text) by other means (as a picture might illustrate an event in a story). On the other hand, the Wilfred Owen poem conveys an experience that cannot be had other than through the poetic medium in which Owen expresses it.

Still, it was generally argued that the arts may open up worlds to children and young people, different from those they may presently be experiencing. Thus, arts may offer insight into other ways of living that can also make a difference to the way that they live their lives, especially underprivileged young people who have difficult lives and limited prospects. Some policy makers actually said that arts might bring much vision and hope into such limited lives. For example, those children who may be trapped in abusive family or other relationships may read a book or see a film and suddenly realise that their experience is not normal or acceptable; that is not what everyone does, and that things need not be like this; that violence and abuse and disrespect should not be a part of their lives. The artistic presentation of some problematic social issues such as alcohol abuse may help children appreciate and understand some negative aspects of life in a critical and constructive way. It was suggested that harnessing the positive educational uses of arts in such a way can be the most constructive way of promoting the moral education of students. However, although research participants could understand the moral potential of arts, their practical examples tended to be different from what they described in theory.

Whereas in their ‘theoretical’ reflections, arts were often accorded some non-instrumental value, the practical examples they described invariably focused on *instrumental* value.

Finally, a few further dimensions of moral education in or through the arts were mentioned. A very important point for policy makers seems to have been that pupils need to develop an understanding of others if they are to engage successfully in any sort of group activity, such as making music or performing drama. There has to be some element of not just self-awareness but awareness of others and of how to respond positively to them. This educational potential and benefit of the arts for group work was frequently emphasised. However, another recognised moral educational benefit of engagement in the arts was the development of such qualities as the discipline acquired in the process of learning a musical instrument or in submitting to the rules of an artistic project. In connection with this, a policy maker stated about arts:

I think they can do all the things we talked about, they can make people – they can be a tool to engage pupils, they can be a way to allow students, if they’re playing an instrument, they can make them disciplined to learn something and to may be apply that same skill to learning. To reading books, appreciating books, to doing their maths – whatever. Just getting those ... these are all good things. I don’t necessarily think music would make someone a better person either. I don’t think it ... in a moral sense, I think they’re ... if I’m going to say that it doesn’t corrupt morally, I don’t see how it can ... I don’t know, it’s difficult. I don’t think the arts necessarily corrupts the mind, I don’t know either whether it makes someone morally better, but I think it can make you ... if it’s used well it’s something that can give you the skills to be creative; to be critical learners.

10.3.4 Seizing the moment of fun

In sum, arts were described as of having the potential to convey various sorts of knowledge and to help learners develop a wide variety of skills. Nonetheless, there is another highlighted dimension of the arts to which the majority of the research participants referred: precisely, the hedonic, sensory or kinaesthetic pleasure that results from, and through, *fun* in the arts. For children to be able to appreciate and enjoy music, or art, or dance, or drama – was regarded as a psychologically healthy activity. To be able to fill their leisure time with such artistic pursuits, just for the

fact that it can bring about pleasure and relaxation, or help them to relieve the pressures of other aspects of their lives, was generally applauded by interviewees. In short, the pleasure of arts for some people is clearly escapism, and this may also have positive *therapeutic* value. Quite a few policy makers and cultural coordinators stressed that the arts can give children, intense feelings of pleasure, satisfaction and joy that might not be so readily found in other classes. And of course it was widely argued that if children are not enjoying their learning, there is little hope of their becoming life-long learners. Arts could therefore be described as the ‘enjoyment in *Curriculum for Excellence*’. A policy maker commented:

To see primary school children dancing and running around and they feel so free and so in touch with their whole bodies. And the fact that their bodies are in space in a position and the movement and their little faces all light up – and that is an absolutely fantastic experience which is particular to dancing and particular to the arts experience. And that’s the way we should look at arts in our schools.

However, this dimension of the arts reminded the researcher and the research participants of two problematic terms in the Scottish curriculum that have been much criticized by educators, other commentators and other members of the general public. Even some research participants were unsympathetic to these terms in so far as they sound vague and are not readily susceptible to practical assessment. The general view may be represented in the following words of a policy maker:

Somebody said a very derogatory remark, about the writing and the expressive arts outcomes because the writers had mentioned something about the magic and wonder of the arts. And they felt this was all very hippy-hippy, you know, flowery sort of language. And yet, if you sit and look at a child’s face when they are either watching a performance or engaged in a performance; they are just so totally drawn into it and thoroughly enjoying it. It is magic, it is wonder to a young child, and I don’t think we should put it down.

10.4 Magic and wonder in the arts: concluding remarks

Magic and wonder may be vague and ambiguous expressions; but at the same time magic and wonder in the arts is largely what this thesis is all about. Indeed, the philosophical part of this thesis has attempted to clarify more precisely what constitutes the magic and wonder of the arts, and consequently of arts education. However, the importance of the arts and their distinctive contribution to the

formation of children and young people has been precisely related in this thesis to their power to communicate humanly significant *knowledge*, in particular *moral* understanding of emotion, character and virtue. On the other hand, the practical research of this thesis has indicated that contemporary educational policies have tended to point in other directions. Current policy seems to value the arts in the rather more utilitarian terms as indicated in this chapter.

That said, in this research, the initial question ‘Does Scottish educational policy development accord much significance to the arts (and to what extent)?’ has attracted a generally affirmative response from research participants. Scottish educational policy development does indeed accord much significance to the arts. Moreover, arts do seem to be appreciated as useful tools to build those skills and capacities that are needed for pupils in their work and life. Arts are regarded as pleasant and pleasurable means of giving learners ‘a chance to succeed’ – as one policy maker argued: to succeed precisely through successful participation in active individual and group presentations and performances. Such participation is a source of hedonic pleasure, but also purportedly of the satisfaction of achievement that yields confidence and other psychological benefits (though, of course, it is also arguable that this would require empirical proof). To be sure, one reservation here might be that there are many learners who are not at all artistically talented and who therefore do not experience such enjoyment in artistic participation. However, arts may also be used as vehicles of other curricular knowledge and therefore have a cross-curricular function as well. In this regard, the first conclusion from this research would be that arts are generally regarded by arts policy makers as important in the various ways described in Figure 10.3:

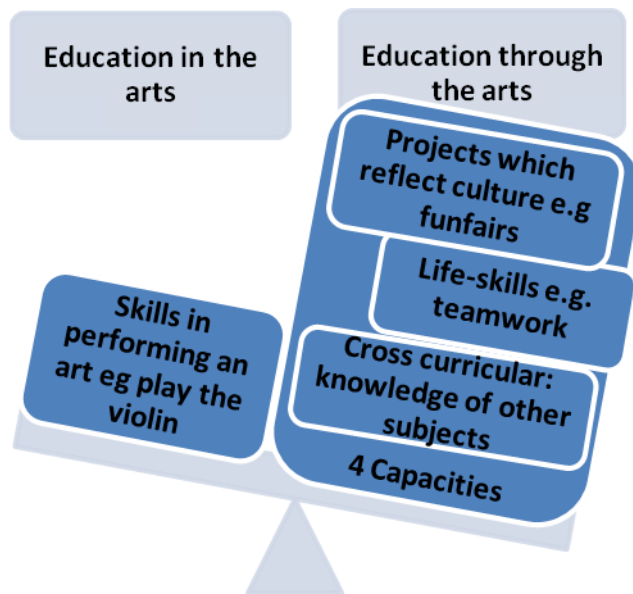


Figure 10.3 Turning the scale in favour of education through the arts.

This figure represents the standard view of research participants on the educational significance of arts. There is a clear focus on education *through* the arts, though education *in* the arts may still take place in the context of projects wherein pupils might participate and express themselves creatively through performances and presentations. Most importantly for policy makers, education through the arts may help pupils to make significant educational connections between different curriculum areas, as well as between education and everyday life: e.g. in getting to know their own and other cultures through festivals, ceilidhs etc. According to research participants, however, the main educational requirement seems to be the training of people in the various skills needed for life and work. For most interviewees, moreover, training for life appeared to be equivalent to the development of the four *Curriculum for Excellence* capacities, already much discussed. In this respect, the new Scottish curriculum is arguably a curriculum that focuses on *training* more than *education*; though the arts are equally valued alongside other subjects, especially in so far as they assist the achievement of skills and capacities with particular respect to so-called creative learning. But to that extent, the answer to the second main question of this research: ‘What, according to Scottish policy, is the key role of arts education

in healthy human formation?’ would seem to be that it has primarily *instrumental* worth. In fact, its main role would seem to be that of contributing to the creative and cultural learning that will produce (artistic and other) skills and capacities for the schooling system. And, for that matter, an education or schooling system that is designed primarily to serve the economic needs and purposes of society (Figure 10.4)

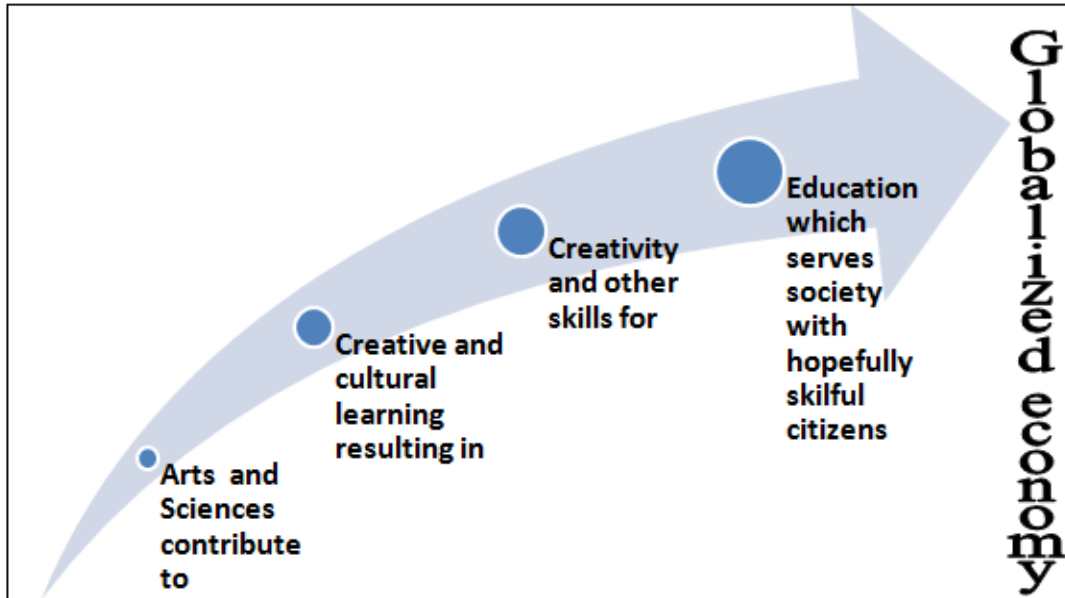


Figure 10.4 Direction of Scottish education system.

