10.2 The difficult relationship between education and culture: an inevitable and permanent divorce?

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It is not law, but education and custom which make the difference (Taylor, 1973:95)
Aesthetic intolerance can be terribly violent (Bourdieu, 2016:55)

When we talk about the relationship between education and culture we are certainly faced with a permanent debate and a historical problem in Spain and probably in the rest of the world. In this debate, our position from the perspective of ideas, policies and practices will be conditioned by the relationship we establish between, precisely the three concepts that articulate this monograph: truth, ethics and aesthetics.

In this article, we start with the following hypothesis: to a large extent, the rise of populism, nationalism, fundamentalism, domestic violence and post-truth, aspects all of which are based on strategies of fear and which are not exclusive to our times, can be understood as an effect of cultural and educational policies whose method of articulation is responding to outdated paradigms.

First pedagogy and later contemporary sociology have both tried to analyse the issue from different perspectives but both of them agree when they point out that the specific form of the relationship between the two fields gives rise to, and/or is based on, a determined public policy.

Eulalia Bosch in her book Education and Everyday Life introduces us to the debate with this statement: (...) In post-war Spain, general culture, French and piano perfectly defined an education perspective designed to fit the future desired for women who are treated like young girls and conquered by their husbands as an object of representation. (Bosch 2003:35)

If we place ourselves in the current context, we could say that management, English and computer science are the new educational perspective for elegant women as an attractive element at - always intermediate-management levels.

What we want to highlight with this introduction is that our position in the debate could be summed up in a fundamental equation: we defend education as a guarantee of emancipation and participation in cultural life and this implies rethinking the link between education and culture in terms of social inequality, gender issues and other contemporary cultural struggles.

From a sociological perspective, according to Bourdieu (2016), social differentiation has historically been established by the cultural profitability that is produced by the control of economic and cultural capital by certain family environments. At the other extreme, the popular classes, opposed to hegemonic culture, defend their own pragmatic cultural practices, often understood as community service and according to Bourdieu (2016), based on the defence of traditional values as opposed to avant-garde ones. High culture
versus popular culture as the first anathema; modernity and tradition as a matter that particularly affects gender relations and is present, in our view, in all forms of culture.

The welfare societies of the mid-twentieth century allowed the generalization in our country of a middle class that multiplied exponentially the demand for access to this essentially masculine dominant culture with which there was no prior familiarity. This middle class included women as a political subject to a greater or lesser extent. Thus, hope was placed on education systems as guarantors of the social elevator and gender equality. The state school system and the emergence of ministries of culture historically tried to respond to these challenges until the end of the twentieth century but the contemporary crisis of the welfare state stemming from economic and social globalization has once again opened a Pandora’s box creating the need for a review of the educational-cultural debate that is, in the end, an ethical-political debate.

Ministries of Culture and cultural-educational policies: a historical perspective.

Since the end of the eighteenth century, modern nation states have assumed the task of education and culture as a mission clearly aimed at providing access to legitimate culture mainly concreted in fine arts, the creation of the great national museums and the protection of the publishing industry. To this end, the creation of public education systems and universities was promoted.

In the nineteenth century, cultural policy continued to be directly linked to public instruction. The European Romantic movement denounced the cultural bureaucracy of good taste and demanded the incorporation of the people and their popular culture, folklore, in the configuration of new scenarios. The hybridization of different cultural forms and social classes, the growth of the middle class, coupled with the development of the media gave way to a new mass culture whose maximum exponent was propaganda as a method of cultural-educational control effectively used by totalitarian regimes in the first half of the twentieth century.

If we focus on Spain, the first effective attempt at legislative action in the field of education and culture is the Moyano Law of Public Instruction of 1857 (Puelles 1999). In 1879 the first Socialist party was born with an education project based on liberalism and in this period, anarchism also defended its commitment to popular education through Cultural Associations and neighbourhood schools.

