

*“The Cognitive Anatomy of Moral Understanding
and the Moral Education Question”.*

A study in the Philosophy of Moral Education
by James A. Cooper BEd (Hons)

A thesis submitted in total fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

School of Religious Education
Faculty of Education

Australian Catholic University
Research Services
Locked Bag 4115
Fitzroy, Victoria 3065
Australia

June 2008

STATEMENT OF SOURCES

This thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis by which I have qualified for or been awarded another degree or diploma.

No other person's work has been used without due acknowledgement in the main text of the thesis.

This thesis has not been submitted for the award of any degree or diploma in any other tertiary institution.

Signed:..... Date:.....

Acknowledgments

I am eternally grateful for the enduring confidence and support of my supervisors, Professor Graham Rossiter and Dr John Quilter. Without their learned input and critical judgement I could not have completed this thesis. Thanks are also due to my wife Claire for her patience and understanding these past years, as well as to my Mum and Dad and my brother Adam for their invaluable feedback, guidance and prayers. For the interest and support of many other family members and friends, I am also very grateful.

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the problem of contemporary interpretations of the moral education question, as informed by rival moral-philosophical and epistemological traditions. In this study, the moral education question is taken to mean, *'What educational form and content may best assist students in becoming ethically minded and morally good people?'* Accordingly, this necessitates a consideration of what is meant by morality and what are the central characteristics of the moral life (i.e. moral philosophical perspectives), as well as how such accounts of morality are seen to relate to the educational aims of knowledge and intellectual development (i.e. underlying epistemology).

This study shows that current interpretations of moral education (as efforts to 'teach values') are predominantly informed by the 'juridical ethical tradition,' which, in turn, is underpinned by a distinctive epistemology (or 'Juridicalism'). The thesis proposes that Juridicalism is philosophically contestable because it leads to a partially distorted conception of the moral life and hence of moral education. Generally, by regarding the cognitive dimensions of moral thought and action as separate from and independent of the emotional-volitional dimensions, Juridicalism is an obstacle to understanding the proper moral educational task of schools. Notably, Juridicalism leads to a questionable emphasis on the importance of 'values', as expressed in generally agreed rules and principles, as opposed to particular and substantive moral judgements.

A critique of Juridicalism is developed, focussing on its underlying conception of human reason as inspired by a distinctly Modern mind-body/world dualism. I argue that the fragmented and reductive epistemology of Juridicalism signals the need for a richer and more variegated theory of cognition, marked specifically by

an *integrated anthropology* and *substantive theory of reason*. Further, such an epistemology is located in the realist philosophy of classical antiquity – particularly within the Aristotelian tradition. I propose a defence of what I call ‘Classical Realism’, in contrast to Juridicalism, highlighting its distinctively integrated account of the mind/soul and body/world relationship, and substantive conception of practical rationality or moral understanding. Classical Realism also makes central the notion of knowledge as ‘vision’ in order to explain how the rational and affective dimensions of human nature come together in moral thought and action.

Finally, the moral education question is reconsidered in light of the visional ethical perspective emerging from Classical Realism. In this light I interpret the moral education question as a matter of nurturing the (intellectual) capacity for and habit of correct vision and, relatedly, moral judgement. Further, this task is shown to be vitally connected with the school’s focus on developing knowledge and the intellect through the teaching of traditional academic and practical disciplines. Some initial comments are made concerning the pedagogical implications of such an interpretation, while some associated challenges and questions for further research are highlighted.

Table of Contents:

| | |
|--|----|
| <i>INTRODUCTION</i> | 1 |
| <i>CHAPTER ONE</i> | 5 |
| Introduction..... | 5 |
| I. THE MORAL EDUCATION QUESTION – A DISCUSSION OF THE ISSUE. | 6 |
| i. The Philosophical Nature of the Moral Education Question..... | 6 |
| ii. The Particular Responsibility of the School. | 7 |
| iii. The School as a Socialising Agency..... | 8 |
| iv. Schooling and Emotional Development. | 10 |
| v. Knowledge, Moral Understanding and the Meaning of Education. | 12 |
| vi. The Socratic Tradition on Knowledge and Virtue..... | 16 |
| vii. Interpreting the Moral Education Question. | 19 |
| viii. Towards an Adequate Cognitive Anatomy of Moral Understanding..... | 20 |
| II. PHILOSOPHICAL STARTING POINTS – ESTABLISHING AN ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK..... | 22 |
| i. Dykstra on Juridical and Visional Ethics..... | 22 |
| ii. McNaughton on Moral Non-Cognitivism and Moral Realism..... | 25 |
| iii. A Note on Juridicalism as an Analytical Framework..... | 30 |
| iv. Summary of Chapter One. | 32 |
| <i>CHAPTER TWO</i> | 35 |
| Introduction..... | 35 |
| I. CHARTING JURIDICALISM IN CONTEMPORARY MORAL EDUCATION THEORY – A SURVEY OF RECENT LITERATURE. | 36 |
| i. Juridicalism and Non-Cognitivism in Kohlberg’s Theory of Moral Development.... | 36 |
| ii. Juridicalism and Contemporary Moral Education Theory – Morality Defined by Questions of Obligation and Duty. | 39 |
| iii. A Morality of Rules and Principles. | 39 |

| | |
|--|---------------|
| iv. The Cognitive Anatomy of Moral Understanding in Values Education Approaches. | 42 |
| v. Reasoning and Valuing as Separate Realms. | 44 |
| vi. Moral Motivation as a Non-Cognitive Problem. | 48 |
| vii. Perceived Pedagogical Challenges - Stimulating the Aspect of ‘Feeling’ | 51 |
| viii. Moral Development Through Civics Education..... | 53 |
| ix. Summarising the Juridical Legacy in Contemporary Moral Education Theory. | 55 |
| x. Questioning a Juridical Interpretation of Moral Education. | 57 |
| II. JURIDICALISM AS A PHILOSOPHY OF HUMAN UNDERSTANDING - | |
| CLARIFYING THE EPISTEMOLOGICAL PROBLEM..... | 58 |
| i. Juridicalism and Modern Philosophy. | 58 |
| ii. Juridicalism and Cartesian Reason – Three Features. | 62 |
| 1. A Pervasive Mind/Soul – Body/World <i>Dualism</i> | 62 |
| 2. Rationality Regarded Exclusively as <i>Mental Activity</i> | 64 |
| 3. Reason Understood as Exclusively <i>Procedural</i> | 68 |
| iii. Summary of Chapter Two and Thesis Itinerary. | 70 |
| CHAPTER THREE..... | 73 |
| Introduction..... | 73 |
| I. JURIDICAL EPISTEMOLOGY & MODERN DUALISM. | 74 |
| i. Descartes’ ‘Distinct’ and ‘Clear’ Knowledge..... | 74 |
| ii. Hume’s Fact-Value Gap. | 78 |
| II. THE IMPLICATIONS OF MODERN DUALISM FOR MORAL THEORY – | |
| CRITIQUING MORAL NON-COGNITIVISM. | 83 |
| i. Modern Dualism and Moral Non-Cognitivism..... | 83 |
| ii. Against the Basic Philosophical Claims of Non-Cognitivism..... | 86 |
| iii. Comparing Non-Cognitivism with Everyday Moral Experience. | 88 |
| iv. Problems and Non-Problems of Moral Non-Cognitivism. | 90 |
| III. QUESTIONING MODERN DUALISM – SOME RECENT REFLECTIONS..... | |
| i. A Review of the Argument So Far. | 99 |
| ii. Hill on Integrating Values and Disposition. | 101 |
| iii. Smith on Moral Judgement and Attentiveness. | 106 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| iv. Smith & Standish and Moral <i>Vision</i> | 108 |
| v. Summary and Conclusion of Chapter Three..... | 110 |

CHAPTER FOUR..... 114

| | |
|--|-----|
| Introduction..... | 114 |
| I. A CASE AGAINST REASON AS EXCLUSIVELY ACTIVE..... | 116 |
| i. Modern Dualism and the Activist Conception of [Practical] Reason..... | 116 |
| ii. Other Ways of Knowing – Taylor on Poetic Knowledge..... | 120 |
| iii. Dykstra on Mystery, Revelation and Imagination..... | 124 |
| iv. Pieper on ‘Down-to-Earth Contemplation’..... | 128 |
| II. A CASE AGAINST PROCEDURAL REASON..... | 130 |
| i. From Reason as Activity to Procedural Reason..... | 130 |
| ii. Procedural Reason and the Internalisation of Moral Sources..... | 134 |
| iii. Procedural Reason and Disengagement from Lived Experience..... | 137 |
| iv. Vital Reason – Towards an Alternative Conception..... | 142 |
| v. Summary of the Critique of Juridicalism..... | 145 |

CHAPTER FIVE..... 147

| | |
|---|-----|
| Introduction..... | 147 |
| I. CLASSICAL REALISM AND THE MIND-SOUL-BODY-WORLD RELATIONSHIP - TOWARDS AN INTEGRATED ANTHROPOLOGY..... | 148 |
| i. What is Philosophical Realism? | 148 |
| ii. Aristotle’s Hylomorphic Soul-Body Relationship..... | 151 |
| iii. Perception and Intelligence..... | 154 |
| iv. The Affective and Volitional Powers in Human Understanding..... | 158 |
| II. THE RECEPTIVE AND SUBSTANTIVE NATURE OF MORAL UNDERSTANDING –THE RECOVERY OF VITAL REASON..... | 167 |
| i. Rethinking the Mind’s Activity – the Receptive Mode of Vital Reason..... | 167 |
| ii. The Double Nature of Vital Reason..... | 170 |
| iii. Vital Reason and Substantive Moral Knowledge..... | 172 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| iv. Meeting the Problems of Juridicalism – Bringing the Strands Together..... | 176 |
|---|-----|

CHAPTER SIX 182

| | |
|---|-----|
| Introduction..... | 182 |
| I. REALITY AS THE BASIS OF ETHICS - THE VISIONAL CHARACTER OF MORAL LIFE..... | 185 |
| i. Reality and the Good. | 185 |
| ii. <i>Phronesis</i> and Moral Vision. | 191 |
| II. THE DYNAMICS OF MORAL VISION – REVISITING THE MORAL EDUCATION QUESTION..... | 198 |
| i. The Continuous Fabric of Moral Life..... | 199 |
| ii. Quality of Consciousness and Moral ‘Attention’..... | 201 |
| iii. Objectivity and Interpersonal Understanding..... | 203 |
| iv. Interpersonal Understanding and the Moral Life..... | 206 |
| v. The Conditions and Limits of Objectivity. | 210 |
| vi. Cultivating Vital Reason - Revisiting the Moral Education Question..... | 214 |

CHAPTER SEVEN..... 218

| | |
|--|-----|
| Introduction..... | 218 |
| I. MORAL VISION AND INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT – THE ESSENTIAL CONTRIBUTION OF SCHOOLS. | 219 |
| i. Moral Education as Learning to Attend..... | 220 |
| ii. Murdoch on Intellectual and Moral Discipline..... | 224 |
| iii. [Moral] Education as an ‘Asceticism of Knowledge’. | 228 |
| II. RESPONDING TO A CLASSICAL REALIST INTERPRETATION – MATTERS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH. | 235 |
| i. The Danger of Intellectualism. | 235 |
| ii. On the Intellectual Attitude of the Teacher. | 239 |
| iii. The Assent to Philosophical Realism. | 243 |
| iv. Establishing Communities of Learning. | 250 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| v. Locating an Intellectual, Cultural and Spiritual Centre. | 252 |
| vi. Plumbing the Spiritual Depths of Humanity – a Role for Theology and Religion. | 256 |

| | |
|--------------------------|-----|
| <i>REFERENCES:</i> | 262 |
|--------------------------|-----|

INTRODUCTION

This thesis paints a picture, in quite broad brushstrokes, of the epistemological and moral-philosophical traditions informing current moral educational theory. In response to this picture I defend an alternative interpretative framework based in a more ancient tradition of thought, which has, hereto, been largely disregarded or misunderstood among contemporary moral educational theorists. Throughout the thesis, my aim is to question a certain 'style of thinking' about the foundational philosophical questions underpinning moral education. In this study, therefore, I operate at a level of abstraction from particular philosophers and theorists in order to criticise commonalities and tendencies of thought, rather than precisely defined doctrines or sets of propositions. Given this level of abstraction from particular and precise theorists and doctrines, it will be helpful to provide, in this introduction, an outline of how all the elements of my argument hang together as a whole. By laying out the logical relations between the different theses and theories addressed in the study, it will be easier for the reader to understand the relevance of the various elements, as they are introduced and explained in the thesis, to the overall argument.

I begin this study, in Chapter One, with a discussion of moral education, bringing to light the foundational importance of underlying moral-philosophical and epistemological assumptions to how one interprets, and subsequently responds to, the moral education question. In the second part of Chapter One and in Chapter Two I argue that current interpretations of moral education are predominantly informed by what I call the 'juridical ethical tradition,' which, in turn, is underpinned by a distinctive epistemology (or 'Juridicalism'). I hold that contemporary moral educational theory generally assumes that the nature of ethics is as the juridical ethical tradition supposes. Further, the distinctive claims of juridical ethical tradition are based on certain epistemological assumptions which, I argue, are part of the Cartesian Legacy throughout Modern philosophy. I conclude Chapter Two by

detailing the particular aspects of the Cartesian Legacy which I see as foundational to Juridicalism, and therefore to juridical ethics and contemporary moral education theory. The Cartesian Legacy generally asserts: (i) some form of *dualism* between reason and thinking on the one hand, and feeling, motivation, bodily and historical life on the other, (ii) an *activist conception of rationality* as the power of critical and discursive thought only, and (iii) some form of *proceduralism* with regard to rationality and moral understanding.

Chapters Three and Four comprise a critique of Juridicalism, focussing on the three epistemological features identified at the conclusion of Chapter Two. In Chapter Three I argue that the feature of dualism is unconvincing and that this shows we need a more integrated conception of the relation between reason and emotion, cognition and affect, thought and motivation etcetera – or a more ‘integrated anthropology’. In Chapter Four I argue that the feature of activism is also unconvincing and that this shows the need for a conception of rationality which leaves room for the possibility of a passive receptivity which is trustworthily informed by the world – or what I call knowledge in the ‘visional modalities’. I then question the feature of proceduralism and argue that its alleged importance to moral understanding is also unconvincing. This shows the need for a more ‘substantive conception of rationality’ based on the notion of attunement to reality, and remaining open to such notions as revelation, mystery, and insight into objective moral truth.

My critique of Juridicalism shows that the Cartesian Legacy, as a philosophical basis for describing the nature and scope of moral understanding, is unconvincing. As such, Juridicalism is shown to be without its typical support in the Modern tradition. Of course, this does not rule out that there might be other arguments to support Juridicalism and the juridical ethical tradition, but by showing that its chief source of philosophical support is unconvincing Juridicalism is strongly discredited. Further, side-by-side with my critique of the Modern philosophical foundations of

Juridicalism, I draw attention to parallel aspects evident in 'moral non-cognitivism'. As a meta-ethical theory, moral non-cognitivism might be seen as an argument for Juridicalism. Moving between Juridicalism and moral non-cognitivism, therefore, I suggest that both positions lack argumentative support – in terms of their underlying philosophical/epistemological foundations and the descriptive accounts of moral experience they provide. Again, this does not rule out that there might be further arguments that could be offered for Juridicalism, but in the absence of two major sources of support – the Cartesian Legacy and moral non-cognitivism – the grounds for Juridicalism are significantly weakened.

In short, Chapters Three and Four argue that the grounds for Juridicalism are weak and that, as such, we should look for an alternative conception of the epistemology of moral understanding if we can find one. Further, in so far as current moral educational theory is logically dependent upon juridical ethics, any such alternative conception will prove an important basis for understanding better the moral educational task of schools. The remainder of the thesis, then, is dedicated to outlining and defending an alternative cognitive anatomy of moral understanding, and a related alternative interpretation of the moral educational task of schools.

In pursuit of a better account of the cognitive anatomy of moral understanding, I turn to the realist philosophical tradition rooted in classical Greek and, particularly, Aristotelian thought. In Chapter Five I argue that Aristotle's distinctive philosophical anthropology and epistemology meets directly the needs emerging from the earlier critique of Juridicalism. In Aristotle one finds a strongly integrated account of the rational and non-rational elements of the human soul, with the affective and volitional faculties and sensibilities playing a constitutive role in one's cognitive grasp of the morally relevant features of particular circumstances. The classical and Aristotelian traditions also offer an account of human knowledge and understanding which leaves room for reason to be passive and receptive to being informed reliably

by the world, and in which substantively correct moral thoughts and judgements rank among the distinctive and highest possibilities of the intellect.

In Chapter Six I build upon my defence of Aristotelian epistemology to develop a picture of the distinctive understanding of the intellectual foundations of the moral life, from a Classical Realist perspective, and the related interpretation of the moral education question. Finally, then, in Chapter Seven, I consider some of the pedagogical implications of such an alternative interpretation of moral education, developing some of these in detail and commending others to further research and enquiry.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction.

This chapter provides a discussion of the research topic and the particular problem addressed by this study, as well as an introduction to the analytical framework within which that problem is considered. Accordingly, the chapter is divided into two sections. The first section deals with the moral education question, which is taken to mean, *'What educational form and content will best assist students in becoming ethically minded and morally good people?'* A discussion of this question reveals its inherently *philosophical* nature as well as certain practical considerations that limit and define how moral education in schools is understood. Further, it is maintained that any enlightened interpretation of and response to this question requires an adequate *cognitive anatomy of moral understanding*, since the principal responsibility of schools is for the development of knowledge and the intellect. As I will argue, it is of vital importance, moreover, that any theory of moral education make sense of the interrelation between reason and affect in moral thought and action. As such, it is argued that some appropriate *epistemological foundation* is also required.

The second section considers philosophical starting points in order to provide an analytical framework for considering how the moral education question is currently, yet might otherwise be, interpreted. Following Dykstra (1981), two main perspectives within contemporary ethics are identified - 'juridical ethics' and 'visional ethics'. The particular emphases and discursive traits of these two perspectives are shown to rest on more concrete philosophical differences. McNaughton's (1988) distinction between 'moral non-cognitivism' and 'moral realism' within contemporary moral philosophy is therefore introduced as a way of describing these underlying differences.

Adopting Dykstra's terminology, it is argued that contemporary approaches to moral education are chiefly informed by the juridical ethical tradition, especially as a result

of Kohlberg's influential research into moral development. This leads to a more detailed analysis of the influence of Kohlberg's theory, and its underlying philosophical assumptions, on contemporary interpretations of the moral education question in Chapter Two.

I. THE MORAL EDUCATION QUESTION - A DISCUSSION OF THE ISSUE.

i. The Philosophical Nature of the Moral Education Question.

This study addresses the question of moral education, which concerns the possibility of teaching (for) ethical behaviour. According to Maritain, "Ever since the time of Socrates and Plato the problem 'Can ethical behaviour be taught?' and 'How to teach ethical behaviour' has been the ordeal of teachers" (1967: p103)¹. This is because schools, colleges and universities, as educational institutions, "have to help young people to become men and women worthy of the name", and to this end right moral conduct can be seen as a vital (if not *the* most vital) aspect (p103). Put another way, the moral education question concerns *what educational form and content may assist students to become both ethically minded and morally good people*.

From this, questions arise concerning the relationship between curriculum content (together with method of instruction) and the moral impact education might have, or ought to pursue. For example, consideration must be given to questions like, "Is knowledge of any avail for the moral life?" or, "Is something extra, some special faculty or capacity enabling correct moral judgment and the disposition to behave ethically required?" and, "What is the connection between knowledge or intellectual development and moral thought and action?" In other words, the question of the

¹ Of course, Socrates and his pupils ask 'Can virtue be taught?' Though there are differences that could be raised between virtue and ethical behaviour, they do not matter for our purposes here, which is to highlight the ancient and perennial nature of the moral education question.

precise relationship between the aims and means of school education and moral development is raised.

Furthermore, how one interprets and responds to questions like these depends very much on one's understanding of what it means to be moral: for example, among other possibilities, whether morality is primarily a matter of developing a coherent set of principles to assist in responding to situations of social conflict, or if morality relates to some higher, more ultimate *end* of being human and is more centrally a matter of discerning and responding to the nature of that end. In other words, any enlightened response to the moral education question entails a consideration of underlying moral philosophical perspectives and related epistemological foundations. Such matters are the focus of this study.

As fundamental as the above questions are, however, a range of more practical considerations must also inform our interpretation of the moral education question. Pedagogically, the moral education question basically concerns the contribution of *what schools teach and how* to the moral development of students. Any response to this challenge is necessarily limited and partly defined at least by (a) the particular responsibility of schools as educational institutions, (b) the extended social and emotional dimensions of schooling, and (c) underlying conceptions of what it means to be 'educated'. I shall briefly discuss all three of these considerations, outlining the specific stance towards each adopted in this study, and will use the observations gathered from this survey to refine the focus of my examination of the moral education question.

ii. The Particular Responsibility of the School.

Children do not come to school as morally 'blank sheets', neither is the impact of school-based education the 'be all and end all' of a student's moral development. In fact, the school is but one, inchoate agency endowed with some *limited and general*

responsibility for the moral development of young people. As Maritain observes, in the first place, “the direct and primary responsibility of the school is not moral, but intellectual in nature – namely, responsibility for the normal growth of the intellect of the students, the acquisition by them of articulate and sufficiently universal knowledge [and skills] and the development of their own inner intellectual capacities” (p104).

Nevertheless, because an obvious (albeit controverted) connection exists between thought and action, there is an indirect responsibility on the part of the school for doing its best to ensure the curriculum will contribute to, rather than inhibit or corrupt, students’ moral qualities. It remains that the responsibility of schools for moral education must be calculated in view of the fact that there exist other institutions (such as the family, the church and other social networks) whose responsibility for moral development is far more primary and direct.

iii. The School as a Socialising Agency.

Apart from endowing students with formal knowledge, skills and intellectual capacities, the school is a living community with its own unique standards, values and structures of authority. This (often) inexplicit and unarticulated dimension of schooling may reflect the standards and structures of wider society and, as such, the school plays an active part in the socialisation of young people, at its best accustoming them to the demands of effective participation in a well-ordered society. This socialising role can be seen as important to the moral development of students, especially in so far as it provides them with a sense of their own moral standing in respect of rules, laws and mutual responsibility - as individuals and as members of a society and an integrated environment.

For example, students may learn the value of honouring systems of authority which serve to ensure some private or public good, like their own education or personal

protection and well-being. Certain schools or teachers may adopt highly democratic procedures in their establishing guidelines and expectations for standards of behaviour, thus encouraging students to recognise and respect the needs and rights of others, and to recognise and engage with the structures of government in wider society.

Another, and more fundamental, element of the socialising dimension of education stems from the psychological fact that “the mental atmosphere and the world of images in the midst of which the minds of children... breathe and feed have [a definite] impact upon their moral development” (Maritain 1967: p107). That is to say, it is into a particular ‘mental atmosphere’ and ‘world of images’ (or *intellectual culture*) that students are inherently ‘socialised’ through schooling. Further, the explicit and intentional practices of the school (i.e. the form and content of the curriculum) will certainly reflect these underlying, less explicit and unarticulated foundations. As such, the quality of this ‘intellectual culture’ and its (likely or intended) bearing on moral development needs to be considered.

The socialising force of schooling, therefore, stems in part from the influence of wider socio-political structures and values. More directly, although relatedly, however, schools are active in socialising students into a particular ‘intellectual culture’ – i.e. the mental atmosphere and world of images that underpin and are reflected in the more explicit aspects of the curriculum. What can be said at the outset, therefore, is that given that the specific and mandated concern of the school is for the intellectual development of the young, whatever, more precisely, we say about the particular responsibility of schools for children’s moral development, it seems reasonable to expect that it have something to do with *the intellectual foundations of moral life*.

iv. Schooling and Emotional Development.

Of course, this assumption that the governing focus of schooling is on intellectual development, stands against the background of students' having both a rational and an emotional nature. This is not to assume that human beings are simply a product of an impersonal, rational mind on the one hand and an irrational emotional self on the other, with schools assuming responsibility for the former but not the latter. In charting intellectual and emotional development, developmental psychologists have often regarded these two dimensions as interrelated, with Piaget concluding that "there is a close parallel between the development of affectivity and that of the intellectual functions, since these are two indissociable aspects of every action" (1967: p33). Furthermore, the development of emotional and affective faculties can be seen as particularly dependent on experiences of socialisation and enculturation, an aspect of psychological development strongly emphasised by Vygotsky, who also concluded:

Thought is not begotten by thought; it is engendered by motivation, i.e., by our desires and needs, our interests and emotions. Behind every thought there is an affective-volitional tendency (1986: p252).

Of course, the precise nature of thought and emotion and of the interrelationship of reason and affect (and, indeed, socialisation) remains a controverted issue. Recent cognitive and neural science does generally support the notion, however, that the two aspects are strongly related, also indicating that to consider one aspect independently of the other is fraught with the possibility of misunderstanding (Damásio 1995, LeDoux 1998). Given this widely recognised, albeit variously disputed, relationship between the rational, emotional and social dimensions of human personality, and since schooling is often a prominent aspect of a young person's social and cultural upbringing, some degree of responsibility for emotional, together with intellectual, development is introduced into the whole educational enterprise.

Further, a persistent notion within educational thought since ancient times is that moral virtue and emotional (or affective) development are closely connected. Throughout much classical and medieval philosophy, growth in moral virtue is seen centrally as a matter of engaging, refining and directing the emotions and passions in accord with what, by way of natural reason, is known about the world. For example, in book II of *The Laws*, Plato's *Athenian* defines education in terms of the acquisition of [moral] virtue. Such education is said to have occurred when:

...the feelings of pleasure and affection, pain and hatred, that well up in [the child's] soul are channelled in the right courses before he can understand the reason why. Then when he does understand, his reason and his emotions agree in telling him that he has been properly trained by inculcation of appropriate habits (1975: p86).

More recently, R.S. Peters (1973) has argued that the motives and levels of *compassion* that suffuse peoples' social interactions are, in terms of moral development, most important. Peters defends this contention by asking these rhetorical questions:

...for what is the moral status of a man who can reason in an abstract way about rules if he does not care about people who are affected by his breach or observance of them? ...Is not the capacity to love, as well as the capacity to reason, important in the form of morality? (p26).

In short, it is arguable that the most vital moral categories such as *love*, *care*, *compassion* or *self-control* appeal directly to the powers of emotion and affection in the first instance, rather than those of rational analysis or reasoning, understood in contrast to feeling. It is possible, however, that the rational and emotional (*cognitive* and *affective-motivational*) dimensions of human understanding are not simply

interrelated, but are *interdependent* or even inseparably a *unity* and, as such, educational interest in intellectual and emotional development cannot be neatly cordoned off into separate domains².

Indeed, Hirst and Peters (1973) have pointed out that many of the standard works on child development are classified under the headings *physical, intellectual, social* and *emotional*, with the *moral* also being considered separately. Hirst and Peters question this 'four-sided' view of the developing child, warning that distinguishing between emotional and social development (or between intellectual development and either of these or moral development) is fraught with the danger of assuming that "men have an intellect which is somehow divorced from feeling, and that neither the intellect nor the emotions are social" - assumptions Hirst and Peters describe as "quite indefensible" (p49). It is central to my hypothesis that an *integrated* understanding of both the rational and non-rational dimensions of human intelligence is of paramount importance to any effective engagement with the moral education question. I will attempt to show why this is the case in the following comparison of the aims of general and moral education.

v. Knowledge, Moral Understanding and the Meaning of Education.

As I have argued, schools, as educational institutions, are directly and primarily concerned with knowledge and the development of the intellect. Only by extension are they concerned with the effect of such instruction on students' moral lives. Moral education is easily considered a 'special issue', since it concerns the health of students' moral personalities (especially the capacity for moral judgement and the motivation to behave ethically) as distinguishable from making them adequately

² The general nature of the discussion at this point leads to the use of metaphor and vague language. It is important initially, however, to establish that there is difference between distinct and interrelated capacities in order to develop my overall argument. More precise distinctions will emerge as the course of my argument proceeds.

informed about various issues and subjects and endowed with basic skills for life in the world of work. However, this is no ground for assuming that the task of moral education is altogether separate from, or adjunct to, the task of general education. While it is commonly held that a general education ought to provide students with a range of knowledge about history, literature, science and so on, it is also readily agreed that an educated person is more than a merely well informed person.

Education, of course, must be useful, but not merely in a utilitarian sense of the word. Education, rather, is useful also because *understanding* is 'useful', and this is the crux of the matter. An educated person will not simply know certain information about science or literature or whatever, but will know something of the very *forms of knowledge and understanding* peculiar to each discipline. In science, for instance, 'honesty' about the results of experiments is a vital dimension of the required method. Honesty in science is valued so that experiments can be repeated, and because it embodies a commitment to the higher aims of the discipline, such as truth, rather than one's personal reputation or getting satisfying results. Likewise in history, treating sources 'fairly' and considering more than one side of the same event is internal to good historical method. Giving 'just' voice to a range of human perspectives and interpretations is seen as important to the very form of knowledge and understanding sought by historical analysis and inquiry. In the study of literature, all kinds of evaluative norms inform the way students interpret, evaluate and criticise, while much literature itself is concerned with universal themes such as 'love', 'revenge', 'despair' and a whole range of archetypal human characters. In mathematics it is arguably not out of place to speak of the 'justice' of an equation, the 'elegance' of a proof, or of 'beauty' inherent in geometry. In other words, language and ideas with strong evaluative force are intrinsic to the forms of knowledge, understanding and method in each and every discipline.

Hence, it is widely agreed that general education should not simply inform students, but enable them to *form judgements* in relation to a range of human interests and areas of experience, and help imbue in them the requisite *character* to live according to their best judgements. Further, correct judgement requires a certain capacity to differentiate, discern, evaluate, sympathise, to reflect upon and constrain one's own interests while discerning the needs and interests of others. Each of these abilities is integral to the life of moral thought and action, yet are likewise intrinsic to any developed grasp of the content and method of a range of academic (and even practical) disciplines. It is important to note, however, that the ethical standards of interpretation, evaluative terms and concepts internal to such disciplines are typically inexplicit and unarticulated. While such disciplines have an inherent yet usually unconscious moral educational force, there is clearly a sense in which all teaching and learning, across each and every subject area, is laden with moral educational significance.

The mastery of prescribed content (formal knowledge or skills), therefore, is only one dimension of the educative process, if the capacity and propensity to judge rightly and act accordingly is in any way an educational aim. As Pieper observes:

For what use can it be to [a person] to possess the most accurate and comprehensive information, if he is an indecisive and irresolute person or suffers from exaggerated scruples or if he is a rash and heedless person who, at the decisive moment, forgets what he knows or fails to take it into account and, as it were, blindly makes some decision... simply in order to get the matter over with? (1985: p220)

Additionally, John Haldane has argued:

Since antiquity – and even today – it has been widely held that the general point of education is to enable the learner to develop into a rounded figure; to acquire abilities to make evaluative discriminations; to have and to control feelings important for life, and so on: in short, to become virtuous (1999: p157).

The idea of an ‘educated person’, in other words, includes not merely someone with certain know-how and mastery of facts and figures, but also many qualities commonly associated with the morally virtuous person. Put simply, it could be argued that general education is, *inherently*, a task in moral formation.

On the one hand, the question of curriculum content appears markedly different according to whether one has in mind the idea of general education or moral education. With general education one usually has in mind a relatively prescribed and set content, to which the term ‘knowledge’ is sensibly applied. In a sense, moral education is broader than general education in that it goes beyond propositional knowledge and prescribed content, bringing to mind certain habits and depths of understanding, less prescribed and propositional, to which the term ‘knowledge’ might seem wrongly applied. That is, moral education involves more than instruction in (and the mastery of) prescribed knowledge and skills. Perhaps the term ‘knowledge’, as typically understood, may be inadequate to convey the deeper level of *understanding* - involving a disposition or inclination to form judgements and also to act upon them - which the idea of active moral agency typically includes.

That said, however, the distinction between general and moral education is not especially clear-cut. The difference between the two seems to be one between the *forms* of knowledge and understanding of primary interest in each case. Articulating the difference between these forms of knowledge and deciding how they are related, and further how they are related to the school’s concern with knowledge and intellectual development, is therefore an important precursor to any enlightened

interpretation of the moral education question. There is a need, in other words, to determine an appropriate philosophical – and especially epistemological – basis to inform our understanding of the moral educational task of schools. At this point, therefore, the pedagogical challenge of determining curriculum form and content merges with the philosophical heart of the moral education question.

vi. The Socratic Tradition on Knowledge and Virtue.

At the outset of this chapter it was noted that philosophical questions concerning knowledge and human intelligence, as they relate to morality, are basic to the moral education issue. For Socrates (according to Plato) moral virtue *is* a matter of knowledge, since in order to be good (and not simply by accident) one must in some way *know* the good. Following Socrates' dictum, both Plato and Aristotle strive to determine the *kind* of knowledge which is virtue. Plato, in particular, opposes the notion expounded by the Athenian Sophist Isocrates that the knowledge needed for virtue is something that can be 'poured into' the student, like water into a glass. Instead, Plato argues, the knowledge which is virtue must be *educed from* the student. Such knowledge resides latently in the soul of the student as a kind of prenatal experience of eternal Ideas – including the Idea (or *being*) of Justice itself, Temperance itself, each of the other virtues themselves and, ultimately, the Good itself. This latent knowledge of eternal Ideas must, according to Plato, be recalled in some way with the assistance of an already morally wise teacher.

Plato's argument, however, raises further questions about the kind of knowledge which is virtue and how it might be acquired, which Aristotle attempts to make square with Socrates' original dictum. Aristotle is especially puzzled by the fact that even the person who knows (propositionally) very clearly what is right and wrong may, even consciously, fail to do the right thing. It would appear then that simply knowing the meaning of courage, justice or self-control, or even what counts as each of these in a given situation, will not necessarily lead one to behave courageously,

justly or with self-control. In this way, Aristotle concurs with Plato by asserting that moral virtue cannot be readily *taught* (as the Sophists claimed to teach it) in the manner of propositional knowledge or transferable skills. That is, the knowledge which is virtue (knowledge of the Good), and the manner in which it is acquired, cannot be reduced to a prescribed content, readily transmittable by repeatable processes of teaching and learning. For Socrates' dictum to hold, therefore, Aristotle is compelled to argue that the relevant knowledge of right and wrong (i.e. practical wisdom) and moral virtue must in some way be inter-definable.

In other words, while one must know the good in order to be good, in order to know the good one must *already in a sense be good*. By this Aristotle means one must possess the virtue of *phronesis* (or 'practical wisdom') - classified as both an intellectual and a moral virtue - which affords true insight into the nature of things. Following Aristotle, then, moral virtue is indeed a matter of knowledge - specifically *phronesis*, which is an intellectual and deliberative excellence. In this way Aristotle refines Socrates' original dictum by bringing out that the knowledge needed for virtue is characterised by *a unity of emotion, motivation and intellectual understanding*. To see how this is so, the contrast between the understanding of the virtuous person and that of the merely strong-willed person is illuminating.

Since both the virtuous person and the strong-willed (or self-controlled) person may act morally from their knowledge of the good, the question of how, if at all, they are different arises. Like the weak-willed, the strong-willed are buffeted by desire, fear, self-interest and other emotions and inclinations which carry them in a counter-moral direction. They may even feel disappointment at the loss of pleasure, reputation, personal gain etcetera, caused by their being good rather than bad. Through strength of will, however, they are able to overcome these temptations and regrets to pursue actions in accord with what they know to be right. The virtuous person, on the other hand, is not prone in this way to temptations or regrets over losses caused by being

good. For the will of the virtuous person is entirely in accord with what is good, such that knowing and doing the good is their duty and delight.

In a sense, the strong-willed person and the virtuous person (and even the weak-willed person) share a knowledge of the good, or of what is right and wrong. This knowledge might be thought of as highly propositional, or as knowledge of the 'right principles'. Such knowledge may provide an ability to state true propositions and even to believe in them, but it does not run deep to the level of personhood and conviction. Such knowledge, then, is not *phronesis*, which is characterised instead by a unity of emotion, motivation and intellectual understanding. Unlike *phronesis*, such knowledge as is shared with the strong-willed or weak-willed person can become disconnected from one's feelings and motives in relation to the good. In Book VI of his *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle argues that moral virtue is a state of character concerned with choice. Further, the right choice, under the guidance of practical wisdom, amounts to a kind of 'reasoned desire' or 'desiring reason'. That is to say, feeling, motivation and knowledge are not at all dissociable in *phronesis*.

The kind of knowledge necessary for moral virtue, therefore, in the Socratic tradition as developed by Plato and Aristotle, is a strongly integrated understanding characterised by a union of intellect, will and emotion. Following this, it seems reasonable to expect that in trying to determine the proper moral educational task of schools, whose primary concern is for knowledge and intellectual development, some kind of highly integrated psychology and expansive epistemology would lend considerable support. Indeed, these themes highlight the topic of Chapter Five, in which I defend a Classical Realist philosophical perspective – informed particularly by Aristotelian moral psychology – as a vital source of understanding for contemporary efforts to interpret and respond to the moral education question.

vii. Interpreting the Moral Education Question.

From the foregoing discussion, a set of criteria emerges for determining the appropriateness of any *response* (by schools) to the moral education question. Firstly any such response must acknowledge the limited responsibility of schools as institutions chiefly concerned with the development of knowledge and the intellect. Further, an appropriate response will recognise that the responsibility schools have should be examined in light of their inescapable socialising role and the irrefutable (though controverted) connection between the rational and emotional dimensions of human intelligence. Finally, an appropriate response must recognise that general and moral education form an *integrated enterprise*, enacted via pedagogical processes which, on the one hand, are no means for ensuring the kind of transformative learning that is sought but which, on the other hand, provide the indispensable context for such learning to occur.

At the pedagogical level, responding to the moral education question is a matter of determining what to teach and how – i.e. content and instruction. What is clear from the foregoing discussion, however, is that any given response will rest upon a certain philosophical *interpretation* of what moral education amounts to. Such an interpretation must be made in view of the criteria listed above. But such interpretation will more primarily involve a consideration of the intellectual or cognitive dimensions of the moral life. This leads more deeply than a discussion of practical means and ends to a more philosophical consideration of such key themes as the relationship between the intellect, knowledge and moral development, and even the aims and purposes of school education.

Questions about the proper role of schools or the aims of education are, naturally, open to speculation and further research. These are not questions addressed specifically in this study. Rather, this study assumes a limited role for schools as one of several institutions sharing a responsibility for students' moral development,

limited and partly defined by the school's principle aim of intellectual development. In particular, this study regards education as an enterprise not merely concerned with the development of skills and knowledge of a strictly utilitarian value, but with an overall intellectual development incorporating a measure of social, physical, emotional and moral 'health'.

The specific concern of this study, then, is the philosophical basis from which the moral education question is interpreted (and, subsequently, pedagogical measures are commended). In particular, the nature of the connection between the human intellect, knowledge and moral agency defines the philosophical interest of this study. Accordingly, this study addresses the philosophical anthropology and, particularly, theory of cognition informing contemporary ethical perspectives and related interpretations of the moral education question.

viii. Towards an Adequate Cognitive Anatomy of Moral Understanding.

Earlier I argued that moral education and general education might be distinguished by the different *forms* of knowledge and understanding with which they are each concerned. I also observed that such different forms of knowledge, while distinguishable, cannot be readily treated as distinct and independent, and hence general and moral education can be thought to form an 'integrated enterprise'. Given the school's mandated concern for developing knowledge and the intellect, and given the inescapable social, emotional and hence moral dimensions of schooling, there is a need for a robust, variegated yet integrated epistemology to inform our understanding of the intellectual foundations of the moral life. For this will be crucial to our understanding of the school's contribution to the student's moral development. This study, then, by critiquing current approaches and drawing on past insight, aims to identify what we might call an adequate *cognitive anatomy of moral understanding*. By this is meant simply what is the knowledge, in terms of an ideally fulfilled human *cognitive capacity*, that is actuated in thoughts, judgements,

decisions and actions that can be considered *morally good*. To clarify, one might ask, 'If one is to perform a morally good thought, judgement, or decision, what, cognitively speaking, must take place?'

Importantly, the term 'cognitive' is not being used here in a particular or limited way to mean strictly rational or discursive thought, as distinguishable from feeling and affectivity. Rather, 'cognitive' here entails any that could reasonably be thought to contribute to knowledge and understanding. At the outset, therefore, the idea of cognition must remain a fairly open-ended and loosely defined concept. What can be said is that a student's 'moral understanding' entails more than mastery of propositional knowledge and prescribed content. Rather, it involves a deeper level of awareness and personal engagement (involving the emotional and volitional faculties) necessary for the good habit and dutiful action indicative of moral excellence. To illuminate what such understanding involves, cognitively speaking, will require the kind of variegated yet integrated epistemology that I have signalled.

Any theory of cognition must include some notion of the knowing *subject* as well as the possible range of known or knowable *objects* (or reality). In other words, it will simultaneously entail a philosophy of mind and the knowing person (i.e. a philosophical anthropology), as well as a philosophical ontology. This study then seeks to uncover and examine such guiding epistemological foundations as are involved in contemporary interpretations of the moral education question, and to sketch an alternative.

In particular, I argue that current approaches to moral education are predominantly informed by what Dykstra calls the 'juridical ethical tradition' (Dykstra 1981). From a juridical ethical perspective, the cognitive anatomy of moral understanding (and hence how moral education is understood and approached) is conceived in a particular way, as will be discussed. Further, a juridical ethical perspective logically

presupposes a distinctive epistemology which, I argue, leads to a distorted view of how schools might best contribute to students' moral development, within the limits of the criteria defined earlier. I develop an argument for why alternative grounds for understanding moral education are not only needed but are variously available in the broad tradition of thought grounded in the realist philosophy of classical and medieval antiquity. At this point, however, I will provide an overview of the analytical framework within which the research problem is identified and addressed.

II. PHILOSOPHICAL STARTING POINTS - ESTABLISHING AN ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK.

i. Dykstra on Juridical and Visional Ethics.

Dykstra argues that "[e]very conception of the moral life presupposes some understanding of what the central features of morality are and what the nature of a moral person is" (1981: p7), and that such presuppositions necessarily form the basis of any approach to moral education. In his thesis, Dykstra identifies two broad ethical traditions - perspectives on morality - within western moral philosophy which he terms "juridical ethics" and "visional ethics" (p1), and argues that "whether one approaches the moral life from the point of view of juridical ethics or that of visional ethics makes a difference in how one understands moral development and moral education" (p2). Dykstra differentiates between these two ethical traditions in the following ways:

Firstly, there is the characteristic language of each tradition. Juridical ethics is typically marked by reference to concepts such as "principles, rights and duties, justice and injustice, conflicts and claims, decisions, judgements, reasons and justifications, roles and acts" (p1). Visional ethics, on the other hand, refers more often to concepts like "convictions and meanings, responsibility, good and evil,

contexts, vision, stories and images, character, virtue, and ways of being" (p1). Obviously, these two characteristic ways of talking about morality are not exclusive of each other. There are areas of overlap, of course, but this general discursive distinction reflects more concrete philosophical differences (as will be discussed).

Another significant feature of juridical ethics is its tendency to attend almost exclusively to the dilemmas, decisions, choices or problems people encounter in social relationships. This focus presents morality as the life of making choices about how to act when people's claims about rights and duties conflict. It follows that moral development is seen centrally as a matter of developing an ability to provide more reasoned principles in justification of the choices one makes in such circumstances. The need for one's conceptions of rights and duties – or moral obligation – to be rationally grounded (rather than connected with feelings, traditions and other overtly 'situated' ways of seeing the world) is a striking feature of a juridical perspective. As will be discussed in later chapters, this tendency is connected with a deeper philosophical view of reason and sentiment (or cognition and affectivity) as distinct and separate.

Dykstra also makes the point that few value words are central to juridical ethics – its main vocabulary being 'right' and 'wrong'. "What alone is important in juridical ethics is whether a particular act is right or wrong" – a distinction that hinges upon whether it is "justifiable or unjustifiable" in a purely rational way (p40). Significantly, one of the central value terms of visional ethics – "good" – takes on a very different meaning within a juridical perspective, as Dykstra explains:

When a word like "good" is used [in juridical ethics], it is used as a description that we give to human acts. It is not used as a symbol that points to a reality, "the Good," in the light of which we might know certain acts, persons, or things to be good (p40).

Within juridical ethics there is a demand that morality be understood and explained in terms of human actions and a procedural conception of reason since that's all that can be taken for granted without entering into metaphysical (religious and indeed moral) speculation. Because of its commitment to establishing principled reasons for action (as independent of subjective feelings or tradition as possible)³ juridical ethics tends to avoid entering into such metaphysical speculation since such speculation is a highly controverted area, notoriously bound to subjective, historical and otherwise situated modes of knowing. But the assumption that human action and procedural reason offer a sufficient account of moral reality is itself a metaphysical claim. As such, Dykstra notes, this "may be regarded as an achievement of the maturity, freedom and autonomy of the human race. But it need not be" (p40). Instead, Dykstra suggests:

It may be seen as a symptom of our culture's overly optimistic sense of its own power and of its hubris. In any case, visional ethics, whether of a religious or nonreligious variety, attempts to restore the classical idea that we live in a universe of value that cannot be reduced to empirical facts and the projections of human emotion and rational consciousness (p40).

One of Dykstra's main points is that belief or non-belief in transcendent realities (such as the Good) makes a difference to how morality is construed. Such belief "suggests that there is an order to things and that we make moral progress with respect to that order" (p41) - a central tenet of the visional tradition in moral philosophy, which will be considered more fully in later chapters.

³ See Chapter Two for a description of how, in moral education theory, Kohlberg draws on the Kantian deontological tradition, and especially John Rawls, to develop just such a juridical position.

Dykstra goes on to argue that the juridical/visional distinction stems from a deeper underlying philosophical rift – i.e. between two distinct pictures of the world and the human person. In particular, conflicting views of the nature of human understanding and the knowable world – *epistemologies* – underscore this division. Dykstra tends to focus on the outward features of each ethical perspective rather than on the precise nature of their underlying philosophical differences. In this regard, McNaughton's (1988) distinction between what he sees as the two main currents in contemporary moral philosophy provides some relevant insight.

ii. McNaughton on Moral Non-Cognitivism and Moral Realism.

A similar distinction to that made by Dykstra, between juridical and visional ethics, is made by McNaughton (1988). McNaughton's distinction is between two contrasting meta-ethical perspectives, and he begins his discussion of these with the following observation about moral experience:

There are two contrasting feelings about our moral life that all of us share to some extent. On one side, we often feel that morality is an area of personal decision; a realm in which each of us has the right to make up his or her own mind about what to do...

In this mood, we may feel that what matters is not that we make the right decision – for who is to determine what is the right decision? – but that each of us makes his *own* decision.... Each of us has to decide what values he is to live his life by and the rest of the world should respect the sincerity of those choices.

This view sits unhappily with the second feeling that we all share, namely, that it is often difficult, when faced with some pressing and perplexing moral problem, to discover which answer is the right one. If I am puzzled as to what

I ought to do then I am likely to feel that what matters is not that the answer I arrive at should be mine... but that it be the correct answer. I do not think of my choice as determining the right answer; on the contrary, I wish my choice to be determined by the right answer...

These feelings are in tension: the first appears to lead to the view that there is nothing independent of our moral opinions that determines whether or not they are correct; the second runs counter to that conclusion... (p4)

McNaughton points out that while philosophers try to take both of these contrasting feelings into account in their moral theories, they tend to veer towards one conclusion or the other. Theories which veer towards the first conclusion – “that there is nothing independent of our moral opinions that determines whether or not they are correct” – McNaughton describes as ‘non-cognitivist’, since, on this view, there is no independent moral truth or source of value to be *known*, only the non-evaluative facts of the matter which are theoretically available to all. The epistemological basis of moral non-cognitivism is discussed in more detail in Chapter Three. The second conclusion – that there is an objective moral reality or order of value against which people’s opinions and moral decisions might be judged – McNaughton calls ‘moral realism’. Such a moral realist position will be presented in Chapter Five as part of a defence of a more classically inspired moral psychology.

While the non-cognitivist position takes the radical step of rejecting the possibility of moral knowledge, it appeals primarily to those aspects of moral experience emphasising freedom of choice, individual autonomy, the close connection between sincerity in holding a moral view and acting upon it, the connection between moral views and sentiments (rather than knowledge) and the right to form one’s own opinions free of judgmentalism. This is certainly quite a common ethical sentiment among members of modern, liberal-democratic societies.

For example, Mackay (2004) identifies a 'general cultural shift [within Australia] away from prescription and conformity towards the idea that we are all free to choose how we shall live, and that in a diverse and pluralistic society, judgements upon each other's choices are uncalled-for" (p5). Mackay recognises the danger of slipping into a morass of moral relativism, following the proposition that "morality is an exterior, social construct" (p43), and so develops his own quest for some foundational, more certain guide to ethical decision-making. While recognising the need for some foundation beyond merely personal tastes and preferences, however, Mackay too gives open assent to the doctrine that what matters most in the moral life is preserving individual autonomy, as exercised in freedom of choice. As such, he steers well clear of any appeal to objective truth or normative moral characteristics. Instead, he claims that what is 'right' for one person may be different to what is 'right' for another (p237), and that in the quest to 'decide for yourself' in moral matters one should simply *imagine* an ideal external standard against which one's judgements and alternative courses of action can be consciously and systematically evaluated (pp83-85, 239). Putting aside the finer points of Mackay's argument, what is clear is his underlying sympathy for those aspects of moral experience associated most strongly with moral non-cognitivism. It is also clear that Mackay recognises a shift towards this sentiment among the general population.

Having ruled out the possibility of moral knowledge, non-cognitivist perspectives assign priority not to the *conclusions* but rather to the *processes* of moral thinking. What matters most, on this view, is not whether a particular judgement, thought or action is objectively right or wrong but whether or not it results from sufficiently open, systematic, sincere, informed and rationally justifiable thought processes. Clear analytical reasoning and the formulation of a rationally consistent and justifiable position – or 'values framework' – is the desired outcome from the non-cognitivist viewpoint. Seen this way, moral non-cognitivism does not reject the

importance of knowledge and cognition in the moral life but, in making certain assumptions about the nature and scope of human cognition, interprets the nature of knowledge and the role of reason in a particular way. This will be brought out more clearly in Chapter Three. Significantly, for non-cognitivist theories the question of *motivation* to follow through on one's professed values is not ascribed to any kind of cognitive power but to feelings or *desires* (viewed as non-cognitive, non-intellectual or non-rational), which must be stimulated in some way and so *added* to the agent's cognitive beliefs if he or she is to be motivated to act according to his or her reasoned moral position⁴.

Thus, within the non-cognitivist tradition, Ayer (1936) describes moral statements or judgements as projections of moral emotion, without any kind of 'cognitive weight'. For Ayer such projections bear no correspondence with reality - or objective, transcendent truth. Moral discernment is therefore a matter of 'matching feelings' (moral emotions) to circumstances in order to justify their significance in similar situations. Similarly, Hare (1952) places importance on the *universalisability* of moral judgements in order to determine whether or not they can be counted as *prescriptive* of human action. More recently, Blackburn's 'quasi realism' (1993) combines the non-cognitivist view of projected moral emotions with what Blackburn regards as quite rational (as in procedurally justified) and inescapable features of moral discourse itself, which compel people to treat moral talk *as if* it were cognitively grounded. In each variant of non-cognitivism, despite their differences, the moral realist claim that moral judgements are cognitive in nature, and hence bear some relation - to a greater or lesser extent - with the real world, is rejected.

Dykstra's juridical/visional distinction and McNaughton's non-cognitivist/moral realist distinction each refer to quite broad moral philosophical and meta-ethical

⁴ See McNaughton's outline of moral non-cognitivism (1988: pp17-37).

trends. As such, I do not equate juridical ethics with moral non-cognitivism, but wish to point out (here and in the following chapter) that an emphasis on analytical reasoning, consistency and procedural justification, as well as an underlying division between cognition (i.e. thinking/knowing) and the affective faculties (i.e. feeling/doing) aligns the non-cognitivist position naturally with a juridical perspective. For Dykstra, the key representative of the juridical tradition in moral education theory is Laurence Kohlberg, whose cognitive-developmental theory of moral development will be considered in more detail later on. Given Kohlberg's central emphasis on maturing cognitive capacities within his scheme of moral development, it might seem strange to align his position with non-cognitivism. To be sure, Kohlberg could be interpreted as a 'moral cognitivist' for certain purposes. For instance, he may well claim (unlike a traditional non-cognitivist) that moral evaluations can be regarded as being either true or false, but would insist that the basis of any true moral evaluation is some underlying rational principle, where rationality is understood in a particularly modern way. It is this underlying conception of rationality, I intend to show, that Kohlberg shares even with non-cognitivism. Further, the fundamental distinction McNaughton brings out is not between moral non-cognitivism and moral cognitivism, but between non-cognitivism and *moral realism*. There is nothing distinctly moral realist about Kohlberg's position nor the tradition he represents. Like non-cognitivism, Kohlberg's brand of cognitivism can be contrasted with moral realism, which has its basis in quite a different philosophical tradition about the metaphysical status of (moral) value and the nature of rationality. This is the important contrast for our purposes and hence the reason why I align Kohlberg and juridical ethics with the non-cognitivist tradition.

