

individual freedom. Indeed there are strong grounds for arguing that the most clearly liberal political organisation in South Africa in the mid-twentieth century was the African National Congress. This is reflected in the Bill of Rights of 1945, calling for, among other things, one man, one vote, equal justice, freedom of residence and movement and the removal of discrimination against blacks.(16) Strong liberal tendencies are also reflected, perhaps more controversially so in the light of its socialist element, in the Freedom Charter of 1955, which calls for liberty, justice, equal rights and opportunities, and the removal of 'distinction of colour, race, sex or belief'.(17) The socialist principles in the Charter, focussing on the redistribution of ownership of wealth and land, and the ANC's move towards more radical methods than those favoured by most white liberals in the late 1940s and early 1950s, illustrates the variations of which liberal ideas are capable, as expressions in particular contexts of the fundamental principle of individual freedom.

To sum up the central points I want to make in the light of these brief observations, firstly, the liberal tradition in South Africa since at least 1948 defines itself partly by means of its opposition to the apartheid policies of the Nationalist Government. Secondly, it is characteristic of the liberal tradition in this context that it expresses, as part of this oppositional role, certain principles like that of equality, a rejection of racist discrimination, and the defence of certain rights. Such expressions of liberal principles may take

different forms, and it could be argued that some organizations have offered more defensible versions of the liberal point of view than others. But these two general characteristics remain applicable to and definitive of the liberal tradition in South Africa.

3

Let us now examine the examples cited by the radical critics of works in the liberal tradition. In doing so I shall raise the question of the extent to which the examples below fit the criticisms, and criteria, of the liberal tradition of studies of education in South Africa, made by the radical critics. I shall focus in this section on the first three criticisms listed above, which I am taking as radical criteria of the liberal tradition. The fourth criticism will be considered in section 4 below. In addition I will raise the question of whether the works cited match the further two criteria of the liberal tradition in South Africa, which I have added to those suggested by the radical critics. To recapitulate, the five criteria in question are: first, that 'liberal' studies neglect black education; second, that they are descriptive and lacking in critique; third, that they fail to see education in the context of society as a whole. To these three radical criteria, which I have agreed to accept for the sake of argument, I add the following criteria of liberalism in the South African context: fourth, that liberalism plays an oppositional role; and fifth, that it sets out to defend liberal principles, e.g. that of equality.

(1) Coetzee and Rupert

While J. C. Coetzee's collection Onderwys in Suid-Afrika 1652-1960 may well be one of the standard texts on education, examination of this book and of Coetzee's own background make it quite clear that we do not have here a liberal text. While Onderwys in Suid-Afrika 1652-1960, firstly, as Kallaway points out, devotes only 20 per cent of its text to black education, secondly is indeed descriptive and lacks analysis and critique, and thirdly fails to relate education with other features of South African society, this should not be seen to establish that it is liberal in character.

Clear evidence of this is the implicit endorsement, in the book, of the Christian National Education Policy(18) and Coetzee's own role as both an author and a vigorous defender of the Policy. The C.N.E. Policy is more appropriately described as reactionary, rather than either liberal or conservative. I argued in Chapter 4 that conservatism is most appropriately described as a view which values present institutions and traditions for their continuity with the past, and favours innovation rather than change. I am going to take as reactionary a position which, while it may share with the conservative a valuing of present institutions and traditions and of continuity with the past, is opposed to both change and innovation. The best historical example of a reactionary is Metternich, the Austrian statesman who, after the defeat of Napoleon, pursued policies which tried to 'turn the clock back' to pre-revolutionary Europe. It may be

that in South Africa there is a stronger tradition of reaction than of conservatism among whites, but I will not pursue this possible line of argument here. Instead I want to suggest that the C.N.E. Policy as a reactionary document endorses certain traditional ideas which favour white domination and racial segregation, and is opposed to changes in traditional structures which could threaten them.

These themes emerge in the C.N.E. Policy in the following ways:

- (a) Education must be in accordance with the life and world view of the Afrikaner, i.e. it must be Christian and National. This appeal to traditional values and the categorical rejection of any departure from them hardly sounds like a liberal view of education.
- (b) The teaching of various subjects must be conducted according to this view of education. For example, 'history must be taught in the light of the divine revelation and must be seen as the fulfilment of God's decree ... for the world and humanity'. This closed conception of the nature of knowledge is reflected in the article dealing with higher education: 'instruction and practice in the secular sciences must proceed from the Christian life and world view: in no single science may the light of God's truth be lacking'. There is no suggestion here of any liberal concern for freedom of ideas.

- (c) The teacher 'should be a man of Christian life and world view, without which he is nothing less than the most deadly danger', and must be trained in accordance with this view. These ideas are opposed to the tolerance or freedom of ideas which are associated with expressions of a liberal outlook.
- (d) The reactionary position which underpins the Policy is reflected in the statement 'We believe that the authority must ... see to it that the education which is given to adults is not damaging or dangerous to the State'.
- (e) While the principle of segregated schooling, of English and Afrikaans-speaking children as well as of black and white, is not necessarily indicative of either reaction or conservatism (there is a strong segregationist streak in the liberal tradition in South Africa), (19) it should with respect to the former be interpreted in association with the dogmatic prescription of preserving a single 'life and world view'. And the racial segregation in question is explicitly one of paternalistic trusteeship over blacks, whose education 'should not occur to the cost of white education', i.e. should be financed by the communities concerned, with the implication that equality of provision is not an aim.

R. M. Rupert's position is not as clearly reactionary as Coetzee's but it is quite apparent from reading The Educational

System in Southern Africa that this 'descriptive' and 'exploratory' work, as Ruperti describes it, is no liberal text either. Ruperti's heavy emphasis on 'culture' smacks strongly of the notion of life and world view espoused in the C.N.E. Policy.

The ground motive or spiritual force is the driving power behind all thought and action of an individual or a community. All cultural advance, including the development of an education system, takes place under the guidance of a ground motive which is the primary determinant of the nature and direction as well as the degree and rate of cultural unfolding ... We can talk of a Christian, Mohammedan, Buddhist or other ground motive or the ground motive behind rationalism, empiricism, pragmatism, existentialism, communism and other philosophies of life which raise man or an aspect of his being (human reason, human experience, human society etc) to an absolute position as the centre of all things.(20)

This implicit rejection of liberalism, among other things, is made more explicit where Ruperti argues that 'the confluence of cultures in an all-embracing world-wide oecumenical culture, as propagated by international liberal thought in our time, exaggerates the relative importance of cultural integration and emphasises it at the cost of differentiation and continuity'.(21)

Apart from Ruperti's tendency towards a reactionary stance and her explicit rejection of liberal ideas, she satisfies the three radical criteria of the 'liberal' tradition. Firstly, little space is devoted to black education. Secondly, the book is descriptive (it is expressly intended to be so) and lacking in analysis and critique. Thirdly, education is not seen as interrelated with other features of South African society. At no stage in the book does Ruperti hint at the possibility that all is not well in schooling in South Africa. She implicitly

endorses the status quo by refusing to see it as problematic in anything but an organisational sense. This is reflected in her naive 'descriptive' view of the State, e.g. where she writes

As a cultural community (a group sharing more or less the same culture) develops, so various societal relationships, such as state, church and school, come into separate being. Their functioning is interwoven; but each has its own separate characteristic duty to perform. It must not only fulfil its own duty, but must refrain from attempting to fulfil that of another. Each has its own field of competence in which it can and must operate and it may not trespass on another's sphere of competence....(22)

While Ruperti thus meets the three radical criteria of the 'liberal' tradition, she cannot be described as part of this tradition if she also rejects liberal thought. In this respect she does not match the fifth criterion which I have suggested is indicative of a liberal position. Nor does she meet the fourth criterion I suggested as essential to liberal ideas in the South African context - its oppositional nature. That this is so reinforces my doubts about the adequacy of the three radical criteria, which do not enable us to distinguish between the liberal and either reactionary or conservative traditions.

Kallaway mentions both Coetzee and Ruperti as 'standard texts on the history of South African education', (23) but he does so ambiguously, in association with a critique of 'liberal writers' on the history of South African education. That Kallaway does this reinforces the impression that, although he would probably not label Coetzee and Ruperti as 'liberal', he does not find the characterisation of liberal texts on South African education to be problematic.

(ii) Pells

The following significant passages from Three Hundred Years of Education in South Africa raise severe doubts as to whether E. G. Pells can be described as part of the liberal tradition of studies of education in South Africa.

Starting with the Bushmen:

Living in caves along the lower slopes of the mountains was one of the most primitive peoples in the world. Their language consisted of a few clicks and clucks, rarely mastered by Europeans. They were utterly hostile and implacable. They stole, pillaged and killed at every opportunity. In consequence the colonists were compelled to seek them out in their mountain fastnesses and shoot them on sight, man, woman and child.(24)

On the Bantu, Pells observes,

The White man's contact with the strong-willed, physically powerful, proud, yet essentially simple-minded Bantu has been for him an education in itself.(25)

And further

In spite of the fact that the Bantu is unsuited by nature and custom to unremitting toil, his contact with European civilisation has steadily increased his wants. To satisfy these wants he has learned to submit himself to six months' labour underground, or to do the White man's ranch and farm chores.(26)

There is much that could be said about this last passage in particular. Pells appears to be ignorant of the factors which forced blacks into mine or farm labour. But most strikingly, there is little suggestion of liberalism in the attitudes which Pells expresses on the subject of the Bushmen and the Bantu.

Here are none of the liberal tendencies one might expect, like a concern for the dignity and rights of human beings, regardless of race, or of tolerance and a willingness to see things from the point of view of people different from oneself. And on the specific issue of 'Native Education', to which Pells devotes the final chapter of the book, there are also clear indications of an attitude to blacks which can hardly be described as liberal. Pells sees the vast majority of blacks as ruled by superstition and witchcraft and 'deficient in the higher ethical sanctions and moral standards associated with civilised religions'.(27) He sees it as essential that the Bantu be taught the essential elements of civilisation, 'if they are not to be an ever-present menace to society'.(28)

If Native education is to have a vocational bias, then the boys must be taught cookery, housewifery, and laundry-work, for many of them will go into domestic service in home or hotel, while the girls should be instructed in field and animal husbandry, for they remain in the kraals and till the fields!(sic)

Maybe the missionaries were right and what is best for the Bantu is a schooling in higher ethical standards, a finer morality and better manners. In addition he should be given a knowledge of hygiene and a knowledge of how to use his leisure in organised sports and games and social gatherings. Above all he must be taught that while civilisation affords amenities and privileges, it demands a sense of duty and a spirit of service and responsibility.(29)

To be fair to Pells, such illiberal remarks about the 'child-like Native'(30) are tempered by a concern that education should be extended to as many blacks as possible, and a feeling that not enough concern had been shown by the authorities for black education. He is strongly critical of the way in which the Act

of Union sub-divided native education by allocating it to the provincial councils, enabling the Union Government to wash its hands of native education. Discussing the state of black education in 1940, Pells is clearly shocked at the small proportion of black children in school, at the quality of work done by those who were attending school, and at the high drop-out rate. While he notes an increase in expenditure from 1935, he comments that 'stagnation remains the keynote in Native education'.

The position by 1940 was that one in every 1 000 Native children received a fair elementary education! Native education was therefore failing to make the Native literate. Nor can it succeed until a far greater sum is made available for Native education. The annual expenditure on the education of white children, 354 000 in number, during 1939-40 was £6 500 000 per annum; on that of 283 000 Native children it was £600 000 per annum! These figures give eloquent testimony to the fact that the mass of Natives in South Africa were not being educated.(31)

Pells's critical remarks on the provision and financing of black education, while convincing on their own, must be interpreted in the context of his overall views on blacks and their education. On this score we have no grounds for ascribing to him liberal views. His central concern appears to be that unless they are educated - and by this he means a vocational education allied with schooling in the values he associates with 'white civilisation' - the blacks will remain a threat to the prevailing order. This is surely the view of a conservative. I would not describe Pells's views as reactionary, on the grounds that there are features of schooling as traditionally provided for blacks which he regards as requiring improvement. While Pells may

satisfy the three radical criticisms of the 'liberal' tradition, his failure to meet the further criteria which I have suggested, the oppositional criterion and especially that of expressing liberal principles, must raise severe doubts as to the accuracy of describing Three Hundred Years of Education in South Africa as a liberal text.

(iii) Behr and Macmillan

A. L. Behr and R. G. Macmillan's Education in South Africa(32) and Behr's New Perspectives in South African Education are works which fit most closely the criticisms of Kallaway and Crewe, outlined above.

The treatment of education in these books is accurately described as descriptive and lacking in analysis and critique, the emphasis being on giving an account of the administration, organisational structures, provision and extension of education, as well as on curricula. Careful attention is paid to various pieces of legislation.

The lack of analysis and critique is indeed striking. Even the most controversial topics are treated with an apparent attempt to avoid critical comment which is startling. For example, Behr devotes 1½ pages to the unrest in black schools in 1976. Little attempt is made to analyse the causes of black resistance to Bantu Education, beyond the suggestion that 'urban Africans' regarded the system of Bantu Education 'as being inferior to that of other groups'.(33) Behr observes that there were 'legitimate

complaints' concerning problems of finance, pupil-teacher ratios, overcrowding, low qualifications among teachers and lack of equipment in schools. But he suggests that the dissatisfaction 'would seem to be largely politically motivated'(34) and is careful to point out that not only was it the case that both curricula and syllabuses and the pattern of education had developed 'on lines similar to those for Whites', but also that 'steps were being taken to alleviate the position within the framework of available and potential resources'.(35) By avoiding elaboration on his allusion to political motivation Behr is guilty of the failure to appreciate that education is not an issue to be seen as separate from other features of a society.

Another striking example of the apparent attempt to remain detached in the face of controversy is the discussion in Behr and Macmillan, in their chapter on university education, of the establishment of racially segregated universities. Referring to the Separate University Education Bill, tabled in 1957, Macmillan writes

There was considerable reaction to the Bill, it being felt that the autonomy of the universities and the academic independence of university staff would be seriously threatened.(my emphasis)(36)

Macmillan is careful not to offer stronger critical comment here, which is striking, bearing in mind that as an academic involved in these issues he must hold informed opinions on the matter. He comments as follows on the black universities and the Acts of 1969 establishing most of them:

It is the view of a number of educationists that these Acts are premature, and that the institutions should have been given more time to evolve and develop. However, they are now being put to the test and it is of the utmost importance to the non-White peoples and to the country as a whole that they should succeed.(37)

Macmillan fails to offer the kind of critical comment one would expect of a genuinely liberal writer in discussing the principle of racially segregated universities:

The policy of separate ethnic university colleges is consistent with South African practice in the field of English-Afrikaans relationships. Here a policy of two-stream or racial grouping has been followed for over fifty years with separate universities, on the basis of the medium of instruction used, as part of the pattern. In the new university colleges, the languages used are Afrikaans and English whichever is better understood. As yet the language of the particular group (in the case of the Bantu) is not used as a medium of instruction.(38)

Macmillan is less detached in his expression of concern at the problem of the first year failure rate in South African universities. This tendency to express critical concern where the issue in question is not so clearly politically contentious can be seen in the following examples:

The status of the Director of Education has repercussions upon the teaching profession. It is of the utmost importance that Directors be given the power, rank and salary commensurate with the vital office they hold. This is not the case in South Africa as yet.(39)

Commenting on primary education:

The primary school has tended to gravitate in the shadows of the intellectualism of the nineteenth century, and instruction has been too much on the traditional lines of class teaching.(40)

And:

An unsatisfactory development in recent years has been the fact that our primary schools have been denuded of graduate teachers.(41)

Yet again, by contrast, when it comes to more controversial issues, the authors abandon their critical stance. Commenting on racial segregation in Transvaal schools after the turn of the century, they observe that in response to the presence of black and coloured children in white schools the School Boards 'were guided by a clear directive from the Director of Education in 1910, in which he stated that "in emphasising the need for educating White children and coloured children in separate schools, the principle of social segregation is carried out and it is a principle that no one has challenged"'.(42)

Behr and Macmillan do indeed commit all three of the 'liberal' errors suggested by the radical critics. Firstly, in Behr and Macmillan only one chapter in twelve (albeit a long chapter) is devoted to black education. And it must be observed that although, as Kallaway points out, Behr devotes 20% of his book to black education, the emphasis is still strongly on white education. Secondly, their work is lacking in analysis and avoids critique. It will be noted here that while the radicals criticise 'liberal' work for lacking critique I have evaluated Behr and Macmillan in terms of whether they offer critical comment. I will take up this distinction later. Thirdly, interrelations between education and other aspects of South African society are not considered. Yet once again, I must point

out that this is insufficient to establish that the work in question is of a liberal nature. There is little indication of an oppositional stance (where this might be in order the authors avoid it) and there is no attempt to annunciate those liberal principles which a liberal author would find pertinent in handling the issues in question.

