

RESEARCH ARTICLE		The Philosophical Context of Art Education in Light of Selected Philosophical Approaches	
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Abstract			
<p>As the second most significant social institution after the family, the school has attained a prominent position within social spheres and across the globe due to its role in socialisation and education. It is fundamentally responsible for the construction of both the individual and society. The school diligently strives to equip the learner with various skills, values, and principles that contribute to personality development from early childhood. It supports the individual intellectually, culturally, emotionally, and civilisational, building the self, enabling meaningful interaction with others, sound decision-making, and adopting appropriate stances to confront the era's challenges and coexist with others, regardless of their background.</p> <p>To achieve these aims, the school relies on various didactic, scientific, technical, and artistic media, such as theatre, drama, cinema, and literature. These foster diverse experiential domains in the child and prepare them for communication processes and various forms of expression, particularly artistic expression. This raises the following question: What is the rationale behind using these media? Moreover, can they indeed foster artistic and practical creativity in children and realise the educational objectives assigned to them?</p>			
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## Introduction

Art education plays an unparalleled role in the didactic educational process for children. It is not a subject taught through rote learning, as is the case with other academic disciplines such as history, geography, and the sciences. Instead, it consists of creative activities to develop the child's abilities and reveal their learning skills and competencies. Moreover, art education serves the essential function of generating meaning and enhancing a child's intellectual capacity, such as imagination, intelligence, and concentration.

Through artistic didactic media such as images, films, and school theatre, including visual and auditory tools, as well as

mechanical aids, children are supported in acquiring knowledge and forming attitudes toward what is presented to them. This is achieved through the interaction between the creative material and the learning child. Such creative material may consist of literary texts, whether poetic or prosaic, which elicit artistic pleasure to the extent that the learner lives through this aesthetic enjoyment. This process delineates the space between the child as a reader-learner and the artistic-creative work.

Within this aesthetic realm, the child learner's personality takes shape intellectually, ethically, and behaviourally, and their psychological well-being is nurtured. Generally, education in its specific sense and art in its broader sense con-

tribute to comprehensive development in education and across other sectors, including politics, economics, and beyond.

Therefore, through this study, I aim to elucidate the role and responsibilities that art education has taken in enriching children's cultural awareness, developing their various abilities and competencies, and producing meaning and aesthetic reception. What, then, is meant by art education? What mechanisms and strategies are employed to achieve a child's cognitive and personal growth? More specifically, what artistic didactic media can contribute to developing a child's intellect and emotional sensibility? To what extent are drama, theatre, narrative, and drawing effective as artistic media in education, moving beyond conventional forms and passive reception towards practice and active application?

## 1. Definition of Education

Nations, particularly Arab nations, need an educational project that gradually prepares a new generation aware of life's development and the continuous changes occurring worldwide. This is a strategic objective that can be achieved through educational construction. This is based on the understanding that the entirety of education's ailments and afflictions ultimately stem from a single source: the failure of educational policies.

Therefore, education aims to prepare a righteous individual capable of fulfilling their societal functions with wisdom and responsibility and achieving comprehensive development across all dimensions of their personality. To realise these objectives, education must begin early in life, namely, in childhood.

Education is defined as preparation for life; indeed, it is "life itself, and an expression of the movement and development of society through it, society progresses and realises its intended goals, as it begins and ends with the human being. Thus, the human being is both the goal and the means of development."<sup>1</sup>

This definition suggests that proper investment in ensuring the integrity of society and its various institutions and in preparing a generation with civilisational qualities lies in and through the human being. We urgently need effective strategies and didactic media that encourage thinking, enhance performance, and transform information into active engagement.