McNaughton suggests that non-cognitivist meta-ethics is predominant within contemporary moral philosophy at the same time as Dykstra argues that the juridical tradition is a significant force in moral educational theory. In this thesis, therefore, I

abstract elements from both moral non-cognitivism and juridical ethics (as well as their underlying philosophical sources) to form a single analytical construct, which I term 'Juridicalism'. In doing so, however, it is necessary to acknowledge the relative methodological weaknesses and strengths of such an approach.

iii. A Note on Juridicalism as an Analytical Framework.

As I stated in the Introduction to the thesis, my concern here is with a certain 'style of thinking' with regard to basic moral philosophical and epistemological assumptions, as evidenced in much contemporary moral educational theory, rather than with precisely defined doctrines or sets of propositions identifiable with a definite range of individual philosophers or theorists. Because, in the process of abstracting commonalities, I shall necessarily attend to particular philosophers and theorists (and have done so already), such as Descartes, Hume, Kohlberg and others, there is a risk of being perceived as not attending sufficiently to the precise claims of, conceivable objections to and counter-claims of those theorists, and so of developing a 'straw-man' argument. Acknowledging this potential weakness is one step towards providing against it. As well as acknowledging this potential, and in addition to endeavouring to deal as thoroughly and accurately as possible with the positions established by individual theorists, within the limitations imposed by a study of this size, it is also possible to state a case for the inherent *strengths* of my analytical approach.

In developing Juridicalism as an analytical construct, I draw attention to ideas and systems of thought peculiar to certain theorists which, taken in their detail, may differ considerably. However, the process of abstraction in which I am engaged has conceptual value in bringing out important similarities between different theorists which, taken together, represent a common strand between such otherwise different points of view. This common strand of thought - denoted by the term 'Juridicalism' - itself is, I will argue, a source of a problematic conception of relations among

reason, emotion, motivation etcetera, and notions of objectivity and the personal, etcetera (see Chapter 2.II and Chapter 3.I). In short, Juridicalism is not a univocal notion, yet it serves to demonstrate a 'family resemblance' in moral education theory and its underpinnings. In the next chapter I aim to demonstrate that there is conceptual profit in submitting this strand of thought to a common critical examination. While different particular positions that are labelled as belonging to Juridicalism, for the purposes of my thesis, may be able to answer to the various objections I intend to raise, other positions within the association will not be able to answer so well. Regardless, the abstraction 'Juridicalism' is valuable for helping to show trends in thought about moral education that deserve critique.

Support for the use of the abstraction Juridicalism also derives from the general character of educational theory itself. I refer to a phenomenon commonly understood as a kind of 'trickle-down effect' whereby popular trends of thought and related concerns and priorities in educational theory and practice are not strictly tied to the pure doctrines of individual philosophers, but, rather, as Haldane suggests, encompass "the diluted and contaminated versions" of such philosophers or related philosophical positions (2004: p6). While particular theorists – such as Kohlberg – may have a relatively direct effect on contemporary moral educational theory, the positions they advance are often informed by a range of divergent philosophical sources. In the following chapter, for example, I highlight how Kohlberg's moral educational theory draws upon such diverse sources as Kantian deontological ethics, Rawlsian contractualism, Piagetian epistemology and the critical theory of Habermas. The trickle-down effect of ideas from these sources, via Kohlberg and others, into the current body of thought about moral education, means that the common strand I identify within such thought and which I regard as problematic, is itself an abstraction from more particular philosophical positions. I do not aim here at a complete and systematic critique of all such particular positions, directly or indirectly referred to by 'Juridicalism'. Rather, I contend that there are sufficient points of

agreement between such positions – particularly as regards fundamental questions related to the nature of practical rationality – to allow for a general critique of the equally general and abstracted ‘style of thinking’ that arguably characterises (more or less) much contemporary moral education theory. The thinking of contemporary moral education theorists is typically dominated by a ‘set’ of views – even though the pattern of emphasis within this set of ideas will vary from individual to individual. Juridicalism simply denotes one such useful ‘analytical set’ of ideas – ethical, moral philosophical and epistemological. I offer the thought that the value in this generalisation is that it helps illumine important questions in moral education theory, for example, the problematic nature of the contribution schools can make to the moral development of children and the roles different conceptions of rationality and intelligence imply for this.

Dykstra has argued that that within contemporary moral education theory the influential research of Kohlberg clearly represents the juridical point of view. While a critique of Juridicalism is developed in later chapters, at this point it is helpful to consider the ways in which a juridical ethical perspective is reflected in and has developed from the work of Kohlberg. In this way, a picture of the juridicalist’s cognitive anatomy of moral understanding and how it has informed recent interpretations of the moral education question can be developed. Additionally, a description of the epistemology underlying juridical ethics needs to be made clear in preparation for the eventual critique. The following chapter, therefore, considers Kohlberg’s influence on contemporary moral education approaches and how, as a result, the moral education question has come to be understood and in what respects such an understanding is problematic.

iv. Summary of Chapter One.

This chapter began with a discussion of the moral education question. It was observed that thinking about moral education necessarily leads to a consideration of

more basic philosophical questions including what is meant by 'morality' and the nature of human knowledge with respect to moral agency. It was also suggested that moral education must be considered in view of the particular responsibility of schools, the extended social and emotional dimensions of schooling, and what an 'educated person' is taken to be. In these respects, this study adopts the view that schools are primarily concerned with knowledge and intellectual development but, consequently, also share a measure of responsibility for the social and emotional (and hence moral) development of students. It is also assumed that intellectual development cannot be separated from social, emotional and hence moral development and that, as such, general and moral education form an *integrated enterprise*.

To interpret clearly the moral education question (and hence properly to identify the moral educational task of schools), it was therefore argued, requires a philosophical account of human intelligence in which the rational and emotional powers of understanding, especially as involved in moral thought and action, are related in a single, integrated picture. In particular, such a sound epistemological basis is required to inform our understanding of the cognitive anatomy of moral understanding and hence the proper moral educational task of schools.

Following this introduction to the topic, the question of philosophical starting points was addressed. Two broad yet distinct traditions in contemporary western thought about morality were identified. Within ethics, Dykstra refers to 'visional ethics' and 'juridical ethics', while within moral philosophy McNaughton refers to 'moral realism' and 'moral non-cognitivism'. Following Dykstra, it was argued that the juridical tradition (sharing aspects of moral non-cognitivism) has dominated contemporary moral philosophy and likewise has been the dominant philosophical influence in recent moral education approaches. This, then, provides the analytical

framework within which the problem of contemporary interpretations of the moral education question is addressed in this study.

Also, following Dykstra, it was suggested that Kohlberg's theory of cognitive moral development clearly represents a juridical ethical perspective, and that his research has widely influenced current understandings of and approaches to moral education. Chapter Two takes up this suggestion in order to show how a particular cognitive anatomy of moral understanding has developed out of the work of Kohlberg and the juridical tradition he represents. Of further interest is how this has given rise to a particular and predominant understanding of moral education in schools. Also in Chapter Two, an introduction is provided to the distinctive epistemology underpinning a juridical perspective in preparation for a critique of Juridicalism in Chapters Three and Four.

CHAPTER TWO

Introduction.

This chapter further clarifies the analytical framework introduced in Chapter One and provides a more detailed description of the context of the debate in which my thesis engages. The chapter examines the philosophical basis of contemporary interpretations of the moral education question, and begins by charting the development of a juridical perspective in contemporary moral education out of the work of Kohlberg. I aim to show that there is an underlying juridical perspective in Kohlberg's work and that this in turn makes philosophical assumptions about what counts as morality, as well as the nature and role of reason and cognition (what I call juridical epistemology, or *Juridicalism*) in the moral life. These distinctive philosophical claims are brought to light as keys to interpreting the significance of Kohlberg's influence on current interpretations of moral education.

It is at such a philosophical (or epistemological) level that this study evaluates current approaches, arguing for an alternative, 'Classical Realist' basis for understanding the cognitive anatomy of moral understanding and hence moral education in schools. Therefore, the second part of the chapter clarifies the problem under investigation by explaining more precisely what is meant by 'juridical epistemology', in preparation for a critique of Juridicalism in Chapters Three and Four. In particular, juridical epistemology is defined in terms of a distinctively Cartesian or Modern conception of human reason, which can be seen to underwrite both a juridical ethical and moral non-cognitivist perspective.

I. CHARTING JURIDICALISM IN CONTEMPORARY MORAL EDUCATION THEORY – A SURVEY OF RECENT LITERATURE.

i. Juridicalism and Non-Cognitivism in Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development.

According to Dykstra, in Kohlberg's account of moral development the moral life is "primarily the life of making choices about how to act in situations where people's claims about rights and duties conflict" (p2). This is partly due to the fact that, in order to achieve clarity and precision, Kohlberg's research into moral development focuses almost exclusively on "the dilemmas, decisions, choices or problems people encounter in social relationships" (p7). As such, the moral landscape is described in terms of problematic circumstances while morality itself is portrayed as the enterprise of social problem solving. This is the essence of a juridical ethical perspective which, Dykstra argues, Kohlberg represents and has helped reinforce in contemporary thinking about moral education.

Kohlberg's cognitive-developmental moral theory is basically a description of the development of people's "ability to provide increasingly more principled reasons and justifications for the choices" they make in situations of social conflict (p2). A juridical ethical perspective such as Kohlberg's, therefore, "places a premium on human capacities for analytical reasoning, disinterested judgement, decisiveness of will, and rational discourse" (p8). Dykstra also points out that Kohlberg's juridical perspective has dominated contemporary research into moral education, observing that, "[a] vast literature has grown up around it" (p2). Likewise, Carr & Steutel (1999b) have argued that "twentieth-century research and enquiry into moral development has continued to be the disputed territory of competing psychological theories" (p242), and that, the Piaget-inspired work of Kohlberg "has occupied the centre stage of theorizing about moral education for most of the post-war period" (pp242-243).

Further, Carr and Steutel claim that Kohlberg's theory appeals to "such post-Enlightenment philosophical influences as Kantian deontology, the Kant inspired structuralist epistemology of Piaget, Deweyan pragmatism, the critical theory of Habermas, Rawlsian contractualism, non-cognitivist constructivism and others" (p243). This says something significant about the epistemological tradition on which Kohlberg relies and of which he is a part.

Kohlberg himself claims to follow the 'formalistic' or 'deontological' tradition running from Immanuel Kant to John Rawls. Kohlberg writes, "Central to this tradition is the claim that an adequate morality is *principled*, i.e., that it makes judgements in terms of *universal* principles applicable to all mankind" (1978a: p40). Importantly, for Kohlberg 'universal principles' are characterised by a high degree of generality made secure by sufficiently developed powers of analytical reasoning, rather than any independent, transcendent or objective moral reality or Truth. "[Universal] principles", says Kohlberg, "are freely chosen by the individual because of their intrinsic moral validity" (p41), a validity, moreover, that derives from their connection with a certain conception of 'justice' rather than any transcendent moral order.

For Kohlberg moral principles are principles of 'justice', which he takes to mean 'giving each his due'. Such just principles are described by Kohlberg as, "the principles any member of a society would choose for that society if he did not know what his position was to be in the society and in which he might be the least advantaged" (p41). The validity of universal moral principles is seen to derive from their connection with processes of justification in which one adopts, by rational procedures of excluding partiality, some optimal point of view enabling equal consideration of every person's claims in situations where people's claims conflict.

In short, for Kohlberg moral principles are principles of justice, and principles are justice are those that can be shown to be universalisable. This implicit rejection of moral truth (independent of human thought processes) or an objective Good as the foundation of moral value, in deference to procedural and impersonal (i.e. universalisable) rationality, aligns Kohlberg's approach with what moral non-cognitivism has to say about the absence of any objective, external foundation for moral values⁵. That is, it assumes that moral properties are not things to be known, residing in the cognisable features of the world around us. Instead, morality is viewed as a matter of reconciling evaluative disputes and, as such, the only relevant moral 'properties' are those engendering "more advanced patterns of reasoning about political and social decisions and their implementation in action" (p42). In this way, moral constraints on behaviour are regarded essentially as constructions of reason developed in response to social problems, rather than objective truths discovered by reflection on, for example, human nature.

These last two points, concerning the wide influence of Kohlberg on contemporary moral education approaches and the distinctive epistemology underlying his juridical ethic, must now be considered in more detail. Firstly, I shall chart the impact of a juridical ethical perspective on contemporary approaches to moral education, following Kohlberg's landmark research. Then, in the final section of the chapter, I shall elaborate on the idea of juridical epistemology – or *Juridicalism* – underpinning the currently dominant juridical perspective in moral education theory. Specifically, I will highlight how Juridicalism is connected with a distinctly *Cartesian* anthropology and theory of practical reason.

⁵ See again my clarification of this comparison in Chapter 1.II.ii.

ii. Juridicalism and Contemporary Moral Education Theory – Morality Defined by Questions of Obligation and Duty.

While the “vast literature” arising since Kohlberg’s landmark research in the field of moral education has extended, challenged, refined and diversified his original account of how people develop as moral beings, certain features of his picture of the moral terrain (and its underlying epistemology) have persisted almost without challenge – becoming virtually normative among contemporary engagements with the moral education question. One of these features is *an exclusive association between morality and questions of obligation and duty*.

In keeping with the deontological philosophical framework within which he works, Kohlberg draws support for his psychological theory from Durkheim’s functional sociology. In Durkheim’s view, “Morality is respect for rule and is altruistic attachment to the social group” and, as such, “the child must learn respect for the rule, he must learn to do his duty” (cited in Kohlberg 1978b: p151). While sensitive to the dangers in this view (of promoting militaristic “collective national discipline”) as well as contesting Durkheim’s own account of moral development, Kohlberg’s theory resonates with Durkheim’s basic association between morality and respect for rule, obligation and duty. Indeed, this particular view of morality underwrites Kohlberg’s description of moral development as “a sequential progressive growth of basic principles of moral reasoning and their application to action” (p155).

iii. A Morality of Rules and Principles.

An exclusive association between morality and questions of obligation or duty, such as Kohlberg’s arguably is, therefore, presents moral behaviour as being dependent upon the availability of rationally formulated rules and principles⁶. The idea that the choices, decisions and actions people make are primarily informed by the principles

⁶ As I will argue later, it is not so much principles per se that are problematic as a reliance upon them as if they sufficed.

to which they subscribe is also evident in many more recent approaches to education concerned for personal (moral) change. It is evident, most of all, in the central place accorded to 'values' (typically as reflected or embodied in rules and principles) in the whole scheme of moral living and in how such 'values' are typically defined – i.e. *as determinative principles of human action*.

Indeed, the trend in contemporary educational discourse of referring to “values education” in preference to “moral education” can be interpreted as evidence of a distinctively juridical perspective. Specifically, this trend indicates a separation of the category 'moral' from human valuing generally, associating it in particular with rules and principles for solving social conflicts. Where the meaning of morality is limited to such moments of conflict (and hence to questions of rules and obligation) the impression is given that 'the moral' is one among a variety of human domains, each with its own (internally derived) ends and specific principles or 'values' to help guide and govern action within each domain. As Hill (1971) has written:

In common parlance, “morality” is associated with questions of obligation and duty; in particular, how we ought to behave towards other persons. We speak of moral persons, moral actions, moral principles or values, moral judgements and the moral sense. It is also possible to speak of immoral persons or actions, non-moral actions or principles, amoral persons etc. This suggests that the adjective “moral” may be used in two different ways: the first to judge something, when its opposite is “immoral”; the second to describe its type, when the opposite is “non-moral” (p56).

From a limited association of morality with questions of obligation and duty, therefore, morality is viewed as one 'value domain' among many. The term 'value' seems then to describe a ubiquitous yet essentially context dependent aspect of human affairs. Instead of referring to a universal condition that 'colours' all

existence, 'moral value' is seen to relate particularly to questions of obligation and duty arising from situations of social conflict: morality or (ethical) value becomes one realm among other realms of value wherein each of which guidance of human choice and action can be found.

Following this view of things, categorising the supposed "realms of value" has been heralded as important groundwork by values educators, including Aspin (2002) and Hill (2005). Also, with the distinction in mind between different value domains (e.g. aesthetic, religious/spiritual, economic, technical-vocational and ethical-moral), each with its own distinctive values and guiding principles, the question 'which values are to be taught and how?' has become urgent. For example, Stephenson, Ling, Burman & Cooper (1998) reflect that deciding "what values are appropriate, whose values are appropriate and how such values are to be addressed in the curriculum" are questions of central importance. In their solution they advocate the need for teachers to "reflect critically upon the era in which they live and the learners are to function and thus... formulate a structured, coherent, *era-appropriate* curriculum for values education" (p211 italics added).

Similarly, Newell and Rimes have queried, "If we include values in the formal curricula, whose values do we teach, and whose responsibility is it to teach them? How shall we teach values? Can they be assessed?" (2002: p100). Indeed, since a way to obviate these questions would be to find shared values, recent research and literature in values education is marked by a quest to identify and categorise shared or "core-values" which might provide some basis for an education concerned with personal (or moral, contrasted to social) change (Pascoe 2002: p5), and by an on-going quest to decide how best to commend those values to students. Again, Newell and Rimes propose a concerted effort to develop "a set of conscious and shared values for all members of the school community" (p101). Likewise, in Western Australia the quest for 'core shared values' has underpinned the development of the state

Curriculum Framework (Curriculum Council 1998), with other states and territories beginning to follow suit.

iv. The Cognitive Anatomy of Moral Understanding in Values Education Approaches.

There is a central emphasis, therefore, on the place of values, as expressed in rules and principles, in contemporary discussion of education concerned for personal change – or ‘values education’. This is no less the case where moral change is the issue in question, as recent government research and policy development makes clear. The Final Report of the recent Values Education Study is a prominent example. Although the Report is not representative of the full range of values education perspectives, it is a large-scale, Federally-funded and hence significant, investigation and is likely to be instrumental in shaping the perceptions of educators and the direction of further research.

The Report has given rise to *A Draft National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools* in which “values” are defined as “...the principles and fundamental convictions which act as general guides to behaviour, the standards by which particular actions are judged good or desirable” (DEST, 2003: p6). This definition clearly presents values as determinative principles of human action. Further, this definition is typical among current values education research and literature. Aspin (2002), for example, describes values as “targets for emulation and as guides to judgement, choices and conduct” (p14), while Hill’s (1994:p7) definition of values as “the priorities individuals and societies attach to certain beliefs and objects in deciding how they will live and what they will treasure”, has been widely endorsed.⁷

⁷ However, Hill has recently modified his definition in order to encompass the dimension of affectivity and motivation. This is discussed later in the thesis.

According to the Final Report, and following the definition of 'values' above, values education aims "to promote student understanding and knowledge of values, and to inculcate the skills and dispositions of students [to] enact particular values " (p6). In pursuit of this aim, schools are encouraged to: 1. Establish (by negotiation) a set of generally agreed rules, principles and convictions (i.e. core-values) and 2. Endeavour to make these known to students *in such a way* that they understand what they mean and feel disposed to consult and adhere to them in their day-to-day living. Within this view, moral agency is equated with "being ethical", interpreted as "acting in accordance with generally agreed rules and/or standards for right [moral] conduct or practice" (p7).

The congruency between this view and Kohlberg's moral perspective – centred on developing increasingly principled reasons for choices in situations of social conflict - is quite clear. Other recommended approaches to values education also reflect a distinctively juridical emphasis on critical reasoning, justification, social problem solving, and the pervasive search for guiding principles. For example, the 'Core Framework' for values education developed by Newell and Rimes (2002) features the tenets 'Clarification' whereby students become proficient at identifying the key elements in a situation of social conflict; 'Analysis' whereby students weigh up considerations, balancing one against the other in a critical way; and 'Justification' where students become skilled in justifying their analysis and conclusions.

We can see, therefore, that the juridical influence in contemporary moral educational theory includes a limited association of morality with situations of social conflict where questions of obligation and duty arise. This limited focus gives rise to a morality of rules and principles, or the search for 'values' to guide and govern individuals in their collective, social lives. Against this background, the cognitive dimension of moral life is readily associated with the ability to reason critically about situations of social conflict and exclude or overlook the importance of affect. Hence,

Dykstra observes, "From the point of view of the juridical moral philosophical tradition that Kohlberg represents, social reasoning... is moral reasoning, and to engage in such reasoning is to be moral" (1981: p28).

Further, we can see that as this juridical picture of the cognitive anatomy of moral understanding has been adopted (or assumed) by mainline values education approaches, a particular interpretation of the moral educational task of schools has emerged. A number of distinctive assertions, problems and priorities characterise contemporary interest in moral education or 'values education' approaches. In the next section I will argue that these features of contemporary moral education theory are made best sense of in the light of certain (highly contestable) philosophical presuppositions, underwriting a juridical perspective.

v. Reasoning and Valuing as Separate Realms.

In the first place, a chief feature of juridical ethics, reinforced by Kohlberg, is a particular understanding of the nature and role of reason in the moral life. Kohlberg does not follow a distinctively juridical path simply by emphasising the importance of reason in the moral life, however. From both a juridical and a visional (or a non-cognitivist and a realist) viewpoint, thinking and reasoning play an important part in comprehending accurately and responding decisively to the interplay of needs and interests underpinning the dynamics of social life. Kohlberg's distinctively juridical notion of moral reason, rather, has two dimensions.

Firstly, Kohlberg emphasises moral reasoning *solely* within the context of social problem-solving. As discussed, this brings to the fore questions of obligation and duty and, subsequently, the perceived importance of 'values' as engendered in generally agreed social rules and principles. Such shared, or *public*, values are seen as necessary to negotiate a resolution of social conflicts, bringing the respective parties to a resolution no matter how far apart, morally, they were at first. The second

dimension derives from this limited focus on social conflict and moral principles, in that moral reasoning comes to be characterised as analytical thinking. Basically, 'reason' in Kohlberg's view, as an empirical psychologist, denotes cognitive operations that tend towards the *strictly rational* – i.e. operations which, in contrast to more obviously affective and motivational faculties, can be empirically demonstrated and used to measure, assign and/or predict classifiable stages.

Again, both visional and juridical ethical perspectives regard questions of obligation and duty, as well as rules and principles, as important to moral living. The distinctively juridical understanding, however, is that one's sense of obligation and duty, and the moral content defined by rules and principles, is the product of (and must ultimately yield to) rational analysis. 'Moral reason', from a juridical perspective, always denotes analytical and discursive thought and is ideally characterised as publicly accessible and transparent, regardless of one's emotional or cultural dispositions. In this way, practical reason is regarded as fundamentally distinct from the level of the emotions and the powers of affection – which are often dismissed as operating in a highly subjective and sometimes obscure way. This is not to suggest, however, that Kohlberg or the juridical tradition in general sees no place at all for the emotions and affective capacities in the moral life. But rather than regarding such affective powers as having a partly constitutive role in good moral judgement and action (as I intend to argue), Juridicalism tends to view them as merely incidental to, or at best having an auxiliary role in supporting the 'real business' of the active moral agent, understood as acquiring and enacting more advanced patterns of principled reasoning about social problems. Kohlberg himself writes:

I am arguing that moral judgment dispositions influence action through being stable cognitive dispositions, not through the affective charges with which they are associated... Affective forces are involved in moral decisions, but

affect is neither moral nor immoral. When the affective arousal is channelled into moral directions, it is moral; when not so channelled, it is not moral. The moral channelling mechanisms themselves are cognitive. Effective moral channelling mechanisms are cognitive principles defining situations (1981: p187).

However Kohlberg or other theorists in the juridical tradition may admit that emotions and affectivity are actually involved in moral judgment and moral action, it is always in such a way as to suggest that rationality and affectivity, or cognition and emotion, are two distinct and competing aspects of the human psyche. The assumption is always that the affective powers make no *essential* contribution to the cognitive activity upon which good moral judgment and action depend. Bailey (1988) traces this notion along a line of thought extending from Kohlberg through Piaget back to Kant. He writes:

Kant argued for a morality in which we, as it were, free ourselves from the mechanisms of nature by subjecting ourselves to rational laws given by ourselves, the laws of practical reason. Among the mechanisms of nature, of course, and especially for Kant, are the affections, feelings, emotions which happen to us 'under laws empirically conditioned' and give us no guidance in themselves as to what our moral duty is. The question of what to *do* about any issue of feeling or emotion can only be resolved, for Kant, Piaget and Kohlberg, by some act of cognitive judgment, preferably rational, autonomous and altruistic judgment. The tradition is clear and Kohlberg is solidly within it (pp198-199).

Underpinning the juridical conception of moral thinking, therefore, is a strong division between reasoning and valuing – i.e. between the powers of thinking or *cognition* on the one hand, and those of affection and *motivation* on the other. Indeed,

the juridical focus on social conflict and explicit moments of moral choice invites this hard and fast distinction, due to its limited concern with conscious, or *intentional* decisions based on analysed reasons supposedly compelling for all parties. Further, the resolution of such conflicts, for Juridicalism, *depends on* decisions formulated along rational lines, irrespective of the sentiments and motivations of the disputing parties. The question of where and when the affective dimension of moral decision-making is played out is therefore put to one side, well apart from cognition and intellectual development.

The impact of this view on contemporary thinking about moral education is considerable. For example, it has prompted Hill to suggest that, "The conscious process [moral educators] are investigating has two sides. One is the operation of reasoning... The other is valuing" (1971: p61). Reasoning, Hill argues, "is detached and objective" while valuing is "committed and subjective" (p61). While Hill stresses the need for "a view that sees the two operations coming together in a decision that is both morally right and morally responsible" (p62), the limited understanding of morality from a juridical ethical perspective, I argue, overlooks the possibility of such an integrated perspective.

In recent values education research there is a pronounced sense of the need to consider both the rational and affective/motivational dimensions of moral development – or the interplay of cognition and affect. Nevertheless, the currently dominant picture of the moral landscape – a juridical perspective inherited via Kohlberg – entails a fundamental *separation* of reasoning and valuing. The current climate of thought about moral education, therefore, is marked more by an emphasis on concepts and reasoning – interpreted as the "cognitive core" (Hill 2005: p53) – together with an *added* recognition of the need for some supplementary, emotional-level impetus for "moving the student from 'knowing the good to be desirable' to 'desiring to do the good'" (p51). Basically, the dominant philosophical tradition

informing current theory entails a radical distinction between 'understanding what is to be done' (morally speaking) and 'being moved to do it'. Each are conceived as quite distinct and independent steps in the process.

vi. Moral Motivation as a Non-Cognitive Problem.

As mentioned in Chapter One, research into child development is often classified under the headings *physical, intellectual, social and emotional, and moral*. Further, Hirst and Peters (1973) question such a 'four-sided' view of the developing child, pointing out that where a *distinction* can be drawn (such as between the cognitive/intellectual and the emotional/motivational), the temptation to carry this over to a conceptual *separation* is often irresistible yet it is unfounded. For example, they write:

The separation of intellectual from affective development is as untenable as the study of emotional development without stress on the role of cognition... It is understandable, however, why 'intellectual' should be thought of in such a narrow way; for 'intellectual' is more properly related to a disposition to theorise, to construct and think in terms of elaborate symbolic systems [as distinct from less theoretical and analytical modes of understanding]... Yet this disposition is unintelligible, in any developed form, without a concern for truth, which introduces the aspect of feeling (p50).

Primarily, it is our way of talking about the various distinguishable elements of moral development that reveals the tendency to conceive of them as being somehow independent. For example, such a conception is reflected in Hill's concern that values educators may overlook the *motivational* aspects of moral development with too much talk about the *cognitive* dimensions (2005: pp50-51). The assumption here seems to be that the cognitive (thinking/knowing) and the motivational (being/doing) are not inter-definable elements, but that they are essentially *separate*.

Similarly, statements like this, from Neville Carr (2002), reflect a conceptual separation of the *reasoning intellect* on the one hand and the feeling, doing *affective nature* on the other: "If worldview, wisdom and wonder are important educational issues... then parents, educators and community groups must equip young people for more than mere intellectual or economic productivity" (p181). Likewise, Aspin raises the question "whether the transmission of knowledge should be the central concern of schools," quoting Laura who argues that "the fabric of society could well be improved by doing far less to ensure initiation into the so-called domains of knowledge and far more by way of instructing children in the art of living with themselves and with each other" (1978 cited in Aspin 2002: p23). Reflected in this statement is a fundamental separation of society's "cognitive capital" (concerning intellectual development) and "its very identity, its culture and its principal values" (concerning moral development) (p23).

Further, Loader (2003) has raised the question of the purpose of contemporary schooling, arguing that, "Schools need to be shapers of both the intellectual and social character of students" (p35). While drawing attention to both the cognitive-intellectual and moral-social dimensions of schooling, however, he does so in such a way as to suggest that these represent fundamentally distinct areas. For example, he asks, "Is the goal [of schools] to transform the mind *or* to renew and enliven the whole person? Is a person one who only thinks *or rather* one who feels, creates, knows, plays and who, through choice, relates to others, the environment and to the more than human?" (p35 italics added). While Loader might object to Kohlberg's reduction of morality to social reasoning, by distinguishing the life of the mind from social and moral development in this 'either-or' fashion, his comments reflect a distinctively juridical conception of human nature, as do those of Hill, Carr and Aspin, cited above.

Further, this view of things leads to a perception of moral motivation as an essentially non-cognitive problem. By focussing on situations of social conflict and the search for guiding rules or principles (i.e. 'values') a juridical perspective invites this divided conception of human nature. For example, it is quite possible for someone to subscribe to the value of 'honesty' (understood, say, as the principle that one should tell the truth when asked) and even to justify this principle in a coherent way, appealing to its general applicability in situations where people's claims and interests conflict. This, for Juridicalism, is essentially the rational/cognitive dimension of moral life. However, that same person may well fail to behave in an honest way at an opportune moment. Moral reasoning, conceived in the juridical sense as analytical and discursive and aimed at the formulation of principles and values, on its own is no guarantor of moral action. Therefore something else, it is assumed, must be needed to inspire motivation and compliance with principles leading to social action. That 'something', moreover, is generally regarded as something *other than* the reasoning intellect or knowledge (i.e. as non-cognitive).

Because of its exclusive focus on situations of conflicting claims, duties and responsibilities, from a juridical point of view morality comes to be considered solely in terms of intentional decision-making, as supported by principles which are seen to derive from a highly impersonal kind of discursive reasoning. In turn, this signals a sharp divide between reasoning (moral thinking) on the one hand and valuing (motivation and moral action) on the other. As such, moral development tends to be seen as a matter of emphasising one element over the other or as a matter of combining both elements in some ideally balanced way. In any case, the assumption remains that there are two distinct and independent elements at work. This is reflected in Loader's contrasting the 'mind' on the one hand with 'the whole person' on the other. That is, 'thinking' is contrasted sharply with 'feeling', 'creating' and 'relating to others'. The previous quotations too, in their own way, highlight the same

(assumed) distinction with regard to reasoning and valuing, the cognitive and affective, or knowing and being.

vii. Perceived Pedagogical Challenges - Stimulating the Aspect of 'Feeling'.

In contemporary approaches to moral education, the above understanding finds expression in a number of ways. Firstly there is considerable talk of the need to address the aspect of 'feelings' and 'emotions' through such activities as 'identity questioning' and 'role play'. Callan summarises such discussion:

Moral educators like Clive Beck and Jack Fraenkel argue that [Kohlberg's] theory of moral development needs to be coupled with an "interactive" approach that enables individuals to become aware of the *feelings* and thoughts that influence their behaviour... John Wilson advocates that individuals need to learn not only how to deal with questions about what to do in conflict situations but also how they *feel*. He believes that awareness of one's own and others' feelings and emotions is a basic skill needed for moral judgement and behaviour. In his writings he discusses the importance of identifying emotions and the impact they can have on one's decisions and behaviours... (1978: p201).

Following this, contemporary approaches to moral education are marked by a concern to awaken a sense of empathy to move students from their principled values towards ethical action. For example, Hill (2005) has argued that students need to be encouraged "to feel 'what it's like' to act out, or live by, the values being commended [by schools]" and that empathy needs to be awakened "through such teaching strategies as drama, role plays, simulations, and being given responsibilities within the school community and the classroom" (p51).

Such efforts at emotional stimulation can seem contrived, however, calling upon students to engage with ethical problems that are not necessarily directly or

personally relevant. I will argue in Chapter Four that such activities tend also to invite students to disengage from the lived experience of their particular social setting, culture or tradition in a way that is questionable. By focussing on disengaged, analytical thinking about real or hypothetical ethical dilemmas, or one's own or some other system of values, such approaches ultimately reflect and reinforce the perceived importance of critical and discursive reasoning to moral development. Indeed, Hill writes, "An important part of values education then becomes the act of talking about the insights gained from these ['emotion stimulating'] experiences, which again brings in the cognitive [or 'social reasoning'] dimension" (p51).

In a different way, Dodd and Menz (1996) have attempted to reconcile the dimensions of reasoning and feeling by focussing on the concept of 'stewardship' in moral education. Stewardship aims to bring together what the authors perceive as the emphasis on reasoning and justice following from Kohlberg's cognitive-developmental theory, and the emphasis on empathy and care following from the care ethics and narrative psychology adopted by Carol Gilligan (1982) and others. Dodd and Menz clearly recognise that moral development is "part of a person's total intellectual and emotional development" (§2). From this basis they argue the importance of narrative stories (like traditional moral fables) that "present an episode of human behaviour within which the reader is invited to interpret the encompassing concept of stewardship": meaning "the ideals of care, communalism and compassion" (§20).

However, foundational to their approach is the juridical assumption, following Kohlberg, that "moral reasoning can be separated from the content of moral education" – i.e. separated from moral disposition and behaviour. As such, while concerned to develop a motivating sense of empathy through the use of imaginative narrative, Dodd and Menz still place a primary emphasis on fostering skills in "analysis" and "critical decision making" – i.e. the powers of discursive reasoning. In

short, their overarching concern remains to assist students to “form a personal code of ethics from which to act” while trusting to the creative, imaginative format of the narrative stories to engage students at an emotional level, motivating them towards some committed ethical stance (§16). This again reflects the juridical notion that moral reasoning (understood as the ability to form rationally coherent values and principles) is central to the moral educational task of schools, yet remains fundamentally separate from the personal and emotional aspects of motivation and conviction (which must be stimulated and brought into effect in some novel way).

In assuming from the outset, with Kohlberg, that moral reasoning and moral behaviour are distinct and separate components, Dodd and Menz are foiled in their attempt to forge a “comprehensive intellectual and emotional framework for individual and social moral thought and action” (§18). Basically, Dodd and Menz assume a (juridical) theory of reason according to which, as MacIntyre writes, “one can be fully rational without as yet being just” (1988: p342) or, presumably, caring. Or in other words, no disposition to care for justice is seen as prerequisite or intrinsic to rationality itself. As such, priority is naturally granted to certain kinds of impersonal, discursive and emotionally detached reasoning, since this is seen as the necessary foundation for justifying and establishing coherence to one’s personally, imaginatively and emotionally generated sense of value, care and moral motivation.

viii. Moral Development Through Civics Education.

Another result of the perceived division between reasoning and valuing (including moral action) is the apparent connection between values education and ‘citizenship’ or ‘civics’ education. For example, Kohlberg centres his moral theory on the principle of *justice*, defined as a universal mode of choosing – i.e. a rule of choosing which we want all people to adopt in all situations. As such, justice, for Kohlberg, is intimately connected with his juridical conception of morality centred on the conflicting claims of individuals. On this basis Kohlberg asserts:

...moral and civic education are much the same thing... civic education is education for the analytic understanding, value principles, and motivation necessary for a citizen in a democracy if democracy is to be an effective process. It is political education. Civic or political education means the stimulation of development of more advanced patterns of reasoning about political and social decisions and their implementation in action (1978a: p43).

Ideally, Kohlberg believes such programs of moral education should involve strategies such as 'identity questioning' in order to engage those aspects of 'feeling' thought necessary to move students from reasoning to action. But equally important in this respect, says Kohlberg, is the *moral atmosphere of the school*. By this he means "the moral character and ideology of the teachers and principal as these are translated into a working social atmosphere" (1978b: p160). As such, following his definition of moral maturity as a principled sense of 'justice', Kohlberg advocates the creation of an 'atmosphere of justice' through adopting democratic principles of school administration and classroom interaction.

As mentioned, because of the juridical focus on social conflicts and analytically reasoned and publicly transparent decision-making, a central concern within moral education theory becomes developing ways to contextualise moral thinking so that it might translate into ethical social action (i.e. the practical application of moral principles). This 'practical application' approach is, arguably, also favoured since it provides some context for the assessment of achievement/development. As an example, the growing emphasis on civics education or education for democratic citizenship can be seen as an attempt to provide just such a context and as further evidence of the current influence of Kohlberg and the juridical tradition he represents.

ix. Summarising the Juridical Legacy in Contemporary Moral Education Theory.

In the juridical ethical tradition, the moral life is viewed as the problem of making choices about how to act in situations where people's claims about rights and duties conflict. As such, the cognitive anatomy of moral understanding is presented as a developed ability to provide increasingly more principled reasons and justifications for one's choices in those situations. That is, it is seen mainly as a matter of analytical and discursive thought aimed at the formulation and justification of guiding principles (or 'values') in the context of social problem solving. While for Kohlberg one's development along these lines is a good indicator of one's moral development as such, other theorists have identified what they see to be more pressing concerns.

The juridical focus on ethical dilemmas and intentional choices is compelled into hypothesising a divide between moral thought and moral action. Since one's moral reasoning, as defined above, is not seen as a reliable indicator of one's *performance* during moments of explicit moral choice and action, reasoning comes to be distinguished sharply from valuing. There is a perceived need, therefore, for some further element - *distinct from reasoning, non-cognitive in nature* - to provide the motivation or disposition to act according to one's rationally formulated principles and values.

Consequently, attention in moral education theory is *divided* between (a) developing the 'cognitive core' of moral development through the stimulation of analytical and discursive reasoning about values and moral issues, and (b) devising ways and means of contextualising such moral thinking to invite reflection and stimulate the aspect of 'feeling' or 'motivation' thought necessary for moral reason to bear fruit in social action. Basically, following the influence of the juridical ethical tradition, the chief moral educational problem has come to be seen as reconciling the so-called 'cognitive' and 'evaluative' elements of moral thought and action. This, of course,

makes sense, and indeed imposes itself, on the juridical premise that these elements are distinct and independent to begin with.

In light of the preceding account of a juridical ethical perspective and its impact on contemporary moral education (via Kohlberg), it can be argued that the moral education question has come to be understood typically as *'what values should be taught and how to teach values'*⁸ (or as 'values education'). Informed by the juridical conception of morality identified above, this interpretation has translated into a broad range of pedagogical initiatives. At the theoretical level teachers have been drawn beyond their traditional concern for knowledge and intellectual development to identify a range of (morally) relevant 'issues' – or areas of social conflict – from the contestable field of practical ethics. Additionally, teachers have been encouraged to identify or 'negotiate' a range of shared or 'core' values relating to such issues and around which to structure the educational curriculum. At a practical level, attention has become focussed on devising ways to assist students in exploring and analysing various value stances (including their own) whilst encouraging them to reflect and

⁸ A noteworthy exception is the contribution of certain feminist educational thinkers, such as Gilligan (1982) and Noddings (1984), who advocate an approach to moral education based on an 'ethic of care'. Care ethics is advanced as a counterpoint to Kohlberg's emphasis on (and particular interpretation of) the principle of *justice*. In contrast to Kohlberg and the juridical tradition, Noddings and Gilligan have argued that *care* is an integral part of moral reasoning and so seek to emphasise 'receptivity', 'attention', the 'non-cognitive', 'non-rational' and the 'effeminate' in their accounts of moral learning. Their emphasis on attention and receptivity, in particular, resonates with the visional ethical tradition advocated in this study. Indeed, Crittenden (1990) has argued that care ethics, and the work of Gilligan, in particular, redresses themes central to classical Greek and especially Aristotelian philosophy, from which a visional ethical perspective derives. Crittenden suggests, however, that an adequate engagement with such classical sources is lacking from Gilligan's work. The present thesis brings to light certain of these sources in a way that endorses the general emphases of an ethic of care, yet explores in a more particular way their underlying epistemology, metaphysics, and implications for moral education.

act upon their own professed values in a social setting. To this end, the stimulation of students' feelings and motivations through such activities as role-play and identity questioning is seen as an important parallel requirement.

x. Questioning a Juridical Interpretation of Moral Education.

We have seen, however, that the juridical ethical perspective informing such approaches rests on particular philosophical claims about what counts as morality and the nature and importance of reasoning (or cognition) with regards to moral development. A key critical question for contemporary moral education theorists, then, is *whether or not the juridical tradition is at all mistaken by focussing chiefly on social conflict, intentional decision-making and the importance of rationally formulated rules and principles in the moral life*. That is, are the philosophical foundations of a juridical interpretation of moral education open to serious question? In particular, for our purposes, one might also ask, does the cognitive anatomy of moral understanding following from a juridical ethical perspective adequately enable schools to identify and pursue their moral educational task as an integral aspect of their primary concern for knowledge and intellectual development?

In Chapter One it was argued that a key to addressing the moral education question is an adequate cognitive anatomy of moral understanding. This in turn was tied to the availability of some integrated epistemology in which the rational and emotional powers of understanding in moral thought and action are feasibly related. In this thesis I argue that the cognitive anatomy of moral understanding connected with the juridical ethical tradition (inherited via Kohlberg and outlined in this chapter) is significantly *inadequate*. Specifically, I maintain that it conceives too narrowly of what counts as morality and, subsequently, misidentifies the desired object of moral education (as 'values' and 'principles') as well as the appropriate pedagogical measures. Not instead of values and principles, but more crucially, I shall argue that the proper object of moral education should be the formation of the capacity for and

habit of substantively correct thought and judgement, understood as intrinsically possessed of right feeling.

Essentially, the inadequacy of a juridical cognitive anatomy of moral understanding (and, subsequently, the perceiving of the moral educational task of schools as ‘values education’) stems from underlying epistemological assumptions. As such, I will argue that the way in which a juridical epistemology characterises and relates reason, cognition and affectivity, particularly with regard to moral thought and action, is philosophically contestable. This, then, defines the focus of the critique of Juridicalism developed in Chapters Three and Four. To provide greater precision to this focus, I will now explicate more precisely what Juridicalism implies and logically presupposes. In particular, I argue that juridical epistemology is characterised by its underlying conception of human reason – a conception inherited as part of the Cartesian Legacy in Modern philosophy.

II. JURIDICALISM AS A PHILOSOPHY OF HUMAN UNDERSTANDING - CLARIFYING THE EPISTEMOLOGICAL PROBLEM.

i. Juridicalism and Modern Philosophy.

A range of theorists has documented the ascent (since the birth of the modern era and the philosophical revolution following Descartes) of certain philosophical assumptions and priorities which the term ‘juridical epistemology’, or *Juridicalism*, is intended to convey. For example, in his critique of post enlightenment moral philosophy, MacIntyre (1985) characterises modern thought in terms of its rejection of any kind of Aristotelian *telos*, or overarching vision of transcendent reality, in favour of moral theory and the search for more ‘certain’ (i.e. rationally derived) grounds for belief and action. Both Maritain (1953) and Pieper (1952) have described modern epistemology in terms of a loss of the notion of *contemplative knowledge* – the ability to

know reality by virtue of the *intuitive* and *receptive* powers of the intellect. Instead, in their combined view, an epistemology that focuses exclusively on the active and critical (or *discursive*) aspects of human reason has come to dominate modern philosophy, resulting in a pragmatic and materialist conception of knowledge. Within education and following Maritain and Pieper, James Taylor (1998) has charted the ascent of a scientific conception of knowledge at the expense of what he calls 'poetic knowledge' – a more intuitive, though no less real, sensory-emotional experience and knowledge of reality.

Typically, such commentaries present modern epistemology as having suffered some *loss* by illustrating how certain aspects of what it is like to think and to know are inadequately explained, reduced or ignored by the modern theories. Bénétón (2004) also describes modern epistemology in terms of a loss – i.e. the loss of 'vital reason' in deference to 'scientistic reason' – but describes more precisely the reductive conception of reason he associates with modern thought, and which I argue underpins Juridicalism:

...modern thought did not discover or rediscover reason, but it emancipated it (in a subjectivist sense), and it conferred upon it a dominant and exclusive authority (to the detriment of revelation and tradition), and, finally, it turned it in a new direction. Classical Christian reason was essentially concerned with personal life: reason was supposed to allow each person to master his or her passions and to lead a life in accordance with the nature of a rational animal... modern reason would focus first on the exterior world; it proposed to change the fate of mankind through the conquest of nature and the mastery of society. The work undertaken by Bacon, Descartes, and Hobbes issued in this revolutionary proposition: to transform the world we must rethink it (p83).

Accompanying this radical shift in the authority and direction of reason was a changed perception about the nature and scope of human knowledge. A revised understanding of rationality, following Descartes, can be seen to inform conceptions of knowledge as being impersonal and independent of feeling, tradition and other situated ways of being. As will be discussed, Descartes sees rationality – the power of thought – as a capacity to construct orders of meaning which meet the demands of evidence and of certainty. As Charles Taylor argues (1989: pp143-158), for Descartes the hegemony of reason is a matter of instrumental control. In this way, knowledge, following the demands of precision and control of the available evidence, will be characterised as universally valid (binding on all rational human beings), in contrast to the variability and variety associated with emotional responsiveness, traditional teachings and ethics, social and religious experience and so on.

In the Modern tradition, therefore, following the Cartesian Legacy, the nature and scope of human knowledge is typically limited to that which can satisfy the demands of rational control, following the view of reason's authority as independent of feelings, tradition and the like. Further, Taylor argues that throughout rationalist and empiricist philosophy, following Descartes, one finds:

...the growing ideal of a human agent who is able to remake himself by methodical and disciplined action. What this calls for is the ability to take an instrumental stance to one's given properties, desires, inclinations, tendencies, habits of thought and feeling, so that they can be worked on, doing away with some and strengthening others...(p159)

Such an ideal reinforces the notion of reason's knowledge and authority as being independent of the body/world dynamic – i.e. the subjective, historically and traditionally situated conditions of bodily, emotional and social experience. Further, this view may extend to include a rejection or suspicion of any definition of the

human subject in terms of some inherent bent towards transcendent truth or the Good (Taylor p164), rather than in terms of reason's dominance. Although it raises another question, it is important to note that Cartesian rationality tends also to cast doubt on any overarching assurance about the existence of an objective, transcendent reality, order, or given 'nature', since these all imply criteria of truth and knowledge independent of and external to the agent's own rationality. This internalisation of the standards and sources of (particularly moral) truth has profound consequences for modern ethics, and these are considered in detail in Chapter Four. Of immediate interest, however, is the divided conception of the knowing subject – wherein man's rational, knowing essence is contrasted strongly with his embodied emotional, cultural and historical subjectivity – which accompanies the distinctively Modern reinterpretation of rationality, beginning with Descartes⁹.

The dominant aspects of the philosophy of the Modern era following Descartes reflect this dualism between the *reasoning mind* on the one hand, and the embodied, culturally situated and *personal self* on the other. In particular these aspects relate to how reason itself is understood: what are its main features in terms of its mode of

⁹ Of course, Descartes himself regards feelings and emotions as thoughts and therefore as *mental*. Here, however, I am not directly concerned with Descartes' own conception of emotion but with what emotions actually are, and particularly with how they are not easily prised apart from bodily experience. We need only recall the sensation of cold in the stomach during moments of intense fear, or even a loss of bladder control, or physical arousal at the experience of sexual desire, the flushing of one's face that accompanies anger etc, to demonstrate this point. It is in light of this more common sense perspective that I speak of emotions in the same voice as the body when discussing Descartes in this thesis. Further, this connection is not entirely absent from Descartes, for whom feelings and emotions (like sense perceptions), *precisely because of their connection with the body*, lack the clarity and distinctness he takes as the criterion of true and valid knowledge. Having established this criterion in Meditations III, Descartes goes on to argue in book VI that the thinking, knowing soul (or mind) is entirely and absolutely distinct from the body, and hence emotions and feelings (together with other corporeal appetites, imaginative experience and sense perceptions) must be regarded as lesser, 'confused modes of thought' produced by a merely 'apparent' intermingling of mind and body.

operation and proper object – or what is meant by ‘rationality’. These features of the Modern conception of reason can be seen to underpin Juridicalism. It is this Modern, *Cartesian reason* that is signalled by the use of the term ‘Juridicalism’ or ‘juridical epistemology’ in this thesis, and with which the critique of Juridicalism in Chapters Three and Four is concerned.

ii. Juridicalism and Cartesian Reason – Three Features.

1. A Pervasive Mind/Soul – Body/World Dualism.

In the first instance, following the Cartesian Legacy reason is marked by a strong mind/soul – body/world dualism. That is, the knowing (or ‘cognitive’) part of human nature is seen as having a distinct existence independent of the realm of matter - i.e. the world, including the body and its emotive and affective operations. This feature is sometimes attributed directly to Descartes since, as Schumacher points out, Descartes “insisted that ‘We should never allow ourselves to be persuaded excepting by the evidence of our Reason,’ and he stressed particularly that he spoke ‘of our Reason and not our imagination nor of our senses’” (1995: p18). Indeed, in his *Discourse on Method* Descartes postulates the independence of the essential thinking, knowing person from any material thing, concluding that, “this ‘me’, that is to say, the soul by which I am what I am, is entirely distinct from body” (1986b: pp51-52). As such, James Taylor (1998: p93) argues that “under a Cartesian philosophy, the mind [is] virtually isolated from the body” and, subsequently, “the Cartesian view is one of the great disintegrating philosophies of all time” because of its “tendency to set the mind against the sensory and intuitive powers of the body-soul harmony”, generally maintained throughout classical and medieval philosophy.

It should be noted, however, that Descartes was not entirely original in contrasting rational operations to bodily operations (or matter). What was new with Descartes was the collapsing of the many distinctions posited by earlier theorists between

different kinds of matter (e.g. inanimate, animate, heavenly) and between matter and 'form'. For example, for Aristotle and many medieval thinkers the *substance* known as 'man' is a composite of *matter* (man's body or flesh) and *form*. Man's form (or 'soul') is what gives his body life and makes it distinctly human by endowing it with powers of intellection. That said, man's form, without the matter comprising his body, is insubstantial. More will be said on this complex relationship between matter and form in Chapter Five.

For now, the point is, as Susan James (1999) has argued, that Descartes and many of his contemporaries were concerned to dispense with what they perceived as an unnecessarily complex and divided view of matter and the soul, as advanced by medieval scholasticism. The scholastic view, building upon Aristotelian metaphysics, was indeed highly differentiated and correspondingly subtle, a fact which fuelled the efforts of the New Philosophy of the early Modern Period to develop a simplified, integrated account of matter and the soul. It is questionable whether or not the scholastic view was as *disintegrated* as it might have appeared. Nevertheless, a growing ideal of philosophical transparency, concurrent with unprecedented developments in scientific method, led early modern philosophers to dispense with many of the previously held distinctions and related terminology in their efforts to explain human thought and action.

With Descartes, Galileo and the advent of modern science, the scholastic distinctions among kinds of matter (and corresponding differentiated view of the soul) gave way under the weight of emerging and apparently immutable laws of nature as described by mathematical functions. 'Matter', in effect, came to be viewed as *one* – as physical, quantifiable matter only. Intellectual faculties such as perception, emotion or imagination, once closely associated with the specific human form (i.e. soul) and its distinctive matter (i.e. body), no longer figured as part of what scientific method would designate as material reality. Neither could such elements be readily

incorporated, in a strongly integrated way, into Descartes' developing account of rationality. For Descartes rationality refers to the power of the mind to grasp ideas *clearly* and *distinctly* – in the manner of mathematical certainty. As such, while identifying the rational mind with the human soul (or essence), Descartes depicts the mind/soul identity as (in its very nature) cut off from the body and all worldly matter.

It seems therefore both inevitable and ironic that a fierce dualism between the thinking, knowing mind on the one hand, and the doing, feeling affective and material nature on the other should result. It can be argued though that Descartes' influence in this regard is inchoate compared with that of other philosophers of the modern era, such as Hume (as will be discussed in Chapter Three). Nevertheless, a hard and fast distinction between the reasoning, knowing mind on the one hand, and the world of matter, the body and its affective operations on the other, be traced to Descartes' distinctive philosophical project.