(iv) Rose and Tunmer

Both Christie and Collins, and Crewe, cite Brian Rose and Raymond Tunmer's Documents in South African Education(43) as in the 'liberal' category. Perhaps it could be said that this collection of documents, with some editorial comment, commits the first of the three 'liberal' errors criticised by the radicals by devoting just over a quarter of the book to black education, albeit in the longest chapter in the book. On the second of the radical criticisms, the position is less clear-cut, in that the editors do offer some analysis, e.g. of the development of the C.N.E. movement and its central ideas,(44) and in so far as attention is paid to critical responses to, for example, the C.N.E. Policy. On the third radical criticism, there are stronger grounds for attributing to Rose and Tunmer the failure to see interrelations between education and other features of South African society. This could also be said to be reflected in the selection of material and the atomistic way in which the editors arrange their material, e.g. treating 'African Education' as a separate issue from, say, 'Religion and Education'. There are, however, no clear-cut grounds for attributing to this work

the further two criteria of the liberal tradition which I have suggested, namely its oppositional nature and its defence of liberal principles.

Rose's Education in South Africa offers what Kallaway calls a 'more balanced presentation' in terms of attention paid to black education (as well as generally matching the other two radical criteria). But that this is so raises the very problem of classifying works in education as 'liberal' or not on the basis of their emphasis on white education at the expense of black education. One is left asking the question: If it is a common feature of 'liberal' studies of education in South Africa that they neglect black education, how can two books, one which neglects black education, and another which gives to it a great deal more attention, be classified together as part of the same paradigm? Here we see the confusion surrounding the identification of what is liberal which arises from the assumption that the meaning of the term is given and uncontroversial. The complexities multiply on examination of a further example from this alleged paradigm, E. G. Malherbe.

(v) Malherbe

In his Education in South Africa, a wide-ranging and detailed study of education in South Africa, Malherbe is more inclined than the other authors in question to take a stand which is critical of official policies, particularly more recent ones. He is uncompromisingly critical of many aspects of educational

policy since 1948, although his criticisms are by no means confined to the post-1948 period. The Broederbond and the C.N.E. Policy in particular come in for criticism as acting against the best interests of education. In his introduction to the first volume he makes the following clearly liberal comment:

In general, it may be said of South Africa that whenever a particular system of education did not recognise the people's ingrained love of liberty, their deep religious sense, and their desire for self-government, it was doomed to failure,(45)

Discussing the period of Batavian rule at the Cape from 1803 to 1806, Malherbe expresses approval for the liberal policies of De Mist. Discussing the subsequent period of English rule, he is critical of inefficient bureaucratic control, and of attempts to Anglicise the Dutch.

Owing ... to the total disregard of the language of the majority of the people and to the injudicious tamperings with local institutions and ways by a tactless and injudicious Government, this period saw the unfortunate beginnings of an antagonism towards English rule and the English language which has retarded the progress in general, and that of education in particular, of the two white races in South Africa up to very recent times; and many of the educational problems that emerged subsequently can be traced to this very period.(46)

This theme of language and medium of instruction is one of Malherbe's greatest concerns. The theme of national unity, meaning unity between English and Afrikaans-speaking (white) South Africans receives a lot of attention in the second volume, where he discusses 'the school as an arena for fighting out the nationalistic struggle for cultural survival on the part of the Afrikaans-speaking section of the population'.(47)

In this connection he criticises in the strongest terms moves away from dual-medium education, which he sees as essential to the development of unity between English and Afrikaans-speakers. Malherbe acknowledges in volume one that he has confined his attention mainly to white education 'and mentioned Native Education only in passing'.(48) Here we appear to have one of the flaws of work in the 'liberal' paradigm. Yet, again, to accept this criticism as appropriate in discussion of Malherbe's work leaves the position far from clear. For I have pointed out that the critics are not unambiguous in their use of this feature as a criterion of 'liberal' studies.

Can we classify Malherbe as located in the 'liberal' tradition, in the light of the above features of his book, and the criteria in question? As far as the first radical criterion is concerned, it seems clear that Malherbe follows the alleged liberal formula by paying little attention to black education. (I have raised doubts about the viability of this criterion of the liberal tradition.) Malherbe deviates from the second radical criterion by offering considerable critical comment of several aspects of official policy, at the same time appearing to satisfy the fourth, oppositional criterion which I have suggested as necessary to the liberal tradition in South Africa. But the limited nature of Malherbe's oppositional stance, which is restricted to the language issue, the role of the Broederbond and C.N.E. Policy, and a concern for national unity among whites is of some consequence for the applicability of my fifth criterion. There is a lack of expression of liberal principles like

equality, with regard to black education, which according to the fifth criterion is a prerequisite for a liberal position. Concerning the third radical criterion of the 'liberal' tradition, here indeed Malherbe does match the radical formulation, in that he does not treat education as interrelated with other features of South African society. But, apart from satisfying this criterion, the accuracy of locating Malherbe's work in the liberal tradition is, at least, controversial.

(vi) Horrell

Muriel Horrell's work for the South African Institute of Race Relations has been an invaluable source of information for scholars of black education in South Africa. Examination of African Education: Some Origins and Development until 1953, A Decade of Bantu Education, Bantu Education to 1968 and The Education of the Coloured Community in South Africa 1652 to 1970, (49) reveals certain features which, I will argue, make her work clearly classifiable as liberal, unlike the other examples discussed above.

On the question of the first characteristic of 'liberal' studies suggested by the radicals, that the emphasis in 'liberal' studies has been on white education while black education has been neglected, we have in Horrell a clear exception. Her work is specifically on black, and in one book coloured, education.

Concerning the second of the suggested features of liberal studies, Horrell does offer a great deal of descriptive information, e.g. on enrolment, expenditure and pass rates. Yet this descriptive content does not appear in the absence of critical comment. Unlike the other 'liberals', Horrell's critical opposition to Bantu Education in both principle and application emerges clearly and forcefully. This can be seen in the following examples.

Horrell gives a detailed account of critical responses, at the time, to the publication of the Report of the Eiselen Commission. This account focusses on the National Conference called by the SAIRR in 1952 to study the Report, as well as a variety of arguments opposed to the findings of the Eiselen Commission. These arguments emphasised that blacks were 'an integral part of South African society', and that 'since every child is the inheritor of world culture to the full extent of mankind's present attainments, he should have access to this common cultural heritage'.(50) Horrell is unambiguously critical of segregated schooling for blacks, and reports the strong opposition of the National Conference to the proposed abolition of missionary control over black schools.(51)

In dealing with the Bantu Education Act of 1953 Horrell notes expressions of dissatisfaction by a number of bodies, particularly to the method of financing black education. In addition Horrell pays careful attention to increased disturbances at black schools after 1953,(52) attributing this to both the

introduction of Bantu Education and to 'the mounting spirit of unrest among Africans in South Africa'. Her account includes discussion of ANC-organised boycotts in 1955, expulsions, boycotts and riots at schools during 1960 at the time of the State of Emergency, and demonstrations, closures of schools and expulsions in 1961, 1962 and 1963.

Horrell gives detailed accounts(53) of opposition and protests, again from a wide variety of quarters, to the Separate University Education Bill, introduced in 1957, and of reaction to the University College of Fort Hare Transfer Act (1959) and the Extension of University Education Act of 1959. These protests rested on a rejection of separate universities for different racial groups and on a defence of university autonomy against government interference. Repercussions at Fort Hare are also recounted, including dismissals and resignations of staff, student protests and demonstrations, non-readmission of students, and stringent regulations affecting student activities.

On the question of coloured education, Horrell cites evidence presented by the SAIRR to the Botha Commission in 1953 against the establishment of a separate Coloured Education Department. Reactions are described,(54) again from a number of bodies, to the Coloured Persons' Education Act of 1963, vesting control of Coloured Education in the Department of Coloured Affairs. Attention is also given(55) to student unrest at the University College of the Western Cape in the 1960s.

We can see so far, in Horrell's studies, a considerable departure from the first two features of 'liberal' studies suggested by the radical critics. Firstly, she is specifically concerned with black education, and secondly her work is quite clearly critical of government policies. Before taking up the question of whether it is amenable to the third radical criticism (and here the issues are more complex), we ought to take note of how Horrell's work is clearly liberal in the two senses which I have added as necessary to the liberal tradition.

Horrell's treatment of black education in South Africa, in its critical stance against government policies, satisfies the criterion of being oppositional. And there is no doubt that Horrell expresses her criticisms of official policies from a point of view which rests on certain basic liberal principles. Some of these principles have already appeared, explicitly or implicitly, in the above account of Horrell's studies. These include the principle of equality in the financing of the education of all South African children, the defence of the principle of university autonomy, and the implicit attempt to see the issue from the point of view of those on whom Bantu Education was imposed. This latter feature emerges clearly in the following passages:

The Government ... has introduced increased separation in regard to political representation, places of residence, the provision of amenities and employment; has introduced race classification and job reservation; and has placed numerous deterrents in the way of inter-racial contact. Africans have been offered many new opportunities of advancement in their own areas, but their rights and

freedoms in the "White" areas have been very considerably curtailed.(my emphasis)(56)

Most Africans, and a large proportion of the White population, are opposed to this concept of "apartheid" or "separate development", and, accordingly, object to a system of African education which has been developed within and for the promotion of such a concept. The system is based on the belief that Africans and Whites are inherently different and can never live together in peace. Very many people challenge this belief and are in any case convinced that the Government's policy is impossible of achievement.(57)

The integrationist theme reflected here is repeated elsewhere:

Many considered that ... South Africa should aim at unity and eventual equality in its rich diversity. Economic integration was a reality that must be accepted ... Political rights and opportunities at the level of central government must eventually be available equally to all citizens, for if not the system would inevitably be discriminatory.(my emphasis)(58)

This emphasis on the principles of rights, freedom, and equality of opportunity is a clear pointer to a liberal position. Based on these principles are Horrell's objections to the failure to consult black leaders and organisations about proposed changes in educational policy, and to the assumption of sole centralised control over black education by the Department of Bantu Education, with vast powers vested in the Minister.(59)

It is not only the centralised control of schools that is resented on many sides, but also the very strict regulations introduced for the control of teachers and students. Those with any independence of mind feel that their intellectual freedom is inhibited.(my emphasis)(60)

In the light of Horrell's critical opposition to Bantu Education, from the point of view of basic liberal principles, it is both simplistic and an injustice to lump her work together with the

other examples of so-called 'liberal' studies cited by the radicals. But I have not yet taken up with reference to Horrell the radicals' third claim and criterion of 'liberal' studies of education in South Africa, namely that the superficiality in analysis in 'liberal' studies has resulted in a failure to see education as interrelated with other features of South African society. Here I must concede to the radicals that this criticism of Horrell is largely correct. Although she is more aware than any of the other so-called liberals of the interrelationship between politics and education, (61) she does not offer the depth of analysis which she could have had she taken into account the central interrelationship which has been the subject of analysis aided by Marxist concepts, i.e. that between education and political economy. It can be said, referring back to the related second radical criterion, that while Horrell offers criticism she fails to offer critique, in the sense of analysis using sophisticated tools of explanation. But one must be careful not to make too much of this concession. Horrell, after all, belonged to an earlier generation of opponents of Bantu Education and the system of which it has been a fundamental part. Furthermore, while critical work by liberals in the sixties may have been superficial in that it lacked the analytical tools now more popularly available, it does not follow that liberal analysis must necessarily be critically superficial and lacking in analytical depth. Nor, to reiterate the inadequacy of the radical criteria of 'liberal' studies, is lack of critique a definitive feature of liberal studies, since it is also a feature of the reactionary studies typified in the work of Coetzee and

possibly also of Rupert, as well as the conservative work of Pells and Behr and Macmillan.

To sum up my argument in this section, I have shown that the radical view that the dominant tradition in studies of education in South Africa has been a liberal one is open to question on several grounds. These are that many of the examples of 'liberal' texts cited by the radicals are to some degree conservative and even reactionary, rather than liberal, and that the criteria indicated in criticism of the 'liberal' tradition are not only incomplete, but also fail to match the supposed examples of 'liberal' works as closely as one would expect. I turn now to a further radical criticism of the 'liberal' tradition, of a different order to those already considered.

4

While the radical criticisms of the 'liberal' tradition considered so far have been directed at its underlying presuppositions and formal features, we turn now to a criticism directed at the alleged content of studies in the 'liberal' tradition. This focusses on a suggested overemphasis on the part of the 'liberals' on the significance of the coming to power of the National Party in 1948 and an associated tendency to regard the introduction of Bantu Education in 1954 as a dramatically retrogressive development. This criticism could be seen as a symptom rather than a criterion of the 'liberal' view, exhibiting the error pointed to by the radicals in their third criterion of

the 'liberal' tradition, i.e. that it fails to see education as interrelated with other features of South African society.

The radical argument in question is summed up by Kallaway:

The state policy of Bantu Education was not an "irrational" interlude in South African politics, as it is often presented in liberal literature, but a reflection of the state's attempt to secure the appropriate conditions for the reproduction of capital in general at a particular phase of South Africa's political development under the hegemony of Afrikaner Nationalist ideology in the 1950s and 1960s.(62)

This argument receives a more detailed treatment by Collins and Christie in two papers already mentioned above. In 'Black Schooling in South Africa: Notes Towards a Reinterpretation of the Schooling of the Indigenous Peoples in South Africa', Collins argues that:

In its most succinct form, the liberal history of African schooling sees the main event in such schools as being the introduction of the Bantu Education Act of 1953. In that year, it is alleged, the Nationalist government introduced this apartheid measure whereby Africans would be forced backwards into the tribal entities and into menial vocational education for the purposes of control and oppression, thus contradicting the integrationist and liberal/academic tenure of the previous owners of the African schools, namely the English-speaking missionaries.(63)

Preferring to apply the radical paradigm to the history of indigenous schooling in South Africa before 1953, Collins argues that Bantu Education should not be seen as constituting a radical break from missionary schooling, but rather as part of the continuing process of labour production, under different control. Summing up his argument in concluding his paper, he writes:

The Bantu Education Act of 1953 was not a radical deviation from the enlightened liberal policies of the preceding generations, the pattern, changing according to the particular character of the ruling elites, in essence remains the same. Indigenous peoples are schooled to discipline them and make them better workers in the lower unskilled and semi-skilled jobs. A generalised academic schooling is given at a mainly rudimentary level; anything more would generate "cheeky Kaffirs" with rising expectations that go beyond their station in life and society. Vocational schooling is mainly manual labour but increasingly becomes more sophisticated as manpower needs increase but only insofar as these improvements do not conflict with the work possibilities of the white colonists. And although the missionaries do not always agree with these policies, the effects of what they did were largely consonant with the interests of the colonists.(64)

In their paper 'Bantu Education: Apartheid Ideology or Labour Reproduction?', Christie and Collins develop this argument further, concentrating their analysis on changing labour requirements from the 1950s, and emphasising continuities between the period before and after 1948.