Since education is part of a broader system, that system inevitably influences it. Therefore, it must keep pace with the system's changes and societal developments. This is precisely what Émile Durkheim articulated: education shapes the individual as society desires, not by what nature

has bestowed upon them. It refers to socialisation, the process of transmitting society's culture, values, customs, and traditions to its members. "Society, within the individual, becomes a new being, the social being."<sup>2</sup>

## 2. Branches of Education

Education has been divided into several branches, each playing a role in achieving educational and developmental goals and enabling the child to think and learn with motivation. Among these branches are the following:

### a. Family Education:

The family is regarded as the primary environment and fundamental starting point for the educational process. It is within the family that the child grows up, deriving from it both material needs and educational and moral values. As a family member, the child possesses both material and moral rights to be fulfilled by the parents while also bearing responsibilities, such as discipline and adherence to the family's teachings and principles.

The Enlightenment philosopher Immanuel Kant referred to this type of education as "primary education," describing it as physical, aimed at supporting the child's natural growth and emotional experiences. He also termed it "negative education" insofar as it aligns with the child's natural disposition but emphasises the necessity of instilling discipline and adherence to moral rules and ethical values to help the child emerge from a state of savagery and barbarism. In this form of education, Kant assigned a more prominent role to the mother than the father, considering her the principal agent. He warned that it is not in the child's best interest for the mother to pamper them excessively or to fulfil every desire, as this would hinder their integration into life.

The school, then, takes responsibility for the child's formal instruction, which constitutes the positive aspect of education and serves to complement the role of the family and that of primary education. As Kant stated, "The human being is the only creature that must be educated; and by education we mean care (nourishment), supervision and discipline, as well as instruction combined with formation. From these three perspectives, the human being is an infant, a pupil, and a student."<sup>3</sup>

### b. Social Education

After joining the family as the primary social institution in which they are raised, the child soon integrates into the broader community. Society's distinguishing feature is its role in transforming the child from a being who relies on others to meet their needs and correct their behaviour into

<sup>1</sup> Hani Mahmoud bin Mustafa. *Educational Policies and the Political System*. Amman, Jordan: Jarir Publishing and Distribution, 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Émile Durkheim, *Éducation et sociologie* (Paris: P.E.F., 1989), 12.

<sup>3</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Reflections on Education*, trans. Mahmoud bin Jamaa (Sfax, Tunisia: Mohamed Ali Publishing, 2005), 11.

a mature individual capable of bearing responsibility independently.

Social education seeks to prepare citizens who possess the customs, traditions, values, and culture of the society to which they belong so that these elements become an integral part of their social identity. Moreover, society equips the child with methods and skills for interacting with others and communicating ethics through the shared language that unifies its members.

Social education thus contributes to shaping a mature personality. According to Émile Durkheim, one of the pioneers of the functionalist school, education fulfils three essential functions:

“First, the transmission of societal norms and values from generation to generation.

Second, youth should be trained to engage in social interaction on the basis of the rules of society.

Third is the social division of labour, whereby education teaches individuals the skills necessary for their future professions...”<sup>4</sup>

Social education aims to advance and develop societies, guiding and leading them toward improvement. Since the school is part of the social structure in which it exists, including children, pupils, and students as human and moral resources (in terms of customs and values) and material resources (in terms of facilities), it is one of the school's duties to serve the goals pursued by society. This includes the sharing of mutual interests and the fulfilment of everyday needs.

### c. Religious Education

Religion represents the spiritual bond that connects the Creator with His creations. It is a set of rules, principles, commands, and prohibitions to guide human behaviour and regulate conduct. The family, society, mosques, and schools instil religious values, principles, and behaviours within the child's character. In addition, they equip the child with language as a tool for understanding and reading religious texts. They also cultivate respect for religious symbols and rituals, such as celebrating religious festivals, venerating the Qur'an, and honouring religious figures, including prophets, messengers, and companions.

The family is the primary space from which the child receives religious values and teachings, often through advice, guidance, and behavioural refinement by the principles laid out in religious law. Families strive to ensure the regular observance of religious practices, such as prayer and fasting. A child raised in a devout household and society will likely

develop a solid religious foundation, and the reverse is equally true. The quality of the family environment is closely linked to the nature of the education it provides its children.