2. Rationality Regarded Exclusively as *Mental Activity*.

Secondly, with the Cartesian Legacy reason comes to refer to human thought as something exclusively *active*. Knowledge, then, is regarded as the fruit of analytical and discursive thought processes, rather than anything gratuitous, given or received. Pieper (1952) attributes this aspect of modern epistemology largely to Kant who, he writes:

...held knowledge to be exclusively 'discursive': that is to say, the opposite of receptive and contemplative... According to Kant man's knowledge is realised in the act of comparing, examining, relating, distinguishing, abstracting, deducing, demonstrating – all of which are forms of active intellectual effort. Knowledge, man's spiritual, intellectual knowledge (such is Kant's thesis) is activity, exclusively activity. (p32)

The implications of this exclusively *active* conception of rationality will be addressed in detail in subsequent chapters. Presently, however, it is important to observe that it is a commonplace notion, especially within contemporary educational thought. In particular, the widespread influence of Dewey and Piaget upon contemporary educational theory has helped reinforce the view that human cognition denotes exclusively active rational processes.

For example, In *My Pedagogic Creed* Dewey states, "The only true education comes through the stimulation of the child's powers by the demands of the social situations in which he finds himself" (1963: p142). For Dewey, everything in education turns upon the principle of social activity and progress; thought and knowledge (so far as education is concerned) are essentially connected with man's activity as a social animal, or the resolution of problems arising as part of social life. Elsewhere in his *Creed* Dewey writes, "The true centre or correlation on the school subjects is not science, nor literature, nor history, nor geography, but the child's own social activities" (p146). Of course, this view of knowledge and learning underpins Dewey's whole view of education as "the fundamental method of social progress and reform" (p150) and characterises his notoriously pragmatic epistemology and related educational philosophy.

Dewey's emphasis on schooling as an agent of social change and learning by doing (process learning or inquiry method) has had a particularly strong and enduring influence on contemporary western educational theory. Indeed, such is the impact of Dewey's progressive educational vision that it has largely obscured certain other educational aims and purposes, more closely connected with a mode of knowing not properly characterised by 'activity'. The particular thrust of Dewey's educational insight is apt to give the impression that all vital knowledge derives from, and must ultimately serve, social and intellectual *activity* – or the struggle to maintain "proper

social order and the securing of the right social growth" (p151). Taylor has argued that Descartes' insistence on method, process, and the tools of science are replicated in Dewey's construction of "a theory of knowledge that claims what we know is instigated exclusively by a rational process, a method, actually a simple reworking of the scientific method of enquiry where knowledge is the result of controlled experiments" (1998: p98). Taylor explains:

...in Dewey's pragmatism, like Descartes' method, there is a position of doubt that begins enquiry, where it follows that all will have to be proved in some kind of way... With the influence of Kant, as well as Descartes, all learning now becomes a kind of effort and work which Dewey models after a dynamic idea of democracy and social change, where learning has as its end the fulfilment of a progressive society *always* changing towards some perfected goal...(p98)

Like Dewey's educational philosophy, Piaget's developmental psychology also emphasises the nature of the learner as a *problem solver*, and, as Elkind says, conceives the learning process as "a giving up of erroneous ideas for more correct ones or as a transformation of these ideas into higher-level, more adequate conceptions" (Piaget 1968: vii). Furthermore, Dewey's experimentalism is supported by Piaget's genetic epistemology as a function of innate dispositions. For example, Piaget's research into childhood development suggests that the infant, by bringing everything he touches toward his mouth, actively organizes the world in terms of his own actions. This resonates with Dewey's contention that true education comes about via learning which involves 'the stimulation of the child's powers by the demands of the social situations in which he finds himself'.

Dewey's emphasis on *learning by doing* is also reinforced by Piaget's claim that thought derives from one's own actions upon things. As Piaget writes, "The child

does not adapt himself right away to the new realities he is discovering and gradually constructing for himself. He must start by *laboriously incorporating* them within himself and into his own activity” (p22 italics added). Further, Piaget’s theory asserts the centrality of a principle he calls “equilibration”. Equilibration refers to a fundamental psychological “need”, engendered in a tendency “to incorporate things and people into the subject’s own activity, i.e., to ‘assimilate’ the external world into the structures that have already been constructed, and secondly to readjust these structures as a function of subtle transformations, i.e., to ‘accommodate’ them to external objects” (p8). Knowledge, on this view, is a continual and *active* process of adjustment – reappropriating new experiences into previously *constructed* conceptual schemes.

In contemporary educational theory, such notions are reiterated and reinforced by a range of widely endorsed ‘constructivist’ learning theories. According to Winch and Gingell, ‘constructivism’ is “a set of related doctrines about learning” (1999: p42). They elaborate:

Conceived of by Piaget (1953) as a way of incorporating the best insights of both empiricist and rationalist accounts of learning, [constructivism] develops the Kantian claim that information from the world is arranged by our psychic constitutions into a form that is intelligible to us. In a sense then, we actively construct what we learn... This view is combined with a developmental theory about the way in which the mind operates on raw data at different stages of human growth. However, the Piagetian version of constructivism has enjoyed a close relationship with pragmatism and, in particular, pragmatist doctrines deriving from James and Dewey, that maintain a scepticism about the possibility of achieving objective truth as the proper object of knowledge (p42).

Constructivism has entered education in myriad ways but is manifested in certain maxims and principles of 'best practise' familiar to most teachers. These include the ideas that students learn best by doing and a *hands-on approach*, that students are most effectively engaged and show improved learning outcomes when given *problem solving activities*, that teachers shouldn't tell students but rather allow them to discover and so *construct their own knowledge*, and also that education is a powerful means of supporting *democratic citizenship*, wherein the social demands of the classroom provide a *relevant context* for engendering habits and ideals necessary for *active citizenship*. Most of these principles are quite defensible, since it is true that people learn well in socio-historic contexts. Also, it is quite contingent that these principles could be understood and affirmed on quite different grounds to those supposed by constructivist learning theory. Nevertheless, in contemporary educational theory these principles have been largely derived from, and so have helped reinforce, a conception of human reason (and of cognition) denoting *solely active* processes. In contrast, I will argue later that this view of things overlooks important ways in which learning requires a measure of passive (or receptive) attentiveness, following from ways of knowing more accurately described as 'contemplative' or 'revelatory', rather than active.

3. Reason Understood as Exclusively *Procedural*.

A third and related feature of reason within the Cartesian Legacy is the tendency to think of reason's proper role in human understanding as the formulation of correct general ideas or thoughts. Again, this idea can be traced to Descartes who, in his *Rules for the Direction of the Mind*, described the method of reason as to "reduce involved and obscure propositions step by step to those that are simpler, and then starting with the intuitive apprehension of all those that are absolutely simple, attempt to ascend to the knowledge of all others by precisely similar steps" (1986a: p7). Similarly, in his *Discourse on Method* Descartes argues that by following such a process, "in order to deduce the one conclusion from the other, there can be nothing

so remote that we cannot reach to it, nor so recondite that we cannot discover it” (1986*b*: p47). The culmination of such procedural reasoning is, for Descartes, “to make enumerations so complete and reviews so general that [one] should be certain of having omitted nothing” (p47).

Charles Taylor has also contrasted a Modern understanding of reason, following Descartes, with that of ancient times. In the Modern view, Taylor argues, reason is “no longer understood as our being attuned to the order of things we find in the cosmos, but rather as our life being shaped by the orders which we construct according to the demands of reason’s dominance” (1989: p155). Taylor continues:

We could say that rationality is no longer defined substantively, in terms of the order of being, but rather procedurally, in terms of the standards by which we construct orders in science and life... For Descartes rationality means thinking according to certain canons. The judgement now turns on the activity of thinking rather than on the substantive beliefs which emerge from it (156).

...the modern conception of reason is procedural. What we are called to do is not to become contemplators of order, but rather to construct a picture of things following the canons of rational thinking... Rationality is above all a property of the process of thinking, not of the substantive content of thought (p168).

The result of this picture of rationality in modern ethics is to focus on the formulation of correct *general thoughts*, ideas or *principles* (typically translated as ‘values’ in moral educational theory) rather than correct *singular* and *substantive* thoughts and judgements in the particular circumstances of life in all its complexity. More will be said on this aspect of Juridicalism in Chapter Four.

iii. Summary of Chapter Two and Thesis Itinerary.

Chapter Two began with an analysis of the development of Juridicalism, via the work of Kohlberg, revealing how the underlying philosophical features of a juridical perspective are replicated in current moral education discourse and pedagogy. In particular, a juridical perspective associates morality with questions of rules and obligations arising in situations of social conflict, and places particular emphasis on 'rational' or *principled* decision-making with regard to such situations. Subsequently, juridical ethics is marked by a strong focus on the role of 'values' as expressed in rules and principles and derived by rational processes whose authority is assumed to be independent of the specific moral bent, emotional state or motivations of the conflicting parties.

Further, in light of the need for values to be personally compelling, such an emphasis invites a sharp division between reasoning and valuing – or between the life of the mind on the one hand, and the life of feeling and motivation on the other. These features of a juridical ethical perspective are replicated in approaches to moral education which centre on 'values' as determinative principles of human behaviour and which exhibit an attention divided between the 'cognitive core' (or social reasoning dimension) of moral development on the one hand, and the quest to introduce and stimulate the (supposedly 'non-cognitive') aspects of feeling and motivation in some way on the other. Essentially, juridical ethics has fostered an interpretation of the moral education question as *which values (i.e. rationally grounded rules and principles) should be taught and how best to teach those values such that students acquire some emotional and motivational identification with them..*

Such an interpretation is open to question. In particular, an important consideration for educators is whether or not the juridical tradition is at all mistaken in associating morality exclusively with conflicting claims about social rights and duties, and in its subsequent, limited focus on 'values' as expressed in rules and principles deriving

from analytical and discursive rational procedures. Critical attention might also be directed at the assumption that the motivational aspect of moral understanding and commitment, because clearly connected with the emotions and the will, must be thought of as fundamentally non-cognitive. Indeed, throughout Chapter Two it was emphasised that the juridical approach is predicated on a certain philosophy of human understanding - what I call *juridical epistemology*. It is at this epistemological level that the following critique of Juridicalism is directed. To provide clarity and focus to this critique, Chapter Two concluded with a description of the distinctively *Cartesian* (or Modern) concept of human reason characterising a juridical epistemology.

Briefly, three distinguishing features of the Cartesian concept of reason underpinning Juridicalism were identified. These features are (i) a *dualism* in which thinking reason is considered distinct and separate from the feeling and doing affective nature, (ii) a perception that reason is an exclusively *active* faculty such that knowledge and understanding is seen as the fruit of mental effort, rather than anything gratuitous, given or inspired, and (iii) an understanding of reason's mode of operation as distinctively *procedural* such that rationality is a property of the correct process of thinking and not of the substantive content of thought and judgement.

In Chapters Three and Four, these three aspects of Juridicalism are challenged. In my critique I seek to clarify the ways in which a juridical interpretation of the moral education is problematic. Specifically, by challenging the epistemology underpinning a juridical ethical perspective, the need for an alternative epistemological framework, marked in particular by an *integrated anthropology* and *substantive theory of reason*, is made clear.

In Chapter Five, such an alternative epistemology is developed from the realist philosophical tradition rooted in classical Greece. My discussion and defence of what

I call 'Classical Realism' highlights the importance of the concept of 'vision' for understanding the cognitive anatomy of moral thought and action. As such, the distinctive visional ethical perspective following Classical Realism, and its implications for how moral education is understood, are developed and considered in Chapter Six.

Chapter Seven concludes the study by identifying some of the pedagogical implications of a Classical Realist (or visional) interpretation of the moral education question, and by highlighting several emergent questions and challenges in need of further consideration and research.

CHAPTER THREE

Introduction.

Chapters Three and Four provide a critique of Juridicalism, focussing on the three aspects of Cartesian reason typifying juridical epistemology, outlined at the end of Chapter Two. This chapter concerns the mind/soul – body/world dualism which, I have argued, underwrites juridical epistemology. I begin by tracing the philosophical origins of this divided conception of human personality, beginning with Descartes' quest for 'distinct' and 'certain' knowledge. I argue that Descartes' philosophical project laid the foundation for Enlightenment rationalism and empiricism which, in Hume, culminated in a *sceptical* view of human knowledge, reinforcing the view that cognition (thinking/knowing) and affectivity (feeling/doing) each have a distinct and independent existence¹⁰. Such a division is reflected in Hume's *fact-value distinction*. The conclusion of this philosophical survey is that this dualist tendency gives rise to an epistemology in which discursive reason is seen as *the* seat of human cognitive power, and in which thought and knowledge are sharply distinguished from the affective (and specifically evaluative) aspects of human understanding.

The results of this development of Cartesian dualism (or Modern dualism) in contemporary ethics are then discussed, drawing on McNaughton's comparison of moral non-cognitivism and moral realism which I introduced in Chapter One. A

¹⁰ In effect, my critique of Juridicalism ranges over a variety of dualisms – from Descartes to Hume to a range of non-cognitivist theories. I do not attend to each dualist expression independently and in full, however, nor do I attempt to 'paper over' their significant differences. Rather, I strive to show how they are essentially related – how they lead to each other and to similar basic conclusions or emphases in thinking about moral understanding. Tracing this dualistic lineage is not unprecedented, as Carr has also argued that "it seems likely that the post-Humean alignment of fact and value with reason and affect is just a particular expression of the Cartesian separation of mind from world – a schism which marks the fall of modern philosophy into a new dualism" (1999: p146).

critical analysis of non-cognitivist moral theory and its supporting juridical epistemology shows how its basic philosophical claims are open to challenge, especially concerning its disintegrated view of the mind/soul – body/world relationship. Also, non-cognitivism fails to do justice to certain familiar aspects of everyday moral experience, such as when one's sense of moral compulsion can be seen to derive directly from one's cognitive grasp of a situation. As well as lending weight to an alternative moral realist position (and *visional* ethical perspective), these criticisms highlight the contemporary need for a more *integrated anthropology* as a basis for understanding the dynamic of reason, cognition and affect in the moral life. Finally, the need for such an alternative, integrated picture of human beings (as knowing subjects) is identified in several reflections on moral education by current theorists. This, then, provides part of the basis for a defence of a classical realist anthropology and *visional* ethics as a basis for interpreting the moral education question, developed in Chapters Five and Six.

I. JURIDICAL EPISTEMOLOGY & MODERN DUALISM.

i. Descartes' 'Distinct' and 'Clear' Knowledge.

As discussed in the previous chapter, there is a strong connection between juridical epistemology (or Juridicalism) and the philosophy of the Modern tradition following the Cartesian Legacy. Although Juridicalism cannot be reduced to or equated with Descartes' philosophical views, it is with Descartes that a distinctively juridical conception of 'reason' – its nature and place in human understanding – has a definite beginning. In particular, the notion that reason amounts to the whole of intellection (all cognition) while remaining distinct and independent from emotion and affectivity, stems from Descartes' particular theory of rationality. The foundations for a radical separation of the thinking-knowing mind on the one hand and the doing-feeling affective nature on the other, can be found in Descartes' contrasting of rational

knowledge with embodied sensory-emotional experience in order to posit a *method* for attaining true knowledge based on the criterion of the clarity and distinctness of ideas.

James Taylor (1998) has explained that, as a philosopher, Descartes was strongly motivated by the problem of growing scepticism in his day toward the “tradition and authority of the philosophical legacy embraced by the Roman Catholic Church” (p89). In response to this scepticism Descartes proposed a *method* for attaining accurate and verifiable knowledge. The chief criterion Descartes adopted as the measure of such knowledge was clarity and distinctness. In the third of his *Meditations* Descartes writes, “it seems to me that already I can establish as a general rule that all things which I perceive very clearly and very distinctly are true” (1986c: p82). In this way Descartes reconfigures the acceptable standards of valid human knowledge in a profound way. As Pieper comments:

With this statement something unprecedented has occurred: the clarity and precision of a concept has been made the criterion for its factual truth... A “distinct” concept, according to Descartes, is not only clear but, beyond that, is so different and separated... from any other concept that it contains within itself nothing but what is clear (1989: p26).

The paradigm example of such clear and distinct knowledge is mathematical certainty. Although mathematics of itself does not contain very great insight into the nature and meaning of human existence, Descartes effectively transposed the principles of mathematical certainty onto all other modes of knowledge and understanding.

Descartes’ emphasis on clear and distinct knowledge was intended to contrast rational (i.e. methodical and analytical) thinking with sensory-emotional experience.

This distinction is acceptable since the kind of knowledge which exhibits the clarity and precision of a solved problem is often quite different to people's sensory-emotional experience of things: where views and opinions conflict and where perspective and judgement can be clouded or distorted. However one regards the similarities and differences between sensory (perceptual) and emotional experience, it is easy to accept that, together, they contrast with knowledge of a more strictly rational kind. But implicit in Descartes' distinction is that the difference between the two is simply one of *degree* (of clarity and precision), rather than one of *kind* (among different 'modes of knowing').

For example, in his *Meditations* Descartes documents the practical application of his philosophical method and at one point considers his knowledge of a lump of wax. In short, Descartes highlights the pitfalls of trusting to sense perception since the perceptible qualities of the wax are apt to change under different conditions (e.g. proximity to heat). The imagination is of little help also since it is necessary to admit that the wax may undergo an infinitude of changes, about which the imagination cannot be at all certain. Descartes then asks, "what is this piece of wax which cannot be understood excepting by the [understanding of] mind?" (1986c: p80).

Once clarity and distinctness are admitted as the criteria of valid knowledge, sensory-emotional, imaginative and evaluative experience is necessarily relegated as inferior to knowledge understood to be derived by analytical reasoning. That is, the distinction sets up a dualism between the mind (identified with discursive reason) on the one hand and the world of matter, including the body and, by association, one's affective capacities and inclinations on the other. Importantly, for Descartes, the mind's first function is a critical one, operating via "a self-conscious systematic method and an assumption of doubt about previous givens" (Taylor 1998: p90).

For Descartes, then, true (i.e. clear and distinct) knowledge and understanding is a power of the mind, viewed as essentially independent of the world of material things. The immaterial rational mind (*cogito*) is for Descartes the first principle of all human knowledge. He writes, regarding the wax in the example above, “what must particularly be observed is that its perception is neither an act of vision, nor of touch, nor of imagination, and has never been such although it may have appeared formerly so, but only an intuition of the mind” (p80). The power to conceive of an idea or property clearly and is attributed solely to the rational mind, and to this end the incidental physical properties of objects, or the bodily senses, the imagination, the emotions and the will, have no essential role.

The importance, therefore, of *disengagement* of the mind from the sensory-emotional faculties is established. This, for Descartes, is the foundation of all true knowledge. The distortions of sense experience, the emotions and imagination – while having a part to play in life – are considered secondary and/or inferior to the operation of disengaged reason – defined in terms of rational control. As Charles Taylor elaborates:

[Descartes’ epistemology] calls for disengagement from world and body and the assumption of an instrumental stance toward them. It is of the essence of reason... that it push us to disengage.... [S]o when the hegemony of reason becomes rational control, it is no longer understood as our being attuned to the order of things we find in the cosmos, but rather as our life being shaped by the orders which we construct according to the demands of reason’s dominance (1989:p155).

Not ‘what is’ but that ‘one thinks’ is the principle condition of all knowledge for Descartes, as expressed in his maxim *cogito ergo sum* (‘I think therefore I am’). Of course ‘thinking’ for Descartes means all consciousness, from the rational intuition of

fundamental metaphysical principles to feelings and emotions (insofar as they are understandable in abstraction from the body). But it is rational thought which Descartes takes as definitive of man's essence – his soul – and which is to be granted exclusive authority in areas where the discernment of truth and falsehood is a priority – including the moral life. Further, the essence of rational thought, understood by Descartes as attaining to clear and distinct ideas, is to be realised by disengaging the mind from embodied experience of the world, including emotion and tradition. All knowledge of reality and truth now stands in need of, indeed, is the product of, *proof* as grounded in the rationally mastered (i.e. controlled) evidence. In other words it could be said that the court of reason trumps all appearance, feeling and tradition.

Although Descartes remained mindful of the impossibility of actually separating reason from sensory-emotional experience in living human beings, his dualism and emphasis on rational primacy and control certainly laid the foundation for just such a theoretical separation. Descartes' method and, in fact, his entire quest for such a method has been criticised repeatedly on just this point. As James Taylor points out, "To know that $2+2=4$... is not the same kind of knowledge as in knowing that a definition of justice is giving to each his due; nor, is either one of these like the certainty [of knowing] that someone loves [you]. To demand that each field of enquiry, that all knowledge, yield a high degree of demonstrative certainty is, finally, unreasonable" (1998: p92). That said, Descartes' challenge to a former, more *integrated* view of human nature, and his casting of disengaged reason as *the* foundation of true knowledge, had a profound influence on subsequent western philosophy.

ii. Hume's Fact-Value Gap.

Following Descartes, various schools of rationalist philosophy developed throughout Europe and Britain. Although many philosophers, including the British empiricists of the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, departed from Descartes' account of *a priori*

rationality, they maintained his quest for a rational method of attaining certain knowledge, and carried within themselves the same primary attitude of doubt toward the conditions of human subjectivity¹¹ - such as culture, upbringing and especially religious tradition - where a quest for truth is concerned. Indeed, Haldane describes this period in terms of a "rise of new analytical schemes associated with a particular method of enquiry: [supposedly] metaphysically unburdened empirical investigation conducted through controlled experiment" (2004a: p6). The relative accessibility and unprecedented power of (physical) predictability and control afforded by these analytical schemes led to a widespread acceptance of the modern scientific worldview, together with an increasingly mechanised view of the universe. In light of this view, the problem of explaining how man's knowledge (the human mind) can be understood in relation to a body and a world seemingly explicable in terms of mechanically interacting particles became paramount. So it is that with Descartes' philosophical project, resolving this perceived mind-body/world problem becomes a major concern for modern philosophy.

Marías (1967: p247) also explains that between Francis Bacon and David Hume there extended a series of thinkers whose philosophy was in many ways opposed to the "Continental rationalistic idealism" following Descartes. These philosophers were less concerned with strictly metaphysical questions and more concerned with theory of knowledge and the philosophy of the State. Also, and quite unlike Descartes, they tended to "grant first place to sensory experience as a source of knowledge." Nevertheless, these thinkers, whose ideas "intensely influenced the transformation of European society" (p248), in their sensationalism and commitment to the advancement of an empirical method, were indebted to Descartes' own quest and his

¹¹ See for example Bernard Williams' characterisation of the modern project as 'defusing subjectivism' (1993: pp5, 14-37).

original departure from a former, more harmonious view of the thinking mind and the feeling soul. As James Taylor explains:

With the initial rupture by Descartes in the integrated and harmonious view of man as a knower of his world, some of the disintegrated pieces become isolated and driven to radical ...conclusions. A new empiricism, after Locke and Hume, asserts that all knowledge is derived from sense experience... Without the confidence of the role of sensory-emotional powers integrated with the mind, Immanuel Kant posits that we only know *impressions* of reality, not reality itself... Also, there is a new and radical Idealism with and after Kant, that, so much like Descartes, says we can only know our thoughts, where what we call reality is merely a projection of thought with no certainty of a real and independent existence 'out there' (1998: p97).

The important thing about these philosophical developments, for the present study, is the way in which they reinforce and exaggerate the division wrought by Descartes between the mind/soul and the body/world: between reason and cognition on the one hand, and sensation, emotion, tradition and affectivity on the other. Although varying in their points of emphasis as well as motivation, the various philosophical movements identified by Taylor above share three common features which promote a conception of reason as (a) *the* source of cognitive power and (b) as being distinct and independent from emotion and affectivity. Taylor lists these features:

... [all such philosophies] begin with consciousness, the mind, as the starting point of reality, as opposed to an independent existence outside the knower; two, doubt, as in the modern scientific mode, is the method of procedure to establish...certitude, or some experimental social agenda; and, three, following from number two, all these philosophies distrust, if they do not reject, the traditional view that the senses, inner and outer, are intimately integrated in

the act of knowing with the will and the intellect, and have... a cognitive power in themselves (pp104-105).

The philosophy of David Hume, in particular, was instrumental in discrediting the idea that the emotional, evaluative and imaginative powers possess any kind of cognitive value. Of course, as an empiricist, Hume placed primary importance on sense perception and drew a sharp distinction between *impressions* of reality via the physical senses and *ideas* about reality (resulting from subsequent, subjective associations between recollected impressions). However, for Hume, all items of knowledge are based on logic, definitions or observation, where observation is understood in a tendentious way which we will come to shortly. Everything apart from logically derived, empirically defined or observed facts is considered by Hume to be subjective response (ideas, feelings, desires) and not knowledge. In this sense, Hume carries on the rationalist conception of the human mind wrought by Descartes. For Hume, people's feelings, desires and ideas do not necessarily correspond to anything that truly exists, unlike sense impressions which form the basis of Hume's notion of observation. But even though observation through sense impressions provides a basis or support for knowing what things are really like, for Hume, no *direct* impression of reality (of *substance*) is ever available. This sceptical view of knowledge is summarised by Marías (1967):

In Hume empiricism reaches an extreme and becomes sensationalism. According to him, ideas are necessarily based on intuitive *impressions*. Ideas are pale and lifeless copies of direct impressions; the belief in the continuity of reality is based on this capacity to reproduce experienced impressions and to create a world of representations (p268).

[According to Hume] I encounter impressions of colour, consistency, taste, odour, extension, roundness, smoothness, all of which I refer to an unknown

something that I call an apple, a substance. Sensible impressions have more vitality than imagined impressions, and this causes us to believe in the reality of what is represented (p258).

In Hume, empiricism reaches its ultimate consequences and becomes *scepticism*... knowledge is not knowledge of the things. As a result, reality becomes perception, experience, *idea* (p259).

Importantly, Hume does not limit his criticism to material substances but extends it to include metaphysical properties such as the self and even value. Hume's peculiar and influential development of Cartesian dualism is his distinction between people's *knowledge of reality* (essentially impression only, not direct knowledge) and people's *ideas about reality*. Indeed, with Hume the realm of ideas comes to include the metaphysical soul as well – i.e. the idea of a human essence or form, and all associated notions of morality as, in one way or another, bound up with the realisation of that human form or essence. This revised dualism (with the mind on one side and the soul/body/world on the other) forms the basis for Hume's distinction between fact and value – the claim that no statement of value (*ought*) can rightly follow from a statement of fact (*is*).

The implications of this philosophical development are especially pronounced in the field of action explanation and, therefore, moral theory. In the following section I consider how the division between reason and affect, cognition and feeling/motivation, fact and value etcetera, has influenced certain contemporary understandings of moral thought and action. In particular, I return to McNaughton's account of moral realism and moral non-cognitivism in order to demonstrate how the philosophical dualisms so far described are central to the epistemology chiefly informing moral non-cognitivism. I develop a critique of moral non-cognitivism in terms of its epistemological foundations (i.e. underlying dualism) as well as its

general account of moral experience in order to show that the mind – body/world dualism characterising Juridicalism is unconvincing. This creates a basis for arguing that there is a need for a more integrated philosophical anthropology to inform our understanding of moral thought and action. This refutation of Modern dualism is also foundational to the subsequent critique of the activist and procedural conceptions of reason developed in Chapter Four.

II. THE IMPLICATIONS OF MODERN DUALISM FOR MORAL THEORY – CRITIQUING MORAL NON-COGNITIVISM.

i. Modern Dualism and Moral Non-Cognitivism.

The preceding account of the rise of rationalist and empiricist philosophy, following Descartes, reveals how the idea of cognitive intelligence has tended to be collapsed into the single faculty of reason. Reason, in turn, has been repeatedly divorced from the body, the world and finally the soul - that is, from sensory-emotional, imaginative, or spiritual experience (metaphysics). Consequently, reason is stripped of any of the qualities rightly associated with such experience and hence also from the realm of evaluative judgement. This dualism lays the foundation for Hume's description of a fact-value gap. According to this doctrine, what people imagine, desire, hope for, trust in and consider morally important, seems to bear no constitutive relationship to what people know by way of sense perception and discursive reason (generally, empirical method).

Comparing contemporary moral non-cognitivism and moral realism, McNaughton (1988) has shown that a distinctly Humean fact-value distinction is the hallmark of a non-cognitivist moral perspective. In other words, moral non-cognitivism draws support from an epistemological tradition involving a sharp distinction between the

thinking, knowing, *reasoning* mind on the one hand, and the feeling, doing, *valuing* self on the other. As McNaughton writes:

[One of the main traditions supporting non-cognitivism] stems from the ethical theory of the eighteenth century German philosopher Immanuel Kant. Kant was, in part, reacting to the views of another eighteenth century philosopher, David Hume, whose ideas supply the main inspiration for much modern non-cognitivist thinking (p18).

McNaughton also argues that for the greater part of the twentieth century, “the claim that there is a fact-value gap took on the status of holy writ” (p29). He explains that the “division between fact and value runs right through non-cognitivism finding expression in many distinctions, such as the one between belief and attitude” or belief and desire (p18). McNaughton illustrates this division with the following example of a non-cognitivist explanation of moral commitment:

Suppose that I see some children throwing stones at an injured dog. Because of what I see I acquire a whole variety of beliefs – that there are three children, that the dog is bleeding, and so on. I am horrified by what I see; I am sure that such behaviour is cruel and wrong. What is it to make such a moral judgement? According to the [moral non-cognitivist] I am not, as the realist supposes, forming a further belief about what the children are doing, namely that what they are doing is wrong. Rather, I am reacting emotionally to what I see. My moral condemnation is to be thought of as an affective response – a reaction of the feeling side of my nature – to my beliefs about the way things are (p8).

In general, non-cognitivism explains moral thought in this two-part fashion. Firstly, people have certain beliefs about what they take the facts to be. Secondly, they react

to those beliefs at the level of their feelings. Such reactions reveal something about the person, but nothing about the world – the way things really are. In one sense, non-cognitivism can be seen as a logical doctrine in so far as it provides a coherent account of the nature of moral judgments as expressed in moral propositions (e.g. “euthanasia is wrong”). Such moral evaluations are regarded essentially as entailing someone’s affective response to the beliefs they have about the way things are. So far as it goes, this account of moral propositions has nothing to say about moral psychology, yet it would be disingenuous to suppose that non-cognitivism, even as a logical doctrine, makes no assumptions about or has no significant implications for moral psychology. Our concern here is precisely with moral psychology and so it is at this level that I want to look critically at the non-cognitivist position, the implications of which, for moral psychology, are made more clear in consideration of the question of moral motivation.

From a non-cognitivist perspective, moral judgements are thought to contain a *non-cognitive* element from the feeling or emotional side of human nature. Further, this non-cognitive element is considered the necessary ingredient for *motivating* people towards ethical (or basically any kind of) behaviour, as McNaughton explains:

This view of action explanation, which we may dub the *belief-desire theory*, was advocated by Hume who often expounded it in terms of a hydraulic metaphor. For example, the desire to eat an apple provides the motivational push which drives the agent to act but furnishes no information about how to satisfy that desire. Beliefs, which are themselves lacking in motive force, supply that information and thus guide or channel that push in appropriate directions. Thus the belief that I can buy apples at the local store channels the latent energy in my desire for apples in the direction of the shops. The combination of belief and desire is required to motivate the agent to act (p21).

ii. Against the Basic Philosophical Claims of Non-Cognitivism.

The moral realist position, to be developed in later chapters, does not deny the non-cognitivist claim that motivation requires a desire or emotional impetus, but does reject the claim that such desires must be *non-cognitive* in nature. The non-cognitivist claim that evaluative judgements involve faculties possessing no cognitive power, stems from the basic philosophical claim that there exists a fundamental gap between fact and value, or belief and desire, knowledge and affectivity, reasoning and valuing, the knowing mind and the doing, feeling, sensing body. Such dualism, however, need not be accepted.

As with Descartes, knowledge via discursive reason can be distinguished from and even contrasted with sensory-emotional experience. It is a mistake, however, to conclude from this comparison that any essential *separation* exists between the thinking knowing mind and the feeling doing affective nature. Descartes considered the difference in question to be one of *degree* between the clarity and distinctness of ideas, with knowledge restricted to the clear and distinct ideas in contrast to those derived from sensory, affective and volitional experience. In conceiving things this way, Descartes arguably overlooks the possibility that critical rationality and sensory-emotional understanding may be thought of as different *modes* of knowing, each corresponding to different aspects (or depths) of reality. In the same way, precise knowledge or beliefs about the facts of a situation can be distinguished from people's desires, feelings, attitudes and evaluative experience of those facts. But, again, there is no necessary logical connection between this distinction and the conclusion that beliefs are a matter of knowledge about things that really exist (cognition), while desires and the like are simply non-rational, purely personal and wholly subjective (that is, non-cognitive) elements. Our ability to distinguish between two things does not imply that there can be no sense in which the two 'belong together' or are mutually involving.

The Cartesian legacy, founded on this enduring division between the mind/soul and body/world, has become synonymous with empirical method and the dominance of a scientific worldview. McNaughton argues that “it is natural, at least in our day, to take science to be the proper method for discovering the nature of reality” (p36). To the extent that this is so, people are likely to suppose that “only those entities and properties which figure in a scientific account of the world really exist” (p36). The kind of dualism described, and which underscores moral non-cognitivism, tends to remove from the category of ‘the objectively real’ all that to which sensory-emotional, spiritual, imaginative and evaluative experience attests. McNaughton writes:

If what science does not tell us about is not really there, then it follows that goodness and beauty [and almost every other evaluative concept] are not properties of the world. *The evaluative features of our experience are contributed by us* (p36 italics added).

Part of the apparent appeal of a non-cognitivist account of moral experience, therefore, is the way in which it seems to fit neatly with a purely scientific (empirical) worldview. The conclusion, however, that the evaluative features of a person’s experience are contributed by the individual and do not correspond to anything objectively real, is only possible by assuming the tendentious philosophy of *scientism* – i.e. “the uncritical acceptance of scientific investigation as the only legitimate method of finding out the nature of reality” (McNaughton, p36).

Non-cognitivism seems like a realistic theory in other ways as well. It emphasises the deeply personal dimension of moral commitment in a way that resonates with the contemporary western ideal of individual autonomy. It emphasises the obvious difference between a rational (i.e. analytical and detached) survey of ‘the facts’, and the subjective, emotional level experience of those facts, without which moral action would be inconceivable. But, as has been argued, the way in which non-cognitivism

characterises and relates these two levels of understanding presupposes a sharp division between the thinking, knowing mind and the sensing, feeling body/world which, upon reflection, is difficult to substantiate.

Further, this view of things is not the only one possible. McNaughton notes that, in contrast to non-cognitivism, “The moral realist denies the existence of that sharp and significant division between fact and value which is the hallmark of his opponent’s position... Where the non-cognitivist sees division, the realist finds unity” (p39). There are no irrefutable, un-contestable grounds for arguing that such a sharp and significant division does or does not exist. Instead, appeals must be made to common or everyday experience in order to substantiate either position.

iii. Comparing Non-Cognitivism with Everyday Moral Experience.

To summarise, non-cognitivism assumes a significant division between knowledge via discursive, analytical reason on the one hand, and evaluative experience borne at the level of the emotions on the other, in explaining moral commitments. Non-cognitivism speaks of a *fact-value gap*, or division between people’s *beliefs* about a situation (formed by powers of reasoning) and their attitudes or *desires* (seen as purely emotional and non-cognitive). In this way, both the ‘cognitive’ element of beliefs about the facts and the ‘non-cognitive’ element of a personal desire are seen as necessary ingredients in a moral commitment or moral act. The philosophical basis for describing moral commitments in this way involves a division between the mind (as ‘discursive reason’) and the affective nature. Such a dualist foundation, it has been argued, is open to question. For there are significant ways in which non-cognitivism may be seen to contradict everyday moral experience.

One of the founding philosophers of moral non-cognitivism, David Hume, attempted to show that evaluative claims, like “stealing is bad” or “lust is wicked”, do not involve any genuine cognition of objective properties instantiated in some object or

situation. For example, Hume suggested that the quality of *beauty* is essentially unobservable (as a knowable reality). Instead, it is a property people *read into* the facts made known via sense perception. Among such sense perceptions, according to Hume, are not to be found any evaluative properties. Rather, such perceptions elicit a feeling of pleasure, for example, which is what people call beauty. This two-stage theory, however, cannot be made to square with everyday moral experience. For example, McNaughton has argued that:

It just does not accurately describe what it is like to see, say, a beautiful sunset. I do not see an example of coloured cloud, which is not in itself beautiful, and then experience a thrill of pleasure to which I give the name beauty. The beauty of the sunset is woven into the fabric of my experience of it. I see the sunset *as* beautiful (p56).

The implausibility of such a two-stage theory is even more striking when one considers not simply evaluative properties like beauty, but the idea of moral requirement. One common feature of moral experience is that it is intensely personal and subjective; another is that people naturally seek external and objective references to guide them in their decision-making. Indeed, certain situations actually appear to *demand* a particular response, irrespective of the agent's feelings or desires. As McNaughton also argues, "To be aware of a moral requirement is... to have a conception of the situation as demanding a response" (p109). In this way, "We cannot separate out... the way the agent conceives the situation to be from his taking it that he is required to act a certain way" (p110). That is, the quality of a person's *cognitive* grasp of the facts of a situation is implicated in their evaluative interpretation of and response to it – the two cannot be regarded as strictly independent.

Basically, the non-cognitivist account of morality is far removed from everyday experience in three main ways. Firstly, it leaves no room for the idea of moral truth

except in the “thin” sense of meaning that certain moral evaluations are shared, or intersubjectively experienced¹². Second, it leaves little room for discussion around moral disagreement, and makes no sense of the human search for ultimate values or principles, since the only ground for criticising another moral outlook is in terms of its internal consistency. And, thirdly, it denies that evaluative features or moral requirements can be observed in any situation, action or individual. For the only properties people can be aware of or rightly know are non-evaluative.

iv. Problems and Non-Problems of Moral Non-Cognitivism.

Inherent in this portrait of morality is the possibility of moral skepticism – the view that objective moral properties do not exist, and hence that truth bearing evaluations are an illusion. Certainly, to assert that, owing to the subjective, non-cognitive and hence non-real nature of moral evaluations, no moral outlook is any better or worse than any other, would be a highly relativistic outlook. I submit that such a view is a morally irresponsible position, directly at odds with reasonable interests in moral

¹² This is very much the status of moral truth in Richard Hare’s theory of Prescriptivism (1952), in which moral evaluations attain a level of objectivity of a ‘rational’, but not a factual, sort. Further, Hare’s criterion for rational objectivity is defined procedurally, in terms of the need for consistency or universalisability, rather than substantively in terms of correlation with an objective transcendent order. In this respect, although attempting to find a middle road between moral realism and non-cognitivism, Hare is still basically committed to a Cartesian conception of rationality. Also for Hare, the primary role of moral judgements is the prescription of courses of action, rather than substantive insight into what is *right*, being a morally *good* person, or living the *truth*, in any realist sense. This resonates with Richard Rorty’s (1998) denial that the search for truth is a search for correspondence with reality and his counter-claim that it be seen instead as a search for the widest possible intersubjective agreement. Such a view, arguably, underwrites the fervent concern shown by some educators to identify “shared” or “core values” on which to base [moral] education. For example, in his search for an ontology of values, Aspin claims that “values are objective because they are intersubjective” (2002: p15). On this basis he argues that such shared values can be considered “action-guiding and generally prescriptive” (p16). Clearly, on this view, the objectivity of values related to controversial moral topics is left in tatters, since one party’s set of intersubjective values will conflict with that of the other party, and both conflicting sets of values cannot be equally objective.

education and the quest for schools to help form ethically minded and morally good people. Of course, non-cognitivism need not entail moral relativism, since the position still admits of ways to rank moral points of view. I would argue, however, that non-cognitivism in all its variants tends to present too reductive a view of the moral life, allowing only for a 'deflated' conception of moral education as looking to provide students with some way to adjudicate conflicting moral points of view according to criteria such as their relative logical consistency or universalisability. In this regard it is worth pausing to consider some of the moral philosophical and ethical positions that derive from or share in the main presuppositions of moral-non-cognitivism.

In Chapter One (II.ii), I highlighted several of the main forms of non-cognitivism, including Ayer's emotivist view of moral evaluations as mere projections of emotional attitudes to one's beliefs about the world. From an emotivist position such as Ayer's, morality simply amounts to expressions of personal desires or what one feels to be right. In this way, moral obligation extends no further than to each individual in following their own desires and feelings, subject only to the broadest, procedurally defined limitations (such as not causing 'physical harm'). Such unbridled individualism is fraught with the dangers of greed and self-preservationism. Other forms of non-cognitivism, however, seek to rank moral perspectives in terms of their internal consistency or the degree to which they are universalisable. In such cases, the criteria for assessing moral points of view are logical or conceptual, rather than moral, and so tend to imply that in matters of right and wrong, or good and evil, correct judgements are those which can be made secure by discursive reason. This can be seen, for example, in Hare's Prescriptivism. For Hare and other prescriptivists, correct moral judgement centres on the ability to reason analytically about ethical questions and to develop action-guiding principles that can be justified, according to the extent that they bind the individual or conflicting parties irrespective of their subjective feelings and beliefs.

Blackburn's Quasi-realism is different again. It is a highly complicated project, built on non-cognitivist and projectivist premises, that Blackburn describes as "the enterprise of explaining why our [moral] discourse has the shape it does" (1984: p180). I cannot enter into a refined engagement with Blackburn's position here but want to suggest that his project, by which he supposes one might 'earn the right' to treat moral talk *as if* it were established as true on moral realist grounds, also prioritises a detached analytical stance towards moral evaluations as expressed propositionally. The same might be said of Gibbard's Quasi-realist theory of *Wise Choices, Apt Feelings*. Gibbard is expressly concerned with a narrow reading of morality as concerning "the moral emotions it makes sense for us to have from a standpoint of full and impartial engagement" (1990: p128). The very project of trying to determine what moral emotions 'make sense', and the assumed importance to this task of assuming a 'full and impartial engagement', also prioritises a detached analytical focus "on agent-based criteria for reasonable norms" which, as Rorty argues, "sheds little light on the other tasks of morality" (1993: p319).

Indeed, the variety among non-cognitivist positions is less important to my argument than their underlying similarities. While the range of non-cognitivist positions can, to a varying extent, resist the idea that no moral outlook is any better or worse than any other (i.e. moral relativism), they all share an underlying belief that no moral outlook is *objectively better founded* than any other. Further, one might say that non-cognitivism implies that the *ultimate* principles of moral outlooks are no better objectively well-grounded than each other. For example, two moral outlooks might both agree that killing human beings is evil, but have different ultimate reasons for saying so: one because human life is sacred and hence precious, the other because human beings should be free to pursue whatever course of action they desire provided it doesn't restrict that same freedom in other individuals. Now, one outlook might not extend its view to capital punishment, maintaining that capital

punishment is perfectly legitimate in certain cases, while not wishing to qualify its fundamental commitment to the notion that killing human beings is evil. In contrast, the other outlook may extend its view to include capital punishment on the view that the life of even the worst kind of criminal is precious. Allowing that neither view can be convicted of internal inconsistency, non-cognitivism will say that there is no way rationally to resolve the disagreement about capital punishment at the level of ultimate principles – both moral outlooks are as good as each other from the point of view of there being objective rational grounds for them: neither has objective rational grounds. Whatever moral education might amount to following such claims about moral points of view, it is unlikely to be adequately responsive to everyday human interest in forming insights and judgements that are right and true in something more than a relative or highly contingent (i.e. in an objective) sense.

Putting aside the underlying metaphysical and moral-psychological presuppositions of non-cognitivism – the tendentious nature of which I shall discuss shortly – its presiding concern with examining moral propositions, and the way such propositions are generally considered, lays non-cognitivist theories open to significant critique on phenomenological grounds. For instance, non-cognitivism generally divides moral propositions into two components – one descriptive, the other prescriptive. Consider the proposition “hunting is cruel”. The descriptive component pertains to a particular instance or type of behaviour, as denoted by the term “hunting”, of which the value term “cruel” is predicated. The prescriptive component entails the note of condemnation in the proposition which infers that because the activities denoted by the term hunting fall into the category of those that can be considered cruel, it is morally contemptible and so should be avoided or outlawed. The interest of non-cognitivists is generally with determining how value words, like “cruel” in the above example, work to express and determine normative standards of good and bad, right and wrong. One of the main problems encountered by this approach, however, is that it is not possible to define the descriptive component of ‘thick’ ethical terms like

“cruel” (or, for example, “inconsiderate”, “just”, “greedy” or “chaste”) without using a word of the same kind. Putnam explains the dilemma this way:

For example, someone who has studied how the word “cruel” is used without performing... an act of imaginative identification [with it] could predict that the word would be used in certain obvious cases, for instance, torture. But such a person would be baffled by the fact that some cases which seemed (from the same external point of view) to be cases of “kindness” would be described by us as “subtle forms of cruelty”, and by the fact that some cases of what he or she would describe as cruelty would be described by us as “not cruel at all under the circumstances”. The attempt of non-cognitivists to split words like “cruel” into a “descriptive meaning component” and a “prescriptive meaning component” founders on the impossibility of saying what the “descriptive meaning” is without using the word “cruel” itself, or a synonym (1992: p86).

Putnam considers that the views of philosophers Bernard Williams and Iris Murdoch, regarding the strong entanglement of fact and value, help highlight what he sees as the forlorn hope of non-cognitivism. Murdoch, especially, emphasises the close interdependence of our ability to see something clearly and describe it appropriately on the one hand, and our ability to determine if it is good or bad, or right or wrong on the other. Putnam explains:

For example, our evaluation of a person’s moral stature may critically depend on whether we describe the person as “impertinent” or “un-stuffy”. Our life-world, Murdoch is telling us, does not factor neatly into “facts” and “values”; we live in a messy human world in which seeing reality with all its nuances... and making appropriate “value judgements” are simply not separable abilities (p87).

Another reason to suspect non-cognitivist accounts of moral evaluation relates to their abiding concern to work out, from an examination of the function of moral propositions, some kind of 'reasonable' or 'public' ethics, the chief aim of which would be to adjudicate between conflicting moral points of view by appeal to procedurally derived principles perceived as binding on all parties irrespective of their subjective cultural, religious, social or emotional standing. In Hare this takes the form of universalisability; in Rawls, the 'veil of ignorance' (2001) ¹³. In this way morality is identified with negotiating the conflicts arising from social interaction according to the demands of a highly transparent or 'public' rationality – clearest perhaps in Rawls' theory of 'justice as fairness' and accompanying notion of 'public reason' (2001, 2005). This is certainly the thrust of juridical ethics and can also be seen in Kohlberg's 'higher stages' of moral reasoning/development, which are characterised by an orientation towards principles appealing to logical universality and consistency. In this way, the internal consistency, or generalisability, of a moral outlook or 'framework' begins to take precedence over its substantive content.

Indeed, the important aspect of this kind of ethical project (for our purposes) is the tendency to diminish the fundamental importance of the *particular* beliefs and practices, and *substantive* visions of the good which define moral communities, and which people find ultimately compelling. What follows is a highly reductive picture of the moral life in which the personal and communal elements of feeling, belief,

¹³ Such quests for a 'reasonable ethics' or 'public reason' are directly tied to an underlying denial of any objective (i.e. external, mind-independent) foundations for moral values. This is the common ground shared by non-cognitivists and many other modern moral theorists, such as John Rawls. While he is no non-cognitivist, Rawls' theory is arguably representative of certain metaphysical and epistemological assumptions inherited from the post-Enlightenment tradition (or Cartesian Legacy) in moral philosophy. Haldane refers to these inherited assumptions as the "empiricist orthodoxy", an outlook chiefly characterised by a pervasive subjectivity regarding the metaphysical status of value, and which he argues is evident in both deontological and consequentialist moral theories (2004a).

community, custom, religious faith and the like are seen, at best, as having an instrumental value only because of their role in developing feelings and emotions (affectivity) which are thought necessary for moral motivation. Moral development as addressed to forming the young in a reasonable ethics or public reason will tend to eschew traditional sources of morality - religion and other culturally specific patterns of feeling and customary social relations etcetera. An alternative view is to see these elements as inextinguishable from the contexts in which the moral life is played out, as well as from a person's capacity to apprehend the features of any given situation (i.e. their character), and therefore as vital to one's development of moral understanding as well as to efforts aimed at overcoming moral disagreement.

As I discussed in Chapter Two (I.v,vi), since Kohlberg, many educational theorists have sought to reintroduce or re-emphasise the subjective and especially affective dimensions of moral experience in responding to the moral education question. Yet a sharp division between reasoning and valuing (stemming from the dualisms inherent in post-Cartesian moral philosophy and Modern thought generally), evident in juridical epistemology and non-cognitivist moral theory, continues to inform how the chief problems and approaches of moral education are expressed by many moral education theorists. Indeed, Carr and Steutel (1999b: p244) speak of the abiding influence of what they term the "modern (and modernist) Kohlbergian moral education orthodoxy," a view they maintain is informed by a wide array of enlightenment ethical sources. To the extent that such an orthodoxy holds sway, and that, as Carr and Steutel also claim, "twentieth-century research and enquiry into moral development has continued to be mostly the disputed territory of competing [empirical] psychological theories" (p242), it is not surprising to find the dualisms I have been discussing throughout this chapter expressed in various ways by contemporary theorists.

An especially enlightening example of this is the moral educational theory of Roger Straughan (1999). An essential aspect of Straughan's approach is his underlying conception of morality as centrally concerning the need and ability to give reasons in order to justify moral points of view (p260). From this narrowly defined and distinctly juridical conception of morality, Straughan is particularly concerned with what he sees as the 'motivational problem' in moral education (see Chapter Two, I.vi). The significance of this problem, for Straughan, also stems from his implicit division between the "'theoretical', reasoning element" and the "'practical', doing element" of both morality and education (p260). In addressing the motivational problem, Straughan distinguishes between what he calls "justificatory reasons" and "motivational reasons" for moral judgments and action. A justificatory reason is one a person recognises as a valid reason for behaving a certain way in a particular situation. A motivational reason stems from the agent's wants and desires and is actually instrumental in motivating the agent to act a certain way – sometimes in accord with her justificatory reasons, sometimes not. Part of the problem of Straughan's distinction here is explaining in what sense a motivational reason is in fact a reason, and in what way it can be both a reason (i.e. rational) and at the same time connected with one's feelings and desires, while other sorts of reasons (like justificatory reasons) are not connected in this way. As Carr writes:

In [Straughan's] view, the problem of the [weak-willed person] is that although he acknowledges a strong justification for acting other than he does... the reason is not presently *motivational* for him... Either the motivational reason has equal status with the justification as a *real* reason – in which case it remains unclear why the agent fails to act upon that which he takes to have greater rational authority – or its motivational force derives from its character as a desire or impulse in cognitive disguise. In that case, Straughan's attempt to have it both ways in the form of some hybrid of reason

and desire also fails, and his motivational reasons totter on the brink of a non-cognitivist theory of moral motivation (1999: p143).

All variants of non-cognitivism maintain “a sharp distinction between cognitive states, which do not themselves move the agent towards action, and essentially motivational states, such as desires or preferences” (McNaughton, p49). Such a divided view of the moral psyche is a defining mark of the epistemological tradition on which non-cognitivist moral theory relies – what I call juridical epistemology. If this view of morality is correct, the question arises: on which side of the fence do moral commitments fall – the rational, cognitive side or the emotional, non-cognitive side? As argued in Chapter Two and reiterated above, this question has largely governed contemporary moral education approaches. It is reflected in theoretical approaches to the question of moral motivation such as Straughan’s, and also pedagogical approaches in which attention is divided between (a) developing the ‘cognitive core’ through analytical and discursive reasoning about belief systems and moral issues, and (b) devising ways of contextualising moral thinking to invite reflection and stimulate the aspect of feeling thought necessary for moral motivation. But also in Chapter Two, the question was posed whether such a moral perspective is any way mistaken. We now have reason to answer this question in the affirmative.

Among contemporary theorising about moral development and moral educational, relatively little thought has been given to the possibility that not only are emotion and affectivity necessary for providing an impetus to choose rightly and act morally, but that the quality of one’s cognitive grasp of a situation may be interdependent with the quality and sensitivity of one’s emotional and affective faculties.¹⁴ In other

¹⁴ Arguably, educational philosophers and philosophers in general have paid more attention to such a possibility in recent years. In particular, a renewed interest in the Aristotelian virtue tradition among certain contemporary philosophers has involved considerable attention to the strongly integrated philosophical anthropology advanced by Aristotle and his followers. Indeed, these are the sources I

words, a way of knowing may also be a way of feeling or caring, and vice versa. Even less thought has been given to the radically different moral psychology and epistemology this implies. The overall point of this thesis is to consider just such an (alternative) epistemology and moral psychology and to reflect on the implications for moral education in schools.

III. QUESTIONING MODERN DUALISM – SOME RECENT REFLECTIONS.

i. A Review of the Argument So Far.

By showing how the Modern dualism inherent in juridical epistemology is open to question, and that non-cognitivist moral theory, which draws heavily upon that epistemology, fails to account for key aspects of everyday moral experience, a basis has been created for challenging the main priorities and concerns of a juridical ethical perspective. For example, a moral realist perspective is able to deny the importance of the question which side of the fence moral commitments fall (and even to deny that this is a meaningful question at all) since it rejects from the outset that sharp and significant division between cognitive and motivational states which is the hallmark of the non-cognitivist position.

