

**Learning history in and outside the classroom: how the
interaction between museums and primary schools constructs
understandings of history**

by

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requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

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*To my parents,
again*

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Abstract

It has been argued that the Educational Reform Act 1988, with the introduction of the National Curriculum (NC), effected changes in museum education (Hooper-Greenhill, 1994d: 240-241; Hein 2006:6). This study looks at the relationship between schools and museum education, and how it is mediated by the NC for History in Wales. The majority of existing museum data derives from studies that collect visitors' and children's views either during or after their visit. This study tries to bridge this gap by combining these two institutional settings, using history in the NC as a lens in order to study the relationship between these two social settings: schools and museums.

The study takes two epistemological grounds into account. The first examines cultural policies, the NC, and the ways in which they represent or promote history. The second considers the ways in which people directly involved with these policies put them into practice. Simultaneously, it looks at how children respond to their visit to St Fagans: National History Museum (henceforth St. Fagans: NHM).

The research data derives from classroom observations, before, during and after children's participation in the history workshops and activities offered to schools by St Fagans: NHM as well as from interviews with museum professionals, teachers and the history advisers for Wales. The findings show that the ways in which history is taught at the participant schools and through the history activities for children at St Fagans: NHM reflect the general direction of neo-liberal approaches to knowledge and learning. History teaching and learning appears to take an instrumental form, which places more emphasis on activities rather than knowledge and understanding. Learning through activities was a central demand of the progressive voices that demanded child-centred curricula in Britain during the late 1960s. Nevertheless, this shift is now taking place under different political and economic goals, which are in line with neoliberal directives that emphasise the learning of transferable skills through each NC subject.

Additionally, the findings of the study suggest that workshops for history at St Fagans: NHM fail to equip children with analytic skills of knowledge and understanding. History is mainly restricted to the enquiry of superficial relations of objects and material

expressions of social history, which do not allow children to grasp further the social relations and processes of the historical period studied. Moreover, with few exceptions, the workshops for history do not raise awareness of the particularities of Welsh history and its relations to the history of the other nations of Britain during the periods studied.

Nevertheless, the analysis of the interview data shows that there is a certain level of unease about the directions of the NC as well as the character of St Fagans: NHM, as part of the National Museum of Wales. The participant teachers, museum professionals and history advisers are satisfied with the 'active' and enquiring character that school history seems to be taking on board, but there are some concerns about the ways in which these could be balanced out with historical knowledge and understanding, chronological awareness as well as the complicated social and political implications of the historical period studied and its connections to the present.

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Abbreviations

ACCAC

The Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales
(Formerly the ACAC: Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales)

CCW

Curriculum Council for Wales

CfL

Campaign for Learning

DfEE

Department for Education and Employment

DfELLS

The Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills
(Formerly the Department for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills, Wales)

DfES

Department for Education and Skills, UK

DfCSF

Department for Children, Schools and Families)

ERA 1988

Education Reform Act 1988

HCW

History Committee of Wales

HWG

History Working Group

KS

Key Stage

MLA

Museums Libraries and Archives

NAW

National Assembly for Wales

NC
National Curriculum

NMW
National Museum of Wales

SHP
School History Project

SEMLAC: South East Museum, Library and Archive Council

St Fagans: NHM
St Fagans: National History Museum

WAG
Welsh Assembly Government

*So the Old strode in disguised as the New, but it brought the New with its
triumphal procession and presented it as the Old...*

Berthold Brecht (*Parade of the Old and New*)

Chapter One: Introduction

Defining the context of the National Curriculum and the National Museum of Wales

Introduction

This study examines how schools and museums have responded to, and accommodated, the requirements of the National Curriculum for History, first set out in the Educational Reform Act (1988). This objective has entailed the generation of two distinct data sets, which have lent the study its twin themes: the educational and the museological. In order to comprehend and analyse the relevant education policies, namely the National Curriculum (NC) and the approaches to it adopted by schools and museums in Wales, it is crucial to understand the general context within which these policies and approaches have been created.

This chapter introduces the main areas of the study. Part A provides a synopsis of the main subjects and theoretical areas relating to the study: the National Curriculum, museological approaches and an overview of historical approaches. Part B discusses the three relevant Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) policy documents, which are referred to throughout the thesis, together with a brief discussion of the Lisbon Strategy (2000) and EU policies that are closely connected to UK and Welsh policies. Finally, Part C details the structure of the thesis.

The reason for including a discussion of my primary sources in this introductory chapter is because I consider these policies to be both primary sources as well as documents wherein dominant political discourses are reflected. Therefore, in order to comprehend and analyse education policies, the National Curriculum, and the new approaches to museums in Wales, it is crucial to understand the general context within which these policies and approaches have been created.

Part A: Statement of the problem and originality of the study

Aims of the study

Since its introduction in 1988, the NC has been contested at all levels; that is, within and between the macro-level of policy making, through to its implementation at the micro-level of the school. It is a story of ideological struggle, and about how the processes of policy making and implementation worked to define and redefine the nature of school subjects. Perhaps no subject was as hard fought over as history (see Phillips, 1998). Its reach was not restricted to the education (schools) sector, but as several commentators have noted, the introduction of the NC also impelled changes in museum education (Hein 2006:6; Hooper-Greenhill, 1994d: 240-241). In this thesis I study the relationship between schools and museum education; that is, how each has mediated history in the NC for England and Wales.

Furthermore, the study looks at if, and how, history as a subject in the NC was forged out of dominant political agendas, which give emphasis to particular forms of

knowledge and knowledge acquisition, namely, the 'how' of historical knowledge rather than the 'what' (see Chapter Two). As discussed in later chapters, the priority of content over skills and vice versa became the subject of debates about the need for child-centred versus subject-based curricula in Britain in the 1960s. The present research studies if, and how, the ideas for progressive and child-centred curricula for history and beyond have been used by ideologies that seek to privatise and infuse institutions as well as everyday practices with the laws of the market: ideologies that are characterised by the critics as neoliberal.

Essentially, therefore, the study is about the contest for history and its outcomes, as illustrated by how it is defined as a school subject, what is taught, how teaching and learning takes place, and ultimately, what constitutes historical knowledge and understanding. The main aim of the study is to look at how schools, museums and the National Curriculum for England and Wales have defined history and how these definitions relate to each other. The NC is used as a way of exploring the relationship between schools and museum education, and the extent to which each constructs, and together co-construct, history as a school subject. In order to meet the aims of the study I chose a history museum as my case study, St Fagans: National History Museum (NHM), to represent museum education, and a number of primary schools and history advisers in Wales to represent schools.

The study focuses on Wales rather than England because, despite the fact that the education policies refer to 'England and Wales', it is argued that following devolution in 1999, Wales has taken a different approach to education policies and the

NC than England. This arguably relates to the political history of Wales, and the proclamations of the Welsh Labour Party that, in contrast to the neoliberal 'consumerist' education attitudes in England, they would support the welfare state (Rees, 2005; Reynolds, 2008). This approach has also been attributed to the different education culture, geography and socio-political situation of Wales (Rees and Delamont, 1997; Reynolds, 2008). Furthermore, optimistic views before Devolution and soon after the introduction of the NC for Wales argued that the common requirement of the Curriculum Cymreig in the National Curriculum (see Chapter Two) would be a new chance for Welsh education to promote not only the Welsh language but Welsh culture as a whole, which would pervade the whole ethos of the school (Jones and Lewis, 1995). As a result, it was very interesting to see how these expectations and changes were taken on board and reflected in the most recent changes to the NC for history and the National Museum of Wales (NMW).

Therefore, with a focus on Key Stage 2 history, the key aims of the study were the following:

1. How is history constructed by St Fagans: NHM and by schools in Wales?
2. How are these two constructions of 'national' or Welsh history related to each other?
3. How is this relationship to be understood in the context of wider cultural and educational policy frameworks and wider ideological and political discourses?

From these key aims there were six important points that the empirical research had to address. As a result, the Research Questions were as follows:

1. St Fagan's: NHM: How is 'national history' constructed:
 - a. Through museum-led educational programmes and displays directed at Key Stage 2 (KS2) children?
 - b. By museum policy documents?
 - c. By the key staff?
2. National Curriculum: How is 'national history' constructed:
 - a. Through the NC programmes of study?
 - b. By KS2 class teachers sending children to the NHM?
 - c. By children both in class and during the museum visits?
 - d. By history advisers working for local authorities?
3. How can the above two constructions of 'national' or Welsh history be related to each other?
4. How is this relationship to be understood in the context of wider educational and cultural policy frameworks, implemented by the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG)?
5. How are the above policies related to the European Union educational frameworks?
6. How can these relationships be situated within wider neoliberal or ideological and political discourses?

Originality of the study

Much has been written about the NC and the place of history within it. In recent years there has also been a growth in literature on museum learning. The originality of this study is that it combines two organisational settings, museums and schools. It explores a range of perspectives by engaging in interview research with key informants, such as key museum personnel, school teachers and history advisers. In addition, there has

been an attempt to examine children's understandings of history by engaging in observational fieldwork both in the school classroom and museum-visit contexts.

Most of the existing research data on museum visits has been collected during visits, or within the setting of the museum, despite the fact that learning may take place after a visit, when children return to school, or at a future moment in time when the experience of the visit becomes relevant and is integrated with the visitor's/learner's life (Falk et al., 2006:6). Further, aside from this study, there is none that looks at what children are taught in a museum in conjunction with what they do in the classroom/school and with what the National Curriculum expects them to be taught. Finding a way to reconcile the inevitable divergence between the policies of museums and schools is an issue that arguably has complicated the field of museum education (Hein, 2006:12). This study tries to address these gaps by bringing together the two institutions through an examination of how they define history, how this leads to the adoption of certain forms of museum display and how, in turn, children construct history through their learning experiences.

Theoretical frameworks

Before moving on to the analysis of the general changes in education and museums, I will explain the main theoretical frameworks that I have drawn upon. This section also highlights and clarifies some of the important issues that will be discussed throughout the thesis, such as: what does and does not constitute a pedagogic study; the division of

knowledge into theoretical and practical varieties, or else into content knowledge and skills; and why this study finds the teaching of history important.

General framework: Marxist approaches

This thesis draws upon various Marxist approaches, as they are able to pose pertinent and useful questions about the place of history in the world of changing education and learning under the neoliberal state. This thesis takes as its starting point specific aspects of Marxist analysis that address the relationship between economic organisation and the institutional role of education. These include Marx's position that historical change is ultimately driven by humans' rational desire to subdue the forces of nature and free themselves from necessity by expanding the forces of production (Marx, 1976: 21). History is a succession of 'modes of production', each characterised by a given level of development of the productive forces, and a corresponding set of social relations (class relations, i.e. relations of ownership and control over the productive forces). When a mode of production matures the social relations of production become dysfunctional and start holding back the growth of the forces of production, and this occurs as economic recession.

Finally, although Marx did not write in any systematic way about the capitalist state, the idea that the modern state, as defined in *The Communist Manifesto*, is a 'committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie' (Marx and Engels, 1992:5), invites one to treat the state (including the welfare state) as what Engels (1975) called 'a capitalist machine'. As such, the role of state education, in this

analysis, is to save capitalism from its own irrational contradictions, and ensure that the collective interests of capital – and of the national economy on the global stage – is not retarded by the self-seeking outlook of individual capitalists.

At the same time, Marx (1999: 3-4) argues that the contradictions between the forces and the relations of production, when they mature, are also manifested as contradictions in the realm of ideas; that is, in the 'legal, political, religious, artistic, philosophical – in short ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out'. In that sense, part of the struggles among the forces of production also includes struggles for ideological dominance. In capitalism, the bourgeoisie tries 'to create a world after its own image' (Marx and Engels, 1992:7), so that the dominated classes will adopt the capitalist mode of production as the norm. In other words, the dominant classes, through controlling the means of production, also control cultural and educational organisations as well as the media (Gledhill, 1997:348).

In this sense, education is not just a practical training of future workers, but also a moral, cultural and ideological training. Educational practices transmit values and beliefs not just in the form of certified knowledge but also in the very practices of teaching and learning. This is what Althusser (1971) means when, defining education as a key ideological state apparatus, he explains that ideology is rooted in material practices that construct social relations, roles and identities and which are internalised by subjects and shape their sense of self.

Despite the fact that the classic Marxist approaches have pointed to ideological struggles as part of the wider struggles for control over the means of production and in the economic domain, they do not provide an adequate and clear theoretical tool to examine the 'realm of ideas'. Marx and Engels (1970: 83) pointed out that the ideas that dominate the realm of political and cultural institutions (like education) will be ideas fashioned by the dominant economic class to legitimise and perpetuate its domination. However, Marx and Engels did not give sufficient consideration to the relative independence of the superstructure (ideological realm) from the infrastructure (economy and social relations) so as to better explain the 'reciprocal' relationship between the two (Althusser, 1971:6). Classic Marxism, thus, can overlook the relative independence of these social relations and ideas, which are formed in the ideological and cultural domains, from the economic context.

As a result, the present study has also drawn upon Gramscian approaches of hegemony in order to look at how the individuals and participants studied negotiate the policies that inform their work and their rhetoric, and how they put them into practice. Gramscian approaches consider education a field of conflicting and reversible forces, powers and interests. Gramsci points out the importance of the precedence of the ruling class' ideological dominance of the working or any class over revolutionary action, in order to gain the support of other classes and maintain its power (Gramsci, 1971:5; Gramsci, 1978:431). Gramsci also supports the idea that ideological leadership – or 'hegemony' - is essential for a class before coming into power, and questions the 'teleological' position of the state as being the only dominant ideological agent. He

explains how different dimensions are articulated together for this hegemony to take place, while dominant classes create situations where compromises are formed in their favour. Resistant voices become incorporated into what the moral leaders of society present as 'common sense' and thus individuals are encouraged to support understandings that promote ruling class agendas (Darder et al., 2003:7; Gramsci, 1971:11-12). Gramsci explains that the need to organise hegemony and consent has resulted in, amongst other things, the rise of a certain division of labour that is not based on the needs of a society but the needs of the dominant classes for ideological dominance (Gramsci, 1971:13-14). Gramsci's views can be helpful in analysing the ideological 'struggles' that may lead to consent, or non-consent, in the process of the implementation of specific policies. Gramscian perspectives could allow a study to see education not only as an apparatus of reproduction of the dominant ideology, but also as a field of conflicting and reversible forces, powers and interests. In this sense Gramsci's hegemony can grant a further dimension to the analysis of cultural and educational institutions.

Simultaneously, this thesis also draws on the views of social scientists and educators, who, albeit not from a Marxist perspective, provide insight into how dominant ideologies are reproduced and negotiated in educational and cultural institutions, in relation to class struggles and socio-political and economic forces. I also draw upon those theorists who locate their work in radical social thought and try to link educational and organisational practice to the interests of the dominated rather than the dominant classes or communities.

Why is it important to learn history?

Another issue that needs clarification in this introductory chapter is the reasons for advocating the idea that history learning is important. Marxist historiography, albeit from various perspectives, points out the need to understand how underlying relations between individuals and between classes have resulted in the creation of 'the material production of life itself' (Marx and Engels, 1970:58-59) which, in turn, can create other relations, contradictions and reactions (ibid). Understanding these constantly changing interactions and relations that result in certain socioeconomic and cultural productions could in theory help an individual to understand the world they live in and act upon it.

At the same time, as Hobsbawm (1997:224) comments, Marxist historians take the writings of non-Marxist historians into account, as long as they are 'good history'. He further argues that 'today it is impossible to tell whether a particular work has been written by a Marxist or non-Marxist, unless the author advertises his or her ideological position' (Hobsbawm, 1997:224). Following this view, it is evident that non-Marxist historians and theorists have also pointed out the importance of studying history in order that students find out about the interrelated processes and social relations that have created the present society.

It could therefore be argued that the teaching of history is crucial as a way of understanding our own world, not in the sense of 'lessons from history', as historians from some traditions (see Chapter Two) see it, but as a way of explaining the situations we live in and the ways in which we act upon them. There might well be, as pointed out above, different views on what takes precedence - the economic or the ideological

changes - and there will be issues as to what actually leads individuals or classes to resist, negotiate, or accept dominant ideologies. These different views however, can serve to promote further discussions and enquiry, which is a positive characteristic of scientific debate and disciplinary knowledge, and can lead to fruitful conclusions. The fundamental importance of learning and teaching history is that it helps children to think historically, in the sense that they can understand that what they experience in life is part of something bigger, something with a past, a present and a future, which is up to them to create.

Knowledge and skills

An important theoretical issue studied in this thesis is the division between knowledge and skills, as promoted by the NC, and the ways in which this division is interpreted by the professionals at the NMW, the teachers selected for the study, and the relevant history advisers. Chapter Two discusses the socio-political and cultural dimensions of this division and suggests reasons for it. Here I just clarify how the terms 'knowledge' and 'skills' are used throughout the thesis.

The use of the term 'knowledge' in the thesis refers to the combination of practical experience with theoretical understanding. As Luria (2000:9) explains, knowledge grants theoretical understanding and practical experience a complete and holistic meaning. If theory and practice are separated from each other then knowledge can be considered to be incomplete. As a result, the use of the term 'knowledge' in the study refers to this combined experience, as opposed to 'content knowledge' or 'subject

knowledge', which refer to the memorisation or learning of certain theories and information. This study explores the problem of isolating content knowledge from activity. It also looks at the meaning that the NC and the professionals of the study seem to give to these two terms.

The term 'skill' can also take various meanings in the literature. There are skills that refer to the 'methods' and 'practices' that help a person understand a subject and develop their knowledge about the specific subject, as explained above. For example, the historical skill of enquiry will help us in our acquisition of historical knowledge. Re-enactment (see Chapter Two) has also been regarded as a method contributing to historical knowledge. On the other hand there are general skills or 'transferable skills' or 'skills for life' that can be vague and can include anything that we might apply in any aspect of our lives. These may include communication or interpersonal skills (see Chapter Two). Finally there are the 'traditional' skills, which refer to a 'concrete property that a person could attain as a result of a long apprenticeship in a trade' (Aronowitz and DiFazio, 1994:95). These skills can be related to the vocational skills. In the present thesis the term 'historical skill' is used in reference to the methods that can lead to historical knowledge and understanding, as defined above, and the terms 'skills' or 'transferable skills' are used in reference to the skills and common requirements frameworks as used in the National Curriculum.

Pedagogy

As outlined in Chapter Four, this study is not solely concerned with pedagogy. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* (1995) defines pedagogy as ‘the science of teaching’, whilst it has also been described as the sum of ‘what’, and especially ‘how’, children and young people learn, and how this information is ultimately framed (Yates, 2009:19). In the present thesis, the term pedagogy refers to a ‘science’ that seeks to form a child’s knowledge through the particular education system of a particular society. In line with Darder et al. (2003:2), who refer to the characteristics of critical pedagogy, pedagogy can be regarded as a ‘theoretical landscape’ of principles, beliefs and practices that form the ‘ideal’ schooling of a given society (see Lawton, 1992).

As a result, pedagogy goes beyond the sum of how children should learn and how teachers should teach. As a science, it includes psychological and educational research on how we learn, in order to provide a means of assessing specific teaching methods. Additionally, as pedagogy is part of schooling or organisational/institutional learning, it also examines the socioeconomic and ideological contexts that create specific aims for children’s learning, such as the formation of a National Curriculum.

For these reasons the present study is different from a ‘pure’ pedagogical one. It examines a pedagogic issue, which is the learning and teaching of history, but it mainly focuses on how the NC, museums and professionals define knowledge, learning and consequently historical knowledge, and how they use a certain pedagogic method, namely ‘activity’, to deliver these aims. This research is interested in the political, cultural and economic circumstances that have shaped the NC under examination, and

the ways in which school and museum professionals interpret it and put it into practice. Put more simply, it primarily looks at the 'adult' world of museum education, public policy and school history teaching. It seeks to examine how children respond to this 'world', but it does not evaluate children's learning, nor does it look for answers and suggestions as to how they might learn better. It does not analyse the ways in which children's learning and acquisition of historical knowledge could be improved in order to suggest a theory of pedagogy. This would be the work of a more child-focused, longitudinal study in relation to general socio-political and economic contexts as well as other issues such as gender or ethnicity. The importance of longitudinal ethnographic research, especially when studying young children, has been supported by numerous researchers, notably Corsaro (2003:22). Longitudinal research of this kind, which aims to generate theoretical suggestions for children's learning, would be closer to a truly pedagogical study.

Education in the context of neoliberalism

In addition to the presentation of the key theoretical approaches that this study will draw upon, it is important to briefly outline the main changes in education and museums under current political conditions, which will be further analysed in the following chapters. The present study examines museums and schools at two levels: the policies of the state, and the people responsible for the implementation of these policies. In the case of schools, these individuals could be further divided into 'higher level' implementers, namely the history advisers, and 'lower level' implementers, such

as the teachers. In this chapter I briefly introduce the general frames as set out by current policies.

Powerful international organisations for the ‘protection’ and consolidation of capitalist interests had already appeared after the Second World War. The International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the NATO, the ‘Trilateral Commission’ (a partnership between North America, Japan and what was then referred to as ‘Western Europe’), which was formed later on in 1973, and the Bilderberg Group, founded in the 1950s (Sklar, 1980), were powerful capitalist elite coalitions that still define certain global capitalist agendas today. Nevertheless, as Cole (2008:89) argues, globalisation was given a major boost with the signing of the GATS (General Agreement on Trade Services) at the WTO (World Trade Organization) in 1995. Educational provision, like the provision of telecommunications, health, environment, culture and tourism, transport and construction, have been either fully privatised in some countries, or, by facing reductions in public resources have been obliged to search for alternative sources of funding and thus have adopted business administration practices¹ (De Siqueira, 2005:7).

International trade coalitions for the facilitation of capital or privatisation are not merely a current phenomenon. The World Bank, for instance, emerged with the purpose

¹ This refers to business practices that the education sector has to embark on, due to cuts in public resources: the monitoring of performance, with targets to aid consumer choice (Reynolds, 2008:754), and the establishment of partnerships with public and private providers mainly from areas such as communication, computer science, services and education management (De Siqueira, 2005).

of supplying loans for the reconstruction of countries destroyed by the Second World War, while the IMF would control a country's finances (De Siqueira, 2005:2). Further, the EEC (present EU) was formed in 1957 as an economic and political co-operation between six of the most powerful capitalist countries of Europe (Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg), - and aimed 'to achieve integration via trade with a view to economic expansion' (Europa, 2007). With current forms of globalisation however, agreements are becoming tighter, as discussed above, and the state has become the main facilitator of capital, promoting legislation for severe funding cuts in the welfare state and public sector.

For these reasons, the current phase of capitalism, whose roots can be traced to the post-War era, but which became further entrenched during the 1990s (see Cole, 2008), can be described using the term 'neoliberalism'. This school of thought needs to be differentiated from classic liberalism. In classic liberalism the state was not supposed to interfere with capitalists. It has been argued (e.g. by Brown, 2003: 4-7) that in neoliberalism, it is the state which, under the guise of market regulation, undertakes the role of facilitator of capital (Brown, 2003:4-7). Thus, it is not the state that controls capital, as in the Keynesian model of the state, but the state that helps capital to permeate all institutions and aspects of life. The state is arguably then, no longer the welfare state but the state-facilitator of the market. Writers such as Davies and Bansel (2007) argue that neoliberalised sectors like education have to be made effective in order to transform knowledge into a product that can be bought and sold. In this context new partnerships emerge, and sectors that traditionally belonged to the welfare state are

passed to the hands of private companies or other organisations; or, in some cases, they have to play the role of attracting investors. International agreements like GATS (1995) as well as agreements in the EU, like the Bologna Declaration (1999), which concerns Higher Education in the EU member states, and the Lisbon Treaty (2007) (see footnote 3, page 39), were signed in order to give more power to economic interests and support the operations of the free market. Faced with such competitiveness, Saul (2005) argues that small nations in particular had little choice but to accept these neoliberal policies for fear that a denial would mean exclusion and economic ‘casualties’.

Education is one of the most important sectors that have been ‘targeted’ by the market. As mentioned above, education can be an ‘eye opener’ and also a human right, when considered part of the ‘welfare state’. However, as De Siqueira (2005:2) argues:

...as in most countries, education has been established as one of the human and social rights, offered and controlled by the State, this poses several limitations on the commercial/mercantile expansion of education traders. These limitations are now being identified as “barriers” that should be suppressed. As a result, there is growing pressure for education to be treated as a commodity, regulated by the supposedly “neutral and general” rules of the market/commerce, without interferences from local regulations (barriers), but with increased possibility of reshaping public funding.

Arguably education can be a barrier for the market both ideologically and economically. Although not completely privatised, at least in the case of Britain, it is nevertheless directly linked with economics and the laws of the market. Education may become commercialised and enter processes in which international groups or national groups are just buyers of education ‘packages’ (De Siqueira, 2005:11).

It is not only education, however, that is defined in terms of the market. There are those who argue that human social behaviour in a knowledge economy is also defined in economic terms (Brown, 2003:5; Rose, 1999: 142), including the goals of being relevant, successful and even happy. Survival of individuals and nations can also, according to Davies and Bansel (2007:251), go hand in hand with economic survival and with what the market dictates as necessity. Castells (2000:125) argues that even academic and scientific research is increasingly determined not by what is needed but by what seems to be economically promising for the market.