Analysing what they see as the liberal view, that from 1948 the new ideology of Bantu Education was introduced as part of the policy of apartheid, Christie and Collins attribute to 'liberal' historians the following view:

On the one side is the Nationalist Party who represent, in the main, the Afrikaner people. Because of their frontier background, they are not only isolationist but also racially prejudiced against the blacks. The view that they have of themselves is that of a pure race which needs to maintain its purity by racial segregation. The policy of apartheid is geared towards establishing their own identity and removing other groups either geographically or culturally from themselves. To that effect, they need to control other groups. A reinforcing mechanism to the apartheid creed is the Calvinist religion in its most severe form, adding the divine touch of predestination of the Chosen People to Afrikaner cultural identity.

With such a creed functioning, the liberal analysis goes, it is not surprising that the control of black schooling would be viewed as a main purveyor of ideology wherein, it is argued, the blacks would be taught not merely the value of their own tribal cultures but that such cultures were of a lower order and that, in general, the blacks should learn how to prepare themselves for a realistic place in white dominated society, namely (at that point in time) to be "hewers of wood and carriers of water". To this purpose, the Nationalist government set out what was allegedly the greatest piece of ideological manipulation of the young since Hitler.(65)

The authors go on to suggest that, according to the liberal account, English-speakers in general, and particularly English-speaking missionaries, opposed the introduction of Bantu Education. Christie and Collins attribute to teachers in the mission schools an integrationist view of society which emphasised the principles of equality of opportunity and treatment. According to the 'liberal' view of Bantu Education, they allege, the conflict around the Bantu Education Act was between apartheid followers, for whom Bantu Education was education for subservience in a white dominated society, and the liberal integrationist ideal, which included the principle of equality of opportunity.

Instead of subscribing to the view they attribute to the 'liberals', i.e. that racism explains white oppression of blacks, Christie and Collins want to emphasise that blacks are oppressed because they are needed as 'non-competitive cheap labour'. In terms of a class analysis the real contradiction is between white capitalists and black proletariat. The central continuing feature in black schooling is that it 'is in the main for the purpose of reproducing a certain kind of labour, as required by

the particular form taken by the accumulation process at a particular time'.(66)

While arguing that 'in content and style' there are not significant differences between missionary education prior to 1953 and Bantu Education, Christie and Collins do note the following differences which did occur: new centralised methods of control, new financing and curricula, and an emphasis on primary schooling, and rural schooling in the homelands to move people out of urban areas, creating an élite in the homelands. Frank Molteno, also arguing that 'liberal' histories mistakenly see Bantu Education as a completely new system, makes a similar argument:

In brief the changes involved greatly increased numbers of black children in school although with minimal additional expenditure, removal of the black schools from church and other non-state hands and the centralisation of control in Pretoria, more rigid regimentation of the teachers, revision of the syllabi, and reorganisation of the schools on a fully sectionalist or 'tribal' basis.(67)

Now although all these changes look far-reaching to me, I accept the general point that the underlying purpose of black schooling did not undergo a change after 1953, i.e. it continued to serve the needs of capital for certain kinds of labour. And I accept the argument that new patterns emerged at this time to advance the same purpose, and that the reason for these changes is not simply racist ideology. And it must be acknowledged that, to some extent, what is 'significant' depends on one's location with reference to both Marxist and liberal starting points. But this is not my main concern. My quarrel is not with the positive

features of the account of black schooling in South Africa which Christie and Collins develop - I acknowledge its strength - but with their account of the 'liberal view' which they wish to discredit. My interest is in whether this attack on 'liberal studies' is successful, and how much further enlightened we now are on the question of the characterisation of the 'liberal' view which the radicals wish to attack.

If anything the issue of the nature of the 'liberal' position is now more confused than ever. A large part of the problem is the failure of the radicals to link their arguments convincingly to their sources. In his contribution to this argument, Kallaway offers no specific references, so we must assume that he has in mind those 'liberal' histories which he cites elsewhere (see section 2 above). Given the difficulties which I have exposed about which of these are indeed liberal texts (see section 3 above), we are left with only one example which in any way resembles the kind of study under attack from Kallaway. The example in question is that of Robert C. Jones's paper in Rose's Education in Southern Africa, entitled 'The Education of the Bantu in South Africa'. There is evidence that Jones does indeed see the year 1948 as of considerable, though not unqualified,(68) significance for black education in South Africa. But I do not find here the argument attributed to the 'liberals' that missionary education was considerably different, more enlightened and simply better than Bantu Education. Indeed, Jones is critical of missionary education, and includes a long quotation(69) exposing the inadequacies of this system. Jones

does offer a survey of the history of the Afrikaners which echoes some of the themes of the 'liberal' histories suggested by Christie and Collins, such as isolation and the frontier, racial prejudice and the spirit of Calvinism. But my point is that neither Jones nor, to greater but varying degrees, do any of the other studies cited by Kallaway, match the argument described in the 'liberal' account.

In his earlier paper Collins cites only the example of Pells in his discussion of the 'liberal' history of black schooling. But I do not find the argument which he appears to attribute to Pells in Pells's book. This is not altogether surprising, considering that Pells published Three Hundred Years of Education in South Africa in 1954, the year of the introduction of Bantu Education. In giving their account of the 'liberal view' Christie and Collins, too, offer no specific references in describing the 'liberal' reaction to the introduction of Bantu Education, although they include Rose and Tunmer, and Horrell, in their bibliography. But I do not find, on reading Rose and Tunmer, the 'liberal' view on the significance of 1948 outlined here. Nor do I find it in the work by Horrell to which Christie and Collins refer, Bantu Education to 1968. Nor, indeed, is it present in Horrell's A Decade of Bantu Education. There could therefore be grounds for suggesting that Christie and Collins have, in their account of the 'liberal' view, set up an Aunt Sally. Such grounds would be strengthened by noting the critical comments made of missionary education by Horrell in African Education: Some Origins and Development until 1953. These include comment

on low standards, inadequate accommodation and equipment lack of teaching materials, irregular attendance, the low pay, overloading and inadequate supply of teachers, many of whom were unqualified or underqualified, a curriculum which was 'bookish and unpractical', small government grants, a high drop-out rate, poor control and organisation, and interdenominational rivalry. Horrell does add that there were exceptions, like Lovedale. And not only does she point to the inadequacies of the mission schools; on the subject of the new system of Bantu Education introduced in 1954 she makes some positive comments in addition to her objections. For example, she suggests that the expansion in numbers from 1953 to 1962 'represents a very considerable achievement', (70) that new primary and secondary syllabuses 'are generally considered to be an improvement on the previous ones', (71) and comments favourably on the introduction of school boards and committees. (72) In the light of these considerations it comes as a surprise that this work is not mentioned by Christie and Collins, as it deals with precisely the topic so central to their account of the 'liberal' view of the introduction of Bantu Education.

I suggest that, instead of being based on examination of the types of text in question, the radical argument here rests heavily on the particular use of the term 'liberal' in several well known papers by radical historians (73) which attack 'liberal' history of South Africa in general, as against 'liberal' studies of education. The argument thus relies for its account of the supposed liberal view in the history of education

in South Africa on the general radical literature attacking 'liberal' history, centrally as exemplified in the Oxford History of South Africa.⁽⁷⁴⁾ The question not considered is whether it is correct to assume that because, during a certain period, the dominant tradition in history in South Africa was a 'liberal' one, the same is the case in studies of education. Of course I do not entertain the assumption that history and history of education are distinct and separate fields. That is not the point. My observation here is that the radicals have taken a particular critical argument from a certain context and applied it to another object of interest, without considering the extent of its applicability. They have assumed that a ready transfer can be made before checking the subject and its central texts as carefully as they ought.

5

In addition to exposing the inadequacies of the radical attack on the supposed liberal tradition in studies of education in South Africa, I have shown, by considering the criticisms and criteria offered of the 'liberal' tradition by the radical critics as well as the additional criteria which I have suggested, that of the central examples they cite only Muriel Horrell can be uncontroversially classified as a liberal writer. In the light of this to suggest that the dominant tradition in studies of education in South Africa is a liberal one is simply wrong. I hasten to add that, considering the history of schooling in South Africa and the continuing crisis which it faces, I share the

radicals' disquiet at the general quality of academic studies of education in this country. But I am concerned, in the light of the mistaken view which radicals in theory of education hold of the nature of liberal ideas, that the relevance of such ideas will be missed.

Considering the history of schooling in South Africa, especially black schooling, it is clear from the liberal point of view that the principle of individual freedom has not been one which has informed either schooling policies and their application in this country or most of the studies of the subject. In Chapters 6 and 7 I will sketch the formal features of a liberal notion of education, but we can observe here several ways in which black schooling has clearly been at odds with liberal principles. Taking into account the very criticisms offered by the radicals of black schooling, it emerges that what is fundamentally wrong is that it has, firstly, been directed towards the supply of cheap labour, secondly that it has been rigidly controlled, and thirdly it has received proportionately less funding than white education. These three features reflect an absence of concern for individual freedom and for the associated principle of equality.

By holding a mistaken notion of the nature and relevance of liberal ideas we may miss their centrality to some crucial elements in the enterprise of theory of education. Considering questions like the aims of education (as against schooling), or what sort of education we ought to envisage for a future South

African society, calls for consideration of issues of principle, like freedom and equality, of the kind to which liberalism draws our attention. They cannot sensibly be excluded from either a characterization of liberalism or from the study of education. The radicals ought to reconsider the relevance of genuinely liberal ideas to the study of education in South Africa.

Notes

- (1) See, for example, Harris, (1979 and 1980) op. cit.; Matthews, op. cit.; Sharp, op. cit.
- (2) Kallaway, op. cit.
- (3) Africa Perspective, (1980) op. cit., p. 2.
- (4) Ibid.
- (5) Kallaway, op. cit., p.3. Texts referred to here are: E. G. Pells, Three Hundred Years of Education in South Africa (1954); R. M. Rupert, The Educational System in Southern Africa (1976); J. C. Coetzee, Onderwys in Suid-Afrika 1652-1960 (1963); A. L. Behr New Perspectives in South African Education (1978); Brian Rose (ed.), Education in Southern Africa (1970).
- (6) Kallaway, op. cit., p. 4.
- (7) While Crewe does not use the word 'liberal' she is concerned in this paper to criticise the English-medium university education departments, which are commonly described as 'liberal'. Johan Graaf and Michael Lawrence in their paper 'Twice Upon a Kenton: Methodological Reflections on the Liberal-Radical Education Debate' (1982), p. 30, discuss Crewe's paper as 'an analysis of Liberal theory in South African education'.
- (8) 'Why Can't the English?' (1981), p. 139.
- (9) Ibid. The South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) is an independent organization which aims to promote inter-racial understanding. It has played a major role in monitoring the effects of apartheid on the lives of South Africans.
- (10) 'Black Schooling in South Africa: Notes Towards a Reinterpretation of the Schooling of the Indigenous Peoples' (1980).

- (11) 'Bantu Education: Apartheid Ideology or Labour Reproduction?' (1982).
- (12) Kallaway's further comments on the 'dominant tradition of educational research' on pages 4 and 5 can be seen as elaboration on the second and third points of criticism here. Kallaway suggests that this tradition 'seldom, if ever, raises fundamental questions about what schools are for, whose interests they serve, what kinds of knowledge or skills they reproduce or what their relationship is to the labour market', that its work is invariably 'written from a standpoint internal to the policy-making process itself', sharing its assumptions, that it equates the provision of education with the expansion of schooling, ignoring the elements of historical struggle and conflict. I have no quarrel with these comments on the dominant tradition in general, although I would question the accuracy of Kallaway's comments on R. S. Peters.
- (13) Liberalism in South Africa, 1948-1963 (1971), pp. 15-16.
- (14) Ibid., p. 45. Paul Rich makes a similar point in White Power and the Liberal Conscience: Racial Segregation and South African Liberalism 1921-60 (1984), p. 123, where he suggests that 'liberal political discourse from Union was increasingly defined by the alternative ideological concept of white settler segregationism'.
- (15) See Robertson, op. cit., pp. 110-117.
- (16) Ibid., p. 31.
- (17) Reprinted in Eli Weinberg, Portrait of a People (1981), pp. 122-124. Although, as Tom Lodge points out in Black Politics in South Africa Since 1945 (1983), p. 72, some liberals saw the Charter as the outcome of communist conspiracy by the Congress of Democrats, liberal principles do emerge clearly in the document
- (18) Instituut vir Christelike-Nasionale Onderwys (1948); reprinted in Brian Rose and Raymond Tunmer (eds.), Documents in South African Education (1975), pp. 120-128.
- (19) For example C. T. Loram.
- (20) Rupert, op. cit., p. 5.
- (21) Ibid., p. 8.
- (22) Ibid., p. 3.
- (23) Kallaway, op. cit., p. 3.
- (24) Pells, op. cit., p. 6.
- (25) Ibid.

- (26) Ibid., p. 136.
- (27) Ibid., p. 149.
- (28) Ibid., p. 152.
- (29) Ibid., p. 151.
- (30) Ibid., p. 152.
- (31) Ibid., p. 140.
- (32) A. L. Behr and R. G. Macmillan (eds.), Education in South Africa (1971).
- (33) Behr, op. cit., p. 265.
- (34) Ibid.
- (35) Ibid.
- (36) Behr and Macmillan, op. cit., p. 238.
- (37) Ibid., p. 241.
- (38) Ibid., p. 242.
- (39) Ibid., p. 29.
- (40) Ibid., p. 143.
- (41) Ibid.
- (42) Ibid., p. 387.
- (43) Rose and Tunmer, op. cit.
- (44) See Rose and Tunmer, op. cit., Section Two.
- (45) Education in South Africa, Vol. I (1925), p. 8.
- (46) Ibid., p. 69.
- (47) Ibid., Vol. II (1976), p. 55.
- (48) Ibid., Vol. I, p. 458.
- (49) African Education: Some Origins and Development until 1953 (1963); A Decade of Bantu Education (1964); Bantu Education to 1968 (1968); The Education of the Coloured Community in South Africa 1652 to 1970 (1970).
- (50) Horrell, (1964) op. cit., p. 7.
- (51) Ibid., p. 10.
- (52) Ibid., p. 104.

- (53) Horrell, (1964) op. cit., pp. 152-169; (1968) op. cit., pp. 16-19, 130-132.
- (54) By the United Party and Natives' Representatives in Parliament, the open universities, the National Union of South African Students, the SAIRR, the Christian Council of South Africa, the National Council of Women, and the Black Sash.
- (55) Horrell, (1970) op. cit., p. 160.
- (56) Horrell, (1964) op. cit., p. 192.
- (57) Ibid.
- (58) Horrell, (1968) op. cit., pp. 136-137.
- (59) Horrell, (1964) op. cit., p. 194.
- (60) Ibid., p. 195.
- (61) Horrell emphasises (1964, p. 187) that 'One cannot appreciate the significance of developments in African education unless these are viewed against the political background of the time'. Compare this with Behr's comment, revealing in its naivety, that dissatisfaction leading to the Soweto riots of 1976 'would seem to be politically motivated'.
- (62) Kallaway, op. cit., p. 18.
- (63) Collins, op. cit., p. 5.
- (64) Ibid., p. 15.
- (65) Christie and Collins, op. cit., p. 59.
- (66) Ibid., p. 74.
- (67) 'The Schooling of Black South Africans: An Historical Overview' (1980), p. 25.
- (68) See Rose. op. cit., p. 41.
- (69) Ibid., p. 50.
- (70) Horrell, (1964) op. cit., p. 199.
- (71) Ibid., p. 200.
- (72) Ibid., p. 203.
- (73) M. Legassick, 'South Africa: Capital Accumulation and Violence' (1974), p. 253; D. O'Meara, 'Class and Nationalism in African Resistance: Secondary Industrialization and the Development of a Mass Movement in

South Africa 1930-50' (1973); H. Wolpe, 'Capitalism and Cheap Labor Power in South Africa: from Segregation to Apartheid' (1971), p. 425.

- (74) Monica Wilson and Leonard Thompson (eds.), Oxford History of South Africa (Vol. I 1969, Vol. II 1971).