In short, the very concept of ‘human reason’ within Juridicalism (i.e. reason as distinct and independent from the feeling and doing elements of human nature) gives rise to the perspective reflected in non-cognitivist moral theory. Everyday experience,

turn to in later chapters in order to develop an alternative framework for considering the cognitive anatomy of moral understanding, the intellectual foundations of moral life, and hence the moral educational task of schools. What is clear, however, is that these developments in philosophical circles have yet to make a significant impact on contemporary discussion of moral development and moral education among educational theorists more generally.

however, attests to the fact that reason is *not* fundamentally cut off from the emotional and affective faculties. Further, I shall argue, drawing on a more ancient epistemological tradition based in classical and medieval European philosophy, that reason more properly refers to the human mind's unique power to form an intellectual identity with objective reality. In this respect, the reasoning intellect does not act alone but in a strongly integrated way with the body, the senses, the emotions and the will. The two main aspects of this alternative epistemology – namely, the idea of an objective and transcendent reality (including moral order), and a unified capacity of perception (the *mind/soul/body dynamic*) capable of true knowledge (albeit partial and incomplete) of that reality – will be developed more fully in Chapter Five.

What the preceding critique of the dualistic anthropology underlying juridical epistemology reveals is the need for a more realistic and convincing account of how cognition and affect - reasoning and valuing - are interrelated and feature in the moral life. This need is especially relevant to the search for an adequate account of the cognitive anatomy of moral understanding as a basis for interpreting the moral education question, which I raised in Chapter One.

In Chapter One I argued that the adequacy of any cognitive anatomy of moral understanding hinges upon the availability of some integrated framework of intelligence - or epistemology. We are now better placed to describe, more precisely, one of the features of such an epistemology. From the critique of the dualism in Juridicalism, we can see that a reintegrated account of the rational/cognitive and bodily/emotional dimensions of human knowing is required for a better understanding of moral thought and action, and hence moral education in schools. In this respect, there is a need to move beyond the argument that emotions and the affective faculties *are* integrated with reasoning, but *only in an instrumental way*. That is, where feelings, emotions, motivations and so forth are seen simply as 'enabling conditions' for thinking and reasoning, the same problematic dualism, previously

discussed, is upheld. Such a view, while offering a 'weak' integration, falls short of accounting for the ways in which emotional experience can itself be a way of *knowing* someone or something. For instance, in grieving for a dead friend one may come to know that person, or something about one's relationship with them, in a deeper, truer, more profound way. Such an (emotional) experience, in other words, can constitute a cognitive grasp of the nature of a situation, person or thing that was previously (and would otherwise remain) unattainable. The required epistemological basis must therefore be marked by a more *integrated anthropology*. We shall return to this in greater detail in Chapter Five.

The arguments so far adduced in this chapter are general enough to invite the conclusion that our understanding of the cognitive dimensions of the moral life requires a more integrated psychology. I now wish to highlight further evidence to support this conclusion in the area of moral education theory. A notion that there is something wrong with current ideas about moral value and how it enters into education, as well as the epistemology supporting such ideas, has been expressed recently by a number of educational theorists. Each, in their own way, suggests the need for a richer account of moral understanding as a property emerging from the interplay of cognition and affect, and as occurring in the embodied lives of historically and culturally situated individuals. We now move to consider these discussions.

ii. Hill on Integrating Values and Disposition.

Hill (2004, 2005), reflecting on the discourse of contemporary values education, has expressed reservation about the emphasis on values as determinative principles of human action. Hill (2005) argues that by speaking of values as "principles and standards that guide behaviour," values education approaches overemphasise the cognitive dimensions of evaluative experience, "which potentially obscures the motivational aspect" (p50). The 'motivational aspect', for Hill, is more closely aligned

with such personal factors such as culturally informed beliefs, subjective feelings and emotion. By redefining values as “*the priorities individuals and societies attach to certain beliefs, experiences, and objects, in deciding how they shall live and what they shall treasure*” (p51), Hill aims to broaden the notion of values to include the idea of “a whole-person decision,” including a “disposition” to choose a particular course of action (p51). Of course, Hill’s concern that values educators may overlook the affective, dispositional aspects of moral judgement by concerning themselves with the cognitive, implies that the cognitive and the affective/volitional dimensions of evaluative experience are generally understood as fundamentally distinct to begin with. Nevertheless, Hill’s reflections confirm the need for a more *integrated* account of the cognitive and affective aspects of moral understanding – an account that will challenge presupposed notions about morality and the life of the mind.

For Hill, ‘values’ remain guides to moral thinking, but must somehow include a *disposition* to enact those values. Disposition is, for Hill, an essential aspect of the kind of personal change sought in values education. In his view, one’s disposition depends on ‘higher-order frameworks of meaning’, seen as “integrated network[s] of beliefs and values” (p54). For Hill, belief systems should be “explored” to help students understand that a connection exists between such higher order frameworks and their moral judgements, intuitions and reactions. The reason Hill sees this as an important task, however, springs from the following presupposition:

...it is essential to recognise that human beings are driven to construct some kind of framework of meaning... which is each individual’s way of making sense of the social reality (2004: ¶21).

The idea that the frameworks underpinning people’s moral sensibilities, habits and choices, are in some way “constructed” tends to suggest the importance of adopting an instrumental stance - disengaged or independent from any particular framework

of meaning. Hill's aim is to enable and encourage students to construct a *personal* framework of meaning, by first bringing to their attention the fact that their customary ways of valuing and acting derive from higher-order frameworks of beliefs and values. By exploring such connections in a range of contexts, Hill's hope is that students will then be able deliberately, autonomously and responsibly to consider and [re]structure their own frameworks of understanding. I am not here calling this aim, as such, into question, but rather its supposed importance to young people's moral development and its intended association with a more integrated view of the cognitive and affective, the rational and emotional. Clearly, Hill understands the need for such an integrated framework to inform our thinking about the moral life and moral education. However, Hill's overriding moral educational project - "exploring" higher order frameworks of meaning - prioritises a detached, analytical stance that is implicitly directed towards distancing oneself from received moral truth and subjective ways of knowing. This approach relies on an epistemological outlook that assumes the possibility of adopting some 'morally-neutral' rational standpoint from which to explore and so to 'get at' - to appraise and re-make - one's own moral framework. This approach seems oblivious to the fact that - as Hill himself maintains - there is no such depersonalised vantage-point: one cannot simply choose among patterns of moral insight and commitment in the manner of a well-informed consumer.

In short, the operative concepts of 'exploration' and 'construction' grant a central place to discursive reason in such a manner as to reinforce the kind of division between the rational/cognitive and emotional/affective that Hill is calling into question. The radical reflexivity and self-objectification which Hill's "exploration" requires, is not itself independent of all frameworks of meaning. On the contrary, it is typically bound up with a committed stance towards disengaged reason and an associated commitment to modern freedom or the ideal of self-mastery through rational control - a point which is considered more carefully in Chapter Four. As

such, it represents quite a *particular* framework of meaning in its own right. It is not my intention to argue that such is Hill's underlying framework. Rather, I wish to point out that *any and every* kind of moral pedagogy represents an assent to some 'higher-order framework of meaning' (or general philosophy of life) and, likewise, calls upon students to make that assent. Every aspect (explicit and inexplicit) of education, and especially those aspects considered important to moral education, will rest upon and so reinforce certain assumptions about the nature of moral value – e.g. that it is imposed from without, or constructed from within, or that it resides in reality itself and is discerned as part of an on-going struggle against the easy tendency toward selfish fantasy. G.K. Chesterton neatly summarises the vital point here:

Every education teaches a philosophy; if not by dogma then by suggestion, by implication, by atmosphere. Every part of that education has a connection with every other part. If it does not all combine to convey some general view of life it is not education at all (1950: p167).

If, as Hill recognises, a synthesis of reasoning and valuing (or the cognitive and evaluative dimensions of moral thought and action) is vital for understanding moral education, then assent must first be given to an epistemological framework that is more congenial to such a synthesis. A better focus, therefore, might be away from *exploring underlying belief systems* and towards *discerning the truth*. This would constitute an open assent to some sort of classical realist framework, as defended later in this thesis. Rather than 'constructing frameworks of meaning', it could make better sense to speak of a *vital understanding* or *contact with reality* in light of which the values people hold are made properly intelligible and ultimately compelling. Such vital understanding would not be considered in terms of an abstract, theoretical framework of beliefs and values, but (to borrow a phrase from Iris Murdoch, 1971) would refer to an individual's "quality of consciousness".

For Murdoch a good quality of consciousness is a habitual level of awareness characterised as “a patient, loving regard, directed upon a person, a thing, a situation” (p40). While Murdoch rarely deals explicitly with the role of the emotions in her moral philosophy, it is clear that since a good quality of consciousness requires one to “see justly, to overcome prejudice, to avoid temptation, to control and curb imagination, to direct reflection” (p40) etcetera, the ability to *feel for* others is vitally important. As McDonough has argued, Murdoch emphatically resists positions that distinguish or separate the place of emotion and that of reason (1988: p218), speaking instead of a unified consciousness and concerning herself more directly with the question of how consciousness is to be purified. Further, while purifying consciousness is, for Murdoch, a matter of ‘detachment’, this means detaching from one’s usual selfish preoccupations in order to attend more carefully to reality, rather than detachment aimed at self-objectification. Murdoch’s suggestion that detachment means, “We cease to be in order to attend to the existence of something else” (1971: p59) does not imply a flight from the emotions and affective response. Rather, as McDonough urges, it presents us with a description of “a vision that puts the good of others above one’s own interests” (1988: p220). McDonough continues:

Murdoch is not interested in developing a philosophy that plays into a romantic self-indulgence or into an empirically limiting position that creates boundaries around something that, in her view, is neither confinable nor definable. For Murdoch, reason and emotion are conjoined in the call to be “just” and “loving” in our orientation toward one another (p223).

A good quality of consciousness, eliciting correct knowledge partly constituted by relevant feelings, therefore, might be necessary for the clarity of ‘vision’ required to ‘see’ the reality from which value concepts derive and to which they are necessarily tied, and so to respond in light of that vision.

Bénéton's (2004) notion of *vital reason* and Murdoch's idea of *quality of consciousness* will be taken up in this regard in later chapters. It is presently clear, however, that Hill's reflections on values education highlight the need to question and rethink current presuppositions about the nature of moral understanding and its relationship to the cognitive-intellectual development focus of schools. To summarise, the recovery of an epistemology in which reasoning and valuing are more feasibly related is of primary importance. Hill's reflections above make it clear that a conceptual separation of reasoning and valuing - the life of the mind and the personal life - makes realistic approaches to moral education difficult to articulate and to achieve. As such, the need for an alternative epistemological basis is evident. Along these lines Fraenkel (1978) has argued that "children need to develop not only intellectually but also emotionally if they are to become fully functioning and psychologically whole human beings" but also observes, "it is becoming clear... that intellectual and emotional development are interdependent" (1978: p259). Other recent reflections suggest more directly the kind of integrated epistemology moral educators might need to consider. I now turn to consider Smith's (1997) ideas about moral judgement and 'attentiveness' and, in the next section, the idea of 'moral vision' emphasised by Smith and Standish (1997).

iii. Smith on Moral Judgement and Attentiveness.

Smith (1997) has argued that an [over]emphasis on the place of rules and principles (as per a juridical ethical perspective) results in a great conceptual reduction of the texture, fluidity and scope of moral experience. He writes:

Moral principles... have their place among the elements of the moral life, and may be of significance from time to time... But exaggeration of the importance of moral principles across the whole range of moral experience acts as an open invitation not only to conceive moral thinking as a search for the rigid and

unvarying guidance of rules, but to see that search, and the use of rules, as something for special occasions only: for when we are confronted with a dilemma, or when we are discussing euthanasia or genetic engineering. It obscures the way that the moral dimension colours the whole of our lives. It encourages us to place morality in a ghetto called moral education... (1997: p116).

Smith argues that the emphasis in moral education needs to be drawn away from moral principles and placed more squarely on *moral judgement*. By 'judgement', Smith means something quite different to Kohlberg's juridical notion of moral judgement as identifying highly *generalisable principles* for action through *analytical* reasoning about situations of social conflict. Instead, for Smith, the key features of moral judgement are "attentiveness, a kind of self-awareness, flexibility and the right use of experience" (p114). *Attentiveness* to the details of each and every incident is vital to avoid responding "in the light of your own needs and vulnerabilities" (p114) and so being able to perceive and respond to what is *really* going on. Following this is the need for *self-awareness*, which acts as "a check on self-interest and self-regard" (p115). "In being willing to revisit and revise our judgement we display appropriate *flexibility*" (p115), while through *reflection on experience*, "We learn to distinguish the morally relevant features of situations, perceiving those which are and those which are not similar to previous ones" (p115).

Significantly, first and foremost among Smith's listed features of moral judgement is *attentiveness* - the nature of which is quite different to discursive analysis. Instead, attentiveness denotes a turning away from the self towards *that which is* - or reality - in willingness to receive from it. This suggests a different epistemology to that beginning with critical enquiry, analysis and comparison, and which aims to gain control by extracting or constructing order and appearance. It also suggests a philosophical anthropology in which the rational and emotional faculties are

integrated powers of a mind uniquely capable of perceiving and understanding (that is, acquiring true knowledge of) reality.

iv. Smith & Standish and Moral Vision.

Further, Smith and Standish (1997) have questioned certain of the philosophical underpinnings of many contemporary approaches to moral education. In particular, they point out an impoverished view of morality arising from a reductive and fragmented idea of human knowledge, rooted in the instrumentalism of modern philosophy (p141). They note how such philosophy has “fostered a partially distorted conception of the moral life – as consisting of issues and choices” surrounding ethical dilemmas (p141). This narrow conception of the moral life, they also suggest, grants a privileged place to detached analytical reasoning about moral problems, which are understood as conflicts emanating from people’s personal, subjective beliefs, feelings, attitudes etcetera. In this way, the moral agent comes to be associated with the idea of a thoroughly impersonal, purely rational choosing will. Yet such a notion, Smith and Standish maintain, is at odds with how someone’s ability to comprehend another person or a situation, in all its morally significant detail - that is, one’s ability to attain a rational grasp of a situation - is itself bound up with an individual’s habitual way of seeing and responding, personally and emotionally, to the world. They write:

The prominence given to circumstances where people are faced with dilemmas... is apt to give the impression that morality is reserved for special occasions... This is a travesty of the way in which *our lives are never without moral significance*... It is also symptomatic of the running together of our excessive preoccupation with individualism and the identity imposed on us as consumers. We think of ourselves as people who express ourselves through choices. To oppose someone’s choice then looks like an unwarranted suppression of their individuality and authenticity, of what is closest and most

real to them... But values, and especially moral values, are not like that. We do not choose to think this is right and that is wrong. Normally *we cannot see things otherwise: their rightness or wrongness forces itself on us. To change our values requires a more subtle and fundamental change of view* (p141 italics added).

If a synthesis between reasoning and valuing is required for moral education, then a philosophical starting point in which the two are regarded as fundamentally integrated must be sought. In this regard, it is arguably significant that Smith and Standish employ the metaphor of 'vision' or 'seeing' to describe how moral knowledge (reason and cognition) and moral judgement (emotion and affectivity) are inseparable. The metaphor of vision allows for a view of cognition (knowledge and understanding) as a kind of 'seeing', or 'intellectual perception', consisting in certain rational/intellectual and affective/moral excellences, none of which can properly be considered independent of the others. In later chapters I develop a case for the Aristotelian virtue ethical tradition as an important instance of this kind of *visional* moral philosophy: one which provides a better basis for understanding how the moral life connects with the life of the mind and so for interpreting the proper moral educational task of schools. In preparation for that part of the thesis, the following insight from Martha Nussbaum helps illustrate the connection between the metaphor of perception and a genuinely alternative philosophical viewpoint from which reasoning and valuing are understood as strongly integrated¹⁵:

The agent who discerns intellectually that a friend is in need or that a loved one has died, but who fails to respond to these facts with appropriate sympathy or grief, clearly lacks a part of Aristotelian virtue. It seems right to say... that a part of discernment or perception is lacking... We want to say...

¹⁵ See also McDowell's *Virtue and Reason* (2001), particularly passages on the perception metaphor (p51).

[that this person] really does not fully *know* it, because the emotional part of cognition is lacking... The emotions are themselves modes of vision, or recognition. Their responses are part of what knowing or truly recognising or acknowledging *consists in* (1990: p79).

As seen, a number of reflections by contemporary educational theorists support the view that such a strongly integrated psychosomatic framework is required. It might be said that these theorists' collective challenge to contemporary moral educational theory represents a challenge to the Cartesian Legacy in the Modern tradition, especially its distinctively fragmented underlying anthropology. Taken together, these reflections also point to the need for a richer and more variegated account of moral knowledge and moral learning. In summary, an epistemology providing some integrated anthropology is needed better to explain how the life of the mind and the moral life come together in daily living. In this way we might better understand the cognitive anatomy of moral understanding, and so more clearly and adequately interpret what moral education in schools might actually entail.

v. Summary and Conclusion of Chapter Three.

Chapter Three began with a description of Descartes' quest for a method of attaining clear and distinct knowledge. With Descartes' philosophical distinction between the thinking, knowing mind on the one hand, and the doing, feeling body/soul on the other, and his reduction of the mind to the faculty of analytical and discursive reason, a strong dualism was introduced into subsequent, Modern philosophy. The development of this dualism, it was argued, attained a significant point in the philosophy of David Hume, for whom all knowledge is based on logic, definitions or observation following *sense-impressions*. Emotion and affectivity, especially as involved in evaluation, are, for Hume, simply more complex *ideas* arising from indirect, less vividly recalled and subjectively associated impressions. This, then, is the basis for Hume's fact-value distinction and claim that no statement of moral

imperative (*ought*) can rightly follow from a statement of fact (*is*)¹⁶. The result of this philosophical dualism in contemporary ethics was then considered.

Hume's fact-value gap, or belief-desire theory of action explanation, is a central strand of non-cognitivist moral theory. Non-cognitivism regards moral judgements as comprising two elements: one cognitive, the other non-cognitive. The cognitive element has to do with reasoning about the 'facts' of a situation which, it is argued, are theoretically available to anyone but do not provide any impetus for action, or moral motivation. For the agent to be moved from moral reasoning to moral action requires an appropriate feeling or desire, an emotional-level response which is non-cognitive. In this way, moral or evaluative properties are seen to be contributed by the agent, but not to correspond to anything objectively real, and therefore as unrelated to knowledge and cognition. Non-cognitivism, therefore makes the central ethical question, 'what side of the fence between belief and desire (or the cognitive and non-cognitive) do moral judgements fall?'

Assuming this philosophical background, a range of ethical positions can be formed, including juridical ethics which emphasises critical reasoning about moral dilemmas

¹⁶ It might be argued, against my rejection of any Humean-style separation of fact and value, that the question of whether and how value judgements relate to descriptive matters of fact is a *logical* issue. Logically, statements of fact about a situation do not necessarily indicate any moral requirements involved, but it is not clear that the way in which moral and factual/descriptive claims are related must be of a logical nature. Surely, whether or not the descriptive claim "Tom's feelings have been hurt" implies the moral imperative "I should do something to cheer up Tom", is not a question that logic can settle. It is rather a moral question whether Tom's having been hurt has that moral significance – and a question that cannot be answered in the abstract. For instance, whether I should cheer up Tom depends on whether he deserved the reprimand he received from his mother, on what kind of character Tom is, how old he is, how I am related to him and other matters. Of course arguments are needed in this area, but it is question-begging to assume that they must be of a logical kind.

and the development of an internally consistent framework of values, rules or principles. Although this strongly rationalistic position has been questioned in recent times, attempts to grant due emphasis to the affective-volitional dimensions of moral evaluation have generally assumed the same sharp and significant division between fact and value – the cognitive and non-cognitive. I have argued, however, that this presiding assumption can be challenged in two significant ways. Firstly, the mind/soul – body/world division which characterises Juridicalism, and which also underpins moral non-cognitivism, is open to question. Secondly, not only does Juridicalism involve a contestable dualism, but the main moral-philosophical and ethical positions which assume this dualism cannot be made to square with everyday experience in significant ways. The reduction of moral understanding and truth-bearing evaluations to merely something of human fashioning goes against the grain of moral experience in which people seek objective and external points of reference to guide them in their judgement and action, irrespective of what they (think they) know or how they are motivated or feel. Certain situations may actually *demand* a particular response, irrespective of an agent's desires or feelings and, in this way, to be aware of a moral requirement cannot be separated from an agent's conception (or cognitive grasp) of a situation.

The critique I have developed of the dualism underlying Juridicalism, as well as moral non-cognitivism which can be seen to rely on that same dualism, suggests that there exists a need for a more integrated anthropology to inform our understanding of the cognitive anatomy of moral understanding, and hence to properly interpret the moral education question. This general conclusion is confirmed by a number of recent reflections by educational theorists who have queried accepted notions of how moral value enters into education and, consequently, have signalled the importance of a revised account of how reason, cognition and affect are interrelated. These reflections support the argument that a more strongly integrated anthropology would help make sense of how the emotional and affective faculties are bound up with rational-

cognitive understanding. From such an integrated framework it would follow that the development or perfection of one's sensory-emotional-volitional capacities is intrinsic to one's rational/intellectual development.

In the following Chapter, I will critically examine the remaining two features of Cartesian reason characterising juridical epistemology – i.e. reason as exclusively *active* and as purely *procedural*. From this I will suggest what else (besides an integrated anthropology) is required of the kind of integrated epistemology being sought. In particular I argue that the metaphor of *vision*, as against activity or process, better accounts for the way in which reason can be seen to function in a unified way with the emotional and volitional faculties. Also, the idea of vision helps to emphasise that moral sources are located in reality itself rather than in the individual's will and desires. This, in turn, opens the door to a more *substantive theory of reason* by which to understand moral thought and action.

CHAPTER FOUR

Introduction.

Chapter Four addresses the remaining two features of Cartesian reason that characterise a juridical epistemology, as introduced and called into question in Chapter Two (part II). I begin by explaining how the kind of dualistic anthropology discussed in Chapter Three, together with a non-cognitivist explanation of moral thought, lends support to a conception of practical reason as exclusively *active* (analytical and discursive)¹⁷. I argue that so far as such dualism and non-cognitivism is open to challenge (as indeed, in Chapter Three, it was shown to be), an activist conception of reason may be seen to lack support. I also highlight several counter-examples to strengthen the case against the view that knowledge and understanding issue from exclusively active rational processes. Drawing on the work of Dykstra (1984), Taylor (1998) and Pieper (1985), I argue that the idea of reason as an exclusively active faculty ignores a very different yet perfectly familiar mode of knowledge which has been characterised variously as intuitive, contemplative, receptive and sympathetic. In particular, Taylor argues for the importance of such knowledge (which he calls 'poetic knowledge') to educational teaching and learning, while Dykstra signals the centrality of knowledge through 'mystery' and 'revelation' to the formation of moral character. Lastly, Pieper highlights the everyday character of knowledge via what he calls the 'contemplative mode of vision'. I contend that these examples highlight the need for a broader account (than that familiar from juridical epistemology) of the nature and scope of human knowledge as well as the role of reason in human understanding.

¹⁷ I am sensitive here to the criticism that the argument is running together a disparate range of issues. I would remind readers, however, that my overall project is one of locating similarities among different positions and treating them for common errors, in the domain of moral educational thought, as mentioned in the Introduction and discussed in Chapter One (II.iii).

In part II, I consider the juridical notion that the proper mode of practical reason is *procedural* – that it operates according to particular canons of rationality, to produce correct general ideas or thoughts (theoretical perspectives) rather than substantive, objectively grounded, judgements. I argue that such a procedural conception of practical reason follows from the disputable claim that all valid knowledge hinges upon rational activity. In this way, rationality is seen as determined by the activity of the thinker (thought processes) rather than the substantive content of thought. Following Charles Taylor (1989), I argue that a procedural conception of reason can, again, be seen to contradict everyday experience. In particular, the way in which it calls people to *disengage* from lived experience can be challenged. In ethics, such a disengaged stance tends to locate sources of moral understanding within the individual rather than externally as something the individual responds to and is measured by. Moral understanding then comes to be associated strongly with the capacity to provide reasons for actions and to arrange such reasons together in a unified theoretical structure. The consequent priority given to internally consistent *general* thoughts, ideas and principles, rather than to correct (as in ‘corresponding to something real’) singular and *substantive* thoughts and judgements, provides a warrant for reconsidering the nature and role of reason in moral understanding. Further, a procedural account of rationality leaves little room for the idea of ‘transcendent truth’ or of any predisposition toward ‘the Good’ (as constituted by such truth), and so rejects as irrelevant these key features of everyday moral experience, especially as articulated by religious and other traditional accounts of morality. On this basis, I argue there is a need for a more *substantive theory of reason* to support our understanding of moral thought and action. Our examination of these themes concludes the critique of Juridicalism in preparation for a defence of classical realist epistemology and a visional ethical perspective as a basis for interpreting the moral education question, in Chapters Five and Six.

I. A CASE AGAINST REASON AS EXCLUSIVELY ACTIVE.

i. Modern Dualism and the Activist Conception of [Practical] Reason.

In Chapter Three I observed how a conception of reason as the power of discursive thought may derive from a dualism between the thinking, reasoning mind on the one hand and the (bodily and culturally) situated, feeling and valuing self on the other. I also described how this division can be traced to Descartes, who sought to make all thought and knowledge subject to the demands of mathematical certainty. This view of rationality, however, is not entirely original or peculiar to Descartes. The British Empiricists for instance, in their search for a scientific method, also maintained such a view of rationality. Moreover, the seeds of modern empiricism were arguably sown as early as the thirteenth century with the philosophy of Roger Bacon. Bacon regarded mathematics (together with language and history) as an essential 'tool' for interpreting nature. Further, he recognised three modes of knowledge: authority, reason and experience. For Bacon, the authority of tradition was insufficient, requiring the support of reason, yet reason too could not attain to 'certainty', according to Bacon, without experience. For Bacon, experience was not limited to sense experience, but also included experience founded on divine inspiration. Yet, what was significant with Bacon was his definite interest in nature and observation – i.e. empirical evidence – as a basis for certainty, or truth. This fact, coupled with Bacon's very quest for a distinct and certain explanatory method, therefore, initiated a recurrent philosophical theme which came to a head in Descartes' rationalism and the work of the Empiricists.

With Descartes, the mind (distinguished by its powers of discursive reason) comes to be seen as the primary and independent basis of all knowledge. Knowledge is understood essentially as the fruit of reason's labour, while rationality as such begins and ends with the activity of the mind, constructing order and making sense of the world. Significantly, the reasoning, knowing mind is sharply distinguished by

Descartes from the bodily-sensory-emotional and affective nature. This is because the ideas emerging from such faculties cannot attain the degree of clarity and distinctness Descartes associates with discursive thought and which he insists upon as criteria for true and certain knowledge. While I argued that Hume was especially influential in reinforcing this divided conception of the human person, Pieper (1952) identifies the reduction of human knowledge to the 'effort' of discursive reasoning, in contrast to the passive susceptibilities of the sensory-emotional faculties, most strongly in Kant. Pieper says:

Kant... held knowledge to be exclusively 'discursive'... According to Kant, man's knowledge is realised in the act of comparing, examining, relating, distinguishing, abstracting, deducing, demonstrating – all of which are forms of active intellectual effort. Knowledge, man's spiritual, intellectual knowledge (such is Kant's thesis) is activity, exclusively activity (p32).

The dualism characterising Juridicalism, detailed in Chapter Two, does not of itself necessitate the conclusion that reason is exclusively active, in all its operations. Many Modern philosophers (including, among others, Descartes, Hume and Kant), while maintaining the dualism in question, allow that the mind is possessed of a passive or receptive mode whereby it may encounter and so receive (for example, sense-impressions of) certain empirical 'givens' or properties of the world. What is peculiar about Modern epistemology's acceptance of the mind's receptive nature is the way in which such receptiveness is interpreted in relation to rational knowledge and understanding. The distinctively Modern interpretation is that knowledge and understanding is only actuated when the passively received or 'given' impressions are actively articulated and formulated into coherent ideas. There is no scope, on this view, for the possibility of passively received givens being intelligible or understandable *unless* they can be articulated or the representation caused in the agent can be formulated. Indeed, this view of things forecloses the possibility, which

I defend in later chapters, that even if a passively received impression of reality cannot be articulated, spelled out or formulated, it may nevertheless contain something to be grasped, understood and rationally known.

With the dualism of Modern philosophy comes a particular interpretation of the mind's being receptive to 'givens' in a passive mode. Following this interpretation, knowledge and understanding are conceived as being dependent upon the mind's rational activity in constructing order and appearance – articulating and formulating ideas about the world. Of course, articulability and formulability are a matter of active mental operations or discursive reason, which, following Modern dualism, is regarded as distinct and separate from emotion and affectivity. This raises interesting questions in regard to moral knowledge, since moral and evaluative thought (not to mention moral commitment) is inherently imbued with elements of emotion and affective response. While Modern dualism does not logically entail a conception of reason as *exclusively* active, an activist conception of practical reason does become prominent in connection with a non-cognitivist account of moral thought and action.

Let us suppose a woman is waiting for a train when a small child (a stranger) topples off the platform onto the railway tracks below, just as the train is approaching. The woman is filled with horror at the child's predicament and the helpless pleas of his elderly grandmother. In spite of the immanent danger and risk to her own safety, the woman leaps down to pull the child out of the path of the oncoming train. In this example, both the dualist and non-cognitivist reject the possibility that the woman *sees the horror* of the child's predicament *and therein understands* that she must (i.e. is morally obligated to) do something to rescue the child. For the dualist, the rational thought (that the child has fallen and is in immanent danger) and the emotional response (that this is horrible and something must be done) are distinct and separate elements. Further, the non-cognitivist adds that the woman's registering of the child's predicament is not a distinctively moral thought, but only an emotionally empty

registering of the facts. In this way, the woman's being put in mind of the child falling into the path of an oncoming train may be a passive registering of what the environment causes her to observe. Her experience of horror, however, is construed merely an emotional response - non-cognitive in nature and bearing no essential relation to the facts of the matter. The moral thought, that 'the situation is horrifying and that this obligates a certain kind of response', is therefore regarded as an actively constructed, emotion-expressing but ultimately non-factual kind of thought. Moral reason (or more generally, practical reason), on this view, comes to be seen as active - i.e. a matter of the mind actively formulating emotion-expressing thoughts and ideas about the passively registered facts.

The case against an activist conception of reason is strengthened by the fact that the dualism from which it springs is far from a forgone conclusion, as was discussed in Chapter Three. Also, allowing that an activist conception of practical reason is reinforced by non-cognitivist moral theory, then in so far as non-cognitivism was shown to be lacking support in Chapter Three, support is further withdrawn from the activist conception of reason. An activist conception of reason stands in stark opposition to an ancient (and continuing) tradition which, in different times and places and in various ways, has referred to moral understanding in terms of becoming 'attuned' to an objective order which in some sense is in nature. Such attunement, moreover, is typically explained in terms of reason's mode of passive reception rather than in terms of analytical or discursive thinking. In Chapter Five I will describe a particular epistemology along these lines. At this point, however, I wish to highlight several examples of forms of knowledge and understanding linked to a passive or receptive rational mode, yet escaping articulation or formulation by way of more active and discursive rational powers. These examples strengthen the case *against* an activist conception of reason while strengthening the case *for* an alternative epistemology (developed in Chapter Five) in which reason's receptive

mode is seen as foundational to knowledge as such, and to moral understanding in particular.

ii. Other Ways of Knowing – Taylor on Poetic Knowledge.

James Taylor (1999) has critiqued what he views as the dominant, scientific conception of knowledge within contemporary educational theory, arguing the importance of a largely forgotten dimension to human understanding, which he refers to as *poetic knowledge*. For Taylor, “Poetic experience indicates an encounter with reality that is nonanalytical”. It is characterised by the “same surprise as metaphor in poetry, but also found in common experience, when the mind, through the senses and emotions, sees in delight, and even in terror, the significance of what is really there” (pp5-6). Poetic experience, at the level of the senses and emotions, gives rise to ‘poetic knowledge’ which consists of “a spontaneous act of the external and internal senses with the intellect, integrated and whole, rather than an act associated with powers of analytical reasoning”.

Poetic knowledge, says Taylor, rather than being knowledge *of* or *about* reality, actually “gets us *inside* the thing experienced” (p6). For example Taylor highlights the difference between “studying music – theory, harmony, rhythm – and actually *doing* music, by singing and dancing, to become, in a sense, music itself” (p13). A more developed example is provided of how children learn to read. Taylor notes that “modern scientific theories have given us the battle over look-say, phonics, basal readers, with all manner of audio-visual machines, graphics and “high-tech” aides and methods” but quotes Frank Smith to illustrate the relevance of poetic knowledge:

One of the leaders in research on how children learn to read, Margaret (Meek) Spencer of London University, says that it is authors who teach children to read. Not just any authors, but the authors of the stories that children love to read, that children often know by heart before they begin to read the story.

This prior knowledge or strong experience of how the story will develop is the key to learning to read, says Professor Spencer (p9).

Taylor identifies this as an example of poetic knowledge and poetic learning because the child is “left alone, undistracted by methods and systems, so that the senses and emotions come naturally into play when being read to, where wonder and delight gradually lead the child’s imagination and memory toward the imitative act of reading” (p9). This is not simply imitation in the sense of ‘monkey see – monkey do’, but refers rather to the child’s natural disposition to fully and personally engage in the lived experience of the thing that is imitated, or to somehow participate in its very being.

Taylor outlines one further and striking example of poetic knowledge at work, in the life of John Stuart Mill. Mill reveals, in his *Autobiography*, that his father’s efforts to educate him in order to become a genius, “bypassing if not indeed rejecting altogether the poetic mode as anything serious, eventually led to his depression and thoughts of suicide” (Taylor, p113). Taylor quotes Mill:

I saw... that the habit of analysis has a tendency to wear away the feelings: and indeed it has, when no other mental habit is cultivated, and the analysing spirit remains without its natural complements and correctives.

I was thus... left stranded at the commencement of my voyage, with a well equipped ship and rudder, but no sail; without any real desire for the ends which I had been so carefully fitted out to work for: no delight in virtue, or the general good,... there seemed no power in nature sufficient to begin the formation of my character anew... (p113)

Taylor recounts how Mill, by chance, came to read *Memories* by Marmontel and was moved to tears by an account of how the young author lost his father at a young age. "At this moment, Mill says, all darkness was lifted. Vicariously, he had experienced the emotions he had so long neglected" (p114). Mill goes on to write, "'I had now learnt by experience that the passive susceptibilities need to be cultivated as well as the active capacities, and require to be nourished and enriched as well as guided'" (p114). Mill's comments suggest the importance of a mode of knowledge that is not purely active and analytical, but significantly passive, or receptive in nature. Clearly, emotional sensitivity is central to this alternative way of knowing, which is why Mill speaks of his thought coming to be "coloured by feeling" (p114). However Mill as a philosopher may have understood the nature of emotions and their cognitive value, there is much in his personal account to suggest that they may play not merely an *instrumental* role in lending thought something like an aura of personal (i.e. merely subjective) significance. Rather, Mill's reflections suggest that the passive susceptibilities, including the emotions, are more *intrinsic* to or partly *constitutive* of the proper life of the mind. Indeed, Mill's chief complaint about his former education was that no other *mental habit* apart from discursive and scientific analysis was cultivated in him.

Here, the charge of subjectivism can be anticipated. That is, it might be argued that what Taylor describes as poetic knowledge is not true knowledge at all, but the illusion of knowledge deriving from subjective experience. One might suppose that poetic knowledge is 'merely' emotional experience rather than genuine knowledge. This, of course, is to admit a sharp and significant division between the thinking, knowing mind and the feeling, doing self – a philosophical contention already called into question. Further, Taylor quotes theologian Andrew Louth to clarify the important distinction between *subjectivism* and *subjectivity*, returning the latter term "to its broad and integrated meaning" (p72):

Science is concerned with objective truth... independent of whoever observes it... experiments must be repeatable by other experimenters. Objective truth, in this sense, seeks to be detached from the subjectivity of the observer. In contrast to such objective truth is a truth which cannot be detached from the observer and his situation... Put like that, it seems at first sight obvious that objective truth is real, and subjective truth falls short of such ultimacy. But further reflection suggests that so to suppose is to over-simplify. When Kierkegaard claimed that all truth lay in subjectivity, he meant that truth which could be expressed objectively (so that it was the same for everyone) was mere information that concerned everyone and no one. Real truth, truth that a man would lay down his life for, was essentially subjective: a truth passionately apprehended by the subject. To say, then, that truth is subjective is to say that its significance lies in the subjective engagement with it; it does not mean that it is not objective in any sense... (pp72-73).

In light of the above, it can be argued that what Mill's emotional 'awakening' accomplished was not the opening up of a separate, purely subjective world of emotion, but the correction and complementing of his active, analytical faculties, revealing new depths to and enriching his knowledge of the world. Following this initial awakening, Mill recounts how the poetry of Wordsworth served as "a medicine for my state of mind", opening up a world not just of private feeling, but of "thought coloured by feeling" (in Taylor: p114). In other words, Mill's newfound emotional sensibility lent weight and depth - indeed, substance - to his *cognitive* grasp of the world, revealing to him the "real, permanent happiness in tranquil contemplation" as well as "the common feelings and common destiny of [his fellow] human beings" (p114).

The problem with the manner in which Mill had been educated was precisely the philosophical spirit which says that all knowledge, to be valid, must yield a high

degree of demonstrative certainty, or the clarity and precision of a solved problem – visible, as such, universally and regardless of one’s emotional responsiveness. Arguably, the call for disengagement from emotion, the body and tradition which this philosophical spirit calls for, deprived Mill not just of an avenue for emotional stimulation or expression, but of a whole *mode of knowing* (poetic knowledge) to which the life of the emotions and the imagination is intrinsic and which, he was to discover, was fundamental to his social and moral development.

iii. Dykstra on Mystery, Revelation and Imagination.

Dykstra (1984) has voiced criticism against the same ‘activist’ philosophical spirit mentioned above, especially concerning Christian religious education. Indeed, religious experience and theological knowledge, broadly speaking, provide a considerable example of alternative modes of knowledge and understanding that cannot be characterised solely as intellectual *activity* or mental *effort*. Central to the Judeo-Christian heritage, for example, are the notions of ‘mystery’ and ‘revelation’.

A mystery, for Dykstra, “is not a problem that goes away once figured out [but] is an enduring reality that we know only through a glass darkly and never exhaustively. What we do apprehend is somehow disclosed or revealed to us” (p34). Dykstra observes that the human encounter with such mystery does not take place by our initiative. Rather, “[mysteries] approach us almost without our knowing. And our knowledge of them is not a direct knowledge. We know them by the way in which their presence is reflected in the way we think and feel and act” (p36). Dykstra also quotes Gabriel Marcel to clarify this vital category of human knowledge:

A problem is something which I meet, which I find complete before me, but which I can therefore lay siege to and reduce. But a mystery is something in which I myself am involved... A genuine problem is subject to an appropriate

technique by the exercise of which it is defined; whereas a mystery, by definition, transcends every possible technique (p35).

In this sphere everything seems to go on as if I found myself acting on an intuition which I possess without immediately knowing myself to possess it – an intuition which cannot be, strictly speaking, self conscious and which can grasp itself only through modes of experience in which its image is reflected, and which it lights up by being thus reflected in them (p36).

Significantly, Dykstra argues for the importance of revelation and mystery to moral development, which he describes as a transformation of the imagination. He recounts Flannery O'Connor's story *Revelation* in order to illustrate such moral transformation, highlighting the intuitive, receptive, yet thoroughly *real* kind of knowledge that comes about through revelation – “that special occasion which provides us with an image by means of which all the occasions of personal and common life become intelligible” (Niebuhr, in Dykstra, p79). Briefly, in O'Connor's story the main character, Mrs. Turpin, has a corrupt, self-deceiving and thoroughly self-righteous outlook. Dykstra summarises:

Her egocentric ordering of people into a hierarchy in relation to herself operates with stunning rapidity. She is able to put everyone in his or her place... before they have much of a chance to exist as particular persons for her at all. She achieves this task primarily by putting into operation the conventional images of her own subculture: “nigger,” “white trash,” “common,” “stylish”... these images are a deep part of her character and personality... and they form her perceptions and her evaluations of every person and every action (p75).

She is unaware of most of this... Her gratitude for her own goodness and her pleasure with her own virtues show how overcome she is with her own vision of the world. Everything is absorbed into it (p75).

Mrs. Turpin is a captive of an evil imagination of the heart. So long as she remains in this condition, moral progress for her is impossible. Her imagination absorbs everything into her own self, and she has no leverage from within by which to be moved... Something from the outside must break the veil of deceit... (p78).

What finally breaks Mrs. Turpin's veil of deceit is a contrary image of herself in a young girl's hostile rebuke. This new image, Dykstra explains, "could not be absorbed without a revolution of the whole pattern of all her other images, and yet could not be denied, it was so direct. She was 'an old warthog. From hell'" (p78). Importantly, "The transformation of her imagination was not something that Mrs. Turpin could either carry out by her own power, will for herself, or reason to a conclusion. At this point her only task was to live with the image and wait" (p79).

The importance of this example is that Mrs. Turpin's transformed understanding of herself (and others) is not instigated by a critical mind actively constructing orders of meaning, and reasoning from within those orders. Instead, it is instigated by a revelatory image that comes from *without*, illuminating truths about herself that were not reasoned into existence and cannot be reasoned away. Dykstra argues that the concepts of mystery, revelation and imagination help make clear the distinctive 'rationality' of moral transformation, involving a mode of understanding quite removed from active, analytical and discursive reasoning, but which yields insight truly worthy of the name 'knowledge'. Dykstra summarises:

... the rationality of the imagination is not always the logic of deduction. Because revelation illuminates selves and history, its rationality will be of a kind appropriate to selves and history: a dramatic or narrative rationality. Revelation will help us to see connections between persons, events, evaluations, and descriptions that we had not been able to see before...

The tightly controlled world in which we live is exploded by revelation so that the details and depths that were previously hidden from us are now present to us... Through revelatory images, a world of inexhaustible particularity, richness, and depth is illuminated. In this experience, we become conscious of having encountered both the mystery of the world and the mystery of the Power in which that world is held and by which our seeing has been made possible (pp80-81) ¹⁸.

¹⁸ I refer to Dykstra's observations about what he calls "imaginal transformation" because they highlight the interplay and essential unity of imaginative experience and the moral life, thus signifying a general mode of knowing markedly different to active, discursive reasoning. Against the charge, however, that his argument is as reductive or one-sided as those of the juridical tradition, Dykstra contends: "The process of moral growth through the transformation of the imagination is not the only way we make moral progress, but it is one very basic and important one. It makes its impact at the fundamental level of our consciousness and character by shaping and reshaping the ways in which we see the world and understand ourselves. The imagination is foundational to all seeing, believing, feeling, and acting; and any shift of its contours is also a transformation of ourselves as moral beings" (p87). Dykstra argues that although moral growth does take place this way, "it is neither automatic nor irreversible", and that "moral growth through imaginal transformation is not itself developmental in the sense that one moves progressively through higher stages. Each person's journey is a particular and unique journey, the course of which is not marked out in advance" (p88). For our purposes, what is fundamental to Dykstra's account of moral development through imaginal transformation is the recognition of a fuller range and depth of human knowledge, together with an integrated view of reasoning (thinking/knowing) and valuing (doing/being). Such an epistemology is not foundational to

iv. Pieper on 'Down-to-Earth Contemplation'.

Finally, Pieper's description of 'down-to-earth contemplation' helps convey why human knowledge cannot be considered simply the result of mental exertion – of analytical and discursive reasoning. Pieper's notion of contemplation "implies that man in this world is capable of visionary knowledge, that his means of ascertaining the nature of reality are not exclusively mental, i.e. do not consist solely of working with concepts and of intellectual exertion. It implies and presupposes the celebration of the simple act of looking at things" (1985: p149). For Pieper, "man is, to the very roots of his being, a creature designed for and desiring vision" and as such "a man's happiness is only as great as his capacity for contemplation" (p149).

Although contemplation represents for Pieper a "blissful awareness of the divine satiation of all desire" (p150), he keenly points out that contemplation "is by no means confined to the cloister and the monastic cell. The element crucial to contemplation can be attained by someone who does not even know the name for what is happening to him" (p150) or, presumably, who knows it by some other name. The contemplative mode of seeing, therefore, is testimony to an everyday sort of knowledge not attained by way of the active, critical faculties, but by a receptive and attentive openness before – or waiting upon – reality itself. As Pieper explains:

It would be impossible to exaggerate the concreteness of this vision. If a person has been terribly thirsty for a long time and then finally drinks, feels the refreshment deep down inside and says, "What a glorious thing fresh, cold water is!" – then whether he knows it or not, he may have taken one step toward that beholding of the beloved wherein contemplation consists.

a juridical or non-cognitivist ethical perspective, but is identified in Chapter Five as being distinctive of classical realist epistemology.

How splendid water is, or a rose, a tree, an apple! But as a rule we do not say such things... without implying, to some degree, an affirmation which transcends the immediate object of our praise and the literal meaning of our words – an assent touching the foundation of the world (p151).

It is simple contemplation such as this, Pieper argues, “which ceaselessly nourishes all true poetry and all genuine art” (p152). As an example, he refers to the journals of poet Gerard Manley Hopkins, highlighting the profound importance and familiarity, yet remoteness and un-containable quality of knowledge in the contemplative mode:

Hopkins says, “I do not think I have ever seen anything more beautiful than the bluebell I have been looking at. I know the beauty of the Lord by it.” What is the actual content of the message which became perceptible to him when he gazed at this blooming creation of God? He does not say a word about it. For this too belongs to the essence of all contemplation: the fact that it is incommunicable. It takes place in the innermost cell. No one can observe it. And it is impossible to “write the message down,” for during the experience no faculty of the soul remains free and unengaged (p154).

Despite the subjective and esoteric nature of contemplative vision, Pieper describes its connection to a very real mode of knowledge and understanding in which, as with Dykstra’s revelation, “an infinite network of relationships becomes visible which had hitherto remained concealed” (p153).

The above examples make clear that there is a dimension to human knowledge and understanding which an exclusively active conception of reason cannot do justice to. It is vital to point out, however, that in each of the examples given, reason *is* in fact seen to be at work. When poetic knowledge, or mystery or contemplation are spoken

of, it is not that something *other than* reason is involved, rather that reason is operating in a particular way, integrated, moreover, with the volitional and sensory-emotional faculties in performing the act of intellection. As Taylor explains:

[T]here is an aspect in every act of intellection, in all its parts, that is effortless, spontaneous, requiring no stimulation other than the presence of the object of apprehension itself, where the mind arrives at material and immaterial knowledge of a thing by way of the senses, and the universal quality is abstracted – a natural transcendental gazing into the forms of things. This is a virtually unconscious act where the will sees with the intellect the universal good in all reality, in being *qua* being (p57).

The very different psychology and epistemology spoken of here, and the precise nature and role of reason within it, is the subject of Chapter Five. However, the importance of such an expanded and variegated epistemology, for understanding moral thought and action, has, I believe, been strongly confirmed.

II. A CASE AGAINST PROCEDURAL REASON.

i. From Reason as Activity to Procedural Reason.

In light of the above examples of non-analytical, non-discursive (i.e. non-active) thought and knowledge, any case for the view of reason as exclusively procedural is difficult to sustain. Nevertheless, the idea of procedural reason must be considered in its own right because it is such a significant feature of juridical epistemology. I have argued that an underlying dualism dictates the juridical conception of reason's *nature* (as distinct and independent of feeling and doing), and that a purely activist conception of reason defines a juridical understanding of reason's *mode* (as discursive thought). In this section I argue that the idea of procedural reason explains the

juridical conception of reason's proper *content* – of what reason is thought to act upon and to produce in the way of knowledge. It is in this regard that juridical epistemology most significantly informs the way in which moral thought and action is understood. Firstly, however, the nature of the connection between an activist conception and a procedural conception of reason needs to be spelled out.

To clarify, what the activist conception of reason excludes is the possibility of knowledge that is received, gratuitous or revealed, rather than knowledge always being attributable to the power of the mind to lay hold of, control and 'make sense' of a world otherwise devoid of meaning. With the activist conception of reason, all human thought is constituted by the mind's own activity upon and ordering of the world, and this activity is what yields knowledge. As such, what the mind's activity consists in (or reason's proper *mode*), according to Juridicalism, is critical and discursive thought processes only. Also, the idea that knowledge *derives* exclusively from mental activity or effort – seizing the world and arranging it in a sensible and orderly way – carries with it the notion that thought itself necessarily *culminates* in some useful social activity or work – achieving some extrinsic purpose. That is, the practical needs and ends of the mind (for sense and order) and/or the social organism (for order, meaning and subsistence) are seen to ultimately underscore the essential character of human rationality as effort, work, or activity.

If reason, as involved in acquiring knowledge and understanding, is regarded as wholly active - i.e. without any *receptive* nature whereby the mind may receive truth and insight according to the order of transcendent and objective reality¹⁹ - then the

¹⁹ We find such a view in the scepticism of Hume (see Chapter 3.I) as well as Locke. Locke refutes the validity of knowledge based in passion, custom or education, limiting it instead to the understanding each individual actively "constructs out of the building blocks of simple ideas" (Taylor, 1989: p166. See also Locke's *Essay*, 2.2.2 and 2.12.1). Taylor argues that Locke's scepticism towards custom and the like is not intended, as with Plato and other ancients, to allow us to follow our inherent bent towards

whole idea of such a reality as the basis and measure of human thought is cast into doubt. Instead, reason is thought to begin and end with its own activity upon the world: with constructing canons of thought and meaning which then become the arbiters of rationality, knowledge and truth.

Basically, in the absence of any account of knowledge in terms of a self-revealing reality, knowledge comes to be viewed as *representation* of reality only. Further, all such representations must somehow be *constructed*, and accordingly stand or fall according to self-imposed criteria such as certainty through deductions based on clear and distinct perceptions (as with Descartes). Thus, if the arbiter of rationality is not something outside of reason itself (such as reality, nature, or the Good), then it follows that it must reside in rational operations themselves. There is a clear development, therefore, among the features of juridical epistemology, running from the mind/soul - body/world dualism, to an activist conception of reason, and finally to the view of reason as strictly procedural, rather than substantive.

Substantive reason is where we judge the rationality of agents or their thoughts and feelings in substantive terms. This means that the criterion for rationality is that one's thoughts or feelings are 'right' in the sense that they correspond in a strong way to the way things truly are in reality. The procedural notion of reason, on the other hand, moves from a definition of rationality in terms of corresponding to objective reality, or transcendent moral order, to that of rationality understood as adhering to certain canons of thought. As Taylor writes, the procedural option is to define

reason, nor is his radical empiricism directed towards discerning the (immutable) forms of the things we encounter (1989: p166). Instead, Locke's philosophy introduces an influential rejection of the notion of innate principles, "giving vent to his profoundly anti-teleological view of human nature, of both knowledge and morality" (pp164-165). The legacy of this way of thinking can be seen in modern theorists such as Richard Rorty (1998) who eschews any conception of nature as a repository of teleological norms and of any correspondence theory of knowledge and truth.

rationality in terms of “the properties of the activity of thinking rather than the substantive beliefs which emerge from it” (p156).

Taylor also observes a historical connection between the shift from a substantive to a procedural concept of rationality, and the growing ideal of the human agent as one who is able to remake himself by methodical and disciplined action – through disengaged reason (p159). In short, the shift from a substantive to a procedural conception of reason is bound up with an allegiance to the modern ideal of freedom, where primacy is given to the desires and will of the individual as an autonomous and self-determining agent. What we have seen, however, is that following a dualism between the mind and the body (together with its affective operations), an individual’s desires, emotions, and volitional tendencies are regarded as irrational and non-cognitive. The question therefore arises: how can moral thought and practical judgement be made trustworthy while still emphasising the primacy of the individual’s own will and desires? The answer, as Taylor confirms (p86), is to define practical and moral thinking in procedural terms. If the right thing to do is still to be understood as what is reasonable, then the justification for moral thought and action must be procedural – and as exclusive of personal desires, emotions, motivations and historically and culturally situated modes of knowing as possible.

In the following sections I wish to contest this emphasis on procedural rationality in matters of moral thought and judgement. Firstly, I will query the way in which this view suggests that all sources of moral strength and understanding reside inside the individual agent. Secondly, I will attend to the emphasis on disengagement from lived experience which procedural rationality carries with it. Lastly, I will contest the way in which an emphasis on procedurally correct thoughts and ideas leads to a view of morality as concerned with identifying general or universalisable principles of action, rather than substantively correct singular thoughts and judgements in particular circumstances. On the basis of this critique I argue the need for a more

substantive theory of reason to inform our understanding of moral thought and action.

ii. Procedural Reason and the Internalisation of Moral Sources.