At the same time, one of the main arguments of the critics of neoliberalism is the fact that the above ideas are promoted as a norm by neoliberal ideologists and politicians. In Britain, the former Prime Minister Tony Blair's speech to the Labour Party Conference in 2005 (The Guardian, 2005) revealed New Labour's position that globalisation² in Britain should be as 'un-negotiable' as the fact that 'autumn should follow summer'. Britain's obligation, which, according to Mr Blair, is not to resist the force of the specific economic model of globalisation but to prepare for it, coincides with equivalent views of the New Right (Brown and Lauder, 2001:5-6). Despite the fact that there are many commentators who see these changes as possible agents of economic stability and social cohesion, there are also those who see them as intentionally designed to perpetuate and intensify inequalities (for discussion, see Ball,

² The term 'globalisation' that the former PM mentions in this quote refers to the free-market ideology, which seeks to bring down the barriers to free trade, such as price controls, protectionism and state subsidies, and currency controls etc. This globalisation differs from other definitions of globalisation in a sociological or cultural sense; for example as a set of processes of widening global interdependence between states, which, however, the present thesis is not concerned with.

2000; Lloyd and Payne, 2002). In Sklar's analysis (1980:21), capital 'imposes' market needs and practices by transforming them into universal values, which is what global capitalist agents, like the Trilateral Commission³, call 'piecemeal functionalism', in which individuals, states and organisations will become gradually convinced of the necessity for certain measures and policies, without being aware of the global economic agendas driving them. Arguments that the Labour Party of Wales has tried to separate its position from the neoliberal approach of the New Labour in favour of the welfare state, as mentioned above, have been both asserted and contested (see Rees, 2005).

Simultaneously, it would appear that part of the market rationale is economic competitiveness and individualism. In this context, it is argued (see Brown, 2003:6; Castells, 2000) that neoliberalism seeks to create highly individualised learners who are required to be the entrepreneurs of their own lives. Individuals may in this way appear to be responsible for their own actions, choices and 'mistakes'. However, Brown (2003:5-6) argues that they frequently have to act within preset social, cultural and economic conditions, which they cannot easily control.

Individualism is not new in the history of capitalism. As George and Wilding (1976:118) explain, capitalism, according to the classic liberal ideal, depends on individualism, competition, self-help and achievement. The classic liberalism of *laissez-faire laissez-passer* based its ideology on the belief of the freedom of the

³ The Commission was created in 1973 to bring together experienced leaders within the private sector to discuss issues of global concern at a time when communication and cooperation between Europe, North America, and Asia were lacking. The Commission has grown since its early days to include members from more countries in these regions (The Trilateral Commission, 2011)

market and the individual. According to liberal ideals, the individual can be led to irrational decisions, but this is the way to progress, and therefore the state should not interfere at all with these decisions (George and Wilding, 1976:24). Later approaches to liberalism however, seem to have advocated the interference of the state in the market as they fostered the view that capitalism cannot be self-regulated. As stated in the Beveridge Report (1942), for example, cooperation between the state and the individual is regarded as a necessary step towards 'social security' (Beveridge, 1995:6). These 'modern liberal' notions, to follow Galbraith's term (1977:239), still supported the market, the power of consumer choice and the education of the masses as a way towards the improvement of economy. From various perspectives the theorists of modern liberal notions advocated the need for the state to be an agent that could help capital but also bring about social balance and well being (see Beveridge, 1995; Galbraith, 1977; Keynes, 1971).

It has been argued that individualism and the doctrine of personal responsibility for one's financial situation can be traced back to the nineteenth century and the notion of the 'pauper'. Rose (1979:23) has analysed pauperism as the habits of the poor that 'resulted in' their poverty and their refusal of socialisation. The pauper was regarded as politically threatening and therefore the Victorian capitalist state, towards the end of the nineteenth century, felt the need to include the poor in a compulsory education system that would enable them to read the Bible and change their habits. It was then, Rose (1979) argues, that they became the 'objects' of welfare policies. The bourgeoisie blamed the 'poor' themselves for their moral deterioration and not the system they had

created. Today, neoliberalism has been criticised for making citizens feel responsible for their own choices, particularly their failures (Apple, 2000:62; Sklar, 1980:19).

Another difference between classic liberalism and neoliberalism is that the latter, according to Castells (2000:295-296), does not only create a flexible and easily programmed working class, but also creates the conditions in which the middle or even upper classes and professionals are subjected to 'flexible' working practices and high mobility (ibid:299-300). Arguably, in order for capital to survive, the goals of education must be limited, serving the needs for the ruling classes (Sklar, 1980:41) as education is the element that can increase awareness (Engels, 1975:243), an awareness that may not coincide with dominant ideology and practices.

Thus various writers suggest that ideas that originated with classic liberalism, or are similar to older discourses, like pauperism, are now taken on board but given new meanings or expressions under neoliberalism. Under neoliberalism, the role of the state, far from being absent, as the classic liberalists would prefer, becomes a facilitator of the market, as opposed to the Keynesian liberals' regulator state. Capital with the help of the state establishes tight global agreements, organisations and treaties to expand its markets and secure its economic and ideological dominance. Furthermore, it has been argued that it is the changes in the meaning of what constitutes 'worthy' and 'non-worthy' in our everyday lives that characterises neoliberalism. Ball (2000:186) offers the analysis, in the course of a discussion on the privatisation of education, that neoliberalism also changes the ways we regard ourselves as learners and teachers and is 'part of a broader social dislocation'. As a result, neoliberalism can be regarded as

something deeper than how the state facilitates the laws of the market to be applied in every sector: neoliberalism can be thought of as a market ideology that infuses our everyday thinking and our perception of the world and the self.

Museums in neoliberalism

The ‘new’ ‘inclusive’ museum

The museum as we know it today - an institution that preserves collections and displays them to the public - was also known as the ‘public museum’ (for further discussion see Chapter Three). The origins of the public museum, as an integral part of a democratic state, and with public education as its main goal, can be traced to the Louvre in 1792 (Hooper-Greenhill, 1994c:258). In general, as Fyfe (2006:2) has suggested, the museum as a public institution is connected to industrialisation, political revolution and to the formation of nation states. Macdonald (2006:4) has argued that the museum should also be studied in relation to issues other than industrialisation and politics:

The museum phenomenon is best seen as a product of the coming together of a heady mix of partially connected motivations and concerns. These include, inter alia, anxieties about ‘social amnesia’; [...] quests for authenticity [...] and antidotes to throwaway consumers’ society; attempts to deal with the fragmentation of identity and individualization; desires for lifelong and experiential learning.

The public museum is regarded as an aspect of certain socio-political and ideological changes, or, as Macdonald puts it, ‘concerns’ and ‘quests’. The ‘birth of the museum’, to quote Bennett (1995), is further discussed in Chapter Three. This section

introduces the changes that museums have undergone over the last three decades and how these changes have resulted in what is often called a 'new' type of museum, or the 'new museum'.

This 'new museum' of the last thirty years 'refers to museums that exhibit social history, natural history, ethnology, science and technology, and it is also used in relation to museums of art' (Message, 2006:604). In general, the 'new museum' and the 'new museology' are interested in ordinary, everyday life and 'inclusion' (Vergo, 1989) whilst, at the same time, a new approach to the 'object' has been developed. Object collections are not necessarily the starting point for the foundation of a new museum. Objects and historical artefacts can become obsolete and replaced by people who narrate stories or exhibitions based on multimedia demonstrations (Debary, 2004:129).

Inclusion, then, is another characteristic of the new museum. Discourses of inclusion though, have been seen as directly connected to neoliberal agendas. As Tlili (2008:136) explains, the state, and to a lesser extent self-funded museums, have to 'demonstrate that they are doing something about social inclusion'. The 'inclusive' museum however, cannot be studied in isolation from the fact that cultural institutions have long been facing cuts in state funding (Hooper-Greenhill, 1994e:326-329). This has led to the 'marketisation' of museums, which try to find ways to increase their visitor numbers in order to attract sponsors or to justify their funding to their sponsors (see Hooper-Greenhill, 1994e; Macdonald, 1998b). In this context therefore, as Tlili

(2008:138) argues, inclusion can be interpreted merely as an increase in visitor numbers (see Chapter Three).

In some writings, however, the marketisation of museums is regarded as a positive step towards the democratisation of the museum. As Ross (2004:100) concluded in his study:

Yet it should be owned that material factors- the political and economic shifts that have thrust museums into the marketplace, along with other public institutions - have been decisive in bringing about a new climate of audience-awareness and reflexivity [...] The ostensible effect of these trends has been to propel museums in a progressive direction: towards greater accessibility and wider public participation; to dispel elitism and make museums more representative.

The above view proposes a positive side to marketisation, as contributing to widening access and public participation and therefore as a means towards the democratisation of museums. The most important question is not whether fewer or larger numbers visit, but about the quality and effectiveness of what they are offered when they do.

Arguably, the effects of these new changes in the culture of museums and the outcomes of their inclusion agendas are yet to be seen. For instance, there are a number of tensions regarding identity and representation that are created and negotiated between cultural elites and organic grassroots culture (Housley, 2006:165). The playing-out of these issues tends to be negotiated not only at the policy-making level but also at the level of the staff of museums (Tlili, 2008). The ways in which these issues, as well as other political frames, are negotiated by the museum staff and the audiences cannot always be predicted. As a result, from a Gramscian perspective, it could be suggested that this potentially democratic idea of inclusion, which is co-opted

by the dominant ideology and used in line with the agendas of the marketisation of culture, might have different outcomes from those that the market advocates would like to achieve, if used by other hegemonic forces. For example, as suggested in Chapter Three, inclusion at museums could imply a political and substantial inclusion of minorities. Inclusion at museums, then, under different hegemonic forces, could mean that they try to include ethnic minorities and deprived communities not only in their representation and visitor numbers but also by helping them become active citizens, so that they can claim their inclusion in other aspects of society as well.

Another key characteristic of the museum that seems to be shifting due to the inclusive 'new museum' is the possible redefinition of the traditional middle-class orientation of museums. In their classic study on major European museums in the 1960s, Bourdieu and Darbel (1997:109) concluded that museums reproduce dominant cultural practices that working-class children cannot identify with. Additionally, Benjamin (1999:403) has characterised museums as places where the bourgeoisie finds shelter from the cruelty of capitalism. In contrast however, Fyfe (2006:6) argues that marketisation has 'deprived the middle class of a museum identity', while Dicks (2000b:75) argues that the new heritage centres, as opposed to traditional museums, require different kinds of cultural capital from their visitors.

Museum education and the new museum of learning

In addition to its emphasis on inclusion, the other main characteristic of the new museum is learning. Education and learning have always been key characteristics of

the museum. According to UNESCO's (1960: 64) report one of the functions of museums is the provision of direct educational services to the public. From children, who can find something interesting to stimulate their imagination and their interests, to elderly people who can remember and feel that they have played their own role in history, it has been argued that the museum can be an endless source of knowledge (Chadwick and Stannett, 1995). The role of museums as a place for children's education was especially evident during the First World War when the lack of school buildings and teachers meant that they were quite often used as substitutes for schools (Hooper-Greenhill, 1991).

However, new approaches to museum education have emerged in the last thirty years. During this time attention has been directed towards the active use of collections (Miles, 2002). For this reason, museum theorists draw upon constructivist approaches to learning, which emphasise experiential learning and are frequently regarded as the best option for museum learning (see Hein, 2006; Witcomb, 2006).

Museum learning in relation to learning theories and theories of activity is further explored in Chapters Three and Six. These chapters also discuss other forms of learning that the museum caters for, including lifelong, family or community learning. In these chapters learning as an organisational policy for museums is also analysed.

Part B: Educational and cultural policies: from the Lisbon Strategy to the Learning Country

In this second part of the Introduction I briefly discuss the policies of the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) that are directly connected with the National Curriculum and St Fagans: National History Museum (NHM). These policy documents are *Wales: A Learning Country* (2001), *Creative Future: A Culture Strategy for Wales* (2002), *Wales: A Better Country* (2003). The more recent policy document *Wales: A Vibrant Economy* (2007) is not analysed in this thesis as it was introduced after the completion of this study. In 2007 the *One Wales* agenda was agreed between the Labour and Plaid Cymru Parties of the National Assembly, and this also influenced the NMW in its strategies of 2008-2009. Although I do not analyse the *One Wales* agenda here as it was introduced after I had completed my museum study, I do make occasional reference to it in the course of this thesis, especially in Chapters Six to Eight. As has been argued, global economic changes to the knowledge economy analysed above have been decisive in the formation of education policies in Wales (Rees, 2005:35; see discussion in Chapters Two and Eight).

It has also been considered necessary to refer to the European Union's Lisbon Strategy (2000), which the Welsh Assembly is 'devoted to' (WAG, 2003)⁴. Of course,

⁴ When the Heads of States met at the Lisbon summit in March 2000, European Union leaders set out a new strategy, based on a consensus among Member States, to make Europe more dynamic and competitive. The initiative became known as the Lisbon Strategy and came to cover a very wide range of policies. The Strategy was re-launched in Spring 2005. The Treaty of Lisbon was finally signed by the heads of the 27 member states on 13 December 2007. In order to come into force the Treaty has to be ratified by each Member State. So far only Ireland

there has been a series of Treaties at European and international levels that have promoted and established the knowledge economy. These include the Bologna Declaration (1999) and the Maastricht Treaty (1992) which established the basis for the economic and social union of the state members of the EEC. However, as my study concerns the skills framework in the primary school curriculum in Wales, and as the Lisbon Strategy (2000) is followed by the WAG, I focus mainly on the impact of the Lisbon Strategy on the educational and cultural policies of the WAG.

a. EU policies: Towards a flexible knowledge economy of skills

With the Lisbon Strategy (2000), which is also referred to as Lisbon Agenda, and the later Lisbon Treaty (2007), lifelong learning is constructed as the education of the future. These are the guiding strategies that set out the framework for making the economy of the EU countries more competitive, with education in the form of skills development and lifelong learning being regarded as highly important in meeting this aim. Lifelong learning is presented as ‘an essential policy for the development of citizenship, social cohesion and employment’ (European Council, 2004: 87). Lifelong learning is considered to be a way to achieve social cohesion, but, as has been argued, it can intensify inequalities as it mainly ‘privileges’ those types of learning that are related to business, enterprise and ‘new technologies’ (Ball, 2007:157). As explained in Chapter Two, the fostering of the above skills is also reflected in, or rather actually

has held a referendum, which has not approved the Treaty, while in the other member states it has been approved by parliamentary vote (source, EU site, 2009).

starts from, primary school curricula that establish skills frameworks that 'favour' the learning of the above skills through all subjects. Education becomes directly connected with employment, and a series of policies, strategies and plans have been signed by the EU members to ensure that European education systems will work together towards this direction.

Before the Lisbon Strategy, the Bologna Declaration (1999) set out the main goals for EU members' higher education as follows:

- the adoption of a common framework of readable and comparable degrees, "also through the implementation of the Diploma Supplement";
- the introduction of undergraduate and postgraduate levels in all countries, with first degrees no shorter than 3 years and relevant to the labour market
- ECTS-compatible credit systems also covering lifelong learning activities;
- A European dimension in quality assurance, with comparable criteria and methods;
- the elimination of remaining obstacles to the free mobility of students (as well as trainees and graduates) and teachers (as well as researchers and higher education administrators)

(Confederation of EU Rectors' Conferences and the Association of European Universities, 2000:4, document emphasis).

It is apparent that there is a perceived need for a common assessment framework that will make workers' mobility within the EU easier, because it will enable employers to assess their future employees according to specified standards. Universities have to provide degree schemes 'relevant to the labour market', which means that 'irrelevant' disciplines or science may lose their status or disappear.

The aim of the EU, however, is not to connect higher education alone with employment. The teaching of skills from an early age and during school education is

also a priority in achieving a flexible, mobile work force in the EU, and this is one of the main aims of the Treaty of Lisbon. One of the follow up documents to the Lisbon Strategy, the *Education and Training 2010 work programme*, (signed in 2001), aims to assure closer co-operation between the EU members and the European Commission in applying the Lisbon Strategy agenda for education. According to this document, high quality pre-primary, primary, secondary, higher and vocational education and training remain as important as ever. However, the same document makes apparent that initial learning is not enough (Council of the European Union, 2001). It is expressed that people's skills must be constantly renewed to enable them to meet the challenges of ever-evolving technologies, increasing internationalisation and demographic changes. Nowadays, lifelong learning is considered key to jobs and growth, in addition to allowing everyone the chance to participate fully in society. There are three overall objectives:

- improving the quality and effectiveness of education and training systems;
- facilitating access to education and training systems; and
- opening up EU education and training systems to the wider world

(European Commission, 2008).

The goal for the EU therefore is to achieve common training and educational systems for the member-states that will not be constrained to school learning and 'initial education', but will be lifelong. Lifelong learning is promoted as a means to competitiveness and economic growth and aims to equip a person with the skills that

will make them flexible and adjustable to the demands of the economy. This is made clear in the European Union's documents that are inspired by the Lisbon agenda:

Improving basic skills, particularly IT and digital skills, is a top priority to make the Union the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world. This priority includes education policies and lifelong learning as well as overcoming the present shortfall in the recruitment of scientific and technical staff. A knowledge-based economy necessitates a strong general education in order to further support labour mobility and lifelong learning... (European Council, 2004: 93).

According to the EC, a 'strong general education' will support 'mobility' and further learning in life. Basic skills, IT and digital skills, and, as analysed in the following chapters, mathematics, literacy and foreign languages, are all regarded as priorities for the state education system of every country member as a means to economic growth.

Within the hegemonic discourse of neoliberal ideologies, as presented through the EU policies, then, the neoliberal construction of the idea of lifelong learning is promoted. This notion promotes the individual's sense of responsibility for his or her own economic fortunes. However, the idea of lifelong learning could also have a humanistic content; learning for one's fulfilment and in order to be an active citizen and be able to change one's world. There might be a chance that lifelong learning, contrary to the version promoted by neoliberalism, could eventually create individuals who will be inquisitive and curious, and who may question the neoliberal idea of the individualistic lifelong learning. This, however, remains to be seen.

Nonetheless, within this hegemonic struggle for a continuously reprogrammed and flexible workforce, various policies are directed at trying to create tight schemes of assessment, such as a 'European format for curricula vitae...to facilitate mobility by

helping the assessment of knowledge acquired, both by education and training establishments and by employers' (European Council, 2004: 88). According to the Lisbon Agenda (2007), the aim of a single and flexible labour market has to be based on a common set of frameworks that can ensure and facilitate workforce mobility:

On this basis, the Commission intends to present...proposals for a more uniform, transparent and flexible regime of recognition of qualifications and periods of study, as well as on the portability of supplementary pensions... (European Council, 2004: 90).

We see here a concern for tighter central control by the EU in order to overcome the different educational systems and cultures of the member-states and to allow employees to be equally assessed by their employers using a common assessment framework. A common assessment framework makes it easier for employers to assess their employees' qualifications and at the same time it enables the education systems of the EU members to adopt the same educational goals.

It is also worth noting that education and training systems are always mentioned concurrently throughout EU policy documents. This has the effect of giving them both the same meaning and aims. So, for instance, we read that:

Europe's education and training systems need to adapt both to the demands of the knowledge society and the need for an improved level and quality of the employment. [...]. This new approach should have three main components: the development of local learning centres, the promotion of basic skills, in particular in the information technologies, and increased transparency of qualifications (European Council, 2004:87).

The above quote makes clear that Europe's education systems need to adopt the same goal as training systems, which is to improve employability. Schools and any other training institutions have to equip children with 'basic' skills, which are defined as

including basic information technology (IT) skills. The connection between education and employment in the knowledge economy is further discussed in Chapter Two, where it is argued that such easily acquired skills are also associated with low paid employment and more profit for capital. Therefore, it can also be argued that flexibility and lifelong learning may not be liberating, but may result in easily acquired skills that are disposable and low waged.

b. Wales: A Better Country

Are the above issues evident in Welsh policies? In 2003, the WAG document *Wales: A Better Country* set out the agenda for future policies in Wales. In this document one comes across the goals of the Lisbon Strategy and the role that Wales is called to play in the new, globalised world. In Rhodri Morgan's (the then First Minister for Wales, from 2000 to 2009) forward letter, we read:

This agenda [Wales: A Better Country] sets a challenge to all concerned with the future of Wales. With devolution, our destiny as regards health, wealth, education, the environment, and the domestic agenda more widely, is increasingly in our own hands. We need to work together to shape a positive destiny, reflecting our heritage but also confident, outward looking and enjoying the challenges that the twenty first century will set us. I look forward to working with you to deliver that better country we all want to live in. To live in that country we first have to create the conditions for it. We are ready for that responsibility (WAG, 2003: 2).

It is worth noting here how the notion of 'destiny' is used. Either intentionally or unintentionally, Mr Morgan expresses what critics of neoliberalism present as central to its existence: market forces create inevitable structures within which individuals and institutions must make decisions. However these decisions do not ultimately belong to

the individual or institution, but are formed within, and guided by, this specific context that capitalism creates. The twenty first century is presented as *setting* challenges for us in a teleological way. It is *our* destiny and what remains for us to do is to *enjoy* and feel positive about it.

The main point, however, is that the language of the EU is repeated. The main objectives are the same. They are concerned with a diverse, competitive, high added-value economy with high quality skills and education as priorities. At the same time, there is a focus on the environment and the strengthening of the Welsh identity:

- action on social justice that tackles poverty and poor health, and provides people and their communities with the means to help themselves and break out of the poverty trap;
- action in our built and natural environment that enhances pride in the community, supports bio-diversity, promotes local employment and helps to minimize waste generation, energy and transport demands;
- strengthening Wales' cultural identity and helping to create a bilingual country;
- ensuring all our children and future generations enjoy better prospects in life, and are not landed with a legacy of problems bequeathed by us;
- supporting people to live healthy and independent lives;
- promoting openness, partnership and participation.

(WAG, 2003: 4).

Wales: A Better Country (2003) positions Wales within the context of European policies, with an extra emphasis on the creation of a national and cultural identity. Poverty is also presented as a metaphysical trap, where communities and individuals of Wales are somehow imprisoned. The document neither explains the causes of this poverty nor gives radical solutions in regards to social justice. Rather it *promises* a better future for Wales that will be based on a proud cultural identity, a better

environment and an ‘openness’ to partnerships, where everybody, from citizens to the government,- have to work ‘together’ towards the completion of this Vision. The present study is not about the kind of identity that the WAG tries to promote. However, I do analyse how the WAG’s work towards the promotion of a ‘proud’ Wales seems to be translated into the policies and practices of the National Museum of Wales and St Fagans: National History Museum.

c. The Learning Country

The document entitled *The Learning Country* was introduced in 2001 as a ten-year vision for education in post-Devolution Wales (DfELLS, 2001, no page numbers). The follow up document, *The Learning Country: from Vision into Action*, states that Wales in its turn is ‘devoted to the Lisbon Agenda’ (DfELLS, 2001: no page number). Thus, a competitive economy with flexibility and lifelong learning remains the main goal:

- We want Wales to be a learning country, where high quality, lifelong learning provides the skills people need to prosper in the new economy, liberates talent, extends opportunities and empowers communities.
 - We want all our young people to have the best start in life, the opportunity to reach their full potential, and a clear entitlement to influence the services that affect them.
 - We want to drive up standards of teaching and attainment in all our schools, valuing and supporting the teaching profession to achieve this.
 - We shall ensure that the benefits of improvements are enjoyed by all, in a fully comprehensive system of learning that serves all our local communities well.
 - We want learning to be an everyday part of working, and non-working life, in which the interest of learners come first.
- We want to strengthen the contribution of education and training to economic development as set out in the National Economic Development Strategy consultation document (NAW, 2001: 8).

It is evident here that learning should be the priority for a prosperous Wales. The question, however is that it is not clear what we have to learn in our everyday life practices in order to prosper. Definitely, the learning of skills, as stated at the beginning of the document, can be one answer. Another answer, as analysed above and discussed later on, is that the terms 'skills' may refer to the basic skills of IT, numeracy, literacy and foreign languages. However the term 'skill' remains vague. Following the discussions so far, and in light of further analysis in the following chapters, this study argues that *The Learning Country* cannot give specific answers to the questions of what skills stand for, since in the new economy of flexibility and competitiveness, what is to be learnt is dictated by the market and thus is never a constant.

d. A Creative Future

In addition to education policies, cultural policies in Wales are also connected with the ways in which the NMW designs its own strategies. Also directed by the EU (WAG, 2002:12), the document entitled *Creative Future: A Culture Strategy for Wales* sees culture as an 'important driver of regional development' and 'means of economic benefit' (WAG, 2002:3). In *Creative Future*, we come across the same language and the same plans we see in education policies:

A modern, culturally-rich society will be a society that is also economically prosperous, because it will have nurtured curiosity, imagination, creativity and diversity - as well as particular skills - in its young people [...]

That imaginative commitment will also have ensured that all people - men and women, young and old, able-bodied and disabled, as well as from the diverse cultural strands of our society - have participated and shared in this enriching process. It will have opened doors to learning and new skills -

artistic, technical, managerial and physical. It will have built confidence in individuals and cohesion in communities.

[...] We must seek to extract new cultural value from all that we do - whether building a school or hospital or planning our towns and cities. Equally, we must extract the maximum economic benefit from all that we invest in cultural policy
(WAG, 2002: 3).

From the above quote it is obvious that culture has to have economic benefits. This benefit may be translated into numbers and profit, but it can also be indirect. For example, by helping citizens to learn skills, an institution enables them to contribute to the economy. Along these lines, culture is envisaged as a means of helping people acquire skills, which may not only be artistic but also managerial and technical. Moreover, we see that creativity is encouraged as a way to facilitate social cohesion and inclusion. The latter, however, can be 'edited, modified and co-opted by the requirements of economic participation and the labour market' (Ball, 2000:185). The fact that the WAG (2002:3) points out that 'the maximum economic benefit' has to be gained from each cultural policy gives an economic character to inclusion and diversity, as well as to imagination and creativity.

Creative Future (2002) 'appoints' duties to each Assembly Sponsored Public Body (see Chapter Two) for this strategy to be implemented. It is within this document that it is stated that the National Museum of Wales (NMW) is expected to create a 'one-stop venue for an overview of Welsh history' (WAG, 2002:44), which, as discussed in following chapters, refers to St Fagans: National History Museum. However, the relation between the NMW and the WAG is further discussed in Chapter Three.