CHAPTER 6

P. S. WILSON AND JOHN WHITE AS LIBERAL PHILOSOPHERS OF EDUCATION

1

The previous two chapters have set out to illustrate the failure of radical critics to use the word 'liberal' accurately. In Chapter 4 it was demonstrated that Hirst and Peters, who are taken by radical critics to represent 'liberal philosophy of education', are more appropriately described, in respect of the notion of education which they hold, to be conservative. Chapter 5, in turn, showed that the dominant tradition in studies of education in South Africa is not accurately described as a liberal one. The task undertaken in these two chapters was essentially a negative one, in that both chapters set out to expose the inadequacies of radical attempts to characterise 'liberal' theory of education. The present chapter takes a more positive turn towards a defence of a liberal notion of education, as the foundation for a defence of liberal theory of education. As a contrast with the conservative notion of education which I have attributed to Hirst and Peters, I will show in section 2 that the radicals would do better to choose P. S. Wilson and John White's ideas as reflecting a liberal view of education. Then, taking the positions of Wilson and White as my starting point, I

will begin in section 3 with the task of offering a systematic sketch of the liberal notion of education which I see as underlying liberal theory of education. This will comprise an analysis of what is implied by the liberal emphasis on freedom in the context of education. This will be followed up in Chapter 7 with a corresponding analysis of what is implied by the notion of the individual whose freedom is the concern of a liberal view of education.

2

In maintaining that P. S. Wilson and John White are better examples of liberal philosophers of education than Hirst and Peters, my argument will show, firstly, that Wilson and White's ideas reflect far more clearly the central feature of the liberal point of view, namely its concern for the freedom of the individual. Secondly, I will show that, far from endorsing the status quo, Wilson and particularly White escape some of the accusations which the radical critics level against Hirst and Peters, by opening the way for education with potential revolutionary consequences. These arguments as a whole will point to the superficiality inherent in the idea that 'APE' is a united school of thought, whose content and tone are exemplified in the ideas of Hirst and Peters.

The fundamental feature of Hirst and Peters's position on which I wish to focus in drawing a contrast between their ideas and those of Wilson and White is the idea that education should be seen as

initiating pupils into worthwhile activities, identified in terms of public traditions and modes of understanding, which I have suggested indicates conservative rather than liberal leanings. Certain activities or disciplines are seen as intrinsically valuable, regardless of whether the individual sees any point in engaging in them. Wilson's view of education strongly opposes this. In Interest and Discipline in Education Wilson considers the question of why children should have to go to school. The main thrust of the book is summed up in the argument:

Only, I think, to the extent that school is educative, or in other words to the extent that it helps children to engage in intrinsically valued pursuits, can we reasonably say that it is right that they should have to go there.(1)

These intrinsically valued pursuits are those valued for their intrinsic worth by the child herself. For Wilson the interests of the individual child are the starting point and central consideration for determining whether schooling is educative and thus whether there could be grounds for arguing that children should have to go to school. These interests Wilson describes as the child's 'capacity ... to find intrinsic value in the circumstances of living, and his inclination to pursue or seek such value in terms of finding and understanding and of activity which seems appropriate to its practical point'.(2)

Education, on this account, comprises whatever helps the pupil to develop the capacity to value, and encouragement to pursue whatever it is that is valued. This argument leads to a different account of the role of the teacher from that offered by

Hirst and Peters. The teacher can no longer be seen as one who initiates pupils into traditions and modes of understanding, of which she has a much better grasp. We recall here that the radicals are upset by what they see as Hirst's allowing for the teacher to impose her own particular understanding on the pupil, whose ideas are seen to be inferior to those of the teacher. Wilson must surely escape this criticism by giving to the teacher the role of helping the pupil to discover what interests her, of responding to the interests of the pupil and helping her to develop those interests. The teacher helps the child to explore what interests her, and to pursue her interests in the light of resources available for doing so.

... the only way of engendering interest in anything is through helping the child to see something of its significance ... the most that a teacher can do, I think [to develop an interest in something], is to try to communicate his view of what is interesting in an intelligible way. In a sense it must be interest itself which engenders and arouses interest, but it only does so if one can somehow show to others what it is that seems interesting.(3)

Wilson's defence of interests as the starting point in pursuing what is worthwhile and in understanding the notion of education reflects quite clearly a classical liberal position. The individual herself chooses to pursue what she finds pleasurable or worthwhile, on the basis of her interests. And just as Bentham provided for moderation where the individual's pursuit of pleasure may cause pain to another, Wilson qualifies his argument that the interests of the individual child are the educational grounds for selecting what she should do, by pointing out that 'teachers have a duty, too, to consider whether or not a

particular interest is undesirable on other grounds, such as its being very probably dangerous, or being morally obnoxious'.(4) And besides this liberal provision to curtail the individual's freedom to pursue her interests when they threaten harm to herself or others, we should note the more fundamental feature which makes Wilson's argument here a liberal argument. This is quite simply that Wilson's theory reflects a concern that the individual be allowed to exercise freedom to discover what interests her. This concern for the freedom of the individual, while not absent from the views of Hirst and Peters, is not in evidence in their views on this fundamental issue of which activities the child ought to engage in when we are talking about her education.

It should be noted, however, that Wilson has more sympathy for Peters's argument on this issue than he has for Hirst's. In his account of Peters's position Wilson writes:

It is, he says, because some activities rather than others best exemplify or most explicitly embody disciplined, rational enquiry, that we should place these activities compulsorily at the centre of the curriculum for all. The very fact that we are concerned to give good reasons for a curriculum is itself the best possible reason for getting pupils going on those theoretical pursuits such as science and history in which the different forms of disciplined thought can be seen (by us, at least) in their most highly developed state.(5)

Wilson's response to Peters's defence of certain curriculum activities as exemplifying rational thinking is to agree with Peters

that a more or less disciplined understanding of whatever a pupil is engaged in is an essential part of what we mean by the educativeness of a situation. His argument, as I see it, is not that children need to be forced to "study science", for example, because then they will get to think rationally. Rather, it seems to me, he is saying that "studying science" is one of the things which we mean by "thinking rationally".(6)

But although Wilson suggests that the degree of difference between Peters's ideas and his own is not clear, and implies that it is not a very dramatic one, particularly if both he and Peters are making a logical point about compulsion, for our purposes there is a difference of some significance. For Wilson, it does not really make a difference whether we call what the child does history or science, or whatever. If the child is studying anything seriously then he is already attempting to be rational about it. He does not need to study it first in order to learn to be rational. 'What is of fundamental importance educationally is whether or not his enquiries (whatever they are) are being engaged in for their intrinsic interest. What makes his curriculum educationally worthwhile is not the presence on it of any particular school subject, but the presence in it of serious thought about whatever he is doing.'(7) Wilson resists the idea that certain particular kinds of activities rather than others best exemplify what it is to be engaged in rational enquiry. The contrast between Wilson and Peters on this issue can be viewed in terms of different theories of morality. Peters sees the criteria for worthwhileness as necessarily interpersonal, and this reminds us of his conservative leanings, with their emphasis on traditions and institutions which embody what is worthwhile in a community. But for Wilson, with his emphasis on the individual

discovering what is worthwhile, the criteria of worthwhileness are individual. This makes for problems, which I will raise later, in Wilson's position, but the point I am concerned to make at this stage is that Wilson's notion of education, by contrast with that of Peters, is a liberal notion, emphasising individual choice of activities, rather than initiation into activities deemed worthwhile by others.

What the individual child is going to find worth thinking seriously about cannot be reliably predicted unless the teacher is prepared to take an interest in the pursuits in which the child is practically involved. For Wilson, therefore, there are no grounds for determining in advance of this what activities are educationally worthwhile.

In terms of my characterization of liberalism in Chapter 2, Wilson expresses the central characteristic of the liberal point of view by defending individual freedom. I have made a distinction between the central enduring characteristic of liberalism and the particular, varying expressions of the liberal point of view, depending on the context, which determine what is seen at a particular time as a threat to individual freedom. In his specific application of the central characteristic of individual freedom Wilson defends freedom of choice of activities based on interests. He argues against what he sees as threats to individual freedom posed, not by autocratic kings, as with Locke, or the tyranny of the majority, as with Mill, but by a particular kind of social science and its influence on contemporary

attitudes to schooling. Wilson's consideration of the relevance of notions of needs and control to the justification of compulsory schooling illustrate this. In opposing attempts by psychologists and sociologists to justify compelling children to go to school on grounds of individual or societal needs, rather than the child's interests, Wilson argues with evident passion against 'the kind of educational guidance which is supposed to become available to teachers through the empirical study of individuals and society'.(8) He sees in the rise of positivist social science, particularly Behaviourism, the danger that schooling will be taken over by social scientific manipulators. This perception of the manipulative potentialities of contemporary social science as the central threat to individual freedom in schooling also emerges in the contrast which Wilson draws between discipline and control. Wilson regards discipline as a form of order achieved for the sake of values which are intrinsic to an activity, and as necessary for the activity to retain its interest. The notion of control by contrast, favoured by theorists under the influence of Behaviourism, Wilson associates with manipulating the child so as to control her behaviour where the child's seeing the intrinsic worth of an activity is irrelevant. Perceiving the issue of order in schools in terms of control rather than discipline is a threat to individual liberty and to educative teaching.

Because, for Wilson, there are no grounds for determining what activities are worthwhile in advance of taking an interest in the pursuits in which a child is practically involved, he has no

sympathy for Hirst's theory of forms and fields of knowledge. Wilson suggests that in practice it is the interests of teachers in particular fields which determines their content. The practical grounds for the interest of these fields are more often particular academic traditions and examination requirements than the practical grounds of the pupils.

To the extent that the child is "thinking seriously" at all ... then it seems to me that it is logically unavoidable that his thinking will come increasingly to take conceptually distinct "forms". But these categorial or conceptually distinct "forms", increasingly explicit in disciplined ways of thinking or "forms of thought", are not somehow paradigmatically embodied in "school subjects" or in "fields of knowledge" as these are found in school curricula.(9)

Instead of being concerned chiefly with the academic tradition in which she sees herself as working, the teacher should, according to Wilson, recognize that 'The pupil's thinking, too, has a tradition, and, unless the teacher begins his instructive communication with the pupil in a language and in relation to experiences and activities which already the pupil understands something the point of, then no conceptual development and no development of interest will result directly from the encounter'.(10) We recall how Hirst, in developing his account of 'liberal education', rejects the idea of education based on, among other things, the 'predilections of pupils'. Wilson's criticisms of a view of education based on respect for the interests of the individual child mark his position as far more clearly liberal than that of Hirst.

None of this is intended to suggest that Wilson's theory is itself unproblematic. A problem is the nature and origin of what the child finds to be of interest. One way of casting this problem is to point to the apparent irrationality of Wilson's individual criterion of worthwhileness. Wilson appeals to R. M. Hare at times, and just as choice of moral principles and thus moral arguments themselves are on Hare's account ultimately irrational,(11) so too on Wilson's account the interests an individual may discover and the activities she chooses to pursue on the basis of these interests, are not open to argument. No person can object to what another finds to be of interest, other than on grounds of possible harm to herself or others.

Another approach to this problem is that offered by the notion of ideology. What an individual finds of interest could be said, particularly in the absence of an account by Wilson of its origin, to be ideologically determined, in which case interest cannot be rock bottom, but merely the expression of a particular ideology. But these problems are not central here to my argument that in Wilson we have a philosopher of education who is more accurately described as liberal than Hirst or Peters. John White is another such example.

In Towards a Compulsory Curriculum White argues a case for a minimum set of achievements which should be expected of pupils leaving school, and so for a basic compulsory curriculum. While this is clearly a position which conflicts with that of P. S. Wilson discussed above,(12) and at first glance it may

seem puzzling that I should describe both as examples of liberal thinkers on education, I will show how, albeit with some differences, White, like Wilson, gives expression to the basic principles of the liberal point of view. I have already pointed out that there can be considerable variation between different particular expressions of the liberal point of view, and that it is the presence of its central distinguishing feature, of concern for the freedom of the individual, which characterizes the liberal point of view.

In developing his argument for a basic compulsory curriculum White adopts two principles which locate his argument within the liberal tradition. The first is a statement, with qualification, of the general principle of liberty. Affirming that the principle of liberty is essential to any rational morality, White accepts that infringements of liberty are prima facie morally unjustifiable, but only prima facie so, as there may be overriding considerations to the application of the principle of liberty. On the question of the kinds of considerations which might justify an interference with liberty, White, expressing as does Wilson the classical qualification of the principle of liberty, argues that 'it would be right to constrain a child to learn such and such only if (a) he is likely to be harmed if he does not do so, or (b) other people are likely to be harmed'.(13) Children's liberty, therefore, could justifiably be overridden, for example by constraining them to reach a minimum set of achievements on leaving school, in their own interests. The second basic liberal principle which White adopts is that

unless overriding reasons can be produced, under some special circumstances, a rational educational system must act in the interests of the individual pupil.

That White makes these liberal moves in preparing the ground for his defence of a compulsory curriculum is clearly significant for my argument. These moves, which are underpinned by the view that freedom is valuable in itself, stand in clear contrast to the starting point adopted by Hirst and Peters, that it is on the basis of certain worthwhile activities, identified in terms of public traditions and modes of understanding, that we should determine what children should do in schools.

Moving on to the problem of identifying what the pupil's good is, and rejecting Peters's 'transcendental' argument in favour of certain activities as intrinsically good or worthwhile, White considers the argument in favour of the superior value of the arts and sciences, which suggests that an objective of education is to initiate children into the 'higher culture' represented by the arts and sciences, committing children to them as essential features of a civilized way of life. In response White adopts the objection which argues that such an approach, which sees teachers as 'initiating' and 'committing' children to this 'higher culture' involves imposing the teacher's values on the pupil. This interference with a pupil's liberty is morally wrong. Here White echoes to some extent Wilson's view. White defends the argument that while teachers should not try to commit pupils to such pursuits, there are some pursuits to which pupils

should be introduced. He suggests, making a significant distinction, which distances his position from those of both Peters and Wilson, that 'If it cannot be shown that science and art are intrinsically valuable for everyone, it still remains possible that they are educationally so'.(my emphasis)(14) The starting point for curriculum planning should not be accounts of what individuals ought to find intrinsically valuable, as no valid arguments of this kind have yet been produced. Apart from moral considerations, we do not know what a child will eventually find to be intrinsically valuable. While doubts can be raised as to whether an individual can know what is her intrinsic good with certainty, it does not follow that others have grounds for claiming to know this better than does the individual in question. If the individual has as broad as possible an acquaintance with the various things she might want and has reflected over a period of time on priorities among these things she is in what White calls the 'ideal situation', having some grounds for arguing that the things she chooses are the most intrinsically worthwhile. In terms of educational guidelines for action this does not mean that if a child does not want to learn about something we should not teach her. To do this would make it harder for her to reach the 'ideal situation'.

Non-interference, therefore, may well harm the child, by restricting his options. The least harmful course we can follow is to equip him, as far as possible, for the ideal situation - to let him determine himself what the Good shall be for him. To do this, we must ensure (a) that he knows about as many activities or ways of life as possible which he may want to choose for their own sake, and (b) that he is able to reflect on priorities among them from the point of view not only of the present moment but as far

as possible of his life as a whole. We are justified, therefore, in restricting his liberty as far as is necessary to ensure (a) and (b): we are right to make him unfree now so as to give him as much autonomy as possible later on.(15)

White proceeds to offer guidelines to help in determining a basic minimum of knowledge and understanding which the child should acquire while at school. The first guideline which White suggests is that we should enlarge as much as possible the child's knowledge of the things she may in the future want for their own sake. The curriculum designed for this purpose would enable the child to acquire, firstly, knowledge of particular types of activity. On the basis of the principle of liberty, and the argument that this principle may sometimes be justifiably overridden, in the case of activities which are unintelligible without engagement in them by the child, for example mathematics and philosophy, the pupil must be compelled to engage in such activities. But compulsion is not justified in the case of activities an understanding of which is possible without their being engaged in by the pupil, for example cookery and cricket. Secondly, the child should be enabled to acquire an understanding of different ways of life and different grounding principles in terms of which people may conduct their lives, instead of accepting unreflectively the dominant way of life into which schools tend to socialize children. Enabling the child to acquire these types of knowledge would both increase her freedom to choose activities later on and develop in her a moral sensitivity to the interests of others.