Earlier I explained that the hegemony of reason throughout post-Cartesian epistemology tends towards rational control, and that this necessitates a detached and instrumental stance towards the body, the world and the emotions. One result of this instrumental stance is that the sources of moral strength and understanding are no longer regarded as residing outside in reality, in the order of the cosmos or even the social order, but within each individual. As Charles Taylor writes:

Descartes' ethic, just as much as his epistemology, calls for disengagement from the world and body and the assumption of an instrumental stance towards them.... so when the hegemony of reason becomes rational control, it is no longer understood as our being attuned to the order of things we find in the cosmos, but rather as our life being shaped by the orders which we construct according to the demands of reason's dominance... (p155)

Murdoch (1971: p53) also observes that in modern western moral philosophy the idea of "goodness", as rooted in reality and as an appropriate object of human intellection, has been largely superseded by the idea of "rightness" – understood in terms of 'correct' rational processes – supported by some conception of "sincerity" or strength of will. In this way, the agent's moral quality is seen to reside in her choices, as informed by her emotional responsiveness, personal desires and strength of will. These affective and volitional faculties, however, following Modern dualism, are regarded as distinct and separate from the rational-cognitive components of the agent's psychological make-up. The quality, strength and direction of moral understanding, on this view, are attributed to these supposedly wholly subjective, personal and non-cognitive elements. The sources of moral strength and

understanding, therefore, are thoroughly internalised - perceived as unrelated in any essential way to the cognitive relation between mind and reality.

In contrast to this view, Murdoch (1971) speaks of the sovereignty of “the Good”, as rooted in reality, as something to be known (albeit obscurely), and as a vital source of moral energy and insight. The view of moral agency as residing in the agent’s free choice, as informed by his personal will and desires, regulated by disengaged procedural reasoning, seems overly optimistic and ignorant of how the moral life seems set against “a continuous background with a life of its own” within which “the secrets of good and evil are to be found” (p54). Pure will, and one’s other inner energies, can often achieve little, such as when one is tempted by infidelity in a relationship, or when one experiences misplaced feelings of personal resentment. In such cases, knowing what is right and acquiring the energy to do the right thing is not always a matter of resorting to one’s own will, feelings, or ability to reason procedurally. Instead, one’s attention needs to be fixed outward, away from self and towards the situation at hand, or even elsewhere to acquire the right kind of insight and energy. Murdoch explains:

Where strong emotions of sexual love, or of hatred, resentment, or jealousy are concerned, ‘pure will’ can usually achieve little. It is small use telling oneself ‘Stop being in love, stop feeling resentment, be just.’ What is needed is a reorientation which will provide an energy of a different kind, from a different source... Deliberately falling out of love is not a jump of the will, it is the acquiring of new objects of attention and thus of new energies as a result of refocussing (pp55-56).

The Good, as a source of moral strength may be found in the example of virtuous people, great art, the idea of goodness itself or, as many believe, through prayerful contemplation of God. I develop a fuller picture of Murdoch’s ‘visional’ moral

philosophy in Chapter Six. The essential point being made here is simply that the view of the moral agent following the juridical epistemology I have been critiquing – i.e. a combination of an impersonal rational thinker and a non-rational, emotional, willing, personal self – does not square with what moral experience is really like. Murdoch seems nearer the mark when writes that the moral agent is more “a unified being who sees, and who desires in accordance with what he sees, and who has some continual slight control over the direction and focus of his vision” (p40).

In Chapter Three I discussed how moral non-cognitivism develops an account of evaluative properties as something contributed by the agent rather than residing in reality itself. I also drew attention to how a stance of moral relativism, emotivism, or a narrow rationalistic ethic can result from such a rejection of substantive moral truth (see 3.II.iv). It was pointed out that not only are such options generally considered unsatisfactory, but that such an account of morality fails to do justice to a natural human interest in locating external and objective points of reference in forming moral judgements, as well as the way in which recognising a moral requirement cannot be separated from an agent’s conception of a situation (suggesting that moral properties are, in fact, *things to be known*). Chantal Delsol (2003: pp45-63), in a discussion of the relation between goodness and truth, has also shed light on this natural human appeal to external and objective moral sources.

In an age of relativism marked by the attitude ‘to each his own morality and truth’, Delsol points out a widespread recognition of absolute evil, reflected in an essentially uncontested disdain for (among other things) apartheid, neo-fascism and xenophobia, as well as a widespread demand for respect for others across the globe, protection of the planet for future generations, increased aid for third-world nations and the like. Through this rejection of the intolerable, Delsol argues, objective and transcendent good imposes its presence. She writes:

To denounce an evil essentially means to identify a good under attack. And this is true even if we merely react to evil and refuse to look for the good.... It is as though the good manifests itself by its lack of presence. Its intolerable absence shows that it is impossible for it not to be (p52).

Here then is evidence of a pervasive human recognition (at times unconscious or even unwilling) of “something that transcends the sovereign individual” (p51). The revelation of an evil and hence of a good independent of individual desire, will and interest indicates that “the subjective world is not the only world” (p57). The absolute, and in particular moral absolutes, seem then not to come from within. Instead, as Delsol maintains, it seems reasonable to suppose that, “Absolute good rests on objective realities, it takes root in truth, in the knowledge of a good from which one cannot escape” (p55).

The examples and counter-arguments above indicate that the internalisation of moral sources and related perceived importance of disengaged, procedural reasoning in matters of moral thought and judgement, lacks support from everyday experience. Further, the plausibility and actual importance of disengaged reasoning to moral understanding may be called into question. In the following section I explain how.

iii. Procedural Reason and Disengagement from Lived Experience.

Whether one is engaged in lived experience, or attempting to disengage from it, some supposition or other must be invoked to “take up the interpretive slack”, as Charles Taylor puts it (1989: p163). Procedural reason pushes the agent to disengage from lived experience, requiring that they adopt some supposition or theory, in place of the one they are foregoing. What this deprives the agent of, according to Taylor, is the kind of knowledge that can *only* be had by living in the experience itself, fully engaged in it. Adopting a disengaged stance does indeed provide certain knowledge of a situation, but it is qualitatively different from the knowledge of first-person

experience precisely because it attempts to suspend the 'intentional' dimension of the experience – what makes it an experience *of* something. As Taylor writes, "In objectifying the experience, I no longer accept it as what sets my norm for what it is to have knowledge of these properties" (p162).

Taylor suggests that the attempt to disengage and to reason procedurally necessitates a "radical reflexivity", the point of which is to gain a kind of control – such as an impartial view of things, or the necessary 'leverage' to self-determine one's beliefs and attitudes. In this way, the interpretive framework that enters in with the attempt to disengage from lived experience is one of instrumentalism, control, domination or self-imposition. As Taylor writes:

Instead of being swept along to error by the ordinary bent of our experience, we stand back from it, withdraw from it, reconstrue it objectively, and then learn to draw defensible conclusions from it. To wrest control from "our appetites and our preceptors", we have to practise a kind of radical reflexivity. We fix experience in order to deprive it of its power, a source of bewitchment and error (p163).

The modern ideal of disengagement requires a reflexive stance in which we are called to turn inward and become aware of our own activity and of the processes which form us. In this way the aim of disengagement is to impose one's own power of control – to fix and order experience according to one's own images and ideals. Taylor explains:

We have to take charge of constructing our own representation of the world, which otherwise goes on without order and consequently without science; we have to take charge of the processes by which associations form and shape our character and outlook. Disengagement demands that we stop simply living in

the body or within our traditions or habits and, by making them objects for us, subject them to radical scrutiny and remaking (pp174-5).

The move toward disengagement which procedural reason calls for, therefore, does not afford the freedom from ideological or evaluative commitment it aims to achieve. In fact it represents quite a committed stance towards a highly individualistic ethic. Further, this turning in upon the self – a radical individualisation of moral agency – has definite implications for the moral life. For one thing, it leads to a preoccupation with oneself: with constructing and ordering one's own values and beliefs away from life as lived in community and according to particular traditions. There is an inherent danger, therefore, in this kind of independent self-scrutiny and introspection, of becoming isolated from one's fellow men as well as becoming ignorant of any common humanity underpinning human fellowship and mutual obligation. Delsol makes this point quite clearly:

To say "to each his own morality" means, apart from the enviable freedom to name one's own values, that the same criteria of the good do not apply to everyone. Humanity thus becomes fragmented into individuals radically differentiated from one another by their divergent paths – each person's "good" being nothing more than the destination he has set for himself. Through this very divergence, the other is kept from becoming one's fellow man (2003: p57).

Against this radically reflexive stance, Taylor commends a more familiar, everyday kind of reflection which he dubs "engaged exploration" (p164). Engaged exploration seems to make better sense of ordinary experience in which the effort to understand a person, thing or situation may actually require one *to engage more fully* and more personally in the experience of that person, thing or situation. In such cases one's sensory and emotional responsiveness is everything, together with one's imaginative

grasp of reality, one's available conceptual scheme and vocabulary as made available by one's tradition. Taylor explains:

Rather than disengaging, we throw ourselves more fully into the experience, as it were. There is a kind of search which involves being "all there", being more attentively 'in' our experience. A more important context is the one in which we try to get clearer on what we feel about some person or event. This involves reflexivity and self-awareness, but precisely not of the disengaging kind. Rather we think of that person or event, we allow our feelings full reign, precisely as the way we experience the person concerned (p163).

The distinction here between disengagement and "engaged exploration" is very important, since they each "carry us in contrary directions and are extremely difficult to combine" (p164). The distinction is vital, moreover, because it highlights the point that "the option for an epistemology which privileges disengagement and control isn't self-evidently right" (p164). Indeed, that option requires certain assumptions, including a rejection of the idea of a universe of meaningful order and a rejection of any kind of teleology wherein human beings are defined in terms of some inherent bent towards the truth or the Good, as manifested in such reality. In the previous section I explained how such assumptions seem to contradict certain familiar aspects of everyday moral experience.

Taylor's distinction between disengagement and engaged exploration also signifies the importance of a more substantive conception of (at least) moral rationality. From the foregoing critique of procedural reason there is need for a conception of rationality in terms of the substantive content (truth or falsehood) of the claimed rational understanding, rather than simply in terms of the procedures of thought. With a more substantive theory of (practical) reason a place can be made for the role of the individual's emotional and volitional responsiveness – e.g. as required for

engaged exploration or attentiveness to a thing, person or situation, or indeed the Good itself. While indispensable as a way of acquiring understanding and insight necessary for moral discrimination, an individual's own emotions, will and desires would not be seen as the fundamental source of moral value, however. Instead, a place would be made for a notion of absolute or objective standards of truth and goodness. With a more substantive account of reason, rational knowledge and understanding would be characterised as being *in tune with reality*. In the moral life, this means that some of the thoughts we are put in mind of by our 'attunement' to reality include thoughts about objective value, truth and goodness. Toward this end, one's emotional responsiveness and the condition of the will would be vital.

This point, in turn, signifies the importance of the classical tradition as a source of enlightenment for our understanding of moral thought and action. As I shall be discussing in the next two chapters, the crucial moral capacity in the Classical Realist tradition is that of seeing an objective order that is somehow represented in reality. This is not to say, however, that self-understanding and personal reflection are considered unimportant in the moral life, but that in order to know oneself clearly one must come to see oneself in the light of something other – something already good and virtuous. As Murdoch has reflected, the self is such a dazzling object that if one focuses only on it, one may well see nothing else (1971: p31). The crucial difference between the classical notion of moral reflection (following a substantive conception of reason) and more modern notions (following the perceived need for practical reason to be wholly procedural) is summarised by Taylor as follows:

Of course the great classical moralists also call on us to stop living in unreflecting habit and usage. But their reflection turns us towards an objective order. Modern disengagement by contrast calls us to a separation from ourselves through self-objectification... It calls on me to be aware of *my*

activity of thinking or *my* processes of habituation, so as to disengage from them and objectify them (pp174-175).

I wish now to say something more about the notion of substantive reason I shall be defending in later chapters, as an alternative to the procedural conception of practical reason I have been critiquing. This brief introduction will underscore the main differences I have already highlighted while providing a general overview of the alternative account I will go on to defend.

iv. Vital Reason – Towards an Alternative Conception.

Against the background of a procedural conception of reason, morality takes on a distinctive 'shape'. Basically, morality is thought to concern adjudicating conflicting evaluative claims and judgements - or 'moral thought' which is seen to be expressive of supposedly non-cognitive, irrational emotions and desires. Reliable adjudication is seen then to depend on adopting a certain style of impersonal, procedural reasoning. In contrast, if practical reason (which might be considered the nexus between thought and action) is substantive, then practical wisdom (including moral understanding) "is a matter of seeing an order which is in some sense in nature" (Charles Taylor: p86). To reject the idea of such order, giving primacy instead to the agent's own rational methods and procedures, supported by sincerity of desire or will, as in juridical epistemology, while still wanting to give value to practical reason, requires that reason be defined procedurally. Procedural reason, motivated by the search for self-mastery and control and tending towards disengagement from tradition and the world 'as given', leads naturally to "a view of moral thought focussed simply on determining principles of action" (p87). This view can be challenged in several respects.

Firstly, following procedural reason, morality is regarded as a special kind of reasoning about certain kinds of problems – often centred on respect for others - and

seeking a high degree of universalisability from which general principles of behaviour can be (formally and procedurally) derived or prescribed. The outcomes of such reasoning are thought to have a special priority in relation to those deduced by reasoning in other spheres, but the exact nature of that priority remains unclear. This is because, as Taylor points out, "To understand our moral world we have to see not only what ideas and pictures underlie our sense of respect for others but also those which underpin our notions of a full life" (p14). For example, two people may share the value of respect for others and maintain, in particular, that respect for one's elders is of vital moral importance. Yet each person may differ in their opinion about whether or not terminating the life of an elderly relative in a vegetative state amounts to respect for that elderly relative. Each person's notion of respect, and what counts as respect in any given situation, will depend more fully on their respective understandings of what it means to live a full human life - in particular, the place and meaning of suffering (and death) as an apparently indissociable aspect of life, taken as a whole.

Similarly, my notion of respect for others or for the environment (actuated in my interpersonal relations and way of living) will reflect my underlying sense of, for example, whether a full life is one determined as much by the satisfaction of my own desires and interests as possible, or whether a full life is one lived in view of a more fundamental connection and obligation to those who have lived before me and those who will live after me. Further, respect for others is not the only moral sense underpinned by one's vision of a full life. One might consider the countless decisions we make in respect of pursuing, or not, different life courses - e.g. getting married or simply living together, seeing through a course of study, developing one's gifts and talents or devoting oneself more fully to some other vocation. In such cases one's deliberation, choosing, or unreflecting response will embody all manner of evaluative judgements and moral commitments, each saying something about one's underlying sense of the life worth living - a full human life.

In short, if reason's role in the moral life is exhausted by procedural rationality related to respect for others, we are unable to explain how morality connects to living a full life. But, as explained, morality *is* connected with one's sense of a full life and so procedural reason alone is inadequate. There is a gap, in other words, in this picture of morality which must be filled by some substantive, authoritative order or shared vision of the good. This, however, is something procedural reason cannot provide.

Secondly, as argued above, procedural reason calls the agent to disengage from lived experience. A radically reflexive stance is required in order to 'get at' the activity of one's thoughts or the processes informing one's habits, and so to take charge and remake oneself along other, 'better' lines. This, however, involves disengaging from lived experience, where the moral life ordinarily takes place, and coming to regard the self as a bodiless, tradition-less, fully autonomous entity of pure consciousness. This is quite illusory. One might say that a *divorce from being*, as well as a general *hostility towards truth* and other forms of external authority, are inherent in the picture of morality following from a procedural conception of reason. In the bid for self-mastery, such a radical self-objectification is called for that one becomes cut off from one's 'self' as it actually exists – i.e. embodied, socially and historically situated, encultured, tending to the incessant and particular experiences of everyday life. This separation from being through self-objectification is regarded by Bénéton as a defining characteristic of modern thought and culture. He writes:

The will to autonomy raises a barrier that shuts out not only all authority but more generally all vital knowledge. In the realm of opinion, there is no place for an understanding that engages being. What is opinion? It belongs to the order of having; it is something I possess, something that depends only on my sovereign freedom, something that is not essential to what I am... Gabriel Marcel wrote... "If someone asked my opinion of Mozart or of Wagner, I

would not know how to answer; it is as if my experience has too much depth, as if my spiritual cohabitation with Mozart or Wagner were too close.”... If I were to say, “Here is my opinion on my son,” then I am distancing myself, I am severing an essential bond, I am excluding my son from the circle of my being. More generally, all profound experience is foreign to the language of opinion: would a survivor of a Nazi camp say, “Here is my opinion of what I lived through”? But testimony engages us. What I gain in being I lose in having. When being is involved, what is does not depend on my sovereign freedom; rather, I participate in, I attest to, something that is not dependent on me, something of which I am not the master. The reign of the Self requires us to remain on the surface and on the outside. *Opinion is at once self-affirmation and disengagement from being* (2004: pp141-142).

The link posited here, between opinion, self-affirmation and disengagement is crucial. It highlights the need for (and indeed the central place) of what Bénéton calls ‘vital knowledge’ which, unlike opinion, depends on an effacement of the self and a deeper engagement with reality. Indeed, Bénéton’s notion of *vital reason* bespeaks a more substantive conception of rationality -- as part of a thoroughly realist epistemology. I shall take up Bénéton’s terminology in my defence of an alternative theory of knowledge and moral reason in Chapter Five.

v. Summary of the Critique of Juridicalism.

The foregoing critique of Juridicalism has signalled two important epistemological requirements. First, following Chapter Three, the need for an *integrated anthropology* - where the reasoning intellect is seen as vitally integrated with the body and its affective operations. Second, following a critique of the active and procedural conceptions of reason, there is a need for a *substantive theory of reason* (or cognition, generally) accommodating human understanding in the intuitive, contemplative or *visional* modalities, and concerned as much for substantive and particular moral

thought and judgement as with procedurally derived general principles of action. In the following chapter I will sketch the contours of just such a theory of cognition and the epistemology surrounding it. In doing so I will be responding to the two requirements just identified, as well as the three characteristics of a juridical conception of reason I have been critiquing.

From this point I will argue that an epistemology like the one I am spelling out provides a better basis for understanding the cognitive anatomy of moral understanding and hence for interpreting the moral education question. In conclusion to the present critique of Juridicalism, I provide the following summary description of vital reason, since it neatly highlights the distinctiveness of the classical realist position I will be defending in light of the problems arising from a juridical perspective, as I have identified them:

The exercise of vital reason presupposes an attitude toward the world that is opposite to the one implied by scientific reason. The latter results from a dissociation of human faculties that works to the detriment of being and the benefit of the Self. For scientific reason, to think is to think with just one part of oneself, with that part that allows one, with the help of method, to dominate an object. To think is to look down from on high and thus to affirm oneself... By contrast, vital reason presupposes a unifying of faculties to the detriment of the Self. To think is to commit one's whole being and to efface oneself before the object. To think is to be available, receptive, to let oneself be taken up by the truth. Vital reason is inseparable from the virtues of understanding and in the first instance from humility before what is real (Bénéton 2004: p179).

CHAPTER FIVE

Introduction.

Chapter Five outlines what I call a 'Classical Realist' epistemology as an alternative to Juridicalism. The three needs identified in Chapter Four, following from the critique of Juridicalism, are treated here in two sections. In the first section I provide a brief explanation of what is meant by philosophical 'realism' before addressing the need for an *integrated anthropology* in response to the mind – soul/body/world dualism underwriting a juridical perspective. The distinctively integrated account of the mind/soul and body/world throughout classical (and especially Aristotelian) philosophy is considered. Particular attention is drawn to the way in which Aristotle presents the rationality of the virtuous person as a harmonious integration of the senses, the emotions, the will and the reasoning intellect, and how each of these are viewed as cognitive powers. I argue that an Aristotelian picture of the knowing person as a psychological whole, incorporating mind, body and soul, better accounts for the ways in which reasoning (or cognition) and valuing (feeling and willing) are experienced as continuous and coextensive (as discussed in Chapter Three).

In the second section I attend to the limitations of a strictly activist and procedural conception of reason (as considered in Chapter Four). Specifically, I argue that Classical Realism offers a substantive conception of reason that leaves space for the possibility of a passive receptivity which is trustworthily informed by the world – or what, in Chapter Four, I called knowledge in the 'visional modalities'. In light of the integrated anthropology developed in section one, the nature and role of reason in human intellection is discussed. Briefly, reason (in the Aristotelian tradition) denotes not simply the active and critical (or *discursive*) powers of intellection but also a certain passive or *receptive* capacity to apprehend reality directly and so to grasp immaterial truth (*De Anima* III, 4). I defend this double nature of the reasoning intellect (as both active and passively receptive) as a necessary corrective to the

reductive and pragmatic view of knowledge associated with a strictly activist conception of rationality. Further, this alternative conception of reason (or 'vital reason') denotes a theory of cognition in which the possibility of substantive thought designates the highest aspirations of the life of the mind. This alternative 'realistic' theory of cognition gives rise to a distinctive visional moral philosophy, the significance of which, as a basis for interpreting the moral education question, is the focus of Chapter Six.

I. CLASSICAL REALISM AND THE MIND-SOUL-BODY-WORLD RELATIONSHIP - TOWARDS AN INTEGRATED ANTHROPOLOGY.

i. What is Philosophical Realism?

Just as 'Juridicalism' refers to a wide-ranging philosophical current, marked by a distinctive conception of human reason, philosophical 'realism' denotes a broad philosophical tradition marked by certain epistemological claims. Realist philosophy posits that *reality* is the first principle of human knowledge. Knowledge is essentially possible because things exist as they are, pre-conditional to and regardless of human awareness of them. Human knowledge is made possible by a correspondence (however obscure or partial) between the knowing mind and the knowable world. To paraphrase Etienne Gilson (1990:p129), realist philosophy regards knowledge as the *lived and experienced unity of the knowing intellect with an apprehended reality*. Knowledge is the realisation of a (potentially universal) unity between the mind of the knowing person and an intelligible, objective order of existence.

Realism in philosophy stems from the thought-world of ancient Greece and, notably, the philosophy of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. For example, consider the Socratic method of pursuing definitions and knowledge via questioning (e.g. *What is justice? What is friendship?*) which underpins Socrates' philosophical quest to know things as

they truly exist. This, of course, like classical Greek thought in general, presupposes the intelligibility of the world and the ability of the mind to attain to such truth. As Marías affirms, “Hellenic man finds himself in a *world* which has always existed and which is therefore never a problem; all questioning *presupposes* this world, takes it for granted” (1967: p10). Further, Marías observes, “The Greek’s world is *intelligible*. It can be understood, and comprehension consists in *seeing* or contemplating that reality and of *explaining* it” (p10). Again, as is well understood, it is Socrates’ concern with defining the essence or nature of fundamental socio-political and moral concepts – with understanding and explaining reality – which underwrites Plato’s theory of the Ideas.

Plato’s ‘otherworldly metaphysics’ states that the *being*, or essential ‘Idea’ of a thing has an existence independent of the thing itself. Thus, for example, there is such a thing as bread which we might have and hold in our hands. But the essence of bread, its *bread-ness*, or the quality by which we know and understand it to be what it actually is, Plato regards as an *essential Idea* which, he further supposes, must exist as part of a separate, immaterial world of Ideas. The human soul, belonging to this otherworld of Ideas (or having passed through it on its way to the body) recalls the Ideal forms it has previously encountered when stimulated by the world of material things. It is important to note that Plato’s theory of Ideas, by seeking to explain the *being* or essence of things, takes it for granted that reality (including metaphysical reality) is ultimately intelligible and that knowledge consists in some kind of correspondence between the truth seeking mind and things which can be known, and known truthfully. For Plato, however, the reality by which the mind comes to know truth is not the reality of this world (material reality) but a separate world of Ideas. The material world and the finite body are seen ultimately by Plato as a kind of mediator, helping to bridge together once more the mind/soul and the eternal world of Ideas.

With Aristotle, however, the underlying realism of classical thought finds a new and enduring, albeit highly complex, philosophical expression. Put very simply, for Aristotle the essential being or 'form' of a thing (unlike Plato's Idea) resides in the thing itself and not elsewhere. It is not knowable apart from the conditions which substantiate its existence in the world before us. For Aristotle, physical and metaphysical reality are joined in an objective order of existence. This unity of form and matter is repeated in the unity of the mind (or human soul) with the physical body. Further, for Aristotle, it is this correspondence of form and matter that explains what makes knowledge possible. More will be said on this shortly.

In this chapter I pursue a distinctively Aristotelian epistemology. A broad tradition of realist philosophy, however, also lends support for the account I wish to develop of how the reasoning intellect is strongly integrated with the will, the body and its emotive operations. Besides those mentioned, other significant thinkers in the realist tradition include Thomas Aquinas, whose remarkable synthesis of Aristotelian philosophy and Christian theology/philosophy has proved a significant and enduring apology for philosophical realism. Drawing variously from Plato, Aristotle and Aquinas, other contemporary realists include Etienne Gilson, Josef Pieper, Jacques Maritain, C.S. Lewis, Elizabeth Anscombe, Simone Weil, Iris Murdoch and Alasdair MacIntyre. Although diverse in terms of their interests and particular arguments and allegiances, these thinkers (and others besides) have each spoken of a fundamental bond between the knowing mind and the knowable world and, in particular, have attested to the distinctive nature and role of reason within human intellection. In this regard, I shall be concentrating on Aristotle's distinctive unitary account of the *hylomorphic soul* - the very principle of existence or 'form' of the living human body, as distinctively human. From this account I shall draw out the distinctive conception of reason's role in moral thought and action - identified in Chapter Four with Bénéton's *vital reason* - which can be directly contrasted to the conception of reason underwriting Juridicalism.

For example, where Juridicalism is marked by an underlying separation between the thinking, knowing mind on the one hand, and the doing, feeling affective nature on the other, Aristotle speaks of an indissoluble *union* of body, mind and soul (i.e. the physical senses, the emotions and the will together with the reasoning intellect). In Juridicalism reason is associated exclusively with active (or *discursive*) mental processes, whereas for Aristotle reason also includes a passive or *receptive* capacity to be informed by reality itself. And, finally, whereas Juridicalism tends to define rationality *procedurally* as a measure of the processes of thought, in the Aristotelian tradition practical reason is defined *substantively* as a measure of attunement to an objective order in reality. These three features of rationality then, drawn particularly from Aristotle's moral psychology, designate the epistemological standpoint referred to in this thesis as 'Classical Realism'.

The remainder of this section addresses the need for an integrated anthropology as a way to explain the intrinsic role of emotion and affectivity in moral understanding, as discussed in Chapter Three. The unfolding account of the knowing person presents the reasoning intellect as a distinct yet integrated power of understanding within a concert of faculties that includes the bodily senses, the emotions and the will. This prepares the way for section two in which I address the need for a more substantive theory of practical reason, involving an essential openness and receptivity to reality, as identified in Chapter Four.

ii. Aristotle's Hylomorphic Soul-Body Relationship.

An important point that bears mentioning initially is that in the realist tradition, following Aristotle, the mind and the soul are generally not considered to be analytically distinct entities. In *De Anima*, for example, Aristotle describes the mind as "the part of the soul with which the soul knows and thinks" (1986: iii4, 429a 9-10). Further, as Christopher Shields (2005: p6) points out, by investigating this capacity of

the soul – that is, in investigating mind – Aristotle is investigating what makes humans distinctively human. That is, for Aristotle, by investigating the mind one is simultaneously investigating the soul, and vice versa. Aristotle's account of the unitary nature of soul and body is an important basis for understanding how the human soul's distinctive powers of reason and intellection are fundamentally integrated with the body, together with the emotional-affective and volitional faculties. To understand the nature and extent of this soul-mind-body integration, it is helpful to consider Aristotle's more general explanatory principle of *hylomorphism*. Hylomorphism is Aristotle's way of explaining what makes something *be* what it is, which in turn, as we shall see, helps to explain why it is intelligible.

As mentioned, for Plato the essential being or nature of a thing relates to its universal Idea, held to exist independently of the world of material things. In contrast to Plato, Aristotle holds that that which gives a thing its being, and so makes it a thing of substance, is its 'form'. Further, according to Aristotle, form is always found residing in 'matter'. Substance, or that which has being, is understood as a composite of these two elements: matter and form. Matter is that *of which* a thing is made, while form is that which makes a thing *be what it is*. For example, the matter of a table is wood, while its form is that of table, or 'table-ness'. Wood, possessed of other forms, might come to *be* other things, such as a chair or a cricket-bat. Importantly, however, matter and form are not seen as independent elements that unite to form a substance. Rather, as Marías explains, "matter is always found determined by form, while form is always found determining matter" (1967: p70).

Aristotle also adopts this hylomorphic framework in his discussion of the soul. For Aristotle, the soul is a life-giving principle which gives form or being to all living entities. Further, just as there are different kinds of living things, Aristotle distinguishes between different kinds of souls (*De Anima* II). Plants have vegetative souls which provide powers of metabolism, growth and reproduction (common to all

living things). Animals have sensitive souls, which include the additional powers of perception, appetite and locomotion (common to both animals and humans). Humans alone have rational souls, marked by the unique capacity of the intellect, with its powers of conception, reasoning, and volition. It is the human soul, marked by these distinctive capabilities, which makes a human body a distinctively human and living body.

Just as a table is a composite of matter (wood) and form ('table-ness'), human beings are also a composite of matter (their bodies) and form (their souls). To the extent that matter and form are indissociable components of substance, as hylomorphism maintains, the mind cannot be considered separate from or independent of the body, since it is intrinsic to its very form (determined by the soul). We are now closer to seeing how significant is the difference between an Aristotelian anthropology and the Modern mind-body dualism underpinning Juridicalism.

Following Aristotle, the mind's knowledge and understanding cannot be regarded simply as deriving from antecedent interactions between the physical body and its environment, since the mind and its powers of intellection partly constitute the very form of the human body, as distinctively human. Neither can the knowing mind be understood, as with Descartes, as being essentially independent of the body, and therefore as exercising a kind of rational remote control over the body from somewhere within. The particularly Modern problem of whether the mind has priority over the body, or the body over the mind, simply does not figure in Aristotle's account of the hylomorphic soul. Instead, the relationship between mind and body is far more 'incarnational', as John Haldane explains with the following example:

Consider a simple demonstration of human intelligence at work. Suppose I am drawing a square. With the edge of a pen I draw a square in space. Now what

I want to say is that as I do this you see a soul in action, not the effects of intelligence but actual intelligence, intelligence publicly on display in my movements. These movements are not the effects of thought but embody thought as I move my arm (2003: p5).

The mind/soul and the body then, following Aristotle, are fully integrated and whole. As such, throughout classical realist epistemology, it is not strictly speaking the mind but the *person* who thinks. The knowing person is an embodied psychological whole and knowledge is not attributable to any one separate part of that whole. As James Taylor writes, “the ancient, classical, medieval tradition on man as knower was the consistent view that it was the whole person who experienced the world – not just the eyes or just the mind, but the composite being, body and soul, man” (1998: p31). Following this view we might better understand how it could make sense to speak of the affective and volitional faculties as playing a constitutive, rather than merely functional, role in (particularly moral) knowledge and understanding. To shed light on this matter, however, we now move to a closer examination of the mind’s distinctive faculties and their interrelationship, according to the Aristotelian tradition.

iii. Perception and Intelligence.

Putting aside the nutritive powers, which are common to all living things, the most basic faculty intrinsic to man as a rational being is that of perception. Through perception, operating via the agency of the bodily senses, man acquires a direct knowledge of individual things, in terms of their sensible qualities. Unsurprisingly, Aristotle deploys a hylomorphic analysis in order to explain the manner in which the mind is able to perceive the sensible form of a given object. Basically, perception involves the mind’s receiving an impression of a sensible form by a suitably qualified sensory faculty. Clearly, the sensible form comes to exist in the perceiver in a particular way – since in receiving the sensible form the perceiver does not literally

become the thing being sensed. For example, in perceiving a tree I receive the sensible form of the tree through an appropriate sensory faculty (e.g. sight), but in doing so I do not (nor do my eyes) actually become the tree, according to its actual form. The sensible form is rather a singular representation of that individual and particular tree, existing in the sensory/visual mind. This is the same for animals as it is for humans.

Turning to the highest and most distinctive human power – i.e. intelligence – we may note that Aristotle approaches the nature of thinking and intellection in the same way as perception – in terms of form reception. The mind is related to what is thinkable in the same way as sense is related to what is sensible (*De Anima* III, 4). However, the distinctive power of the knowing intellect is to receive the form of the known object in a more fundamental way to that in the case of perception. Intelligence differs from perception in that it is not limited to the sensible qualities of particulars, but allows for the formation of universal concepts. Aristotle distinguishes between individual or ‘primary substances’ – e.g. this or that particular tree – and more universal, generic or ‘secondary substances’ – e.g. a tree as such. The universal is a form, but unlike Plato’s universal Ideas, they are not separate from material things but are found residing in them and determining them. Speaking of the substance ‘man’ Marías explains, “man, the species man, is not separated from each individual man; rather it is present in each man as the human form” (1967: p71). In other words, while perception pertains to particulars, thought (intelligence) may be considered as pertaining to universals – while of course not excluding a knowledge of particulars, for it is through our cognitive grasp of particulars that universal or conceptual knowledge is actuated.

The unique power of the intellect, therefore, is to abstract universal concepts from particular representations as provided by perception²⁰. In this regard, the intellect can

²⁰ The idea of abstraction in epistemology and philosophy of mind is somewhat controverted. Berkeley (1999), for example, in his *Principles of Human Knowledge*, questions an abstractionist doctrine,

be thought of as both active and passive (or receptive) in its operation. In its passivity the intellect corresponds to the sensing/feeling part of the soul, receiving the perceptible or intelligible form like the imprint of a seal into wax. In its activity, the intellect abstracts the intelligible form from the image presented to it by the senses, and coming to possess the form in this way is what knowledge means. Importantly, this distinction between the active and the passive intellect does not imply the existence of two separate faculties. Rather, the intellect remains a single faculty characterized by two distinct modes – one active, the other receptive, operating simultaneously in every act of intellection. I shall return to this distinction between the mind's active and passive natures in a later section. At this point, we may describe in general terms how knowledge, following Aristotle, comes to be seen as an essential identity between mind and reality.

particularly as advanced by Locke, arguing that concepts abstracted in the manner Locke proposes would be impossibly empty and indeterminate. More recently, Geach (2001) has criticised the abstractionist doctrine "that a concept is acquired by a process of singling out in attention some one feature given in direct experience – *abstracting it* – and ignoring the other features simultaneously given – *abstracting from them*" (p18). Geach appeals, however, to Aquinas' qualification of Aristotle's theory of abstraction to show that the mind does not, contrary to certain empirical psychological theories, operate in just this way when forming universal concepts. Geach maintains that the mind does not just abstract concepts that are, point for point, identical copies of known things. Rather, he argues that the mind is partly active in generating concepts, which in turn furnish us with an understanding of things. I cannot engage properly with the anti-abstractionist literature here, but instead direct the reader to the on-going discussion, while noting that revisions such as Geach's do not undermine my essential point in this chapter. Namely, that epistemological realism, along the lines instigated by Aristotle, provides a better framework for explaining knowledge and understanding (including moral knowledge or practical wisdom) than that of Juridicalism, for the purposes of describing the intellectual foundations of moral life and hence the proper moral educational task of schools.

To pursue an earlier example, in perceiving a tree I come to have a representation of the sensible form of that particular tree in my sensual/visual mind. In thinking about or knowing the tree, my active intellect is able to abstract the same form as is in the tree, liberating it of the material conditions which made it *that particular tree*. The essential form of the tree thereby comes to exist in the passive intellect, universally, as a conceptual representation of all trees. It is this capacity that distinguishes the reasoning intellect as the highest and most distinctive power of the human mind. Further, this view of knowledge establishes, as a general principle of realism extending from Aristotle through to Aquinas and beyond, the notion that “the soul is in a way all existing things; for existing things are either sensible or thinkable, and knowledge is in a way that is knowable, and sensation is in a way that is sensible” (*De Anima* III. 8). In other words, the human soul bears a universal though potential correspondence to all reality. The unique power of the mind is to translate this *potential* correspondence into an *actual* identity – which for Aristotle is knowledge.

In so far as this capacity is distinctive of the human soul, it can be said that the desire and propensity to know is essentially human nature (*Metaphysics* I, i). Of course, human minds must do more than form conceptual understanding. As moral and political beings, humans are concerned with planning, deliberating and directing their knowledge towards all variety of practical ends and purposes. Such activities are no less ascribable to the mind and it is for this reason that (along with distinctions among other forms of rationality) Aristotle distinguishes between the theoretical intellect and the practical intellect (*Nicomachean Ethics* VI 8 1143a35-b5), this being a distinction of particular import. Again, this distinction does not imply the existence of two separate faculties. Practical reason, rather, refers to the manner in which intelligence extends into the realm of the practical lives of human beings, and the additional range of concerns and intellectual activities this implies. This is an important distinction, therefore, since in considering the moral life we are concerned

precisely with how knowledge and understanding comes to bear in our social and individual lives.

We have seen how the senses play a constitutive role in knowledge and understanding, by presenting the intelligible form to the intellect through perception. The senses do not play a merely functional role - serving as inert conduits of raw data which the mind then translates into meaningful images and ideas. Rather, the sense faculties (and their respective organs) are uniquely adequate to the sensible forms, and the realisation of this correspondence constitutes the perceptual act. Sight, for example, is not merely the function of the eye but constitutes its very form - an eye is an eye because it sees. The 'eye' of a corpse, although resembling an eye, is not, properly speaking (in Aristotelian terms), an eye at all - it is simply dead matter. What once made it an eye was the agency of sight, for which it was dependent on the perceptual capacity and activity of the soul - the life-giving principle and essential form of the human being. More generally, the perceptual powers of the soul give form to the sense organs, making them be what they are. Haldane's example, cited earlier, indicates that one's actions do not merely *express* thought, nor are they antecedent to thought in some functional manner. Rather, they embody thought even as it is actuated. So too with the senses, which, in their agency, embody the perceptual activity of the soul. In this way the senses are seen to possess a certain cognitive value in their own right. Further, in so far as perception is foundational to intelligence, we can see that the senses play a constitutive role in human thought and understanding. We might now consider how the emotional and volitional powers of the soul may play a similarly constitutive role in human understanding, and particularly in determining human action - i.e. in practical reasoning.

iv. The Affective and Volitional Powers in Human Understanding.

Aristotle notes that every passion (or emotion) and every action admits of some feeling of either pleasure or pain, delight or disgust (*Nicomachean Ethics* II 3). Further,

he maintains that moral excellence is concerned with coming to experience such feelings in the right measure and at the right times. Aristotle refers to this right measure as occupying a 'mean' between two extreme and contrary feelings and associated responses. Confronted with a dangerous situation, for example, we may be subject to feelings of either fear or confidence. If a person fears too much, he will likely behave in a cowardly manner, while an excess of confidence will likely lead to rashness. 'Courage' – the virtue occupying the mean between these two extremes – is a matter of fearing the right things at the right times and from the right motive. For this to occur, one's feelings and emotions must be habituated in a certain way and brought under the rule of right reason; that is, one must be perfected by virtue. I shall return to this notion of acquired habit under the guidance of virtue later on. Of immediate interest is the fact that the emotions – occupying the lower or 'sensitive' part of the soul – are not simply blind responses, but play a constitutive role in furnishing the agent with an understanding of the morally significant evaluative content of reality. It is as if our emotions and feelings present a situation before us in a particular way – as pleasurable, painful, good or bad, as something to be desired or else avoided – and from this arises the practical problem of how to respond. For instance, consider the following hypothetical example:

Suppose a man has been courting a woman – a divorcee with young children. As their relationship deepens they each realise they are in love. Yet in truth the man's love extends only to the woman, not to her children. Now the love he feels for this woman will present the situation to him in a particular way, possibly as requiring some kind of response. He may, for instance, feel inclined to turn a blind eye, allowing the relationship to become 'serious' regardless of the consequences for the woman or her children at some future point (he may not even recognise the limitation of his love as being problematic). Alternatively, he might be disposed to 'shoot through' without a trace – not even a note of explanation. Now, in the first instance we could say that he acts with an excess of courage, which is to say rashly. In the

second case he is not nearly courageous enough, and so behaves like a coward. In both cases, surely, we would want to condemn his response as selfish and/or insensitive, to suggest that his love for this woman is in some way defective or deficient. We may conclude that something about the quality of his love has disabled him from seeing the situation in all its morally significant detail. As such, it has not enabled the right response, which may be (let us agree) to courageously 'come clean' about his doubts, exhibiting a heart-felt concern for the dignity of the woman he loves and the emotional welfare of her children, who, although a part of her, he cannot love as they deserve. Further, to respond this way, we can see how important is a commanding sense of empathy – a capacity to *feel for* another – and of love nuanced by such emotional resources as a sense of potential guilt, shame, loneliness or betrayal. Even from this contrived scenario we may get a sense of how the quality of a person's emotions is intrinsically bound up with his ability to see truthfully and respond ethically to a given situation, a person, or thing.

A degree of emotional depth and refinement is vital for attaining knowledge of those things we are rightly attracted to and desirous of, and those things we are rightly repulsed by and opposed to. Just as our movements and actions embody the mind's thought, so our emotional responses embody a certain level of understanding about the world. This affective mode of understanding does not attain to the same degree of certitude as that of the reasoning intellect. However, just as all reasoning rests on the lower powers of perception, so all practical reasoning – concerning means and ends – requires some foundational contact with reality born at the level of the affective sensibilities. As Nancy Sherman writes, "Our virtuous and vicious conduct relies upon a whole gamut of emotions that inform what we see and how we act... Emotions are ways of judging the world" (1999: p46). In the Aristotelian tradition, the life of the passions is underwritten by cognitive content, and in our feeling and desiring we are directed toward that content. As Sherman argues:

It is not just that certain antecedent evaluations typically cause certain emotions. Rather, the connection is a conceptual one. Anger would not be anger without thoughts that one was unfairly injured or the like. Fear would not be fear if there were not some mental content of a threat or danger. Indeed, Aristotle is insistent that closely related emotions, such as contempt, spite, and insolence, are differentiated not by their 'feels', but by their distinct intentional focuses: by what they are about (Rhetoric 1378b14) (p44).

In Chapter Three I highlighted how non-cognitivist meta-ethics, being a key source of inspiration for Juridicalism, is informed by a particularly Humean account of the division between reason and affect (or Modern dualism). To argue the weakness of non-cognitivist theory and so call Juridicalism into question, I drew attention to the fact that non-cognitivism fails to account for significant ways in which one's evaluative interpretations, including emotional experience, cannot be separated from one's cognitive understanding of a thing or situation. For example, suppose you saw a savage dog mauling a small child, and at this experience you felt a sense of horror. According to the Humean/non-cognitivist account, your emotional response (i.e. your feeling of horror) bears no essential relationship to the cognitive content actually inhering in the situation, to what is actually there to be known. By contrast, as I have been arguing above, on the Aristotelian view the quality of one's emotional sensibilities is vital to one's cognitive grasp of the situation, in its full depth and significance. If, therefore, someone saw the dog mauling the child and started to laugh uncontrollably, one could readily assume that that person did not fully realise what was going on, even though they might clearly register that what they were seeing was a dog mauling a child. It would be difficult to impugn their emotional responsiveness without simultaneously impugning their cognitive grasp of the situation. Also, when it comes to the question of how one might act in response to such a situation, one's cognitive evaluation, constituted partly in emotional

experience, becomes crucial. If one can detect nothing akin to horror in the scenario, one will most likely feel no obligation or impetus to intervene or to seek help.

Of course, in arguing that the emotions play a partly constitutive role in our coming to know what are the morally significant aspects of reality, I do not mean to suggest that one's feelings and emotions are an infallible means of determining such knowledge. A person's emotional depth and sensibility is not fixed at birth and how the life of the emotions figure in one's engagement with the world may vary from person to person, place to place or from one instance to the next. It seems that emotional sensibility and one's affective tendencies, just as with the reasoning intellect, must be deliberately cultivated and may be subject to on-going refinement or corruption. Indeed, both the higher intellectual powers and the lower sensitive faculties, including the emotions, must be built up over time and in light of previous experience to provide a fully rational grasp of the world. As children we learn about the world partly by sharing in the emotional experience of others, and so our own cohort of passive susceptibilities begins to emerge together with our developing conceptual understanding, each illuminating and guiding the other to form a unified perspective. Through experience, over time, we acquire general cognitive dispositions – habits of thought and feeling – which, in turn, are exercised in our customary thought, judgement and action.

Haldane (2004: p193) notes that for St. Thomas Aquinas, "the theory of acquired habits in terms of which conceptual understanding is characterised should also be invoked in connection with emotion and will". This is because habits are directed phenomena, involving tendencies to do or refrain from doing something. The act of judging, with respect to the value of a thing or the right course of action, involves deliberation, in which "*affective* and *volitional* tendencies are likewise exercised as the would-be agent is attracted to or repelled by possible outcomes" (p193). It is here that Aristotle's integrated psychology is especially helpful in explaining how the rational-

intellectual and emotional/ volitional faculties come together in practical reasoning and the moral life. Aquinas, building upon Aristotle's integrated anthropology, argues that every tendency – intellectual, affective or volitional – has its natural object, and that virtue “consists in a correct ordering of each faculty with regard to its proper object” (p193). Intellectual virtue, Haldane explains, “is a habit or disposition of judgement tending towards truth and away from falsity”, while “affective and volitional virtues are habits of feeling and choice directed towards goodness and away from whatever is bad” (p193). Aquinas, then, following Aristotle, “integrates cognitive and moral psychology in a single theory of the structure and powers of the human soul” (p193).

Within the classical realist tradition – and particularly with Aristotle – we therefore find a strongly integrated anthropology and moral psychology in which practical reasoning and the life of the emotions are brought together to explain the kind of cognitive grasp of reality that constitutes moral understanding and which underwrites moral action. With the unitary nature of Aristotle's hylomorphic soul/mind-body composite as a background, a theory of knowledge as form reception – or an *identity* of mind and reality – emerges in which the sensory and emotional faculties play a constitutive role in our cognitive understanding of the world, both in terms of its essential being or nature and in terms of its moral significance. Indeed, an important corollary of the epistemology I have just sketched is that the objective order of existence does not simply contain a rich and varied empirical factual content, but includes certain morally relevant evaluative content or properties. This moral realist doctrine contrasts sharply with the moral non-cognitivism I associated with Juridicalism in Chapter Three, according to which there are no cognisable moral properties. Following Classical Realism, moral virtue – concerning practical reason – is vitally connected to an objective order of existence, and is realised in the substantive content of moral thought and action. Such moral understanding issues from an identity of mind and reality, the full actuation of which

is partly constituted at the level of the affective and volitional faculties, which serve as cognitive powers in support of the reasoning intellect. An important aspect of this level of knowledge and understanding therefore includes a basic openness and receptivity to the world, afforded by the sensitive soul in its powers of affect, appetite and emotion. I will develop this receptive and substantive notion of moral reason, in contrast to the activist and proceduralist conceptions of Juridicalism, in section two.

Although the Aristotelian anthropology presented speaks of the possibility of reason and affect coming together in cognitive moral understanding, something more is needed to complete the account by explaining how such an integration of faculties is realised. That ‘something more’ is *virtue*. Generally, in the classical tradition a thing is virtuous in so far as it conforms to its nature. A virtuous knife, for example, is one that cuts well, while a virtuous house provides shelter and comfort²¹. Virtue refers to the good of a thing, and the degree to which it realises its true being or nature. This raises an interesting problem since human beings, as living bodies and as social, emotional and intelligent souls, are multi-faceted – we are necessarily directed toward a variety of goods, ends and purposes.

For example, the virtue of the eye is sight, while the virtue of the foot is walking. Further, the virtue of the intellect is knowledge and contemplation of universal truth, while the virtue of the sensual faculties and appetites is their impulse away from whatever is bad and towards pleasurable objects, which, while possibly good in themselves, do not necessarily serve the good of the whole person. In short, the various faculties, capacities and appetites in the human being are each ordered towards objects that are respectively commensurate to their own specific good, rather

²¹ It is perhaps uncommon to speak of virtue in relation to anything less than a human being. Nevertheless, there is a perfectly ordinary, though now largely obsolete usage of the English word “virtue” in which it is not at all odd to speak of the virtue of, say, a knife or a house, or even animals like dogs and horses.

than the good of the whole. Human virtue, however, relates to the *full realisation* – happiness or flourishing – of man *as a whole*, as a social, moral and above all a rational being. To realise such complete fulfilment requires that both the soul's higher intellectual powers and lower sensitive powers be brought into right order or a harmonised relationship. Human virtue speaks of such a full and ordered actuation of the soul's various capacities – with the lower powers serving the higher in the context of a whole life. Moral virtue, in particular, refers to the perfection of those lower parts of the soul including emotion or passion, desire and appetite (*Nicomachean Ethics* II 3), whereby one may become astute at discerning and disposed towards the right ends and means of human action – this is what is meant by 'practical wisdom', or the virtue of *phronesis* (as discussed in Chapter One).

A thorough and comprehensive analysis of the classical or Aristotelian tradition of the virtues is beyond the scope of this study, and is not really necessary for the main point being made. The point I have tried to make is that the classical, and especially Aristotelian, philosophical tradition is a vital source of insight and understanding on the intellectual foundations of the moral life, including the cognitive anatomy of moral understanding. The importance of such classical sources lies in their offering a strongly integrated account of the rational and affective dimensions of moral thought and action, within an epistemology marked by a determining openness and receptivity before objective reality, and the possibility of substantive moral thought and judgement. The value of such an alternative epistemology, for the purposes of interpreting the moral education question, is precisely its capacity to overcome the insufficiencies of the dominant Juridical tradition, as I have identified them in previous chapters²². That said, the centrality of virtue within such classical sources

²² To clarify, my line of argument is that Juridicalism's philosophical resources are insufficient for an adequate account of morality for the purposes of education. An Aristotelian Realist framework, on the other hand, does, I argue, provide us with such an adequate account. This is not to argue, however, that Aristotelian Realism can be applied successfully to the chief moral philosophical problems that the

should not be overlooked. I will return to the theme of virtue, and especially the morally pertinent virtue of *phronesis*, in Chapter Six in order to determine a final line of inquiry into the implications of Classical Realism as a basis for interpreting moral education. At this point, however, I will expand upon the receptive and substantive features of (moral) rationality which, as mentioned, form part of Aristotelian epistemology.

juridical tradition seeks to address. Rather, in important ways, as will be seen, the main problems vexing the juridical tradition do not figure, or else figure quite differently, according to an Aristotelian outlook.

II. THE RECEPTIVE AND SUBSTANTIVE NATURE OF MORAL UNDERSTANDING -THE RECOVERY OF VITAL REASON.

i. Rethinking the Mind's Activity – the Receptive Mode of Vital Reason.

In Chapter Four I argued that Juridicalism tends to collapse human thought and knowledge (i.e. cognition) into the single faculty of reason, which in turn is conceived solely in terms of *active* and *procedural* thinking. In contrast, the classical notion of 'vital reason' denotes a capacity to receive knowledge as a kind of insight, thus accounting for knowledge and understanding in what I have called the visional modalities. Vital reason also maintains that the highest possibilities of rationality include substantive thought and judgement, and that such substantive insight is foundational to moral goodness.

I use Bénétón's term 'vital reason' here to distinguish a Classical Realist conception of reason from that associated with Juridicalism in Chapters Three and Four. While the conception of reason in Juridicalism stems from a contestable mind-body dualism, vital reason refers to the integrated anthropology and epistemology just presented. To repeat, vital reason is a power of the intellect. While distinguishable from the faculties of the senses, the emotions and the will, however, it is not separate from but incorporates these, since they too serve as cognitive powers by playing a constitutive role in the mind's knowledge and understanding, especially regards practical reasoning about moral matters (as discussed in the previous section).

While the notion of vital reason draws particular attention to the intellect's *receptive* capacity to be informed by an objectively ordered reality, it has also been noted that the reasoning intellect is neither purely active nor wholly passive in its cognitive operation. As such, and in view of the underlying integrated anthropology we have discussed, reason cannot simply be regarded as the power of discursive thought, although discursive thought is indeed a function of the reasoning intellect. Instead,

according to Classical Realism, reason is seen to possess a range of modalities, each informed in various ways by faculties and capacities which are not wholly active and intentional, but include an element of passive sensitivity or receptivity to being. For just as the cognitive powers of the soul range from the physical senses to the immaterial intellect, throughout classical philosophy, the knowable world is thought to involve a hierarchy of significance – layers of depth and meaning – ranging from the physical to the metaphysical and including moral and evaluative content/realities. Every cognitive act, in penetrating these different levels of meaning, requires a commensurate instrument. Hence, the bodily senses may provide sense-knowledge of pinpoints of light against a dark background. But it is with the intellect and its capacity for conceptual knowledge and analytical reasoning, that one may ascertain that these sensible points of light are in fact stars: flaming balls of gas held in constellation by gravitational forces, billions of light-years away. Additionally, as the affective faculties come into play, one may ascertain that the stars “are immediately pleasant and mysterious, and it is never very long when looking at them before one drifts into a vastness beyond everyday experience, and we participate in some way in their life, which accounts for the sensation of awe that descends upon us in their silent, distant presence” (Taylor, p82).