In this respect, education does not serve the arts *for their own sake*, but the arts are conceived as serving an instrumental function in education. In short, the arts do not serve education in any distinctive way, but only in a manner that is largely common to or shared by other subjects: that of preparing learners/trainees for a competitive globalised economy. This was explicitly held to be important because Scotland was described as a little country that needs to compete economically with other countries.

Thus, physically performing and participating were generally supposed to offer ways to promote creativity and self-expression for the first three common levels of arts education, and if learners chose to proceed further in the arts then they could have further training. Such uses of the arts also seemed to support use of the Scottish curricular term ‘*Expressive Arts*’ in its thinking about arts education. However, even though ‘*Expressive Arts*’ is usually represented as a separate curricular area, research

participants tended to associate arts with wider culture and other forms of creativity. This often resulted in broader definitions of art. That said, broader definitions would be sometimes too inclusive to the extent of confusing the *artistic* with (more general notions of) creativity or the *aesthetic*. The distinction between the artistic and the aesthetic has been explored in other chapters of this thesis in which it has been argued that: i) not all aesthetic beauty and value is a matter of art; and ii) not all artworks may have aesthetic value or intent. This distinction would seem to be at some odds with the view of many research participants who claimed that *anything*, such as cookery, graffiti, football and so on, may be regarded as genuine art. Such confusion is arguably problematic in so far as it is liable to lead to: i) more instrumental use of some arts, such as using dance as a pleasant form of exercise; and/or ii) inclusion of some activities in arts education that are of debatable artistic significance, such as cooking, sport or some technologically based activities of little actual artistic value. For example, according to the arguments of this thesis, and despite the grain of truth that it contains, there would seem to be significant objections to the promotion of genuine arts education through, for example, a class watching the television programme 'Friends'. Here, the soap opera 'Friends' may well be used by a teacher to provide a pleasant or 'light' lesson, and could stimulate students to develop and exercise certain skills, but it seems more doubtful whether this would qualify as significant 'arts education'. Such 'arts education' may well lead to people with certain (perhaps limited) skills, or to people who had some pleasant moments at school, but it seems less likely to lead in any significant sense to 'artistically educated' people.

In this respect, there may seem to be some contradiction between the four basic *values* mentioned initially in *Curriculum for Excellence* guidelines and the four *capacities* at which the guide aims. This is to say that the values or virtues of wisdom, justice, compassion and integrity really require the sort of reflective (Aristotelian) moral knowledge and understanding for which this thesis has argued. But in the way that the four *Curriculum for Excellence* capacities have been characterised in: i) the curriculum guidelines; ii) the outcomes of the pilot of the new curriculum; and iii) in the interviews and completed questionnaires of this research, it

is not obvious that being a successful learner, confident individual, responsible citizen and effective contributor is quite the same as being an agent of moral wisdom, justice, compassion and integrity. Indeed, the principles that seem to govern current Scottish education policies seem rather to reflect the utilitarian spirit of present day pragmatic, economic and consumerist values. In this regard, the main curricular space made by the current Scottish curriculum for arts seems to be for the promotion of practical or craft knowledge and skills of potential social and economic utility (Figure 10.5).

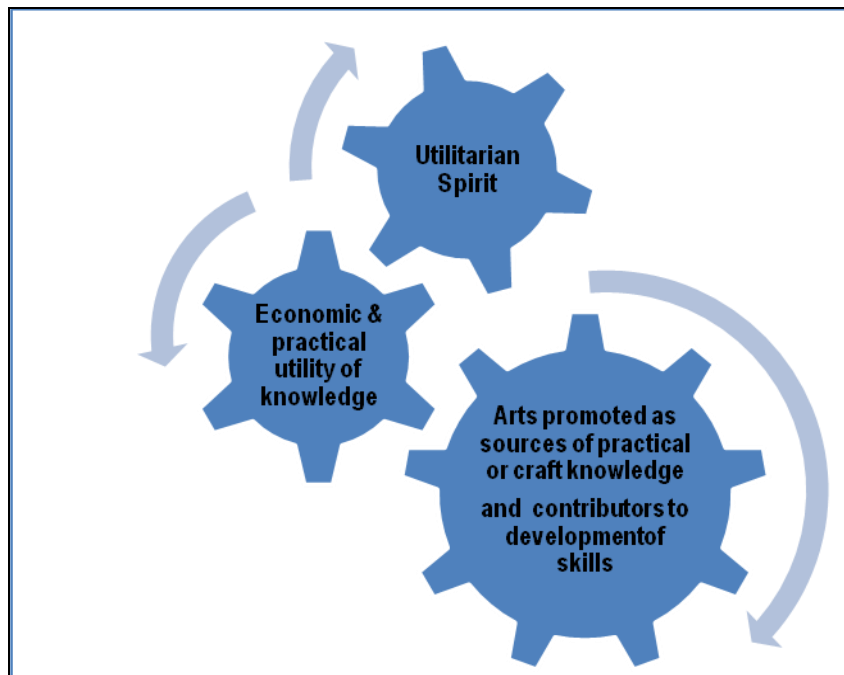


Figure 10.5 The mechanism of policy influences.

While such emphases mean that the arts are accorded an important role in the current Scottish curriculum, it seems that arts *education* in any more substantial sense has a less secure place. Drawing a general distinction between *use of artistic means of expression* and *education in the arts*, it seems that *artistic* modes of training are not at all the same thing as arts education. Some policy makers did indeed notice that current policies have provided little space for the actual *appreciation* of arts and education in the arts; a view that this study confirms. In this regard, opportunities to appreciate art seem often limited to a few rare school experiences and the school

curriculum arguably lacks planned space for the kind of regular and systematic exposure to arts that might contribute to real arts education. Clearly, financial concerns are a hugely influential factor. Many cultural coordinators and policy makers pointed out that it is cheaper to organise group performances (by the pupils) rather than visit an arts venue or invite an arts company to the school. Collective activities, therefore, are often favoured for *utilitarian* purposes (a cost effective approach). Nevertheless, even if the school does invite an arts company, inclusive activities that involve audience participation are preferred. However, this approach overlooks a major aspect of artistic activity. The majority of works of arts are not created with practical or utilitarian outcomes in mind. Art-works should primarily be opportunities to explore artistic ideas or expression, and as such be objects of contemplation more than practical utility.

In conclusion, the philosophical part of this research has argued that arts can be important sources of educationally valuable moral and other knowledge, understanding and insight. Research participants often mentioned the possibility of using artworks as tools to develop skills with ethical implications or consequences, such as team-work skills. In addition, a significant majority agreed with the idea that arts have some power to influence or educate learners' emotions. However, when asked to cite examples of this, they would again emphasise the importance of children or young people participating in performances and presentations rather than appreciating artworks. As already argued, such perspectives may result in problematic educational, curricular and cultural tendencies. For example, one festival manager and policy maker interviewed for this research claimed that the number of young people playing music in Scotland is probably unprecedentedly high, and yet audiences at concerts are in decline. Occasionally, policy makers would refer to evaluation and appreciation of 'art'; but this would usually mean the evaluation and appreciation of learners' own work or that of their peers. Such a limited view of evaluation and appreciation presents two dangers. Firstly, there is the danger of over-focus once again on the development of skills (or on the technical aspects of a work). Secondly, however, there is the danger that with over-focus on the productive side of pupils' art-work, art-works of widely recognised cultural value may be neglected in

the education of children in schools. Thus, the answer to the third main research question of this study of ‘Does policy development in Scottish arts education recognise the full educational potential of the arts?’, may be less positive than it has so far seemed in so far as the full educational potential of the arts would mean exploration of the epistemic and moral aspects of arts through proper academic exposure to them in schools. Moreover, this conclusion would seem to have some implications for the first research question of ‘Does Scottish educational policy development accord much significance to the arts?’ (and to what extent), in so far as any initial affirmative response to this question may reflect an unduly *narrow* perception of arts education. On a broader view, the policy development of Scottish arts education does *not* seem to appreciate the full educational potential of the arts, since it neglects too many significant dimensions of the arts. In sum, Scottish educational policy development does accord *some* significance to the arts, but by no means *enough*. Most importantly, what is excluded is reference to a distinctive curricular role of the arts that would justify a central place for them in the healthy educational formation of young and old.

In particular, it has been a main aim of this thesis to argue that the potential of arts to promote significant moral knowledge, understanding and insight is one that should be given a central educational role in schools. In so far as one distinctive power and benefit of the arts is to enhance understanding of the world, human relationships and the place of humans in the world, such knowledge can play an important part in the formation of human moral character. It would appear from the research for this thesis that this role of arts education has not been taken nearly seriously enough by contemporary Scottish policy makers. If it was taken more seriously, it might possibly help bridge the evident shortfall between the four *Curriculum of Excellence* values of wisdom, justice, compassion and integrity, and the four capacities of successful learning, individual confidence, responsible citizenship and effective contribution so celebrated in this initiative.

However, the overall conclusion of this chapter is that arts can play a major educational role in at least *two* significant ways: the first as envisaged by contemporary Scottish educational policy-makers; the second, which has been

argued for in this thesis, as an important contributor to wider moral and other human development. This potential is here summed up in Figure 10.6.

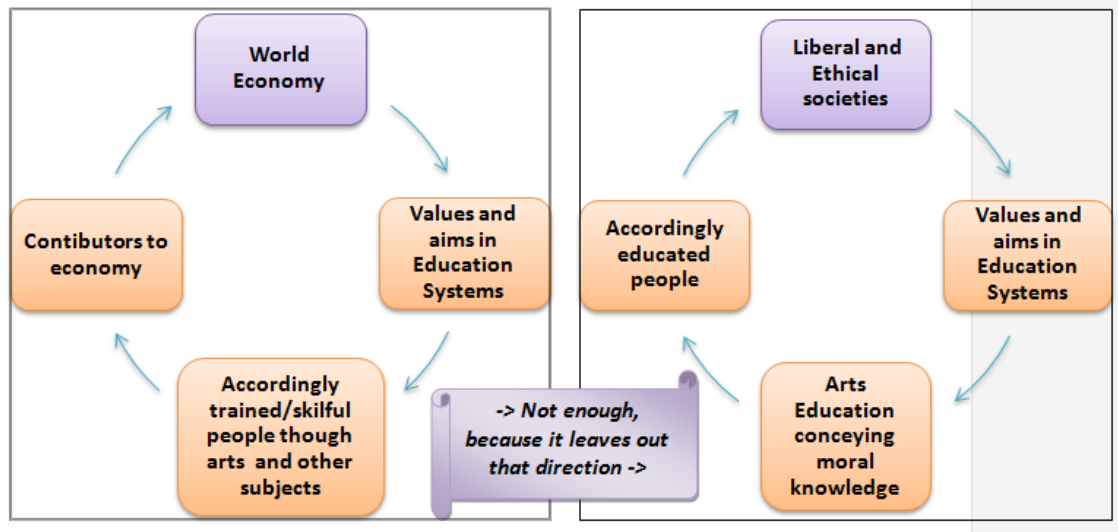


Figure 10.6 The contribution of arts in two significant ways.