The second guideline which White offers on the basis of this alternative view of the Good for man is that the child should be encouraged to reflect on the things he might want 'not only from the point of view of the present moment but also in order to establish some kind of long-term priorities of his own among them', (16) by means, for example, of careers information and learning about socio-economic matters.

Compulsion, then, is only justified in so far as it increases the freedom, in the long term, of the individual child. Although White argues for a degree of compulsion it is, paradoxically, an argument in favour of restricting the freedom of the individual at one stage in her life on the grounds that this will lead to greater subsequent freedom, freedom being the fundamental principle. Wilson, on the other hand, has a different sort of notion of compulsion from White's fairly straightforward recommendation. Wilson envisages a kind of logical compulsion analogous with the compulsion to do something that is morally right, saying that whether we should compel children to go to school depends on 'the moral compulsion implicit in their own interest in the school activities themselves'. (17) This notion of compulsion, what kind it is, and what its justification is, is rather obscure. Peters, by contrast, has a notion of compulsion deriving from what he sees as our own concern to give reasons for a curriculum, but he is also concerned, like White, to make a straightforward (although different) prescription for compulsion. White's argument for compulsion, like that of Wilson, is not grounded in the assumption that children should be

compelled to do what others regard as worthwhile, regardless of their own assessment, now or later. White also argues the case for developing and encouraging voluntary activities where children are free to pursue activities as they wish. So while White and Wilson are not in agreement on the kind of compulsion appropriate in education, both are aware of the value of children being encouraged to exercise freedom in pursuing what they as individuals find interesting. Thus in spite of differences between them, and a degree of agreement between Wilson and Peters, it is clear that White and Wilson embrace the basic principles of liberalism in such a way as to make them far more clear-cut examples of liberal philosophers of education than Hirst and Peters.

White's liberal themes are extended in The Aims of Education Restated, where he reaffirms his liberal position by emphasising the importance as an aim of education of the personal well-being of the pupil, for whom the Good is identified in terms of post-reflective desire-satisfaction:

It is a popular thesis of contemporary philosophy that the individual's good consists in the satisfaction of those desires which, on reflection, he prefers to be satisfied, given a full understanding of all possible options ... Educationally this generates the aim of equipping the pupil to work out what he prefers to do, e.g. by providing him with an understanding of different ends-in-themselves and seeing that he develops the disposition to make reflective and therefore autonomous choices.(18)

This capacity for reflection will enable the individual to build up a life-plan, which will be periodically revised. White proceeds to argue for a hierarchy of educational aims,

subordinating pupil-centred aims to the aim of moral autonomy, and economic aims to both of these. Beginning at the lower end of this hierarchy, White shows how the pupil-centred aim and the economic aim are in conflict. Firstly, they require different kinds of knowledge and understanding; while the pupil-centred aim requires broad understanding of both ends and means, the economic requires what is necessary in particular jobs only. Secondly, while the pupil-centred aim encourages a reflective disposition, the economic promotes obedience to authority. Thirdly, the pupil-centered aim, unlike the economic, requires internalisation and acceptance of the aim by the pupil.

He cannot become an autonomous planner of his own life without coming, perhaps gradually, to know that this is what his educators are aiming at for him, and without accepting it as what he wants. But this is not at all necessary to the economic aim. That the pupil knows and accepts the aim of maintaining and improving the economy is not a part of the aim itself: it is enough that he is equipped for and has the approved attitudes towards a job in a particular sector of the economy ... it may well indeed be counter-productive to let him in on the aims of his education.(19)

The only way to reconcile these two conflicting aims is to make the economic aim subordinate to the aim of personal well-being for the pupil. I need not emphasise here White's reaffirmation of the principle of liberty, that the freedom of the individual is more important than the economic aims which threaten the application of the liberal principle. It will be clear that in taking this view White expresses the central abiding characteristic of the liberal position. In his particular expression of this central principle, White perceives the freedom of the individual to be threatened by those who wish the aims of

schooling in Britain to be determined by the demands of employers for what they perceive to be appropriate skills and attitudes in the workforce.(20) The historical context in which this threat to individual freedom is posed is that of Britain in the 1960s and 1970s, with the prevailing obsession with the health of the economy.

White's emphasis on pupil-centred aims should not be seen as an endorsement of egoistic individualism. White argues that moral autonomy is the central aim of education and that pupil-centred and moral aims can be reconciled, given an account of the individual's autonomously pursuing her own well-being in which her well-being is not seen as hived off from the well-being of others. The individual's well-being is understood in an enlarged sense as including the good of society. In this enlarged sense of her well-being the individual weighs her own needs and interests together with those of others, in pursuing a life of moral virtue. In arguing for moral autonomy as the most important aim for education, White envisages a notion of citizenship, as an aim of education, which rests on a conception of the state 'as a form of community', comprising, like the family, a number of individuals in relationship to each other. In this relationship well-being is a communal matter involving harmonization of needs and interests, and co-operation for common ends. There is much in common between White's notion of citizenship and the collective rather than individualist goals of education which radicals prefer. We will return to these issues in Chapters 7 and 8.

In White's hierarchy of aims, economic aims must be subordinate to moral aims. In a striking example he suggests:

The ideal of moral autonomy clashes head-on with prevailing attitudes in industry. Imagine a pupil educated on the lines proposed ... taking his first job on the shop-floor of a factory producing white sliced bread. He is told to do such and such an operation, expected to get on with it and ask no questions. But as a morally autonomous person how can he not ask questions? ... What kind of product is it? Does it do people any good? ... Is the company out primarily to give a service or to make a profit?(21)

And so on. Employers want workers who are obedient and punctual. They are not very interested in morality. The profit motive is more important than morality, and companies base decisions on prudential rather than moral reasons. For White, these attitudes of employers are clearly a feature of contemporary Britain which, particularly in their implications for education, pose a threat to individual freedom. We should not pass by this example without considering its further implications both for education and for an assessment of White as a liberal philosopher of education. This I will now do, turning to the second major thrust of my discussion of Wilson and White.

White's hierarchy of educational aims, with a subjugation of economic aims to the pupil-centred aim, seen in the broad sense of personal well-being as related to the well-being of others, and with both of these subordinated to the aim of moral autonomy, have been described above as evidence of liberal ideas. For there is a strong emphasis on individual freedom throughout - more clearly than in Hirst and Peters. The second theme of my argument that Hirst and Peters are not the best examples of

liberal philosophers of education that the radical critics could have cited is that the radical association of defence of the status quo with 'liberal' ideas does not apply to White and Wilson. I will begin with White.

White's educational aims, particularly with economic aims subordinated in his proposed hierarchy to pupil-centred and moral aims, have revolutionary implications, which White himself spells out to some extent.

Firstly, White emphasises that his placing of economic aims at the bottom of the hierarchy of educational aims 'points to the need for new forms of work-place democracy to institutionalise moral autonomy among employees'.(22) The worker in the bread factory able to ask the kinds of questions suggested by White would have to be accommodated in a democratic structure in which he would have a share in decision-making. This would obviously require far-reaching changes in the way factories are organized. Details of these changes aside, organizations like industrial institutions will not only themselves have to become more democratic, given this set of educational aims, but they could also have a hand in realising these aims. Instead of being an impediment to moral autonomy, democratically reorganized they could assist in fostering autonomous attitudes formed in schools.

Secondly, White argues further for maximum participation politically. He rejects the Platonic view of society and of the distribution of education,(23) favoured by those who would wish

the aims and content of schooling to be determined by the 'needs' of the economy, in which a small ruling élite receives a more extensive and more 'rounded' education, while the mass of the people are seen to need education appropriate to performing their jobs. For the Platonic view, it is not necessary that the masses have a broad understanding of their society, but for White there is no justification for giving anyone an education whose content is restricted. Everyone should receive a synoptic education, rather than one which is narrowly specialized. He is not impressed with the objection that the majority of the population are not capable of benefitting from a synoptic education. A common education of this kind 'is quite incompatible with the currently widespread view that people's level of educational attainment should vary with their occupational stratum ... If everyone were given a common education of this kind, there might be all kinds of important consequences'.(24)

Thirdly, White suggests ways in which the social ethos could be brought into closer harmony with the aims of education. He suggests that the beliefs associated with our general moral attitudes need redirection. In the first place, there is the common assumption that larger incomes should go to those of supposedly greater ability or intellectual achievements. A more rational system of income distribution is needed. In the second place, conventional wisdom has it that hierarchical organizations are appropriate to work-institutions. As this poses a threat to personal and moral autonomy, more democratic organization is urgently required, in the form of participatory democracy at all

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levels. Thirdly, consumer-oriented ideals need to be counteracted, e.g. by reforms in the media.

An obvious critical response to these suggestions would be to point out that White is being merely utopian here and that he does not offer practical suggestions as to how all this might be brought about. Or, from a radical point of view it could be maintained that White's proposals are pointless without an accompanying emphasis on the need to change the structures in the society as a whole. White himself is aware of the former possibility and emphasises that what he is offering here is a prolegomenon. As to the latter objection, while it may be a problem for White's position, it does not affect my present argument, which is that here is a genuinely liberal account of the aims of education which not only avoids supporting the status quo, but is strongly critical of it and makes some preliminary suggestions as to how it ought to be altered, whose implications are clearly revolutionary. If put into practice, White's aims could not serve presently prevailing ideologies, a fault which Harris attributes to 'liberal' philosophy of education. Nor would they be likely to serve ruling class or conservative interests. White cannot be accused as does Matthews(25) of Peters and Hirst, of putting substantive economic questions outside the purview of philosophy of education. Here indeed is none of the naivety about economic questions which led Peters to suggest that 'keeping the wheels of industry turning' serves no particular sectional interest,(26) failing to see that the capitalist economy works in the interests of a few, rather than

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in the interests of all.

Turning briefly back to Wilson on this issue, we find that he pays far less attention than does White to these kinds of implications of his view of education and schooling. Still, it is interesting to ponder the likely consequences of his argument that we could only argue that children should go to school if there they were able to pursue whatever it is that interests them, as against being compelled to be initiated into the traditions, forms of life or whatever, deemed to be worthwhile by teachers and other parties like educational planners. It seems likely that, given such a scenario, schools as we know them now would have to undergo radical changes and would be less free to pursue the goals and perform the functions attributed to them by their critics. But Wilson is not directly concerned with these possibilities, which are not really at issue for him in his considerations on the themes of interest and discipline. Yet although White gives us more on which to ponder as far as this aspect of his work goes, it suffices to point out that in Wilson's case too we have not only a liberal theorist attacking the status quo, but in such a way as to hint at revolutionary consequences were his arguments to be adopted in the schooling system.

Having shown that Wilson and White are better examples of liberal philosophers of education than Hirst and Peters, whose ideas are more accurately described as conservative than liberal, and in Chapter 4 that Hirst and Peters cannot be taken as

uncontroversially representative of analytic philosophy of education which in turn should not be seen as unambiguously 'liberal', the implications for an assessment of the radical arguments in question are clear. The conclusion to be drawn from my argument is that liberal philosophy of education cannot be seen to have been successfully discredited by the current radical arguments which I have examined. If liberalism is indeed a misguided and flawed view in philosophy of education some other arguments have to be produced to establish a case.

3

We turn now to the business of elucidating the necessary features of a liberal notion of education. The first of the thrusts of the argument in this chapter has been that Wilson and White are better examples of liberal philosophers of education than Hirst and Peters, on the grounds of their emphasis, albeit in different ways, on the freedom of the individual. The characterisation of liberalism developed in Chapter 3 was that its central feature is its defence of the principle of freedom of the individual, particular expressions of liberalism varying in substantive content, depending on the context. Giving a systematic account of what this might mean in the context of education requires analysis of the two components which comprise the central feature of liberalism - its concern for freedom for the individual, and its emphasis on the individual as the subject of concern. I will conclude this chapter with a discussion of what is involved in a concern for freedom in a liberal notion of education, taking as

my starting point a stock-taking of the central features of Wilson and White's liberalism. The issue of the notion of the individual as the exerciser of such freedom will be taken up in the next chapter, where I will defend a notion of individualism. As I will show, a concern for freedom in education, and a concern for the individuals who exercise that freedom, are closely interrelated and mutually supporting.

In the light of my analysis of liberalism in social theory in general, we can begin with the observation that a liberal theory of education must have as its linchpin the promotion of individual freedom, it being taken as read that for a liberal freedom is valuable in itself. To be more specific, the promotion of individual autonomy is the central aim of a liberal education. I refer to autonomy here as a kind of freedom, that which involves the individual's capacity for self-direction, for engaging in thought and activity which is her own, in the sense of not being determined by causes beyond her control. An autonomous person is one who is able to act rationally and independently (I will reply to a possible objection to this later). The role of education is to help people, mainly children, to become autonomous persons.

There are three features of autonomy which arise out of White's discussion of the aims of education. The first can be called personal autonomy. The autonomous individual is able to exercise post-reflective choice, which includes choosing her own life-plan, and developing her capacities as she wishes. To be

able to make autonomous choices of activities which she herself finds intrinsically valuable in both the short and the long term, the pupil needs to be introduced to, and to learn to reflect on, a variety of activities and ways of life. Hence White's justification of a compulsory curriculum, to which we will return presently.

The second feature of autonomy is that the individual is able to exercise moral autonomy. In pursuing her own post-reflective goals the individual is free from conformity to conventional values. And she has an enlarged sense of her own well-being which includes a concern for the good of others. This notion of moral autonomy needs to be understood in conjunction with a cluster of other liberal notions, which will also be raised in discussing 'individualism' in the next chapter. The emphasis on moral autonomy implies, in taking into consideration the good of others, the principle of impartiality or equality. These in turn rest on the liberal principle of respect for persons and their human dignity; each individual is entitled to moral consideration as having needs and goals of her own.

But, and this brings us to the third feature of autonomy, moral autonomy, especially in the workplace, cannot be exercised without democratic participation, both in broad political terms and in all institutions. Hierarchical structures and an élitist distribution of education are incompatible with this principle, which incorporates a notion of persons as active agents. It is clear that autonomy in the first and second senses would be

severely curtailed in the absence of autonomous participation in the third sense. Workers who are allowed little or no role in decision-making cannot be described as exercising either personal autonomy or moral autonomy, as is shown by White's example of the worker in the white bread factory. The crucial features of education for democratic participation would be, in the first place, that authority would not be accepted unquestioningly. In the second place, to be able to participate rationally and with some independence, individuals would need to acquire skills of critical thinking. And in the third place, individuals who are to participate in democratic decision-making, in a variety of contexts including the work-place, need to be well-informed about a range of issues - social, political and economic. One cannot participate with autonomy if one is ignorant about the issues relevant to making a particular decision.

My comments so far on the promotion by liberal education of autonomy as a kind of freedom can be described as articulating a notion of positive freedom in education. Indeed a defence of freedom would be incomplete if it did not raise the distinction between positive and negative freedom, articulated most notably by Isaiah Berlin in his essay 'Two Concepts of Liberty'.⁽²⁷⁾ I propose to make use of this distinction, without necessarily endorsing the way in which Berlin makes it, or suggesting that the two notions encompass mutually exclusive conceptions of freedom, in order to focus on issues at stake at this stage in my discussion.⁽²⁸⁾

I take 'positive freedom' to refer to people being in a position to take charge of their lives as active agents, making choices on their own initiative, determining their own lives in a public or social context, as against having external agents and forces determining their lives for them. In the ability or power to act which is implied by the notion of positive freedom Berlin sees great dangers, to which I will return in the next chapter. I note at this point Charles Taylor's observation(29) that the distinction between positive and negative liberty is a distinction between two families of conceptions and that there is a gamut of views in the two categories of liberty. In spite of its commanding presence Berlin's is not the only possible account of these two notions of freedom.