The doctrine of an apprehensible world (an objective order of physical, metaphysical and evaluative dimensions) is a vital part of the epistemology I am commending. As discussed, it is the correspondence between such an objective order and the human soul which, in the Aristotelian tradition, makes knowledge possible. In this way, knowledge is held to be an essentially identity of mind and reality, while in its seemingly infinite capacity to be informed by the world of being, the knowing soul is said by Aristotle to be, in a potential way, all existing things (*De Anima* III 8). In moving from this *potential* (universal) knowledge to *actual* knowledge, the mind is neither purely passive – receiving an indelible, once-and-for-all imprint of the true nature of all things – nor wholly active – constructing all order and significance and

projecting this onto a universe otherwise bereft of objective meaning and value. As explained in the previous section, the intellect is active in its abstraction of forms from the images presented to it by the faculty of perception. The intellect is passive in its reception of the abstracted form as a universal concept. Further an element of activity (or intentionality) and an element of passive susceptibility can be seen in the lower powers of the soul, as they inform thought and knowledge. In some sense, it can be argued, the affective and volitional powers of the soul are active and intentional, drawn instinctively towards their respective commensurate goods and prompting the practical intellect towards various ends and respective actions²³. On the other hand, it makes sense to speak of the affective powers as being responsive to – i.e. passive and susceptible before – objective reality.

Presently, the important point to be gleaned from the foregoing description of Aristotelian epistemology is that a wholly activist conception of reason is insufficient in accounting for the ways in which knowledge and understanding, especially one's powers of moral discrimination and practical reasoning, often seem to depend on an element of openness and receptivity to the world as encountered. As G.K. Chesterton writes:

The mind is not merely receptive, in the sense that it absorbs sensations like so much blotting-paper... On the other hand, the mind is not purely creative, in the sense that it paints pictures on the windows and then mistakes them for a landscape outside. But the mind is active, and its activity consists in following, so far as the will chooses to follow, the light outside that does really shine upon real landscapes. That is what gives the indefinably virile and even

²³ Although the intentionality of affective states is a vexed issue among philosophers, there are significant arguments to support this line of thought. See, for example, Kenny (2003), de Sousa (1987) and Nussbaum (2003).

adventurous quality to this view of life; as compared with that which holds that material inferences pour in upon an utterly helpless mind, or that which holds that psychological influences pour out and create an entirely baseless phantasmagoria. In other words... there are two agencies at work; reality and the recognition of reality; and their meeting is a sort of marriage (1956: p55).

ii. The Double Nature of Vital Reason.

Pieper's notion of 'down to earth contemplation' was presented in Chapter Four as an example of an everyday sort of knowledge that signals cognitive powers beyond those of active, discursive reasoning. Further, underpinning Pieper's notion of 'contemplative vision' is the kind of classical realist anthropology just I have been describing. As such, Pieper has observed that, "The Greeks... as well as the great medieval thinkers, held that not only physical, sensuous perception, but equally man's spiritual and intellectual knowledge, included an element of pure, receptive contemplation" (1952: p33). In order to account for this, the Aristotelian tradition recognises that the reasoning intellect operates in two distinctive yet fully integrated ways. Pieper explains:

The Middle Ages drew a distinction between the understanding as *ratio* and the understanding as *intellectus*. *Ratio* is the power of discursive, logical thought, of searching and of examination, of abstraction, of definition and drawing conclusions. *Intellectus*, on the other hand, is the name for the understanding in so far as it is the capacity of the *simplex intuitus*, of that simple vision to which truth offers itself like a landscape to the eye. The faculty of mind, man's knowledge, is both these things in one, according to antiquity and the Middle Ages, simultaneously *ratio* and *intellectus*; and the process of knowing is the action of the two together. The mode of discursive thought is accompanied and impregnated by an effortless awareness, the contemplative

vision of the *intellectus*, which is not active but passive, or rather receptive, the activity of the soul in which it conceives that which it sees (pp33-34).

This view contrasts significantly with contemporary notions of 'reason' denoting only the activity of the *ratio*, and from which subjective, emotional and volitional experience (and so also 'valuing') is usually sharply distinguished.

The classical philosophical distinction between "reason conceived as puzzling things out, solving problems, calculating and making decisions" (*ratio*), and "reason conceived as receptive of truth, beholding, or looking" (*intellectus*) has also been observed by Louth (2004: p71). Louth notes that within this distinction, prevalent throughout classical and medieval philosophy, there are not two *separate* faculties at work within the reasoning intellect. Rather, the portrait is of a single human intelligence operating at two *distinct yet integrated* levels. This distinction is also repeated, Louth argues, in Heidegger's notion of *die Welt* (the world) and *die Erde* (the earth). For Heidegger, the world is the environment, the world that people increasingly shape to their purposes and in which they are at home. The earth, on the other hand, is what lays behind all this, something beyond human fashioning that irrupts into the world. Louth explains:

The world is something we are familiar with, we know our way around it; it is the world explored by our reason in the sense of *ratio*. But if we are too much at home in the world, if we lose sight of the realm of the earth, then we have lost touch with reality. It was, for Heidegger, the role of the poet to preserve a sense of the realm of the earth, to break down our being lulled into a sense of security by our familiarity with the world (p77).

Louth suggests that the contemplative mode of knowing, the dispassionate beholding of objective being by the *intellectus*, can be thought to operate in the same way. Such

patient attending to reality, he writes, “can prevent our mistaking the familiar tangle of assumption and custom for reality, a tangle that modern technology and the insistent demands of modern consumerist society can very easily bind into a tight web” (p77). The capacity for and inclination towards such contemplative knowledge primarily involves the operation of the *intellectus*. That said, the *intellectus* – sometimes called the ‘intuitive intellect’ – because integrated with the cognitive powers of the senses, the emotions and the will, is the seedbed of all knowledge and understanding. Taken as a whole, therefore, human rationality is not regarded simply as the power of discursive thought, or dualistically as a combination of two separate faculties: one passive and receptive, the other active and critical. Instead, the idea of what Bénéton calls “vital reason” (p2004: p174) – denoting the whole of mentality, supported and guided by (because integrated with) the sensory-emotional and volitional faculties, operating at both a material and spiritual level – is maintained.

iii. Vital Reason and Substantive Moral Knowledge.

The significance of the concept of vital reason, as explicated above, is twofold. Firstly, as already stressed, human intellection cannot be explained solely in terms of discursive (i.e. active) mental processes. In Chapter Four I explained that vital reason does not begin by constructing, calculating or aligning propositions but is best explained in terms of trying to *see* things more clearly. Even in its active, creative and critical mode (or *ratio*), vital reason depends upon a fundamental awareness or *insight* into the objective order of reality, which is the proper task of the passive, receptive *intellectus*. Like the physical eye, vital reason is active and deliberate in its looking, but in its seeing it remains essentially passive, receiving images from the surrounding world. Indeed, were it not for the availability of the visible world and the unique correspondence between it and the eye, the perceiving subject would not see at all, remaining without a clue as to where to cast his gaze or what to look for. Although the classical tradition speaks of knowledge as a ‘grasping’ of forms and essences, with vital reason this is always a matter of grasping with the ‘eyes of the soul’ and is

characterized, as Bénéton says, by a “unifying of faculties to the detriment of the Self” (2004: p179). In its operation vital reason depends on one’s intellectual attitude, one’s availability before the object to be taken up by the truth. Such openness and receptivity towards reality ‘as given’ was shown to be foundational to the examples of knowledge and understanding in the visional modalities considered in Chapter Four.

Secondly, vital reason speaks of the possibility of substantive moral thought and judgement. As such, it serves as a counter-point to the push towards disengagement from being and skepticism about knowledge of truth connected with juridical epistemology. Unlike the procedural rationality of Juridicalism, with vital reason to be rational means to have the correct vision which, as explained, is a matter of the knowing mind being in accord or ‘in tune’ with objective reality. As such, vital reason does not push the agent towards disengagement. On the contrary, vital reason basically means a profound engagement of the knowing mind (or whole person) with objective reality. That is, knowledge and engagement are inseparable; ‘to know is to be’ or, as Bénéton says, “To think is to commit one’s whole being... to be available, receptive, to let oneself be taken up by the truth” (p179).

There is little doubt that one’s ethical choices and moral actions are indicative of one’s usual cares and interests; one’s habitual way of seeing reality. What Classical Realism and the concept of vital reason maintains, however, is that ‘seeing’, in the sense above, is in fact a kind of knowledge - a power of the knowing intellect - in which emotional sensibility and the condition of the will, in their orientation towards objective reality, are fully involved. Such ‘knowledge as seeing’ was considered in Chapter Four, and is especially well illustrated by Pieper’s notion of the “contemplative mode of seeing” (1985: p151). Further, following Aquinas, Maritain (1953) refers to a developed capacity for such contemplative contact with reality as ‘connatural knowledge’. Connatural knowledge involves a kind of contemplative or

visional mode of knowing, built up with time and experience to become a habitual way of seeing and responding to the world – where one's entire being is in accord or *co-natured* with objective reality. Maritain observes that this is “a very different knowledge from what is generally called knowledge” (p18) since it is not expressed directly in abstract or theoretical notions and judgments, but rather is inseparable from lived experience. He writes:

In this knowledge through union or inclination, connaturality or congeniality, the intellect is at play not alone, but together with affective inclinations and the dispositions of the will, and is guided and directed by them. It is not rational knowledge, knowledge through the conceptual, logical and discursive exercise of reason [*ratio*]. But it is really and genuinely knowledge, though obscure and perhaps incapable of giving an account of itself, or being translated into words (p23).

According to Maritain, connatural knowledge is “the mystical knowledge of the contemplative” as well as “the poetic knowledge of the artist”, both of whom, via their spiritual or artistic encounters with reality, acquire “a non-conceptual knowledge of the things of the world and their secrets” (p17). Yet the most widespread instance of knowledge through connaturality, Maritain contends, is moral understanding. Thus he explains:

On the one hand, we can possess in our mind moral science, the conceptual and rational knowledge of virtues, which produces in us merely an intellectual conformity with the truths involved... A moral philosopher may possibly not be a virtuous man, and yet know everything about virtues.

On the other hand, we can possess the virtue in question in our own powers of will and desire, have it embodied in ourselves and thus be in accordance with it, or co-natured with it, in our very being... (p23).

James Taylor (1998) also recognizes the importance of connatural knowledge to moral virtue, arguing that since to be connatural with a thing is to participate with - or share the likeness of - its nature, then correct moral judgement, and a corresponding rectitude of the affective and volitional faculties, is inseparable from connatural knowledge of certain morally apt evaluative content of reality. He writes:

St. Thomas used the term [connatural] to designate one of two ways in which we form rightness of judgement. The first way is by reason [as in *ratio*], following the steps of discourse and dialectic. But the second way of judging correctly is "on account of a certain connaturality with the matter about which one has to judge in a given instance." For example, in terms of moral virtue, one can arrive through the steps of reason as in a syllogism to the *principles* of right judgement. But there is prudence required to *act* with right judgement when dealing with particular circumstances. It so happens that there are those who, lacking the rigor of rational discipline, act in accordance with prudence displaying a rectitude of the will in a given circumstance. How so? Because they have become, through habit, through familiarity, not rational discourse, *connatural* with the circumstances that tend to turn out a certain way, over and over again (p64).

In the quotation above Taylor highlights an important connection between connatural knowledge and the virtue of 'prudence' - also known as 'practical wisdom' or *phronesis*. As I have already discussed, *phronesis* refers to the peculiar knowledge and understanding of the morally good - or practically wise - person. Such understanding goes beyond a theoretical or propositional knowledge of the good, or

right principles, in that it includes a dispositional awareness or insight into the nature of the good. Like connatural knowledge, practical wisdom cannot be reduced to theoretical understanding or propositional content, but is rather more obscure and incapable of giving an account of itself in abstraction from the very thoughts and actions which embody this way of seeing, judging and desiring of the good.

I shall return again to the central importance of *phronesis* (within the Aristotelian tradition) and its emphasis on character and the moral life as a whole – rather than principles and isolated ethical dilemmas – in the following chapter. What is immediately significant is that moral understanding (including good habit and dutiful action) arguably has less to do with advanced powers of discursive reasoning (*ratio*) than suggested by Juridical epistemology. That said, moral understanding is indeed a matter of knowledge and of intellectual vitality. It has, though, more to do with the kind of substantive, visional knowledge made possible by the exercise of vital reason – a conception of rationality rooted in classical realist philosophy.

iv. Meeting the Problems of Juridicalism – Bringing the Strands Together.

The foregoing account of Classical Realism has signaled a rich and valuable source of insight into the nature of moral understanding. In particular, the integrated anthropology and identity theory of knowledge of the Aristotelian tradition speaks directly to the main insufficiencies of Juridicalism – which chiefly informs contemporary moral education theory – as I have identified them.

To summarise, Juridicalism is based on a strong dualism between the rational, thinking, knowing mind on the one hand, and the sensing, feeling, doing self – embodied and culturally embedded – on the other. Throughout the Modern philosophical tradition this dualism has given rise to a suspicion of overtly subjective, personal and situated forms of understanding, especially concerning claims to evaluative knowledge or truth. In Chapter Three this kind of skepticism was

identified with Hume who denied that knowledge issues from any metaphysical correspondence between mind and reality. Instead, Hume regards knowledge as the generation of perceptions (ideas and impressions) out of the 'raw material' of thought provided by sense perception and reflection on experience²⁴. If cognitive content is located anywhere, for Hume, it is in our perceptions - we are not capable of having knowledge of *things in themselves*. What we take to be reality, therefore, is reconceived as mere perception, experience, or idea, and this is the basis of Hume's epistemological scepticism. Subsequently, one's moral understanding and evaluations - which, for Hume, are prompted solely by the passions, understood as wholly separate from reason - are also seen to possess no objective, *cognitive* basis²⁵. Such subjectivism regarding the metaphysical status of (moral) value, developed by subsequent theorists, is reflected in moral non-cognitivist meta-ethics and more generally throughout post-Enlightenment moral philosophy. Accordingly, morality has come to be widely regarded (reduced to) the task of reconciling social conflicts based on evaluative discrepancies by recourse to 'rational' discourse - understood as a certain kind of 'impersonal' procedural reasoning aimed at the development of internally consistent and generally agreed rules and principles which are binding on all parties irrespective of tradition or personal feelings and motivations.

Many of the problems associated with this non-cognitivist outlook, including a tendency toward an activist and procedural conception of moral reasoning, were raised in Chapters Three and Four. In light of these problems, three key needs were identified for reconfiguring our understanding of the cognitive anatomy of moral understanding, so as to provide a better basis for interpreting the moral education question. First, there is the need for a more integrated anthropology by which to

²⁴ See Hume's *A Treatise on Human Nature* Book I and *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* Sections IV and V.

²⁵ See *Treatise* II (2.3.3.4).

make sense of the integrated nature of reason and affect, especially in moral understanding. In this respect, the integrated anthropology of Aristotelianism offers a unitary account of the mind/soul and body/world, in which the affective faculties may be seen to play a constitutive role in the mind's cognitive relation to reality. In the Aristotelian tradition reason/knowledge and feeling/action are brought together in a single psychological framework. The affective and volitional faculties (integrated with the reasoning intellect) are shown to be central to one's understanding of the morally relevant evaluative content of reality, as informing the practical intellect and leading to human action.

The second need identified in response to Juridicalism is an account of practical rationality which includes an element of passive receptivity towards the world 'as given'. The identity theory of knowledge – understood within the Aristotelian tradition in terms of form reception – together with the integrated nature of the mind's intellectual and sensory-emotional faculties, admits that rationality depends, in part, upon an essential passive receptivity before reality. A basic openness and willingness to be informed by the world 'as given' permeates the Classical Realist view of what makes knowledge possible and, further, how human beings come to judge and act rightly in the world. This aspect of Classical Realism, in particular, makes sense of knowledge and understanding in what I have called the 'visional modalities' (see Chapter Four).

Finally, there is a need for a more substantive account of practical reason allowing for moral understanding to connect more fundamentally with life 'as lived', including a respectful and open attitude towards the possibility of objective moral truth²⁶. In the

²⁶ The notion of objective moral truth is of course philosophically controversial. Generally, arguments fall along the divide between realist and anti-realist or non-cognitivist outlooks (as raised in the discussion of moral non-cognitivism in Chapter 1.II and Chapter 3.II), but there are in fact more than two sides to the debate. Mackie (1988) and Harman (1988), for example, have presented arguments for

classical philosophical tradition practical rationality is generally understood substantively, in terms of having the correct vision or being properly attuned to an objective order of existence (including morally significant content/realities). For Aristotle this signals the importance of the virtue of *phronesis* (practical wisdom) whereby one's intellectual and sensory-emotional faculties are brought into a full and ordered actuation. Moral virtue then centrally involves having one's full repertoire of cognitive capacities (including the emotions and the will) rightly related to one another and in respect of their commensurate objects (depth or aspect of reality). In the moral life this signals the importance of character – one's habitual and characteristic intellectual and moral excellences – and so also the life or context in which one's faculties and capacities come to be developed and directed.

Such a view contrasts significantly to that following Juridicalism, where attention is focused on developing advanced powers of analytical and procedural thinking, aimed essentially at determining formal principles of action which might be seen to apply to all parties regardless of such contextual particularities as feelings, motivations, personal character and socio-cultural and traditional embeddedness. The tendency towards proceduralism, within Juridicalism, reflects a strong concern to eliminate all subjectivity from the knowledge and understanding of the world on which we might rely in making moral evaluations and decisions²⁷. This concern, as

cognitivist forms of anti-realism, while McDowell (1988) and Sturgeon (1988) have argued for quite different kinds of moral realist outlooks. These papers and others contained in Geoffrey Sayer-McCord (Ed.) *Essays on Moral Realism* provide a good introduction to the debate.

²⁷ Understandably, this concern is tied to the history of the West since the Renaissance and Reformation, which has occasioned the need to think through ethical approaches to coping with conflicting world-views in a peaceable way, giving rise to Juridical perspectives. I am not so much concerned here with determining the solubility of such problems as with pointing out that the solutions proposed by Juridicalism tend to exclude or deny the importance of substantive visions of the good in public ethics, and that this does not yield as complete enough a picture of the moral life for

seen, follows from a divided view of the mind/soul and body/world dynamic, and consequent skepticism about the objectivity of knowledge - especially moral/evaluative claims and judgements. If one abandons the view of knowledge as an essential identity between an objective order and the embodied mind/soul then the essential character of rationality must be reconceived. When reality is no longer regarded as the measure of human knowledge, but is viewed instead as a 'meaningful construct' receiving *its* measure from human rationality itself - understood specifically as the capacity to form clear and distinct ideas - then the affective, volitional and other overtly situated dimensions of human experience must be regarded with suspicion. It is largely such a reductive view of rationality - as essentially distinct from or opposed to the passions (the emotions) - which spurs contemporary moral education theorists to seek an adequate account of both cognitive and affective/motivational dimensions of moral experience (see Chapter Two). Reconciling these two dimensions is, I have argued, undermined by a relatively uncritical acceptance of Juridical epistemology - i.e. for lack of a philosophy of mind and theory of cognition in which reasoning and valuing are vitally integrated. I have also argued, however, that such an integrated anthropology is yet available in the Classical Realist philosophical-epistemological tradition.

In the following chapter I will argue that the essential character of the moral life, following the epistemology I have defended, may be construed as the on-going struggle to perfect one's characteristic *vision* of reality - which is as much to say that it is a quest to be perfected by virtue: to have one's intellectual, sensory, emotional and volitional capacities fully awakened and properly ordered. In the sphere of practical reason - understood as the nexus between human thought and action - much has already been said about the importance of the virtue of *phronesis*. In Chapter Six I will

understanding the contribution of schools to moral education. More is needed than ways of dealing with conflict if students are to benefit from their schooling in leading full human lives.

take up this theme once more in consideration of what, in everyday life, coming to acquire the virtue of *phronesis* might entail. In particular, I will consider how the close connection between right thinking and right feeling implied by Aristotle's treatment of practical reason and *phronesis* suggests the need for a deliberate cultivation of certain cognitive dispositions, and how this might suggest a way for schools to interpret their proper moral educational responsibility.

CHAPTER SIX

Introduction.

This chapter considers how the moral education question might be interpreted following the Classical Realist epistemology sketched in Chapter Five. In Chapter One I argued that a clear interpretation of the moral education question requires an integrated scheme of human intelligence revealing the varying scope, modes and degrees of human knowledge within which the rational and emotional-volitional powers of intelligence are feasibly related. I have since argued that a Classical Realism framework, grounded in the philosophical realism of the Aristotelian tradition, may serve to counter the problematic emphases and oversights of the dominant Juridical foundation. The precise implications of a Classical Realist foundation for how morality is understood, and hence what moral education in schools might mean, now need to be considered.

Throughout Chapter Five I drew attention to the centrality of practical reason and the virtue of *phronesis* to morality, according to the realist epistemology outlined. This chapter begins, then, with a closer examination of *phronesis*, in the Aristotelian tradition, in order to show the close integration of right thinking and right feeling associated with moral excellence. In the Aristotelian tradition, such habits of thinking and feeling – or cognitive dispositions – are viewed as a matter of personal character, which in turn draws attention to the contexts in which character is developed, including formal educational experience. Given that the educational interest of schools properly extends to include a concern for students' moral development (as argued in Chapter One), the following questions should then be asked: 'What kind of cognitive dispositions signal the moral understanding of the practically wise person?' and 'How do such cognitive habits connect with the responsibility of schools for knowledge and intellectual development?'

The Aristotelian picture of the practically wise person is a dauntingly perfected figure, seemingly far removed from the day-to-day struggle to be good amidst the incessant demands of everyday life. I argue, however, that the quest for *phronesis* can be characterised as an on-going struggle to attain or cultivate a certain *clarity of vision* – understood as a refined and honest *intellectual objectivity* – and that every use of the mind in daily life contributes to the outcome of this struggle. In order to illuminate the dynamics of such ‘moral vision’ and the place it occupies in everyday life, I turn to Iris Murdoch whose key concepts of *quality of consciousness* and *attention* help show how the quest for good vision connects with the life of the mind, and so especially with education. Following Murdoch, vision (or ‘attention’) is understood as “a just and loving gaze directed upon an individual reality” (1971: p34), and is seen as the distinguishing mark of the would-be moral agent. I also consider moral vision in terms of what might be called ‘interpersonal knowledge’ – i.e. understanding another’s feelings and/or their personal sense of meaning. I argue that the intellectualistic ethics and concern for ‘objectivity’ following from Classical Realism is no less relevant in this regard.

Having argued that the quest for vision best describes the essential character of the moral life, the moral education question is reconsidered. From the preceding argument, the moral education question is interpreted as concerning the role of schools in influencing the characteristic direction and focus of the student’s vision. This task is not presented simply as a matter of procuring sight in the young by imparting knowledge of the good directly. It is, instead, presented as a gradual process of converting (or directing) the mind and its faculties (integrated and whole) towards the desired object – i.e. reality in all its depths, according to the developmental capacity of the students²⁸. Further, this task is viewed as inseparable

²⁸ While not typically expressed this way, this principle is well understood when it comes to teaching mathematics and science. For example, you could teach a child, abstractly, that “2+2=4”, but such knowledge remains utterly meaningless and entirely useless without affording the student some real

from the school's principle concern with developing knowledge and the intellect. This interpretation of the moral education question then lays the foundation for an initial consideration of the pedagogical implications, as well as some related philosophical and practical issues, in Chapter Seven.

experience (e.g. playing with and manipulating counters) through which it might be revealed that 2 [counters] plus 2 [more counters] does indeed make 4 [counters]. The formula $E=MC^2$ likewise makes no sense without some experiential grasp of the realities to which the concepts denoted by those symbols (e.g. 'energy', 'mass', 'the speed of light') actually relate. Further, to be placed in touch with the realities from which our value judgements derive is also to occasion an entirely new *mode* of knowledge or understanding – i.e. what I have called 'visional knowledge'. To learn abstractly by direct instruction that "it's wrong to steal" is one thing, to have the truth of that axiom confirmed by relevant experience is quite another, and this is not at all the kind of knowledge (so central to practical wisdom) that can be imparted directly in some propositional format.

I. REALITY AS THE BASIS OF ETHICS - THE VISIONAL CHARACTER OF MORAL LIFE.

i. Reality and the Good.

In Chapter Five I explained how, in Classical Realism, cognition is regarded as a matter of attaining to a true knowledge and understanding of real things. Reason, in this view of cognition, I explained, is nothing more than the unique power of the human soul (i.e. the mind) to take into itself the truth of real things – to receive their sensible and intelligible forms. In other words, knowledge issues from an *identity of mind and reality*. The mind, in particular, refers to the soul's capacity for understanding, exercised throughout the embodied subject as a union of faculties – a psychological whole comprising the senses, the emotions, the will and the reasoning intellect. Reality, in this scheme, is taken to mean an objective order of things and their properties, both physical and metaphysical, comprising the known (and potentially knowable) universe.

Of utmost importance, here, is that the objective order of reality is not merely a world of interesting but value-free factual content. Rather, it really does entail an 'order' – in the literal sense – among things and their properties. Further, such an order underwrites our evaluation of things as good and bad, or desirable and detestable, and also our determination of actions (in respect of the things of this world) as either morally good or morally contemptible²⁹. In other words, the accuracy or truthfulness

²⁹ Clearly, we do not all find the same things morally contemptible, nor do we esteem the same things in the same way as good or bad, desirable or detestable. How the evaluative 'shape' of the world connects with the judgements of individuals needs to be considered in terms of the broader educational influence of culture, custom, upbringing and the like. The habituation and training of the (integrated) intellectual, volitional and affective faculties, via not just formal schooling but also these wider influences, is of central importance in the quest for virtuous judgement – instantiated in human thought and action and approximating an ever-more faithful vision of and response to the world, as given.

of our evaluative discriminations and moral judgements relates in some way to an objective and evaluative order among things and their properties. Referring to the substantive rationality of the classical tradition Charles Taylor observes:

To be rational is to have a vision of rational order, and to love this order. So the difference [between actions and motivations] has to be explained by reference to a cosmic reality, the order of things. This is good in a fuller sense: the key to this order is the Idea of the Good itself. Their relation to this is what makes certain of our actions or aspirations good; it is what constitutes the goodness of these actions or motives (2000: p92).

In the classical tradition the precise nature of this ultimate Good, or principle of Goodness, as rooted in reality, is disputed. Plato, for instance, conceives of the Good as a transcendent order of being, or as the principle of that order. There is a close connection, on the Platonic view, between having an awareness of the right order in our lives and an awareness of the transcendent order of the cosmos. Aristotle, in contrast, refutes that our knowledge of the right order and priority of ends in our lives is simply, as for Plato, a matter of developing an awareness of the eternal and unchanging order of the cosmos. Aristotle does not reject the notion of any such order but, as discussed in Chapter Five, holds that being or essence, as determined by form, is in the things of this world and not elsewhere. Since the circumstances and predicaments of life in this world are particular and ever-changing, Aristotle argues that the knowledge of the practically wise person is a knowledge of how to behave in each particular instance, which cannot be reduced to a knowledge of general truths³⁰.

³⁰ For Aristotle, the ethical standard is not a general rule or principle, but is the substantive judgement of the practically wise man (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1107a1). Certainly, Aristotle admits of general moral truths that single out some acts as always wrong, such as murder, theft and adultery (1107a10-25), yet he maintains that practical wisdom concerns those things about which we can deliberate, and so what is called for is right judgement with regards to particular circumstances (1140b).

The ultimate Good for man, according to Aristotle, is realised in living 'the good life' – comprised of those actions, moral habits, practices, goods, use of goods, social and political forms and relationships etcetera, which enable man to best fulfil his nature as a rational being (*NE X 6-9*).

While distinguishing in this way between the objective order of being and the right order of goods, ends and actions in a human life, Aristotle does not sever any connection between the two. Indeed, for Aristotle, practical wisdom concerns one's awareness of the order and priority among possible goods and ends, but the organising principle of this order remains man's rational nature. Significantly, the highest possibilities of man's rational nature include contemplative knowledge of the unchanging order of being, and so it is to this end – i.e. the 'contemplative life' – that the right ordering of life's various goods and ends, and hence our knowledge of the right order of such goods and ends, is properly oriented. With Aristotle, attending to both orders – the unchanging cosmos and our lives of contingent goods and ends – is constitutive of the Good of man, human flourishing or happiness (Taylor 1989: p125).

What all this serves to highlight is that the basis of ethics – in so far as ethics and morality have to do with human flourishing and that human flourishing, fundamentally, has to do with man's rational nature – is in reality. The rational order, throughout Classical Realism, is as much in the world as it is in the human soul, and coming to realise this order in the context of our lived engagement with the world is what ethics is centrally about. Moral understanding of the proper ends and means in one's life is inseparable from one's being rational – a capacity defined in terms of actuating an identity between mind/soul and reality. As Taylor writes:

As long as the order of things embodies an ontic logos, then ideas and valuations are also seen as located in the world, and not just in subjects... When Aristotle says that "actual knowledge is identical with its object"... he is

operating with a conception of knowing which is far removed from the representational construal that becomes dominant with Descartes and Locke. Knowledge comes when the action of the forms in shaping the real coincides with its action in shaping my intelligence (*nous*). True knowledge, true valuation is not exclusively located in the subject. In a sense, one might say that their paradigm location is in reality; correct human knowledge and valuation comes from our connecting ourselves rightly to the significance things already have ontically (p186).

To sum up, coming to have a proper cognitive relation with the world is constitutive of moral understanding as such. Further, one's cognitive relation to the world, one's moral understanding, is actuated in one's very thoughts, ideas, valuations, judgements, choices and actions. And, as mentioned in Chapter Five, having a proper cognitive relation with the world is not dissociable from having certain feelings and motivations – affective and volitional dispositions. Practical intelligence, in other words, cannot be separated from excellence of character, where excellence of character is understood in terms of being perfected by virtue. In the classical tradition of the virtues, from Socrates through to Aristotle and beyond, the ethical question 'what ought I to do?' is, in effect, a question about *what sort of life one should live*. It is not strictly one's thoughts, valuations and actions, in isolation, which make up the moral 'landscape', but rather the form of life from which thought and action issues and in which one's underlying character develops. I shall develop this theme further in the following sections. At this point I wish to stress the close relationship, in the classical tradition, between practical intelligence and one's cognitive relation to reality - where cognition is understood in an expanded sense as including the constitutive role played by the affective and volitional faculties in our understanding of the world.

Indeed, the integrated anthropology and theory of cognition typifying what I call Classical Realism underpins Pieper's argument that, "All obligation is based upon being. Reality is the foundation of ethics. The good is that which is in accord with reality" (1989: p111). Further, Pieper writes:

The good lies indeed in the proper relation of action to the reason which truly understands, and so evil is a kind of "logical" contradiction. But reason is nothing but the "passage" to reality. And he who attempts to survey at one glance this circuit - reality-understanding-action - and to express it in one word, will find that evil ultimately proves to be an "ontic" contradiction, a contradiction of being, something that opposes reality, that does not correspond to "the thing" (p113).

Bénéton also stresses this connection between the substantive knowledge (or *insight*) afforded by vital reason on the one hand, and moral goodness on the other. He writes:

When cannibals eat their enemy, when peoples practice slavery, what does this show except their inability to see that the other belongs to the same humanity? When the Nazis divided human beings into masters and subhumans, what did they demonstrate if not a regression in vital understanding? When the mathematician Roberval cries out upon leaving a performance of Corniell's *Polyeucte*, "What does that prove?" what does this say except to point up his limitation as a man imprisoned in science? When a brutal person is untouched by a sublime spectacle, what does it bring to light besides his brutality? (2004: p181).

Here, Bénéton implies that *humanity* and the *sublime* refer to objective qualities of existence, and that certain moral judgements and behaviour may require a

fundamental understanding of such qualities – an understanding, moreover, which vital reason makes possible. Of further significance is that Bénéton refers to this kind of understanding as “insight”, arguing that “Socrates, Michelangelo, Pascal, Rembrandt, Bach, Solzhenitsyn, and others bear witness for all human beings because they ‘see’ farther than we do” (p181). Hence Bénéton suggests that in the moral life, “To see and to enable others to see is everything” (p178). Vital reason, for Bénéton, lies beneath the insight of history’s great visionaries, whose truths are “compelling not because they give rise to a fleeting emotion but because they are in harmony with the constitution of our being, because they are recognised as being consubstantial with who we are” (p179).

As well as making ‘vision’ the operative metaphor, Bénéton also urges that vital reason – or correct moral vision – is not an automatic function but of itself implies a kind of basic ethical attitude, or rectitude of the will and emotions. Specifically, vital reason “presupposes a unifying of faculties to the detriment of the Self” (p179). Likewise Pieper contends, “insight into the nature of the good as rooted in objective being, of itself compels us to carry it out in a definite human attitude, and makes certain attitudes impossible” (p113). That is:

It makes impossible the attitude of always referring to oneself and to the judgement of one’s conscience, which is considered as providing the norm in each instance. We are forced now to look through and beyond our own moral judgement to the norm presented to us by the objective reality of being...

“Objectivity”, if thereby we mean “fidelity to being”, is the proper [moral] attitude of man (p113).

From Classical Realism, therefore, there derives an ethical perspective in which people’s willing and acting is seen as determined by knowledge. Such an idea seems

immediately at odds with everyday experience, where people often choose and act in ways opposed to what they know to be right, or else where in choosing and acting they seem to have recourse not to any kind of knowledge, but simply to generally agreed rules or principles. But what has been repeated throughout this and the previous chapter is that the concept of knowledge (and with it the entire anthropology and theory of cognition) within Classical Realism is developed along quite different lines to those of Modern philosophy and the Juridical tradition. In particular, the classical tradition centres on the virtues – those qualities of character issuing in the excellent realisation of human capacities, in relation to feeling, thought and action. If knowing what is to be done in each particular instance is a matter of practical intelligence, what Classical Realism maintains is that such intelligence is a matter of one's cognitive relation to reality, but that this cannot be separated from one's characteristic habits and depths of thought and feeling – one's cognitive *dispositions*. This close integration of right thinking and right feeling has already been commented on in relation to the virtue of *phronesis*. We may now consider the place of *phronesis* in moral understanding more closely and attempt to describe the essential character of the moral life issuing from a Classical Realist foundation.

ii. *Phronesis* and Moral Vision.

Following Classical Realism, knowledge of the right order of goods and ends in human life, necessary for ethical action, is fundamentally connected with man's rational nature and distinctive intellectual capacity to be informed by the objective order of reality – which includes moral content. As Taylor writes, "The ancient notion of the good, either in the Platonic mode, as the key to cosmic order, or in the form of the good life á la Aristotle, sets a standard for us in nature, independent of our will" (p82). In this sense, practical wisdom, or knowing what is right to do in each particular situation, is significantly a matter of having right reason, or a high degree of intellectual objectivity. 'Objectivity' in this sense does not entail emotional disengagement or adopting as stance of moral indifference or 'neutrality,' but rather

suggests a vital contact with reality issuing from a full and ordered actuation of the senses, the emotions, the will and the intellect. Such an ordering of the psychological capacities involves coming to be perfected by virtue, and where the practical intellect is concerned – i.e. discerning the proper order of goods and ends in life – the virtue of *phronesis* (practical wisdom) marks out those habits of thinking and feeling that are to be sought.

Here, it is worth reflecting on Aristotle's point (raised in Chapter One) that in order to do the good one must somehow know the good, but in order to know the good one must already, in a sense, *be* good. Aristotle refers to this basic or prior goodness as the virtue of *phronesis* (typically translated as 'prudence'). Joseph Dunne (1999) has pointed out that for Aristotle, *phronesis* names a particular virtue but is also like an ingredient in all the others, supplying the necessary component of judgement in particular instances. He writes, "*phronesis* then is at once a deliberative excellence... and a disposition for perceiving, or having insight" (p51). While a distinct virtue in its own right, *phronesis* also refers to or *includes* the other virtues, particularly those indicating an uprightness of character, rectitude of the will and refined emotional sensibility. As Gilbert Meilaender observes:

If prudence requires that our action be in accord with the truth of things, this requires that "the egocentric 'interests' of man be silenced in order that he may perceive the truth of real things, and so that reality itself may guide him to the proper means for realising his goal". We must be just enough to see the proper claims of others, temperate enough that our vision is not clouded by pleasures of the moment, brave enough to adhere to what we see even when it does not work to our benefit. Without the other virtues, moral knowledge, the insight into proper ends and means of action which prudence provides, cannot be had (2002: pp25-26).

The Aristotelian tradition makes clear, then, that moral knowledge and understanding is inextricably connected with virtuous action. As Aristotle says, “it is not possible to be good in the strict sense without practical reason, nor practically wise without moral virtue” (*Nicomachean Ethics* VI 12 1144b30). Dunne provides a useful summary of this connection:

Knowing and being disposed to act, then, are co-constitutive of *phronesis*. But in fact Aristotle goes further, suggesting that if a person is not properly disposed to act then neither will he even know in the relevant (‘phronetic’) sense. Thus, they are not independent co-constituents of *phronesis*; rather, the very knowledge is conditional upon having the right disposition.

...Aristotle believes that true knowledge is possible only because of ‘a certain similarity and affinity’ between knower and known, or because the soul is ‘naturally adapted to the cognition of... (its) object’ (NE VI 1 1139a9-11). If the object of *phronesis*, then, is the good, the soul of the *phronimos* must somehow be attuned or predisposed to this good. It is through the ordering of appetite or desires that one is thus predisposed; and so ‘desire must follow the same things that reasoning asserts’, or ‘the function of practical intellect is to arrive at the truth that corresponds to right appetite’ (1999: pp54-55).

Emotion, desire and the will (or the affective capacities), therefore, play a constitutive role in moral understanding in so far as they serve as cognitive powers, providing insight into especially the evaluative aspects of reality, and also at the level of acquired dispositions, which, as explained, are an indissociable component of practical wisdom. The vital point here is that the life of the practical intellect cannot be conveniently separated from the sphere of appetite and desire – from our capacity to recognise and tendency to be moved by and attracted to certain goods, ends and evaluative aspects of the world.

Rather than assigning priority between the intellect and the affective/volitional powers, Aristotle stresses their close integration, concluding that practical wisdom – the moral knowledge of the virtuous person – is properly understood as either ‘appetitive intellect or intellectual appetite’ (*Nicomachean Ethics* VI 2 1139b5). Both the intellectual and affective/volitional powers of the soul, however, correspond to different yet equally *objective* aspects of reality, and so the proper concern of each is with a true understanding of what is really the case. As the good of man relates to his rational nature, the virtuous ordering and actuation of the intellectual and emotional/volitional powers of the soul, leading to practical wisdom, is described by Aristotle as “a true and reasoned state of capacity to act with regard to the things that are good or bad for man” (NE VI 5 1140b4-5). Implicit in the Aristotelian account of the moral knowledge of the virtuous person, therefore, is a concern for intellectual objectivity, right reason or forming an understanding in which things are perceived according to their true nature. As Charles Taylor (1989: p86) argues, because the ancients understood practical reason substantively, to be practically wise (or, in other words, to be fully rational) “was to have the correct vision, or in the case of Aristotle’s *phronesis*, an accurate power of moral discrimination”. As such, practical wisdom “is a matter of seeing an order which in some sense is in nature”. It is with this need for ‘objectivity’, ‘*phronesis*’, ‘insight’ and the like, as above, that the idea of ‘vision’ becomes central. Further, there are important ways in which the idea of vision – or the quest for good ‘moral vision’ – can connect the bid for virtue with everyday life, stressing the fundamental relevance of acquired habits of thinking and feeling (i.e. character) to the kind of accurate power of moral discrimination which is sought.

The Aristotelian ideal of the virtuous person – or, specifically, the practically wise person – is in many ways a dauntingly perfected figure. In this regard, Dunne remarks:

A person not only without error or fault but even beyond conflict in all the interweaving of thoughts, feelings and actions may seem impossible in reality, and unattractive in very conception (p56).

Given that the practically wise person, in their knowledge of the good must already (or simultaneously) qualify as morally virtuous, it is difficult to find any place for, or see any value in, the sort of familiar and every-day efforts to puzzle out the right course of action, to make one's best possible judgements and then, through a concerted effort of will, follow through with one's decisions³¹. As discussed in Chapter One, the moral understanding of the merely strong-willed person is not equivalent to that of the morally virtuous (or practically wise) person. Practical wisdom speaks especially of a harmony of feeling, will and intellect, such that knowing and doing the good is thoroughly in accord with one's desire, one's very being. Yet, it is difficult to conceive how the person whose capacities are ordered in this way could ever come to be so-perfected except through time and experience in which the will and the other faculties are deliberately cultivated, exercised, strengthened and refined; in short, habituated so that virtuous perfection will prove more likely.

The enhanced power of moral discrimination, or perfected vision, suggested by *phronesis*, does not simply emerge spontaneously and at random. Instead, it emerges in the context of lived and engaged experience and is significantly a measure of personal character - involving one's customary habits of thinking and feeling,

³¹ For interest, on this point, see Swanton's account of virtue as a "threshold concept" (2003: especially pp24-25 & Chapter 3). Swanton maintains that the moral agent need not always approach or attain the ideal of moral perfection in order to exhibit virtue. Instead, she argues, contextual issues such as the agent's relative abilities/capacities and the social/moral climate of her particular circumstances need to be taken into account, and so will allow for a plurality of standards by which to assess the degree of virtue attained.

recognising and responding to the world. The indissociable aspect of character in moral understanding, highlighted by the Aristotelian and classical tradition of the virtues, properly draws our attention to the lived contexts in which character is developed. In this regard, the idea of *striving to perfect one's available moral vision*, unlike the remote and seemingly unapproachable ideal of the fully virtuous person, can help connect our interest in and efforts to become virtuous with the continuous fabric of everyday life. The quest for vision is an on-going struggle of discernment in which every application of the mind and every habit of thought and feeling, and so every activity and context in which we are called upon to think and feel and respond to the world, is immediately and cumulatively relevant.

In short, clarity of vision requires a strenuous and ongoing effort of discernment – a kind of disciplined attention – the ultimate aim of which remains a full and ordered actuation of the soul's capacities with regard to thought and action. The end to be aimed at in the moral life is, of course, good habit and dutiful action, but the background condition to that end is, as Murdoch suggests, “a just mode of vision and a good quality of consciousness” (1971: p91), which is something that must be worked on or cultivated. In *The Art of Making Right Decisions* (1985) Pieper also writes:

If I am to make a [morally] right decision... I must be guided by the truth of things themselves... In other words, the realisation of the good presupposes knowledge of reality. “Good intentions” alone do not enable us to do what is good. Something else is required: That we look at the reality of the actual world and that we make the assent or dissent of our will dependent on our knowledge of reality... a person who is incapable, for a time, of simply keeping silent and perceiving what is there, and then of converting what he has seen and learned into a decision, is incapable of achieving the good, or in other words is incapable of performing an ethical act in the full sense of the term (pp221-223).

When Pieper contends that “a tremendous activity of the will is required if we are to be determined only by reality in our knowing, to be objective and to force ourselves to silence and keep ourselves out of the picture and so to become perceptive” (1989: p135), he is not asserting the dominance of sheer will power as the means to moral virtue. The will, in Pieper’s estimation, is not a kind of ‘steering wheel’ used to control and direct the various rational and non-rational faculties. Rather, Pieper regards the will as a distinctive faculty of the human soul, characterised more as an inclination, an appetite or desire, the proper, commensurate object of which is the good. As such will is deeply implicated in moral matters, and so can have both a positive and negative affect on intellect/vision/perception. Pieper follows Aquinas and Aristotle, therefore, in maintaining that in the soul of the virtuous person the will must find its rightly ordered place among all the other powers – it must be disposed to follow what practical reason asserts, with the aid of the sensory-emotional faculties, as both good and true. Yet, while we cannot ‘make the assent or dissent of our will dependent on our knowledge of reality’ (in the manner of the virtuous person) by sheer strength of will alone, Pieper recognises that there is a need to avail ourselves of the kinds of activity through which a right ordering and actuation of the soul’s faculties and powers can be experienced and cultivated. “We are beginning to understand once more, “ Pieper writes, “the meaning of objectivity in perception, to recognise that there can and must be a kind of asceticism of knowledge (p135).

The notion of struggling to acquire good moral vision draws attention to the contexts in which we become the kind of people we are, with the capacities of feeling and understanding we possess. Murdoch’s account of the moral life as centrally concerned with vision, in particular, highlights the way in which a demand for intellectual objectivity (or right reason) connects with our more clearly personal characteristics and the way these are developed in everyday life. Hence Dunne suggests:

...Iris Murdoch - a philosopher by no means hostile to the kind of ethical project he [Aristotle] espouses - may be taken to offer a truer, more recognisably human picture when she depicts the moral agent as fated to 'live and travel between truth and falsehood, good and evil, appearance and reality' (Murdoch 1992: p166) (Dunne 1999: p56).

While Murdoch's depiction of the Good is more strictly Platonic than Aristotelian, her account of the nature of the moral life resonates with Aristotle's emphasis on the particularity of moral experience and concern for character development throughout life as a whole. As Phillips observes in relation to Murdoch's concern for a transcendent Idea of the Good, "'Transcendence' leads us not to some abstract spiritual realm but into a reality of here and now which selfishness normally conceals" (in Murdoch 1971: editorial note).

In short, as a philosopher in the realist tradition, Murdoch's insights are especially relevant since they help show how a visional ethical perspective remains sensitive to and encompasses everyday features of moral experience, including weakness of will and the place of rules, principles and a sense of duty. The following section therefore outlines this aspect of Murdoch's understanding of moral life. Additionally, I offer a discussion of interpersonal understanding and the moral life in terms of the realistic theory of cognition and intellectualistic focus of Classical Realism. I then turn to reconsider the moral education question in light of the Classical Realist cognitive anatomy of moral understanding I have developed.

II. THE DYNAMICS OF MORAL VISION - REVISITING THE MORAL EDUCATION QUESTION.

i. The Continuous Fabric of Moral Life.

For Murdoch, the moral life is something that goes on continually, rather than being limited to isolated moments of ethical choice. The quality of one's choices and decisions is not determined by some impersonal network that can be switched on at the appropriate moment. Instead, Murdoch argues, what happens *in between* moments of choice is of utmost importance since by the time the moment of decision arrives the agent's quality of attention has already determined the nature of the act (1971: p67). That is, while the agent's 'moral fibre' is expressed in his or her choices and actions, the moral life more centrally involves the moments which prepare him or her for those choices; the experiences and forces which govern one's habitual cares and interests – i.e. one's way of *seeing* the world.

Murdoch explicitly opposes the identification of the moral agent with what she calls the "empty choosing will" – a view promoted by much contemporary moral philosophy supposing that the moral agent "freely chooses his reasons in terms of, and after surveying, the ordinary facts which lie open to everyone" (p35). Instead, for Murdoch, the moral agent is not a combination of an impersonal rational thinker and a personal will, but "a unified being who sees, and who desires in accordance with what he sees, and who has some continual slight control over the direction and focus of his vision" (p40). She explains:

... neither the inspiring ideas of freedom, sincerity and fiats of will, nor the plain wholesome concept of a rational discernment of duty, seem complex enough to do justice to what we really are. What we really are seems much more like an obscure system of energy out of which choices and visible acts of will emerge at intervals in ways which are often unclear and often dependent on the condition of the system in between the moments of choice (p54).

Essentially, the mind is (for better or worse) rarely empty or idle and the virtually constant activity of the mind constitutes a large part of our fundamental moral disposition. Murdoch writes, “it is a function of what we really value, what we love and are magnetised by, and what we are capable of noticing” (1992: p330). As such, Murdoch claims that goodness (i.e. right judgement and moral action) is properly connected with ‘knowledge’, understood as:

...a refined and honest perception of what is really the case, a patient and just discernment and of what one, which is the result not simply of opening one’s eyes but of a certainly perfectly familiar kind of moral discipline (p38).

Here again is the notion of ‘intellectual objectivity’ (discussed in section one) and the ancient doctrine that knowing and being constitute a unity. Indeed, by arguing that “[t]he authority of morals is the authority of truth, that is of reality” (p90), Murdoch’s account of the moral life represents “a footnote in a great and familiar philosophical tradition” (p45) - what I have called Classical Realism.

Murdoch also argues that moral theory underpinned by a Cartesian conception of rationality tends to offer an unrealistic conception of the will. In particular, she sees this unrealistic conception of will as bound up with the rejection of an objective reality not of our own making. The identification of the self with the isolated, deliberative will gives rise to a conception of moral freedom that is inherently hostile towards the idea of a world containing normative characteristics. As a result, morality itself comes to “reside entirely in the pointer of pure choice” (p42) and/or the resolution of conflicting interests. This radical internalisation of moral sources points once more to the dualistic formulations of mind and body (thinking and being, or knowing and doing) underpinning Juridicalism, which were discussed in Chapters Three and Four. By contrast, the place of ‘free choice’ and the relation between reason and the will is pictured quite differently if, as Murdoch suggests, “we think in

terms of a world which is *compulsively* present to the will" (p39). Murdoch describes the resulting, contrary image:

Moral change and moral achievement are slow; we are not free in the sense of being able suddenly to alter ourselves since we cannot suddenly alter what we can see and ergo what we desire and are compelled by. In a way, explicit choice now seems less important: less decisive (since much of the 'decision' lies elsewhere) and less obviously something to be 'cultivated'. If I attend properly I will have no choices and this is the ultimate condition to be aimed at... The ideal situation... [can] be represented as a kind of 'necessity'. This is something of which saints speak and which any artist will readily understand. The idea of a patient, loving regard, directed upon a person, a thing, a situation, presents the will not as unimpeded movement but as something very much more like 'obedience' (p40).

ii. Quality of Consciousness and Moral 'Attention'.

Murdoch develops the image above as a general metaphysical background to morality and not as a formula for describing each and every moral act. She remains acutely aware of the continual importance of a sense of *duty* – of rules and principles – and of the humdrum nature of everyday life. For the most part, Murdoch admits, "we are just 'anybody' doing what is [considered] proper or making simple choices for ordinary public reasons" (p43), and for that reason a sense of duty and the recognition of generally agreed rules and principles for public life are indispensable. But this is not the entire picture of the moral life. By focussing on moral vision and the struggle to discern a transcendent Good rooted in reality, Murdoch does not neglect the importance of good habit and dutiful action but stresses that "the background condition of such habit and such action... is a just mode of vision and a good quality of consciousness" (p91). In the everyday battle against the "fat relentless

ego", the quest for moral knowledge (or insight) is an on-going strenuous task of discernment, incumbent upon all people.

Age is a factor to be considered here, since the young child is perhaps more likely to behave in a 'moral' way by following a rule or precept in order to obtain social approval. Nevertheless, in doing so, the conditions are often met for the kind of intuitive discernment whereby the child gains insight into the objective and transcendental properties underlying the rule or precept. In this regard, Murdoch would arguably follow Simone Weil, who writes:

Precepts are not given for the sake of being practiced, but practice is prescribed in order that precepts may be understood. They are Scales. One does not play Bach without having done scales. But neither does one play a scale merely for the sake of the scale (1952: p112).

Indeed, Murdoch claims that people (and not just children) may sometimes decide to act abstractly by rule, "ignoring vision and the compulsive energy derived from it", but that in so doing they "may find that as a result both energy and vision are unexpectedly given" (p44).

Basically, Murdoch offers "a darker, less fully conscious, less steadily rational image of the dynamics of human personality" (p43). The idea of a compulsive and changing *quality of consciousness* is Murdoch's background for understanding moral thought and action. Further, this background is connected with the Classical Realist ideas of an independent objective reality and integrated anthropology (developed in Chapter Five), as well as original sin. From this background picture emerges the primary importance of vision - what Murdoch calls *attention* - meaning "a just and loving gaze directed upon an individual reality" (p34). 'Attention', for Murdoch, is essentially an

attitude of the intellect, and designates “the characteristic and proper mark of the active moral agent” (p34).

Rather than denying the importance of moral freedom, or the place of the will in determining moral actions, or the importance of guiding rules and principles, or the role of reason in moral life, Murdoch helps reconfigure these elements in a more enlightening way. The following quotations re-emphasise the importance and nature of vision in the moral life – an emphasis with definite consequences for how moral education in schools might be understood:

If thought of without the enclosing background of general and changing quality of consciousness, of moral experience, of acquired moral fabric, it [duty] may seem stark, inexplicable except as arbitrary orders given by God, or be considered as mere historically determined social rules. It may also be taken to suggest that morality is an occasional part-time activity of switching on the ethical faculty on separate occasions of moral choice. But... we can only move properly in a world that we can see, and what must be sought for is vision (1992: pp302-303).