For these reasons, the Quran is more important to the family than other religious traditions are. "Qur'anic legislation has granted the family great attention, regarding it as the nucleus from which all human relationships emerge. It has bestowed upon it a level of care, the safeguarding of rights, and protection from fragmentation and decay, unmatched by any other religious code affirming thereby its recognition of the family's position and its crucial role in building a sound society.”<sup>5</sup>

### e. Political Education

Political education develops and prepares the individual to serve the political system through education. Thus, it becomes necessary to establish an educational system that enables the implementation and realisation of the principles, objectives, and aims of political discourse. The direct outcome of this process is to place education in the service of politics and the citizen as an individual endowed with rights and bound by duties.

Both Plato and Aristotle agreed on the necessity of political education, as the ultimate aim of politics is to prepare a virtuous citizen through education. In his dialogue *The Republic*, Plato linked education with justice and law, asserting that attaining justice as the highest virtue requires proper education. He stated, "Education, in truth, is the preparation of children and their guidance towards the principles and rules that the law has declared to be right.”<sup>6</sup>

On this basis, the state strives to establish educational institutions and design programmes to realise a rational form of education that serves its political agenda and ensures its continuity and preservation. Education is thus linked to the state, a concept called public education.

Immanuel Kant classified education into private and public forms, favouring the latter over the former owing to its clearly defined and organised objectives. He observed the failure of private education, as it does not align with the living standards of all social groups, particularly low-income families, and he rejected the idea of private tutoring. This is because the child, in such a setting, finds themselves pressured by two authorities: the obligation to comply with the teacher's instructions on the one hand and the desires of the parents on the other hand.

Therefore, education must be public, overseen and directed by the state to serve its predetermined aims and objectives. "Education," Kant asserted, "may be either

<sup>4</sup> Saeed Ismail Amro, *On Education and Democratic Transformation: An Analytical Study of Education in the Thought of Henry Giroux* (Cairo, Egypt: Egyptian-Lebanese House, 2007), 57.

<sup>5</sup> Zainab Radwan, *Social Theory in Islamic Thought*, 2nd ed. (Cairo, Egypt: Dar Al-Maaref, 1982), 145.

<sup>6</sup> Plato, *The Laws*, trans. Mohammed Hassan Zaza (Cairo, Egypt: General Egyptian Book Organisation, 1986), 134.

private or public; the latter does not concern only instruction, which may always remain public.”<sup>7</sup>

Thinkers of the Enlightenment regarded education as a fundamental instrument for political and social change. Accordingly, they linked education with state intervention, viewing it as a public regulation of human behaviour. They treated education as a political issue rather than merely a pedagogical one and worked to liberate it from the grip of religious institutions and their ideologies. Their insistence on subordinating public education to the state aimed at eliminating human disparities and reducing inequality among learners.

“In this way,” enlightenment thinkers asserted, “By associating education with the public state, they identified two main functions of education. The first is political-social in nature, concerning its role in fostering enlightenment... and in reducing existing inequalities between the abilities and competencies of individuals from poorer social groups and those from more affluent classes. The second function is civilisational in nature.”<sup>8</sup>

On the basis of this premise, they tied the success or failure of education to the nature of the state's political authority.

The American philosopher John Dewey, known for his pragmatist orientation, considered education's ultimate aim to be the embodiment and service of the democratic system. This idea was reflected in the curricula and educational programmes in his book *Schools of Tomorrow*, which he coauthored with his daughter, Evelyn Dewey.

Dewey's emphasis on education bears a notable resemblance to Plato's conception of education in *the Republic*, which is based on the belief that “the greatest guarantee of the state's endurance and strength lies in the education of its citizens and their guidance according to a general plan that assigns to each individual a role in accordance with their natural aptitudes, in service of the Republic.”<sup>9</sup>

John Dewey did not limit himself to linking education with democracy merely on a theoretical level; instead, he brought it into practice through his *school-as-laboratory* project and the concept of progressive education. Suppose that we are discussing the role of education in embodying the democratic system as a political model. In that case, we find a strong presence of this notion in Jürgen Habermas's communicative philosophy. Habermas connected the act of communication and the ethics of discourse as educational procedures and practices with the realisation of the demo-

cratic order through the transfer of debate and argumentation from the public sphere to the private sphere via the mediums of civil society to achieve what he terms *deliberative democracy*.