Part C: Conclusions and thesis structure

In this chapter I have tried to explain how Marxist approaches have helped to frame my research questions. The important influence of economic changes to the changing aims of learning, education and museums has been discussed, whilst I have also explained the importance of analysing how individuals, groups and organisations react to these given contexts, which is further discussed in the data analysis.

The discussion has shown how capital, with the help of the neoliberal state, can be interpreted as infusing education and virtually every aspect of our lives with market principles. These principles have been incorporated in the EU and the Welsh Assembly Government policies, which make the link between education and the individual explicit, foreground the importance of national prosperity, and clearly divide knowledge into skills on the one hand and knowledge on the other, with a particular emphasis on the former. It also needs to be acknowledged, however, that neoliberal policies also promote some democratic promises, like inclusion, which form a controversial context, as the individualistic laws of a neoliberal economy are arguably not compatible with inclusion seen in terms of pure democratic practices and principles (see also Brown and Lauder, 2001).

As a result, it can be argued that certain key ideas about inclusion and ‘active learning’ are potentially contested: on the one hand, as a means for the state to adapt young people to the new and fast-changing demands of flexible capital, but also - potentially - as a means through which they can enhance their access to ideas and, possibly, to the means of effecting change in their worlds. It will be the objective of

subsequent chapters to show how far this latter potential is opened up or closed off, according to the analysis of the kinds of knowledge that are actually being produced in the museum-school nexus studied. The following chapters elaborate on the above general arguments by presenting detailed related debates in light of the research data. In Chapters Two and Three I discuss the general political and economic framework that affects changes in education, cultural sector and museums, exploring, at the same time, how progressive ideas have been used by dominant ideologies for purposes other than those for which they were originally conceived. Chapters Five to Seven analyse how individuals who are responsible for the implementation of the NC and work at the National Museum of Wales negotiate, enact, are opposed to, or are 'affected' by these policies.

Thus, Chapter Two discusses theoretical issues related to the curriculum and the concepts of 'activity' and historical knowledge in relation to the theoretical frames I have analysed in this chapter and elaborates on the NC for England and Wales. First, the chapter seeks to examine how the aims of a curriculum change according to different socioeconomic models, which, in turn, direct one's ideas about what constitutes knowledge. Secondly, it explains that education becomes a field of conflicting interests. Vygotskian approaches to activity are discussed in comparison to constructivist and situated learning theories. Finally, it examines the arguments of the main schools of history, elaborating on what can constitute historical knowledge for different schools of historical thought. The second part specifies the debates about the National Curriculum in England and Wales, as they reflect the conflicting interests

between these voices for progressive curricula and those driven by neoconservative and neoliberal forces. It is argued that the NC has consolidated skills frameworks, in the process dislocating knowledge from skills. The chapter then moves to the National Curriculum for Wales, by discussing Welsh history in the National Curriculum for Wales, which is further analysed in Chapter Five.

In Chapter Three the discussion shifts from schools to museums. The museum's changing aims through time as they have been shaped by socioeconomic changes and changes in relations of power are discussed. The main focus is on how cultural display in many museums and heritage sites in the past thirty years have been used for economic regeneration and have been characterised by marketisation, and privatisation. At the same time, the controversial question that characterises cultural display at museums is discussed: is it possible for marketisation to be a step towards inclusion and democratic representation of various social groups and classes? In this context I further discuss the development of museum learning and I analyse the dual role that it has recently acquired in museums as both an educational provision and organisational policy. The chapter then brings the National Museum of Wales into this framework and discusses its present visions in relation to the aims of its main funding body, the Welsh Assembly Government of Wales. Finally, there is an introduction to the history of St Fagans: National History Museum, explaining the main changes it has undergone since its opening in 1948, as a brief introduction to the main analysis that follows in Chapter Six.

In Chapter Four the research methods and data analysis are detailed. The main decisions made in order to realise the present research are also reflected upon and analysed.

Chapters Five, Six and Seven include the data analysis, which brings together policy documents and individuals' interpretations, or, in the case of child participants, their understandings of what is communicated to them. In Chapter Five the documents of the National Curriculum for History for Wales and the history advisers' views on the NC are analysed. The chapter is constructed in two parts. The first part analyses how the changing aims of education are reflected in the changes in the NC for history in Wales and the creation of multiple skills-frameworks, in which knowledge is redefined as a skill. Using the historical skills that are presented in the NC and the Common Requirement, Curriculum *Cymreig*, as the main analytical categories, history advisers' views on each skill are analysed, raising questions about the problematic of the inclusion of historical knowledge and chronological awareness in the specific skills framework. The second part analyses history advisers' views on how history can be taught in museums and how Welsh history is presented and communicated to children at St Fagans: NHM. Individuals' views on museum learning, historical re-enactment and 'activity' are also analysed and the chapter seeks to find out how the school professionals of the study comprehend, interpret and put the NC into action.

In Chapter Six the NMW documents and interviews with the museum staff are analysed. Part A constitutes an analysis of the documents of the NMW in relation to the WAG's policies and, specifically, the NMW document entitled *Vision for a World*

Class Museum of Learning (2005). This relationship is analysed within the context of neoliberal discourses that set out certain cultural, learning and economic aims. Simultaneously, the museum staff's views on the NMW's aims are discussed and analysed, in order to see if and how certain economic and political aims as well as 'inevitable' imposed by the neoliberal state are negotiated in the specific museum organisation. Part B analyses the changes at St Fagans: NHM within the above context and examines how these changes have influenced the representation and construction of Welsh history and history in general. Once again, museum staff's views on these changes are analysed in relation to the above changes. In this way, I examine what constitutes Welsh history and historical understanding, as well as how the Museum and its staff communicate their ideas about Welsh history and historical understanding in the displays and workshops for schools.

In Chapter Seven, school data, which consist of field observations and interviews with children and teachers, are analysed. The chapter discusses the ways in which the above constructions of Welsh history and the ways they are communicated to schools are received by the children. It includes analysis of the ethnographic study with a sample of schoolchildren before, during and after their visit, in conjunction with teachers' interview data. Part A discusses children's views on the visit before this takes place. It then moves on to the analysis of how the workshops of history at St Fagans: NHM were received by children and teachers, and how children participated in them, raising issues of the aims of activity learning. Part B follows the same analytical categories as Chapter Five. This time, children's and teachers' views and children's

activities are analysed in relation to what the NC expects children to acquire from the study of history and Welsh history. This section also discusses the contribution of the designed workshops of St Fagans: NHM to the skills or requirements of the NC.

The conclusions of the analysis chapters and the main theoretical issues raised in the first four chapters are brought together in Chapter Eight. It shows how the analysis supports the proposition that the educational and cultural organisations facilitate the neoliberal state and how they are, for practical purposes, transformed into agents, whether consciously and avowedly or not, of political and ideological reproduction of capitalism and the creation of certain types of citizens. These changes directly affect the study and the substance of history in the National Curriculum and in the National Museum of Wales. Museum learning, museums as facilitators of governmental policies, their transformation into learning organisations, whose main target is the 'measurement' (Easterby-Smith and Araujo, 1999:8) and the role of school education as a place of creating the future flexible employees are analysed in light of the developments of neoliberal policies in Wales and the EU. At the same time, the chapter discusses how governments, the WAG in this case, and individuals at various levels of organisations interpret and deliver the changes that neoliberalism seeks to apply, trying to highlight the processes and negotiations at each level. Once more, it examines how ideas for child-centred curricula are being used in a neoliberal hegemonic context. It then returns to the schools' data in order to analyse how activity and history teaching are delivered, and how children respond to the above decisions and learning environments. Finally, there is a critical discussion about the existence of a specific

pedagogy for history, as defined in this chapter, and the ways in which St Fagans:
NHM designs its history activities.

Chapter Two

Knowledge and Skills in the National Curriculum

Introduction

The previous chapter set out the aims of the study and the theoretical approaches, which this thesis draws upon, in order to analyse the place of history in the present National Curriculum (NC) and in the organised activities for schools at St Fagans: National History Museum (NHM). It was highlighted that many critics, from Marxist but also other backgrounds, consider that the present policies of neoliberalism, with their global agendas, have been shifting the role of the state and the aims of education, as part of an agenda for privatising and bringing the laws of the market into, virtually, every institution. Simultaneously, it was explained that Gramscian perspectives and revisions of classic Marxism have pointed out the importance of analysing and understanding the ideological and hegemonic struggles in various levels of organisations, classes and groups.

Thus, in order to set out the ideological and political contexts, which the institutions and individuals who participated in the present study were called to negotiate, interpret, accept or deny, some of the key policies of the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) were discussed in Chapter One. There was also an outline of EU policies, which were either mentioned in the specific documents of the WAG as flagship policies (i.e. the Lisbon Strategy) or were important strategies that have shaped

certain frameworks for the education of the Member States, like the Bologna Declaration. Chapters Five to Seven analyse how the NC for history for Wales and the participants of the study enacted and interpreted these frameworks.

The aim of the present chapter is to discuss how education is becoming a site of struggles, negotiations and conflicting ideologies and practices that are also responsible for the formation of a curriculum. It discusses how specific curriculum ideologies are shaping new meanings for learning, knowledge and skills. It also locates these debates in the context of the post-War education in England and Wales with a particular focus on the objectives and the learning targets of the NC for history in England and Wales, since the implementation of the NC in 1988.

Finally, it discusses the changes in history and Welsh history in the NC for Wales, within the same frame of these shifting aims of education and the shifting meaning of knowledge and skills. Documentary analysis of the NC for history in Wales and data analysis will attempt to answer some of the questions about the place of history in the NC for history in Wales and how this is enacted by the teachers and the history advisers of my study, in Chapter Five.

PART A: Skills and knowledge in curriculum

Curriculum ideology

The nature of a national curriculum implemented in a nation-state is bound to reflect, to some degree, the ideological preferences and policy directions that favour the dominant

economic interests of the state, even though the actual outcomes and content may reflect struggles and negotiations over what constitutes pedagogy, knowledge and learning. Therefore, a consideration of ideology and its relationship to education is important. These ideologies entail particular visions of society and will frame, to an extent, the policies that are adopted by educationalists whose job it is to try to prepare the child for this world through transmitting certain forms of learning and knowledge. At the same time, these dominant ideologies are not imposed wholesale on institutions from above but potentially become objects of negotiation and struggle between dominant political-economic interests and the various stakeholders involved in curriculum planning and delivery. In this section I briefly discuss the debates and conflicting views over what vision of society is contained within different curriculum approaches.

Theorists from various ideological backgrounds who have analysed curriculum ideology hold differing views on the ideological levels and socio-political groups related to the final formation of a common curriculum. Lawton (1992), for instance, distinguishes three levels that contest curriculum ideology: the general/political level, the interest group level, and the education/teaching or pedagogy level; and within each level there are further competing ideological agendas. At the political level, for example, there are four main ideological agendas according to Lawton (1992:17): the privatisers, who believe that the education sector should be completely privatised and controlled by governing bodies and companies; the minimalists who favour state schools, which provide a basic education for all, but who also argue that those who

have the economic or social resources can 'buy' a better, private education; the pluralists who support the view that a good state education can reach very high standards, and that there will be little or no need for private education; and comprehensive planners, who believe that a common culture is the key for a coherent, organised curriculum for all, which will eliminate discrimination and obstacles related to the acquisition of knowledge.

Similarly, George and Wilding (1976) distinguish four ideological groups whose attitude towards the curriculum is shaped according to their ideology regarding state interference and the welfare state: the anti-collectivists, who support the complete freedom of the individual; the reluctant collectivists, who believe that state regulation is necessary to ensure equality; the Fabian socialists, who can have characteristics of both the reluctant collectivists and Marxists; and the Marxists, who advocate that despite the fact that the welfare state is needed, changing capitalism is the only way for the working class to be liberated from exploitation.

Goodson (1998), on the other hand, has drawn particular attention to the role that academia plays in conflicts over the formation of the school curriculum. He suggests that there are often disputes over which institutions should have the power to define a subject and its distinctive contribution. In the case of Geography as a school subject, the subject was established first, and then the academic world adapted to it. The need then arose for specialised teachers of the subject, and only then did the subject become 'academic' and 'traditional', which raised questions about academic practices, which then in turn led to a questioning of established school practices. Alternatively, as

in the case of economics in secondary education, debates and struggles can be triggered when a subject previously demarcated as academic newly enters the curriculum and becomes a matter of central control (Jephcote, 2002).

Thus, there can be considerable negotiation and struggle between institutions over the direction of state-sponsored curriculum policy. Some agents, preferring a *laissez-faire* approach, would leave such decisions to those who lead and manage schools, parents and other interested parties. Others, who might regard the school curriculum as a means to exercise social and political control, would argue for these matters to be decided centrally. These different approaches to the construction of a curriculum imply that various groups, interests and classes may be involved in the struggle for power over the content of a curriculum. All the above categorisations reflect the ideological affiliations or interests of groups, which may have to be compromised through this constant struggle in various fields related to education and curriculum. These ideologies may have to face - or be tested against - the dominant ideological structures that are supported by various apparatuses (see Goodson, 1998).

Part of this compromise and the struggle for hegemony can be reflected in the fact that some of the progressive ideas about the formation of a curriculum have often managed to 'be heard' and incorporated in more conservative or different political agendas. However, the extent of this incorporation may be adjusted in contexts that seek to accomplish aims that are quite different from the progressive ideology that has created them. For instance, it has been argued that elements of progressive/child-centred curricula can be pragmatically adopted by a range of different political interests

(Halpin, 1990:24; Morrison and Ridley, 1988:7). This lends support to Hartley's (2003:87) view that child-centred curricula are 'elastic', as they have been co-opted into various political and ideological projects. The main question is whether elements of democratic pedagogies and progressive ideologies can sit easily within a political context that is moving in the opposite direction (Smith, 2003:498). It is also questionable whether it is possible for neoliberal ideologies that seek to make education fit the narrow needs of employment to create a curriculum that incorporates progressive and democratic aims. I discuss this question in relation to the research findings of my study later on in the thesis.

Theories of knowledge and the curriculum

The aim of this chapter is to analyse how historical knowledge is constructed in the National Curriculum as a result of the ideological struggles outlined above. Education often becomes a means of social control through the transmission of certain types of knowledge and culture through the school curriculum (see Bernstein, 2000; Young, 1971). Young (1971) focuses on the importance of the teacher's role in transmitting and reproducing the official knowledge and culture. He argues that teachers' socialisation, which is broadly a process of reproducing the knowledge gained from universities, is the main agency of control, and that their legitimatising of the academic curricula creates a specific and specialised school curriculum. The teachers' independence in relation to certain 'prescribed' texts of the National Curriculum has

however been questioned (Coffey and Delamont, 2000:30). Prescribed curricula set patterns that teachers may not be able to challenge.

Goldstein (1988:215) argues that

...any attempt to construct a curriculum on the basis of *a priori* partitioning of knowledge is hopelessly misguided.

Contrary to Goldstein's warning, though, it could be suggested that it is difficult for an educator to design a curriculum without them having an '*a priori* partitioning of knowledge' in mind. As George and Wilding, (1976: vii) explain, it is impossible to adequately understand the views of those who write about social welfare policy without understanding their social values and political ideas. The same can apply for education and curriculum. As discussed so far, the construction of a curriculum is a simultaneous result of what one regards as knowledge, which in turn is driven by the perceived nature of the society in question. This ideology will set out the aims of education, pedagogy and therefore a curriculum. These elements are interlinked, and it is difficult to claim that the idea held by curriculum makers or stakeholders as to what constitutes knowledge is independent from the ideas they hold as to the purposes of education and the curriculum.

At the same time, it is difficult to define knowledge. It is sometimes automatically linked with education as well as experiences, standards or ideals (Scheffler, 1999:2). It can also be regarded, as the previous chapter argued it should, as the combination of practical experience and relevant theoretical understanding able to give this practical experience a complete meaning and holistic understanding (Luria,

2000:9). Generally, the main theories of knowledge debate the priority of knowing 'that' over knowing 'how' and vice versa (Morrison and Riddley, 1988:10). Although the present study is not an analysis of knowledge theories, I discuss here the main theoretical approaches that are relevant to the present form of the NC.

On the one hand, there are theories that prioritise knowing 'that'. Hirst and Peters (1970) defined the nature of knowledge through 'forms' of knowledge – mathematics, fine arts, religion and morality, philosophy, history and human sciences - which have to be developed in order for a person to acquire knowledge. Forms of knowledge constitute propositional knowledge, meaning that they refer to specific statements that one has to learn (Goldstein, 1988:217). They are also associated with traditional, subject-centred curricula (Carr, 2007:7).

On the other hand, there are approaches that favour knowing 'how' and experience, such as the constructivist approach. Constructivism is associated with progressive, child-centred curricula and is based on the assumption that knowledge is experience and the way we cope with reality. The main aim of constructivism is to help children adapt themselves to the world and to organise their experiences; or enrich their 'mini theories' into something greater (Claxton, 1984). Thus, the purpose of education is to help us learn how to organise our experiences (von Glasersfeld, 1989: 136). Close to the school of constructivism is Dewey's innovative pragmatist philosophy. As explained in the following section, Dewey's ideas have influenced the pedagogies of the 'problem solving environment' and the notion of 'activity'. Like von Glasersfeld, he believed that knowledge is when, through everyday life experiences, activities and

socialising, we organise our disposition in a way that enables us to adapt the environment to our needs and to adapt our aims and desires to the situation we live in (Dewey, 1921:400). Dewey also believed that the subjects of the curriculum should be organised in ways that would correspond to real life experiences and prepare the child for a community life. Put simply, he introduces the idea of 'transferable skills' (Dewey, 1921:241), which is similar to what the present NC and neoliberal education policies appear to promote: the use of subjects for the teaching of certain 'transferable skills'. There are, however, different aims within this approach, which will be discussed later on in the thesis.

Dewey's, and constructivist, ideas about knowledge have been associated with skills-centred as well as child-centred curricula. They differ from Hirst's traditional liberalism, which has been criticised for its focus on intellectual development and for not being able to respond to a changing society (Goldstein, 1988). In general, constructivist approaches have been associated with progressive curricula because they place greater emphasis on the child and the role of their experiences in their learning. They also point out the importance of activity in the process of learning.

Constructivism, however, has been criticised for its vague orientations (Suchting, 1992) which could generate an accumulation of information with no valid conclusions. Constructivism has also been criticised for assimilating education with training, thereby giving an instrumental meaning to knowledge, while neglecting emotions, interpersonal relationships and subjects like literature that promote creativity and emotions (Peters, 1981:85).

Neoliberal curricula seem to have been taking constructivist ideas on board; not, however, to prepare the child to be 'citizens for democracy' as Dewey envisaged (Peters, 1981:78), but for the needs of the market. Transferable skills are chosen to meet employers' needs, and not as constructivists may have seen it as a way to organise our experiences. That is the main reason why the division between knowledge and skills has been criticised: for it may lead to a further social division. From a classic Marxist perspective, the division of labour into practical and theoretical types in capitalism has a specific aim: to simplify the labour process and make the special skills of the labourer less valuable, aiming at cheap labour (Marx, 2006:2). The problematic of divided knowledge is also acknowledged by other theorists from a non-Marxist background. Bernstein (2000:85-86), taking Durkheim's views further, claims that personal character and people's commitments are impediments for the market. The market, therefore, 'divorces' knowledge from 'inwardness', which makes knowledge unique for every person as it includes all their personal preferences and ideologies. By separating knowledge into 'theory' and 'practice', knowledge becomes impersonal and therefore people can be substituted by other individuals or excluded from the market. Consequently, these approaches view the division of knowledge as an artificial division, subjected to certain needs of dominant ideologies as these are expressed through education systems.

In the present context of globalisation, capitalism wants a fast adjustable labour force and so education has become the key. Children are expected to be taught and develop interpersonal skills in nursery and primary education (Scase, 2000:53), while

their education will focus on the development of basic technology and IT skills later on (European Council, 2004:93). This may result in the abandonment of knowledge; or rather the integration of knowledge in skill-frameworks and the formation of two sorts of people: the skilled, vocationally driven and the ‘academically educated’ (Carr, 2007:5). Curriculum-wise, equating education with training may lead to cross-curricular activities and vocational curricula considered suitable for the working class (Jephcote, 2002:255-256); while on the other hand, there will be curricula for the ‘academically educated’ leaders of all disciplines and sectors.

Activity

The discussion so far has focused on the ways in which present neoliberal curricula separate knowledge from skills, emphasising the latter. In this section I discuss how skills in a curriculum have been connected to ‘active learning’, a term that has been used in discourses related to ‘progressive pedagogies’. One also comes across this term in the Plowden Report (1967:553) and in the Welsh Assembly Government’s *Learning Country* agenda (DfELLS, 2001:2). ‘Active learning’ incorporates a variety of meanings that refer to active forms of learning, like multimedia, living history and re-enactment or interactive exhibitions at museums, team-based and problem-solving organisational learning, games in the classroom and others. This section focuses on the main theories that have informed the broader notions and expressions of active learning: Constructivist approaches; Vygotsky’s activity theory; and situated learning.

There are three main reasons for this focus on 'activity'. First, during the last five to six decades, there has been a shift in Britain from the subject-centered to more 'progressive', child-centered and activity-oriented curricula. These curricula draw upon Dewey's approaches (Carr, 2007:8) which, as discussed, have influenced constructivism. Constructivist approaches seem to be adopted by museums. Simultaneously, Vygotsky's pioneering approach to activity, following dialectical materialism, has radically influenced child psychology thinking and is even used by organisational learning (see Chapters Three and Eight). Vygotsky's approach arguably contrasts with constructivism and other theories, like behaviourism or pragmatism, on the ground that the former considers knowledge, learning and (mainly) a child's development as socially constructed. Finally, situated learning is another innovative approach, which is close to constructivism in terms of how it conceives knowledge; yet it also emphasises social circumstances. The following chapter elaborates which of - and how - these main pedagogic approaches are used by museums.

As discussed above, according to constructivism, knowledge is formed by how we construct the material world through our senses (Russell, 1948). For constructivists learning is a personal and active process (Claxton, 1984: 57). Dewey's work (1921:123) particularly emphasised the need for an educational system that would encourage enquiry and research through its subjects in order to teach children how to learn.

Piaget is also one of the most influential representatives of constructivism. His work focuses on the consideration that play is a mechanism of behaviour by which a

child adapts themselves to external conditions, and ‘constructs’ worlds, and it is therefore a way to understand the world (Piaget, 1962). Activity, like play, is an adaptive mechanism, which, through our experiences helps us make sense of the world. That is to say, a child can learn to explain and identify solutions through discovery and personal involvement (Gallagher, 1988). However, Piaget has been criticised for his ‘adualism’, which refers to the view that children are locked into their own experiences and they just try to adapt to situations (Butterworth, 1987: 65). Piaget’s developmental stages have also been criticised for their failure to explain the ways and reasons for the transition from one stage to the other (El’konin, 2000:6).

In contrast, Soviet psychologist Vygotsky, with his students and colleagues, for whom I use the name ‘Neo-Vygotskians’⁵, were influenced by Marxist ideology and approached child development and activity from a sociocultural perspective. Neo-Vygotskians – such as El’konin, Galperin, Leontyev, Luria and colleagues or students - extended Vygotsky’s theory and tried to overcome its methodological and theoretical shortcomings. For this school of developmental psychology, consciousness is socially constructed, through the use of ‘psychological’ tools, like language (Vygotsky, 1962). Vygotsky studied the cultural development of the child through education and activity, while he introduced the concept of the ‘zone of proximal development’ (ZPD). He claimed that what a child can do without the help of an adult or another person reveals ‘his mature capabilities and functions’ (Vygotsky, 2008:18). The ZPD refers to those

⁵ Karpov (2005:45) uses the term *Neo-Vygotskians* to refer to Vygotsky’s Russian followers, while he explains that there were also a number of American psychologists associated with the Neo-Vygotskian school.

processes that have not yet 'matured' in a child's mind during their development. Herein lies the importance of the organised activity. The adult or the teacher takes a guiding role in organised activities that will help children develop these not-yet-matured processes. He also introduced the 'social situation of development', which describes the ways the child understands and deals with social situations (Vygotsky, 2008:14).

In contrast to Piaget's or constructivists' ideas, for Vygotsky and Soviet psychologists, mental development is subject to historical change; the more favourable the economic and cultural conditions of development are, the faster the pace (Blonskiy, 1973:326, cited in El'konin, 2000:2). Vygotskian approaches argue that society produces activity and the individual activity forms society (El'konin, 2000:7; Leontyev, 1977:3, 29). Activity is not, as suggested by Piaget or behaviourists, an adaptive mechanism. Vygotsky and Neo-Vygotskian psychologists describe social activity as an outcome of the interaction between the individual and the social consciousness (Davydov et al., 2003: 69; El'konin: 2000; Luria, 2000:4). What is important is that human action understands and changes the environment, and therefore human mental life is a product of new activities in social practice (Luria, 2000:5, 6).

Situated learning is similar to constructivism but with more emphasis on the social environment. It was introduced by Lave and Wenger (1991), who see activity itself as the starting point and the goal of activity. Engaging in problem situations itself is learning (Lave and Wenger, 1991: 49-50). Their approach also takes the social context into account, in that it determines relations in the activity context (Lave and

Wenger, 1991:51). However, situated learning has been criticised for having failed to take further issues of power and ideology into account (Arnseth, 2008:299) and this is what differentiates it from Vygotskian activity theory. Furthermore, whereas the Vygotskian perspective regards activity as a way to obtain knowledge, for Lave and Wenger as well as for constructivists, activity *is* knowledge.