Morality... is right up against the world, to do with apprehensions of others, all lonely reveries, all uses of time... Here the idea of imaginative grasp of one’s surroundings may be preferred to that of a rational survey or an ability to learn, or we may like to insist that good reasoning and learning is imaginative (p324).

iii. Objectivity and Interpersonal Understanding.

Before turning to consider the implications of Classical Realism and a visional ethical perspective for understanding the moral education question, I wish to further clarify the concept of ‘objectivity’ spoken of throughout this chapter. The question of the

scope and limitations of such objectivity is raised especially in consideration of what might be called interpersonal knowledge: where one is not so much concerned with the knowledge of tangible, 'concrete' things as with the feelings, emotions, attitudes and meaningful experience of other persons. With its talk of objective truth and cognition as participation with reality, the epistemology and related ethical perspective I have commended might (wrongly) be thought to overlook such [inter]subjective elements of human understanding. Or, one might hastily assume that a concern for objectivity in knowing necessarily aligns Classical Realism with some form of logical positivism. In actual fact, the objectivity spoken of by Classical Realism is significantly different from the objectivity through disengagement connected with a procedural conception of reason (Ch 4, II, iv). The proper meaning of 'objectivity', as commended here, turns upon the notion of objective reality and the identity theory of knowledge outlined in Chapter Five.

A particular merit of Classical Realism is that it doesn't fragment reality into isolated realms such as the physical-material and the spiritual-immaterial. It maintains the distinction, but doesn't dislocate the two. Classical Realism certainly recognizes that knowledge through sense perception of 'concrete' things is of a different *order* to that of emotional and intellectual discernment of immaterial or transcendental truth. Yet at the same time it holds that both immaterial properties (like number, truth and beauty) and the properties of things (like size, shape, colour, even bread-ness or humanity) comprise what is properly termed 'objective reality'. Also, Classical Realism recognises that even knowledge of properties like the bread-ness of bread begins at the level of the physical senses, progressing to the imaginative and higher intellectual faculties. That is, the essence of a thing – that which makes it what it is and by which we apprehend it as such – resides in the material thing itself and so knowledge of it begins at a sensory/bodily level.

The same is true of immaterial and evaluative properties like truth, goodness or

beauty. Beauty, for example, while not in itself a material 'thing', can only be known by means of our physical experience of beautiful things. Because we ourselves are material, bodily beings, we can only know transcendental realities through material, bodily means. All that is knowable, according to Classical Realism, is only knowable to us directly by sensible experience, or else by reasoned or intuited reflection upon sensible experience. As such, Classical Realism does not regard people's feelings, perceptions and systems of meaning as belonging to a disembodied, tradition-less self, or 'pure independent consciousness'. In fact, it is precisely because of the embodied and culturally situated nature of human experience that it is sensible – i.e. knowable – even between different people. Just as the essential form of a thing resides in or determines its material substance, one's non-material feelings and perceptions are made manifest in the substantial, embodied and, so, sensible life of the individual and/or their tradition.

Thus Classical Realism holds that the various 'objects' (or aspects of reality) people might seek to know require a commensurate modality of understanding. As Bénéton writes, "In Aristotle, the object comes first, and since the objects of knowledge are by nature different, they imply different modes of knowing" (2004: p48). For example, to know the material qualities of a thing like a stone (its colour, texture, shape and so on) requires the outer, bodily senses. As discussed in Chapter Five, through sense perception we come to know *that* a thing exists, while through the powers of intelligence we can form an understanding of *what* something is, receiving the intelligible form of a thing and forming conceptual knowledge. Through the affective capacities we acquire knowledge of the relative good of things and so may form an understanding of and an affinity towards such evaluative properties as truth, goodness and beauty. Given this need for the mind to 'fit' the object that would be known, the following questions can be asked: 'When it comes to knowing someone else's feelings or what meaning they derive from some experience, what is the nature of the object we are trying to discern? Why do we wish or need to know it and how is

the mind to be directed?’

As discussed already, Classical Realism holds knowledge to be a kind of intellectual *participation* or *identity* with reality, issuing from experience. In this respect the reasoning intellect doesn’t act alone but is fully integrated with a host of other faculties including the will, the emotions, and the senses. Therefore, the emotional and imaginative faculties, just as much as the physical senses, provide a way of experiencing some thing or some situation. With Classical Realism the senses, emotions and the will all possess a cognitive power. As such, emotional or imaginative experience is a way of *knowing* some aspect of reality. For example, through the emotional experience of grief at the death of a loved one, some objective aspect of their intrinsic dignity or value, or perhaps one’s own vulnerability, attachments or love for that person, may be disclosed. So in trying to apprehend how someone feels about a certain thing or situation, I am concerned with sharing in their *experience*, which is also to say their *way of knowing* some aspect of reality.

Therefore, for Classical Realism the quest for knowledge of the immaterial (in this case someone’s feelings or meaning) is no less a matter of trying to know ‘objective reality’ than the study of physical properties. In struggling to interpret or understand how someone else feels, or what meaning a certain experience has for them, one is still concerned to know *what is really the case*. In a sense all knowledge is a kind of ‘interpretation’ (or perception) of reality. Yet what matters, arguably, is the accuracy of one’s perceptions – the degree to which they are ‘in tune’ with what is objectively the case. This matter might be further clarified by considering how interpersonal knowing is important in the moral life.

iv. Interpersonal Understanding and the Moral Life.

Firstly, it is clearly important to *realise that* people have their own unique perceptions, influenced by and giving rise to various beliefs, attitudes, feelings, systems of

meaning etcetera. Given the personal and culturally determined character of human experience, different people's perceptions, beliefs or attitudes are apt to differ to some extent. Having realised this, one can see the injustice of all kinds of prejudice, and the importance of remaining sensitive and patient when trying to understand others. Secondly, it's equally important to be able to discern the *particular* attitudes, beliefs or feelings of others in order to cooperate and live peaceably. Part of living in any human community is learning to recognise the various human concerns, needs and rights of others, and to gauge how best to ensure these are tended to. So it is sometimes necessary not just to know *that* someone else thinks and feels differently, but to know more precisely (empathetically) *what or how* they are thinking and feeling, or what things mean for them.

In both these respects, Classical Realism proves enlightening. First of all, Classical Realism doesn't deny the subjective conditions of human knowing (especially emotional and other meaningful experience). On the contrary, it holds that truth is necessarily disclosed to us as embodied and situated subjects, or that knowledge is truth (reality or being) become subjective. With that in mind, it comes as no surprise that people's perceptions, feelings, or the meaning they derive from certain experiences (a) vary to some extent from person to person, community to community, culture to culture, and (b) are as mysterious and difficult to penetrate truthfully as reality itself. A degree of tolerance and humility is therefore necessary in coming to terms with differences in perception which run across boundaries of personal character, sex, race, colour or creed.

Secondly, Classical Realism holds that even interpersonal or empathic knowledge must be comprehended at a physical and bodily level. This is not to say we rely solely on our outer senses, but that they are the first 'port of call' in the mind's effort to know what's going on. In all our thinking and knowing, we remain embodied souls (hylomorphic composites) and our condition as such establishes both the possibilities

and the limitations of our knowing. As I mentioned earlier, in trying to apprehend how someone feels about a certain thing or situation, I am concerned with sharing in their *experience* of (or their *way of knowing*) reality. Since all human experience is fundamentally embodied experience, I must begin with some perception of their personal and emotional reactions: with what they do and say regarding a given thing or situation. Such embodied responses, however, signal inner emotional states connected with a meaningful interpretation of some aspect of reality. My effort to understand how they feel or what meaning they attribute to (or derive from) their experience, therefore signals a more overarching concern – namely, striving to perceive some part of reality more truthfully, and to make my own interpretation of things (including the other person’s feelings, motivations and the like) dependent upon a more faithful knowledge of *what is*.

Suppose someone tells me, for example, that they believe human life is sacred, and as such capital punishment can never be condoned. In this explicit statement I have some rudimentary, concrete access to their personal outlook upon a given area of human experience, and they may even tell me how they feel about it. Suppose then I disagree, saying that I cannot relate to the way they say they feel about the issue. In fact, I also hold human life to be sacred, but *as such* I think capital punishment can and should be condoned in certain cases. Given what Classical Realism has to say about the necessarily embodied and (socially, historically and culturally) situated condition of human knowledge, our difference of opinion is not entirely unexpected. It simply highlights the difference in our perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, emotional sensibilities etcetera, and how these affect our experience of the world. But this difference also prompts us to try and understand what we each *mean* when we say that ‘life is sacred’. That is, we want to know who is nearer the mark, or whether or not one of us (or both) may have missed something.

In trying to understand how others feel and what they *mean*, I have to dig deeper than the abstract proposition of their beliefs or the more obvious outward signs of inner emotional states (e.g. tears of sadness, shouts of anger, a blush of shame). I am not looking now for some moral injunction, or propositional statement of belief. Rather, I wish to share in their experience, their understanding; I am seeking some kind of *insight*. Even if they offer principles or reasons to justify their view, these will only benefit my understanding if they help me to view the matter in a new light, more realistically and objectively. It so happens (in the above example) that my interlocutor's statement about the sanctity of life and its implications refers further to more ultimate conditions of reality – i.e. the nature of *human* life and what value it actually has. In struggling to come to grips with their personal beliefs or what things mean for them, I am also struggling to comprehend the very properties to which their stated beliefs, principles or system of meaning refer.

In other words, in struggling to grasp the *content* of someone's personal outlook, I am also concerned with the *object* (i.e. the field of reality) to which that content relates. Hence, I am concerned with deepening my knowledge of reality itself: with knowing and experiencing *for myself* that aspect of reality with which we are both concerned, and with knowing it more faithfully (i.e. objectively). To this end, a person's stated beliefs are one way by which I can gain access to the content of their thoughts and feelings. Yet it may be, however, that something intangible and inexpressible about their immediate physical presence facilitates a shared understanding or added insight into how they think and feel. We can appreciate this in relation to empathic knowledge, where physical proximity seems so important to our capacity to truly feel for another. Additionally, some aspect of my own or another's physical and emotional bearing in a given context may enlighten our respective view of things in new and unexpected ways. Classical Realism simply implies that outside of our bodies, our traditions, our language, our senses and so on, there can be no knowledge at all, let alone interpersonal knowledge, yet that it still makes sense to say we are

concerned with objectivity in our quest for knowledge, including interpersonal knowledge.

In the moral life, insight into another person's perceptions, feelings or beliefs is important since it confirms that they, like me, are human – i.e. they are rational and emotional subjects, naturally drawn by the meaning, truth and mystery of the world of which they are a part. Seeking interpersonal understanding may therefore help illuminate those aspects of reality with which people are ultimately concerned, or else may have overlooked or failed to understand sufficiently. As such, in light of Classical Realism, the struggle for interpersonal understanding signals such moral imperatives as humility, friendship, honesty, openness and truth, as well as the value in diversity of experience and our common humanity. Following Classical Realism, any attempt at interpersonal understanding both requires and reaches for some fundamental grasp of reality – some knowledge of objective truth. What is called for and what one seeks is a 'refined and honest perception of what is really the case'. In Classical Realism this is what is meant by 'objectivity'.

v. The Conditions and Limits of Objectivity.

Since Classical Realism speaks about the possibility of confident and secure knowledge of reality, the question of the conditions and limitations of cognitive objectivity might also be considered. Arguably, the most controversial aspect of the Classical Realist framework I have defended is the distinctly Aristotelian doctrine that the human mind/soul possesses a 'potency unto the infinite' – i.e. is in a way all existing things and so possessing the potential of universal knowledge (*De Anima* III.8). The idea of an infinite universe and a correspondingly infinite mind/soul can give the impression that human knowledge may attain to a limitless and infallible understanding. What must be recalled, however, is the fact of the mind/soul's instantiation in the body/world. Significantly, the substantive conditions of body and world (including the senses, feeling, volition, as well as matter, experience,

language, tradition and the like), while making human knowledge possible, at the same time represent limits to a merely human understanding. Human sight, for instance, cannot take in all reality from all conceivable angles in a single glance, or even a lifetime of glances. That is, time, space and matter define and limit the available range of human experience, as does mortality. One's available experience of an infinite reality is limited to the distinctly finite 'here and now' together with an all too selective memory of the past. Further, thought and knowledge must be cultivated in a living culture and language, both of which are pulled in multiple directions for a variety of purposes. In short, as creatures of the flesh human beings are denied any kind of 'angelic vision', and our knowledge as individuals is developed communally through shared practices, language and experience.

That said, from the proposition that interpersonal knowledge is marked by a natural level of uncertainty it does not follow that objectivity is impossible and/or an inappropriate ideal. To be sure, Classical Realism does not regard the quest for interpersonal or any other form of understanding as an 'exact science' (if there is such a thing). The quest for interpersonal knowledge is characteristically shrouded in uncertainty or *mystery*. But with Classical Realism, uncertainty (i.e. *doubt*) is not foundational to knowledge – that is the Cartesian model. Rather, certainty or confidence in the existence of things and the human cognitive ability to form an identity with reality is the basis of all knowledge. Regarding the need to remain open to the possibility of error, however, Classical Realism holds that one can never rest content in the assumption that one's knowledge of reality is exhaustive or necessarily adequate.

The classical and especially the Aristotelian virtue ethical traditions often speak in terms of an ideal, fully perfected moral agency, which is apt to give the (false) impression that such moral perfection (or 'good vision') is readily or ultimately achievable, once and for all. It would be wrong to assume, therefore, that a virtue

ethical perspective must inherently be insensitive to the on-going, ever-becoming nature of moral progress, and of the intrinsic sinful selfishness against which people do battle daily in striving to become good. For Aristotle the chief ethical standard is not an abstract rule or principle, but the substantive judgment and character of the virtuous person. By making character central in this way, we are reminded of the various contexts and influencing forces that shape human character and how, as a result, and also as a result of a perfectly familiar human tendency to put our own interests before those of others and to mask our flawed characters with all sorts of self-consoling fantasies, we all too readily fall short of perfection. Acknowledging such tendency to error or human fallibility, however, can be quite different to enforcing an assumed 'uncertainty' in our quest for knowledge (i.e. skepticism). Yet it may serve to hold in check the kind of hubristic belief that one can rightly claim an exclusive hold on the whole of truth. Arguably, truth cannot be contained: one does not possess the truth, one is rather more possessed by it.

Another vital point is that truth, or knowledge of truth, or one's certainty in knowing, is not necessarily correlative to *provability*. One can know something partially, even obscurely, yet truly and with unshakeable certainty: such as the love of a parent, the beauty of a painting, or the sanctity of life. True and certain knowledge, in other words, does not imply total understanding. Basically, for Classical Realism subjectivity is not the enemy of knowledge. The enemy of knowledge, rather, is anything that obscures one's available vision, or leads one to mistake human insight for some angelic or all-encompassing point of view. One thing that tends to distort vision in this way is the will to dominate, to control and manipulate reality: the intellectual attitude which seeks to impress the Self upon reality and dictate its terms, rather than be taken up by it and conformed to what is real. What affords good vision, by contrast, is the orientation Bénéton refers to as vital reason - "a unifying of faculties to the detriment of the Self" (2004: p179).

Classical Realism also holds that one's knowledge of reality is not a single or isolated (or necessarily permanent) achievement. It ebbs and flows, waxes and wanes. Consequently, we must sometimes (probably often), in our willing and acting, rely on formal rules and principles or some disconnected sense of duty. But as Murdoch writes, "Will cannot run very far ahead of knowledge, and attention is our daily bread" (1971: p44). The struggle to discern and to know – to make objective reality the basis of our willing and acting – remains the principle task of the moral life.

Further, I believe it makes some considerable difference whether or not one regards interpersonal understanding in this way – as connected with objectivity in knowing. For one thing, it means that moral understanding is not as egalitarian as some would like it (or imagine it) to be. That is, there are varying degrees of aesthetic and moral insight which are open to some but not to others; because knowledge depends on vision, and vision depends on character, and character largely underwrites one's attitude in knowing. Yet at the same time, this view of things helps us realise that even those with whom we disagree or fail to understand are engaged in a common (human) quest to discern the nature of a reality whose ultimate depth and significance transcends us all. The moral life, in this view, is a common calling to discern truth and to live according to one's best judgement, and to never cease 'tending the soul'. I believe a vital spirit of friendship can issue from such a perspective.

In summary, the notion of objectivity invoked by Classical Realism and represented in a visional ethical outlook, entails a unified understanding of the knowable world and of human cognition, and specifically the intellectual capacity described here as vital reason. It remains to observe that objective knowledge through vital reason is not an infallible mechanism. It is rather a matter of one's customary *attitude in knowing* (i.e. a question of character). The kind of attitude that affords accurate discernment (vision) is itself a basic ethical attitude, in which the selfish ego is

silenced. It is an attitude of the intellect characterized as a kind of patient, loving regard for 'what is' – what Murdoch calls 'attention'. The habit of such attention provides the intellectual foundations for the moral life. Further, it is a habit that must somehow be *learned* (or cultivated).

vi. Cultivating Vital Reason - Revisiting the Moral Education Question.

The foregoing critique of Juridicalism and defence of Classical Realism has highlighted the importance of the ancient concept of *vital reason*, and of the idea of *vision* to our understanding of moral thought and action. 'Vision', as explained, is a matter of one's attitude in knowing – essentially an attitude of the intellect. Further, good vision can be thought of as a 'just and loving gaze directed upon an individual reality'; a way of perceiving marked by *objectivity*, understood as 'fidelity to being'. Such objectivity is not a matter of disengaged analysis, or curtailing the emotional and volitional faculties. On the contrary, owing to the integrated anthropology considered, objectivity here involves a deliberate orientation of the will and a refined emotional sensibility, by which the self is silenced and one's attentive energies are fixed more squarely on reality itself.

From the argument that the struggle for vision describes the essential character of moral life, and therefore that moral education has chiefly to do with 'seeing' and enabling others to 'see', the question naturally arises, 'Just what does inculcating correct vision in the young involve?' The realist philosophical tradition has, from its inception, been largely concerned with just this question. For example, Book VII of Plato's *Republic* contains the famous parable of the cave, intended to provide an image of "human nature in its education and want of education" (514a in Bloom 1991: p193). Plato's parable together with the dialogues *Meno* and *Phaedrus* tend toward the conclusion that growth in virtue is not simply a matter of imparting knowledge of the good. Moral knowledge, rather, is more akin to a kind of intuition or *vision grasped by the eyes of the soul*. Plato's central insight throughout, however, is that knowledge of

what is good cannot be put into the eyes of the learner by a teacher, but instead the power by which we learn – the soul/mind – “must be converted, turned around, and then it will not need to be taught. It will see” (Meilaender 2002: p60). Quoting Plato and Robert Cushman, Meilaender explains:

... the power to see is in the soul, but “the instrument with which each learns... must be turned around” (518c). What moral education requires therefore is not an art of procuring sight but an art which can bring about this turning. “It was clear to Plato that virtue could not be transmitted either by precept or by example.” We cannot put sight into blind eyes; we cannot put virtue into those who lack it. We must, it seems, be virtuous before moral knowledge can be ours. Paradoxically, this is what [Plato’s] myth [of the cave] teaches us (p52).

This is as much to say, that “the goal of moral education – vision of what is good – can never be fixed in advance by any education, as if there were teachers who could regularly and easily transmit it” (p72)³². Nevertheless, Meilaender argues, “although

³² It is true that Plato advances a particular method – *dialectic* – for the teaching and learning of virtue (knowledge of the good). Yet it is significant that he cautions against the use of dialectic in the very young (Republic 539b). In fact, students in Plato’s Republic do not advance to study of dialectic until well over the age of twenty years, and even then only those who have been proved by earlier instruction to be of a suitable nature (disposition or character). Instead of centring on dialectic, Plato’s vision of education for the young involves “gymnastic for bodies and music for the soul” (376e-377b). From an early age students are to be reared so as to be philosophically natured, lovers of learning, and of strong mind and body (376c). Although it is not always clear from Plato whether deliberate cultivation or some kind of ‘divine dispensation’ is central in determining the nature of the student, early education (prior to adulthood) is explicitly concerned with “shaping the soul” through tales intended to arouse a love of truth, justice, beauty and the good (377c-378a) and, through the study of sciences, arts and crafts, to cultivate a good disposition (400e-401e). The centrality of character in ethics

no person can see for another, the journey towards this vision cannot be made in isolation. It must be made within a community which molds and shapes us in such a way that we delight in what is good" (p69).

Schools, owing to their concern with knowledge and intellectual development, and the further connection (already posited) between one's intellectual attitude in knowing and moral vision, have a responsibility to operate as such communities. In the spirit of Classical Realism Meilaender asserts that, "Reason discerns moral truth only if the soul is rightly ordered" (97). Further to this, and paraphrasing Murdoch, he suggests, "If we really want moral knowledge, not just interminable moral arguments... we will need a discipline which, negatively, begins to suppress that fat relentless ego and, positively, begins to develop in us a love for the good" (p58).

Classical Realism helps to explain just what this might entail. In particular, it connects such an undertaking with the central concern of schools for the life of the mind. Rather than dividing the attention of educators between conventional educational form and content on the one hand, and the heated debates and contingent issues of practical ethics on the other, a visional moral perspective grounded in Classical Realism provides the scope for schools to situate their concern for students' moral development within an expanded concept of cognition – i.e. of intellectual development and hence of education itself. In other words, in light a Classical Realism view of the intellectual foundations of the moral life, there is a way in which general and moral education can be seen to form a genuinely integrated enterprise. In the following (final) chapter, I will discuss how this is so. In particular, I reflect on Murdoch's account of the connection between intellectual discipline and moral virtue to consider the implications of Classical Realism for how education itself is understood, as well as the moral educational task of schools according to such an

and especially moral formation is, of course, a theme emphasised by Aristotle, but this can be seen as a development of insights already evident in Plato's approach to education.

understanding. Following this (necessarily cursory) introduction to the pedagogical implications of Classical Realism and visional ethics, I will conclude the study by addressing several of the most immediate problems and areas of concern arising from such a conception of education and the moral task of schools.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Introduction.

This chapter builds upon the Classical Realist interpretation of the moral education question, sketched towards the end of Chapter Six, by addressing some of the implications for moral education pedagogy as well as some associated philosophical and practical concerns. The development, here, of a reconfigured understanding of moral education in schools is necessarily limited and cursory. To provide some focus, however, the three presiding considerations for school-based moral education identified in Chapter One serve as a guide here. Firstly, there is the point that schools-based moral education is properly concerned with the development of knowledge and the intellect. Secondly, there is the fact of an extended moral responsibility in light of the school's inescapable socialising role and an irrefutable connection between thought and action. Lastly, there is a need to recognise that general and moral education form an integrated enterprise.

With these criteria in mind, and following the preceding interpretation of the moral education question, this chapter considers how the school's customary focus on knowledge and intellectual development may have a significant bearing on a student's habitual way of seeing reality, and hence their moral sensibility and inclination. Following Murdoch's account of how intellectual disciplines can serve as moral disciplines, I argue that the traditional school focus on intellectual development might be approached as a vital 'asceticism of knowledge'. In the light of Classical Realism and its related visional ethical perspective, such an approach to education can be seen as a significant way of educating for the intellectual foundations of moral life. Further, this way of approaching education resonates with the classical ideal of *liberal education*, especially as explicated by Jacques Maritain and defended by a burgeoning body of contemporary educationists. As such, I propose

that something like a classical liberal educational approach is foundational to, if not constitutive of, a general, yet vital, and fully integrated response to the need for moral education.

Certain philosophical and practical challenges arise from this perspective, however, and the most immediate of these are identified in Section II. Briefly, there is a strong intellectual focus in the account of morality and moral education I have presented. This emphasis can readily be misunderstood where a narrow conception of what counts as cognition, and of how the emotional-volitional faculties are involved in every act of intellection, is assumed (see Section II.i). In such cases there is a danger of conflating measurable intellectual excellence in the academic sphere with improved moral development in general. Further, there is the philosophical matter of giving assent to a realist world-view. This raises questions about the durability of post-Enlightenment models of rationality, and the need for some robust and integrated epistemology by which to understand moral truth and moral disagreement, without opting for a shallow moral relativism or reductive moral proceduralism. Finally, there is the question of whether or not philosophical realism is, of itself, *enough* to sustain the kinds of communities (including communities of learning) in which morality and ethics have their foundation. The need for some overarching transcendent vision of the Good, rooted in human practice, traditions and institutions, suggests an important role for theology and the religious life as well. Each of these factors is raised as an initial response is provided, opening the way to further dialogue and research.

I. MORAL VISION AND INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT - THE ESSENTIAL CONTRIBUTION OF SCHOOLS.

i. Moral Education as Learning to Attend.

At the end of Chapter Six I argued that Classical Realism helps bring together the aims and objectives of general and moral education, such that schools might realistically respond to the challenge of moral education in the context of their primary concern for intellectual development. Indeed, it could be said, in light of the classical realist epistemology presented, that for better or worse, *there is no education of the mind that is not simultaneously education of the heart*. That is, all intellectual training accustoms the mind to attending to certain objects (aspects of reality), developing cognitive dispositions in which evaluative inclinations and judgements are actuated, and does so in a particular spirit.

Further, from the visional moral philosophy considered, one's *quality of attention* – or customary way of seeing the world – is foundational to one's moral sensibility and character. From Classical Realism, the metaphor of 'vision' characterises the on-going struggle to maintain the kind of *vital contact with reality* upon which knowledge of the Good and moral action depends. 'Knowledge', in this sense, does not refer to some abstract and detached "quasi-scientific knowledge of the ordinary world" but, instead, denotes "a refined and honest perception of what is really the case" (Murdoch 1971: p38). Knowledge, throughout classical realist philosophy, from the most basic cognitive grasp of first principles to the highest act of abstract reasoning, involves and depends upon an essential identity of mind and reality. As Maritain suggests, knowledge begins and ends with *insights* and so human thought "is a vital energy of spiritual intuition grasping things in their intelligible consistency" (1967: p46). Further, Maritain maintains, "In knowing I subordinate myself to a being independent of me; I am conquered, convinced and subjugated by it. And the truth of my mind lies in its conformity to *what is* outside of it and independent of it" (1953: p12). From this distinctive epistemological viewpoint, the quest for knowledge and understanding fundamentally involves laying oneself open to reality while tending

the soul (i.e. the mind and its faculties) to ensure a more just discernment of what is really the case.

To rephrase the above in a more straightforward manner, we could say that people who by nature (i.e. because of their acquired cognitive habits of thinking and feeling) are attentive to the world about them, and whose customary way of attending is framed and energised by an underlying affinity with the hidden structures of truth goodness and beauty, will be those most prone to see what is the just course of action and most inclined to respond virtuously, in light of that vision. Consider, for example, any case of human suffering that bears the moral significance of demanding some compassionate response. Indeed, what is compassion other than a capacity to attend to the objective human dignity of another where that dignity has somehow been undone by suffering? And is not the compassionate response one which yearns to 'put right' the ordered goodness that has come undone – a response moreover which flows as a matter of course from the insight gleaned through an honest and refined attention to reality and to others? It is important to recall here that with the kind of Aristotelian virtue ethical perspective we have been discussing, 'what is just' does not reduce to a general principle, which might then be used to prescribe obligatory action. Instead, the central question is what sort of person do I have to *be* in order to see what is just and act accordingly? Further, in taking up the Aristotelian perspective in this context – i.e. considering the proper moral educational task of schools – we are not attempting to provide any kind of comprehensive and self-contained moral theory, but rather to provide an account of the *intellectual foundations* of the moral life.

The ethical idea of *vision*, then, speaks of a basic intellectual attitude marked by *openness to reality* and a *silencing of the self*: a patient waiting upon and attentiveness to particulars. Consequently, Murdoch has stressed that the area of morals can be seen as "covering the whole of our mode of living and the quality of our relations with the

world" (1971: p97). Accordingly, the contribution of schools to students' moral development can be considered a fairly modest, albeit vital, task. An individual's mode of living and the quality of their relations with the world are rightly informed by a range of agencies and institutions, like the family, the church, or other religious or ethnic cultural traditions. The fact is that formal schooling is one amongst a host of influences (both deliberate and contingent) affecting the customary direction and focus of a person's vision – their way of seeing the world and ergo of acting in it. As such, it would be neither right nor possible for schools to assume *total* responsibility for a student's 'mode of living' and 'relations with the world'. Instead, (as argued in Chapter One) the moral educational task of schools is properly connected with their primary concern for the development of knowledge and the intellect. However, the intellectual foundations of the moral life, from a Classical Realist viewpoint, are such that the importance of this traditional educational focus cannot be overstated.

In short, given the Classical Realist picture of the knowing person and of moral agency I have outlined, schools must help discipline students in *learning to attend*. This involves presenting them with objects for study capable of revealing fundamental value concepts *in such a way* that students become disciplined in the art of 'attention' – i.e. silencing the self before what is real in order to recognise and develop an affinity for such fundamental moral qualities as truth, love, justice and beauty. The idea here is to 'attune the soul' of the student, through the training of the intellect, to Goodness as ordered in reality itself, inculcating a habitual affiliation for and inclination towards such 'right order'. Intellectual training here, of course, means more than stimulating the powers of discursive reasoning. It has rather more to do with cultivating *vital reason* – i.e. with awakening the intuitive intellect (*intellectus*), integrated as it is with the senses, the will and the emotions. Viewed in this light, certain approaches to moral education might appear less than essential, or arguably mis-educational.

For example, dialectical analysis of moral points of view (including one's own), such as many values education approaches involve, may prove profitable and necessary as students approach adulthood – or once a definite character and habitual outlook has been established. Prior to this, however, it can yield scepticism about the possibility of attaining insight into moral truth. Unless the mind of the student is already accustomed to discerning universal aspects of truth in particular circumstances, through practiced attention via disciplines capable of revealing such universal knowledge, discursive reasoning and disengaged self-scrutiny are unlikely to make any positive contribution to students' moral development. As Meilaender warns:

But if before our character is settled we examine philosophically our beliefs about justice, when we study argument and counterargument, finding each in turn seemingly persuasive, we might easily conclude that in these matters there is only opinion, not knowledge. We may become skilled debaters, but we have lost the passion for truth (2002: p56).

Additionally, approaches which urge a so-called 'cognitive' focus on analysing points of view alongside emotional stimulation intended to arouse a sense of personal conviction and motivation (as considered in Chapter Two I), can, in view of Classical Realism, be seen as mistaken. Specifically, such approaches fail to recognise that a person's feelings, convictions and motivations are intrinsic to their cognitive capacity as such. Excellence of intellect and personal character cannot be considered in isolation or as independent constituents in moral virtue. Thus, exploring ethical points of view through disengaged discursive analysis while trying to 'kick start' some emotional-level conviction by asking students how they feel about certain issues, or getting them to assume the role of someone whose feelings, motivations, character and capacities they do not share, disregards important ways (as raised in this thesis) in which one's habituated cognitive and affective capacities are indissociable aspects of one's approach to practical reasoning. Further, such

approaches are fraught with the undesirable possibility of manipulation and scepticism. Any organised analysis of moral points of view must be conducted on moral ground. To raise a particular conviction, belief, point of view or behaviour for discussion and then to ask students how they feel about it is to draw attention to what are supposedly the morally significant features of human behaviour – or, by *not* identifying them, to suggest that they are morally *insignificant*. Certain aspects are signalled as morally important or unimportant and hence a moral judgement is made. Prompted by teachers to respond in some way to those features singled out as morally significant, yet without any clear indication from the teacher as to how or why to respond, may result in students becoming sceptical both towards the activities in question and towards matters of ethical disagreement in general³³.

ii. Murdoch on Intellectual and Moral Discipline.

Murdoch's discussion of the connection between intellectual and moral virtue confirms the conclusions drawn above. Murdoch suggests that a key consideration for moral philosophy (and hence a vital concern for moral education) can be formulated thus: "are there any techniques for the purification and reorientation of an energy which is naturally selfish, in such a way that when moments of choice arrive we shall be sure of acting rightly? (1971: p54)" By 'energy', Murdoch means the human personality, or the embodied 'soul' in the ancient sense. Murdoch answers this question in the affirmative, yet she does not invoke some psychological device guaranteeing clear vision and automatic right action. Instead, Murdoch refers to the sovereignty of 'the Good', as a transcendent source of purifying energy.

³³ Annette Baier (1985: pp207-208) has identified this phenomenon in her own experience as an ethics teacher, observing how a comparative analysis of moral theories or ethical perspectives can produce the effect of a "loss of faith in any of the alternatives presented", doing little or nothing to assuage relativistic and sceptical attitudes. "In attempting to increase moral reflectiveness," she writes, "we may be destroying what consciousness there was in those we teach."

The important point here is not so much the precise nature of 'the Good' as that of its transcendence – that the source of moral power does not reside principally inside the agent but comes from without, from reality, penetrating a veil of self-deception and requiring of the agent a certain orientation to begin with. This notion of transcendence, however, need not lead into an abstract spiritual realm but, on the contrary, has much to do with the here and now and the immediate 'task' of tending the soul and purifying one's vision. As Murdoch writes:

By opening the eyes we do not necessarily see what confronts us. We are anxiety-ridden animals. Our minds are continually active, fabricating an anxious, usually self-preoccupied, often falsifying veil which partially conceals the world. Our states of consciousness differ in quality, our fantasies and reveries are not trivial and unimportant, they are profoundly connected with our energies and our ability to choose and act. *And if quality of consciousness matters, then anything which alters consciousness in the direction of unselfishness, objectivity and realism is to be connected with virtue* (p84 italics added).

The major argument of this chapter (a conclusion drawn from the preceding investigation) is that the connection posited above - between realism and moral virtue - is of utmost importance to how schools approach moral education. That is, moral education is principally a matter of altering the consciousness by directing it toward 'unselfishness, objectivity ('fidelity to being') and realism'. Chapter Six explained how quality of consciousness (one's character or attitude in knowing) is connected with moral virtue. What has to be considered, then, is how directing and purifying the consciousness in this way connects with the aims and means of general education.

There is no necessary limit to the kinds of activities or objects capable of purifying consciousness, nor is there any way to predict the degree of purification. Murdoch, however, recognises a clear role for intellectual and practical disciplines in so-

directing the consciousness. Such disciplines, she argues, can habituate the quality and direction of one's vision and usual attachments and hence help to ensure the kind of vital contact with reality which, following Classical Realism, constitutes the intellectual foundations of moral life.

An illuminating and familiar example is that of art: its ability to place the artist or spectator in contact with reality (specifically with *beauty*) and so to bring about a reorientation and purification of the direction of their vision of the world and consequently their way of acting in it³⁴. As Murdoch explains:

It is important too that great art teaches us how real things can be looked at and loved without being seized and used, without being appropriated into the greedy organism of the self. This exercise of detachment is difficult and valuable whether the thing contemplated is a human being or the root of a tree or the vibration of a colour or a sound. Unsentimental contemplation of nature exhibits the same quality of detachment: selfish concerns vanish, nothing exists

³⁴ Of course it is necessary to ask 'how do we tell which artworks do this?' The task of addressing such a question is, for Roger Scruton (2007: pp8-15, 49-51), at the heart of 'art criticism'. Anything presented as an object of aesthetic interest can be a work of art, but some of these objects reward our interest with knowledge, understanding and emotional uplift – such are the works that become part of a tradition's canon of 'good art'. Scruton observes how we rightly deplore the brutality and violence offered for the sake of spectacle at the Roman games, and how we would deplore it even if it were simulated if we thought "the interest of the observer were merely one of gleeful fascination" (p13). On the other hand, we praise Greek tragedy and classic artworks which also deal with death and suffering but do so out of sight, unrelished and in order to uplift the human spirit. 'High culture', including what is recognised as good art, should, Scruton argues, aim at preserving and enhancing aesthetic experiences of the second kind (p13). Murdoch is even more forthright in stating that "Good art reveals what we are usually too selfish and too timid to recognise, the minute and absolutely random detail of the world, and reveals it with a sense of unity and form" (1971: p86). Good art, she maintains, presents us with "a truthful image of the human condition in a form which can be steadily contemplated" and so, "The realism of a great artist is not a photographic realism, it is essentially both pity and justice" (p87).

except the things which are seen. Beauty is that which attracts this particular sort of unselfish attention. It is obvious here what is the role, for the artist or spectator, of exactness and good vision: unsentimental, detached, unselfish, objective attention. It is also clear that in moral situations a similar exactness is called for (pp65-66).

Thus, for Murdoch, art or the simple contemplation of natural beauty is one of the most powerful forces for 'unselfing' and hence the conversion of the soul/mind towards the Good. Indeed, Murdoch suggests that art is the most educational of all human activities since it provides a place in which the nature of morality can be seen. The student of art, in order to succeed, must "cease to be in order to attend to the existence of something else" (p59), a pattern and habit of attention clearly required in the area of morals.

As well as art, Plato considered the sciences, crafts and other intellectual disciplines good starting points for an education centrally concerned with growth in virtue. Murdoch agrees, suggesting that, "there is a way of the intellect, a sense in which intellectual disciplines are moral disciplines" (p88). Murdoch offers a personal example of learning another language, writing:

If I am learning, for instance, Russian, I am confronted by an authoritative structure which commands my respect. The task is difficult and the goal is distant and perhaps never entirely attainable. My work is a progressive revelation of something which exists independently of me. Attention is rewarded by a knowledge of reality. Love of Russian leads me away from myself towards something alien to me, something which my consciousness cannot take over, swallow up, deny or make unreal (p89).

Very simply, intellectual and craft studies are capable of revealing the nature of concepts very central to morality such as justice, truthfulness, beauty or humility. As such, intellectual disciplines “can stretch the imagination, enlarge the vision and strengthen the judgement” (p90). Through such disciplines students may discover value in their ability to forget self, to be realistic and to perceive justly. In this way, value concepts become “patently tied on to the world, they are stretched as it were between the truth-seeking mind and the world, they are not moving about on their own as adjuncts of the personal will” (p90).

While it is sometimes difficult to see just how excellence in one sphere (the intellectual) can translate into excellence in the other (that of morals), the situation in each is not so very different. To be sure, human personalities are not as straight forward as languages or mathematical concepts, and the struggle against selfish fantasy is pervasive. However, in matters of moral choosing and acting, the kind of attitude which brings the right answer and which activates is, suggests Murdoch, that of “love” characterised by “an exercise of justice and realism and really *looking*” (p91).

Further, for such an attitude to become habitual, it must somehow be learned or cultivated via educational processes. This then signifies the moral educational task of schools following from Classical Realism. While morality has of course to do with good habit and dutiful action, it is the habit of good vision (or vital reason) which, from a Classical Realist perspective, forms the proper background and distinguishing mark of the would-be moral agent. Hence, it can be argued that intellectual disciplines, and other kinds of learning, have a definite and intrinsic role to play in fostering moral goodness.

iii. [Moral] Education as an ‘Asceticism of Knowledge’.

The view outlined above must not be taken to mean that the well-educated or knowledgeable person is by definition morally superior, or more likely to become so.

The kind of understanding which leads the student of art or science, for example, to behave justly, truthfully or with humility, is not to be confused with the knowledge of art or science itself. What is at work, rather, in a good person, is a superior kind of knowledge (*practical wisdom*) which may or may not derive from the students' intellectual activity in a structured educational setting. One way or another, however, one's moral character is connected to one's quality of consciousness and customary mode of vision as formed by diverse educational influences (formal and informal) – and to this end, the study of art, science or any given discipline *can* be instrumental. Further (as argued in Chapter One), such practical wisdom or morally charged insight is often intrinsic to the standards of success internal to a given discipline.

What must be understood, therefore, is that with the Classical Realist understanding of knowledge and the visional character of the moral life, the aims and means of general and moral education become inseparably and vitally connected. Basically, in contrast to much current educational concern, Classical Realism draws attention to what, in learning, goes beyond *activity* and what can be commanded by psychological *effort*. With a more integrated anthropology and expansive epistemology as a background, every act of learning can be seen to entail something *received* as well as something performed. In this way, education appears as a profoundly potent and reverent enterprise, in which training the intellect and acquiring knowledge means much more than equipping students with interesting or useful facts, or with instrumental skills and understandings needed simply 'to get on in the world'. It is, rather, a sacred charge of moral (and spiritual) formation.

In light of a Classical Realist understanding of reality, the Good, knowledge and moral action, it can be argued that the areas of intellectual virtue and moral virtue are never fully separate. As discussed, *knowing truly* and *being good* are fundamentally connected in Aristotle's moral psychology, by virtue of the unique identity of mind and reality in which cognition is held to consist. Further, the exercise of vital reason,

upon which such a cognitive identity depends, of itself involves a certain rectitude of the will and refined emotional responsiveness. As noted in Chapter Six, Pieper contends that a tremendous activity of the will is required if one is to be determined only by reality in one's knowing. This "activity of the will", for Pieper, means further that some kind of "asceticism of knowledge" is needed to foster and support the kind of good vision sought (1989: p135). In a similar way Murdoch has argued:

Learning is moral progress because it is an asceticism, it diminishes our egoism and enlarges our conception of truth, it provides deeper, subtler and wiser visions of the world. What should be taught in schools: to attend and get things right. Creative power requires these abilities. Intellectual and craft studies initiate new qualities of consciousness, minutiae of perception, ability to observe, they alter our desires, our instinctive movements of desire and aversion. To attend is to care, to learn to desire to learn. One may of course *learn* bad habits as well as good, and that too is a matter of quality of consciousness. I am speaking now of evident aspects of education and teaching, where the 'intellectual' connects with the 'moral'; and where apparently 'neutral' words take on a glow of value (1992: p179).

This view of learning and knowledge as a kind of morally apt asceticism has, traditionally, been connected with the ancient ideal of *liberal education*. Classical liberal education appropriates the notion that the quest for knowledge and understanding – the perfection and right use of reason – entails certain moral virtues that are not entirely separate from that quest. In other words, the quest for knowledge is essentially a quest for *vital contact with reality*, which of itself demands a range of morally relevant characteristics or cognitive dispositions, including an openness to reality or *just vision*, which I have argued is foundational to moral goodness.

It is not surprising then that Maritain defines liberal education as “Education directed toward wisdom, centred on the humanities, aiming to develop in people the capacity to think correctly and to enjoy truth and beauty” (1967: p69). The stated aim of education here - i.e. ‘wisdom’ - is defined by Maritain as a superior kind of knowledge dealing with the penetration of “the primary and most universal *raison d’être* and with enjoying, as a final fruition, the spiritual delight of truth and the sapidity of being” (p47). Such wisdom, says Maritain, fulfils the supreme aspiration of the intellect in its thirst for liberation. Moreover, one can also see in this quest for wisdom the very struggle for discernment – or vision – which, as argued, is central within the moral life.

There is a clear connection, therefore, between the intellectual quest for wisdom, knowledge and understanding on the one hand, and the moral task of ‘tending the soul’ or perfecting one’s vision on the other. This connection is stressed again by Maritain who contends that, “education, in its finest and highest achievements, tends to develop the contemplative capacity of the human mind” (p54). In other words, education has ultimately to do with awakening the intuitive powers of the mind (*intellectus*) and the capacity for visional (or contemplative) knowledge. Maritain qualifies this assertion with the following remarks:

Thomist philosophy, which insists that man is body as well as spirit and that nothing comes into the intellect if not through the senses, heartily approves of the general emphasis put by progressive education on the essential part to be played in the process by the senses and the hands and by the natural interests of the child... but on the condition that all this should be directed toward the awakening of the intellectual powers and the development of the sense of truth (p48).

It does so neither in order to have the mind come to a stop in the act of knowing and contemplating, nor in order to make knowledge and contemplation subservient to action, but in order that once man has reached a stage where the harmony of his inner energies has been brought to full completion, his action on the world and on the human community, and his creative power at the service of his fellow-men, may overflow from his contemplative contact with reality – both with the visible and invisible realities in the midst of which he lives and moves (p54).

I do not offer a developed account or defence of liberal education here, but simply note that Classical Realism is logically and historically connected with that ideal. Classical Realism entails a significantly different conception of knowledge, of practical reason and hence of the moral life to that connected with Juridicalism. With Classical Realism, morality has to do with ‘getting things right’ both in terms of *what we are* (as rational beings) and *what is* (i.e. reality or the world of our experience). As such, morality has to do with recognising and acceding to various teleological norms of which the world is, in some sense, a repository. The moral life is to be understood as ‘tending the soul’ – i.e. seeking a right ordering of our natural (distinctively human) faculties toward a fuller apprehension of how the various material and spiritual goods proper to our combined physical and spiritual/intellectual capacities and inclinations, are to be ordered and treated so as to better realise our given nature as rational, social animals. Tending the soul, moreover, is an occupation of a lifetime, variously understood as a way of life, a habit of being, an intellectual attitude or a customary mode of vision. Assisting students to become life-long ‘tenders of the soul’ is then the proper moral educational task of schools. We are therefore compelled to consider what we are to make of the form and content of the curriculum – what we teach, how and why. Arguably, Classical Realism reconfigures what is these days commonly meant by education *per se*. It is, for example, likely that the priorities and ideals of liberal education just mentioned would conflict with certain currently

fashionable educational aims and purposes developed more closely along lines of political and economic utility.

For now it is enough to recognise that Classical Realism and its accompanying visional ethics provide the scope for an educational focus on intellectual development as part of a general 'asceticism of knowledge'. Further, I contend that this way of regarding education represents a vital response to the moral educational challenge facing schools. Following Classical Realism, such an approach represents an act of faith in the human cognitive capacity to form a spiritual identity of mind and reality. It also acknowledges the way in which such contact with reality is foundational to moral agency. In both these respects, Classical Realism presents a significant alternative to the widely accepted yet, as we have seen, dubious epistemological tradition currently informing most moral educational theory and practice. To take a single, yet major and arguably representative, example of current mainstream policy approaches, the Australian Curriculum Corporation's *Final Report* on the nation-wide *Values Education Study* (2003) signals a paucity of substantial moral-philosophical engagement with the kinds of metaphysical and epistemological questions raised in this thesis, reflecting instead a fairly uncritical acceptance of Juridicalist assumptions. While emphasising the urgent need to address the problems of social and moral decline through "values education", the Report has little to say on the metaphysical status of "values", evading important questions such as whether or not some or all values are objective or absolute, and in what such objectivity might consist. Consequently, values are defined 'thinly' as commonly shared ways of appraising certain objects, social and cultural practices, people, places or actions etcetera, and as the principles that might be drawn from such commonly held appraisals and used as guides to action (p251). The Report appears largely without philosophical resources by which to account for what it might mean to hold a value, or to share common values, and what, metaphysically and particularly epistemologically, acquiring and

living by one's value judgements substantively amounts to³⁵. An exception is the Report's appeal to the position on such matters set forth by David Aspin and his colleagues, who write, "values are neither private, nor subjective. Values are public: they are such that we can all discuss, decide upon, reject or approve (in *Final Report*, 2003: p155)". Such a statement clearly reflects the Juridical assumption we have questioned in this thesis, that the realms of valuing and of reasoning are separate and independent. This spurious assumption in turn lends force to the moral educational project (which we have also refuted) of developing some procedural, public reason that is as independent of privately and culturally situated ways of knowing, feeling and believing as possible, for the purposes of deriving 'commonly shared' values to serve as action-guiding principles. While at pains to resist the popular current of subjectivist or relativistic outlooks, Aspin and his colleagues fail to provide the Report with any substantive account of how values might have any objective and compelling status beyond their conveying a shared opinion developed in a given social context. They merely assert:

Also, values are objective. They are in a quite decided sense 'hard'. They are arrived at and get their life from their status as intersubjective agreements in our community as to what things shall count as important. Such agreements are constituted in the institutions that make up our social and communal life (pp155-156).

³⁵ An additional consequence of this lack of (or disregard for) philosophical resources is the Report's characterisation of the debate about values education as divided into two camps, one comprised of cognitive-developmentalists such as Kohlberg and his followers, the other made up of advocates of 'character education', which is tritely portrayed as an authoritarian, didactic approach to instilling adherence to societal rules and conventions (2003: p35). At no point does the Report engage with the significant history of classical or traditional liberal education, as discussed above, which centres upon a far more variegated account of character and its connection to education, along Aristotelian lines.

We have seen, by contrast, how the distinctive philosophical anthropology and substantive account of practical reason associated with the moral realist outlook of Classical Realism, grounds value in an objective order of existence, and depicts moral understanding as an on-going struggle to connect our unified rational, bodily and emotional selves with that order through the cultivation of certain moral and intellectual excellences, none of which can be understood as wholly dissociable from the others. On this view, moral education has less to do with clarifying values to determine action-guiding principles than with preparing the intellectual foundations for substantive moral judgement; less to do with evaluating and comparing competing moral outlooks and moral theories than with “tending the soul” – and this, primarily, by cultivating the habit of attention. Certainly, approaching moral education this way is no means for *guaranteeing* the formation of ethically minded and morally good people, as if that were even possible. But it is perhaps, to paraphrase Murdoch, the school’s best chance of educating for *the kind of person most likely of all to become good*.

II. RESPONDING TO A CLASSICAL REALIST INTERPRETATION – MATTERS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH.

i. The Danger of Intellectualism.

I have already mentioned how the intellectual focus of Classical Realism is open to misunderstanding. I insist, however, that such misunderstanding is chiefly due to the dominant (juridical) conception of the intellect as a function of reasoning in an analytical or discursive mode. Further, the conflation of such reasoning with cognition per se, and an associated separation of cognition and affectivity, fuels the potential for misunderstanding. That is, it promotes the notion that the power of the reasoning intellect (or cognition) has an independent existence apart from the acutely emotional nature of evaluative judgement and the deeply personal, in one sense

subjective, nature of affective and volitional inclination. To the extent that such a notion holds sway, the emphasis placed on the intellectual life by Classical Realism is liable to be misunderstood as denying the role of the emotions and free will. As argued in Chapter Six, however, with the expanded conception of cognition presented by Classical Realism, intellectual development entails a far more variegated and dynamic enterprise than merely promoting disengaged analytical thought.

A Classical Realist account of the intellectual foundations of the moral life does not imply that the moral life is itself confined to the life of the mind – to the pursuit of academic or intellectual excellence. Murdoch, for example, while arguing that “‘Becoming better’ is a process involving an exercise and refinement of moral vocabulary and sensibility”, insists that this does not mean that “the articulate educated man is better than the inarticulate uneducated man because he can think rationally and formulate and verbalise his distinctions” (1992: p324). Surely, refining moral vocabulary and sensibility has as much to do with developing certain habits of feeling as well as an imaginative grasp of the world of possible experience. It would be a mistake, however, following Classical Realism’s integrated account of the mind/soul’s integrated faculties – from sense perception to emotion, memory, imagination and abstract reasoning – to conclude that in this regard we are not concerned with knowledge in any sense, or further that the reasoning-intellect is uninvolved at this level. The following reflections on teaching virtue by Roger Scruton say something of the connection:

Maybe, by practicing virtue in our small corner of the world, we will be more ready to practice it in the great field of human conflict. Even if that is not so, we can nevertheless gain the knowledge of what to feel, in those testing circumstances. We cannot be sure, when the time comes, that we shall feel as

we ought, but we can rehearse in imagination the knowledge that we may one day require.

...In all kinds of ways the emotions and motives other people “come before us” in works of art and culture, and we spontaneously sympathise, by recreating in imagination the life that they depict. It is not that we imitate the characters depicted, but that we “move with” them, acquiring an inner premonition of their motives in the context that the writer or the artist provides. Through imagination we reach emotional knowledge, and maybe this is the best way, in the advance of the crucial tests, of preparing ourselves for the joys and calamities that we will someday encounter (2007: p38).

The point I want to make clear is that the cognitive dimension of moral understanding cannot be reduced to the area of a rational, analytical survey of moral problems, or even cleverness and the ability to learn quickly and effectively. Rather, cognition and the life of the intellect are equally possessed of the qualities of imagination and emotional sensibility, owing to the integrated nature of the mind’s faculties, as outlined in Chapter Five. It is quite contingent, as Murdoch has argued, that “good reasoning and learning are imaginative” (1992: p324).

The intellectual emphasis of the interpretation of moral education I have commended is also inseparable from philosophical realism (a matter I will attend to on its own shortly). As explained in Chapters Five and Six, for Classical Realism all known or potentially knowable objects constitute what is real, and this is thought to include objective valuative properties, knowledge of which informs our moral understanding. The quest for moral understanding then is not simply a quest for generally agreed moral rules and principles, yet rules and principles offer a clue as to the nature of the object that is sought. In the area of morals people seek to know what should or must be done in a particular instance. But, as Lyas (1999: p381) points out,

“When someone asks a teacher why it is wrong to keep a bundle of used five pound notes which has fallen from a lorry... that person is asking for a certain kind of insight” and not merely the invocation of some ethical principle or moral injunction such as ‘it’s wrong to steal’. The difference between someone who does and someone who does not *see* that taking the money (in the above case) is stealing, and that to do so would be wrong, is a matter of their available *insight* into the nature of the situation – what and who is involved, and of some kind of rightful order which must in some way be preserved. According to Classical Realism, such insight is a matter of the visional knowledge connected with the exercise of vital reason. The object in question is a kind of transcendent Goodness or rightful order, manifested in a particular set of material or otherwise sensible circumstances. To do the right thing, then, requires that one see what the situation, of itself, demands; which is to say that one’s vital reason (one’s mind, will and very being) must be conformed to the nature of the good or right order as it appears, intact or undone, in that situation. Such an immaterial object as the Good requires a commensurate modality of understanding – namely, the intellect, which, while capable of transcending the particular conditions of time, body and place in its range of understanding, is always to be found instantiated in a particular individual, and is fully integrated, moreover, with every other faculty of understanding.