In 1900 the first Ministry of Public Instruction was created in Spain and in 1901 Francesc Ferrer founded the Modern School inspired by Rousseau and focusing on children’s contact with nature and culture understood as the social environment: factories and artistic social institutions. In Catalonia in 1915, the Directorate General of Fine Arts was established and Prat de la Riba promoted linguistic normalization, professional and artistic education, teacher training schools and the network of public libraries, museums and heritage or the creation of science and arts academies. Public action in cultural and educational matters was urgent because illiteracy rates were around 50%. (Puelles 1999)

The civil war and Francoism stopped this evolution. Intellectuals and professors had to go into exile or be subjected to ideological purging (Marquès S. Portell R., 2006). Education stopped being an opportunity for social ascent and became a place for indoctrination and the transmission of essential national and religious values: For God and for the fatherland. The Ministry of Public Instruction and Fine Arts was renamed the Ministry of National Education. University (1943) and Education (1945) Laws confirmed the definitive surrender of education to the church and the regime.

Observatorio Cultural del Proyecto Atalaya
In Europe, after the Second World War, states incorporated culture into public policies by still focusing on the management of cultural heritage and fine arts, but also understanding the need to cover the deficit of private social participation at a time of decolonization and the crisis of traditional culture in the context of the establishment of the welfare state. The commitment to culture as a space for participation and freedom, including for the working classes, was intended to curb the seduction of communism.

In this context, as is well known, starting in 1959 in France, the first institutionalized cultural policies were born and with them the first paradigm of the democratization of culture, that of sociocultural animation (Rius 2004) as a trend seeking to start a dialogue between hegemonic cultural realities and those arising from the generalization of the mass media and the serial reproduction of works of art, long since denounced by the Frankfurt school.

In Spain, the long parenthesis of Francoism drew a special picture of this paradigm until the return of democratic governments in the eighties. As in all totalitarian regimes, culture and education played an essential role from a specific form of coordination.

In the educational field, aware that despite everything the strategy for control of the popular classes involved guaranteeing a certain level of literacy that would give access to the labour market, in the year 1959, the regime promoted the Law on Labour Universities but it was permanently confronting a university environment where the few non-exiled intellectuals resisted and, in 1965, led the opposition to the regime when strikes and demonstrations ended with the expulsion of the ethics professor José Luis López Aranguren, among others, followed by the resignation of his disciple José María Valverde, an aesthetics professor, with a famous sentence that summarized the situation in Spain: No ethics without aesthetics.

In 1965, an opening stemming from developmentalism allowed the Rosa Sensat Teacher Training College to be created in Catalonia and in 1970 the General Law of Education or Villar Law was passed, representing a first attempt to modernize the regime’s outdated education structures with the advice of UNESCO technicians.

In the cultural sphere, in 1952 General Franco’s regime pushed for entry to the UNESCO, notwithstanding notable criticisms from the exiled left. The main interest of the Francoist government was to participate in the copyright conference from which the first major convention on this matter arose. The protection of their own literary production in the Spanish language was now the new objective of cultural policies. In parallel, Fine Arts formed a Directorate General of the Ministry of Public Instruction during the whole period including a wide range of cultural offer strategically aimed at the different sectors and essentially in the interests of generating a national identity understood as a cornerstone of education and as a consumer product for tourists. It was not until the return of democracy when the first ever Ministry of Culture was created in Spain (Decree 2258/77 of August 27).

According to Badia and March (2006), in terms of cultural policies, the international trend for the democratization of culture in the Welfare State was followed in Spain between 1985 and 2005, without ensuring however a basic educational policy or relationships with and links to the university. The deployment of regional powers involved a decentralization process that in Catalonia generated the reappearance of the Catalan nationalist narrative, according to these authors based on a (...) “Minimal cultural policy, a cross between neoliberalism and paternalism, based on class and identity criteria.”

Now in the 21st Century, the situation has been characterized by the economic and structural crisis of this welfare state, the commercialization of leisure and the generalization of cultural industries. As a result of past policies, the crisis has revealed new polarized attitudes made evident by xenophobic speeches against immigration, in the reappearance of old nationalist ideas and in individualistic consumerism that drastically affects ways of participating in cultural life. The education systems question themselves and try to find
solutions to the high rates of school failure and dropouts, to the radicalization of their young and a cultural model of coexistence that seems to have expired.

In terms of political paradigms, it would seem according to Miralles (2007:5) that today we are in the so-called Relational State based on cultural democracy as a course to follow in answer to these challenges, together with an integral, skill-based education that should allow the traditional relationship between education and culture to be improved.