Historical knowledge

Debates about activity, knowledge and skills can be also reflected in how historical knowledge has been positioned in curricula. In this section I bring together the arguments about the importance of the un-divided character of knowledge and the argument on the importance of learning history as this was formed in Chapter One. This section highlights the main differences in historical approaches in regards to the nature of history. It is not my intention to engage in a detailed discussion on the philosophy of history, but to give the reader the theoretical outline of the main schools of history. At the end of the section my personal view on historical knowledge will be given.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Empiricism was one of the first schools that regarded history as a science and noted the significance of the study of primary sources. Empiricists conceived historical knowledge as a vital element of the general learning process, since history was regarded as the fruit of conclusions drawn from empirical processes (Feldner, 2003). Leopold van Ranke, who wrote histories of ‘important people’ by focusing on the detailed study of primary sources and records, tried to free historical writing from ideologies and superstitions (Acton, 1906:34-35).

He also believed that the past is a reliable source for drawing future decisions (Atkinson, 1978). Ranke's work focused on diplomatic history due to the rise of nationalism and the growth of European states (Green and Troup, 1999). Acton (1906), one of the British representatives of this German school of historical thought (Atkinson, 1978), extended this argument by saying that one of the major duties of historians was to assert moral judgments through history.

With the introduction of dialectical materialism, Marx and Engels (1971; 1992) conceived progress in history as a product of class struggles, as unity and as a spiral process. In *The German Ideology*, Marx and Engels (1970), criticising Hegel's idealism, which primarily conceived History as an intellectual journey and the work of Mind ('Geist'), as well as the idealism of the German philosophers, explained the integral relationship between human history and the history of industry and exchange (Marx and Engels, 1970:58-59). Historical materialists conceive history as progress and progress as history: the two so dialectically connected that one cannot be studied without the other. As discussed in Chapter One, a fundamental element of history according to Marx and Engels (Marx, 1976, 2006; Marx and Engels, 1970, 1971) is the contradictions that are created between the forces and relations of production which eventually leads to class conflict and then revolutionary change to a new set of social relations. Another important point, which was discussed in the previous chapter in reference to the importance of learning history, is that Marxist historians and critics (see Eagleton, 2006) have pointed out the importance of understanding the relations between individuals and their environment, other individuals and their material

production. This understanding constitutes the main characteristic of historical knowledge and knowledge in general. The main point is that one should understand these relations, not in order to be self-fulfilled but also in order to act on the world and change it.

Marx's views were developed or revised in the twentieth century by movements such as *Annales' histoire totale* in France and the school of social history by British historians, who did not necessarily identify with Marxism but had strong left-wing or Labour influences and a democratic approach (Eley, 2003). There was also the 'history from below' movement by British Marxist historians, like Christopher Hill, E. P. Thompson and E. Hobsbawm. E.P. Thompson's *The Making of the English Working Class* (1965), Hill's works on 17th century English history or Hobsbawm's *Bandits* (1969) are examples of writings about the history of marginalised and oppressed groups. Their history is also examined within the wider socio-economic circumstances, which have been oppressing or marginalising them. Moreover, despite their differences to each other, structuralism and post modernism moved away from the study of 'reality' and the progressive route of history as analysed by Marx (Brown, 2005; Passmore, 2003). Structuralism pointed out the importance of language as a catalyst in social relations (ibid). With variations, post-structuralist/modernist historians were expected to write different stories from different aspects and different points of view (Berkhofer, 1995; White, 1978).

Although the above theories have different aims and sometimes different ideological frameworks, all of them talk in one way or another about history as a

totality of relations that have to be studied. Consequently, historical knowledge and understanding could be defined as the understanding of those relations and actions of the past that would help one understand how the present has been formed, with the aim of acting upon it and creating the future. Historical understanding and knowledge is to comprehend that historical events are not static but are interlinked and affect our present. As Lee (1994: 43, 44-48) described, historical knowledge is about being acquainted with historical facts and its different accounts as well as about combining *what* happened with *why* it happened. It would follow that history has to be taught as a whole and, as stated above, this is not only a Marxist approach.

Carr, (1987:87) a relativist, explains that:

If milk is set to boil in a saucepan, it boils over. I do not know and have never wanted to know, why this happens; if pressed, I should probably attribute it to a propensity to boil over, which is true enough but explains nothing.

This example shows that it is not enough to explain how things happen, or propose some superficial connections. As Collingwood (1978: 97-98) also argues from an idealist and relativist philosophical view, 'history is concerned not with events but with processes that turn into one another'. He points out that we 'cannot find out what a man means by simply studying his spoken or written statements [...] you must also know what the question was to which the thing he has said or written was meant as an answer' (Collingwood, 1978: 31).

Consequently, it is not the objects we should be looking at but the ideas behind these objects. Superficial connections may show *how* some events are connected, but

they do not show *why* and *under what circumstances* they have been connected. Thus, irrespective of theoretical background, there is a consensus regarding the importance of an approach to history that locates events and stories in a broader context of events and relations. If one accepts this, then both skills and a body of knowledge are essential in order to reach these relations and processes.

PART B: The situation in England and Wales

Towards a National Curriculum: policies and controversies

One of the central points about neoliberal ideology in education in England and Wales is related to the fact that both Conservative and Labour parties policies have gradually linked education with employment and employers' needs. This section briefly sketches the general socio-political conditions that resulted in the creation of the NC in England and Wales after the Second World War.

The NC for England and Wales was introduced in 1988, with the Education Reform Act (ERA 1988). In England and Wales, until the 1980s, teachers had the main control over the curriculum (Cambell, 1983:13) and therein the general education policies and discourses could be 'loosely' characterised as 'welfarist' (Gewirtz, 2002:1); these were mainly governed by partnerships, which will not be expanded on further in this thesis.

A tighter central control would secure the aims of the improvement of the education system in relation to the demands of the market. Thus, the duties of the

central government, the LEAs, the schools and the teachers, that is, the groups that are mainly responsible for a country's education system (Lawton, 1983), started making changes with the Education Act of 1944. According to Sharp (2002), the 1944 Act did set a new potential for a better notion of partnership between the local and central governments. In contrast, Aldrich and Leighton (1985) argue that the 1944 Act failed to define and distinguish the responsibilities of the central and the local government. Arguably, this led to the beginning of a tighter central control (Campbell, 1983:15; Gordon, 2000; Lawrence, 1992; Lawton, 1992).

After the Second World War there was an urgent demand for the creation of jobs and the reduction of unemployment, and so the political manifestos focused on improving education as a way of producing a better economy (Aldrich, 1988; Lawrence, 1992). Wider access to secondary education was considered to be a way for Britain to compete economically and culturally with the rest of the world (Carr, 2007:5). Therefore, on the one hand, education standards started being linked to the standards of economy and the work place, while on the other hand, there was a proclaimed need for changes in the welfare state. After the War, Attlee's Labour Government introduced a series of programmes for nationalisations. According to Cole (2007:1), despite being progressive and being praised by progressive people, these nationalisations and welfare state reforms might have had to take place at that time in order to avoid the possibility of a social revolution. They were even presented as a way to ensure the continuance of the British race (Beveridge, 1942:154). It can also be seen

as a result of the attempts of the capitalist state to gain the consent of the dominated classes (Apple, 2000: 66-67).

It could also be argued that after the Second World War there was a need for nationalisation of those sectors that had been destroyed. As Engels (1975) argues, in periods of crisis the State is often called upon to undertake the funding of these sectors that are not economically viable for private companies, such as the energy and transport sectors. There was a need, thus, for nationalisation and a strong central government in order to secure political, economic and personal stability and at the same time to pave the way for privatisations in the years to come. This assumption can be based on the fact that from 1951 to 1974 the Conservative Governments tried to return state industries to private ownership (Cole, 2007:2). The Labour Government of 1964-1970 proposed measures against unions, whilst the Labour Party, in opposition, tried to adopt more right wing and anti-socialist positions (Cole, 2007:3).

In 1976, in his famous Ruskin College speech, the Labour Prime Minister James Callaghan claimed that the goal of the education system should be the orientation of a child to learn a job (Docking, 2000). This speech equated the needs of society with the needs of the economy (Maw, 1988:50), and sowed 'the seeds of New Labour, with its essentially neoliberal agenda' (Cole, 2007:4). From the end of the 1970s onwards, Thatcher's government (1979-1990) also introduced funding cuts in the civil service and privatisations. There were also cuts in education funds, with the exception of Polytechnics and Colleges (Paterson, 2003:167). At the same time, Thatcher's New Right was committed to neoliberalism but it also managed to unite it with the

traditional values of neo-conservatism, thereby introducing the idea of a strong government that would promote both ideologies (Phillips, 1998:28). Hence, neo-conservative values of family, culture and nation sat alongside neo-liberal values of free market, and both needed a strong state to secure them.

It becomes apparent that both parties were promoting changes in education that would enable employers to meet their needs while at the same time public funding was being replaced by privatisation. Despite these privatisations, state-funded schools could not be banished entirely and privatised like other sectors. Education remained in the public sector but Ball (2007: 18-19) argues that it was 're-thought in terms of its conditions of operation, inter-relationships and modes of planning and financing, and made subject to competition and choice'.

Thus, from 1979 to 1988, a series of legislations and Acts took place to reinforce the power of parental choice. Choice of schools and, therefore, substantial numbers of pupils, was the key indicator of what made a state school viable (Lawton, 1992). Apart from state funding, the aim of connecting school education with employment was still present. The eventual introduction of the NC sealed a standardisation of the school curriculum, which could ensure and assure the teaching of basic skills demanded by the employers (Paterson, 2003:167).

The general issue that underlined all the policies after the Second World War was the conflicting ideologies within the two major parties. In the Conservative Party, as Lawton (1992:3-7) explains, neoliberals believed in parental choice and market forces as the best way towards a successful economy, while neo-conservatives wanted to

secure their traditional values through an elitist education system. There was also incoherence in the Labour Party's education policies, as many members of the party supported grammar schools, despite the party's commitments to education for all and the promotion of comprehensive schools (Lawrence, 1992; Marsden, 1973). These same controversies, which refer to the conflicting neoliberal and social justice streams within the Party, are still present in New Labour's education agendas (Gewirtz, 2002:164). The paradox is, however, that despite their inner conflicts, both parties introduced policies and practices of marketisation of education, with Labour and New Labour either promoting previous Conservative policies, or, despite their claims, not having been able to eliminate social inequalities in practice (see Cole, 2008; Gewirtz, 2002; Hatcher, 1996; Phillips, 1998).

It is important to note here that there have been differences in the implementation and success of neoliberal education policies between England and Wales. This has resulted in the view that education in Wales carries a pro-comprehensive education tradition that has worked towards transforming society (Reynolds, 2008:758) rather than facilitating market rationales. It has been argued that this tradition was the catalyst for the differentiated policies of the Welsh Assembly Government after devolution (see Rees, 2005, 2007). Parental choice, for example, was not effective in rural areas of Wales as almost 40% of parents could not have had a realistic choice due to the great distances between schools (Reynolds, 1994:9). Although details of these differences are not discussed here, it is important to bear the above differentiation in mind in order to

analyse the NC for history and main policy documents in the context of this Welsh educational tradition.

The National Curriculum for England and Wales: towards a skills orientated curriculum

The debates about the need for progressive curricula as well as new ways of teaching history emerged during the 1960s, which, as discussed in this section, prompted more controversy within the two major parties and the education world in Britain. These new ideas contradicted the plans for a market orientated education system, which both Conservative and Labour policies promoted. The Education Reform Act of 1988 represented a step towards tighter central control. One of its main aims was to introduce a scheme of assessment in order to ensure a 'code' of common standards for the measurement of pupils' success. In turn, this would also help parents draw conclusions about the reliability of each school. As a result, schools were in the 'market place' and parents started to be regarded as consumers (Hughes, 1996; Lawrence, 1992).

As Apple (2000:60-61) argues, consumer choice is the guarantor of democracy in capitalism but this development of 'quasi markets' in education has led to the exacerbation of existing social divisions surrounding class and race. Hence, choice is likely to fail in the context of neoliberalism, at least as a way of eliminating inequalities. That is, it is quite possible that not all parents have the same access and the background to make the 'right' or 'desirable' choice (Ball, 1993:108). In England, as Hughes' (1996) research pointed out, the majority of parents could not see themselves

as ‘consumers’. Nor could they actually act as consumers, particularly since they could not travel long distances to ‘examine’ which school was good for their children.

What the NC also introduced was the teaching of skills. Since its first revision tighter skill-frameworks have been established. Since its introduction in 1988, there have been many revisions to the NC with slight differences between England and Wales (Appendix 1). As the present focus is on how history is defined in the skill frameworks, this section mainly refers to the place of skills in the NC in order to later discuss the case of history. As already discussed in the previous chapter, in the last twenty years, EU and regional policies have been making the connection between learning and economic competitiveness and growth more explicit. In 2004, the DfES (together with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) published the White Paper, *21st Century Skills: Realising Our Potential [Individuals, Employers, Nation]* which more explicitly defines how government conceptualises education:

- a. Putting employers’ needs at centre stage. Skills are not an end in themselves, but a means towards supporting successful businesses and organisations. We must give employers more support in accessing the training they need, and more influence in deciding how that training is provided. This is what we mean by a ‘demand-led’ system.
- b. Helping employers use skills to achieve more ambitious longer term business success. The Skills Strategy is not just about meeting the demands for skills that employers already have...
- c. Motivating and supporting learners. We will make it easier for those adults who most need extra skills by offering them a new entitlement to learning. We will prioritise our resources, with the ambition that over time we help everybody who wants them to gain at least the foundation skills for employability, with better support for young adults to gain more advanced craft, technician and associate professional qualifications (DfES, 2004: 21).

With the exception of the basic skills of literacy, numeracy, ICT and languages, skills are not further specified. In the same document it is stated that 'Across the European Union, the importance of skills has been recognised in the economic reform agenda agreed at Lisbon in 2000' (DfES, 2004:5). The language used is the same as the language in EU documents and the Welsh *Learning Country*. In all the documents the demands of increasing productivity and competitiveness according to the 'employers' needs' is the only clearly defined aim and it is proposed that citizens are expected to gain 'at least the foundation skills for employability'. This implies that they are not expected to cultivate their abilities or interests in an extensive way as long as they can gain basic employability skills. This is an education uninterested in personal abilities unless they are compatible with employers' needs.

As Pring (2004:106) also comments:

A lot therefore hangs on the urgent and rapid development of *skills*: improved productivity, innovation, profitability, quality of public services, choice of services, employability, personal well-being, fairness and inclusivity. Indeed, such is the tone and content of the White Paper that it would seem that everything else shades into insignificance in the attempts to achieve a profitable, fair and personally fulfilling society [...] Perhaps the language of skills and its interconnected concepts gives an illusion of straightforwardness which closer examination would not warrant.

Pring (2004) appears sceptical about what purpose skills serve and the way they are presented as a panacea. The fact that they are presented in the context of personal fulfilment and profitable society, however, cannot ultimately hide the fact that skills are not explicitly defined. The fact that skills are everywhere but at the same time in no document do they take any other 'physical' form, apart from IT, literacy and numeracy,

makes one, as Pring (2004) observes, include everything in this skills framework. The fact that the need to adjust our needs to employers' needs is everywhere may ultimately mean that there is only one skill: the ability to predict early enough the employers' needs in order to learn the equivalent skill, discipline or vocation and so re-programme ourselves (Castells, 1997) according to the needs of the market. As Bernstein (2000:87) has also argued, skills were introduced in the NC in England and Wales to create specific models of citizens.

Therefore, it seems that skills in the NC have been introduced as a means towards facilitating a general education that would assist the needs of employment and, eventually, create certain types of citizens and employees. This aim appears to be different from what the advocates of progressive curricula had in mind, which would help children's learning through 'activity'.

History in the NC

It is possible that the shaping of education towards the needs of the market will affect all those subjects that are not considered necessary for the flexible, skills-orientated labour market, such as history and the humanities. These subjects may be regarded as obsolete in a society that wants to produce employees as quickly as possible. The words 'competition' and 'employment' often occur in National Curriculum documents too (HCW, 1990; SCAA, 1993). At the same time, history has always been a field of contest as governments, through schools and also the media, can promote specific ideas of the past and culture (Jordanova, 2000; Williams 1989), as in the case of nationalism.

As a result, the main debates before and after the implementation of the NC concerned whether the main purpose of school history should be the acquisition of skills or the teaching of historical facts. These debates were inevitably connected to further ideological differences that had to do with the ways various stakeholders regarded historical knowledge and its function in society. Traditional, subject orientated knowledge was opposed to progressive, activity and skills orientated knowledge; however, the 'chance' which was created during these debates for British education to implement pedagogy-based history failed, as this was strongly opposed to what the advocates of neoliberalism, from both the Conservative and the Labour Parties, wanted to achieve.

The earliest regulations for history in the beginning of the twentieth century stressed the main framework and the subjects that should be taught but the main responsibility for methods, aims and content of the subject was left to teachers (Phillips, 1998). The interference of the state was absent and this gave the entire responsibility for the teaching of history to teachers. This policy dominated the education system in England until the 1960s, when educationalists and historians started doubting the content and the methods used in the teaching of history in schools. Generally, there was a belief that there could be a complete fracture with the past and its traditions (Goodson et al., 1998:3). The main concerns were the syllabuses, which up to that point had been anglo-centric and far removed from the achievements of the 'ordinary people', while there was no specific pedagogy for history (Phillips, 1998:15). As a solution to what could constitute the nature of school history, the notion of 'new history' was introduced

in the 1970s as a way towards the renaissance of history (Phillips, 1998:15; Phillips, 2000:13).

‘New history’ was a term that had been used in the USA in the nineteenth century (Fogel and Elton, 1983:13-14); however, it had a different meaning then from the one that emerged during the debate on history teaching in Britain. During the nineteenth century, history in the US, England, France and Germany focused on politics. It was not until the beginning of the twentieth century that social rather than political phenomena were addressed. This shift can be traced to Giambattista Vico, Lord Macaulay and Jules Michelet and had its expression in the movements of new history in the US, and ‘total history’ in France with the *Annales*. These approaches, which were practiced during the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s, demonstrated a united study of human history and discussed the fundamental aspects of civilizations (Fogel and Elton, 1983).

From 1969 onwards the term ‘new history’ reflected the intention of circles of educationalists for a more pedagogic approach to the teaching of history. It emphasised the significance of psychology and pedagogy in the teaching of history, prior to the formation of the NC. There was also an attempt to draw a line between school and academic history and give history school teachers a theoretical context for their work. One of the main questions raised concerned the nature of historical knowledge and whether this was a body of information, a sum of skills or both. The notion of new history introduced the novelty of a history that would be based on subject units rather than chronological continuity. This would enable teachers to concentrate on specific subjects according to their relevance to pupils. It also released teachers from strict

chronology, which was thought to be responsible for the nationalistic character of history as a school subject (Chaffer, 1973). However, Samuel (1989a:15) points out that the study of history by subject and not by period under the implicit influence of structuralism and social sciences since the 1960s has created a linear, anachronistic orientation of history.

The need for a more coherent strategy for and theory of school history emerged as a response to Price's article in 1968. Price (1968: 344-345) posed a warning about the fact that history could lose the battle not only for its place as a subject in the curriculum but also in 'the minds and interests of the young'. She concluded that this danger stemmed partly from the syllabus and partly from the teaching methods, and from the unspoken belief that only able children could profitably study history. She proposed that the purpose of history, which was to prepare the child for the world they were about to enter, was to find a balance between the world and British history while remaining relevant to the child's world.

As a response to the debates stirred up by Price's articles, the Schools Council for Curriculum and Assessment (SCCA) in England announced that it would fund a curriculum project in history, the School Council History Project or SCHP (renamed as the School History Project in 1984). The SCHP would redefine the teaching of history by pointing out the main pedagogic and assessment strategies that a teacher should follow in the process of choosing the content of a history lesson. For the SCHP (1976:16) there was no body of knowledge for history in the sense of a well structured content like sciences, but it suggested that history was about the human past and that it

involves the concept of time past. The practice of history was a specific activity of enquiry into evidence surviving from the past, with a view to finding out, in the context of chronology and through a process of rethinking past thoughts and emotions, what particular events happened and why changes occurred (SCHP, 1976:18).

The SCHP suggested how history should be assessed. It proposed that pupils would be assessed on their ability to 'think historically' rather than on the 'knowledge' acquired as a result of studying the syllabuses (SCHP, 1976:53). This assessment would be based on the ability of the student to analyse, explain or present the evidence. Therefore, it seemed that the main purpose of the SCHP was to change the focus of school history and draw attention away from the knowledge of content towards historical skills that would help pupils develop historical thinking. The SCHP demonstrated that its project was based on pedagogic research and claimed that through the cultivation of the valuable concepts of causation and continuity, historical knowledge would enable pupils to understand and interpret their own lives, their identity and their community (Phillips, 1998).

There were various responses to the SCHP. Scholars like Slater (1989) and Sylvester (1994), who participated in the SCHP, believed in its innovative spirit and saw it as the end of the traditional, English orientated school history. There was, however, scepticism and criticism regarding its effectiveness in the real school world (Phillips, 1998:18). In addition, Williams (1989) questioned the sufficient sense of chronology in the proposed scheme and he also criticised it for its inertia in the selection of historical content. From a different perspective, neo-conservatism, as

expressed in two history groups consisting of historians and educationalists - the Conservative Philosophy Group (1975) and the Salisbury Group (1977) - 'resisted' multiculturalism, cultural relativism, empathy and anarchy by defending British culture (Lawton 1992; Phillips 1998). The Hillgate Group's *Whose Schools? A Radical Manifesto*, a New Right pamphlet published in 1986 written by a group of academics, teachers and philosophers, presented the National Curriculum as the only way the state could safeguard the national tradition and traditional education.

As Phillips (1998:28-29) argues, the Hillgate Group also advocated the privatisation of schools, which it argued should not be subject to the Local Education Authorities. Furthermore, teachers were considered to have monopolised the planning of school and the curriculum for too long. Instead, as schools would soon be entering the world of the free market and competition, parents would be able to choose the best school for their children. Therefore parents would take the leading role in their child's education. As a result, teachers and their work in the classroom should be subject to controls, so that the 'quality' of the history syllabus could be ensured. The Hillgate Group also asserted that teachers had 'corrupted' traditional values by teaching under the influence of relativism and, consequently, neo-Marxism (Phillips, 1998:29).

The debate over the place of history in the school curriculum was reinforced after the introduction of the NC. In 1989 the History Working Group (HWG) was established by Kenneth Baker, the (then) Secretary of State for education and it set out the beginning of a new discourse on history and its place in the NC, thus reshaping school history. The HWG consisted of teachers (although they comprised only two

members), advisers, teacher trainers and local authorities' representatives. Most were carefully selected by members of the government, like Kenneth Baker himself (Phillips, 1998:4-5). Similarly, in 1989, the Secretary of State for Wales appointed the History Committee of Wales as part of the arrangements for the implementation of the Curriculum (HCW, 1990).

The Final Report for the NC for history was completed in April, 1990. It managed to focus on British history; however, it approached it not from the Anglo-centric point of view but from the angle of the history of the different peoples of Britain and the relation of British history with the history of the world (HWG, 1990:16-17).

The Final Report generated various reactions. First of all, traditionalists criticised the NC for its political bias and lack of concern for historical facts. In contrast, there was criticism regarding the exaggerated promotion of Britain's glorious imperial past. In general, there was great scepticism about this new way of history teaching that ignored facts and dates without being specific about the main targets and goals that the educational system intended to promote (Sweetman, 1992). The Final Report was also disliked by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher herself, who personally attacked the HWG's Report for placing too much emphasis on interpretation and not enough on historical knowledge (Phillips, 2000: 16-17). This caused further debates about governmental interference. Consequently, the NC was reviewed by the SCAA (Schools Curriculum and Assessment Authority) under Sir Ron Dearing, between 1993 and 1994. According to Dearing (1994) there was a need to slim down both the NC and the history curriculum, to change attainment testing arrangements and to place more

emphasis on information technology (see also ACAC, 1994). As a result, the revised National Curriculum came into effect in September 1995.

Further reviews and consultation forums have taken place since then. The Education Act in 1996 made some alterations in the content of study as well as in the attainment targets and skills that should be taught (ACCAC, 2000b). However, the general ideological framework for history in the NC has not significantly changed since 1995. The most important feature relevant to this study is the formation and development of a common scheme of key skills or, as they were once called, 'elements' or 'requirements', in the NC for England and Wales. This skills framework is applied to all the subjects of the curriculum and it has to be taught through each subject. The teaching of all subjects and their separate skills is therefore part of a general framework of mathematics, IT, problem-solving, creative and communication skills (See also Appendix 1).

Consequently, the 'progressive' suggestions for school history up until the introduction of the NC had been based on new history or total history approaches that promoted both historical skills and knowledge within a pedagogically sound curriculum. Skills were indeed included in the NC. They were, however, approached from the angle of basic skills that were needed in the market. Since they were first introduced in the NC of 1995, the common requirements have been basic skills like IT, and mathematical, literacy and presentation skills, which history and every subject had to 'serve'. More skill frameworks have been created, as explained in the following section, and historical knowledge constitutes one of them.

As a result, and using the progressive attempts to shift from the subject-based school history to the learning of historical skills, neoliberal policies introduced a common skill framework in the NC. These common requirements as they are called are 'general capacities' of communication, mathematical, IT (Information Technology), problem-solving, creative, personal and social education skills, or 'key competencies' (Council of the European Union, 2004:25) needed by the employers. They are not historical skills that will help a pupil develop historical thinking and knowledge. Knowledge is degraded into a historical skill that, together with chronological awareness, enquiry, interpretation and combination, is subordinated into the above common framework.