Stepping from the broader context of political and social theory to that of education, the notion of autonomy of which I have given an account can be seen to articulate a notion of positive freedom. The positive notion of freedom is reflected in the emphasis on the exercise of personal freedom in the sense of post-reflective choice including that of a life-plan, in the light of moral autonomy exercised in terms of a concern for the good of both oneself and others. Autonomy as democratic participation strongly reflects the positive notion of freedom, emphasising as it does the individual as an agent active in the making of decisions which affect herself and her community.

While the notion of education which I wish to defend is encapsulated mainly in this positive idea of freedom it also

raises an issue pertinent to the notion of negative freedom. The 'negative' view of freedom (which of course is not negative in a pejorative sense) I take to be that a person is free when no other agent coerces or constrains her from behaving as she chooses. Supporters of the negative view are concerned to defend an area of the individual's life which they hold should be free of interference.

If one agrees with Berlin, whose concern is to defend a negative notion of freedom, it is this private or negative liberty which J. S. Mill sets out to defend.(30) In Chapter 3 I quoted Mill's assertion that:

The only part of the conduct of any one, for which he is amenable to society, is that which concerns others. In the part which merely concerns himself, his independence is, of right, absolute. Over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign.(31)

Mill wrote that in general the 'only freedom which deserves the name, is that of pursuing our own good in our own way, so long as we do not attempt to deprive others of theirs, or impede their efforts to obtain it'.(32) This sense of Mill's of the importance of defending a private sphere from interference by others can be seen in his emphasis, noted in Chapter 3, on the importance of escaping from conformity with the opinions of the masses. And our second feature of autonomy spelt out above, that of moral autonomy, reflects a negative notion of freedom insofar as it emphasises, similarly, that the individual should be free from conformity to conventional values. P. S. Wilson, in his concern with the freedom of the individual to discover what her

interests are and to choose to pursue activities relevant to those interests, is defending the principle of negative freedom in education. Wilson insists that we can only compel children to go to school if their doing so is educative in the sense that they may there pursue activities which they themselves find intrinsically valuable. Here Wilson reflects a Millian sense of a private sphere where the individual chooses what activities to pursue, provided they do not harm self or others. But, as with Mill, there is in Wilson an overemphasis on negative freedom as against the positive freedom of the autonomous individual pursuing freedom in a social sphere, which receives more adequate emphasis from White. That a liberal notion of education must perceive the individual as a socially located being will receive strong emphasis in the next chapter.

Implicitly recognising the sphere of negative freedom, White adopts, as we have noted, the liberal principle that infringements of freedom are prima facie morally unjustifiable. But, in defending a compulsory curriculum, he takes the line that there may be overriding considerations to the application of this principle. Adopting the classical qualification of the principle of liberty, which he pushes further than does Wilson, White argues that we may be justified in compelling a child to engage in certain learning activities on the grounds of likely harm to others or to the child herself if she does not, or differently cast, on the grounds of its likely good for the individual and others.(33) So interference with the negative freedom of the child is justified insofar as it increases the long-term, largely

positive, freedom of the child. While this need not commit a liberal view to dismissing the negative sphere of freedom altogether, it is not difficult to see how an over-emphasis on the principle of negative freedom and a resultant refusal to compel children to engage in certain educative activities could retard the development of positive freedom; autonomy is acquired through engagement in educative activities, which are necessarily social, rather than private.

So far, in my attempt to explain what I mean by a liberal notion of education, I have pinpointed several liberal principles. Centrally, the emphasis has been on education as developing autonomy, in the three senses indicated, although we also need to be sensitive to the relevance of a negative notion of freedom to a liberal view of education. I have also pointed to several other associated liberal principles which contribute to the context in which freedom in a liberal notion is to be understood: the principles of impartiality, equality and respect for persons and their human dignity. It may well be asked at this point what I am claiming by referring to these central and associated principles; what kind of work are these principles intended to do in my argument?

In order to indicate the kind of claim I am making here about the nature of liberalism in the context of education, we need to reflect back on the main argument in Chapter 3. The burden of the discussion there was to show, using Locke and Mill as examples, that the liberal point of view is to be characterised

in terms of a central essential principle, that of the freedom of the individual. This central principle was distinguished from the various specific applications to which it is amenable, depending on the context, which includes the liberal preoccupations of the time. In spelling out how the central principle of liberalism is to be interpreted when we are talking about education I am making a similar point. Emphasising a concern for individual freedom as characterising liberalism is to make a formal point, rather than to offer a substantive characterisation of liberalism, as the latter must depend on the particular context. My concern in positing a central characterising feature of liberalism was to indicate that this is universally applicable to expressions of the liberal point of view, but that critics of liberalism have tended to commit the error of confusing some particular expressions of liberalism with its central, universally applicable characteristic. My treatment of a liberal notion of education here is similar insofar as I am offering a universal characterisation of a liberal notion of education. Given that I am now involved with a liberal notion in a specific context - that of education - rather than liberalism in general, it is possible to posit a set of notions, rather than limiting my characterisation to the broad notion of individual freedom. In addition to the notions of autonomy, impartiality, equality and respect for persons and human dignity posited so far there will be others which will emerge from the defence of a notion of 'individualism' in the next chapter. I must emphasise at this stage that the characterisation of a liberal view of education which I am offering is a universal one, not specific to

particular contexts. It could be described as, in this sense, an 'empty' or non-substantive characterisation. I do not propose to tackle the question of specific applications, except in so far as I have indicated what applying a liberal notion of education to the South African context would involve.

The two central characterising features or emphases in a liberal notion of education, explicated as above in the case of freedom and in Chapter 7 in the case of individualism, as well as the cluster of principles on which they rest, are the universal characterising elements in a liberal view of education, regardless of the context. Where they are absent, or where principles from another tradition are introduced and made more fundamental in a notion of education, as for instance in a view of education which is based on tradition in the first instance, we have some other notion of education, in this case a conservative one. Or where, as I will show in Chapter 8, we have a view of education which is tied to a notion of revolutionary praxis, we have a Marxist notion of education.

It must, of course, be recognised that there will be little that is simple or straightforward about the exercise of determining in a specific context the appropriate substantive application of the central and associated principles of liberal education to the conditions which comprise that context, which I have interpreted in terms of historically specific threats to the principle of individual freedom. Just as the specific application of the principle of individual freedom is different in Locke's social

theory from its application in Mill's, so particular expressions of the central and associated liberal principles in education will vary too. In contemporary South Africa, as I have shown in Chapter 5, application of these principles would be most strongly focussed on the principle of equality. We can also see the need in the context of schooling in South Africa to defend threats to liberty in both positive and negative senses. Concern for negative liberty is reflected in Horrell's criticisms of state interference in the form of rigid bureaucratic control, far-reaching ministerial powers and disregard for university autonomy. In observing the inadequacy of provision of schooling and the structural constraints on education in South Africa we acknowledge threats to the successful development of autonomy, i.e. to positive freedom, by those who receive such schooling. It must be added that there will often, in attempting to translate the essential characteristics of a liberal view of education into educational policy and practice, be conflicts between the central features of liberal education and some of the associated principles, for example between freedom and equality, a problem to which I shall return in the next chapter.

I have indicated here the implications of a concern for freedom for a liberal notion of education, and I now want to raise a possible objection to the position which has been developed here. The way this objection might run is: the liberal position defended here rests on the assumption that an individual can think and behave autonomously. But to hold the notion of 'individual autonomy' is misguided, because what the individual

thinks and does is determined by the society in which she lives, which is a product of the relevant mode of production.

I have two responses to this objection. The first I shall merely mention here and discuss further in Chapters 8 and 9. This is, briefly, that although the terminology may not always be the same, autonomy is also an aim of education on radical accounts of the notion of education. Here I refer to radical accounts which are inspired by humanist Marxism, rather than the extreme structuralist versions, which allow little or no room for either individual agency or autonomy of any significant degree. Kevin Harris's account of consciousness-raising as an alternative to 'education', which I will discuss in Chapter 9, is precisely an attempt to work out how to extend people's autonomy.

My second response to this objection is that of course it would be naive to assume that all individuals are or could be fully autonomous. By virtue of being a social creature, constituted by a social context, every individual is subject to some degree of determination of her thought and behaviour. She cannot, as it were, step outside of her context and survey it from a viewless perspective. Doing this would require that she abandon language which, if she could do such a thing, would be to abandon the tools required to survey the context in question. But it is surely quite realistic to take it that individuals have the capacity to achieve both varying degrees of autonomy, and autonomy in various different fields.

As far as moral autonomy is concerned, Kurt Baier(34) has suggested degrees of independence of moral judgment, depending on which of four levels of reasoning a person has reached. These four levels are identified by the types of proposition or premise, ranging from less to more complex, which a person is capable of using in moral reasoning. Propositions of type (i), suggests Baier, are those used in answering questions about what it would be right or wrong to do in specific cases, while propositions of type (ii) are concerned with answering more general questions about kinds of act, e.g. killing. Making type (i) judgments depends on using type (ii) judgments. For Baier, a moral education ought to result in every adult being able to operate at at least the level of type (i) and type (ii) propositions. Type (iii) propositions, which state general moral principles, like justice or benevolence, and those of type (iv), concerning general questions about the institution of morality, e.g. its function, may be mastered only by some. Similarly, we can envisage that individuals can, depending on a variety of factors including education and other life circumstances, achieve varying degrees of personal autonomy. Opportunities to develop one's degree of personal autonomy will tend to be greater in Western Europe than in, say, Ethiopia.

Achieving a satisfactory degree of autonomy in the area of democratic participation is to a considerable degree interrelated with both personal and moral autonomy and the extent of their development. Returning to White's example of the worker in the white bread factory, and assuming that steps have been taken to

democratise the factory, the worker's ability to contribute autonomously to the making of a democratic decision on whether to stop making white bread and to make brown instead can be seen to depend on an awareness of the issues at a number of levels of sophistication, as well as in different fields. He may, for instance, have some common sense awareness that it is healthier for people to eat brown, rather than white, bread. But this could rest instead on a knowledge of the principles of nutrition, which could in turn be informed by a knowledge of biochemistry. Another perspective on the issue may be that he realises that demand and therefore sales may drop if the factory diverted its efforts into making less popular brown bread. He may have a grasp of the possible implications of a drop in sales, which would need to be weighed up against the moral problem of selling people unhealthy food. He could, however, have the capacity to consider a range of economic theories relevant to the issue, as well as to exercise skills for projecting the impact which the proposed switch could have on the factory's income.

An individual can be seen to bring to various situations a range of degrees of autonomy, depending on the issues and his or her own history of interests and competencies. Our capacity to make autonomous decisions will at times require consulting authorities. In a referendum on whether to support nuclear energy there are some relevant issues on which most people are not sufficiently competent to make an independent judgment. Exercising autonomy in this situation seems to depend heavily on judging which authorities to take most seriously - nuclear

physicists, government ministers, army generals, or environmentalists.

To posit as the central aim of liberal education the development of autonomous individuals is not to claim the possibility of 'complete' autonomy. To make standards of autonomy too stringent would be to remove autonomy from consideration as a realistic aim of education. But why should we accept that individuals are so subject to determinist forces that any degree of autonomy is out of the question? We need only think of the example of Marx himself, who was able to transcend his particular nineteenth century German background and to produce a theory of such originality and significance that we must attribute to him a very considerable degree of autonomy. It is not difficult to envisage and compare, on the one hand a product of a schooling system in either a capitalist or a contemporary socialist society who is capable of exercising very little autonomy, with on the other, someone from the same society who is able to exercise autonomy to a far greater degree. Nor is it difficult to imagine the consequences for individuals educated along the lines of White's hierarchy of aims who could thus be enabled to exercise greater autonomy, with uncomfortable consequences for employers and others. If autonomy is desirable (and I shall show in Chapter 8 that it is an aim for Marxists as well as liberals), and if the degree of autonomy an individual is able to attain is largely dependent on whether she receives some education, then it makes perfectly good sense to argue that the development of autonomy to the highest possible degree is the central aim of education.

Notes

- (1) Interest and Discipline in Education (1971), p. 93.
- (2) Ibid., p. 67.
- (3) Ibid., p. 60.
- (4) Ibid., p. 66.
- (5) Ibid., p. 83.
- (6) Ibid., pp. 85-86.
- (7) Ibid., p. 86.
- (8) Ibid., p. 9.
- (9) Ibid., pp. 88-89.
- (10) Ibid., p. 90.
- (11) Here I accept G. J. Warnock's criticism of Hare's Prescriptivism on p. 40 in Contemporary Moral Philosophy (1967).
- (12) See Wilson, op. cit., p. 84.
- (13) White, op. cit., p. 6.
- (14) Ibid., pp. 16-17.
- (15) Ibid., p. 22.
- (16) Ibid., p. 24.
- (17) Wilson, op. cit., p. 74.
- (18) The Aims of Education Restated (1982), p. 39.
- (19) Ibid., pp. 62-63.
- (20) For a critique, located in the context of the Great Debate, of the view that schools should provide industry with the workforce it requires, see Roy Edgley 'Education for Industry' (1977).
- (21) White, (1982) op. cit., p. 105.
- (22) Ibid., p. 106.
- (23) In an earlier paper, 'Instruction in Obedience?', (1968), White argues in favour of helping 'the less able to learn the same things as the more able pupils learn readily'. White's concern here, that directing less able children away from traditional subjects and towards inter-disciplinary studies supposedly relevant to their

needs and interests may 'aim at restriction and acceptance', reflects a liberal awareness of the threat to freedom posed by attempts in schooling to promote obedience.

- (24) White, (1982) op. cit., p. 118.
- (25) Matthews, op. cit., pp. 156-157.
- (26) Peters, op. cit., p. 170.
- (27) Berlin, op. cit.
- (28) I am aware of the controversies surrounding the distinction, most notably concerning whether we can usefully distinguish between positive and negative freedom, and whether Berlin is justified in arguing that freedom is essentially a negative notion. On these issues, see, for example: Gerald C. MacCallum, 'Negative and Positive Freedom' (1967); Alan Ryan, 'Freedom' (1965).
- (29) 'What's Wrong with Negative Liberty' (1979), p. 175.
- (30) This interpretation of Mill is challenged, for example, by G. W. Smith, who argues in 'J. S. Mill on Freedom' (1984), p. 186, that the concept of liberty with which Mill creates 'is neither clearly negative nor clearly positive'. Smith's case rests on the observation that the notion of self-determination in On Liberty is a positive notion of freedom insofar as it includes self-assertion in the public domain.
- (31) Mill, op. cit., p. 73.
- (32) Ibid., p. 75.
- (33) In 'Compulsion and the Curriculum' (1984), White acknowledges that his argument in Towards a Compulsory Curriculum slides unjustifiably from justifying compulsion on the grounds of likely harm to justifying it on ground of likely good.
- (34) 'Moral Autonomy as an Aim of Education' (1973).

CHAPTER 7

IN DEFENCE OF INDIVIDUALISM

1

What are the implications for a liberal notion of education of the emphasis in liberalism on the freedom of the individual? Before embarking on my argument that a liberal notion of education must be committed to a form of individualism, we need to take stock of my argument up to now. The thrust of the argument in Chapter 3 was that the central principle, and characterising feature, of liberalism is its concern to defend individual freedom, and that the history of liberal ideas has shown a variety of expressions of this central principle. This argument in Chapter 3 set the scene for the subsequent three chapters. In Chapter 4 it was shown that in the light of this characterisation of liberalism there is some doubt as to whether Hirst and Peters are correctly described as liberal philosophers of education. These doubts focussed on their view of education as initiation into public traditions, which I showed to be sooner indicative of conservatism than of liberalism. Wilson and White, by contrast, were shown in Chapter 6, with their common emphasis on individual choice of activities, to be better examples of liberal philosophers of education. In an accompanying thrust,

Chapter 5 demonstrated that the dominant tradition in the study of education in South Africa is, contrary to radical views, not a liberal one. Towards the close of Chapter 6 a start was made on the task of describing what I mean to suggest as a liberal view of education, in an account of what is implied by the emphasis on freedom in such a view of education. In this chapter I am concerned with the allied liberal emphasis on the individual.