To make this possible however, we need to thoroughly analyse the spaces of tension that we have generated between the two most relevant public policies for our survival as a species and as a society.

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Source: Miralles, E. (Xabide, 2007: 5)

**Similarities and differences**

In research carried out to understand these similarities and differences in the specific context of Catalonia, we analysed the prologues of about 200 Education and Culture Laws published by the Spanish and Catalan parliaments between 1980 and 2010 identifying the points of convergence and divergence between them. These results were later contrasted with interviews with 18 international and local experts. All this allowed some conceptual categories to be systematically established to explain the divergence factors.

Bureaucracy and the complexity of the public administration are the first obvious obstacle to effective coordination between the two sectors. This administrative division would not alone explain the distancing or narrowing of the relationship between cultural and education policies but would show a way of understanding their orientation.

In Spain, there was a Ministry of Culture between 1977 and 1996. Between 1996 and 2004 it merged with that of Education (and Sport). After the general election of 2004, a Ministry of Culture was once more created, separate from the Ministry of Education and finally, in the 10th legislature, on December 22, 2011, the Ministry of Culture under this name disappeared and its powers are once again included in the responsibilities of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport.

According to the opinion of the experts interviewed, the underlying problem lay in the political tradition. A tradition that at the beginning of the twentieth century was still linked to philosophy and pedagogy, to culture and education but whose contemporary tendency is to confuse politics with administration and programmes with departments.

Administrative complexity in Spain not only comes from the existence of separate ministries or a Directorate-General for Culture subordinated to the Ministry of Education but also by the territorial organization established in 1978. The Autonomous Communities, the Provincial Councils, the County Councils and the Municipal Councils are the different levels of government with powers in matters of culture and/or education.
The distribution of powers has been the subject of constitutional interpretation and debate at all times, not only between the State and the autonomous regions, but also, more recently, between the State and local governments that have seen big reductions in their powers in the latest Local Bylaw when they are actually the political level that invests the most in culture.

At all administrative levels, the logic is departmental, and the areas are compartmentalized which generates a division of responsibilities, specialized management and an overwhelming disconnect that can be clearly seen in the realization for example, of parallel strategic plans for the cultural and education spheres that ultimately seek to solve the same problems or in the constant refusal to concede grants and subsidies to transversal projects arguing that they are "education" or are "culture".

Other important areas of disagreement have been those generated by the professionalization of cultural management. Training in this field has inherited the administrative division of competences and has refused to consider education as a specific line of work of the cultural manager. The world of education has been seen by cultural managers as a space for rigidly transmitting knowledge that is clearly disconnected from contemporary cultural activity and expressive-creative dynamics.

In the cultural environment, the education system is perceived as a conservative environment by nature, universal and generalist in character, advocating for a homogenizing equality, and which has been moving away from the holistic view of the human being to focus solely on training for insertion into the labour market with more and more debatable results.

In parallel to this, professors and teachers have witnessed how the educational role of cultural spaces has gradually become a commercial offer aimed at the creation of school audiences that make up for the lack of cultural consumption on school days. Perhaps we have the best example of all this in the media and the stereotyped character of news about the world of education that always appears in sections on society and from a negative point of view that focuses on its problems, while culture is reported on in the sections on shows and leisure and has apparent social relevance and recognition.

According to the aforementioned study, the apex of the pyramid of disconnection between the two worlds is located in the university that has gradually renounced its humanist traditions and its commitment to cultural extension to focus on discourses of effectiveness, innovation and the training of professionals, professors and cultural agents, prepared for scientific and technological competitiveness but less and less, to understand the complex world in which we live. Many voices have been raised in the face of this issue. We must note Martha Nussbaum's speech at the University of Antioquia: "(...) If we do not insist on the crucial importance of the humanities and the arts, they will die off, because they do not generate money. They do something that is much more valuable than that, they make a world worth living in, people who are able to see other human beings as whole people, with their own thoughts and feelings that deserve respect and sympathy, and nations that are able to overcome fear and suspicion in favour of comprehensive and reasoned debate"

Last but not least, the study points to two other factors that would explain the divorce between education and culture. The first, the digital revolution, regarded as an opportunity for the world of the arts and as a major problem for the education sector. The second, the implosion of a diverse daily reality in its cultural and expressive forms in classrooms and public spaces where the question of identities had not been resolved. Both of these issues are de facto, intrinsically related and have generated a great change in the cultural paradigm that neither schools nor cultural management know how to deal with yet.
Cultural diversity: the great contemporary challenge for education and culture

The paradigm of cultural diversity is a novelty in the discourse of national cultural policies that have always been reluctant to accept it, perhaps because according to their restricted vision, it is too closely linked to the rights of self-determination and nationalism.