Chapter 11

11. Closing remarks

This chapter concludes the present work by considering some limitations of the study, suggesting areas for future research, summarizing the main argument of the thesis and finally making some recommendations for educational policy and practice in Scottish and wider educational contexts.

11.1 Limitations and suggestions

This thesis has mainly pursued a philosophical exploration of the educational value and place of the arts and has then sought to evaluate recent Scottish educational policy in the light of such exploration. Having reflected on the order of enquiry in this thesis I might probably, if I were to approach things again, start first with the practical research in order to come to the issues with a more ‘innocent eye’. However, I have tried throughout to be sensitive to this issue, and as far as possible to avoid partial perspectives and interpretations on the research questions.

Another limitation of this research relates to the difficulty encountered in finding more people related to policy-making, for interview in the study. This research was limited to 30 research participants. Nevertheless, I believe that I was *very* fortunate in finding a good representative sample of Scottish policy makers. It is also true that the sample interviewed includes only *Scottish* policy-makers. Still, even though Scotland has its own education system and guidelines, it still is a country within the United Kingdom and may therefore be held to reflect the influences of wider British educational policy-making. However, future research might well seek to include research participants from a wider United Kingdom context.

The Scottish *Curriculum for Excellence* is a new curriculum (although it is also continuous with and draws upon the previous Scottish curricula of 5-14 and Standard Grade). In so far as this is so, however, future research in this area might be conducted in order to see whether *Curriculum for Excellence* is having a strong

impact on Scottish schools and on what happens in practice after schools have sought to implement the policy guidelines and directions.

Indeed, another question that might be explored is that of the extent to which new policies *do* really influence school practices. It is interesting that the following view of a present research interviewee (cultural coordinator with permanent post in a council) was often endorsed:

Technically the Curriculum for Excellence is like a kind of odd thing because if you were to ask a teacher what you think of the Curriculum for Excellence, they will probably say that they think they already do that, right, and they kind of think that I suppose, how would you put this, they think that it's the government formalising, like giving a name to something they already do, they're just trying to formalise it and give it a kind of heading.

Similarly another interviewee:

I think there are certainly ways of creating arts projects that absolutely tie into all four of the Curriculum for Excellence areas. When that first came out we all went hallelujah because it was what we were already doing. I mean we've not had to change anything that we do to fit in with that because what we do is already that.

Consequently, another question is that of whether policy guidelines or the established practice of teachers in schools 'carry more weight' in professional terms. In connection with this, if policy makers were to recognize the real potential of the arts for which we have argued in this thesis, the question might be that of how they could frame policy that would guarantee appropriate practice. It seems that the 'root' of the problem could lie in the culture and psychology of social groups such as teachers that may militate against the implementation of new policies. Future research might well seek to confirm or disconfirm whether the current state of professional educational practice has been influenced in the directions that the participants in this research believe to be reflective of *Curriculum for Excellence*. Such research might well throw considerable light on the general processes of educational policy change as well as upon the particular concern of this essay about developments in arts education. This research has of course argued for moral education through the arts, but it has not proposed or suggested any specific curriculum of arts that might be particularly conducive to such arts education. Future enquiry might therefore build

on the philosophical argument of this thesis, by attempting to conceive specific testable programs designed for the promotion of moral educational and other epistemic aspects of arts in school contexts.

11.2 Concluding remarks and recommendations

It is often argued by people in the media or in academia (and/or in schools) that people should be roundly educated. Kant (1960, p.6) stated that man becomes human only by education. This thesis has dealt with a variety of particular issues, but it has been centrally concerned to give an answer to the questions of what ‘education’ and (an artistically or otherwise) ‘educated’ person actually mean. It seems clear that while the ancient Greeks placed the educational emphasis on the intrinsic value of wisdom, modern day schools have focused more on the instrumental benefits of science and technology: the former would recognise the main value of knowledge for the personal formation of character, while the latter tends to emphasise the practical utility of socially and economically beneficial skills and other capacities (Carr, 2010a). Some distinction between educated and merely trained people of the kind emphasised in modern times by the likes of Richard Peters and Paul Hirst assumes much significance at this point. Richard Pring (2001) also highlights some such distinction in arguing against the modern tendency for education (or perhaps schooling) to take on utilitarian purposes rather than moral purposes. Thus (ibid, p.101):

the practice of education goes adrift from its moral roots – and serves particular ends such as economic well-being or citizenship as conceived by those in power. Secondly, the programmes of moral or personal and social education are isolated from the moral context in which they make sense.

In the course of interviews with Scottish educational policy makers, and review of contemporary policies, this study has gone some way towards showing that there is indeed a ‘de-moralisation’ of education in Pring’s sense: that, indeed, people have become more and more ‘one dimensional’ in a ‘Marcusean’ sense. While a liberal moral education of ‘broad initiation’, of the kind envisaged by such as Peters and Hirst, might well provide an antidote, to such ‘one-dimensionality’, it seems difficult

to see how such genuine education might be implemented in societies and cultures increasingly focused on the pursuit of material economic benefits and characterised by what the English poet William Wordsworth notably referred to as ‘getting and spending’. In such contexts, the prevailing trend is to construe schooling and the school curriculum in terms of the pursuit or promotion of various skills and to reduce ‘education’ itself to some kind of paper-chase of academic qualifications. The pursuit of wisdom is replaced by collection of certificates. In indicating the dangers of this, Richard Pring (2001, pp.111–112) cites a touching poem written as a letter from a principal to her colleagues:

Dear Teacher,

I am a survivor of a concentration camp. My eyes saw what no man should witness:

Gas chambers built by learned engineers.

Children poisoned by educated physicians.

Infants killed by trained nurses.

Women and babies shot and burned by high school and college graduates.

So, I am suspicious of education.

My request is: Help your students become human.

Your efforts must never produce learned monsters, skilled psychopaths, educated Eichmans.

Reading, writing, arithmetic are important only if they serve to make our children more human.

Aristotle long ago emphasised the importance of the formation of virtuous character, as a vital constituent of what he called happiness (*eudemonia*). Virtuous character, for Aristotle, in turn requires the kind of knowledge needed for practical wisdom (*phronesis*); in Carr’s (1991, p.59) words, ‘*the moral knowledge of wisdom is a knowledge of how to make right moral choices*’. This thesis has argued that one significant way in which we might equip people with the wisdom of *phronesis*, and therefore make them more human, is by educating their minds, hearts and characters through the arts. Having explored a variety of philosophical views on arts, the general conclusion of this thesis is that arts may indeed be contributory to the development of *phronesis* (the practical wisdom of virtue) as well as (if not rather than) *techne* (the productive knowledge of skill). In fact, the thesis has argued that it is the distinctive role of the arts, perhaps by contrast with other curricular areas, to educate and cultivate learners’ emotions. However, the best way of assisting such

emotional education is through the development of learners' understanding and appreciation of the arts, rather than by developing their technical skills or promoting 'free expression'. Indeed, it has been argued that the major educational benefit of the arts is that they are able to communicate various important kinds of knowledge and understanding, including moral knowledge.

It would also appear that while the arts are regarded as important in schools at the present day, they are not seen as important as other subjects. The policy documents of the new Scottish *Curriculum for Excellence*, as well as the research participants of this study, have certainly sought to emphasise how important their *Expressive Arts* are. However, both current policies and practices seem to conceive of the arts as serving mainly practical and utilitarian ends; they seem to observe the spirit of what Ball (1998, p.119) calls the 'marketisation of education'. To this extent, they do not seem to be primarily appreciated in formal schooling for their cultural value and heritage. *Curriculum for Excellence* intends the arts to be used as a cross-curricular tool to make lessons in other subjects fun, to entertain or to promote useful skills and capacities. But while such aims and values are not unimportant in meeting the economic and other utilitarian needs of societies, they are not enough to give really significant meaning to a human experience in which such other values as love, friendship and general quality of life are no less important. Life is not all 'getting and spending', and it hardly profits a person to gain the world but lose his or her soul. Still, as Kristjanson (2009, p.375) reviewing McLaughlin's (2008) work observes:

Because we lack 'a shared view of the meaning of life', schools are not to be allowed to implant in students any 'thick', 'holistic', 'comprehensive' or 'substantive' conception of the human good, but only the basic procedural 'public values' of freedom, justice and autonomy (pp. 52–55). Most importantly, schools need to bring up students able to exercise 'independent critical reflection and judgement' (p. 107) and thus be ready and able to choose the comprehensive moral framework that fits their personal values and temperament.

In this regard, it is presently important to emphasise that the arts do not *dictate* how people should live their lives, or what they should morally or otherwise do. Their power is not in providing propositional or even prescriptive knowledge. As argued in this thesis, knowledge in and through the arts is more like acquaintance than

propositional knowledge; it is knowledge that serves to extend people's cognitive and emotional horizons, to deepen their insights and to cultivate their sensibilities as civilized human beings. The arts (particularly great artworks) are beneficial, not because they provide easy answers to simple questions, but because they serve to provoke further questioning on *complex* human issues. In this respect, education in great art embodies Richard Peters insight about education generally – that to be educated is not to arrive at a destination, but to travel with a new view. But such transformation of heart and mind cannot happen only with one-off school experiences in the arts or by participating only in a few performances or activities. It also cannot happen if the arts are merely exploited to make propositional knowledge in scientific and other fields more enjoyable. Rather, if the full educational benefits of arts are to be realised, then systematic exposure to them is required. In this regard, Scottish education policy as exhibited in *Curriculum for Excellence* is arguably pointed in a direction that threatens to underestimate or downplay the full educational power and value of the arts. A comparative review of seven (Austrian, Berlin, Bulgarian, Greek, Catalanian, Russian and Swedish) European music curricula, and their philosophical underpinnings (Kokkidou, 2009), also suggests that these seven countries have been influenced by the modern instrumental spirit -that has likewise influenced Scottish educational policy (as the present study suggests)-, resulting at best in a focus on musical training rather than music education. So although the arts clearly have the potential to provide a proper curriculum balance of education and training, it would appear that most contemporary educational approaches to the arts, in Scotland and more widely, have not yet quite got the balance right.