In picking up this thread in section 2 I shall provide a preliminary presentation of the thesis that the good of the individual stands at the centre of the liberal notion of education. In section 3 I shall counter the radical attack on the 'individualism' said to be inherent in liberal theory of education by teasing out some of the strands in the concept of individualism, and arguing that liberalism is not committed to the whole package. I shall show that liberalism can remain a distinctive and coherent package while rejecting the indefensible strands in the tradition of individualism. This will be followed in section 4 by a consideration of a possible objection to my position, that while emphasis on individuality is defensible in theory of education, individualism is not. Finally, and crucially, in section 5 I will take up the argument that Marx himself subscribed to a form of individualism.

2

The notion of individualism which I wish to defend must be seen as going together with and complementing, that of freedom

discussed in the previous chapter. As was the case there, I will develop my notion of liberal individualism by reflecting on the views of Wilson and White, whom I have described as good examples of liberal philosophers of education. And as with my account of freedom as an element in a liberal notion of education, I propose to develop further a formal characterisation of this liberal notion of education, whose detailed spelling out would depend on the particular context. The individualist element of a liberal notion of education also rests on certain associated principles, which will be mentioned as we proceed.

I have emphasised in this thesis that for a liberal the Good is to be characterised in terms of individual freedom; we will come presently to the competing claim that the Good is to be characterised in terms of group freedom. P. S. Wilson, as we have seen, gives expression to the liberal notion of individual freedom in his defence of a notion of education in which the individual child discovers what interests her, and then chooses to engage in activities appropriate to exploring those interests, on the basis of personal criteria of worthwhileness. Setting aside the problems with Wilson's account of interests, concerning their apparently asocial and rather mysterious origins, it must be emphasised that we have here implicitly a set of liberal ideas which are part of the cluster of what I have called the associated principles which inform the central feature of the liberal point of view. Wilson recognises the individuality or uniqueness of individuals, that they are what White calls 'distinct centres of consciousness'. This recognition is

associated with the notions of respect for persons and human dignity - each individual has a unique perception of what is interesting and what is worthwhile, which must be respected. From this flows Wilson's notion of education, which is based on the recognition that it is not for others to decide on behalf of an individual what is intrinsically worthwhile. The connection with the ideal of freedom of choice is quite apparent. So, too, is the moral tone of Wilson's position. His view of education is quite fundamentally based on an argument about when it is morally right to compel children to go to school. Both the general principle of concern in education for the individual child, and the associated principles of individuality, and of human dignity and respect for persons are indicative of a particular moral perspective.

This moral perspective achieves somewhat different expression in White's work, with results which I have already suggested to be more satisfactory than in Wilson's. While White takes the view that a rational educational system must act in the interests of the individual pupil this is qualified by his placing pupil-centred aims of education below the supreme aim of moral autonomy. While the good of the individual is seen in terms of post-reflective desire-satisfaction, this good is to be understood in an extended sense as including the good of others. White rejects the attempted reconciliation of pupil-directed with morally-directed aims which posits a minimalist framework of moral rules in which individuals pursue their own ends in an 'individualistic' way. 'Individualism' here suggests the

basically self-centred attitude of what White calls the moral minimalist, who is prepared to fulfil a minimal set of moral obligations determined more by prudence than benevolence, and compatible with the pursuit of self-interest and private profit. White's emphasis on both the good of the individual and on reconciling this good with encouraging children to be sensitive to the interests and rights of others, reflects the principles in terms of which my notion of individualism is to be understood. We have here the liberal principles of human dignity and respect for persons, which receive implicit recognition in White's argument that economic aims be subordinated to both moral and pupil-centred aims. We have, too, the principle of impartiality, that people should not be viewed or treated differently in the absence of relevant reasons for doing so. This principle, and the associated liberal principle of equality can be seen in White's insistence on a synoptic education for all, which in turn is a prerequisite for the overall development of each individual's autonomy in the three senses sketched in the previous chapter, and particularly for the third sense. Democratic participation by all presupposes a recognition of the need to perceive all individuals impartially.

Now I realise that I am arguing myself into a tricky position here. For, it could be argued, in spite of White's apparent reservations about 'individualism', which he associates with the minimalist morality, I have co-opted his anti-individualist view of education in support of an individualist one. Surely, the objector must continue, my argument is contradictory. But while

I am aware of precisely this danger, I do not see my position as contradictory. What is at issue here is the question of identifying what an 'individualist' position is. My exploration of various notions of individualism and their interrelations as well as their relationship with liberalism in the next section will show both the complexities involved in identifying the various strands of individualism and that the forms of individualism repudiated by radical critics of 'liberal' theory of education, as well as by White, do not include the kind of individualism which I wish to defend. In defending a liberal individualist notion of education I am, to summarise the argument in this section so far, defending a notion of education which is concerned with the good of the individual child, notwithstanding White's qualification of this, which I have accepted. To argue this is to adopt the associated liberal principles of human dignity, respect for persons and of impartiality, as well as to recognise the individuality or uniqueness of each individual. I propose to argue in section 4 that it is not individuality but individualism, on a certain account of 'individualism', which a liberal notion of education must embrace. It is there that I will meet the objection to the way in which I have used White's notion of the individual. In the meantime I want to put forward an argument in favour of emphasis on the individual rather than the group in my liberal notion of education.

Why, it might be asked, should a liberal notion of education not be a defence of the freedom of groups of people, rather than individual persons? Isaiah Berlin has a powerful answer to this

question in his essay 'Two Concepts of Liberty', where he shows how the ideal of positive freedom can be 'at times, no better than a specious disguise for brutal tyranny'.⁽¹⁾ Concerned with the threat of totalitarian movements to liberty, Berlin observes that the goal of freedom as self-mastery has been turned in favour of oppression when the autonomous 'self' has been tied to a 'higher' self, 'a social "whole" of which the individual is an element or aspect: a tribe, a race, a church, a state ... This entity is then identified as being the "true" self which, by imposing its collective, or "organic", single will upon its recalcitrant "members", achieves its own, and therefore their, "higher" freedom'.⁽²⁾ Reiterating the observation made in the previous chapter that accepting a positive conception of freedom does not necessarily commit one to the notion attacked thus by Berlin,⁽³⁾ we can nonetheless draw a useful conclusion for education from Berlin's argument against positive freedom. It is not difficult to perceive the risk in theory of education of embracing the principle of freedom but failing to check the dangers of which Berlin warns us by omitting to qualify this concern for freedom with an emphasis on the kind of individualism which I have set out to defend. Each of the three forms of autonomy identified in the last chapter is put at risk when the goals of 'education' are specified in terms of group benefits. Many of the problems in education in South Africa can be traced to the insistence, under the auspices of the doctrines of Christian National Education and of Fundamental Pedagogics, on the principle of self-determination for different 'cultural' groups as a central factor in determining educational policy and

practice. The obvious outcome of defending the freedom of groups and the role of education in this defence has been a reduction of personal autonomy, moral autonomy and democratic participation among whites themselves, and the oppression of other 'cultural' groups. The liberal principles of human dignity, respect for persons, impartiality and individuality also go by the board. For these reasons it is crucial that a liberal notion of education should vigorously defend the notion of individualism as I have sketched it. In the South African context the threat to individual freedom has a special twist, 'freedom' or 'self-determination' being treated in the dominant apartheid ideology in terms of group rather than individual freedom. In this context a liberal notion of education must be an individualist one, and it must be concerned about this context-specific threat to individual freedom.

Let me now draw together the threads of my formal characterisation of a liberal notion of education. Its central feature, derived from the central characterising feature of liberal social theory, is that it aims at development of individual freedom. I have indicated what is implied by the two, mutually supporting, components of this aim. A liberal notion of education, in its concern to help people to exercise freedom, is primarily concerned with developing positive freedom, or autonomy in the three forms suggested. But it must also be sensitive to the issue of negative freedom; compulsion can only be justified if it contributes to the long-term autonomy of the individual. Furthermore, a liberal notion of education is concerned with the

good of the individual, which consists primarily in helping her to exercise autonomy. In developing this characterisation I have indicated how both features call up a cluster of associated principles, namely human dignity, respect for persons, impartiality, and equality. I was at pains in the previous chapter to emphasise that what I am offering is a formal characterisation of a liberal notion of education. There it was also stressed that I do not want to imply that application of these formal features to particular contexts would be a simple matter. One sense in which this exercise would be problematic is that some of the principles which I have cited in characterising this liberal notion of education could come into conflict.

The most obvious example of such a possibility is that both in liberal social theory and in a liberal notion of education the principles of freedom and equality could come into conflict. It is this conflict which radical critics of 'liberal theory of education' recognise as a problem in schooling in capitalist societies, although in doing so they use the word 'liberal' mistakenly. That the object of radical anger here should be capitalism and not liberalism has been made clear, but there still remains for my position the problem of reconciling freedom with equality. There is only a need to qualify the liberal emphasis on freedom. This is often done by appealing to John Stuart Mill's argument, noted in Chapter 3, that 'the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community against his will, is to prevent harm to others'.⁽⁴⁾ In other words, freedom must be limited

where its exercise may cause harm to others. Although there has been a strong strain in the liberal tradition which holds that the interest of all will be served best if individuals are allowed the freedom to pursue their own self-interest, this has been opposed by an equally strong insistence from other quarters in the liberal tradition which have insisted, like Mill, that limits be placed on the freedom of individuals to pursue their interests where others may be harmed. To accept White's notion of education, and the principles of respect for persons and human dignity, and impartiality, which it implies, is to accept that there will be times when the principle of freedom must be overruled by that of equality. One instance where the conflict between the two principles must, as I have indicated in Chapter 5, be resolved in favour of equality is where, in South Africa, the freedom of whites to pursue their own goals, particularly materialistic ones, has been enjoyed at the expense of the black majority, including the quality of their education. But it is not possible to specify in advance of particular circumstances when equality should overrule freedom, and deciding when it should is not usually likely to be as simple as it is in the South African context. To reiterate, then, the kind of characterisation which I have offered of a liberal notion is a formal one, requiring substantive application to particular contexts.

3

I have argued in favour of a liberal individualist notion of

education. But radical critics attack liberal theory of education for its endorsement of 'individualism'. We turn now to consider this attack and whether it constitutes a successful objection to a liberal notion of education. This attack, sketched in Chapter 2, can be seen to comprise three features. The first radical argument against 'individualism' in 'liberal' theory of education is that emphasis on the individual reinforces the 'liberal' notion that the individual is prior to society. The second argument is that 'liberal' theory of education emphasises a commitment to individualistic competitiveness, rather than social co-operation. The third argument is the assertion that while on the 'liberal' account education promotes personal growth and fulfilment, education in 'capitalist liberal democracies' serves to alienate and control the individual, and to prepare her for a place in the occupational hierarchy. This argument I dealt with in Chapters 2 and 3, pointing out that while one might agree that this is one of the features of schooling in capitalist societies this does not undercut the liberal ideals of individual growth and fulfilment. I shall therefore confine my attention here to defending liberal theory of education against the first and second radical arguments which attack its endorsement of 'individualism'. These two arguments, which respectively attribute abstract individualism and a combination of economic individualism and ethical egoism to 'liberal' theory of education are, as I will indicate in the analysis which follows, closely related to one another.

I am going to take it that the radical critics hold that

'individualism' is an inherent feature of 'liberalism', and hence of 'liberal' theory of education. The problem with this view is that there are various strands in the tradition of individualism, in addition to abstract individualism, economic individualism and ethical egoism. Rejection of these three individualist doctrines does not add up, as the radical critics imply, to a rejection of individualism in toto. Historically, individualism comprises a number of other traditions as well as the three already mentioned, and there are complex interrelationships between these various traditions. Steven Lukes, in his treatment of individualism,(5) on which I shall rely for an account of the individualist tradition, identifies eleven basic ideas of individualism: the principles of the dignity of man, autonomy, privacy and self-development, which Lukes describes as the 'four unit ideas' of individualism, and the notions of abstract individualism, political individualism, economic individualism, religious individualism, ethical individualism (of which ethical egoism is a strand), and methodological individualism. It is not clear whether the radicals wish to reject all of these basic ideas of individualism. Nevertheless, a brief examination of Lukes's treatment of the subject will show, firstly, the variety of strands in the tradition of individualism. Secondly, I will agree with Lukes that to be committed to some of these strands in the tradition of individualism is not to be committed to all. Thirdly, while individualist doctrines were on the whole historically liberating and associated with the rise of liberalism, there are powerful arguments against some of these doctrines. Fourthly, in the course of teasing out some of these

strands, I will show that the notions of 'individualism' attributed by radical critics to 'liberal' theory of education are, far from being distinctive of it, incompatible with the liberal individualist notion of education presented in this chapter and the previous one.

Not specified in the radical attacks on 'individualism' in 'liberal' theory of education are the four unit ideas discussed by Lukes which are endorsed in my earlier discussion of a liberal notion of education. The moral principle of the dignity of man, or human dignity, which underpins the principle of respect for persons, is implicit in the recognition by both Wilson and White of the individuality or uniqueness of each individual. The promotion of the ideal or value of autonomy I have argued to be the central aim of a liberal education. While acknowledging that a degree of scepticism towards the notion of privacy is appropriate, it was argued that a liberal notion of education must be sensitive to the problems raised for education by the issue of compulsion, insofar as it invokes a notion of a private sphere of negative freedom. The notion of self-development, for whose importance Mill so emphatically argued, is endorsed by White.

I have noted that these four individualist values or ideals are not among those included in the radical criticisms which we are considering of 'individualism' in 'liberal' theory of education. In arguing in section 5 that Marx himself endorses some notions of individualism I will suggest that, with the exception of the

ideal of privacy, a Marxist view of society can endorse these individualist values.

These four unit ideas of individualism are, as Lukes emphasises,(6) and as I have argued in discussing them as elements in a liberal notion of education, closely related to each other and recognizable as elements in the liberal tradition. But there are a number of other notions in the individualist tradition, as indicated in the list above of individualist notions identified and discussed by Lukes. In discussing these doctrines of individualism I want to show that they, by contrast with the four unit ideas, are not essential to a liberal position, and indeed most must be rejected as not compatible with it. I will first discuss those brands of individualism specifically under attack in the radical arguments we are considering and then briefly discuss the rest. In discussing the individualist notions attacked by the radicals I will show too how they are incompatible with the liberal notion of education which I have defended.

Starting with abstract individualism, which presupposes that individual persons exist prior to or independently of society, this asocial conception of the individual views individual behaviour as determined in the final analysis by psychological rather than social factors. While this notion has been acknowledged by Lukes to have been both historically liberating and associated with the development of liberalism, positing individuals as holders of certain rights, by virtue of being

human, its abstraction of individuals from their social context is an obvious and severe limitation.

While radicals are right to oppose any theory of education which adopts the notion of the individual as logically prior to society, they are mistaken in assuming that abstract individualism is a necessary feature of any liberal theory of education. A commitment to the liberal principle of freedom of the individual is not necessarily a commitment to an abstract notion of the individual - to assume that it is would be to confuse the individual as the locus of certain rights, centrally to freedom, with the idea that the individual is prior to or independent of society. As Lukes points out,(7) the individual's capacity to achieve autonomy is to a large extent socially determined.