Also, in Europe, cultural diversity has been and continues to be related to conflict and power-related violence. The difference is an aspect that was not considered by the centralist and apparently mono-cultural nation states until the end of the twentieth century, when the situation began to change. As Patricio Rivas points out (Rivas, 2011), 2011 (...) Gradually, the territories of the diverse, which were ominously linked to ethnic issues and the civil rights struggle, began to expand their agents, approaches and plots. A multiple polyphony of diversities erupted: the themes of gender, youth, urban worlds, the re-emergence of local subjects, the environment, biodiversity, new aesthetics, thus giving rise to a shift in the political, intellectual and ethical notions of cultural diversity (...).

Cultural diversity thus brings together as a concept the anathemas of class struggle widened to include contemporary cultural struggles, which include that of gender. Thus, it became a central element in international relations from 1998 and 2001 with the Our Creative Diversity: Report of the World Commission and especially from 2005, the year of the adoption of the UNESCO Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. According to this Convention, the diversity of cultural expressions is today a common heritage of humanity. It is for the human genus, as necessary as biological diversity is for living organisms. It is a development factor in economic terms because it is the foundation of a creative economy and a way of access to a satisfactory existence. (UNESCO, 2005)

As Yúdice points out (2002), establishing that these expressions linked to the potential of the digital world constitute a great economic resource and articulate the strategic sector made up of the cultural and creative industries, has been the trigger for international political reaction. Cultural diversity turns out to be the condition for creativity and innovation for lateral and interdisciplinary ways of thinking that are indispensable in this new economic and social context. It guarantees that original contents are provided to the information and communication industries and adds value to work and research teams. The digital revolution linked to this cultural diversity puts into question the conventional forms of struggle: (...) with the generalization of cultural goods and services, culture loses the presential character that made it historically elitist. The essential core of its business is to transform cultural content, “Symbolic values” into economic value. (Rey, 2009)

Due to this, not much time has passed from the cultural exception proposed by France and Canada in the nineties to the rapid ratification of the 2005 Convention and the international political reaction has been the most significant in the history of global cultural politics.

But understanding the defence of this diversity only from an economic perspective would be a serious mistake that some voices among international agencies have tried to avoid in the process of driving the convention. Integral interpretations of diversity as a principle argue that the political culture of its defence is that which is based on the participation of citizens in the public space. People, beyond their national, ethnic, religious or cultural roots, are members of a political community and voluntarily accept a social link to rights and obligations. This perspective would imply giving up any fundamentalist attitudes that would impose the cultural and moral references of a particular community as obligatory.

All those cultural factors that threaten human dignity cannot be considered as positive in the name of diversity, freedom is established as the freedom of choice and expression of visions and perceptions of the
Towards critical and intercultural art education

Faced with this new reality that school and education today face, critical pedagogy becomes intercultural and advocates significant changes not only in content and in teaching methods and uses (often far from democratic, participatory practices) but also in the educational structure itself that should be based on these diverse cultural identities understood as continuous, individual and collective processes of forming citizens not only in formal education, but also in the non-formal, the informal and ultimately, throughout life. As Edgar Morin points out: (...) We must teach not to put the homelands in opposition to the universal but to concentrately connect our family, regional, national, European homelands and to integrate them into the concrete universe of the Homeland Earth. All cultures have their virtues and experiences, their knowledge, at the same time as their shortcomings and their ignorance. (Morin, E., 2000).

In the discourse on education, like in the discourse on development, we have assumed that the key to this new humanistic training lies in the objective of forming competent, talented people. From a vision that seems to us still somewhat biased, the discourse on educational competences in Europe and Spain relies on the transversality of culture and communication, although it continues to put too much emphasis on digital competences alone.