However, suppose that education aims to realise democracy, whether in the minds of John Dewey, Habermas, or other philosophers. In that case, it must also be acknowledged that the application of educational programmes and systems presupposes the existence of freedom and autonomy. It is therefore valid to ask, as the Tunisian thinker Fathi Triki once did, “What kind of democracy for what kind of education?”<sup>10</sup>

Beyond democracy, education also seeks to instill values of citizenship and patriotism, embedding their principles within the fabric of civic identity.

#### f. Economic Education

Economic education involves raising citizens' awareness of the fundamental principles of economics, enabling them to manage their economic affairs effectively. For example, in former socialist countries, educational programmes incorporated the model of the socialist system and Marxist theory. As in the former Soviet Union, “Marxist theory constituted the ideological foundation of education in all socialist states. In this context, education was not merely a means of cultural enrichment; rather, it was deliberately employed to serve the core objective of socialism, namely, the transformation of human life.”<sup>11</sup>

Economic education is instilled through learning curricula, educational activity programmes, and educational tools such as televised educational broadcasts.

#### g. Art Education

Art education begins within the family, which serves as the foundational environment for nurturing the child's aesthetic and artistic sensibility. Through play and role-playing, the family contributes to developing the child's emotional awareness and stimulation of their sensory perception. Following the family, the school plays a key role in the child's artistic development. It is considered one of the most significant environments for art education, with a more effective influence than the family does, as it operates during the formative years when the child is building their knowledge base.

“As early as the beginning of the last century, many countries around the world recognised the critical importance of the educational process and began to reform their educational policies with regard to curriculum, teaching methods,

<sup>7</sup> Immanuel Kant, *op. cit.*, 25.

<sup>8</sup> Abdelhaq Mounsef, *The Enlightenment and the Authority of the Pedagogical Expert: A Study in the Theory of Culture and Education in Immanuel Kant* (Morocco: Afrique Orient, 2011), 30.

<sup>9</sup> Mounis Bakhadra et al., “John Dewey,” in *Dictionary of American Philosophers: From the Pragmatists to the Postmodernists* (Algiers: Ikhtilaf Publications, 2015), 186–87.

<sup>10</sup> Fathi Triki et al., “The Principle of Democracy, Education, and Socialisation,” in *Education and Democracy* (Tunis: Mediterranean Publishing and Distribution, 2010), 61.

<sup>11</sup> Wahib Semaan, *Education in Socialist Countries* (Egypt: Anglo-Egyptian Library, 1972), 1.

and the psychological and intellectual needs of students. As a result, educational technologies such as cinema, television, computers, and theatre were introduced into the educational domain. These were regarded as essential subjects that closely interact with and integrate into the learning experience within a comprehensive framework.<sup>12</sup>

*Art education* is relatively recent compared with the concept of *art*, which dates back to the Greek era. The significance of art education in schools lies in its orientation towards nonrational didactic media and in highlighting the role of marginal and *nonphilosophy*, in the language of Deleuze, in the process of creativity. It seeks to cultivate the child's emotional dimension and aesthetic values, nurtures their inclinations and aptitudes, adjusts their behaviour, and enables them to express their emotions and feelings through art as a linguistic mode alongside verbal language and expressions.

Artistic and aesthetic education refers to "the development of the ability for aesthetic expression. It is the result of a long journey filled with aesthetic experience and ways of appreciating it... in addition to the presence of aesthetic judgment, appreciation, artistic evaluation, and aesthetic taste."<sup>13</sup>

In addition to the aforementioned branches of education, such as moral and environmental education, the focus here will be on the role of art education and artistic didactic media and their function in instilling a variety of values and principles that are religious, moral, scientific, and others and in developing the child's personality in a holistic sense. What, then, are these media?