REFERENCES

- Abbs, P. (2003) *Against the Flow: Education, the Arts and Postmodern Culture*. London: RoutledgeFalmer.
- Ackrill, J. L. (1987) *A New Aristotle Reader*. Translated by M.E.Hubbard, Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Ackrill, J. L. (1997) Aristotle, *Poetics*. In: D. E. Cooper, P. Lamarque & C. Sartwell (eds.) *Aesthetics : The Classic Readings*. Oxford/Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 29-44.
- Alexander, K. J. W. & Great Britain. Scottish Education Dept. (1975) *Adult Education, the Challenge of Change. The Alexander Report*. Edinburgh: HMSO
- Annas, J. (1982) Plato on the Triviality of Literature. In: J. M. E. Moravcsik & P. Temko (eds.) *Plato on Beauty, Wisdom, and the Arts*. Totowa, N.J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1-28.
- Aristotle (1935) *The Metaphysics. Books X-Xiv*. Translated by H. Tredennick Cambridge, London: Harvard University Press; W. Heinemann.
- Aristotle (1996) Soul and Body, Form and Matter. In: J. Cottingham (ed.) *Western Philosophy: An Anthology*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Armstrong, J. (2005) *The Secret Power of Beauty*. London: Penguin.
- Arnold, M. (1960) *Culture and Anarchy*. J. D. Wilson (ed.) Cambridge: University Press.
- Arnold, M. (1967) *Matthew Arnold*. J. Gribble (ed.) London: Collier Macmillan.
- Arnold, M. (1975) Literature and Science. In: M. Sanderson (ed.) *The Universities in the Nineteenth Century*. London/Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Ball, S. J. (1998) Big Policies/Small World: An Introduction to International Perspectives in Education Policy *Comparative Education*, 34, (2), 119-130.

Barrow, R. (1975) *Plato, Utilitarianism and Education*. London/Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

BBC (2009) Primary Education 'Too Narrow'.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/7896751.stm> (date last accessed - 13/09/2010)

Beardmore, R. W. (1971) *Art and Morality*. London: Macmillan.

Bell, G. H. & Chisholm, T. (1998) Research Based Teaching in the Arts: Towards a European Dimension of in-Service Teacher Education. Wakefield: Bretton Hall.

Best, D. (1980) The Objectivity of Artistic Appreciation. *British Journal of Aesthetics*, 20, (2), 115-127.

Best, D. (1985) *Feeling and Reason in the Arts*. London/Boston: Allen & Unwin.

Best, D. (1992) Generic Arts: An Expedient Myth. *Journal of Art & Design Education*, 11, (1), 27-44.

Biernacki, P. & Waldorf, D. (1981) Snowball Sampling: Problems and Techniques in Chain Referral. *Sociological Methods and Research*, 10, (2), 141-163.

Bloom, A. D. (1987) *The Closing of the American Mind: How Higher Education Has Failed Democracy and Impoverished the Souls of Today's Students*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Blumenfeld-Jones, D. (1995) Fidelity as a Criterion for Practicing and Evaluating Narrative Inquiry. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, January, 8, (1), 25-35.

Boeree, C. G. (2000) *Modern Philosophy: The Enlightenment*.
<http://webpace.ship.edu/cgboer/empvsrat.html> (date last accessed - 10/09/2010)

- Borg, W. R. & Gall, M. D. (1979) *Educational Research, an Introduction*. New York: Longman.
- Bourke, V. (1962) Rationalism. In: D. D. Runes (ed.) *Dictionary of Philosophy*. Totowa: Littlefield, Adams, and Company, 263.
- Brock-Utne, B. (1996) Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research within Education in Africa. *International Review of Education*, 42, (6), 605-621.
- Burgess, R. G. (1989) *The Ethics of Educational Research*. New York: Falmer Press.
- Butcher, S. H. (1902) *The Poetics of Aristotle*. Translated by S. H. Butcher, London: MacMillan.
- Campbell, D. T. & Fiske, D. W. (1959) Convergent and Discriminant Validation by the Multitrait-Multimethod Matrix. *Psychological Bulletin*, 56, 81-105.
- Carney, J. D. (1975) Defining Art. *British journal of aesthetics*, 15, (3), 191-206.
- Carr, D. (1984) Dance Education, Skill and Behavioural Adjectives *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 18, (4), 67-76.
- Carr, D. (1987) Thought and Action in the Art of Dance. *British Journal of Aesthetics*, 27, (4), 345-357.
- Carr, D. (1988) Knowledge and Curriculum: Four Dogmas of Child-Centred Education *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 22, (2), 151-162.
- Carr, D. (1991) *Educating the Virtues: An Essay on the Philosophical Psychology of Moral Development and Education*. London/New York: Routledge.
- Carr, D. (1996) The Dichotomy of Liberal Versus Vocational Education: Some Basic Conceptual Geography. In: A. Nieman (ed.) *Philosophy of Education*. Urbana, Illinois: Philosophy of Education Society.
- Carr, D. (1997) Meaning in Dance. *British Journal of Aesthetics*, 37, (4), 349-366.

Carr, D. (1998) Toward a Re-Evaluation of the Role of Educational Epistemology in the Professional Education of Teachers. *In: S. Tozer (ed.) Philosophy of Education*. Oxford: Blackwell publishing, 439-447.

Carr, D. (1999) Art, Practical Knowledge and Aesthetic Objectivity. *Ratio, Journal of Analytic Philosophy*, September, 12, (3), 240-256.

Carr, D. (2000) Contribution to Symposium on Philosophy of Education. *In: E. V. A. Dias de Carvalho, I. Baptista, M. J. Couto, P.C. Pereira and Z. Almeida (ed.) Diversidade E Identidade: 1a Conferencia Internacional De Filosofia Da Educacao*. Porto: Gabinete de Filosofia da Educacao, Instituto de Filosofia, Faculdade de Letras, Universidade do Porto, 181-190.

Carr, D. (2003a) Making Sense of Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy and Theory of Education and Teaching. London/New York: RoutledgeFalmer.

Carr, D. (2003b) Philosophy and the Meaning of 'Education'. *Theory and Research in Education*, 2, 195-212.

Carr, D. (2005) On the Contribution of Literature and the Arts to the Educational Cultivation of Moral Virtue, Feeling and Emotion. *Journal of Moral Education*, 34, (2), 137-151.

Carr, D. (2006a) *Knowledge and the Curriculum: Ed 2 Lecture Notes* MSc in Education University of Edinburgh, unpublished

Carr, D. (2006b) Moral Education at the Movies: On the Cinematic Treatment of Morally Significant Story and Narrative. *Journal of Moral Education*, September, 35, (3), 319-333.

Carr, D. (2007) Towards an Educationally Meaningful Curriculum: Epistemic Holism and Knowledge Integration Revisited. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, March, 55, (1), 3-20.

Carr, D. (2010a) Dangerous Knowledge: On the Epistemic and Moral Significance of Arts in Education. *The Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 44, (3), 1-15.

Carr, D. (2010b) On the Moral Value of Physical Activity: Body and Soul in Plato's Account of Virtue. *Sport, Ethics and Philosophy*, April, 4, (1), 3-15.

Carr, D. (undated) Reason and Argument in Professional Controversy and Debate. Unpublished.

Carr, D., Allison, P. & Meldrum, G. (2006) In Search of Excellence: Towards a More Coherent Scottish Common School Curriculum for the Twenty-First Century. *Scottish Educational Review*, 38, (1), 13-24.

Carr, D. & Davis, R. (2007) The Lure of Evil: Exploring the Dark Side of Literature and the Arts. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 41, (1), 95-112.

Carr, D., Flynn, T. R. & Makkreel, R. A. (2004) *The Ethics of History*. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press.

Carr, D. & Steutel, J. W. (1999) *Virtue Ethics and Moral Education*. London/New York: Routledge.

Carroll, N. (1999) *Philosophy of Art: A Contemporary Introduction*. London/New York: Routledge.

Carroll, N. (2001) Art, Narrative and Moral Understanding. *Beyond Aesthetics: Philosophical Essays*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 270-292.

Chappell, T. (2005) Plato on Knowledge in the *Theaetetus*. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* [Online] (Updated 8 July 2009). <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/plato-Theaetetus/> (date last accessed - 9/09/2010)

Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. (2000) *Research Methods in Education*. London/New York: RoutledgeFalmer.

Collingwood, R. G. (1925) Plato's Philosophy of Art. *Mind*, 34, (134), 154-72.

Consultative Committee on the Curriculum (1983) *Primary Education in the Eighties: A Cope Position Paper*. Edinburgh: Scottish Curriculum Development Service

- Cooley, C. H. (1902) *Human Nature and the Social Order*. New York: C. Scribner's Sons.
- Cooper, D. E. (ed.) (2005) *A Companion to Aesthetics*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Cooper, D. E., Lamarque, P. & Sartwell, C. (1997) *Aesthetics: The Classic Readings*. Oxford/Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.
- Cothey, A. L. (1990) *The Nature of Art*. London/New York: Routledge.
- Crawford, D. W. (2001) Kant. In: B. N. Gaut & D. Lopes (eds.) *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics*. 1st edn. London/New York: Routledge, 51-64.
- Crown, S. (2007).
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2007/dec/15/featuresreviews.guardianreview35>
(date last accessed - 18/09/2010)
- Dewey, J. (1980) *Art as Experience*. New York: Perigee.
- Ecclestone, K. & Hayes, D. (2009) *The Dangerous Rise of Therapeutic Education*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Eliot, T. S. (1973) *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture* London: Faber and Faber.
- Eliot, T. S. (1986) *Selected Essays*. London: Faber and Faber.
- Eliot, T. S. (1997) *The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism*. London: Faber and Faber.
- Else, G. F. (1957) *Aristotle's Poetics: The Argument*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Elytis, O. (1998) *Eros, Eros, Eros: Selected & Last Poems*. Translated by O. Broumas. Washington: Copper Canyon Press.