In our view, digital competence, the knowledge and use of these technologies, is essential for the promotion of cultural diversity without a doubt, but it must always seek complementarity with competences that seem much more vital. Marta Nussbaum (1995) mentions, in particular, two competences that have been included in Education for Development programmes due to their special significance. These are the competences known as “narrative imagination” and “cosmopolitanism”, directly linked to intercultural dialogue and peace-building, an indispensable requirement for the protection of the diversity of cultural expressions.

The narrative imagination is that receptive capacity that allows the acquisition of moral principles and values, a capacity that a child starts to develop from the moment that adults begin to tell him stories through songs, movements, the mother-tongue and symbolic and/or artistic languages. The arts and story-telling generate this ability to recognize oneself in certain characters and recognise others in the emotions, tastes, needs and feelings.

This narrative imagination is undoubtedly what leads to the cosmopolitan ideal, to a commitment to the community of human beings, to the consideration of unity in diversity, basic knowledge of the education of the future as stated by Edgar Morin (2007). Marta Nussbaum (1995) says in this sense, and we share her vision, that those in favour of political and educational nationalism often make a weak concession to cosmopolitanism when in reality a cosmopolitan education allows us to learn more about ourselves, to make progress in solving problems that require international cooperation, to accept that our moral obligations with the rest of the world are real and to develop solid and coherent arguments based on the distinctions that we are prepared to defend. “If we fail to educate children so that they can cross borders with their minds and imaginations, we will tacitly give them the message that we do not really believe what we are saying to them”. (Nussbaum, Cohen 1996:22-26).
Pragmatic, and therefore complicated, issues stem from competence-based education that require us to address the integration of diversity in school curricula in accordance with social contexts, the review of educational teaching materials under contemporary cultural paradigms (gender, environment, etc.), the involvement of artists and creators in the formative processes, the consideration of cultural heritage as a great educational resource, the training of teachers and cultural managers prepared for this transversality, the creation of participatory audiences, the education of critical consumers, in short, the formation of cultural citizens for the 21st Century.

For Reflection

It is precisely from this new vision of what it means to educate today that it is necessary to demand political and social commitment from the culture sector. Participation in cultural life is a fundamental right recognised in the ICESCR and increasingly legally articulated by United Nations-led reports and documents and special rapporteurs for cultural rights. Among them, General Comment N° 21 (CESCR 2009) specified back then that this participation can be summed up not only as the opportunity to choose or to access, but in particular, to contribute.

To facilitate this contribution to cultural life, cultural managers and policies will have to focus on this development of abilities and skills, on facilitating the effective practice of theatre, music, dance, poetry, the arts in general. It is not a question of turning cultural centres into educational centres but of establishing alliances between them to allow the exchange of professionals and the effective public use of physical and virtual spaces as well as effective participation of all citizens in the programming and decision-making of schools and cultural centres.

There are more and more projects that are innovative in this sense and they include artistic residencies in schools, tandems between cultural and educational centres or a move towards the combined role of artist-teacher to renew methods of teaching and learning. Especially noteworthy are courses in movement, dance and the performing arts, with little or no presence until today in school curricula and yet in high demand as key skills nowadays.

In the field of music and visual arts, even though their presence in schools had achieved some acceptable levels before the last educational reform of the LOMCE, the direct link between the professional artistic world and critical pedagogy guarantees a new approach that puts the emphasis on the possibility of collective artistic work (school orchestras, community art etc.) where aesthetics and ethics are linked.

By way of conclusion, it is urgent that we accept the challenge of education in cultural policies and management and the challenge of aesthetic and cultural training in educational institutions, being aware of the emancipatory potential or, as we indicated at the beginning, the potential for indoctrinating, this alliance may have. To this end, cultural and educational agents should clearly specify in their ethical codes the principles underlying their actions and which in our view cannot be other than democracy and peaceful coexistence based on the aesthetic and intercultural dialogue that the arts and culture make possible.

References


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CESCR. (2009) Observación general nº 21 Derecho de toda persona a participar en la vida cultural. Ginebra 2