### 3. Principal Artistic Didactic Media

Artistic didactic media refer to the key applied aesthetic and sensory creations through which the child interacts with the educational experience in the school setting. These may include oral artistic media such as theatre, cinema, and folk literature or written artistic media such as stories, novels, poetry, and visual arts. The aim of employing these media is to recognise the value and role of art in the learning process, viewing them as practical teaching tools that grant the learner a central role in the educational experience<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> Hani Youssef Al-Jarrah, *School Theatre Activities and Techniques: Training School Activity Practitioners in Stage Lighting Skills* (Amman, Jordan: Yafa Scientific Publishing and Distribution, 2009), 44.

<sup>13</sup> Ibrahim Al-Hussein, *Education through Art: Excavation in the Mechanisms of Aesthetic and Visual Reception* (Casablanca, Morocco: Alam Al-Tarbia Publications, 2009), 64.

<sup>14</sup> Victoria P., Katie B., (2025). Understanding technology acceptance towards online creative arts learning in teacher education, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, Volume 162, 2025, 105085,

The success of the educational process is no longer confined to the academic dimension alone; it has extended to a range of activities and practices that go beyond mere reception and rote memorisation and that move away from exclusive reliance on the textbook as a learning tool. The French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau rejected the contents of the school textbook, believing that work and play teach far more than lessons and that proverbs can offer through reading alone. He "emphasised the importance of the emotional dimension in the learning process, asserting that the development of personality does not rely solely on the intellectual aspect but is also linked to what enables emotions and feelings to grow in a balanced way, empowering the individual to act appropriately in life situations."<sup>15</sup>

John Dewey likewise criticised traditional education, which is based on passive reception and the subordination of children to their teachers. He proposed the concept of progressive education, which emphasises the importance of harnessing children's interests and providing opportunities for school-based work and activities that foster their abilities and personal development.

"Through these occupations, the entire spirit of the school is renewed... and it becomes the child's environment, where learning occurs through direct living experience."<sup>16</sup>

#### a. Theatre

Also referred to as *drama*, a term synonymous with the French *théâtre*, the word *drama* is derived from the Greek verb *drao*, meaning "I act." The Greek philosopher Aristotle employed the term in his *Poetics*, explaining that children learn lessons through imitation and mimicry, particularly role-play and dramatisation. Acting thus constitutes the foundational element of drama, as it represents life portrayed on stage.

Drama, as a professional art, differs from drama, as it is an educational tool designed to fulfil pedagogical objectives and embody educational programmes through performance. The origins of children's theatre as a medium for teaching ethics and religion can be traced back to Ancient Egypt. "Pharaonic artefacts indicate that the earliest theatre in the world was that of Ancient Egypt, which staged numerous plays for children, such as *Isis*... These performances were held in temples, bringing joy and delight to children."<sup>17</sup>

The educational system's curricula reflect the growing awareness of the importance of teaching artistic subjects.

<sup>15</sup> Abdelkarim Ali Al-Yemani, *Philosophy of Education* (Amman, Jordan: Dar Al-Shorouk for Publishing and Distribution, 2004), 87.

<sup>16</sup> John Dewey, *School and Society*, trans. Ahmed Hassan Al-Rahim (Beirut, Lebanon: Dar Maktabat Al-Hayat, n.d.), 14.

<sup>17</sup> Iman Al-Arabi Al-Naqeeb, *Theatre and Educational Values for the Child* (Egypt: University Knowledge House, 2011), 97.

Some learning situations proposed by educational programmes actively encourage children and learners to engage in various activities, including theatre. The values acquired by the child through this activity may be influenced significantly by the family, peer groups, and plays presented by the state and the Ministry of Culture and Arts for children.

Theatrical activity and dramatic performance are among children's most prominent and influential activities due to their aesthetic appeal, refined taste, and artistic expression, whether in form or execution. They aim not only to instil values but also to offer enjoyment, entertainment, and suspense, thereby facilitating the understanding of educational content in a manner that departs from traditional reception and rote learning.