- Esterberg, K. G. (2002) *Qualitative Methods in Social Research*. Boston: McGraw-Hill.
- Fielding, N. & Fielding, J. L. (1986) *Linking Data*. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.
- Frost, R. (2002) *Robert Frost's Poems*. New York: Saint Martin's Press Inc.
- Fuller, T. (1989) *The Voice of Liberal Learning: Michael Oakeshott on Education*. New Haven, CT/London: Yale University Press.
- Gadamer, H. G. (1977) *Die Aktualität Des Schönen*. Stuttgart: Reclam.
- Gandhi, M. (1925) Seven Social Sins by Mahatma Gandhi.
<http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/excat/ideasint.html> (date last accessed - 18/09/2010)
- Garber, D. (1999) Rationalism. In: R. Audi (ed.) *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*. 2 edn. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 771-772.
- Gersh, S. & Moran, D. (2006) *Eriugena, Berkeley, and the Idealist Tradition*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.
- Gettier, E. (1963) Is Justified True Belief Knowledge? *Analysis*, 23, (6), 121-123.
- Gingell, J. (2006) The Visual Arts and Education, *IMPACT*, 13. Oxford: Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain.
- Gingell, J. & Brandon, E. P. (2001) *In Defence of High Culture*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers
- Graham, G. (2000) *Philosophy of the Arts: An Introduction to Aesthetics*. London/New York: Routledge.
- Greenberg, M. L. & Schachterle, L. (1992) *Literature and Technology*. Bethlehem, Pa.: Lehigh University Press.
- Gribble, J. (1983) *Literary Education: A Reevaluation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Haarlow, W. N. (2003) *Great Books, Honours Programs, and Hidden Origins: The Virginia Plan and the University of Virginia in the Liberal Arts Movement*. New York: RoutledgeFalmer.

Hamilton, C. (2003) Art and Moral Education. *In: J.L.Bermúdez & S. Gardner (eds.) Art and Morality*. New York: Routledge, 37-55.

Hamilton, E. & Cairns, H. (1961) *The Collected Dialogues of Plato Including Letters*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Hammersley, M. (1992) What's Wrong with Ethnography? : Methodological Explorations. London; New York: Routledge.

Hammersley, M. (2000) Varieties of Social Research: A Typology *International Journal of Social Research and Methodology* 3, (3), 221-229.

Heyting, F., Lenzen, D. & White, J. (2001) *Methods in Philosophy of Education*. London; New York: Routledge.

Hinchliffe, G. (2001) Education or Pedagogy? *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 35, (1), 31-45.

Hirst, P. H. (1974) *Knowledge and the Curriculum: A Collection of Philosophical Papers*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Hirst, P. H. (1986) Richard Peter's Contribution to the Philosophy of Education. *In: D. E. Cooper (ed.) Education, Values and Mind; Essays for R.S. Peters*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul 8-40.

Hirst, P. H. & Peters, R. S. (1970) *The Logic of Education*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Hofferbert, R. I. (1974) *The Study of Public Policy*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill.

Hopkins, D. (2001) *School Improvement for Real*. London/New York: RoutledgeFalmer.

Hume, D. (1757) *Four Dissertations: I. The Natural History of Religion. ii. Of the Passions. iii. Of Tragedy. Iv. Of the Standard of Taste.* London: Printed for A. Millar.

Hume, D. (1985) *Of the Standard of Taste.* In: E. Miller (ed.) *Essays, Moral, Political, Literary.* Indianapolis: Liberty Classics.

Hutchins, R. M. (1955) *The Great Conversation: The Substance of a Liberal Education (Great Books of the Western World).* Encyclopaedia Britannica. http://www.britannica.com/blogs/wp-content/pdf/The_Great_Conversation.pdf (data last accessed - 31/08/10)

Il Postino (1994) [film] Directed by Radford, M. Italy: Cecchi Gori Group Tiger Cinematografica.

Il Postino (1996) *Theatrical Trailer.* (Updated 28/07/08):<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5QvYXPwF798> (date last accessed - 31/08/10)

Janaway, C. (2001) *Plato.* In: B. N. Gaut & D. Lopes (eds.) *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics.* 1st edn. London/New York: Routledge, 3-13.

Jesus, P. (2006) *From Homo Educandus to Homo Æstheticus: Kant on Education.* *Studi Kantiani*, 19, 121-130.

Kant, I. (1956) *Critique of Practical Reason.* Translated by L. W. Beck New York: Liberal Arts Press.

Kant, I. (1960) *Education.* Translated by A. Churton Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Kant, I. (1961) *Critique of Pure Reason.* Translated by N. K. Smith London: Macmillan.

Kant, I. (1987) *Critique of Judgment.* Translated by W. S. Pluhar Indianapolis: Hackett.

Kokkidou, M. (2009) *European Music Curricula: Philosophical Orientations, Trends, and Comparative Validation*. Thessaloniki: Greek Society for Music Education.

Koopman, C. (2005) The Justification of Education in the Arts. *The journal of the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain*, 39, (1), 85-97.

Korbilas, T. (2006) *Selection of Aristotelian Teaching*. Hydra: Korbilas.

Korsmeyer, C. (2001) Taste. In: B. N. Gaut & D. Lopes (eds.) *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics*. 1st edn. London/New York: Routledge, 193-202.

Kristjánsson, K. (2009) Liberalism, Education and Schooling: Essays by T. H. Mclaughlin. *Journal of Moral Education*, 38, (3), 373-376.

Kvale, S. (1996) *Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*. London: Sage Publications.

Lamarque, P. (2008) *The Philosophy of Literature*. Malden: Blackwell Publishers.

Langer, S. K. (1996) The Cultural Importance of the Arts. *The Journal of Aesthetic Education*, spring, 1, (1), 5-12.

Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS) (2009) *Expressive Arts: Principles and Practice*.

http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/Images/expressive_arts_principles_practice_tcm4-540037.pdf (date last accessed - 31/08/10)

Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS) (2010a) *All Expressive Arts Experiences and Outcomes*.

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/myexperiencesandoutcomes/expressivearts/alloutcomes.asp> (date last accessed - 31/08/10)

Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS) (2010b) *The Case for Change*.

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/understandingthecurriculum/whatiscurriculumforexcellence/howwasthecurriculumdeveloped/caseforchange/index.asp> (date last accessed - 31/08/10)

Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS) (2010c) *How was the Curriculum Developed?* :

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/understandingthecurriculum/whatiscurriculumforexcellence/howwasthecurriculumdeveloped/index.asp> (date last accessed - 31/08/10)

Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS) (2010d) *Principles for Curriculum Design.*

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/understandingthecurriculum/howisthecurriculumstructured/principles/index.asp> (date last accessed - 31/08/10)

Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS) (2010e) *Process of Change.*

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/understandingthecurriculum/whatiscurriculumforexcellence/howwasthecurriculumdeveloped/processofchange/index.asp> (date last accessed - 31/08/10)

Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS) (2010f) *The Purpose of the Curriculum.*

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/understandingthecurriculum/whatiscurriculumforexcellence/thepurposeofthecurriculum/index.asp> (date last accessed - 31/08/10)

Leavis, F. R. (1983) *The Great Tradition.* Penguin Books.

Lee, R. M. (1993) *Doing Research on Sensitive Topics.* London/Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage Publications.

Lodge, R. C. (1953) *Plato's Theory of Art.* London: Routledge & Paul.

Lodge, R. C. & Frank, S. (1947) *Plato's Theory of Education. With an Appendix on the Education of Women According to Plato.* New York: Harcourt.

Lyas, C. (2001) Sibley. In: B. N. Gaut & D. Lopes (eds.) *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics.* 1st edn. London/New York: Routledge, 131-141.

MacIntyre, A. C. (1981) *After Virtue : A Study in Moral Theory.* Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press.

Marcuse, H. (1968) *One Dimensional Man.* London: Sphere Books.

- Martin, I. (2009) Whither Adult Education in the Learning Paradigm? Some Personal Reflections (Updated 2010), 3. <http://www.rizoma-freireano.org/index.php/whither-adult#a1> (date last accessed - 18/09/2010)
- Mazmanian, D. A. & Sabatier, P. A. (1980) A Multivariate Model of Public Policy-Making. *American Journal of Political Science*, August, 24, (3), 439-468.
- McFee, G. (1994) *The Concept of Dance Education*. London/New York: Routledge.
- McFee, G. (2005) The Artistic and the Aesthetic. *British Journal of Aesthetics*, 45, (4), 368-387.
- McLaughlin, T. (2008) *Liberalism, Education and Schooling: Essays by T.H. McLaughlin*. D. Carr, M. Halstead & R. Pring (eds.) Charlottesville, VA: Imprint Academic.
- McLaughlin, T. H. (2000) Philosophy and Educational Policy: Possibilities, Tensions and Tasks *Journal of Education Policy*, July, 15, (4), 441-450.
- Mearns Castle High School (2008) *Useful Links*. (Updated 20/08/10): <http://www.ea.e-renfrew.sch.uk/mearnscastle/parents/usefulLinks.asp> (date last accessed - 20/08/10)
- Mill, J. S. (1861) *Utilitarianism*. London: Fontana.
- Moravcsik, J. M. E. (1982) Noetic Aspiration and Artistic Inspiration. In: J. M. E. Moravcsik & P. Temko (eds.) *Plato on Beauty, Wisdom, and the Arts*. Totowa, N.J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 29-46.
- Moravcsik, J. M. E. & Temko, P. (1982) *Plato on Beauty, Wisdom, and the Arts*. Totowa, N.J.: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Munn, J. (1978) In: D. Henderson (ed.) *The Munn and Dunning Summary: With Reactions, Comments & Questions*. Edinburgh: Scottish Parent Teacher Council.
- Murdoch, I. (1977) *The Fire & the Sun: Why Plato Banished the Artists*. Oxford Eng.: Clarendon Press.

- Murdoch, I. (1992) *Metaphysics as a Guide to Morals*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Murdoch, I. (1997) The Sovereignty of Good over Other Concepts. In: P. Conradi (ed.) *Existentialists and Mystics: Writings on Philosophy and Literature*. New York: Penguin Books, 363-385.
- National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (NACCCE) (1999) *All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education*. London: DCMS/DfES.
- Nehamas, A. (1982) Plato on Imitation and Poetry in *Republic* 10. In: J. M. E. Moravcsik & P. Temko (eds.) *Plato on Beauty, Wisdom, and the Arts*. Totowa, N.J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 47-78.
- Nehamas, A. (1992) Pity and Fear in the Rhetoric and the *Poetics*. In: A. Rorty (ed.) *Essays on Aristotle's Poetics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 291-314.
- Neruda, P. (1970) *Selected Poems by Pablo Neruda*. Translated by A. Kerrigan N. Tarn (ed.) London: Jonathan Cape.
- Norton, G. P. (1999) *The Renaissance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nussbaum, M. C. (1982) "This Story Isn't True": Poetry, Goodness, and Understanding in Plato's *Phaedrus*. In: J. M. E. Moravcsik & P. Temko (eds.) *Plato on Beauty, Wisdom, and the Arts*. Totowa, N.J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 79-124.
- Nussbaum, M. C. (1986) *The Fragility of Goodness: Luck and Ethics in Greek Tragedy and Philosophy*. Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Oakeshott, M. (1981) *Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays*. London: Methuen.
- Owen, W. (1920) *Poems / with an Introduction by Siegfried Sassoon*. London: Chatto & Windus.
- Pappas, N. (1995) *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Plato and the Republic*. London/New York: Routledge.