The philosophy of neoliberalism that transmits market values in education is partly encapsulated in the application of common skills to all the subjects of the curriculum. For example, as Pring (2009:115) explains, to cultivate entrepreneurial skills through history means that a historian - or a history student for that matter - 'has to think how he or she will put his or her historical knowledge into financial gain - tours in medieval Britain, for example'. This subordination of history to skills gives priority to general capacities and not to historical knowledge or skills. In that sense, neoliberal policies try to promote a scheme of historical skills not as a route to historical knowledge and understanding but as a way to the teaching of capacities demanded by the market.

National Curriculum for Wales

When focusing on the NC for Wales one has to keep in mind the Government of Wales Act in 1998 that led to the establishment of the National Assembly for Wales in 1999. As mentioned above, a distinct tradition had already been established in Welsh education before devolution. Wales had exercised devolved powers in education since the establishment of the Education Department of the Welsh Office in the 1960s (Reynolds, 2008: 756) and it acquired increasing powers over education during the 1970s (Rees, 2007: 9). By the 1990s, the Welsh Office had accumulated major powers over most aspects of education and training; responsibilities which were delivered through the local education authorities and a number of quangos, such as the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) and the Further and Higher Education Funding Councils for Wales (Rees, 2007:13).

Arguably, since the National Assembly has been active in developing new policies, the Labour Party of Wales has tried to separate itself from the neoliberal New Labour positions of Westminster (Reynolds, 2008:754). An example is the abandonment of published 'league tables' of test scores for individual secondary schools, which is claimed to be able to soften the competitive edge of relationships between schools and promote good school attainment through partnership (Rees, 2007:11; Reynolds, 2008:754-755). In contrast, it is also important to keep in mind the discussions within the political circles of England and Wales about the educational reforms concerning children's educational performance by the mid 1980s. During these debates, comparisons were increasingly made between the educational system of

England and Wales together versus the systems of our economic competitors such as Germany or Japan (Reynolds, 1994:9). This argument makes evident the conflicting views on the aims of education in Wales, both pre- and post-devolution.

There is still controversy as to whether the Assembly has worked towards distinct ‘Welsh policies’ or whether there is no big difference since the era of the Welsh Office. To inform this study I concentrate on the policies that have had an impact on the introduction of the NC for Wales. I have already expressed the view that certain policies like the *Learning Country* or the *Creative Future* have been designed along the lines of general agendas set out by the EU, which the WAG approves of and has incorporated into the NC. In Chapters Five to Eight I also discuss the extent to which history in the National Curriculum for Wales is ‘distinctively’ Welsh and how it embodies the Welsh Assembly Government’s aims. In this section I highlight the procedures that led to the introduction and formation of the history curriculum from 1990 onwards.

The Curriculum Council for Wales (CCW) was appointed by the Secretary of State for Wales to conduct the same review as the one undertaken by the SCAA. In collaboration with the SCAA, the CCW collected evidence for the issues mentioned above and also focused on a number of further issues: the future shape of the curriculum in Wales, the assessment of Welsh as a second language, and the future shape of the curriculum for 14-16 education.

In 1994, the Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACAC) (renamed Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority (ACCAC) in 1999) conducted a

statutory consultation exercise on the CCW's proposals, which were in accordance with Dearing's Final Report (ACAC, 1994a). This consultation gave an opportunity to teachers, organisations and individuals to express their views on the proposals for the revised curriculum. As stated before, the final NC orders for history in both England and Wales were published in 1995. In January 1998, the ACCAC was asked by Ministers to give advice on ways in which the NC for Key Stages 1 to 3 could be slimmed down. On the basis of the evidence produced, the ACCAC advised that the programmes of study in six of the non-core subjects should be made optional. These subjects included history. The resulting outcomes of the consultation that was carried out came into effect in September 1998 (ACCAC, b, 2000:6).

In 2000, in the post-devolution era, after a two-year consultation period and open discussion, the ACCAC introduced a revised Curriculum for Wales, in accordance with the Education Act of 1996. The review had to address issues of basic and key skills, breadth and balance, manageability, continuity and progression, work-related education and personal and social education (ACCAC, 2000b:5). The rationale for a new revision was the need for a 'single coherent framework for curriculum and assessment to raise standards of achievement' (ibid: 7). The new curriculum includes a focus statement for each subject at each key stage about what pupils should be taught. The common requirements in the NC for Wales include the Curriculum *Cymreig*, which means that, where appropriate, pupils should connect each subject to the Welsh context (ACCAC, 2000a:5). With regard to history, five key skills have to be developed through history:

chronological awareness, historical knowledge and understanding, interpretations of history, historical enquiry and organisation and communication.

More recently, in 2007, a series of consultations was launched for a new review of the curriculum of Wales in 2008. Once again, more than seven years later, the Welsh Assembly Government tried to establish for 2008 'a single coherent framework for curriculum, assessment and qualifications 3-19 which will help schools to raise standards of achievement and widen educational opportunity' (DfELLS, 2007:2). Thus, the main revision of the subject orders was to clarify how each subject can contribute to the development of skills, to review the icons used for skills, update and reduce content, re-draft level descriptions, remove references to the Key Stage 2 and 3 programmes of study from the level descriptions, and reduce level descriptions in Key Stage 4 Programmes of Study. There was also the need to revise the 'Access for all pupils' to ensure inclusion and accessibility for all pupils, especially those with special educational needs (SEN) (DfELLS, 2007: 7).

Welsh History in the curriculum

The History Committee of Wales (HCW) (see Chapter Two) produced an equivalent to the HWG's Final Report in 1990 where Welsh history was defined as the history of a distinct people and nation. That is, how it has been and is perceived by Welsh men and women. It was stated that

To insist on the separate identity of Wales is not to claim that the history of Wales should be taught in isolation. [...]Pupils in Wales will need to understand the separate identity of Wales, the close relationship between

Wales and England and the place of Wales within the history of the British Isles as a whole (HCW, 1990: 13).

According to this Final Report, the history of Wales played a distinctive role in the National Curriculum. The integration of Welsh history within British history study units was considered to be necessary so that pupils were conscious of the distinctive Welsh culture and identity. However, Welsh history was not regarded separately from the World or British history and it should be taught in conjunction with the history of the rest of Britain (HCW, 1990). Since I analyse the documents of the NC for history in Wales in Chapters Five and Seven, with particular focus on historical knowledge and its relation to skills, there is no need to focus here on the requirements, study units and historical knowledge it promotes. It seems pertinent, however, to express some thoughts and raise some issues here, which will be expanded on in the following chapters.

First of all, Welsh history in the 1990 Final Report document was regarded as a way to make children aware of the Welsh past and a distinctive Welsh identity. In the *Orders of the Welsh Department*, by the Welsh Department of the Ministry of Education in 1952, long before the debates for the NC, we can read the main aims for the teaching of history. These were similar to the ones of the Final Report, yet had a more romantic inclination: ‘...to arouse curiosity and to stimulate the interest and imagination of their pupils must obviously be one of the most important aims of the history teachers’ (Welsh Department, Ministry of Education, 1952:36). In this document, it was also argued that ‘when history is skilfully taught it can train the

memory and stimulate emotions, imagination and judgement' and that Welsh history was '...an enthralling story - long, romantic, stirring and rich in great personalities' (ibid: 37). History was regarded as an essential factor in the survival of the Welsh nation. Simultaneously, the document stressed the urgent need for an adequate teaching of Welsh history both as an independent unit and in relation to the history of those countries that influenced Wales. The views expressed in both documents with regard to the contribution of school history subjects to the promotion of a Welsh identity are quite similar despite the Final Report being asserted almost forty years later than the *Orders*.

Nevertheless, much debate has taken place over the last two decades about the notion of a Welsh past and how it is represented in the media, history textbooks and museums. At least until the 1960s there had only been a small number of books about Welsh history, especially about the modern history of Wales (Hannan 2004; National Union of Teachers of Wales, 1944; Williams, 1989). No serious attempt had been made for the publication of a book about the modern social history of Wales, apart from David Williams' *A History of Modern Wales* (Hannan, 2004). Even in official educational documents Welsh history was characterised as 'rural, interesting and romantic' (Welsh Department, Ministry of Education, 1952).

In the Final Report of 1990 one can read the following:

The centre of gravity and historiography has lain in the social, economic and broad cultural experiences of the people of Wales, rather than in the history of state power, high politics, government and international relationships. [...] History in the sense of collective memory of the past, is one of the most powerful and effective means of cultural transmission in any society...the

teaching of history of the peoples of Wales is a crucial aspect of safeguarding that [the particularity of their past and traditions] identity (HCW, 1990:17, 4.2-4.6).

So what we have here is a 'collective memory away from high politics' that would safeguard an identity. This approach to history, which separates the everyday life from politics and international relationships, may result in a romantic approach to history and consequently Welsh identity (see Jordanova, 2000). For a long time Welsh culture has been presented as romantic and rural, or characterised by the coalminer's pride. Williams (1989) claimed that as Welsh history as a school module did not contain the events after the Acts of Union, there was a gap in people's minds. In order to fill this gap and understand what this Welsh identity was, Williams asserted that Welsh people created 'myths' constructed of exaggerations about actual but not exclusively Welsh characteristics and moments of Welsh history (Hannan, 2000; Williams, 1989).

Secondly, from the Final Report of 1990 to the last revised curriculum of 2008, the study units and requirements for history have been reduced. When the History Working Group set out the main aims for history, historical knowledge, skills and understanding were three separate notions (HWG, 1989). According to the History Working Group (1989:10), 'there is a relationship between knowledge, concepts and skills for history that actually nurtures its very essence'. As a result, the skills framework proposed for the first NC for history consisted of historical enquiry, analysis, interpretation and synthesis of the findings. Chronology, causes and effects, changes through time and various sources should be studied, analysed and finally presented (ACAC, 1994a, b, c; NCC, 1993). In contrast, historical knowledge and

chronological understanding have become part of the skills framework in the latest revisions.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have detailed the main curriculum ideologies, approaches to history, activity and knowledge underpinning the development of the NC. I have argued that ideology in the curriculum is mainly determined by the vision one has for society and the ways these visions and interests are frequently opposed to and clash with each other. These visions also influence the vision one has for knowledge, skills, subjects and the ways these will be taught. In this context I have discussed the creation of the NC in England and Wales which has taken place within a framework of similar struggles, concentrating on the struggle between progressive ideologies for child-centred curricula and the neoliberal agendas for the marketisation of education. At the end of the chapter I focused on the formation of the history curriculum in Wales, which have subsumed historical knowledge and chronological understanding into the skills framework. This sets out the main framework for my following chapters, where I analyse the NC for history in Wales, the place of Welsh history in it and how the neoliberal policies that forged the NC have also forged the policies of the National Museum of Wales.

Chapter Three

From cabinets of curiosity to learning organisations: the new museum and the National Museum of Wales

Introduction

So far I have presented an overview and analysis of the main ideologies that have shaped educational policies over the past fifty years and the formation of the National Curriculum in England and Wales. I have shown how educational policy in England and Wales can usefully be understood from a Marxist perspective, by placing it in the general context of neoliberalism, which transforms the aims of schooling and the substance of knowledge. The previous chapter discussed how substantive knowledge in general and historical knowledge in particular cannot be separated from skills, including historical skills. On the contrary, ideologies that transmit market values into education and place education in the service of the market encourage a division between substantive knowledge and skills, emphasising the latter to the detriment of the former. This shift is also affecting history - and historical knowledge in particular - in the National Curriculum (NC), which will be discussed in Chapters Six to Eight. I have also argued that progressive ideas for child-centred history-teaching emphasising the importance of the development of historical skills during the late 1960s and 1970s have been taken on board by neoliberal ideologies and policy makers with a different aim: to constrain the meaning of knowledge into the collection of information, as opposed to

knowledge of practice, theory and background information as a whole. The same ideologies integrate history into general skill frameworks and use it as a means to teach these general skills needed for employment, as opposed to historical skills that are subject-specific.

In this chapter an analysis of the situation with regard to museum learning is presented. The development of museum education in relation to the development of the museum is discussed, which, it is argued, reflects the history of class struggle and, simultaneously, the hegemonic discourses that were established between the old aristocracy and the bourgeoisie. It is argued that the creation of the 'public museum' in the second half of the nineteenth century was connected, at least in part, to the ascendant power of the bourgeoisie. Over the last thirty years museums have been changing their methods of representation, trying to be more inclusive in terms of their visitors and collections while entering the arena of the marketisation of culture and the new regimes of governance promoted by the neoliberal state. In that sense I expand the discussion started in Chapter One about if, and how, what has been called the 'new museum' (Message, 2006) and, differently, 'the heritage industry' (Hewison, 1987) signify the democratisation of the museum or simply its co-option by neoliberal policy agendas.

Part A. The Museum through time

Introduction

Museums have become arenas of multifaceted debates about, *inter alia*, personal and collective memories, art, nature, strange and exotic objects, personal vanity, emotions and texts. In this chapter I discuss how the museum has evolved in tandem with these debates. I also explain how its aims and functions have changed according to the social role chosen for it in the course of history and socio-political and economic shifts in capitalism. Usually, our perception of the museum is a place where old and valuable objects are preserved and exhibited in order to be accessible to a wide audience. This ‘accessibility’ has not, however, always been the case. In this chapter are highlighted the social and economic transformations in the nineteenth century that made the need for a public, open-to-all museum apparent.

As stated in Chapter One, the analysis presented here draws upon various theoretical Marxist approaches. The starting point is Marx’s view that the bourgeoisie at all times wants to ‘introduce what it calls civilization...’ to ‘...create a world after its own image’ (Marx and Engels, 1992:7) and also that the ‘history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles’ (Marx and Engels 1992:1). According to dialectical materialism, class struggles have the potential to change the means and relations of production and eventually the rest of the ‘structures of society’. Additionally, as also pointed out in Chapter One, these changes are often resisted and/or negotiated in the practical contexts of public policy formation, delivery and administration. I also draw upon Bennett’s (1995) analysis of the development of the

museum, which is not a dialectical materialist approach but explains the ‘birth of the museum’ in the context of the development of capitalism and changes in power/knowledge formations. Bennett’s analysis is influenced partly by Foucault’s (1977) views of institutions as tools of discipline. Foucault, however, has been criticised for failing to acknowledge the primacy of material, economic relations in capitalism and the importance of class-based power and struggles (Hall, 1981). Nevertheless, his framework has crucially influenced approaches that analyse the development of any public space as an arena where the production and consumption of ideas occur, and elements of his theory of power/knowledge relations are useful in understanding broad historical shifts in museum display, as Bennett’s analysis demonstrates.

Up to the seventeenth century: *studiolos*, cabinets of curiosity and the beginnings of the museum as we know it

The origins of the term ‘museum’ can be traced in the Greek word *museion* (meaning a site devoted to the muses) and to the Ptolemaic period when the *museion* at Alexandria, with its legendary library, was founded in 280BC (Abt, 2006:2). So, initially, a museum was a place of knowledge, arts and intellectual well-being, which was exactly what the muses represented in Greek mythology. During the Renaissance, when the need for a deeper understanding of human nature and the human spirit became the intelligentsia’s most important quest, the renowned *studiolos* and the cabinets of curiosity or the ‘proto-museums’ (Walsh, 1992) began to appear. The exhibited objects had to be

strange, beautiful, and unique in order to impress as well as to inform about exotic cultures and the 'new and old wonders of humanity' (Vergo, 1993; Walsh, 1992).

Olmi (1985:5) argues that 'the *studiolos* were the most ambitious responses of Mannerism to the crisis of the values resulting from the breakdown of the Renaissance certainty'. New inventions in astronomy and mathematics, which resulted from the needs of navigation and the discoveries of other lands were seen as economically profitable by the nobility and were therefore embraced and sponsored (Turner, 1985). Within this new era of discoveries and the Renaissance that had started giving priority to the human mind as well as man's ability to discover Nature's rules, *studiolos* and cabinets of curiosities signified something more important than just places where human curiosity was fulfilled.

Studiolos and the cabinets of curiosity contained exhibits connected with nature (*naturalia*), such as exotic animals, fossils etc, and manmade objects (*artificialia*). The purpose of each type of object was different: the first helped the study of nature and the second symbolised the power of the prince or noble or served intellectual interests (Abt, 2002:5). This difference also corresponded to the different purposes of *studiolos* and cabinets of curiosity, which signified the difference between the goals of the old nobility and the ambitions of the new bourgeoisie.

The *studiolos* were organised by Italian princes, who wanted to establish their power within the circle of the ruling strata both in their own and foreign countries (Turner, 1985:214). It is believed that the manner in which the exhibits were displayed also contributed to the establishment of the ruler's power: for example, the objects

placed and locked in glass cases revealed the prince's magnitude as a collector and implied his role as a 'representative' of Man's power over Nature (Hooper-Greenhill, 1994a; Olmi, 1985:5-6;). Visitors could only look upon the exhibits and admire the power of the prince.

On the other hand, the merchants, the intellectuals and those individuals who studied medicine and science and formed the new bourgeoisie in the sixteenth century, had different interests when they established their cabinets of curiosities; but they also wanted to become established as the new intellectually and economically dominant class. Thus, a cabinet of curiosity was still characterised as a celebration of nature and science, but this time it was open to a wider audience, including students, and so its arrangement in comparison to a *studiolo*, was functional rather than symbolic (Olmi, 1985:6). Visitors were able to get closer to the exhibits and study them. With the cabinets of curiosities open to a wider public in the middle of the sixteenth century, the need for private collections to be displayed in a more public context became more urgent - as in the case of Francesco I de Medici, who donated half of his collection to the Uffizi Museum in Florence.

The most crucial element of the political substance of the museum in the Renaissance period, however, was that this urge was not driven by the same governmental goals - in the Foucauldian sense - as in the eighteenth century. Bennett (1995:26-27) argues that the main objective of these first collections was the glorification of the prince in the eyes of the public in a 'juridico-discursive' form that enclosed a meaning of its own (Bennett 1998:65). By contrast, the later 'cabinets of

curiosity' represented the new, open minded and democratic bourgeoisie that was a class open to all, that was sponsoring the arts and sciences, celebrating the new ideas and, as such, creating places of display for wider audiences.

Seventeenth century

During the seventeenth century art started becoming the main interest of the non-professional, scientist collector (Olmi, 1985:13). This did not mean that art had been neglected until then. For example, it characterised the collections of British nobility, a phenomenon that distinguished the British cabinets of curiosities from the nature-centred Continental ones (McGregor, 1985:18). However, now, in the seventeenth century nature was juxtaposed against art. Art became the 'weapon' in the hands of the new bourgeois and a way for the members of the new rising class to distinguish themselves from the old aristocrats. It is the attempt of the bourgeoisie to establish continuity with the past but at the same time discontinuity with the constraints placed by the aristocracy that is significant, a kind of social 'nobility' that only knowledge can give, as Bourdieu and Darbel (1991) explain. Thus, it was not only the object but the cabinet of curiosity itself that acquired a power of its own; a power to overturn 'rigid social hierarchies giving the collector the unique opportunity of attracting important personages of royal blood to his own home...' (Olmi, 1985:13).

Despite the motives of the bourgeois or aristocrat collector and the indisputable primitive steps towards more accessible collections, the very beginnings of the public museum can be traced back to the seventeenth century. In Britain, too, we come across



the term 'museum' for the first time when Elias Ashmole inherited and donated John's Tradescant's private collection to the University of Oxford, in 1683 (McGregor, 1985:152). As mentioned in the Introduction, this is also considered to signpost the formation of the public museum (Abt, 2006:1). In Germany we also come across the first modern museum to be supported by a civic community, thanks to the 'humanistic' tradition that inspired the Basle bourgeoisie (Ackermann, 1985:67).

In conclusion, in the seventeenth century the display of art, science and knowledge are used by the old and the new dominant classes as credentials for their power. These first forms of museum became means of propaganda and ideological and political reformation.

Late eighteenth century: the public museum

The public museum became a reality in the eighteenth century. The French revolution heralded the urgent need for a new museum that would share with the world and the people a depiction of the defeat of tyranny (Hooper-Greenhill, 1994, a, b). The Louvre in Paris was the first museum to outline its pedagogic policy and to be part of the education policy of the state (ibid). This signified the new role of the state in arts and education, as well as official recognition of the educational values of museums. The main concern now was the visitor, the ordinary citizen, who was to be prepared to become a member of the new democratic society. It was in this period of history that many royal collections were made public. So, the collection stopped belonging to an individual to use for his own fame and became administered by a modern organisation

ready to 'serve' the learning and knowledge of the community (Saumarez- Smith, 1993).

Of course, the museum did not just open its doors to the masses of lower classes that had revolted with their bourgeois compatriots against the monarch. After the French Revolution the state began to play the role of service provider for the people and, in theory at least, steps were taken towards the democratisation of the museum. This change took place not only in France but throughout Europe, where it was part of a gradual historical evolution, as Bennett (1995:93) describes.

Nineteenth century: Nationalism, Romanticism and the new museum

The Industrial Revolution in Britain gave rise to huge and rapid urbanisation, which led to the need for local government that would be able to cope with the requirements of the new industrialised society (Walsh, 1992). Simultaneously, political centralisation as opposed to local government resulted in a continuous struggle between the town and the periphery, as Marx' and Engel's analysis shows (Marx and Engels, 1992:7). According to their analysis, the early nineteenth century was characterised by a bourgeoisie that, contrary to the Enlightenment's liberal proclamations, was becoming a harsh ruler, converting every profession into a drained wage labour and centralising the means of production and eventually the governing systems (Marx and Engels, 1992:10). The eventual crises that capitalism could not handle resulted in the conquest of new markets – either by force by establishing empires and protectorates or through economic agreements – from which deeper crises emerged (Marx and Engels, 1992:9).

At the same time the nascent working class was formed as a uniform mass that, instead of gaining power and prestige as the bourgeoisie did in the previous centuries, was living under very difficult conditions (Marx and Engels, 1992: 15).

In this constant attempt to disseminate the capitalist mode of production and keep the working classes under its control, the bourgeoisie made efforts to transmit its culture or - as its leading intellectuals named it - its civilization, in order, as Marx and Engels famously argue, to create a world after its own image (Marx and Engels, 1992:7). In order for the bourgeoisie to co-opt the working class into its project of imperialistic expansion, it also used the idea of the common past (Lenin, 1932).

From the mid nineteenth century the world started experiencing big political and cultural changes. The nationalist revolutions in 1848 and the formation of the German Nation-state in 1871, movements for state independence, the Paris Commune, and the Chartist movement in Britain signified crises in capitalism and the beginnings of evident class struggles. In that context, Nairn (1977) explains that the formation of a strong national identity was essential in order to be used for imperialistic purposes by the bourgeoisie, which required an ideological stronghold. Eventually, this was expressed as a need for a return to the origins of the nation and there was an idealisation of the country as the commonplace of a nation. Although Nairn's analysis applies to Britain, similar ideological projects were used in Germany by the Second and Third Reich and their imperialistic visions (Welskopp, 2003).

Although I do not attempt an analysis of nationalism here, Hobsbawm's (1977:4-5) comment that nationalism in the nineteenth century took a different form from

nationalism today is worthy of note. Nationalism today is characterised by separatist movements, while nationalism in the nineteenth century meant a united nation-state.

These nation states

represented that crucial element of the creation of internal conditions (e.g. a national market) and the external conditions for the development of the national economy through state organization and action (Hobsbawm, 1977:4).

For the purposes of this nationalism of the nineteenth century, history, arts and the intellectuals that belonged to the bourgeoisie were called up to serve this cause in different ways. From a Marxist perspective, the use of arts and culture and, principally, their 'massification' in the nineteenth century, cannot be studied separately from nationalist movements. Hobsbawm (2002:300), for example, explains how sports were 'used' by the ascending bourgeoisie both as a way to separate themselves from and compete with the old aristocratic traditions.

The newly established public museum arguably played its role as an institutional mediator of the above ideas and policies. The nation-state needed national heritage to identify its territory as well as to absorb different sociocultural groups; hence heritage became the responsibility of governments (Graham et al., 2005:27). Similarly, as Anderson (1991:180-183) explains, the museums and archaeology were key resources deployed by the later colonial regimes in South East Asia to create links between them and the local antiquity and secure the nascent nationalist feelings. According to Anderson (1991:178) 'museums and the museumising imagination were profoundly political'. Museums became places for promoting and formulating ideas of a common nation with a common fatherland that citizens should be proud of. At the same time

they housed the ideals of bourgeois civilization. There was the strong need to combine the nation with a global vision of civilization and therefore legitimise its importance. That is why there was a shift towards the historical museum, a shift that was helped by the new archaeological excavations and ethnographic studies (Bennett, 1995: 75). It was also the period when objects took on a meaning through narratives and were given a history (Ernst, 2000). The object thus, was no longer just admired for its peculiarity but for the meanings it addresses.

Museums in the late nineteenth century, as well as later on during the twentieth century, can also be regarded as responses to the uncertainties of the new era that followed the decline of the old feudal classes, bourgeois empowerment and 'modernization's disruption of traditional modes of control as well as spaces of conflict between the old and the new dominant classes' (Fyfe, 2006:2). The Age of Reason had Romanticism as its counterpart, which idealised nature and the irrational (Graham et al., 2005:27).

Consequently, museums entered the public sphere with a completely different identity genre to any other public place. They were regarded as sanitised places where the working-class family could pass their time together, as the man would be kept away from the 'unhealthy' public places and taverns (Bennett, 1995: 31). Museums were places that, instead of excluding working class people as before, tried to embrace them (ibid, 93). This was why some of them were positioned in the wider city-planning visions of social reformers, at least in England. Some museums, like the South Kensington Museum (later the Victoria and Albert Museum), adjusted their admission

policies and opening hours so as to be accessible to the working class, which was met with an enthusiastic response (Bennett, 1995:70). Consequently, museums became established as places where the working class family could familiarise itself with the values and 'norms' of the middle class or dominant class family model. Here the rules of best behaviour of a 'superior' society were promoted (Stallybrass and White, 1986:86-88), and whoever wanted to be 'civilized' would have to try to accept and abide by these rules.