Such activities are "based on the enactment of knowledge within a context where the student identifies with a particular role, in a situation involving tension, employing all of their intellectual, emotional, physical, and linguistic faculties, whereby they discover educational content either independently or with the assistance of their peers."<sup>18</sup>

Theatre serves as a vital link between various art forms, such as music, literature, singing, and acting, and provides a medium for children to express diverse artistic skills through movement, recitation, dance, and a rich linguistic, cognitive, and cultural repertoire. For this reason, schools and educational programmes are keen to present academic content within a theatrical framework. Theatre plays a key role in uncovering and exploring children's mental abilities, behavioural skills, and cultural knowledge through educational institutions' practical implementation of this activity.

By engaging in such applied activities, we may liberate education from informational overload, the centralisation of the teacher, and the sterility of outdated teaching methods, transforming them into more fertile and dynamic approaches. It also enables a shift from mere memorisation and reliance on memory to the activation of imagination and contemplation.

Immanuel Kant insisted on simultaneously developing both faculties and abilities without favouring one over the other. He categorised them into higher faculties, reason, understanding, and judgement and lower faculties, attention, memory, and imagination.

Theatre further enhances the child's linguistic repertoire through exposure to various linguistic and grammatical structures. Children who engage in theatre generally acquire stronger and more enriched linguistic capacity than their peers do. In addition, theatre contributes to cultivating value through diverse formats such as humour and satire rather than through preaching and moral instruction, with

the former having a more significant impact than the latter. Moreover, it aids in "raising awareness of the nation's history and the eternal days of Islam, and provide exemplary role models by introducing heroic and outstanding Islamic figures."<sup>19</sup>

Theatre is a communication medium and a meeting point for ancient and contemporary cultures. It also serves as a mode of human interaction. Given its significance, educational institutions should be encouraged to establish theatres within each school, organise theatrical performances, form theatre troupes, and deliver lectures on theatre art. Learners should be encouraged to engage in playwriting and theatrical performance.

To achieve these goals, the theatre supervisor must possess specific qualifications, the most important of which include "a solid understanding of the educational objectives of teaching; good knowledge of the students they are working with; flexibility and problem-solving abilities; and proficiency in the skills of public speaking and the art of acting."<sup>20</sup>

Theatre comprises elements and tools, foremost the script, constituting the foundational material upon which the theatrical piece is built. The script conveys an event expressed through specific roles, with the playwright selecting events connected to reality and life and aligned with the intended message to be communicated to the audience and spectators, with a focus on what is engaging and relevant.

Theatre also conveys an idea, as every dramatic act carries meaning: "The image represents a dramatic moment imbued with meaning."<sup>21</sup> The characters transmit this idea, transforming the written text into movement and dramatic action filled with emotion and expression. They adopt a style of performance suited to the child's cognitive level and chronological age. "The dramatic language must carry both emotional and intellectual personality, and it must be close to reality."<sup>22</sup>

In addition to the spatial and temporal framework, set design plays a crucial role in theatre, particularly in capturing children's attention, stimulating their senses, and providing visual enjoyment. Great care is taken in crafting the aesthetic presentation of theatrical works by relying on elements such as music, costumes, colours, and lighting.

"There is no doubt that the most important truth no lighting designer ever forgets is the need to illuminate the stage with sufficient intensity to draw the audience's attention directly to the artistic performance... Theatre is a visual

<sup>18</sup> Lina Nabil Abu Maghli and Mustafa Qaseem Hilalat, *Drama and Theatre in Education: Theory and Practice* (Amman, Jordan: Al-Raya Publishing and Distribution, 2008), 25.

<sup>19</sup> Ramzi Ahmed Abdel-Hay, *Educational Media in the Age of the Information and Communication Technology Revolution* (Amman, Jordan: Al-Warraq Publishing and Distribution, 2011), 139.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 149.

<sup>21</sup> Abu Maghli and Hilalat, *Drama and Theatre in Education*, 33.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 33.

composition woven from all the pictorial elements that constitute a work of art."<sup>23</sup>

There are various styles and methods for presenting children's theatre. These include live theatre, in which roles are performed by adults, children, or both, and puppet theatre, one of the most beloved folk art forms among young audiences. Puppet theatre includes marionettes (string puppets), among the most widely used types, such as glove puppets, rod puppets, and stick puppets.