- Pappas, N. (2001) Aristotle. In: B. N. Gaut & D. Lopes (eds.) *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics*. 1st edn. London; New York: Routledge, 15-26.
- Patton, M. Q. (1990) *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods*. Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage Publications.
- Peters, R., Stanley, C. & Edward, D. (1986) *Education, Values and Mind*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul plc.
- Plato (1993) *Republic*. Translated by R. Waterfield Oxford England/New York: Oxford University Press.
- Plato (1995) Plato's *Theaetetus*. In: E. A. Duke, W. F. Hicken, W. S. M. Nicoll, D. B. Robinson & J. C. G. Strachan (eds.) *Platonis Opera Volume 1*. London: Clarendon Press.
- Pleasantville* (1998) Directed by Ross, G.: New Line Cinema Corporation.
- Plowden Report (1967) *Children and Their Primary Schools*. London: HMSO.
- Preece, J. (2006) Beyond the Learning Society: The Learning World? *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 3 May, 25, (3), 307-320.
- Primary Memorandum (1965) *Primary Education in Scotland*. Scottish Education Department, Edinburgh: HMSO.
- Pring, R. (1995) Closing the Gap: Liberal Education and Vocational Education. London: Hodder and Stoughton.
- Pring, R. (1999) Political Education: Relevance of the Humanities. *Oxford Review of Education*, 25, (1), 71-87.
- Pring, R. (2001) Education as a Moral Practice. *Journal of Moral Education*, 30, (2) 101-112

Pring, R., Hayward, G., Hodgson, A., Johnson, J., Keep, E., Oancea, A., Rees, G., Spours, K. & Wilde, S. (2009) *Education for All: The Future of Education and Training for 14-19 Year-Olds* London: Routledge.

Reid, A. (2010) T.S. Eliot, Education and Culture. *In:* R. Barrow, C. McCarthy, D. Carr & R. Bailey (eds.) *The Sage Handbook of Philosophy of Education*. London: SAGE Publications.

Richardson, M. (1948) *Art and the Child London*. London: University of London Press.

Ross, W. D. (1923) *Aristotle*. London: Methuen & co.

Russell, B. & Rouben Mamoulian Collection (Library of Congress) (1967) *The Problems of Philosophy*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Salmond, A. (2008) *Answering the Research Questions*. [letter] (Personal communication, 3 June 2008), gov.ref: 2008/0021366

Satterfield, J. (2002) *The Great Ideas: The University of Chicago and the Ideal of Liberal Education*. The University of Chicago Library <http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/excat/ideasint.html> (date last accessed - 31/08/10)

Schofield, J. W. (1993) Increasing the Generalizability of Qualitative Research. *In:* M. Hammersley (ed.) *Social Research : Philosophy, Politics and Practice*. London/Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage Publications, 200-225.

Scottish Art Council (2005) The Cultural Co-Ordinator's Handout <http://www.scottisharts.org.uk/resources/publications/education/pdf/Cultural%20Co-ordinator%20Handbook.pdf> (date last accessed - 30/09/10)

Scottish Education Department (SED) (1977) *The Structure of the Curriculum in the Third and Fourth Years of the Scottish Secondary School*. The Munn Report. London: HMSO.

Scottish Executive (2006) *A Curriculum for Excellence: Building the Curriculum 1*. Scotland: Scottish Executive
http://pkcace.wikispaces.com/file/view/building_curriculum_Nov_2006.pdf (date last accessed - 31/08/10)

Shelley, J. (2001) Empiricism: Hutcheson and Hume. *In*: B. N. Gaut & D. Lopes (eds.) *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics*. 1st edn. London/New York: Routledge, 37-49.

Shelley, P. B. (2003) Percy Bysshe Shelley, the Major Works *In*: Z. Leader & M. O'Neill (eds.) *Essay Used: A Defence of Poetry*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 674-701.

Silverman, D. (1985) *Qualitative Methodology and Sociology: Describing the Social World*. Aldershot, Hants, England/Brookfield, Vt., U.S.A.: Gower Pub. Co.

Silverman, D. (1993) *Interpreting Qualitative Data: Methods for Analysing Talk, Text, and Interaction*. London/Thousand Oaks Calif.: Sage Publications.

Smithurst (2005) Hume, David. *In*: D. E. Cooper (ed.) *A Companion to Aesthetics*. 10th edn. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 197-199.

Stevenson, L. F. (1974) *Seven Theories of Human Nature*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Swanton, C. (2003) *Virtue Ethics: A Pluralistic View* [electronic resource], New York: Oxford University Press.

Take the Lead (2006) [film] Directed by Friedlander, L. USA: New Line Cinema Corporation.

The Scottish Government (2009) *National Indicators*. (Updated 02/06/09): <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/scotPerforms/indicators> (date last accessed - 31/08/10)

The Scottish Parliament Corporate Body (2008) *Education, Lifelong Learning and Culture* <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/committees/ellc/index.htm> (date last accessed - 31/08/10)

The University of Chicago Library (2002) *The Great Ideas: The University of Chicago and the Ideal of Liberal Education*. (Updated 6/09/02): <http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/excat/ideasint.html> (date last accessed - 31/08/10)

Thiher, A. (2005) *Fiction Refracts Science: Modernist Writers from Proust to Borges*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press.

UNESCO (2006) *A Backgrounder on Cultural Industries*. http://www.unescobkk.org/fileadmin/user_upload/culture/Cultural_Industries/HK_Open_Forum/Backgrounder-FINAL.pdf (date last accessed - 31/08/10)

UNESCO (2007) *Creativity*. (Updated 31/08/10): http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=34326&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html (date last accessed - 31/08/10)

Uzgalis, W. (2001) John Locke. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* [Online] (Updated 5 May 2007). <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/locke/> (date last accessed - 9/08/2010)

Walford, G. (1994) *Researching the Powerful in Education*. London/Bristol, Pa.: UCL Press.

Ward, A. (2005) Aesthetic Judgment. In: D. E. Cooper (ed.) *A Companion to Aesthetics*. 10th edn. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing ltd, 243-249.

Warnock, M. (1973) Towards a Definition of Quality in Education. In: R. S. Peters (ed.) *The Philosophy of Education*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 112–122.

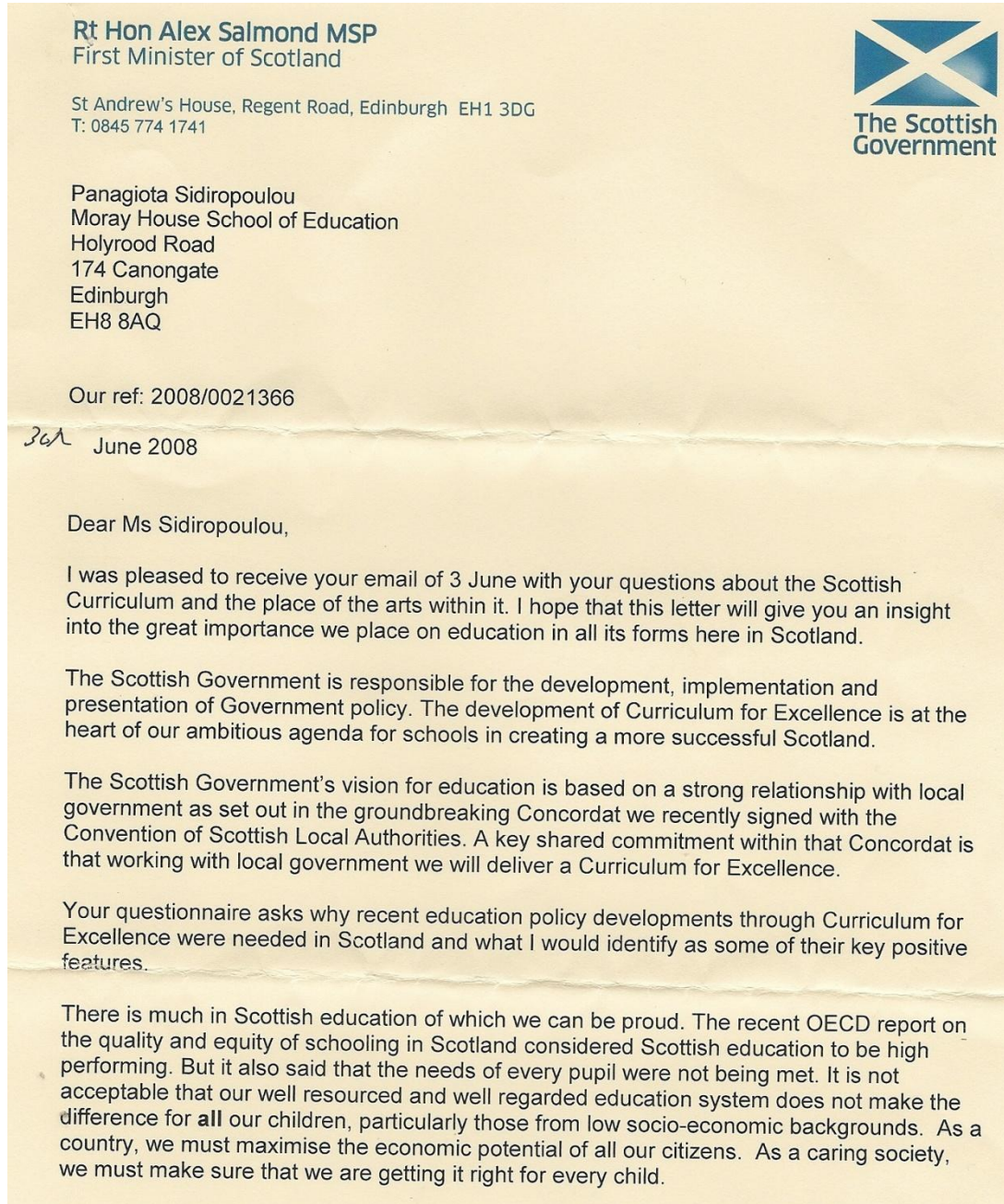
Warnock, M. (1977) *Schools of Thought*. London: Faber and Faber.