However, there was also the need for leisure and recreation of the bourgeoisie itself. The museum became a place with which members of the bourgeoisie who were excluded from the other parts of the public sphere, such as women, could get involved. Along with the department stores, museums were places where women could spend their leisure time in a 'civilized' environment (Riley, 1988). The museum, thus, strove to become the reference point for the underrepresented members of the new capitalist society.

In conclusion, the museum of the mid and late nineteenth century became public, under the protection of the government in an era of rapid changes and huge crises in capitalism. It tried to shelter all these 'noble' ideas and 'civilised' values of the bourgeois model of society so that everyone could imitate it. At the same time it promoted ideas referring to the common past and greatness of the nation. So, museums started following a pattern by 'copying' one another, so that these meanings they wanted to communicate would become directly explicit (Bennett, 1995: 47).

Twentieth century: museums and the neoliberal state

The museum is changing

In the course of the twentieth century the professional practice of curating emerged, taking its influences from the academic worlds of history, anthropology, biology, sciences and various liberationist and environmentalist movements. This resulted in a more diverse and open debate and critique, which brought about radical and progressive exhibitions. Minority voices started being represented and new types of museums emerged, especially during the 1960s and the 1970s. Science centres with interactive exhibits were established and the heritage centres, which had already started being established by the end of the nineteenth century, were vastly expanded (Macdonald, 1998a:14). It has also been argued that principles of mass communication research and cultural studies as well as the general post-1960s problematisation of language, of which semiotics was a part, helped museum professionals develop new types of museum (Hooper-Greenhill, 1994b:17). As a result, from the 1960s to date, there has been a shift towards progressive forms of learning provision and representation at the museums. Most importantly, there have been debates about and questioning of scientific authority, processes of exhibiting and issues of representation. Museums were not necessarily towing the state's line in a mechanistic way as they did in the nineteenth century.

At the same time, however, economic changes and the rise of neoliberal ideologies have created new frames, which museums have to comply with. From the 1970s onwards, there has been a gradual decrease of state support for public culture. In

Britain this could be dated from the beginning of Margaret Thatcher's premiership, when museums had to depend less on public money and entered the sphere of privatisation and the voluntary sector and, therefore, increasingly had to generate their own income (Hooper-Greenhill, 1994e). This led to the marketisation of museums and their adopting market practices in order to attract visitors and sustain their existence (Macdonald, 1998b; Tlili et al., 2007).

The New Labour government's agendas by the end of the 1990s had the ambition of making museums more accessible⁶ and places that would attract more communities and ethnic minorities; however, as explained in Chapter One and later on in this chapter, museums are still expected to form partnerships with the private sector and local enterprises in order to secure funding. This may have various implications, which may differ from a local to a national museum. For instance, in cases of local museums, where heritage may be linked to the regeneration of the area (see following sections), the need for attracting and securing sponsorships has frequently led to compromised representations, and to the creation of place identities, in ways which comply with the needs of the sponsoring bodies (see Dicks, 2000a, b). In the case of national museums, the museum might have to facilitate governmental policies, as the government is the main funding source of the museum.

⁶ The New Labour Government allocated funds to support free entry for children and pensioners and reinstated free-entry to those national museums that had begun charging for entry to their permanent collections under the Conservative administrations of the 1980s (Tlili et al., 2007:272). The devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales also agreed to fund free entry at the national museums, and free entry for all was introduced at all their sites in April 2001.

As a result, although the twentieth century paved the way for new forms of exhibitions and fruitful debates that questioned traditional forms of museum representation, museums may still have to facilitate state agendas and adjust their policies to certain neoliberal regimes of governance. Progressive and democratic ideas, as discussed in the previous chapters and in the following section, are redefined and used in neoliberal agendas in ways that facilitate the neoliberal regime of governance, and arguably tend to lead to the commodification of culture.

The new inclusive museum and the commodification of culture

Based on the discussion above, in this section it is argued that museums are still ‘profoundly political’ (Anderson, 1991:178), as they have always been. The museum of the last two decades, the ‘new museum’ as Message (2006) terms it, is becoming a facilitator of the neoliberal state. National museums promote and reproduce neoliberal discourses while local and self-funded museums have to also comply with sponsors’ views in order to secure funding.

It is argued that in the second half of the twentieth century, the focus of the museum as a place for the collection and exhibition of objects began to shift from the object itself to the consumer-visitor (Saumarez-Smith, 1993). Indeed museums have been criticised for not taking into account the visitor’s own ability to construct meanings (Hooper-Greenhill, 1994b:19). As discussed in Chapter One, the new museum and the new museology claim to be interested in social inclusion, democratisation and new practices that will give priority to visitors’ experiences.

Nevertheless, as analysed in Chapter One, museums, like any cultural institutions under the neoliberal state, have to find sources of funding, due to the decrease of state support. In the case of Britain, Tlili et al. (2007: 284) argue that museums should be seen in the following light:

The New Labour government-driven expansion of the role of the museum should be seen in the light of the broader mode of governance that New Labour has been trying to roll out across the public, private and voluntary sectors, whereby the boundaries of the traditional (social democratic) state are pulled back, and its tasks are redistributed among public, private and voluntary organizations as well as communities themselves.

This scarcity of financial resources forces museums to enter partnerships with business and government (Gans, 2002:372). Arguably, the need for museums to establish partnerships in order to secure funding has created a new era of commodification of the past in 'novel forms' (Urry, 2002:95). Consequently, the 'new museum' tries to find ways of attracting a wider range of visitors by redefining the interpretation of objects and introducing new technologies; yet it also has to struggle with competitive funding regimes, which has resulted in the introduction of managerial tactics and partnerships. As discussed in the previous chapter, this situation may give a new economic meaning to the ideals of inclusion and the democratisation of the museum.

Here I discuss how the new museum is being transformed from an exclusively middle-class to an 'inclusive' organisation. It has been argued that the museum of the twentieth century was largely reproducing the specific bourgeois model of society and addressing a middle class audience, excluding the working class, who felt out of place when they visited a museum (Bourdieu and Darbel, 1991). Current policies, which are

created under the influence of neoliberal ideas, still ask museums to create partnerships and generate their own income. At the same time, one could argue that the visitor-museum relationship is redefined. By placing this relationship in a superficial democratic context of 'inclusion' (see Chapter One), museums create a provider-consumer dynamic. The museum, like any institution and state practice which is measured by a cost and benefit calculation (Brown, 2003:5), is also subjected to neoliberal discourses, which frame everything in terms of a transaction. As discussed in Chapter One, national museums have to facilitate the regeneration or cultural policies of the state. This does not mean they have to produce direct profit but 'something in return'; in other words, a return in terms of increased visitor numbers and hence, supposed increased 'social inclusion' (Tilli, 2008).

Apart from the commodification of the past that Urry (2002) presents as a result of increasing drives for financial returns, museums have also entered a phase of what Gee et al. (1996) call 'customization'. The visitor and their needs are placed at the centre of museum policy, and the museum tries to customise its services according to these needs. This can be construed as a democratic step in the sense that museums are willing to move towards inclusion and towards enhancing their accessibility for visitors. Customisation, however, is also associated with enterprise and business. Thus, in finding out about the customer and attracting investors, the museum becomes a business-like institution. Consequently, one of the most important developments is now considered to be the evaluation of museum services. There are many forms of evaluation including observation of visitors or interviewing non-visitors about their

reasons for not visiting the museum (Economou, 2004; Hein, 1994). The museum is therefore, evaluated from the consumer-visitor's point of view, rather than that of the producer-curator. This is considered to be an interactive procedure through which the museum 'learns' from the visitor and vice versa (NMW, 2005 a, b). This is also part of policies aimed at creating a learning organisation, as discussed in Chapter One.

A problem may appear, though, in terms of visitors' cultural capital. As argued by Bourdieu and Darbel (1991:98), although both the middle and working classes are 'exposed' to the same information through popular culture or mass media information, it is school education that can inspire pupils' interest in museums by equipping them with cultural capital. However, the more the school leaves this 'task' to families, the more the working class remains excluded and alienated from museums (ibid). Bourdieu and Darbel's argument may not correspond to the new heritage centres that attract visitors from a wider range of class backgrounds as they may need different cultural capital than that needed for a visit to an art museum (see Dicks, 2000a). However, their emphasis on the importance of schooling can still be decisive.

As discussed in Chapter Two, the education system in the context of capitalism, especially in its present form with its emphasis on a knowledge economy, seeks to create academically-educated ruling classes and a flexible workforce with basic, fast, adjustable and transferable skills. My question here is on what cultural or intellectual grounds the relation of mutual learning between museums and its visitors can be built. Let us suppose that the new museums want to address the working classes, whose education now separates knowledge from skills, giving priority to the latter and who,

therefore, may not have the cultural capital that would help them identify with high art or history or a certain scientific language. In that case, how are heritage parks and the new museums going to be able to fill in the gap by providing the skills-educated person with a museum that fits with their own cultural experiences and capital? In that sense, how is the new learning museum going to follow the demands and needs of this audience? Ultimately, are museums going to try to bridge the gaps in schooling by giving the audience what they cannot find in schooling or the media? Or, alternatively, are they going to 'surrender' to the mainstream ideas and knowledge promoted in school and popular media, just because these ideas appeal to the majority of the people? There is a distinct possibility that museums will opt for the latter route due to their bonds with policy-makers and sponsors who need to see immediate and 'measurable' results. Neoliberalism, which sets ever tighter ways of assessing the work of museums (see Part C) may not give these institutions the time to work towards bridging the deficiencies and inequalities of the education system.

Consequently, an underrepresented working class that does not find any interest in a museum that exclusively addresses a middle class elite may be a thing of the past. Museums try to make their collections more accessible and more relevant. They claim that they are democratised by including the 'voices' of un/under-represented groups or by approaching themes from a social history perspective. For example, *The Falklands 25th Anniversary* exhibition at the Imperial War Museum in London (IWM, 2008) or the exhibitions on the anniversary of the abolition of slavery throughout Britain in 2007, approached themes from the perspective of minorities, children and ordinary

people. So exhibitions or collections try to reach out to and represent ethnic minorities in order to accustom audiences to different religions and cultural diversity.

This is indeed a significant step towards the democratisation of the museum. As Bourdieu (1998) argues, however, the inclusive museum can end up distinguishing between two different groups: the common ground (us), who are lucky enough to live in a wealthy society and the immigrants (the others), who are usually poor and underprivileged. Different cultures and their everyday customs may be represented as a single unity with no reference to their class background at all. A group of people whose characteristic is that they have the same religion and culture is often given a homogenous identity. In this case we can have another set of Anderson's (1991:15) imagined communities - not according to the scale of a nation, but in the form of separated communities and ethnicities that are regarded as one, single indivisible unity.

Heritage debates

The concept of heritage is part of the phenomenon of the inclusive, twentieth century museum. It refers to a number of issues, such as authenticity, the past and history, national identity, folk and the everyday economy, as well as public access and the democratisation of culture. The multiple aspects that surround heritage demonstrate the fluidity of the term. The debates on heritage began in the sixties, while in the seventies and eighties 'heritage' became part of the debates on national identity (Lumley, 2005:16). In one of his concluding paragraphs in the *Tourist Gaze*, Urry (2002:123)

argues that the boundaries of what constitutes museum and what constitutes heritage are fluid:

So museums cannot be created about anything anywhere. But a museum on almost any topic can be created somewhere, though whether we should still call them 'museums' is doubtful. The very term museum stems from a period of high art and auratic culture well before 'heritage' and 'multi-media' had been invented and spread across the globe.

Urry differentiates the function of the museum of the past, which served ideals of high culture, from that of the new museum, arguing that heritage centres and museums can become one and the same thing in the future. By summoning technology, ethnology, ecology, social history and other disciplines, heritage centres resemble what Message (2006:604) defines as the 'new museum' (see Chapter One). Commentators have principally linked heritage centres with history, national identity and nostalgia; and at the same time with innovation and democracy. The new museum, however, can be a museum of art or archaeology or any discipline or even a mixture of disciplines with more innovative approaches, use of technology and 'democratic-inclusive' aims. In the discussion in this section I use the terms 'new museum' and 'heritage centre' interchangeably.

To use Lowenthal's (1998:1) words, heritage has become a worldwide 'cult' phenomenon. Heritage is strongly connected with conditions of economic decline and deindustrialisation that may, in some arguments, create a false past and history (Hewison, 1987; Urry, 2002). However, it has also been celebrated as a way to create a new democratic national past (Samuel, 1989b). Heritage has been associated with history but equally despised by historians (Lowenthal, 1998:127). It has been associated

with the 'de-industrialised industrial' and the worn-out machinery and old industries 'in the cultural landscape' (Hoyau, 1988:29). On the other hand it has also been strongly connected with the reconstruction of an ideal folk past, like fishermen's villages (Sorensen, 1993) or Victoriana costumes (Samuel, 1989b). Finally, as part of the de-industrialised tourist industry, heritage has been directly connected with the economy and the commodification of the past and culture (Urry, 2002:95; Dyson, 2005) and with the human need to give meaning to 'temporary chaos' (Hoelscher, 2006:17). At the same time, heritage sites have been connected with open-air folk museums, where high-quality research and an articulate interpretation of the regional scene has been taking place (Wight Marshal, 1987:36). However, other critics refer to open-air museums and theme parks as one, under the title of 'heritage' (Samuel, 1989b: xlvi-xlvii; Littler, 2005:5).

Heritage, therefore, has been connected with economic and ideological phenomena. I will start with the ideological implications of heritage, which can also be connected to the economy. As I have discussed so far, the creation of a national identity through 'heritage' was apparent long before the heritage debates started. The concept of 'folk' was summoned for the creation of nationalism in the nineteenth century, while it was used by Romanticism as a way of going back to nature. In the twentieth century and specifically in the 1980s, heritage was connected with Conservatism and its nostalgia for a world with 'visible social differences...where classes were classes, localities and the British indigenous people though one, divided into warring camps' (Samuel, 1989b:xliv). It has also been argued that this nostalgia through heritage is part

of countries' failure to come to terms with industrial change (Hewison, 1987:104). As I argue later on, heritage is still often presented in a nostalgic and romantic way.

Nostalgia is frequently associated with national pride and a forgotten-but-glorious past, especially when a society is in crisis. As discussed earlier, in the nineteenth century, nostalgia sought to establish links between the present and a common, usually rural, past, and 'national' heritage was summoned towards this aim. There are times when a nation needs to hold on to glorious, great personalities in order to erase shameful pages from its past (Walsh, 2007). In this case museums still contribute to the creation of an identity that is usually a mixture of a sanitised old and a modern version that derives from it, as in the case of the Glasgow Empire exhibition (McArthur, 1986). Furthermore, in the era of globalisation when culture becomes 'placeless' and the search for roots can become more intense (Lumley, 2005:16), museums can help establish these roots.

Heritage, on the other hand, is strongly connected with deindustrialisation. Certain economic and political issues arise from this connection. The debates focus on the commodification of heritage; that is, meanings and ideas that are promoted and consumed for purposes of economic exchange. It has been argued that by making a location a destination (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998:153), any cultural institution, whether a heritage site or a museum, can be used to make areas that are no longer profitable, economically viable once more. Heritage thus contributes to policies for social and economic development (Arantes, 2007:292). Marketing policies make every effort to discover and use every possible means of imagery to recreate 'lost spaces'

(Balm and Holcomb, 2003:171). Areas whose economies were based on industry are transformed into places of service provision and tourism regeneration in order to survive the economic decline. Chapter One discussed the cultural policy of the Wales Assembly Government, which principally talks about culture instrumentally as a way of ensuring economic growth. Additionally, self-funded museums have to find sponsors and justify their existence by accruing profits. In this context it is highly likely that these institutions are confronted with choices between what they would like to present and what they can actually present in terms of their sponsors. Studies have suggested that a number of open-air museums face these dilemmas.

In many cases heritage sites and new museums claim that they present authentic history, but the ways in which they do so is questionable. In his study of Ulster and Virginia open-air sites, Mills (2003:75) found that:

... although these sites believe that they are presenting history, their concern for the visual dimension of experience means they are in effect engaged in the creation of heritage sites, particularly those most appropriate for enhancing local tourists' attraction.

Here, leisure and history are intermingled in this attempt to attract tourism. Open-air museums become sites for entertainment and leisure, despite the fact that they believe or claim that they are promoting history. In the case of the *Le Creusot* open-air museum in France, industrial history is transformed into rural history and ecology, neglecting class history (Debary, 2004:127-131). In the 'Newseum', an 'interactive museum of news' in Arlington Virginia, a 'marketplace of ideas has been established, which, however, is only open to those ideas sponsored by large media corporate interests'

(Gans, 2002:379). At the Rhondda Heritage Park, local voices that were opposed to sponsoring entrepreneurial plans have contested the way that the history of the people of Rhondda was presented. As a result the final construction of the Park ended up being far different from what originally had been conceived (Dicks, 2000a, b). These studies show that ideological and political 'battles' may result in only partial representations, which renders the claims of these sites to authenticity doubtful.

Authenticity at museums in any case has been highly contested, because the artefact or building has been separated from its original environment (Urry, 2002:119). This original environment formed the historical, social and geographical contexts of the object, which are not possible to transfer into or represent in a museum. In a sense, the 'aura' of the object, which is connected with the human presence (Benjamin, 1968:223), is lost. The absence of the human context narrows down the meaning of authenticity.

As a result, the label of 'authenticity' that heritage sites use can also mask the exploitation that takes place behind the scenes in order for this authenticity to be created. Davis' (1997:243) comment concerning the Sea World Park in California, that it hides its real processes of profit 'extractions', is also relevant to the fluidity of authenticity. The extraction of profits, through the exploitation of workers, animals and landscape, cannot be part of what claims to be an authentic natural environment. Davis associates theme parks with Disneyland, where American life is presented not as it really is but rather as the rich manufacturers of the park would like it to be. Sea World

Park presents itself as a patch of nature, which actually is, day by day, being consumed by the machine growth in California.

Heritage can also be 'disneyfied' in customising culture for economic profit, general economic goals and for an indulgence of the senses. Like a visitor in a nature-themed park, who escapes from the real exploited and polluted surroundings, a visitor may go to a heritage park to identify him/herself (Gellner, 1983) with the history or reminisce about the long-forgotten, difficult but good old days of the past (Dicks, 2000a,b). Apolitical heritage sites and museums, where industrial history is set in a rural background, can be a pleasant spectacle (West, 1988:59). In this way, heritage is often still used to shape people's political acquiescence and this is presented under the camouflage of the so-called 'authentic experience'.

There is, however, a more optimistic view, which is that heritage parks and the commodification of culture have led to the democratisation of heritage. As discussed in Chapter One, marketisation has been regarded as a route to democratisation (Ross, 2004). Samuel (1989) and Lowenthal (1998) have advocated the expansion of folk museums and heritage sites to give the working class and ordinary people's lives a chance of representation. They have also argued that in the last two decades of the twentieth century heritage has finally moved away from being a conservative, elitist and self-serving tradition. Samuel (1989: xlvi) talks with enthusiasm about 'commercialized leisure' and the immediacy this offers visitors, as a way to a better understanding of 'people's' history. The diversity and the new groups that enter museums have also been alluded to (Lowenthal, 1998:248; Samuel, 1989: xlvii).

Lowenthal (1998) also talked about the ‘sentimental’ element of heritage, which eliminates the importance of authenticity. According to this view, heritage appeals to our sentiments, and therefore historical evidence and historical ‘truth’ should not be seen as its main purpose.

The enthusiasts of heritage see customisation as a way to democratisation, despite their doubts about the danger of heritage sites ultimately offering a romanticised view of heritage. I argue that the more museums are marketised and the more they have to facilitate neoliberal policies, the more difficult it becomes to cover aspects of history or heritage other than those that fit with the needs of the sponsoring body (as in the case of the ‘Newseum’). One cannot ignore the argument that the revision of heritage practices, taking its cue from political transformations, involves the re-shaping of public memory as an explicit project (Davison, 2005:186).

Twenty first century: museums as learning organisations?

In the early years of the twenty first century in this wider ideological context of marketisation and customisation, narratives are disputed and multimedia are altering museum collections. The idea of a museum with no object collections at all is regarded as an innovative possibility (Crane, 2000). During the last fifteen years the object itself has been gradually disappearing from museums, or at least, becoming dethroned (Gans, 2002:372; Message, 2006:604). It is argued that the museum should reflect or promote the loss of the materiality of objects (Ernst, 2000:28) The visitor should be ‘taught’ by the museum how to cope with the information given (ibid:18). Space is believed to

replace narratives and actually bridge this problematic gap between the object and the text/context.

Thus, one of the key characteristics of museums in the twenty first century is learning. Judging from the National Museum of Wales' latest *Vision for a World Class Museum of Learning* (analysed in Chapter Six), learning in the new museum seems to become both something provided to the public and an organisational policy. Learning becomes a core policy for organisational development, which will lead to better results for the business (Easterby-Smith and Araujo, 1999:1). Organisations have adopted learning as a central issue of managerial development that is particularly associated with 'action learning approaches,' according to which, 'learning is achieved in a shared problem-solving environment' (Margerison, 1994:115) but which is, arguably, difficult to define (Simpson and Bournier, 2007). One of the main characteristics of learning in an organisation is that it takes an experiential, skill-flexible and pervasive meaning, engaging all the levels of the institution and reconstructing meanings and views within it (Gould, 2004:3-4). Learning in museums in the twenty first century, should, therefore, be studied in a dual way: from both a managerial and a pedagogic perspective.

Part B. Learning in museums

From education to learning

In this section the meaning of learning for museums from a pedagogic perspective are analysed. In Chapter Six the second aspect of learning (organisational learning) in

relation to the NMW documents is discussed further. The argument is that both pedagogic and managerial practices in museums are two sides of the same coin. Museums seem to follow learning approaches that are close to constructivism (Hein, 2006:7), with all the implications this may have for knowledge and skills (see Chapter Two). Learning as an organisational policy is part of the marketisation of culture and museums and arguably this has led museums to abandon the traditional idea of 'giving' knowledge to the masses in favour of free-choice learning according to the individual's needs (Falk et al., 2006:11).

The first museum in the world that tried to outline its pedagogic policy was the Louvre in Paris. In fact, it was the first public museum to be part of the education policy of the state. For the first time, the museum had the potential to serve a vast number of visitors as well as to educate (Hooper-Greenhill, 1994 a, b). The main focus was the visitor, the simple citizen, who was to be prepared to become a member of the new democratic society. This movement had a great impact in the rest of Europe as well as in Britain. The British Museum, which had been established by an Act of Parliament earlier in 1753, still had a kind of elitist spirit and paid virtually no attention to the needs of the public (Hooper-Greenhill, 1991, 1994 a, b; Walsh, 1992).

During the nineteenth century, the museum as an alternative place for education was partly recognised by the state and many museums became established with education as their main purpose. The Victoria and Albert Museum, the Museum of Science and the Natural History Museum were established for educational as well as economic purposes, which were accomplished by the display of the achievements of the

new society. However, at the beginning of the twentieth century, museum education was limited to school activities in the museum. The role of the museum as a place for children's education was quite clear during the First World War, when they were quite often used as substitutes for schools due to a shortage of school buildings and teachers (Hooper-Greenhill, 1991).

One of the most important factors that directed changes in museum education in Britain was the Educational Reform Act 1988, which introduced the National Curriculum and the Local Management of Schools (LMS) (Hooper-Greenhill, 1994e). Some parts of the curriculum specifically referred to the use of museums and galleries for the teaching of Art, and museums themselves started organising their educational activities according to the directions of the NC.

Simultaneously, lifelong learning, a key aspect of the neoliberal educational agendas has given new opportunities to museums to become established as learning providers. As traditional school knowledge is regarded as 'problematic' (Gee et al., 1996:5), learning-how-to-learn is prioritised over subject-knowledge, and lifelong learning that takes place in organisations other than educational institutions is promoted. Nevertheless, in the nineties it was argued that lifelong learning education in museums had not yet been achieved and very little had been done towards its realisation (Chadwick and Stannett, 1995; Hooper-Greenhill, 1994b). According to these views adults' education was put aside and the education policy focused on school visits and children's learning, in accordance with the directions of the education policies of each country (Hooper-Greenhill, 1995:61). As discussed later with reference

to the NMW, lifelong learning now appears to have been developed, with many museums placing it at the forefront of their programmes.

As mentioned above, museum education has become more organised in the last twenty years of the twentieth century. Much research has been undertaken and many reports and manifestos produced, mainly orientated towards the uses of museums for educational and school purposes. David Anderson's (1997) *A Common Wealth: Museums in the Learning Age* was the first report to examine the educational role of museums and had a direct impact on policy makers. Anderson's report actually envisaged the museums as centres for informal learning, which can engage the whole society at both local and national levels (Anderson, 1997). Anderson set out twelve targets for the development of museum learning, which concerned the museum institutions, the public and the nation. The challenges for the institutions were to establish education as their central purpose; to use their exhibits, programmes and facilities for self-directed learning to the full; and to develop a skilled workforce and improve their effectiveness by using research-based evaluation. According to the report, these steps could contribute to the public's educational development. This development would be further reinforced if the museums engage as many visitors as they can as well as other educational institutions and partnerships (ibid). On a national level, museums have to be supported by the Area Museum Councils, the Government and MLAC (Museums, Libraries and Archives Council).

As a result, museum learning started to become theorised. Councils and organisations of museums regularly publish reports and manifestos which create

frameworks for museum learning, and whose main characteristic is partnership among various levels and organisations. The South East Museum, Library and Archive Council (SEMLAC) is

The voice of the museum, library and archive sector in the South East of England...Its Access and Learning Team led the regional implementation of the National Strategic Commissioning Programme, funded by the DfES and Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). Its aims are to build the capacity of museums to work with schools, to meet the demand for museum learning in schools and to encourage museums and schools to work in partnership (SEMLAC, 2006:2).