Puppet theatre is also known as "*marionette theatre*" or "*karakul*." It has two primary forms: one in which the puppets are manipulated directly in front of the audience using strings and another in which the performers' own hands operate them. The latter is an open-type theatre, with stories performed in the open air.<sup>24</sup>

## b. Cinema

Cinema, known as the *seventh art*, is relatively modern compared with theatre, whose origins date back to ancient Egyptians and Greeks. Cinema combines image and movement, later enhanced by sound, dialogue, and events embodied in artistically engaging roles. It is a beautiful art that combines various other arts to produce visual work on a screen.

The emergence of cinema is linked to the development of documentary presentations. The first moving image projection was by the Lumière brothers, Auguste and Louis, who filmed the scene of workers leaving the Renault factory and presented it "in one of the cafés in the city of Lyon, France."<sup>25</sup>

Initially, cinema was associated with economic realities and the birth of commercial film. It later evolved into feature films, eventually reaching the realms of literary cinema and cinema philosophy. Today, cinema is seen as a meaningful language that portrays reality, suggests visions of the future, and appeals to emotions and the inner self. It is a language that requires decoding and interpretive analysis, a text open to exegesis, and a marginal space from which truth is formed.

Cinema involves aesthetic colours expressed through an audiovisual language in which imagination merges with sensory perception. Its essential elements are narrative and plot. Deleuze says, "Cinema thinks but through feelings and emotions, not through images of all kinds. However, it

remains without concepts; it is up to philosophy to create the concepts that cinema has not been able to generate."<sup>26</sup>

Given cinema's importance in producing meaning, enabling aesthetic reception, revealing reality, and anticipating the future through the architecture of sound and image and through the visions and perspectives expressed by the filmmaker with the camera and by the writer through the novel and the short story, it has become necessary to integrate cinema into educational programmes, particularly about the child, as a foundational element of society.

Cinema plays a significant role in education, pedagogy, and cultural enrichment. It possesses a powerful ability to attract children and engage them with the content presented in a film. Cinema also holds the capacity to instil values and reinforce identity. Following independence, the state of Algeria, through the national broadcasting channel, focused on films depicting the War of Liberation. These films illustrate how people's consciousness of freedom was formed and expose the methods used by colonial powers to erase national identity and suppress Muslim Algerian character.

For these reasons, educational cinema should be integrated as an active component in promoting value through image, movement, sound, and rhythm. There is a call to allocate a dedicated screening room within educational institutions for cinematic presentations that support educational programmes, especially at the early stages of schooling.

A child cannot attain abstract understanding, creativity, or comprehension except through what is tangible and perceptible. Moreover, the role of cinema extends beyond entertainment; it can be used as an integrative learning situation that stimulates thought, cinematic imagination, and even aesthetic judgment, or what might be called the faculty of taste.

Cinema also plays a critical role in cultivating the learner's critical spirit. Just as Kant laid the foundation for critical thinking through his three significant works, *Critique of Pure Reason*, *Critique of Practical Reason*, and *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, and relied on reason to critique reason, positioning it as both judge and defendant, cinema similarly assumes a critical function. It enables the viewer to perceive the world, question reality, and critique society. "According to Walter Benjamin, cinema reveals a visual unconscious in the same way that psychoanalysis uncovers an instinctual unconscious."<sup>27</sup>

For this reason, cinematic films aimed at children should be engaging, with fast-paced action and concise dialogue that fosters enjoyment and delight. Such films should also avoid

<sup>23</sup> Shukri Abdelwahab, *Aesthetic and Dramatic Values of Colour and Light* (Alexandria, Egypt: Horus International Foundation, 2008), 25.

<sup>24</sup> Mohammed Abu Samra, *Educational Media and the Role of School Radio in the Learning Process* (Amman, Jordan: Al-Raya Publishing and Distribution, 2010), 166.

<sup>25</sup> Abdelkader Malfi, *The Interaction of Image and Text*, Publications of the Mass Communication Laboratory: *Semiotics of Visual Systems* (Algiers: 2015), 14.