Abstract individualism is neither a defensible view of the relationship between individual and society, nor is it compatible with a defensible liberal theory of education. The problem of the abstracted individual creates severe difficulties for P. S. Wilson's liberal account of education. For Wilson, in emphasising to the extent that he does that schooling will only be educative if children are allowed and encouraged to pursue what interests them as individuals, fails to locate the origin and nature of these interests in any social context. While Wilson's account of interests places him within the liberal tradition, and more clearly so than Hirst and Peters, for reasons given in the previous chapter, this fundamental problem renders

his view of education inadequate. A satisfactory and useful liberal view of education must avoid the mistake of abstract individualism, which is far from characteristic of liberal theory of education. John White does not commit himself to this position at all. In his argument for a compulsory basic curriculum he makes it clear that children have to be educated in order to be able to exercise autonomy, that they do not present themselves for education as autonomous beings with interests to pursue. The curriculum plays a vital role in constituting interests which might otherwise not have existed. There is no inconsistency in accepting that individuals are constituted by social forces and defending a liberal view of education.

So much for the first of the radical criticisms of 'individualism' in 'liberal' theory of education. Turning to the second, there are two individualist doctrines at stake in the radical criticism of 'liberal' educational theory's alleged endorsement of individualistic competitiveness rather than social co-operation. These two doctrines are economic individualism and ethical egoism, both of which presuppose an abstract notion of the individual. Individualistic competitiveness, correctly associated by radical critics of 'liberalism' and 'liberal' theory of education with capitalism, is central to economic individualism, both as a theory of economic efficiency and as a normative doctrine. In its latter sense it is closely associated with ethical egoism.

While comprising a complex tradition, economic individualism can

be described as a view which supports profit maximization in a 'free market' with restricted state intervention. The pursuit of self-interest by individuals is held to be conducive to the good of all. Milton Friedman, a contemporary defender of economic individualism, addresses in Capitalism and Freedom(8) the problem of how to benefit from government while preventing it from threatening the freedom of the individual. He sees reliance on private enterprise as the best way of ensuring that the powers of government, whose role is that of umpire and forum for the creation of rules, are kept in check. 'Government', argues Friedman, taking the line of political individualism, 'can never duplicate the variety and diversity of individual action'.(9) Competitive capitalism provides economic freedom, which is a necessary condition for political freedom. Friedman endorses what he describes as liberalism's emphasis on 'freedom as the ultimate goal and the individual as the ultimate entity in the society'.(10)

While economic individualism was also historically progressive, as Marx himself acknowledged, and was associated with the development of liberalism, appealing to the principle of freedom, and to equality before the laws of the market-place, it is neither necessary to nor compatible with the notion of liberalism which I have defended. I have of course already shown that a defence of capitalism is not necessary to a liberal position. There are examples in the liberal tradition of thinkers who have acknowledged the need for quite far-reaching regulation and control. We saw towards the close of Chapter 3 how Hobhouse

argues the need for public control in a variety of spheres, particularly in the provision of social services, as well as in industry. Hobhouse argued that the maintenance of freedom and equality was dependent on extension of the area of social control. To oppose all forms of state regulation of the economy on the grounds that they threaten freedom and equality is to ignore, as Lukes argues, (11) the threat to freedom and equality posed by the evil effects of capitalism. The claim to defend freedom and equality does not necessarily qualify a position as a defensible liberal position.

Turning to education, we see a clear compatibility between economic individualism, with its emphasis on the benefits of competition, and the kind of competitive individualism in schools which the radicals rightly criticise, while emphasising instead the benefits of social co-operation. The radicals are quite right to reject such individualism, as must a defensible liberal theory of education. To argue, as does White, that unless overriding reasons can be produced, under some special circumstances, a rational educational system must act in the interests of the individual pupil, is to defend a very different kind of individualism. The extent of the difference between White's individualism and economic individualism is made clear if we recall that, in White's hierarchy of educational aims, pupil-centred aims are subordinated to the aim of moral autonomy, understood in terms of a spirit of co-operation and community. And, what is more, economic aims are in turn subordinated to both moral and pupil-centred aims. This latter feature of White's

liberal individualism is especially significant in understanding the enormous difference between the individualist element in his view of education, and economic individualism. For, by defending education for autonomy and democracy, particularly in the workplace, White challenges the individual freedom which the economic individualist accords to the profit-maker, the competitive individual who is able to thrive in the market-place. A genuinely liberal notion of education endorses the exercise of the greatest possible degree of autonomy by each individual in such a way that the competitive individual could not be allowed to exercise his freedom at the expense of others.

Ethical egoism, a doctrine about the nature of morality, described by Lukes as one of the strands in ethical individualism, proposes that the object of morality is exclusively individual, i.e. the individual's own benefit, not that of others. The other strand in ethical individualism discussed by Lukes, which he calls 'ethical individualism', is a doctrine according to which the source and final authority in morality is the individual. But I shall concentrate my attention on ethical egoism, as it is specifically one of the individualist doctrines under attack and attributed to 'liberal' theory of education, noting in passing that the strand which Lukes calls 'ethical individualism' is not necessary to a liberal position, which may as easily posit a social source and authority in moral thinking.⁽¹²⁾ One response in the history of ethical egoism to the problem of reconciling self-interest with the well-being of society was the assumption that pursuit of self-interest can be

conducive to the good of all. This kind of move can be detected in some expressions of economic individualism. But this brand of ethical individualism is not necessary to a liberal position. It was pointed out in Chapter 3 that J. S. Mill had reservations about the principle of self-interest defended by Bentham among others, and was committed to the idea of the importance of helping others.

Clearly, to endorse ethical egoism would be to put at risk a basic value of liberalism like the dignity of man. Without an awareness of the dignity of others and respect for them as persons, the ethical egoist may threaten the autonomy, privacy and self-development of others. While, it will be remembered, treats individual well-being, as an aim of education, as a notion to be understood in the enlarged sense of including the good of others. Here the individual weighs up her own needs and interests together with those of others, pursuing a life of moral virtue, moral autonomy being the supreme aim of education. Although his moral minimalist is not thoroughly egoistical, White's position avoids the self-centredness which radical critics correctly reject in opposing the notion of the competitive individual with the co-operative individual, working for the good of the whole rather than pursuing self-interest in competition with others.

None of the three individualist doctrines attributed to 'liberal' theory of education in the arguments in question is necessary to liberal theory of education. Indeed I have shown how each must

be rejected by such a theory. About most of the remaining individualist doctrines identified by Lukes we may be more brief, as they are not among those ideas specifically under attack in the radical arguments I am considering.

Resting on an abstracted notion of the individual, the doctrine of political individualism holds a view of society whose members are seen to be independent and rational, defending and pursuing their own interests and aims. The role of government here is to enable individual citizens to pursue these goals by protecting their freedom.⁽¹³⁾ Democratic government is seen to derive its legitimacy through individual consent, whether on the model of the social contract theories of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries or, in modern times, in terms of consent through participation in elections. Political representation is seen as representation of the interests of each and every individual.

But while there is an historical association between political individualism and liberalism, for example in Locke's work, this individualist doctrine is not necessary to a liberal position. Firstly, the laissez-faire view of government associated with political individualism, as it is with economic individualism, while purporting to provide the freedom for all to pursue their interests, will allow some to do so at the expense of others, and so must also be rejected. It is consistent with liberalism to see a need for an active role for government in promoting communal rather than individual goals. Secondly, liberalism is not restricted, in its notion of democracy, to consent through

participation in elections. We saw in Chapter 6 how White called for democratic procedures at other levels beside government, particularly in the workplace. Nevertheless, while political individualism as a theory about government is open to objections, not least from within liberalism itself, it can be observed that in maintaining that the individual is the authority on what she holds to be in her interests, political individualism has contributed an idea which remains central to the liberal point of view.(14)

Epistemological individualism, a philosophical doctrine about the nature of knowledge, embraces abstract individualism's notion of the independent individual standing outside of society, and sees the individual as the source of knowledge. While there have been liberal theorists, like Locke, who have subscribed to epistemological individualism, it is not a necessary feature of liberalism. As far as education goes - and as a doctrine about knowledge epistemological individualism is of some interest here - while Wilson inclines towards epistemological individualism, White and most if not all other 'APEs' see the enterprise of education as fundamentally social, necessarily resting on a view of knowledge as an intersubjective matter.

Methodological individualism, also underpinned by abstract individualism, is a doctrine about explanation which rejects explanations appealing to social factors in favour of attempting to explain behaviour solely in terms of facts about individuals. Although methodological individualism has been subscribed to by

some liberal theorists, for example J. S. Mill, it too is not necessary to a liberal position.

Nor, finally, is the doctrine of religious individualism necessary to a liberal position, holding that the individual does not need intermediaries between herself and God.

In meeting the radical objection to 'individualism' in liberal theory of education I have shown further evidence of the simplistic nature of the radical attack on 'liberal' theory of education. An examination of the values and doctrines of individualism included in Lukes's treatment has shown, firstly, the variety of strands in this tradition, which includes individualist ideas not pointed to in the radical arguments under consideration. Of particular significance in this regard are the four unit ideas or basic values of the dignity of man, autonomy, privacy and self-development. I have shown, secondly, that a liberal may be committed to these individualist values while rejecting other individualist doctrines, especially abstract individualism, economic individualism and ethical egoism. These three doctrines are those clearly under attack in the radical arguments at issue, but there are also other individualist doctrines, i.e. political, epistemological, methodological and religious individualism, which are also not necessary to a liberal position. I have shown, thirdly, that there are strong arguments against most of the individualist doctrines, in spite of their historical association with the development of liberalism. Fourthly, most of these individualist notions are

incompatible with the liberal individualist notion of education which I have set out to defend. A final element in my response to this objection to 'liberal' theory of education will be to show, as part of my argument in section 5, that Marx himself would endorse some individualist values.

4

My position is not unproblematic. I posited in section 2 a likely objection to the formal defence of the kind of individualism developed there. This objection arose from my treatment of White's ideas. The objection was that I attempt to use White's notion of education to defend a view of education which I have described as 'individualist', apparently ignoring White's opposition to 'individualism'. In first raising this objection I maintained that this is not necessarily an inconsistency on my part, and that the ensuing section 3 would demonstrate the complexities involved in identifying what 'individualism' is. There I showed the variety of strands in the individualist tradition and argued that while some of these are essential to a liberal position, others might be rejected as incompatible with liberalism.

What notion of 'individualism' is White opposed to? I mentioned in section 2 how White associates 'individualism' with the attitude of the moral minimalist, who pursues self-interest tempered by a minimal set of moral obligations to others. Here White implicitly rejects ethical egoism, although as I pointed

out before the moral minimalist is not a total egoist. White's defence of moral autonomy as the supreme aim of education is also implicitly in opposition to the kind of individualism reflected in ethical egoism. We need to see this in the light of the further observation that the competitive self-interest of economic individualism would also be rejected by White.

While opposed, it seems, to 'individualism', White is more sympathetic to a notion of 'individuality'. This is evident both in The Aims of Education Restated and in his paper 'Conceptions of Individuality'.⁽¹⁵⁾ In the latter White explores the theories of individuality of J. S. Mill and Sir Percy Nunn, taking the line that a core idea in the concept of individuality is that of self-determination, the latter notion now being a familiar component of his view of education and its aims. Consistent with his position in The Aims of Education Restated, White's view here is that cultivation of the pupil's 'individuality' should be an aim of education, together with the moral aims of education.

While White is occupied in part of this paper with critical reflection on the ways in which Mill and Nunn develop 'exaggerations' of the core idea of self-determination, my own interest in White's paper is in the extent to which both Mill and Nunn in their development of the notion of individuality incorporate features which are at odds with a liberal view of education. In pointing to these features and to a further two which I want to add to those raised by White I intend to suggest that 'individuality', like 'individualism' has a history which

incorporates certain features which are incompatible with a genuine liberalism.

Let us begin with White's treatment of Mill's theory of individuality. Mill identifies individuality with self-determination, with his qualification that this should not harm others. White elaborates:

Self-determination is contrasted with determination by others, with allowing one's plan of life to be dictated by custom, popular opinion, the tastes and beliefs of the majority. But since there are few, Mill believes, who have the power to withstand these social pressures on them and to shape their lives in original ways, the cultivation of individuality is the cultivation of 'genius' i.e. of a creative élite.(16)

While White's agenda is to separate out the various strands in Mill's and Nunn's theories of individuality, he makes a subsequent move which is of special significance for my enterprise. White attempts to detach Mill's account of individuality from its élitism. Accepting that for Mill individuality is found chiefly in the 'man of genius' who is able to free himself from 'the despotism of custom', White's interest is in whether the cultivation of individuality could become a universal ideal and he proceeds to explore the possibilities if, as he puts it, the demand is lowered. What interests me is Mill's preoccupation with 'genius', which reflects his view that society comprises a small creative élite, 'the intelligent part of the public', with the vast majority who are 'moderate in intellect' characterized by their mediocrity. 'There are but few persons, in comparison with the whole of mankind, whose

experiments, if adopted by others, would be likely to be any improvement on established practice. But these few are the salt of the earth; without them human life would become a stagnant pool.'(17) The cultivation of this élite requires the cultivation of individuality. It must be observed that in Mill we have the expression of a theory of individuality which embraces an élitism incompatible with a genuine liberalism and a liberal notion of education.

In Nunn's theory of individuality we find two features, abstract individualism and IQ élitism, which must be dissociated from liberalism and a liberal notion of education. In his notion of child-centred education Nunn posits, alongside his biological developmentalism, the idea of the individual shaping her own life independently of others. White correctly objects to the extreme individualism assumed here, emphasising the social nature of the individual as a user of concepts whose criteria are necessarily intersubjective, in the face of this a-social conception of the individual, the individual of abstract individualism.

The further problem with Nunn's idea of individuality is that it incorporates IQ-élitism. For Nunn, the cultivation of the pupil's individuality being the aim of education, the highest forms of individuality are to be found in those with the highest IQ. Nunn shares Mill's élitist tendency. It is by now quite clear that élitism is not compatible with a genuinely liberal theory of society or of education.

In addition to the two features in the history of theories of individuality which I have suggested to be incompatible with liberalism, namely élitism and abstract individualism, there are further negative features not mentioned by White, but pointed out by Lukes. Tracing the development of the notion of 'individuality' in Germany, which he treats as a use of 'individualism' distinct from its negative French use, Lukes shows how this idea of individuality developed along various lines, including those of egoism and nationalism. The former finds its extreme expression in a striking passage by Max Stirner:

I, the egoist, have not at heart the welfare of 'human society'. I sacrifice nothing to it. I only utilize it: but to be able to utilize it completely I must transform it rather into my property and my creature - i.e., I must annihilate it and form in its place the Union of Egoists.(18)

This expression of 'individuality' is significant. Here we have an extreme statement of the self-interest associated with that brand of 'individualism' which Lukes elsewhere calls ethical egoism. This raises acutely the issue of what the difference is between theories of individualism and those of individuality, to which I shall return. Let us note before moving on that egoism as an expression of individuality is as clearly incompatible with a liberal notion of education as it is when an expression of individualism.

Also incompatible with a liberal notion of education is the progression which Lukes traces in the German use of 'individuality' from the individuality of persons to that of the

state or nation. This was found in a number of early nineteenth century German thinkers. The uniqueness of the individual becomes subsumed in the uniqueness of the nation, which is an organic and spiritual whole. Individuality and self-expression are to be found in membership of the Volk. This brand of individuality, which is reminiscent of the dangers which Isaiah Berlin saw in the notion of positive freedom, is obviously, by virtue of its inclination towards authoritarianism alone, opposed to liberalism. I observed in Chapter 6 how it finds expression in the South African context in the principle of self-determination for different 'cultural' groups, and threatens individual freedom as a result. It is not compatible with a liberal view of education as developing individual freedom, the latter notion calling up principally the three kinds of autonomy which I have argued to be necessary and central to a liberal notion of education.

We have observed that theories of 'individuality' have certain features which are inimical to a liberal position. Theories of individuality have had a historical tendency to types of élitism, abstract individualism, egoism and nationalism. But what is the significance of this observation? It demonstrates that it would be misguided to assume, and I am not suggesting that White necessarily does this, that while individualism is undesirable, individuality is desirable. I have shown that both have historical tendencies towards ideas which are incompatible with liberalism, although I would probably have to concede that this is particularly marked in the case of individualism. But both

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