SEMLAC's document, *Every Child Matters to the Museums*, explores more specifically the ways in which museum learning can be used in all areas of the curriculum and how museums and schools can work together to achieve the most effective learning for all in accordance with the then Labour Government's *Every Child Matters* agenda'⁷. It provides 'structure and guidance to illustrate and evaluate the exciting work that takes place with museums to show how it contributes to the Every Child Matters agenda' (SEMLAC, 2006:4). Self-evaluation is considered to be very important for the work of schools with the museum, and it is suggested this should be built on evidence and collaboration with museums. The proposal, therefore, is that this collaboration could be built on: evidence of pre-visit planning that includes pupils' views, quotes and interviews from pupils on the visit, samples of work completed as a result of the visit experience and assessment of learning (SEMLAC, 2006:7):

⁷ In 2003, the Labour Government published a Green Paper called *Every Child Matters*. This legislation is the legal underpinning for *Every Child Matters*, which sets out the Government's approach to the well-being of children and young people from birth to age 19 (Department for Children, Schools and Families [former DfES] website).

The strengths of museum learning include: Opportunities for first-hand learning...contribution to the creative curriculum and creative thinking...pupils can control the enquiry process: they speculate from their own observations and set hypotheses that are related to their own experiences...pupils can control the learning process: with guidance and support from both teachers and museum staff, they are able to reflect on their learning at each stage, identify their next steps and shape their own learning outcomes (ibid:10).

In addition SEMLAC argues that:

pupils can discover meaningful connection with the past through artefacts that relate to their own experiences and finally that there is a legitimate choice of learning pathways for individual pupils...in terms of the sites and artefacts and information that they need to look for and the learning goals they want to achieve. Furthermore, the museum is envisaged... to make the most of its potential to reach children and their families and to promote diversity (ibid: 11).

The above discussion indicates that the main aim of learning at museums is to find children's individual learning style though activities, help them to learn 'how to learn' and also to engage families and whole communities.

The same principles inspired the manifesto of the *Campaign for Learning* (CfL). The CfL formed in 1995 as an RSA (the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufacturers and Commerce) initiative and it became an independent charity in November 1997. The CfL has been influencing museum organisations, including the National Museum of Wales, with its aims for learning. Its main purpose was 'to stimulate learning that will sustain people for life' (CfL, 2007). According to the CfL:

Learning is a process of active engagement with experience. It is what people do when they want to make sense of the world. It may involve an increase in skills, knowledge or understanding, a deepening of values, of the capacity to reflect. Effective learning will lead to change, development and a desire to learn more (CfL, 2007).

From the above, constructivist approaches to learning are explicit. Additionally, The Attingham Trust's⁸ *Opening Doors: Learning in the Historic Environment* (2004) is a theoretical approach, based on the CfL, adopted by the National Museum Wales as well. It acknowledges four strands of learning in the historic environment:

- The study of the grand historic site, above or below the ground
 - The study and understanding of everyday surroundings
 - The processes of design, construction and presentation
 - An understanding of the ways of life of people living in the past
- (The Attingham Trust, 2004).

We also find two approaches to how a historical site can be used for extra- and cross-curricular activities in line with the NC requirements. It is suggested that the social history of houses can be studied in conjunction with the socioeconomic context, the 'hidden stories' and national and global history (ibid: 49). It is also suggested that a historic environment can serve as a focus for an activity concerning our own community, through which a variety of skills can be developed and acquired, and a cross-curricular activity can be accomplished (ibid: 50).

Consequently, museum learning is organised according to wider educational policies, while it explicitly promotes experiential learning according to individual learning styles. Experience is now considered the foundation of museum learning (Big Pit brochure, 2003; Gallagher, 1988: 58-59; Rhondda Heritage Park website, 2004; MLA, 2006; NMW, 2005b). Discovering individual learning styles is also among the

⁸ The Trust is a self-supporting organisation with its own boards in Britain and the United States. It collaborates with a number of heritage organisations and museums, including The National Trust, English Heritage, The Royal Collection, Historic Royal Palaces and the Victoria and Albert Museum. Members of the staff of these organisations are regularly involved in teaching, and others attend the schools (from the Attingham Trust website).

priorities for museums. The provision of the widest possible variety of learning activities (e.g. multimedia, active learning, handling objects, etc) is considered a pathway towards this discovery. In terms of history, social history and the cultivation of historical skills are the main foci of museum learning.

The above documents suggest ways in which museums can facilitate schools, and their approaches to history remind us of the history in the NC: social history and transferable as well as historical skills. The discussion point here runs parallel to one of the main points of the curriculum debates: how economic motives and a museum that has to facilitate policies or make a profit for its sponsors can develop a sound, research-based pedagogy for its learning provision. None of the above documents suggests pedagogic or 'didactic' frames that museums can use to build up their learning services. They suggest techniques of using museums for learning and *methods* of evaluating it. The absence of pedagogy is not only a museological problem. It has also been argued that British education policies do not give clear pedagogical advice (Hartley, 2003: 90), which refers to a wider context of what and how children and young people learn (Yates, 2009:19). I argue that in the flagship documents of museum learning, there is no pedagogic explanation or theoretical framework to underpin the suggested uses of museums.

The 'convenience' of constructivism for museum identity, which Hein (2006) talks about, provokes a degree of scepticism. Using an educational approach because of its convenience can lead to poorly or inadequately designed activities with no pedagogic aims, and subsequently simply result in a day out for children. This may

constitute knowledge for constructivism, but is it possible that constructivism can be used by museums to conceal amateurish learning provision? This question brings us back to the debates about knowledge and curriculum, which museum education also has to address and engage in.

Historical re-enactment and empathy

Through the discussion to date, learning is becoming central to the museum's aims and constructivism seems to have been adopted by museum theorists as an approach that has focal points in common with the nature of museum learning. The common learning aim of both constructivism and museum learning at the present time is the stimulation of experiences through 'active' forms of learning. In this section I focus on one of the active forms of learning that is also closely related to the heritage debates, as it mainly seeks to stimulate feelings and give the visitor the chance to 'experience' the life of the past: historical re-enactment. Historical re-enactment is one of the central activities in the organised history workshops at St Fagans: NHM as well as at many museums; therefore it is important to consider at this point the meaning that is ascribed to it as part of museum learning.

The previous section showed that The Attingham Trust and the *Campaign for Learning* initiatives consider learning as an engagement with experience. Despite the vagueness of this statement, museums try to provide visitors with these experiences, enabling them to have interactive engagement with the collections and their spaces, either through multimedia or handling objects or re-enactment activities. The above

approaches have stirred up scepticism and debate regarding the learning and the interaction that take place during these activities. Re-enactment, especially, has also become part of the wider debates about heritage and the possibility of representing the original and authentic, which was analysed above.

Interacting with museum collections is regarded as a positive experience for children. Research has shown that children are fascinated when they handle objects and actively participate in a representation of the past, or when they are asked to do a task during their visit (Ingle, 1994). The direct contact with an object can motivate curiosity about its functioning and real usage. Connections can be made between the past form of an item, its place or service and its modern versions. There have been studies, however, that have shown that interaction through electronic multimedia can be problematic. This interaction, which I am not going to detail here as it was not part of the activities observed at St Fagans: NHM, may be restricted to that between the computer and the visitor rather than helping visitors interact with each other (Heath and vom Lehn, 2008). As discussed in Chapter Seven, the material environment of St Fagans can have the opposite effect to the isolation of multimedia, by actually creating many opportunities for social interaction.

In relation to history learning, the museum can help the child to understand concepts or events. It has been argued (Pond, 1983) that children, because of their limited life experience and because the past is an abstract term, might find it difficult to relate an object in a museum to its real function and usage or to envisage the historical background when they visit a historical site. At the same time, it has been argued that

the sense of immediacy that a museum offers to children can help them find these parallels between the past and the present and contribute to 'children's cognitive growth' (Fairley, 1977:3).

Re-enactment is a very popular means adopted in museums for helping children find these parallels between past and present. For years, the traditional wash-day, the Victorian school and the toy sessions have been the common ground for many museums. Despite the risks of amateurism and stiffness that living history can conceal it also gives some good examples of practice (Attingham Trust, 2004: 52). According to the Attingham Trust Report (referring to historical re-enactment) a valid interpretation of history depends on its historical accuracy. This can be acquired if the interpreter locates the activity within its historical context, prior, during and after the session, and if there is a high quality of materials, costumes and language. A successful activity is claimed to be a combination of a good performance and academic expertise (ibid: 52-53). Re-enactment, thus, seems to be promoted by the specific organisation, whose views are also adopted by other museums in Britain, including the National Museum of Wales, as an effective means of history learning at museums. It is clear, however, that the Attingham Trust wants to give it an academic and historical validity.

What exactly, though, is re-enactment? Re-enactment at museums takes the form of role play, which is the simulation of an event or a moment from the past. It is part of what is frequently called 'living history', which also includes larger scale re-enactments of big battles or historical events that may engage a community or a whole country (see Handler and Saxton, 1988:242). During re-enactment at museums, a visitor can dress

up and act out a role. In other cases, interpreters, employed by the museum, undertake roles of certain characters or people of a historical period, e.g. a blacksmith or a soldier. In this latter case visitors can ask the interpreters questions about their jobs and everyday lives. Thus, through re-enactment, there is an attempt to reconstruct the past through role playing and imagination.

This meaning of re-enactment, however, is directly opposite to re-enactment as proposed by Collingwood (1961; 1978), who described re-enactment as a historical method. He wrote that 'a historian must re-enact the past in his own-mind' in order to understand the thoughts that resulted in a document or an idea (Collingwood, 1961:282). He explained re-enactment as a kind of internal dialogue between ourselves, as individuals of the present, and ourselves in the place of the person of the past we are trying to understand (Collingwood, 1961: 283-302). In order to do that we have to put ourselves in the position of the person who wrote or expressed their ideas and try to re-enact, in our minds, the same context of dialogue and theory that may have resulted in their idea.

Despite his idealistic approach, Collingwood conceives re-enactment as an internal process, a kind of historical method that pre-supposes relevant historical knowledge. In Collingwood's terms re-enactment is a dialogue between the self of the present and the imagined individual of the past, whose ideas and motives one tries to comprehend. However, re-enactment in museums takes on the form of external, group role-play activities that try to reconstruct the past. In this thesis I use the term *re-*

enactment to refer to these role-playing activities at St Fagans: NHM, and not to re-enactment in Collingwood's terms, unless otherwise stated.

For that reason, re-enactment has been criticised by theorists and teachers from various backgrounds. It has been related to the above debates about the quest for authenticity. Constructivists like Edward Bruner (1994) see it as a way of stimulating feelings in the visitors and giving them the opportunity to express their social identities and individual experiences. This is what Bruner considers valuable in a historical re-enactment: not the pursuit of reconstructing a historical event but that the event itself, even if it is represented in a fantastical way, stimulates feelings and questions as well as the opportunity to make one's own historical or social interpretations. On the other hand, theorists associated with postmodern thinking have criticised the re-enactment enthusiasts for trying, unsuccessfully, to reconstruct the 'authentic'. This reconstruction, contrary to what the re-enactment supporters believe, creates very specific narratives, which suppress individual participants' identities (Handler and Saxton, 1988). As in the case of heritage, these arguments place re-enactment in the context of emotional history and the meaning that authenticity takes on, as discussed above.

The emotional character of re-enactment that has been discussed so far has direct similarities to the empathetic history that, amongst others, was advocated by the 'new history' movement. Besides this, it has been argued that one of the main aims of historical re-enactment at museums is to inspire empathy (Samuel, 1989b: xlvi-xlvii). Furthermore, despite the conflicting views, which are discussed below, there is a return

to empathy as history practice (Harris, 2003:31) inside and outside of the classroom. Empathy has not been clearly suggested as a teaching method or skill either in the National Curriculum for history or in the suggestions of the Schools Council History Project (SCHP). It is argued, though, that this is what was implied when SCHP encouraged pupils to look at the events from the perspective of the people from the past (Phillips, 2000:14). Moreover, Harris (2003:35-36) claims that statements in the NC for History 2000 document, such as 'the pupils should study features, experiences and characteristics of the people of the past', encourage empathy as a means of reaching an understanding of the past.

As discussed in Chapter Two, the Schools Council History Project (SCHP) was criticised for its emphasis on empathy especially by New Right circles, who considered empathy difficult to achieve and be assessed (Harris, 2003:33; Phillips, 2000:14-15). This criticism, though, is not only related to the New Right. Lee (1984:89) explains that empathy is difficult to achieve, and although it should be related to historical understanding, it cannot be achieved without developing other historical skills. Low-Beer's (1989) view that empathy cannot be seen as a skill and that, as such, it cannot be assessed could counteract the DES' (1985) expectation to examine pupils' ability to empathise at the GCSE level. Empathy is also regarded with scepticism by historians who believe that a child cannot easily understand the adult world so, consequently, it is even more difficult to understand the adult world of the past (Husbands and Pendry, 2000:13). Husbands and Pendry (2000) go on to say, however, that viewing the development of historical thinking through a Piagetian prism of stages may be

dangerous, as this would mean that young people would not be expected to think historically. Similarly, Cairns (1989) argues that there is no age line that signifies the capacity for empathising. Developmental psychologists also consider the maturation and understanding in a child's mind as correlated with sociocultural conditions, which means that there are no predetermined stages (see Chapter Two). Constructivist views (as also discussed above) consider learning as an ongoing social process, through which concepts or ideas can be acquired at any time.

The present study, however, does not discuss whether and how children can learn to empathise. This would be a matter for a pedagogic study, as defined in Chapter One. What is of interest here is how empathy is used and perceived by the NC, the teachers of the present study and St Fagans: NHM. In other words the study is interested in the pedagogic meaning that the above agents ascribe to empathy.

Most of the historians' voices, which support empathy as a way to historical knowledge and understanding as part of the school curriculum, coincide. Their argument is that, contrary to what some teachers and educators believe, empathy is not a means of 'imagining of being in the place of others' (see Cairns, 1989; Harris, 2003; Stockley, 1983) nor a stimulation of feelings (Low-Beer, 1989). Stockley (1983:61-63) asserts that teachers, in their attempt to make their students put themselves into situations of the past, sometimes let them struggle with unfamiliar concepts. Therefore, he claims that empathy should be regarded as part of an already developed scheme of historical skills

Knight (1989:45-46) also points out that stimulation of feelings through empathy can lead to sympathy. He argues that by empathy, teachers mean that children have to feel sympathetic towards the hardships of the past, which can lead to misconceptions that do not help children understand the 'norms of the culture of the past'. Dickinson and Lee (1984:149) argue that 'if empathy is associated with imagination a child may produce an account of *made up* details'. Imagination in that sense is separated from imagination otherwise conceived as a central historical skill by some historians (Collingwood, 1961, 1978; Lee, 1983; Nichol, 1998:34).

Turner (1973:26), one of the academics supporting new history, claimed that 'empathetic' history, albeit attractive, needs to develop a distinct methodology and re-education as it is a demanding task. Thirty years on, Harris (2003:36) still argues that empathy is poorly theorised and therefore poorly used by teachers in many cases. It is also acknowledged that a teacher may not be in a position to help a child empathise due to deficiencies in approach or personality (Cairns, 1989:16).

Consequently, there seems to be recognition of the role of empathy in certain circles but also an acknowledgement that there is a deficiency in theory and research in this direction; however, both empathy and re-enactment are gaining ground at schools and museums, and acquiring an emotional character. Empathy frequently becomes synonymous with putting oneself in another's shoes, which is criticised by empathy supporters as an oversimplified approach (see Dickinson and Lee, 1984). Simultaneously, re-enactment is losing its original character as a historical method and is becoming a role play that aims at stimulating experiences and feelings. Empathy and

re-enactment in that sense seem to mainly promote historical understanding through feelings rather than enquiry, discovery and synthesis of various sources. On the other hand, the constructivist approach to history accepts even the stimulation of feelings or nostalgia as valuable paths towards historical understanding or personal learning in general. There seem to be various approaches to re-enactment and empathy, which can actually contradict one another. Some advocates of heritage seem to understand that emotions are not history, while others seem to approve of any feeling as historical understanding. Other historians and teachers warn of the need for the development of further theory and research towards developing empathy and re-enacting the past. Chapters Five to Eight analyse what meaning the participants of the present study give to empathy and re-enactment.

Part C. National Museum of Wales

The World-Class Museum of Learning

Having discussed some of the main debates in the field, and reflected on the development of museums and museum learning, I now place the National Museum of Wales (NMW) within this context. The main policies of the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) (Chapter One) related to the museum, were highlighted above and further analysed in Chapter Six in relation to the NMW documents. This section works as an introduction to Chapter Six as I discuss the latest strategy of the NMW as well as its governmental relationship with the WAG. As Mason (2007b:87) explains, in its

establishment days the NMW was dedicated to high culture and learning in addition to announcing ‘the great importance of Wales’ (Mason, 2007b:88). It was explicitly stated in the NMW’s Royal Charter of 1907 that the visitor can gain knowledge and be educated from their visit (Jenkins, 1957:17). However, the National Museum of Wales now shapes its visions in a different context, in the current environment of the free market and neoliberal policies.

The NMW is an independent chartered body and a registered charity as well as an ASPB (Assembly Sponsored Public Body). ASPBs are the Assembly’s Non-Departmental public bodies or quangos. They have specific roles in the Assembly’s policies, and although they operate independently of the Assembly, they are directly funded by the WAG (NAW, 2004:1).

...using its formal statutory powers, the Assembly Government monitors and influences the work of ASPBs through administrative tools including the approval of corporate and business plans, and ‘remit letters’ which set out the Assembly’s future priorities and targets for the body (NAW, 2004:1).

Apart from the NMW, the other fourteen organisations are:

- Arts Council of Wales
- Care Council for Wales
- Countryside Council for Wales
- ELWa – The National Council for Education and Training for Wales
- Environment Agency Wales
- Health Professions Wales
- Higher Education Funding Council for Wales
- National Library of Wales
- Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales
- Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments for Wales
- Sports Council for Wales
- Wales Tourist Board

- Welsh Development Agency
- Welsh Language Board (NAW, 2004:2).

The function of the NMW is to:

...promote the wider knowledge and better understanding of Wales, its history, culture and place in the world, through their knowledge and multi-disciplinary collections, which are international in scope and importance (NAW, 2004:6).

As one can read in the NMW's *Corporate Plan 2004-2005/2006-2007*, the NMW's vision goes hand-in-hand with the Welsh Assembly's vision and policy of creating a '...confident, outward-looking Wales' (NMGW, 2003:5). As in the Welsh Assembly's policy, *Wales, a Better Country* (WAG, 2003), partnership equality and evaluation of policies are the main priorities in the NMW's strategy for openness. The involvement of as many members of society as possible seems to be one of the main objectives of these institutions. Additionally, the collections must be properly looked after and widely accessible. In order to achieve this, the funding base must be improved (NMGW, 2003: 5, 6). The National Museum of Wales sets out its *Vision of the World-class Museum of Learning* within this corporate plan. When it was introduced in 2005, this plan described the organisation's purpose as: 'Inspiring people to make sense of the world through memory, reason and imagination' (NMW, 2005 a, b, c, d). The *Vision*, as it is referred to throughout the document, is based on the *Campaign for Learning* (CfL), which was discussed above. The NMW envisages a museum that engages the whole community.

In terms of learning, there is the issue of the different styles of learning, as they are also described in the documents of SEMLAC and the Attingham Trust. The NMW

believes that learning spaces have to be specially designed for individual needs, after visitors' consultation and monitoring:

Our priority is to develop learning settings which enable greater physical, intellectual and sensory access to our collections, settings which offer our visitors deeper and richer learning experiences (NMW, 2005c, no page number).

Overall, the NMW adopts a very similar role to the majority of new museums that have been analysed so far. It facilitates the work of the WAG in creating a confident profile for Wales. Learning becomes both a provision for the public and an organisational policy, and so the museum learns to 'listen' to its visitors and vice versa. Learning in the new museum is therefore the free-choice learning as opposed to the authoritative education of the early museum learning strategies.

St Fagans: National History Museum

Within this framework, the role and aims of St Fagans have also changed. The 'Welsh Folk Museum' at St Fagans opened in 1948, on the model of the first open-air village-like museum of Skansen in Sweden. The latter was established at the turn of the century by Hazelius, whose ideas have been characterised as romantic responses to urbanisation (Hitchcock et al., 2005:302). Most of the open-air museums in Europe opened according to this model. Iorwerth Peate (1956:5), one of the founders of St Fagans museum, asserted that an open-air museum should consist of two parts: a building, where there would be a systematic display of the materials of life and culture and which would be a very helpful resource for any researcher, and also the open-air section, where the national life would be represented in its environment. Peate's (1972:17) idea

for folk was the study of 'man's material, mental and spiritual struggle towards civilization'. He distinguished a national folk museum from local museums, stating that the latter could 'operate as romantic and nativistic community memorials...with little effort at interpretation or academic musing' (Peate, 1956:5). Thus, the new museum at St Fagans concentrated on the representation of the life of rural, pre-industrial, Welsh-speaking Wales with a vision to facilitate the student of folk life and develop and preserve the learning of the traditional Welsh arts and crafts. Arguably, however, this representation ended up being the romanticised folk that Peate wanted to distinguish his vision from, and this gave the Welsh history that was represented at the museum a romanticised image. As Mason (2007a:31) suggests, industrialised Wales was excluded from being presented at St Fagans as it was considered alien to its national origins.

The overrepresentation of rural Wales ended in 1987, when the *Rhyd-Y-Car* ironworkers' cottages were rebuilt at St Fagans. 'The six houses have been rebuilt to illustrate different periods of their history, namely, 1805, 1855, 1895, 1925, 1955 and 1985' (NMW,2005e:48). In 1995 the museum changed its name to the 'Museum of Welsh Life'. Mason (2007b:162) suggests there may have been many reasons for the inclusion of the *Rhyd-Y-Car* cottages at that time: a first reason might have been the fact that St Fagans includes within its grounds only those buildings that are threatened by demolition; another could have been the political situation with the national Miners Strike of 1984-85. The strike may have served to underline the significance of industrial Wales in the modern history of Wales, from which the need emerged for a representation of this history. Mason (2007b) also suggests that the industries had not

been represented in the museum prior to this because they were considered modern and culturally dominant, while St Fagans wanted to present the old crafts that were vanishing under the rapid industrialisation of Wales.

As a result, St Fagans: Folk Museum represented the lives of the ordinary people of Wales in the sense that, by the end of the nineteenth century, had already been given to the Welsh word *gwerin*, which means ‘people’ or ‘folk’. Arguably, *gwerin* took the essence of the rural, Non-conformist and Welsh-speaking ordinary people of Wales (see Gruffudd, 1999; Morgan 1986), as opposed to the aristocrats as well as the industrialised, Anglo-originated Wales. This representation seemed to be shifting by the end of the 1980s, when the industrial history of Wales was integrated into the museum representation and made ‘official’ in 1995, when the museum was renamed as the ‘Museum of Welsh life’. The Welsh name of the museum has remained the same though: *Amgueddfa Werin Cymru* (museum of the *gwerin*/folk of Wales). Hence, Chapters Six, Seven and Eight discuss whether, and if so, how, these and the latest changes at St Fagans reflect a shifting of the museum from a folk towards a ‘National History Museum’ for Wales, and explore the meanings that the museum professionals ascribe to the history of the ordinary people.

Conclusion

This chapter has investigated the changing role of the museum through time. I have demonstrated that museums have been tightly related to hegemonic educational discourses. Their representations of history have also been contested and strongly

associated with political motives. The discussion then moved to the forms that these debates take in the context of neoliberalism, within which culture is *customised* and obeys market laws; and within which the museum has to facilitate governmental policies and sponsors' plans. I have also explained that learning in museums has become focused on experiences, while it also acquires a dual character: it becomes both provision and organisational policy. Finally, the NMW was placed in the above context, setting out the main characteristics of its latest policies.

In Chapter Six I investigate the role of the National Museum of Wales as a learning organisation and facilitator of the WAG's plans, and the role of St Fagans as a National History Museum. Drawing upon the museum's documents and interviews with the museum staff, I discuss the latest changes at St Fagans and the effect these have had on its historical representations and its learning services.

Chapter Four

Methods

Introduction

So far, the development of the National Curriculum for History in England and Wales has been discussed as an aspect of general politico-economic shifts that have affected the role of education, culture and museums in recent times. It has also been argued that policies affecting education and museums have often been controversial and widely fought over.

Given this complexity, as well as the dual character of my study in that it examines both school and museum settings, a research methodology was needed that would bring together this multiplicity. Drawing upon both classic dialectical materialism and Gramsci's theory of hegemony has led to a critical concern with the question of how different domains articulate the ways in which history is presented to children. The study concerns not only policies, but also the voices that negotiate these ideological 'prescriptions', and those agents who eventually put these 'prescriptions' into practice.

This chapter presents the research methodology and the methodological decisions in the chronological order in which they were taken; that is, as the research developed. By unfolding the steps, worries and experiences involved throughout my research,

beginning from scattered thoughts until the last steps of the research, this chapter not only explains the research methodology, but also reflects upon my research experience, in order to draw attention to personal negotiations, relations, and decision-making processes that were involved in the construction of the data and their analysis.

Part A. Choosing a methodology

Domains of enquiry

As explained in Chapter One, the study focuses on Wales in order to examine how the new agendas of the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) have influenced the construction of history at the National Museum of Wales (NMW). St Fagans: National History Museum, one of the NMW constituent museums, was chosen as a highly significant institution where one would expect to find a picture of the ‘whole’ history of Wales, as claimed both in its title and in key documents (see Chapter Six). Unlike other sites of the NMW⁹ or a local museum, St. Fagans: NHM allows investigation of the concept of history and, more importantly, ‘national history’, and how these are being constructed both within the museum’s educational programmes and in its relationship with schools. What the study would then be able to elucidate was how this definition or presentation of history is related to the NC and the presentation of Welsh history and history to children.