This is what Pieper means when he says that over and above every moral act (every right decision of the will) stands one’s cognitive relation to reality (1989: p111, 115). The source of moral strength, of insight and every moral injunction, in other words, derives from reality itself. An identity of mind and reality, in some way and at some level, constitutes each and every cognitive act. So the focus on developing intellectual capacities inherent in the approach to moral education I have presented is not simply a matter of stimulating the intellect, in the narrow isolated sense of internalising propositional knowledge and/or reasoning analytically about conflicts and ‘values’. It is rather, as I have repeatedly urged, a matter of harmonising the student’s inner

energies, or *soul*, better to enable in them the kind of vital contact with reality that affords moral vision and entails a conforming of one's will (indeed, one's very *being*) to the objective order of the Good.

ii. On the Intellectual Attitude of the Teacher.

The potentially vital role of school studies as a medium for developing such insight – or moral vision – was discussed in Section I. Yet this high and mysterious aspect of the educational enterprise cannot be merely equated with the structure and content of academic and practical disciplines. That certain disciplines have the potential to reveal the nature of moral concepts, patterns of justice, beauty or goodness and the like, serves to highlight the nature of the teacher's vocation as a 'sacred trust' and therefore the essential importance of her own manner, her dispositions and the quality of attention reflected in her life as an educator.

For example, Raimond Gaita contends that the teacher's "privileged obligation is, as Plato saw, to initiate her students into a worthy love" (2000: p232). Such 'worthy love' also signals the intellectual attitude which makes knowledge of objective being possible, and is foundational to every moral act. Gaita ranks such love among the deepest values of the life of the mind and this too says something of its fundamental moral significance. While initiating students into a worthy love is, Gaita observes, rarely achieved, it remains "the highest standard in the light of which teachers may describe and judge what they do" (p232). According to Gaita, the capacity of school or university studies to reveal to students a sense of goodness and to inspire in them a worthy love depends most centrally on the kind of teacher they have. He writes:

The deepest values of the life of the mind cannot be taught: they can only be shown, but, of course, only to those who have eyes to see. They may reveal themselves in a teacher's style of teaching when it is determined by her attentive obedience to the disciplines of her subject. She must make something

inspirational of her subject but it cannot be her motive to inspire. Teachers who set out to inspire have their attention in the wrong place...

A fine teacher, then, is made so by his or her love of the subject. In their teaching they will reveal the worth of the life they have given to teaching – the worth of their vocation (p231).

Concerning the selection of educational content, Gaita suggests educators should ask whether their tradition has revealed something which is not only worthy of interest, fascination, enchantment or delight, but something actually worthy of students' love. Presuming there are such things, Gaita asks, "can we find words to name them and reveal their value? Which practices will nourish them? Which will undermine them?" (p233). In light of the interpretation of the moral education question I have defended, such questions are among the most important for teachers in responding to the moral education challenge.

Here I am reminded of my own education in visual art and aesthetic appreciation, which, I am convinced, has not been without a lasting moral significance. In particular, I recall how soon after completing my college education I attended an exhibition of paintings by Monet. I agreed to attend the exhibition because it was free (I was backpacking in Denmark at the time), not because I was especially interested in Impressionist painting – in fact, at the time it was not at all 'my cup of tea.' Attending the exhibition, however, occasioned for me an awakening of a previously unexperienced recognition of and sensitivity to the profound beauty and richness of detail in the very ordinary.

I had studied art at school, right through to my final year, with particular emphasis on the Impressionist period. I could explain in fair detail the various merits of the

Impressionist style and discuss certain of the driving (historical, technological and personal) forces behind its development. Yet, in my typically arrogant and youthful opinion, Impressionist paintings were blurry and second-rate. As such, I was totally unprepared (or so I would have thought) for the way in which my encounter with Monet's original works seemed to crystallise all the theoretical knowledge I had learned into a completely new, personally engaging kind of knowledge that has, I believe, altered my capacity and inclination to attend carefully to natural beauty. While the face-to-face encounter was perhaps the catalyst for my change of view, I believe the theoretical content and, even more importantly, the *manner of instruction* of my art education was vital in establishing the conditions for such a revelation. My teacher's in-depth knowledge of and passion for the subject matter aroused an unextinguishable suspicion that there was *something* of value there, in the Impressionists' works, worthy of my attention, in spite of my arrogant disinterest. Although the postage-stamp sized reproductions in textbooks could never convey it, the teacher's continuous efforts to turn our attention towards what she knew were the significant features, and to provide us with a vocabulary for discussing the works intelligently, by every manner of her dealing with the subject matter at hand and with us students - fledgling heirs to the aesthetic tradition in question - her teaching planted deep within me, unnoticed, a belief in the *possibility* of encountering true beauty in the everyday, and of seeing some profound aspect of the human condition in the artist's response to such beauty, and of representing and thus conveying such experience through the texture, tone and composition of a painted image - through the creative work.

In the course of my studies I acquired a range of theoretical knowledge, various interpretations, dates, facts and figures. But the all-important lesson - in how to think and feel - did not emerge until after I had finished school. Upon reflection, however,

it seems to me absurd to suppose that the important lesson had nothing to do with my formal education. I would not attribute everything that made possible my aesthetic awakening to my formal art education, but I can readily imagine that without the intellectual foundations it most certainly helped lay, it would have been easier to wander past those vibrant, living works of art untouched, unmoved and ultimately unenlightened.

In a similar way, Michael Oakeshott (1983) has argued that the real substance of one's inherited cultural and intellectual heritage (i.e. educational content) is that which enables one to think and to feel deeply. For Oakeshott, like Gaita, such deep thought and feeling is properly characterised as a unified capacity and also as a kind of love. But it cannot, he argues, be taught directly:

It cannot be taught separately; it can have no place of its own in a timetable of a curriculum. It cannot be taught overtly, by precept, because it comprises what is required to animate precept; but it may be taught in everything that is taught. It is implanted unobtrusively in the manner in which information is conveyed, in a tone of voice, in the gesture which accompanies instruction, in asides and oblique utterances, and by example... [A] habit of listening for an individual intelligence at work in every utterance...may be acquired by imitating a teacher who has this habit. And the intellectual virtues may be imparted only by a teacher who really cares about them for their own sake and never stoops to the priggishness of mentioning them (pp175-176).

What I am striving to make clear through these examples is the importance of what Gaita calls *the spirit of truth in love* as engendered in the teacher's manner. If academic and practical disciplines are to awaken in students any insight into and affiliation for objective Goodness, this will depend largely on the spirit of the teacher and of the

educational enterprise itself. A love of truth, or “love in which there is the spirit of truth” (p219), is for Gaita basic to understanding the highest possibilities of the teacher’s vocation. This, in turn, highlights the basic realist premise upon which the interpretation of moral education commended here is established.

The idea of transcendent, objective truth (knowledge of reality), and the love of truth as an appropriate intellectual attitude, or the doctrine that truth and reality are foundational to human knowledge, or that reality includes normative properties including moral truths, are genuine philosophical and ethical stumbling blocks for many people. Granting assent to philosophical realism, then, as recommended by this thesis, warrants consideration in its own right.

iii. The Assent to Philosophical Realism.

Many philosophers have commented on the seemingly inescapable nature of a realist world-view. The point has been made, for example, that to engage in any kind of reasoned speculation or investigation, or to assert any kind of statement or judgement as correct or false is implicitly to count on the existence of real properties which are the object of one’s thought. In other words, every effort toward understanding and every description of the world takes for granted that in our knowing, we either recede from or approach more closely some *true nature of the way things are*. Indeed, Stanley Jaki, referring to Albert Einstein’s claim that “‘belief in an external world, independent of the perceiving subject, is the basis of all natural science’” (in Jaki 1983: p92), argues that all philosophical, metaphysical and theological science, which builds upon the knowledge of natural science, has its basis in objective reality – i.e. all knowledge depends upon not only the existence but also the intelligibility, that is, the potential knowability, of realities external to the human mind (pp92-93).

If what I have argued is right, then rejecting any such realist foundation may invite and encourage a sceptical, relativistic or nihilistic philosophical attitude which, if anything, fuels contemporary concern for the role of schools in helping students establish some firm values base to provide cohesion, stability and a sense of meaning in their lives. It is striking then that philosophical and moral realism runs against the current of popular subjectivist opinion about the nature of value judgements. As discussed in Chapter One, Mackay (2004) has documented a shift in popular perception away from traditional sources of authority on moral and other matters towards individual choice (p5). Following the widespread acceptance of the idea that morality is a merely social construct (p43), Mackay endorses the proposition that what is right for one person may not be right for another (p237). Clearly what people *consider* to be right will often differ, but it does not follow that there are no objective standards of right and wrong, good or evil. The passage from acknowledging such differences in values between individuals and across social and cultural divides, to an easy (i.e. unreflecting) social, cultural or moral relativism has, according to Scruton, had a marked effect on the approach of schools and particularly universities to the study of the humanities (2007: pxii). What Scruton describes as a growing “culture of repudiation” (p69) can also be seen in the popular media, especially in light entertainment and comedy programs, where, it would seem, anything and everything can be made fun of with apparent impunity, for nothing is held sacred: no values, ideas or ideals are taken to be so true or profound as to warrant special (public) consideration involving a measure of reverence, respect or protection. One could dismiss this phenomenon with the observation that ‘it’s only a joke’, yet if Scruton is anywhere near correct in observing that, “To agree in our laughter is to agree in our judgements” (p48), then the trend surely warrants critical scrutiny.

Perhaps even more striking, however, is Chantal Delsol’s observation that such abandoning of belief in objective truth, and its replacement by ‘points of view’ or *subjective* ‘truths’, does not stop contemporary man from identifying moral

imperatives that he would not abandon under any circumstances” (2003: pp45-46).

She writes:

Our contemporary imperiously refuses to recognise an objective disposition of things, a hierarchy of references organised and situated outside of himself and that is binding on his conscience. He has convinced himself over the past two centuries that anything he does not fashion himself cannot be real. A world that is not his own brainchild seems to him to be no more than an imaginary phantom, which is precisely what he thinks of a supposedly objective order revealed to him without regard to his will (pp52-53).

The “good”, reduced to a collage of values, and as such relative to time, place, and the individual [person or community], could never claim the status of an absolute. Absolute good rests on objective realities, it takes root in truth, in the knowledge of a good from which one cannot escape. What is truly astonishing today is the emergence of messages that function like truths, mimicking an objective good in their intransigence and triumphant assertiveness – at the very moment when subjective values and the rejection of the idea of the objective good have reached their peak (p55).

The kind of ‘clandestine’ absolutes that Delsol refers to include assumptions about the rights of the individual, freedom of choice, the equality of all people, the inherent goodness of democracy and so on – all of which are clearly grounded in the epistemological and moral tradition I have called Juridicalism. Ironically, such goods, rarely questioned in contemporary western society, invoke a sense of objective reality: of certain properties that of themselves command respect. Yet such properties might just as readily be invoked to refute the realist’s claims that reality is foundational to knowledge and that one’s cognitive grasp of reality is determinative of one’s willing and acting, or that there are degrees of knowledge and insight,

including aesthetic and moral discrimination, which are, by nature, open to some but not to others. Very simply, philosophical realism is an affront to certain versions of western liberal and democratic sensibility. I do not intend to venture into a detailed analysis of the history and variety of liberal political philosophy, but something can be said, briefly, to distinguish the kind of liberal theory which conflicts with the realist world-view I have commended.

Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger (1996) has observed that the central liberal-democratic ideals of 'freedom' and 'human rights', at the time of their rise to prominence within western political theory, during the Enlightenment, was typically invoked in connection with some sense of 'nature' or natural order. He writes:

When nature is spoken of in this context what is meant is not simply a system of biological processes. Rather, the point is that rights are naturally present in man himself prior to all legal constructs. In this sense, the idea of human rights is in the first place a revolutionary one: it opposes the absolutism of the state and the caprice of positive legislation. But it is also a metaphysical idea: there is an ethical and legal claim in being itself. It is not blind materiality which can then be formed in accord with pure functionality. Nature contains spirit, ethos and dignity, and in this way is a juridical claim to our liberation as well as its measure (p4).

Originally, then, the liberal tradition did not radically conflict with the kind of realist philosophical doctrine which holds that there exists an objective order of reality. On the contrary, Ratzinger argues that the fundamental basis of the liberal tradition included the idea that "freedom is tied to a measure, the measure of reality – to the truth" (p8). From this realist foundation, however, the value of freedom has been disconnected and elevated, in some circles, to an absolute ideal in itself – an ideal beyond measure, indeed, as the irrefutable measure of all other goods and values. As

Pope John Paul II has argued, “This is the direction taken by doctrines which have lost the sense of the transcendent or which are explicitly atheist” (*Veritatis Splendor* §32). Having lost sight of or rejected any basis for freedom in reality or an objective order of truth, the value of freedom more easily comes to be viewed as freedom from any commanding truth or source of authority which impinges upon the individual’s own conscience, understood as “the prerogative of independently determining the criteria of good and evil and then acting accordingly” (§32). This strong bent towards the unconstrained freedom of the individual is also tied to the dynamics of capitalism, issuing in a particular ‘neo-liberal’ socio-political economic standpoint, or what John Paul II calls “economism” (*Laborem Exercens* §13). The dangers inherent in this view include an unchecked consumerism and concern for individual prosperity at the expense of the civil and economic rights of others which, ironically, liberal democracy is intended to uphold.

Bénéton (2004) has also distinguished between two broad yet significantly opposed versions of the liberal democratic tradition. One version he calls “a procedural version”, according to which “liberal democracy is identified with certain rules of the game that are supposed to allow human beings without any common substance or natural ends to follow their particular objectives” (p99). A second version, which he sees as remaining faithful to the original Enlightenment vision, he describes as a “substantive version, founded on the political recognition of a dignity proper to humanity, of a nature common to all, which justifies but also orders equality and liberty” (p99). What is distinctive about the substantive version is the fact of an underlying objective human nature and proper human dignity that not only justifies but also *orders* equality and liberty – which is to say it *imposes limitations* upon and *directs* human freedom in ways that are not necessarily in accordance with the ideal of unconstrained personal liberty, which tends to guide procedural liberalism. The substantive version, Bénéton explains, does not refute the ‘rules of the game’ held central by the procedural version, but does hold that they are *insufficient* “to make a

liberal-democratic regime a good regime" (p102). Good liberal democracy depends, Bénéton argues, upon shared customs that serve to make known and reinforce our understanding of the fundamental nature of the human condition - and indeed of all reality - from which stems our inherent human dignity and the objective values of freedom and human rights. Such shared customs and their associated beliefs and practices typically establish limitations to individual freedom which, without an abiding sense of the objective foundations of human dignity, will appear merely arbitrary and without any binding authority.

The basic importance of social forms and practices which nourish an understanding of the objective and transcendent foundations of human dignity and liberal values, sits uncomfortably with a contemporary current of modern liberalism which holds, as MacIntyre observes, "that questions about *the good life for man* or the ends of human life are to be regarded from the public standpoint as systematically unsettlable" (1985: p112). While this perspective is by no means representative of the entire liberal democratic tradition, certain aspects of it - such as a subjectivistic view of moral judgement and privatisation of conceptions of the good - are sometimes reflected in today's social, political and economic systems. It remains to observe, therefore, that any serious consideration of the kind of realist philosophical foundation I have defended in this thesis will entail a serious examination and reconsideration of the foundations, objectives and forms of modern democratic liberalism. I believe a reinvigorated discussion of these kinds of political-philosophical concerns, in relation to education, is warranted. At a time when various post-modern philosophies call into question the viability of Enlightenment faith in unaided critical reason for the discovery of truth and knowledge, there is a genuine need and opportunity to reconsider former ways of understanding the nature and scope of human understanding.

Indeed it is not very surprising that in recent years there has been a renewed interest in Aristotelian and Thomist philosophy, especially in the field of moral philosophy where a return to some kind of classically inspired *virtue ethics* is now seriously discussed. This philosophical trend is slowly making headway into the realm of educational theory. Nevertheless, as Carr and Steutel maintain (1999a), within education there has not been as significant an engagement with the foundations of a virtue approach to moral education as there has been in moral philosophy. Consequently, they note, there has been “a tendency to confuse the virtue approach to moral education with such quite different accounts as character education, the ethics of care and even utilitarianism” (p4)³⁶. There is a need, then, to be clearer about the epistemological basis of virtue ethics in the educational sphere; this in turn presupposes clarity about the metaphysical basis of virtue ethics³⁷. These are needs which this study has sought to (begin to) address. Further, it may be that a gradual relinquishing of the two-hundred-year stronghold of post-Cartesian philosophy, and a critical assessment of currently formulated and accepted ideals of freedom, is needed effectively to address the role of schools in responding to the particular

³⁶ See additionally Emily Robertson’s (1998) critique of Clark Robenstine’s commentary on Aristotelian philosophy and Character Education.

³⁷ It should be noted that there are several different versions of virtue ethics. See Darwall’s *Virtue Ethics* (2002) for a range of essays covering the classical sources and contemporary expressions of virtue ethics. What the various accounts of virtue ethics have in common, however, and what I have sought to emphasise here, is the primary importance they accord to character rather than conduct: as Darwall writes in his Introduction to the above volume, “with how we should *be* rather than what we should *do*” (p1). Further, all versions of virtue ethics call attention to the integrated nature of right thinking and right feeling as brought out by Aristotle’s notion of practical wisdom, of which knowing the good and being/doing the good are indissociable features. Indeed, virtue ethical perspectives are also orthogonal to consequentialist, contractarian and deontological moral theories, Darwall suggests, because they are often advanced not as a moral theory at all, but “as an account of other ethically deep aspects of human life” (p1), such as the interrelationship of reason and emotion.

environmental, cultural and moral problems which threaten the stability and durability of the industrialised and increasingly 'globalised' west.

iv. Establishing Communities of Learning.

One further issue that deserves consideration is the practical possibility of implementing the kind of approach to moral education I have outlined. The quest for a good quality of consciousness and just mode of vision, as Plato recognised, is not a matter of putting sight into blind eyes. It is, on one level, a deeply private, subjective, not to mention slow journey of personal conversion. That said, it is not a journey that can be made in isolation.

One of the key differences between a Juridical and a Classical Realist understanding of the cognitive anatomy of moral understanding, as highlighted by this study, is the degree to which each regards reasoning as essentially distinct from the personal life – i.e. as formed by and instantiated in the body and its emotional operations, as well as particular historical contexts and cultural traditions. For Classical Realism, rationality does not denote a highly transparent and universally accessible manner of procedural or discursive thinking about irrefutable facts (as with Juridicalism). Rather, reason is seen as a measure of the degree to which the mind of the knower has attained identity with reality. As the mind, however, is understood as a deeply integrated network of bodily and spiritual capacities (including the senses, the emotions, the will and the reasoning intellect) rationality is altogether bound up with one's personal (including moral) character, as well as the traditions and practices which shape character.

As such, from a visional ethical perspective, moral education is centrally concerned with the formation of character *in community*. In this regard Dykstra writes:

[Moral education] will need to strive for the formation of character and the fostering of communities in which people learn to see deeply into the mysteries of the world and to respond to that vision. It will involve the teaching of a language and a way of living that puts us in contact with the world, and that are shaped by the heritage and vision of particular communities (1981: pp61-62).

Similarly, Meilaender notes that, "'Ethics' and 'morality' have their sources in 'ethos', and 'mores', words that refer to the ways and attitudes, manners and habits, sensibilities and customs that shape and define a community (2000: vi)". While the mind, in Classical Realism, partakes in the universal and immaterial properties of reality and so may avail the knower of a cognitive grasp of timeless truth, it is also instantiated in a human body, in time, place and culture, and there is no knowledge outside of such a situated position. Without the shared customs, values, beliefs and time-honoured insights which galvanise a community, the human mind has nothing with which to think – no conceptual or evaluative resources, no 'atmosphere' in which to live and breath, and to grow.

In Chapter Six I argued that moral understanding depends on vision and that vision depends on character. Further, character, as Meilaender argues, "can be shaped only in accord with a prior vision" (2002: p97). Indeed, near the beginning of the *Nicomachean Ethics* (II 1 1103b25), and again towards the end (X 9 1179b31), Aristotle stresses the importance of nurture by established rule and custom to forming the basic moral habits of the young. Haldane also notes that, following the Aristotelian tradition, "moral character is formed and developed in a social context, out of participation – originally unchosen and not reflected upon – in practices whose

meaning is given by their traditional goals” (1999: p159)³⁸. What the classical tradition reminds contemporary thinkers, therefore, is that moral understanding makes no sense without some vision of human fulfilment, which in turn highlights the importance of how such a vision is made possible by, and is articulated and continued through shared social and cultural practices. This underscores the need for communities of learning (such as schools) which are prepared, by way of a shared understanding of human fulfilment, to deliberately instruct the conscience and form a definite type of character. This point, however, also highlights another important consideration: namely, the challenge of establishing some cultural, spiritual and intellectual centre upon which deliberate, public attempts at personal formation (education) can be based. In the following section I will consider this challenge and how it is exacerbated by the fact that within modern western societies there appears to be no single unifying culture or shared vision of human nature and the good life for man.

v. Locating an Intellectual, Cultural and Spiritual Centre.

In an increasingly pluralist society, any genuinely unified vision of human fulfilment is unlikely to be forthcoming. Further, ideals of human flourishing and visions of the Good cannot be created *ex nihilo*, or somehow ‘distilled’ from the plurality of cultural traditions and communities represented in wider society, without regard for the distinct practices and forms of life which make such ideals intelligible. For this reason, as Meilaender suggests (2002: p98), it might be best to forego public attempts at moral education, resorting instead to an openly sectarian approach, with each

³⁸ See Haldane’s continued discussion of whether the fact that virtue and right reason are necessarily cultivated in interpersonal contexts can be made to square with realist claims to transcendent objectivity. Engaging MacIntyre, Haldane argues that there is no fundamental discrepancy between these two views: that “there need be no opposition between *historicism* understood as the claim that reason has a variety of starting points, and *realism* conceived as the view that truth, which is the goal of enquiry, is something transcendent of local perspectives” (p166).

community and tradition educating their young according to their respective, inherited traditions. This may be the only way to remain faithful to the widely endorsed principles of liberal democratic society while remaining sensitive to the classical insight about the need for morality to take root in shared customs and ways of seeing. However, such a sectarian approach seems in many ways quite unsatisfactory, offering practically no hope for any widespread provision of public education apart from that conceived in the narrowest, instrumental terms, and threatening to further fragment society into segregated and obscurely defined communities.

There is a clear need, then, in the effort to sustain public education, to recapture some *tradition of educational practice*, itself informed by and transmitting particular ideals of human flourishing, and offering a definite conception of the kind of character (i.e. the educated person) who is capable of recognising and realising such ideals. To return to an earlier theme, raised in Chapter Six and earlier in this chapter, one might consider the oft-neglected tradition of classical liberal education. As noted, liberal education is historically connected with classical realist philosophy. Unsurprisingly, proponents of liberal education have devoted significant attention to articulating the kind of character schools should seek to ‘produce’. Richard Livingstone, for example, argued almost a century ago that a liberal education ought to provide students with two things: “an intellectual attitude to life and a philosophy of life” (1960: p137). The desirable intellectual attitude Livingstone described as finding the world and life intensely interesting, the desire to see things as they are, and to feel that truth is both permanent and beautiful. The right philosophy of life, he argued, is the extension of this intellectual attitude to cover Goodness, Truth and Beauty, as designated by the tradition of the virtues.

Livingstone commended the ancient Athenian model of education (not so much its content as its form and rationale) because of its “overwhelming insistence on

producing a definite type of character”, and its view of “education as spiritual training”, with educational content (whatever it might be) viewed as “the food of the soul” (p157). Concerning the practicality of such a venture in an age of growing pluralism he wrote:

It may seem a great narrowing of education; nothing about information or mental discipline; no word of science or economics; a restriction of it to training in goodness, to loving what is right and hating what is wrong. It is no doubt an excessive simplification, and over-concentration on one element; but for this age the emphasis is in the right place, nor does it in any way exclude other elements: it only stresses the supreme importance of character-training. Such an ideal would not cause any upheaval in our education, or any serious recasting of the curriculum; it would only involve a change of attitude and emphasis in the teaching of certain subjects (pp157-158).

Livingstone’s recommendations never resulted in any widespread practical application. This is, arguably, due to the pressing demands of a more pragmatic approach to social, economic and educational priorities during the twentieth century, and a generally diminished contact with the philosophical foundations underpinning his educational philosophy. However, in light of present concern for the moral dimension of schooling, and supported by the appropriate realist foundations (highlighted in this study), the ideal of liberal education is, I believe, worthy of renewed consideration.

In this regard it is interesting to note a developing interest, at least among Australian educators, in certain former, more ancient educational ideals, such as liberal education. For example, a recent volume entitled *Education and the Ideal* addresses the aims and purposes of education at a time when competing ideologies vie to structure the curriculum to their own agenda. A recurrent theme among the contributing

authors is the overshadowed ideal of liberal education - emphasising a harmony between intellectual, emotional and physical development in education. For instance, Roderick West argues the case for what he titles "An Education that Liberates", and by which he means "an education in which ethical and spiritual values attend the higher intellectual values" (2004: p212). West queries the commonplace educational aims of producing "well-rounded, gifted, balanced and confident people", suggesting that without inculcating a deep love of truth and the requisite intellectual faculties which underpin "a capacity to wonder", to be "surprised by joy" and the "intuitive" powers of the mind, education will not have recognised or risen to its highest aims (p209). In this regard, one might also consider the ways in which these foundational cognitive capacities and dispositions connect with or underscore the development of more communitarian values such as justice, tolerance, service and the like. Here, then, with the liberal learning tradition - or what Alan Barcan refers to as the "Humanist-Realist Curriculum" which, he argues, was prominent in Australian education up until the 1960s (2004: p16) - is a valuable source of insight and understanding into the potential philosophical, cultural and intellectual foundations of public education.

Further, in a discussion of *The Deep Purposes of Teaching and Learning* (2004) John Ozolins suggests that teaching and learning practice is largely informed by underlying conceptions of education. For instance, Ozolins argues that a currently dominant "market model" of education "emphasises the role of the person as a resource - hence the notion of human capital - for the securing of the economic objectives of the State" (p8). In contrast to such a view, Ozolins outlines what he sees as the higher, more integral purposes of education:

[A vital education] will be directed towards deeper purposes, the development of the intellect, towards self knowledge and knowledge of the good and to truth. For the teacher, it will demand a commitment to these self same

purposes and a spirit of humility in the face of the difficult and arduous task that their pupils are undertaking. The argument about education should not be about what ways it can be packaged and marketed efficiently, nor what teaching and learning methods can do this the most effectively, but what it is that we want education to be for. It has been argued that what it is for is for the development of the person to know himself or herself and through self-knowledge, come to know the Other and finally, to apprehend the good. These are the deep purposes of teaching and learning (2004: p18).

A burgeoning and re-energised philosophical realism, were it to be realised, would certainly assist in articulating a coherent and unified vision of the intellectual, cultural and moral ideals needed to underpin any educational approach. Yet in this regard, it is possible that current needs exceed available powers, and this leads to the last point I wish to raise.

vi. Plumbing the Spiritual Depths of Humanity - a Role for Theology and Religion.

As well as questioning a narrow, instrumentalist and economically rationalised view of education, Ozolins notes that, “a theory of the nature of the human person... needs to be articulated before we can fruitfully consider in detail how education bears on the development of human beings” (p10). In these respects, this study has helped to highlight two important sources of insight and understanding: (1) the Classical Realist philosophical tradition and what it has to say about human nature, rational and other cognitive capacities and the relation between human thought and action, and (2) the liberal learning tradition which draws primarily on classical philosophical sources. But we may also question whether or not such philosophical sources are sufficient, and, if they are not, what other sources may be needed, and are practically available, to inform any attempt to articulate and give some concrete meaning to the kinds of higher purposes we see education as serving.

A resurgent interest in philosophical realism, together with virtue ethics or a visional ethical perspective (and indeed liberal education) may point a way for future systems of public education. In our efforts to address the question of what such lofty educational ideals as 'self-knowledge' or 'personal development' actually mean and require, however, it may be necessary to turn our attention to the actual forms of community and the living traditions which have (and continue to) spawn the very best philosophical and theological insight, cultural, artistic and literary achievement, systems of government and social practices etcetera. Broadly speaking, the tradition of Western culture represents a plentiful and historically relevant source or inspiration for contemporary education. Against the charge that the Western tradition is too narrow and limiting, Scruton (2007) has argued that the Western tradition is rich, multifaceted, and most clearly characterised as an extended conversation aimed at the 'common pursuit of true judgement', in which all cultures and civilisations are invited to take part. As to the particular aspects of this 'Great Conversation' we might attend to as educators, Scruton writes:

Although new works are constantly being added to our inheritance, there is a distinction between those that "enter the canon" and those that remain on the periphery. Every culture is characterised by a central stream or tradition of works that have not merely "stood the test of time" but which continue to serve as models and inspirations for living practitioners. The process whereby an artistic, literary or musical tradition develops and strengthens is a fascinating one, to which critics have devoted much thought. And theories of the "tradition" are invariably controversial... But this battle over the canon is itself part of the canon: a tradition is the residue of critical conflicts, that which remains when the sound and fury has dwindled away to a schoolroom murmur (p4).

Scruton strives to show that the highest elements of Western culture, and those to which we rightly turn to inform our present understanding of ourselves and especially our educational purposes, are those which impart spiritual uplift and humane feeling, enhancing our knowledge not merely of contingent means but of ultimate ends, perceived in light of our common human nature. In this way the task of the teacher includes passing on the rudiments of virtue and sympathy as related in the stories and maxims of religion, as well as the manners and morals that religion facilitates (p40). Aware of the abundance and variety of human sympathy and humane learning associated with the Western tradition and its religious roots, and of how such knowledge is embodied in works of art and reflection, the teacher strives to induce a love of such things. Scruton writes, "Ideal visions of the human condition... are distilled in the works of our culture. From these visions we acquire a sense of what is intrinsically worthwhile in the human condition" (pp40-41).

In this regard, the importance of theological and religious insight, and in what ways theological and religious tradition might feasibly be brought into contact with educational theory and practice, needs to be considered. Doubtless, some atheists will shrink from such a notion. I am not suggesting, however, that a given religious/theological tradition can suddenly be singled out and adopted as a basis for developing the form and content of a public education, nor than any specific religious doctrines be made integral to the curriculum. While I suspect that many 'devout' atheists would resist the kind of strongly teleological philosophical realism I have been advocating - opting instead for a strictly materialist worldview - there is nothing to preclude an atheist from subscribing to such a realist perspective, together with the importance it places on preserving a sense of the transcendent. In this respect, the voice of the religious faithful, past and present, may prove enlightening, irrespective

of one's beliefs about God. Delsol³⁹, for instance, draws on Max Scheler whose comparison of modern humanitarianism with the ideal of Christian love (*agape*) highlights, she argues, the insufficiency of a currently prevalent expression of "a humanitarianism deprived of transcendence, and consequently lacking any critical distance" (2003: p79). Murdoch also, while eschewing the idea of a personal, creator-God, finds great value in the idea of God understood minimally as "*a single perfect transcendent non-representable and necessarily real object of attention*" (1971: p55). Of course, it may make all the difference whether one believes in God as a personal Identity or merely as a faceless entity. The important point here, however, is that Murdoch allows insights and practices connected with the Christian tradition to direct and illuminate her inquiry into the human condition, and ultimately to corroborate her account of an abiding human need for contact with a transcendent and sovereign Good.

I am also reminded of E.F. Schumacher, who, in *A Guide for the Perplexed*, quite undogmatically draws from a range of Eastern and Western religious traditions and spiritual philosophies to outline and defend a general realist view of the world, explicated in terms of a great "Chain of Being" (1995: p25). Further, on the importance of the religious impulse in human beings, and by implication the traditions and practices that form expressions of that impulse, Schumacher writes:

It may conceivably be possible to live without churches; but it is not possible to live without religion, that is without systematic work to keep in contact with and develop towards Higher Levels than those of 'ordinary life', with all its

³⁹ I am not here assuming anything about Delsol's beliefs about God. My point rather is that Delsol's argument shows how theological and religious insight may illuminate our current condition and even point a way forward, irrespective of her own, Scheler's, or the reader's personal theological beliefs.

pleasure and pain, sensation and gratification, refinement and crudity – whatever it may be (p153).

Calling on Scruton again, it can be argued that underlying all the enduring works of Western art and thought is “the legacy of Judeo-Christian monotheism, and the spirit of inquiry that has made the question of its meaning inescapable” (2007: p87). Scruton acknowledges that current academic philosophy – to which we might add contemporary public education – no longer belongs to “that tradition of faith-based and faith-inspired thinking” (p88). Nevertheless, he points out that “within the churches and within the Roman catholic church in particular, the tradition has gone through a significant period of revival” involving the attempt to communicate “philosophical ideas in a clear and sincere idiom to a wide audience” (p88). In light of this renewal, we are challenged to engage with the churches in the interest of deepening our understanding of the world and of humanity, and not simply to reject what they have to say on the flimsy basis that it is inspired by religious belief.

Christopher Derrick (1977), defending liberal education in response to contemporary scepticism, maintains that philosophical realism is the necessary starting point for any attempt to provide a liberal education. He also argues, however, that realism is only one of two ‘necessary dogmas’. The question must also be answered, “Is there in fact any body of achieved wisdom, of truth, which can be handed onto the young as their liberation from the tyranny of mere opinion and scepticism?” (pp59-60). For Derrick, only the dogmatism of catholic Christianity can provide such a body of achieved (and revealed) wisdom, as well as the necessary dimension of *grace* to overcome the inevitable limitations and failures of a *merely human* world-view (i.e. original sin). Recently, Dallas Willard has argued essentially the same thing, noting that community must somehow come before virtue, subsequently providing the support for rationality and the life of reason. Willard concludes:

...something like the development of a community of moral understanding in the Christian tradition must be the answer to our current situation. This seems to me the only thing capable of redeeming reason, of providing the moral substance and understanding that can make the life of reason possible (2000: p5).

Such approaches may be too parochial for any viable form of public education in a culturally and religiously diverse society. Even as they stand, such deliberately sectarian approaches risk the gambit of having to gerrymander their respective traditions in order to provide a picture of shared values and faith practices. What the above arguments indicate, however, is that there is potentially a key role for (engaging with) theology and religious insight in laying down the philosophical foundations of any approach to (moral) education along the lines I have recommended – i.e. where moral and spiritual discipline intersects with and mutually supports intellectual development. In this regard, Meilaender seems to have struck an important truth when he writes that, “moral education requires... a revelation by which we can test our vision and a grace powerful enough to transform our character (2002: p99).

One of the key purposes of this study has been to instigate a renewed engagement with the foundational philosophical considerations at the heart of the moral education question, and to scrutinise contemporary perspectives and approaches in light of the wisdom of former ages. Renewed engagement with the foundational metaphysical and explicitly theological and religious considerations regarding human nature, and the meaning and contexts of human flourishing, may also be required. The challenges posed by Meilaender’s insight above, together with the other issues raised, now stand in need of continued and philosophically astute research and investigation.

REFERENCES:

- Aristotle (1986). *De Anima*, (trans. Smith, J.A.). In R.M. Hutchins (Ed. In Chief), *Great Books of the Western World* (28th ed), vol. 8 (pp631-672). Chicago: William Benton.
- Aristotle (1986). *Nicomachean Ethics*, (trans. Smith, J.A.). In R.M. Hutchins (Ed. In Chief), *Great Books of the Western World* (28th ed), vol. 9 (pp333-436). Chicago: William Benton.
- Aquinas, T St. (1986). *Summa Theologica*, (trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province, rev. Sullivan, D.J.). In R.M. Hutchins (Ed. In Chief), *Great Books of the Western World* (28th ed), vol. 19 & 20. Chicago: William Benton.
- Aspin, D. (2002). An Ontology of Values and the Humanisation of Education. In S. Pascoe (Ed.), *Values in Education: Australian College of Educators Yearbook 2002* (pp12-24). Canberra: ACE.
- Ayer, A.J. (1936). *Language, Truth and Logic*. London: Gollanscz.
- Baier, A. (1985). Theory and Reflective Practices. In *Postures of the Mind*. London: Methuen.

- Bailey, C. (1988). Kohlberg on Morality and Feeling. In S. & C. Modgil (Eds.), *Laurence Kohlberg: Consensus and Controversy* (pp197-208). East Sussex, UK: The Falmer Press.
- Barcan, A. (2004). Ideology and the Curriculum. In N. Smith (Ed.), *Education and the Ideal: Leading Educators Explore Contemporary Issues in Australian Schooling* (pp11-60). Sydney: New Frontier Publishing.
- Bénéton, P. (2004). *Equality by Default: an essay on modernity as confinement*. Delaware: ISI Books.
- Berkeley, G. (1999). *Principles of Human Knowledge and Three Dialogues*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Blackburn, S. (1984). *Spreading the Word: Groundings in the Philosophy of Language*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Blackburn, S. (1993). *Essays in Quasi-Realism*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Callan, M.F. (1978). Feeling, Reasoning, and Acting: An Integrated Approach to Moral Education. In P. Scharf (Ed.), *Readings in Moral Education* (pp198-209). Minneapolis: Winston Press.

- Carr, D. (1999). Virtue, Akrasia and Moral Weakness. In D. Carr & J. Stuetel (Eds.), *Virtue Ethics and Moral Education* (pp138-151). London: Routledge.
- Carr, D. & Steutel, J. (1999a). Virtue Ethics and the Virtue Approach to Moral Education. In D. Carr & J. Steutel (Eds.), *Virtue Ethics and Moral Education* (pp3-18). London: Routledge.
- Carr, D. & Steutel, J. (1999b). The Virtue Approach to Moral Education: Pointers, Problems and Prospects. In D. Carr & J. Steutel (Eds.), *Virtue Ethics and Moral Education* (pp241-256). London: Routledge.
- Carr, N. (2002). Worldview, Wisdom and Wonder: A Quest for Transformation Through Education. In S. Pascoe (Ed.), *Values in Education: Australian College of Educators Yearbook 2002* (pp173-183). Canberra: ACE.
- Chesterton, G.K. (1950). A New Case for Catholic Schools. In *The Common Man*. London: Sheed & Ward.
- Chesterton, G.K. (1956). *Saint Thomas Aquinas*. London & New York: Doubleday.
- Civics Expert Group (1994). *Whereas the people: Civics and Citizenship Education*. Report of the Civics Expert Group, Canberra: AGPS.

Crittenden, P. (1990). *Learning to be Moral*. Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press Int. Inc.

Curriculum Corporation. (1997). *Introducing Discovering Democracy: School Materials Project*. Victoria: Curriculum Corporation.

Curriculum Council. (1998). *Curriculum Framework for Kindergarted to Year 12 Education in Western Australia*. Perth: Curriculum Council.

Damásio, A. (1995). *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason and the Human Brain*. New York, NY: Harper Perennial.

Darwall, S. (Editor) (2002). *Virtue Ethics*. Oxford, UK; Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Delsol, C. (2003). *Icarus Fallen: The Search for Meaning in an Uncertain World*. Wilmington, DE: ISI Books.

Derrick, C. (1977). *Escape from Scepticism: Liberal Education as if Truth Mattered*. La Salles, Illinois: Sherwood Sugden & Co.

Descartes, R. (1986a). Rules for the Direction of the Mind, (trans. Haldane, E.S. & Ross, G.R.T.). In R.M. Hutchins (Ed. In Chief), *Great Books of the Western World* (28th ed), vol. 31 (pp1-40). Chicago: William Benton.

Descartes, R. (1986b). Discourse on the Method of Rightly Conducting the Reason, (trans. Haldane, E.S. & Ross, G.R.T.). In R.M. Hutchins (Ed. In Chief), *Great Books of the Western World* (28th ed), vol. 31 (pp41-68). Chicago: William Benton.

Descartes, R. (1986c). Meditations on the First Philosophy, (trans. Haldane, E.S. & Ross, G.R.T.). In R.M. Hutchins (Ed. In Chief), *Great Books of the Western World* (28th ed), vol. 31 (pp69-103). Chicago: William Benton.

De Sousa, R. (1987). *The Rationality of Emotion*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

DEST. (2003). *A Draft National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools*. Canberra: DEST.

Dewey, J. (1963). My Pedagogic Creed. In R. Gross (Ed.), *The Teacher and the Taught: Education in Theory and Practice*. New York: Dell Publishing Co. Inc.

Dodd, J.M. & Menz, O. (1996). Stewardship: A Concept in Moral Education. Online paper proceeding from the *National Conference of the Australian Association for the*

Education of Gifted and Talented (Adelaide 1996). Retrieved October 2006 from:
http://www.nexus.edu.au/TeachStud/gat/dod_men1.htm

Dunne, J. (1999). Virtue, Phronesis and Learning. In D. Carr & J. Steutel (Eds.), *Virtue Ethics and Moral Education* (pp49-64). London: Routledge.

Dykstra, C. (1981). *Vision and Character: A Christian Educator's Alternative to Kohlberg*. New York: Paulist Press.

Fraenkel, J.R. (1978). The Kohlberg Bandwagon: Some Reservations. In P. Scharf (Ed.), *Readings in Moral Education* (pp250-262). Minneapolis: Winston Press.

Gaita, R. (2000). *A Common Humanity: Thinking about Love, Truth and Justice*. Melbourne: Text Publishing Co.

Gibbard, A. (1990). *Wise Choices, Apt Feelings*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

- Gilson, E. (1990). *Methodical Realism* (trans. Philip Trower). Front Royal, VA: Christendom Press.
- Haldane, J. (1999). Virtue, Truth and Relativism. In D. Carr & J. Steutel (Eds.), *Virtue Ethics and Moral Education* (pp155-168). London: Routledge.
- Haldane, J. (2003). Could the Soul be Software? Text of a lecture given in the 1996-7 *Public Lecture Series, School of Philosophy, Divinity and Religious Studies, University of Aberdeen*. Retrieved December 2006 from: <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/philosophy/endsandmeans/vol1no2/haldane.shtml>
- Haldane, J. (2004a). The Nature of Values. In J. Haldane (Ed.), *Values, Education and the Human World* (pp1-13). Exeter, UK: Imprint Academic.
- Haldane, J. (2004b). *Faithful Reason: Essays Catholic and philosophical*. New York NY: Routledge.
- Hare, R.M. (1952). *The Language of Morals*. Oxford, UK: Clarendon.
- Harman, G. (1988). Ethics and Observation. In G. Sayer-McCord (Ed.), *Essays on Moral Realism* (pp119-126). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

- Hill, B.V. (1971). *Called to Teach: The Christian Presence in Australian Education*. Sydney: Angus & Robertson.
- Hill, B.V. (1994). An Education of Value: Towards a Value Framework for the School Curriculum. In *Report of the Review of the Queensland School Curriculum 1994: Shaping the Future, vol.3* (pp233-276). Brisbane: Queensland Government.
- Hill, B.V. (2004). *Core Values in the Balance*. Paper presented at the ACER Conference, Adelaide: October 2004.
- Hill, B.V. (2005). A Talking Point At Last: Values Education in Schools. In *Journal of Christian Education*, Vol. 48 (No. 3), December 2005 (pp47-57).
- Hirst, P.H. & Peters, R.S. (1973). *The Logic of Education*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Hume, D. (1999). *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Hume, D. (2000). *A Treatise on Human Nature*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Jaki, S.L. (1983). *Angels, Apes, and Men*. Peru, Illinois: Sherwood Sugden & Co.

James, S. (1999). *Passion and Action: The Emotions in 17th Century Philosophy*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

John Paul II (1981). *Laborem Exercens* (On Human Work). Encyclical of Pope John Paul II issued on September 14, 1981. Online publication retrieved January 2007 from: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/index.htm

John Paul II (1993). *Veritatis Splendor*. Encyclical of Pope John Paul II issued on August 6, 1993. Online publication retrieved July 2002 from: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/index.htm

Kenny, A. (2003). *Action, Emotion and Will* (2nd edition). New York, NY: Routledge.

Kohlberg, L. (1978a). The Cognitive-Developmental Approach to Moral Education. In P. Scharf (Ed.), *Readings in Moral Education* (pp36-51). Minneapolis: Winston Press.

Kohlberg, L. (1978b). The Moral Atmosphere of the School. In P. Scharf (Ed.), *Readings in Moral Education* (pp148-163). Minneapolis: Winston Press.

Kohlberg, L. (1981). From Is to Ought: How to commit the naturalistic fallacy and get away with it in the study of moral development. *In Essays on Moral Development; Vol 1: The Philosophy of Moral Development* (pp101-89). San Francisco: Harper and Row.

LeDoux, J. (1998). *The Emotional Brain: The Mysterious Underpinnings of the Emotional Life*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster.

Livingstone, R. (1960). *On Education: containing 'The Future in Education' and 'Education for a World Adrift'*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Loader, D. (2003). Not Intelligence But Intellectual Character. In *Educare News*, July 2003 (p35). Melbourne: Australian Council for Education Research.

Louth, A. (2004). Theology, Contemplation and the University. In *Studies in Christian Ethics*, Vol. 17 (No. 1), 69-79.

Lyas, C. (1999). Getting Someone to See. In L. Gearon (Ed.), *English Literature, Theology and the Curriculum*. London: Cassell.

MacIntyre, A. (1985). *After Virtue: a Study in Moral Theory*. London: Duckworth.

MacIntyre, A. (1988). *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press.

Mackay, H. (2004). *Right and Wrong: How to Decide for Yourself*. NSW: Hodder Headline Australia.

Mackie, J. (1988). The Subjectivity of Values. In G. Sayer-McCord (Ed.), *Essays on Moral Realism* (pp95-118). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Marías, J. (1967). *History of Philosophy*. New York: Dover Publications.

Maritain, J. (1953). *The Range of Reason*. London: Geoffrey Bles.

Maritain, J. (1967). *The Education of Man: The Educational Philosophy of Jacques Maritain*, (Donald & Idella Gallagher, Eds.). Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.

McDonough, S. (2000). Iris Murdoch's Notion of Attention: Seeing the Moral Life in Teaching. In *Philosophy of Education Society Yearbook 2000* (online publication, pp217-225). Retrieved December 2007 from www.ed.uiuc.edu/EPS/PES-yearbook/2000/stone%2000.pdf

- McDowell, J. (1988). Values and Secondary Qualities. In G. Sayer-McCord (Ed.), *Essays on Moral Realism* (pp166-180). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- McDowell, J. (2001). Virtue and Reason. In *Mind, Value and Reality* (pp50-76). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- McNaughton, D. (1988). *Moral Vision: An Introduction to Ethics*. New York: Basil Blackwell.
- Meilaender, G. (2000). *Working: its Meaning and its Limits (The Ethics of Everyday Life)*. Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press.
- Meilaender, G. (2002). *The Theory and Practice of Virtue*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.
- Murdoch, I. (1971). *The Sovereignty of Good*. New York: Schocken Books.
- Murdoch, I. (1992). *Metaphysics as a Guide to Morals*. London: Chatto & Windus.
- Newell, C. & Rimes, J. (2002). Beyond Pious Platitudes: Values, Spirituality and Curriculum. In S. Pascoe (Ed.), *Values in Education: Australian College of Educators Yearbook 2002* (pp92-102). Canberra: ACE.

- Noddings, N. (1984). *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*. Berkley: University of California Press.
- Nussbaum, M. (1990). The Discernment of Perception: A Aristotelian Conception of Private and Public Rationality. In *Love's Knowledge: Essays on Philosophy and Literature* (pp54-105). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Nussbaum, M. (2003). *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Oakeshott, M. (1983). Learning and Teaching. In R.S. Peters (Ed.), *The Concept of Education* (p156-76). London: Routledge Kegan & Paul.
- Ozolins, J. (2004). On the Deep Purposes of Teaching and Learning. Online paper presented as part of the *Australian Catholic University (Sub-faculty of Philosophy and Theology) Teaching and Learning Symposium: Melbourne, April 2004*. Retrieved Nov 2006 from: <http://dlibrary.acu.edu.au/research/theology/symposium.htm>
- Pascoe, S. (2002). Values in Education: An Overview. In S. Pascoe (Ed.), *Values in Education: Australian College of Educators Yearbook 2002* (pp3-11). Canberra: ACE.

Peters, R.S. (1973). *Reason and Compassion*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Piaget, J. (1968). *Six Psychological Studies* (with an introduction, notes and glossary by David Elkind). New York: Vintage Books.

Pieper, J. (1952). *Leisure the Basis of Culture*. London: Faber & Faber Ltd.

Pieper, J. (1985). *Problems of Modern Faith: Essays and Addresses*. Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press.

Pieper, J. (1989). *Living the Truth*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press.

Plato. (1975). *The Laws*. Translated with an introduction by T.J. Saunders. UK: Penguin Books Ltd.

Plato. (1991). *The Republic of Plato*. Translated with notes and an interpretive essay by Allan Bloom (2nd edition). New York: Basic Books.

Putnam, A. (1992). *Renewing Philosophy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Ratzinger, J. Cardinal. (1996). Truth and Freedom. Online article taken from the *Spiring 1996 issue of "Communio: International Catholic Review"*. Retrieved Dec 2006 from: <http://www.ewtn.com/library/THEOLOGY/TRUEFREE.htm>

Rawls, J. (2001). *Justice as fairness: A Restatement*. (Erin Kelly, ed), Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

Rawls, J. (2005). *Political Liberalism* (2nd ed). New York: Colombia University Press.

Robertson, E. (1998). Aristotle and Robenstine on Moral Education. Online paper in *Philosophy of Education Yearbook* (1998). Retrieved August 2006 from: <http://www.ed.uiuc.edu/EPS/PES-Yearbook/1998/robertson.html>

Rorty, A.O. (1993). The Many Faces of Gibbard's Wise Choices, Apt Feelings. In *Ethics* Vol. 103, Jan. 1993 (pp318-328).

Rorty, R. (1998). *Truth and Progress*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Schumacher, E.F. (1995). *A Guide for the Perplexed*. London, UK: Vintage Books.

Scruton, R. (2007). *Culture Counts: Faith and Feeling in a World Besieged*. New York, NY: Encounter Books.

- Sherman, N. (1999). Character development and Aristotelian virtue. In D. Carr & J. Steutel (Eds.), *Virtue Ethics and Moral Education* (pp35-48). London: Routledge.
- Shields, C. (2005). Aristotle's Psychology. In E.N. Zalta (Ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2005 edition). Retrieved August 2006 from: <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2005/entries/aristotle psychology/>
- Smith, R. (1997). Judgement Day. In R. Smith & P. Standish (Eds.), *Teaching Right from Wrong: Moral Education in the Balance* (pp105-117). London: Trentham Books.
- Smith, R. & Standish, P. (1997). Conclusion. In R. Smith & P. Standish (Eds.), *Teaching Right from Wrong: Moral Education in the Balance* (pp139-147). London: Trentham Books.
- Stephenson, J., King, L., Burman, E. & Cooper, M. (Eds.) (1998). *Values in Education*. New York: Routledge.
- Straughan, R. (1999). Weakness, Wants and the Will. In J.M Halstead & T.H. McLaughlin (Eds.), *Education and Morality* (pp260-269). London: Routledge.

- Sturgeon, N. (1988). Moral Explanations. In G. Sayer-McCord (Ed.), *Essays on Moral Realism* (pp229-255). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Swanton, C. (2003). *Virtue Ethics: A Pluralistic View*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Taylor, C. (1989). *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.
- Taylor, J. S. (1998). *Poetic Knowledge: The Recovery of Education*. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Final Report: Values Education Study* (2003). Melbourne: Curriculum Corporation.
- Vygotsky, L. (1986). *Thought and Language*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Weil, S. (1952). *Gravity and Grace*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- West, R. (2004). An Education That Liberates. In N. Smith (Ed.), *Education and the Ideal: Leading Educators Explore Contemporary Issues in Australian Schooling* (pp203-218). Sydney: New Frontier Publishing.

Willard, D. (2000). How Reason Can Survive the Modern University: The Moral Foundations of Rationality. Online paper for the *American Maritain Association at Notre Dame University*. Retrieved July 2006 from: <http://www.dwillard.org/articles/printable.asp?artid=33>

Williams, B. (1993). *Morality: an Introduction to Ethics*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Winch, C. & Gingell, J. (1999). *Key Concepts in The Philosophy of Education*. London & New York: Routledge.