Warnock, M. (1994) *Imagination and Time*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

- Whewell, D. (2005) Kant, Immanuel. *In: D. E. Cooper (ed.) A Companion to Aesthetics*. 10th edn. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 250-254.
- White, J. (1998) The Arts, Well-Being and Education. *In: P. H. Hirst & P. White (eds.) Philosophy of Education: Major Themes in the Analytic Tradition Vol. 4, Problems of Educational Content and Practice*. London: Routledge, 186–196.
- White, J. & White, P. (2001) Analytic Philosophy of Education and Children's Rights' *In: F. Heyting, D. Lenzen & J. White (eds.) Methods of Philosophy in Education*. London: Routledge, 13-43.
- Williams, K. (2002) The Limits of Aesthetic Separatism: Literary Education and Michael Oakeshott's Philosophy of Art. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 25, (2), 163-173.
- Winston, J. (2006) Beauty, Goodness and Education: The Arts Beyond Utility. *Journal of Moral Education*, 35, (3), 285-300.
- Wittgenstein, L. (1958) *Philosophical Investigations*. Translated by G. E. M. Anscombe Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Woodruff, P. (1982) What Could Go Wrong with Inspiration? *In: J. M. E. Moravcsik & P. Temko (eds.) Plato on Beauty, Wisdom, and the Arts*. Totowa, N.J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 137-150.
- Woods, R. & Barrow, R. (1975) *An Introduction to Philosophy of Education*. London: Methuen.
- Wynn, M. (2000) *Representing the Gods: The Role of Art and Feeling*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Young, J. O. (2001) *Art and Knowledge*. London/New York: Routledge.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Salmond, A., 2008. Answering the Research Questions



We need a 21st century education system for a 21st century society. That is the justification for the positive process of change imbued in Curriculum for Excellence. It is a highly ambitious programme of reform and has a vital role to play in preparing our young people to take their place in a modern society and economy. It provides a framework for all young people in Scotland to gain the knowledge and skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work that they need to flourish. It is designed to respond to the needs of all our children and young people and offer a fairer, more flexible curriculum within which a wide range of curriculum areas and subjects, including the arts, play an important role.

You also ask more specific questions about arts in education and in the Scottish curriculum.

In Curriculum for Excellence learning and teaching about and through the arts are covered under the draft experiences and outcomes for expressive arts. These are defined as including art and design, dance, drama and music. Curriculum for Excellence sets out a vision of a broad general education with outcomes aimed at providing an enriched learning experience for all young people. Learning across the expressive arts is important to the learner's experience.

The draft experiences and outcomes on expressive arts have been released for engagement and can be found at:

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence/outcomes/expressivearts/index.asp>.

These set out the overarching experiences which all children and young people should get from their learning. For the expressive arts these include:

- Enabling the child or young person to experience the magic, wonder and power of the arts
- An enhanced and enriched experience through partnerships with professional arts companies, creative adults and cultural organisations
- Recognising and nurturing the child / young person's creative and aesthetic talents
- Providing opportunities for the child / young person to deepen their understanding of culture in Scotland and the wider world.

Another matter you ask about is the contribution the arts can make to the four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence. There is no doubt the arts have the potential to make a considerable contribution to the rich educational experiences we seek for all of our young people. Successful learners should be able to think creatively and find imaginative solutions; confident individuals should be able to express themselves and draw on their own ideas; responsible citizens should be able to explore difficult ethical questions and effective contributors should be able to communicate with others and show initiative. All of these skills can be developed through experiences of the arts.

Finally, let me assure you that the Scottish Government views the arts as an integral part of the curriculum. Scotland has a very rich cultural heritage which all of its citizens should be proud of. Curriculum for Excellence gives room for teachers to use their creativity and initiative to teach the arts in a way which will help children and young people gain wider knowledge and stimulate them in learning more about their cultural heritage.

I trust you will find this helpful. Should you need further information please do not hesitate to contact my officials. I wish you every success in your studies.

Yr f Scotland
Alex Salmond.

ALEX SALMOND

Appendix B: Reason and Argument in Professional Controversy and Debate by David Carr (unpublished)

Introductory remarks

In the course of your postgraduate research work, you will need to develop and exercise capacities for defining and engaging in significant contemporary educational debates and controversies. This will involve isolating – from relevant books, papers in academic journals, newspaper articles and so on – a significant body of research literature or media discussion on a given issue, and analysing this literature to the purpose of identifying key arguments for and against a particular educational theory or policy. The first stage, then, is to identify a more extended body of literature (through, for example, pursuing the references cited in that article, and (as far as necessary) the references cited in those references) in order to identify clear arguments for and against a particular educational perspective or policy proposal.

However, it is important to see that any rational evaluation or assessment of such arguments and counter-arguments (the pros and cons) depends on some appreciation of the kinds of argument these are, and the sorts of grounds upon which they are made. One needs, in short, to appreciate that there are different sorts of arguments – such as the logical (philosophical or conceptual), the empirical (factual or statistical) and the normative (moral or evaluative) – that may well be interwoven in educational controversies or debates in highly complex ways.

Logical (conceptual, philosophical) arguments

Although much if not most educational argument is of a practical rather than theoretical nature – that is to say, it is concerned with what to do, rather than what to believe – it nevertheless needs to be appreciated that practical action is subject to logical constraints of internal coherence and consistency (Geach 1976) For example, if a mother asks her child to take the shortest way to the shops, but not to go by the canal – but the shortest way is by the canal – then she asks the child to do something which is not just a matter of practical difficulty but logical impossibility.

This impossibility is sometimes hard for people to see in educational debates. In a former professional context, students on a BEd course were required to write an essay on curriculum theory in which they were asked to contrast and evaluate two (well known) views: the first that all young people should pursue the same broad range of curriculum content; the second

that children of different interests and abilities should be given different sorts of content more suited to individual needs. It was quite common (not to say alarming) to find students concluding after a discussion of first one and then the other of these perspectives that the answer could only lie in the middle.

The point is not, of course, that there could not be any educational debates in which some practical compromise might be reached (it has, for example, been argued that there are plausible alternatives to the apparently opposite sides often taken by educational traditionalists and progressives) – but rather that this is not an issue of this kind. To point out that there could be no coherent curriculum initiative requiring both that all children should follow the same curriculum, and that not all should, is not to point to a matter of practical difficulty (so that we might come up with a solution if we thought hard enough), but to one of logical impossibility (where we cannot avoid choosing either this or the opposed option). Some educational theories and policy initiatives may therefore be doomed to failure from the outset because they enshrine such prescriptive incoherences or inconsistencies.

Such points about logic and consistency may also do something to shake us free of the tendency of at least some educational researchers to suppose that any genuine educational argument must ultimately rest on empirical evidence. For it is not at all clear (to put it mildly) how the gathering of data or statistics about different sorts of curriculum experience would help us to solve the problem (if it is one) of whether all children should be exposed to common or alternative curricula. How, then, might we decide? The following section may have a bearing on this.

Normative (moral, ethical) arguments

Arguments for this or that educational policy or strategy are clearly not just grounded in empirical or other evidence, but also in our values – in considerations about what we actually desire or think should happen. Some philosophers (so-called non-cognitivists) have thought that our values are purely personal and subjective and quite unrelated to (factual) considerations about how the world is – but this is not very plausible. At a basic level, indeed, human values are fairly evidently related to the brute facts of human life and

circumstance: humans (more or less universally) value clean water, adequate shelter and medical care because life is uncomfortable or intolerable without them. That said, the relationship of fact to value in human affairs – and educational and other debate – is by no means straightforward.

For example, order and discipline in the classroom are obviously desired by any and all sensible educationalists and teachers. Debates about discipline – particularly in former days of corporal punishment – not infrequently turned on purported evidence of the effects of such punishment. Thus, some would argue that corporal punishment should be retained because evidence showed it to be an effective deterrent; but others argued that it should be abolished because evidence showed that it was ineffective. However, it is important to see that it is not in the least inconsistent for someone to maintain that although physical punishment is an effective deterrent it should nevertheless be abandoned – or even, perhaps less obviously, to argue that although corporal punishment does not effectively deter (some pupils may actually seek it out) it should nevertheless be continued.

But on what grounds could such positions be maintained? Although moral non-cognitivists would explain this in terms of the basic subjectivity (non-rationality) of value-preferences, it seems implausible to suppose that in dismissing evidence of the deterrent effects of corporal punishment, its opponents are being no more than unreasonable or sentimental. On the contrary, those who oppose physical punishment invariably argue from a morally principled regard for universal human rights, or from the incompatibility of certain forms of punishment with civilized (liberal-democratic) life and polity. Likewise, those who insist that although such punishment is ineffective we should retain it, will also argue (perhaps less obviously) on morally principled grounds of reciprocal justice (an eye for an eye). The key point for now is that it may be quite rational – in educational debate as elsewhere – to override evidence of so-called practical ‘effectiveness’ in the name of other practical imperatives of a normatively more compelling nature.

This is not, of course, to say that moral principles are never in line with empirical evidence and research. To be sure, the moral case against corporal punishment may derive some support from evidence that corporal punishment does not work – at least for the minority of miscreants at which it was often primarily aimed. In addition, advocates of corporal punishment do not always seem to have made the most persuasive case for its continued use.

For example, I have often heard teachers defend its use on the grounds that children actually preferred it (to, say, detention or lines): but how, one might ask, might one justify something as a punishment on the grounds that it was actually preferred to something less congenial ?

Empirical (factual, statistical) argument

All the same, we can hardly suppose that empirical evidence and research never has any relevance to the framing of educational policies and prescriptions – though, again, such relevance may not be straightforward. One recurring debate in which statistical evidence has often been brought to the aid of educational prescription concerns the adverse effects on pupil learning of large class sizes. But while it seems likely (as a matter of common sense) that children in large classes are unlikely to get their fair share of a teacher’s attention, any judgement to the effect that this must undermine their learning is unlikely to be quite value-free. To the extent that some contemporary (anti-progressive) advocates of direct instruction seem to subscribe to accounts of knowledge and knowledge acquisition as largely a matter of information transmission, whether or not one holds that large classes are educationally inappropriate would appear to depend on how broadly or narrowly learning and education are construed.