<sup>26</sup> Maazouz Abdelali, *Philosophy of Cinema: The Cinematic Image between Art and Thought* (Casablanca, Morocco: Al-Madaris Publishing and Distribution, 2017), 27.

<sup>27</sup> Abdelali, *Philosophy of Cinema*, 204.

relying on deceit, tricks, or manipulation to achieve success, ensuring the child's moral integrity and sound behaviour.

The school textbook should also use cinematic imagery as didactic scientific material, particularly in oral and written expression and reading sessions. Such images may prove more effective than traditional prose texts, as they are more engaging and communicative, functioning as meaningful signs that convey multiple layers of interpretation. They possess the ability to capture the pupil's attention both cognitively and emotionally.

### c. Children's Literature

The discourse on education is inseparable from children's literature, one of the key artistic, educational, and awareness-raising media. Recently, separating education from art, learning from creativity, or intellectual abilities from emotional and affective experiences has become increasingly unacceptable.

Children's literature refers to creative expressions conveyed through oral or written language to transmit an idea, story, or tale through which the writer or creator communicates with the receiving reader or listener.

Just as the film or theatre director selects actors, sets, lighting, and other visual elements, the literary author carefully chooses words and expressions, employing rhetorical and stylistic devices such as metaphor, metonymy, and imagery to convey what resides in their emotions and inner world and to communicate it to others.

Children's literature differs from adult literature in content, language, and objectives. The former aims to develop the child's abilities and literacy skills and educate them in ways appropriate to their age. Accordingly, short stories, novels, and poetry books have been published for children, and the content of school textbooks has reflected this orientation.

Rifā' al-Rāfi' al-Taḥṭāwī, a pioneer of the Arab cultural renaissance, emphasises "the importance of dedicating specific literary genres for children within schools, and incorporated the reading of stories and tales into the curriculum for primary school pupils."<sup>28</sup>

Children's literature takes various forms, including folk literature and the creative expression of the popular collective, which is passed down orally from generation to generation. It serves as "a means of entertainment and of interpersonal connection, as well as a tool for reinforcing collective memory through the narration of ancestral tales and heroic feats." This category includes folk songs, stories, and prose forms that reflect reality or narrate imaginative experiences that transcend the boundaries of time and space.

Stories are important for developing listening skills, improving language style, and enhancing reading and writing abilities. They also increase the child's awareness of themselves and others, help them express opinions, provide commentary, and discuss the story's content in ways appropriate to their cognitive and chronological development. Stories come in many forms, including fantastic, romantic, historical, and scientific narratives.

"To be successful, a story must centre on educational values, which serve as its clear and desired objective. Therefore, we must always present children with stories that deepen positive life values and stimulate interest in science, art, and literature."<sup>29</sup>

Other artistic forms, didactic media, and various educational activities are no less important than previously mentioned. These include drawing, music, animated videos, and play, which are spontaneous and indispensable elements of the educational process. This is precisely what John Dewey affirmed in his book *Schools of Tomorrow*.

### Conclusion

Education is the philosopher's laboratory within which educational ideas are formed and shaped. The notion of the laboratory implies that the essence of the educational process lies in developing the child's capacities through various didactic media, both artistic and non-artistic, and in cultivating the ability for aesthetic expression. Studies have shown that education is a dynamic act in which the cognitive, cultural, and social dimensions intersect. It is a continuously evolving human project whose ultimate goal is to prepare children capable of contributing and grounded in structured educational principles and values.

The mission of education is not limited to the development of intellectual and emotional capacities; rather, it encompasses all aspects of human personality, addressing both the present and future of the child. Education does not prepare the child merely as an individual but as an active and responsible member of society.

Moreover, in addition to focusing on the child as the core of the educational process, it is essential to invest in developing teachers' and educators' competencies, training them according to modern educational approaches that align with the spirit of the age. The success of the educational process depends not only on didactic media but also on the curriculum, the school and social environment, and above all, on qualified teachers, who can effectively employ practical techniques and media to prepare children capable of integrating into their environment and their time.

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