One should also appreciate that empirical arguments in education come in different varieties and forms based on different kinds of evidence. Clearly, though some educationally relevant statistical evidence may be concerned with physical or material conditions and resources (school buildings, access to facilities, safety features and so on) much if not most of it is likely to be of a social more than natural scientific nature. To that extent, however, the kind of problems with which educational researchers engage – about the effects of this or that teaching strategy on cognitive growth, or of a working class upbringing on achievement – are apt to be of a highly normative character involving essentially contested concepts and judgements of value. Indeed, though the authoritative tones of official policy documents – often themselves drawing on the ‘expertise’ of reputable educational researchers – could lull us into believing that this or that curriculum strategy (of, say, broad initiation) has been scientifically proved to be superior to others, such proposals may often be little more than values in thin empirical disguise.

It also seems that different forms of social-scientific research apparently pointing in the same direction may sometimes serve to undermine rather than support each other. Psychological

researchers of the so-called psychometric movement at one time argued that since intelligence is innate, children would need to be sorted for separate educational treatment in different sorts of schools if their different educational requirements were to be properly met. Again, however, some past educational sociologists argued that since working class children are socialised differently from middle class children, they are also likely to experience difficulty with the sophisticated modes of communication and instruction offered by the general run of middle-class teachers. An influential post-war educational theory (Bantock 1973) used both of these views to argue that there are basically two sorts of pupils requiring different sorts of school curricula to meet their very different educational needs: whereas the children of middle-class background and status should be given one sort of (academic) curriculum suited to the development of their higher innate intelligence, working class children should be exposed (in separate schools) to alternative (vocational or technical) curricula better suited to their inferior ability.

Although there are no doubt many questionable assumptions here, the key point for now is that it is doubtful whether these different ‘psychological’ and ‘sociological’ arguments can be harnessed in the same cause. Even if both are true (and there are strong reasons for doubting both) the first argument would seem to be at best irrelevant and at most to offer unhelpful support to the second in any case for separate forms of schooling. One obvious point is that it is doubtful whether differences of innate intelligence exactly coincide with those of socio-cultural class and status. What, for example, should we decide in the case of the not very bright scions of nobility: should they be assigned to an academic school on the basis of their superior (class) socialization, or to a vocational school on the basis of their low ability? Or, suppose we discover in the very lowest of socio-economic strata, prodigious mathematical talent: should such a person be sent to a vocational school on the basis of working class socialization, or to an academic school on the basis of mathematical genius?

At all events, we need to be clear that we can get into just as much of a muddle between different sorts of (alleged) empirical evidence, as we can by mistaking conceptual truths or normative assumptions for empirical claims.

Professional competences: as suitable case for analysis

We might now briefly consider how some of these points might be brought to bear on the analysis of a particular recent professional educational concern – that of the pros and cons of so-called competence models of professional preparation. What then is a competence model

of teacher professionalism? Briefly, it is the view that it is both possible and useful to construe any form of vocational or professional expertise in terms of a repertoire of (connected but separately identifiable) practical dispositions, abilities or skills which are also apt for measurement or evaluation against predetermined standards: indeed, the key case for regarding professional training in this way is that pre- or in-service teaching performance can be measured against a common standard (which is also why competence models are invariably favoured by administrators). In 1993, the SOED introduced a competence model into the pre-service training of Scottish teachers with these words:

The Government considers that greater prominence than ever before should be given in teacher training to the securing of classroom skills and that competences in teaching should be the critical factor which institutions must take into account in designing courses.

Although in writing on the progress of the Scottish competence initiative, Donald Christie (in Bryce and Humes, 2003) has written in terms that suggest that those who opposed competences in general and the SOED competences in particular made rather a mountain out of a molehill, it cannot be denied that many writers (including the present one) have perceived them as a threat to professional education and training – and it may therefore be worth asking why this is so, and what the main arguments for and against competences might be. In this respect, although I shall not presently pause to pursue the psychological case, it should be said that some of the theoretical literature (mostly against) competences did purport to be of an empirical kind concerned with the more practical difficulties of identifying discretely measurable professional dispositions and capacities in the terms required by competence models: in short, the key problem for competence approaches was at least sometimes taken to be one of practical rather than conceptual difficulty.

Despite this, it is my own view that the key arguments against competence models were and are conceptual and normative rather than empirical-psychological: that the trouble with competences is not that they are difficult to identify for the purposes of mapping onto professional evaluation schedules, but that they cannot (logically) be squared with anything that we should (ethically or morally) want to regard as adequate professional preparation. On the matter of conceptual incompatibility with professionalism, for example, Christie follows a common line that the SOED Guidelines (in particular) were essentially reconcilable with the best practices of professional teacher preparation. However, although something undoubtedly hangs on what is here regarded as good professional practice, it would seem to be a conceptual point that if professional conduct is conceived as a matter of coming to

exercise individual autonomy and initiative on the basis of principled reflection, rather than simply conforming to the dictates of others, it is difficult to see how this could be squared with a model which – by definition – actually requires conformity to pre-specified objectives. Another way of putting this is to say that if some alleged competence initiative is so squarable with best current practices of professional training, it could not be a genuine competence model – and, conversely, insofar as it is so squarable, such training could hardly be genuinely professional.

There are, to be sure, some complexities here. One issue upon which the argument turns is that the most vociferous opponents of competence initiatives in professional training have mainly deplored the behaviourist reductionism of cruder vocational models: such implacable opponents of competence as Hyland (1993, 1994) have rightly complained that one can hardly reduce the theoretical complexities of professional expertise to the kind of hands-on skills that a hairdresser or bricklayer might employ. However, Christie rightly observes that since the SOED Guidelines were not reductive in this sense, they are not open to any such anti-behaviourist objections. Indeed, much here has been made of the following passage from the 1993 Guidelines:

In these Guidelines the term 'professional competences should be taken to refer to knowledge, understanding, critical thinking and positive attitudes, as well as to practical skills. In order to teach satisfactorily, certain craft skills have undoubtedly to be mastered. But in addition teachers must have a knowledge and understanding both of the content of their teaching and of the relationship between their methods and children's learning, and must be able to evaluate and justify their procedures to others.' (SOED 1993)

It appears that the authors of the Guidelines believed that by introducing references to knowledge as well as skills they had effectively insured the SOED competences against the standard anti-behaviourist criticisms of such models – and that Christie also believes this to have been so. In short, it seems to have been widely believed that in terms of my above dichotomy between competence and professional models, the SOED initiative could not be regarded as a reductive competence model. I believe, however, that this view is mistaken and that the SOED model, though not strictly behaviourist, nevertheless bears the main hallmarks of a competence model.

Perhaps the key consideration is that although the SOED model speaks of knowledge and even critical thinking, it is doubtful whether anything in the proposal departs radically from top-down pre-specification of professional objectives. In this respect, the last quoted

sentence from the report is at least interestingly equivocal: for whereas talk of being able to ‘justify their procedures to others’ could mean coming to develop independent professional initiative, it could just as well mean bottom-up answerability to the directives of appropriate line-managers. Moreover, while I do not insist that this is the way that this point would have to be taken, it seems that little in the detail of the document does much to substantiate the idea of knowledge as independent critical thought, and much more seems focused on ensuring that trainees are acquainted with appropriate local and central documentation and directives. Nowhere, perhaps more tellingly, was it suggested that critical professional thinking might be concerned with questioning the wisdom of competence models as such.

In any case, a more general problem with even the SOED ‘knowledge-based’ competence model lies in a strong suggestion that the kinds of expertise of lesson planning, pupil organization and classroom discipline needed by educational professionals are apt for analysis and evaluation as value-neutral or normatively uncontroversial (albeit principled) skills – an implication that also seems underscored in the Guidelines by separate (and secondary) treatment of values and skills. Apart from the fact that, as I have argued elsewhere (Carr 2000, 2003), it seems mistaken and distortive to regard all kinds of professional teacher expertise as skills, it seems clear that many of the so-called skills of competence models amount to little more than broad indications of professional desiderata that are also deeply contested. The plain fact is that since teaching is itself a morally normative practice which is apt to enshrine different concepts of human flourishing and association, what counts as good lesson presentation or good discipline is open to wide and variable interpretation. The pros and cons of such different concepts are of course open to rational debate and discussion on principled (logical, empirical and normative) grounds, but by that very token it seems dubious to suggest that the evaluation of even pre-teacher professionalism might be liable to top-down checklist measurement against a standard of good practice about which all are mainly agreed.

In arguing against competence models of teacher professionalism, I have often been asked to present my own alternative model. The only proper answer to this challenge, I believe, is to deny that that it is my business as a teacher educator to promote any one model. On the contrary, as an educator of professionals, my job is to acquaint trainee teachers with as many different conceptions of good or effective educational practice as possible, and to equip them with the rational capacities and resources to evaluate these in an intelligent and responsible way. Likewise, as a teaching supervisor, it is arguably not my job to tell trainees what to do, but to assist them to enter into serious and intelligent conversation about the (often

unanticipated) problems they may face on their placements – with an ultimate view to enabling them think for themselves as professionals should. Students themselves more usually want to be told what to do: I have even had it complained to me that it is a fault of their courses that lecturers will say different and incompatible things about good practice in their lectures – since lecturers really ought to agree. It should hardly need saying, however, that the key to any robust (as opposed to restricted) professional initiation is coming to embrace such different perspectives, and to be able to deal with them in a reflective, principled and responsible way. In this light, any ‘model’ of professional effectiveness or competence which serves to undermine this goal should be viewed with suspicion. That said, I should also want (in the name of consistency) to encourage no less of a critical professional attitude to any anti-competence arguments I have presented in this short paper.

Notes and References

- Bantock, G.H. (1973) ‘Towards a theory of popular education’, in R. Hooper (ed) (1973) The Curriculum: Context, Design and Development, Edinburgh, Oliver and Boyd
- Carr, D. (1993) ‘Guidelines for teacher training: the competency model’, Scottish Educational Review, 25 (1)
- Carr, D. (2000) Professionalism and Ethics in Teaching, London: Routledge
- Carr, D. (2003) Making Sense of Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy and Theory of Education and Teaching, London: Routledge
- Christie, D. (2003) ‘Competences, benchmarks and standards in teaching’, in W. Humes and T. Bryce (2003) Scottish Education (2nd ed) University of Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press
- Geach, P.T. (1976) Reason and Argument, Oxford, Blackwell
- Hyland, T (1993) ‘Competence, knowledge and education’, Journal of Philosophy of Education, 27 (1)
- Hyland, T (1993) ‘Professional development and competence based education’, Educational Studies, 19 (1)
- Hyland, T. (1994) Competence, Education and NVQ’s: Dissenting Perspectives, London: Cassell
- Scottish Office Education Department (1993) Guidelines for Teacher Training Courses, Edinburgh: SOED