⁹ The other sites of the MMW are: the National Museum Cardiff, the Big Pit: National Coal Museum, the National Wool Museum, the National Waterfront Museum, The National Slate Museum, and The National Roman Legion Museum.

Thus, there were five main 'domains of enquiry' in the study:

1. Policy and other key documents: Analyse the ideological implications and motivations
2. The classroom:
 - a) Before the visit: Observe; ask teachers and children about the anticipated visit
 - b) After the visit: Observe; interview teachers and children
3. The visit: Observe workshops (layout, children, teachers and museum staff)
4. Museum staff: Interviews
5. History advisers: Interviews

As a result, the study had to bring together various domains of enquiry that were jointly responsible for shaping children's learning of history. Initially, key policy documents had to be analysed. These provided the initial stage that framed the context that professionals had to negotiate and translate into historical knowledge and learning activities for children. Additionally, children were considered as being on the 'receiving end' of what had been outlined by others, such as professionals and policy makers. Thus, it was important to understand how the visit offered to children had been designed and how teachers used museum activities. The ways in which teachers made use of the museum workshops were analysed in relation to what they were instructed to do, according to the requirements of the NC. Understanding the interrelationships amongst children and between children and teachers - in other words, understanding life in the classroom in relation to the museum visit and workshops - was also an important aspect of my study. Moreover, the study looked at how the analysis of these

interrelationships might be related to what was prescribed in policy frameworks. For this reason, interviewing key professionals from both the museum and schools was important in order to examine the ways in which policies were implemented.

As a result, methods appropriate for each domain had to be adopted. As the study was not intended to be an ethnography of everyday life in the classroom, it cannot be characterised as purely ethnographic. As explained in the following section, certain aspects of ethnographic method and practice did inform the research design. Interviews with professionals were important to see how the policies were interpreted and implemented. Simultaneously, interviews with children were also necessary in order for them to articulate their experiences during the visit, as well as their views on the historical period studied. Additionally, observations of the children before, during and after their visit to the museum were required, since aspects of the visit that I was interested in might not have been articulated during their interviews.

Nevertheless, the study was not pedagogic, in the sense discussed in Chapter One. Due to the time constraints, my research could not be longitudinal, which is one of the main methodological ways of understanding how children learn (Pollard, 1996). Furthermore, a characteristic of pedagogic research is that it seeks to develop theories and suggestions, taking psychological principles (Simon, 1995) and the nature of children's learning (Galton et al., 1999:13) into account. The purpose of this research, however, was not to lead to theoretical and practical suggestions about how children might learn and teachers might teach. The purpose was to follow a number of schools, before, during and after their visit to the museum, in order to obtain a more complete

view of the layout of a history workshop/activity at the museum environment and children's responses to it both within the museum and the school settings.

Research questions and methodology

As presented in Chapter One, the research questions were:

1. St Fagans: NHM: How is 'national history' constructed:
 - Through museum-led educational programmes and displays directed at Key Stage 2 (KS2) children
 - By museum policy documents
 - By the key staff?
2. National Curriculum: How is 'national history' constructed:
 - Through the NC programmes of study, as laid out in the relevant documents
 - By KS2 class teachers sending children to the NHM
 - By children both in class and during the museum visits
 - By history advisers working for local authorities?
3. How can the above two constructions of 'national' or Welsh history be related to each other?
4. How is this relationship to be understood in the context of wider educational and cultural policy frameworks, implemented by the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG)?
5. How are the above policies related to the European Union frameworks, as these have been set out by policies like the Lisbon Strategy?
6. How can these relationships be related to wider neoliberal or ideological and political discourses?

The research questions therefore required the allocation of five domains of enquiry, each of which in turn necessitated an appropriate choice of methods. First, it was important to examine the ideology that constructed the relevant policy documents by undertaking documentary analysis. After the general socio-political context was examined and analysed, the professionals' accounts of their aims for history and Welsh history had to be examined. In order to do so, interviews with teachers and classroom observations were undertaken at selected schools. In order to study the ways in which the children related to the actual visit, it was decided to observe their visits and then ask children to give accounts of their experiences. Classroom observations were used, not to understand teaching styles, but rather those aspects of the lesson that were related to the museum visit.

The interviews with children aimed to elicit their narrative accounts of the visit, despite the difficulties and limitations that this may imply (see Part C). The aim was then to discuss how they felt about the visit as a whole and about the historical activities in which they had participated. Interviews with the teachers would shed light on how they conceived history, history learning and historical knowledge. The same rationale permeated the interviews with the history advisers.

The result of these priorities and aims was a decision to conduct a qualitative study; the methods to be used would include observations, interviews and documentary analysis. The study could be partly characterised as ethnographic, as I wanted to observe classrooms within a broad context (Sherman and Webb, 1990; Wolcott, 1999:98). As the research was developing however, I also empathised with the fate of

the ethnographer: engagement, uncertainty, loneliness and a constant learning of how-to-do-it in the field (Ball, 1993). As Hammersley and Atkinson (1983:2) argue:

The ethnographer participates overtly or covertly in people's daily lives for an extended period of time watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions [...]...it [ethnography] also bears a close resemblance to the routine ways in which people make sense of the world in everyday life.

Although participation in daily lives for an extended period of time was not the aim, elements of ethnography, as presented in the above quote, were highly relevant to my inquiry, such as the 'ways in which people make sense of the world'. However, the study was not going to be longitudinal and I was not going to live and work with people in schools for an 'extended' period of time.

Validity in qualitative research

All research, whether quantitative or qualitative, is based on certain underlying assumptions about what constitutes 'valid' research and which research methods are appropriate (Myers, 2010). Masson (1996:5-6) summarises what constitutes qualitative research in seven key points: systematically, rigorously and strategically conducted research; research where the researcher must be reflexive; research that produces social explanations to something the research wants to explain (intellectual puzzles); research whose conclusions can be generalised 'in some ways'; research that must not be seen in opposition to quantitative research but rather as one choice among a combination of

methods; and, finally, research conducted as an ethical practice and with regard to its political context.

Validity is a widely contested term within the various traditions of qualitative research. Its contestable, or rather, its changing nature, from a pragmatist tradition up until the 'postmodern turn', is evident in the fact that different theorists talk about different 'validities'. Brinberg and McGrath (1985:19-20) for instance, suggest that validities take on different meanings depending on the domain of the research. They identify three domains: the substantive domain, in which the researcher clarifies what is of value; the conceptual domain, which refers to validity in terms of interrelations between the elements of the research domains; and finally, the methodological domain, which refers to the generalisability of the study. What Brinberg and McGrath (1985) characterise as the substantive and conceptual domains can also be characterised as internal validity and the methodological domain can be thought of as external validity (see Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Punch, 2009). Generally, theorists speak of many different aspects of validity as well as the many ways in which it can be addressed. Cohen et al. (2000:105-106), for example, suggest eighteen different kinds. At the same time there is the issue of reliability, which does not ensure the validity of research but is considered a precondition of validity (Cohen et al., 2000:105). Reliability in both quantitative and qualitative research refers to the replicability of the research which, however, can be considered problematic for qualitative research (see Seale, 1999).

A common ground that researchers from various backgrounds seem to agree on in order for a researcher to achieve validity and reliability seems to be the clarity of their

theoretical framework and their reflexive awareness (see for example Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). Reflexivity is built on an acknowledgement of the ideological and historical power which dominant forms of inquiry exert over the researcher and the researched. Self-reflection about the constraining conditions is key to reflexive research and the potential fulfilment of an empowering agenda (Smyth and Shacknlock, 1998: 6). Researchers should be clear, as Prior (2003: 163) suggests, about what counts as 'valid and reliable evidence' as well as about 'what was done in the research process and how conclusions were arrived at'. Furthermore, a researcher has to be clear not only to the reader but also to themselves, about the motivations, values and ideology with which they inevitably entered the field (Blaxter et al., 1996:15). Seale (1999) suggests that this is a more realistic alternative to the belief that entire qualitative studies can be replicated:

A more realistic alternative is the provision of a fully reflexive account of procedures and methods, showing readers in as much detail as possible the lines of inquiry that have led to particular conclusions. [...] writers must then trust their readers' capacity to make their own judgements (Seale, 1999:157, 177).

Consequently, the first step of reflexivity was to make my theoretical approach clear from the start. It has been argued in the thesis so far that the main force influencing the direction of both school and museum roles in the present day is the political framework created by neoliberal policies and, in general, dominant economic forces. In addition, Gramsci's notion of hegemony allows us to understand that individuals may negotiate these frames and may consent to or try to change, resist, oppose or otherwise accommodate them. However, the study was not looking at

personal biographies that may have influenced individuals' interpretation of the policies, but what they presented to me as their accounts of decisions and views, as members of the specific organisations. As explained throughout the thesis and later on in the 'limitations and suggestions' section, what was of interest was how professionals interpreted and implemented policies and how these particular frameworks might have influenced children's historical understanding. Children's biographies and backgrounds were not a concern either, as these would not have been relevant for answering the research questions. Further, examining children's backgrounds would have required a more pedagogically orientated study that would take many more parameters influencing historical understanding into account and would have been the subject of another study. However, such decisions inevitably imply limitations, which, in order to be reflexive and ensure validity, will be discussed later on in this chapter.

Part B. Research Design

In summary, the research design comprised the following:

1. As an initial stage of the research and in order to comprehend the context of the organisations studied, documentary analysis was conducted. I analysed three main policy documents of the WAG (*Wales: A Better Country*, *The Learning Country* and *A creative Future*), Annual Reports and operational plans of the NMW from 1988 to 2006, with particular emphasis on the flagship strategy *A World-class Museum of Learning* (2005). I also analysed the visitor guide of

2006 of St Fagans: NHM. Furthermore, I analysed the documents of the NC for history, starting from the History Working Group's (HWG) Final Report of 1990 to the Revised NC for History for Wales of 2008 (which I did not, however, analyse in conjunction with the present data, as this was collected before 2008).

2. With St Fagans: National History Museum as the starting point, the aim was to try to contact schools that were to participate in their workshops. Schools were contacted at random, and selected for inclusion depending on their willingness to participate. One class visit per school was followed, until it was judged that 'saturation' had been achieved. This means that analysis ceases as soon as categories coded begin repeating themselves and the researcher becomes 'empirically confident that a category is saturated' (Glaser and Strauss, 1967:61).
3. As part of cumulative understanding of the policies and visions of the NMW, key members of the museum staff, mainly from the educational sector were interviewed in depth.
4. In order to gain insight into younger children's responses to history, Key Stage 2 classes were observed, as the majority of the workshops were addressed to KS1 and KS2. As it was not one of my aims to study the educational provision of museums in general, I decided to include only one Key Stage in my school sample.

5. The decision was taken to observe the classes before, during and after their visit in order to gain a more complete view of how the visit was prepared, what children did during the visit, and how the visit was interpreted and contextualised when the children returned to the classroom. My goal before the visit was to find out what children did in history in order to see what they anticipated about St Fagans: NHM and the activities they were going to do. Further, the aim was to get to know the children and their classroom environment and give them time to get to know me, so the barriers between us would be reduced (Lancy, 2001:14, 53). During the visit I would be an observer of how children responded to and participated in the activity, monitoring their reactions, feelings and their own interactions with the place and their peers.
6. The selected schools' classroom teachers were interviewed, in order to see how they fitted the workshop into their history curriculum as well as to find out about their views on history, museum education and St Fagans: NHM.
7. Children were interviewed after their visit in order to see what they remembered and how they interpreted the whole day at the museum. Back in the classroom I would observe their participation in post-visit classroom activities and hear their thoughts on what they did during their visit. In the following sections I discuss my methods of observation and interviews.

8. Additionally, it was considered necessary to interview history advisers, as these comprise another significant group of agents who mediate the version of the NC employed by teachers.

Which schools?

As described in Part A, the study looks into the teachers' aims for history teaching, the ways in which they integrated the museum visit into their history lessons, and, at the same time, the ways in which children responded to the visit. To this end, it was necessary to select a small sample of schools that would visit the museum in order to generate the in-depth data needed on children, teachers and classroom activities in history.

Choosing schools at random was one way to explore various approaches to history. Nevertheless, it was important that the sample had internal homogeneity (Stake, 1998:102) and it made sense for this common ground to be geographical. My school choice was therefore restricted to locations within South Wales, mainly Cardiff, Newport, the Vale of Glamorgan due to these areas' geographical 'homogeneity', and the likelihood that the schools from these areas would make visits to the NMW, given their proximity to the site. The sample was constructed broadly in line with the profiles of those schools in South Wales that visited St Fagans: NHM at the time of my study.

The number of schools followed (nine in total – see below) did not constitute a major issue for the research design. As discussed so far, the study was not interested in

'how many' but in 'how'. It cannot be claimed that the children or schools of the study are representative of all children and schools in Wales, as the sample is relatively small, due to the needs of the study. However, although the sample was not designed to be numerically representative of all schools in Wales, it was possible to ensure that it was a fairly typical sample in the sense that it included children from a variety of socio-economic and ethnic minority backgrounds. This makes me reasonably confident in proposing that one could find similarities between my sample and many schools in South Wales.

Demographics

As explained above, although socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds were not taken into account when the schools were initially selected, the sample was drawn from the same broad geographical area. Later on in this section I explain why the sample contained this number of schools. For purposes of validity and reliability however, the general socioeconomic and cultural context of my sample needs to be addressed.

According to the last census of 2001, about two-thirds of the population of Wales live in South Wales with the highest populations found in Cardiff, Rhondda Cynon Taff (RCT), and Swansea. Cardiff and RCT were included in my sample. From the 22 unitary authorities, Merthyr Tydfil, Blaenau Gwent and RCT are experiencing the greatest socio-economic difficulties and a proportional decrease in population (Dunkerley, 2007:117).

The proportion of ethnic minorities in Wales has tended to be low in relation to England, at least up until the 1980s (Reynolds, 1994:6), and although this has been

changing, it remains low in comparison to the rest of the UK. Between 2001 and 2007, the percentage of minority ethnic groups in Wales increased from 2.1% to 2.9% (National Statistics, 2010). The majority of the ethnic minority groups are concentrated in South Wales and mainly in the cities of Cardiff, Newport and Swansea (see Gorard et al., 2004; NAW, 2001 to 2009; National Statistics, 2008, 2010). In 2007 they made up almost 10% of Cardiff's population, 5.5% of the population of Newport, and 2.5% of Swansea's population.

In 2007, 9.5% of the primary and secondary school population in South Central Wales was from a non-white British ethnic background (Mixed: 2.9; Asian: 3.5, Black: 1.5 Chinese: 0.3; Other: 1.3) and 3.7% in South East Wales (Mixed: 1.2; Asian: 1.6; Black: 0.3; Chinese: 0.2; Other: 0.4) (National Statistics, 2008). At the Welsh level, 8.2% of the primary school and 7.2% of the secondary school population were of a non-white British ethnic background (NAW, 2008). Additionally, according to the 2001 census there was a 4% Muslim population in Cardiff (the largest in Wales), while as a whole, Muslims accounted for less than 1% of the population of Wales (National Statistics, 2004:2).

The national statistics for schools do not give details about the religious background of pupils and neither do the ESTYN reports. Arguably, information on the religious profile of Wales is not as accurate as other social indicators because provision of this information in the 2001 census was voluntary. Wales remains a predominantly Christian country although there are interesting variations in the proportion who declare themselves as Christians (Dunkerley, 2007:121-124). Only 1.5% of the

population (43,800 people) declared themselves as belonging to a non-Christian faith. The largest group is Muslim; however, this still only comprises 0.7% of the population. Cardiff had 17,300 people (5.7%) of a non-Christian faith, followed by Newport with 4,400 (3.8%) people and Swansea with 3,800 (1.7%). No other local authority has more than 2,000 people of a non-Christian faith (Dunkerley, 2007:121-124).

The demographic details of the study's participant schools are derived from the ESTYN reports¹⁰ that took place from 2002 to 2006, the periods before and during my study, and from information from the teachers (see also Chapter Seven, Table 1). According to these reports, which cannot be cited for ethical reasons and in order to retain the anonymity of the participant schools, four schools were above the Welsh average (18.8% at the time of the inspections) of free school meals entitlement. One school was just below the Welsh average. Four schools were significantly below the average¹¹ (See also Chapter Seven, Table 1)

¹⁰ ESTYN is the office of Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales. It is independent funded by the National Assembly for Wales. ESTYN inspects the quality and standards in education and training in Wales. ESTYN's *Common Inspection Framework* sets out the criteria on which inspections are based on. The *Common Inspection Framework*, ESTYN annual reports concerning the general standards of the education in Wales and ESTYN inspection reports are all available and widely accessible on their website: www.estyn.gov.uk.

¹¹ It is worth noting that one school, which was below (9%) of the Welsh average of free school meals entitlement according to the ESTYN report of 2004, is now significantly above the average (20%) according to the report of 2010. In the same school, although English was the first language at all homes according to the 2004 report, and there was no significant number of ethnic minorities, in 2010 the numbers have significantly changed with some pupils from an ethnic minority background and learning English as an additional language, while

There was one Church in Wales school and no other faith schools in my sample. Two schools had a significant number of ethnic minorities: 28% and 50% of the school population came from various ethnic backgrounds. There were no specific numbers given for pupils' ethnic group in the ESTYN reports of the seven schools followed. In one school, all but one family had English as their first language, and in another school, 1% of families had neither Welsh nor English as their first language. However, no further details were given. In three schools it was stated that English was the first language at home for all families (see also Chapter Seven, Table 1). In the classes observed within these four schools there were no children from ethnic minority backgrounds other than White British or White Other ethnic origin. Usually, with the exception of one school, the greater numbers of non-White backgrounds coincided with economically disadvantaged areas.

None of the schools gave numbers on the religious backgrounds of children. At the same time, the ESTYN reports, despite the fact that they give the general percentage of ethnic minorities in each school, do not give numbers by religious belief. Furthermore, for purposes of data protection, the museum did not allow me access to their statistics about the schools visiting them apart from providing general information.

their home languages include Polish, Urdu, Turkish and Mandarin. This is a significant change that could have implications for historical understanding in general, and understandings of Welsh history in particular. This could be the subject of future research.

Analysis: issues under consideration

In the analysis in this thesis five domains of enquiry were brought together: school professionals, the NC documents, the museum professionals, the NMW documents and the children on school visits to the museum.

The different research methods and the different sets of data needed different approaches. The first thing was to proceed with the thematic coding of behaviours, reactions and views. This was done manually rather than relying on NVivo or other qualitative research software packages. Salisbury (1994) explains that when she conducted her research there were no developed programmes for qualitative analysis. Since her research, however, CAQDAS (Computer Aided Qualitative Data Analysis) packages have been developed and simplified. But still even in recent qualitative studies, researchers often prefer the 'classic technique' of piling up papers and using a word-processing package to store and code transcripts by copy and pasting them (see for example Mellor, 2006:76). Arguably a software package can save the researcher time and can help with more complicated tasks that a word processor may not be able to handle as efficiently (Miles and Huberman, 1994:44). However, the time that would have been needed for me to learn how to use the NVivo was valuable and needed for the analysis. I could not afford to spend time on being trained in a new software package and this was a very important factor that made manual methods more appropriate for me (Fielding, 2002:168).

Initially, I followed Blaxter et al.'s (1996: 189-190) example of the novice researcher analysing interviews by coding and breaking up the questions, noting down

the similarities and dissimilarities. This was a rather subconscious qualitative thematic coding process that was close to grounded theory without the cyclical motive that characterises it (ibid). More recent takes on grounded theory draw together studies of discourse, history text or image in order to analyse complex situations (Clarke, 2005:xxii). Charmaz's (2006:9) ideas regard grounded theory as 'a set of principles and practices, not as prescriptions or packages', which can complement other approaches to qualitative data analysis. The Gramscian approaches adopted in the present study helped expose the contradictions and diversity in the data as opposed to stricter structures that can be produced through the use of grounded theory (see also Charmaz, 2006:64).

The persistent coding and recoding of data undertaken during field work is also a method close to grounded theory. *In vivo* codes were given to observed incidents and behaviours recorded in fieldnotes; through analysis and more detailed coding and memoing, certain theoretical categories were produced (see Charmaz, 2006; Glaser and Strauss, 1967). As a result, my main approach was to be 'open-minded' during the coding and recoding of data, which is argued to be the main characteristic of grounded theory (Miles and Huberman, 1994:58).

In order to bring together the five domains of my enquiry (visit, classroom, museum staff, advisers and documents), it was necessary to analyse the datasets in each domain separately and then bring everything together. After the initial coding frame for each domain of enquiry was prepared, I started constructing analytic categories, which helped gradually interlink these five domains. From observations and interviews, I

proceeded to thematically code the data from the very first day and continued with constant re-coding of the new data. I then moved on to more focused coding, bringing together the most important and frequently appearing codes and memos in order to pick up the most important conceptual issues arising from the data (Charmaz, 2006), in the attempt to form conceptual categories. For documents, the same steps were taken; only, I was not looking for ‘actions’ but ‘ideas’ that were repeated or ideas that were contradicting each other. At the end, all five domains were brought together, forming three broad categories corresponding to the main themes of the findings, as outlined in Chapters Five, Six and Seven: ‘School/Education professionals’ (teachers, advisers and the NC: their views on history, museum education and educational provision at St Fagans: NHM); ‘museum professionals, documents’ (NC and NMW policy documents: main learning and policy aims; views on history); and, finally, ‘Children’ (visit and classroom: attitudes, responses and historical knowledge).

Observing, interviewing and analysing: reflecting on validity

Documentary analysis

The analysis of key policy documents was an important aspect of my research design. Yet Coffey and Atkinson (1997:47-48, 56) explain that documents only tell a part of the story, omitting discourses that preceded their writing. They also argue that we cannot be sure about their validity. For example one may not know the ideological differences that pertained during the formation of a policy, or it may be impossible to monitor the

staff's views on the policy. However, official documents 'circulate through social networks which in turn help to identify and delineate divisions of labour and official positions' (Coffey and Atkinson, 1997: 57).

May (1993: 138-139) refers to documents as 'media' that construct social reality. At the same time, a policy document can give only a partial view of reality if we see it in isolation from other documents, as Blaxter et al. (1996: 187) argue. Similarly, Clarkson (2003:82) suggest that the 'golden rule' when using documents is to understand why they were created. Thus, for example, one cannot analyse the National Curriculum for History in Wales separately from the goals set out by the Welsh Assembly Government, and this latter set of aims should be examined in accordance with wider policies or ideological implications. Prior (2003:26) may be right in saying that content is not the most important feature of a document; nonetheless, the content is the starting point for analysis of the ideologies that scaffold it.

Therefore, the ideologies that underpin the policy documents were the main focus of analysis. NC and NMW policy documents, as produced up until the end of my fieldwork, were analysed in conjunction with wider policies, manifestos and debates that surrounded them. Finally, I tried to analyse them in relation to my interview findings so as to examine the ways in which the documentary 'reality' (Blaxter et al., 1996: 187) is related to the settings I studied.

Classroom observations

The present study is guided by principles of classroom anthropology and ethnographic fieldwork that pay attention to the significance, impact, individual and collective interpretation of events (Bohem and Weinberg, 1977:12; Wragg, 1994: 9-10). This is in contrast to other approaches that draw upon behaviourism and observed patterns of behaviour and codes that establish these behaviours. Delamont and Hamilton (1976:3-7), criticising the USA tradition of classroom observation for using pre-specified categories to 'code' or classify the behaviour of the teachers, promote the value of more anthropological techniques, such as participant observation, taking field-notes, recording and in-depth interviewing. They also point to the danger of contrasting the classroom with society (Delamont and Hamilton, 1976:14-15).

As explained so far, the theoretical frameworks of the study consider classrooms, schools and curricula as settings that are formed within economic and political contexts, whilst at the same time they negotiate relevant policies in various ways. A classroom may be self-contained, with its own unique mix of pupils' attitudes, didactics and teaching and learning styles. Nevertheless, these unique characteristics need to be seen as part of wider socio-political and ideological contexts, which are this study's principal focus. Accordingly, the study does not consider the classroom as a separate society detached from the general socio-political and ideological context within which it acts and which it constantly negotiates. Furthermore, the aim of the study was not that of looking for pre-determined learning and teaching styles or reactions to pre-specified methods of teaching or activities. Instead, it was to discover, comprehend and analyse

them. As a result, checklists and rating scales (Boehm and Weinberg, 1997:23) were not considered a helpful tool.

Simultaneously, validity and reliability in observations had to be ensured. Following Cohen et al. (2000:129), there were three main issues that may have influenced the validity of my observations: I was unfamiliar with important antecedent events and everyday practices; there was a chance that my presence might have elicited certain behaviours and statements; and the groups of children I followed during observations might not have been representative of the rest of the classroom (see also the 'limitations' section). One way in which validity of the observations could be achieved was to follow the same pattern for all schools. Rather than video recording, which could not be used for all schools, I decided to keep field notes during each research encounter and make an audio-recording of each whole visit and lesson. I also chose to focus on groups of children during the visit to St Fagans: NHM and follow them around. When children were 'static' during a workshop the focus turned towards one group of children. When a noticeable, different or familiar reaction took place among that group, I tried to look at the rest of the children's responses, to the extent that this was possible. For example, when a child was looking outside the window during the *Maestir School* workshop when all children were seated and I could have full view of them, I roughly put it down in my notes as an instance of 'boredom'. This was then verified by looking around to see if there was something else that caught her attention. When we were in the school classroom I was given the opportunity to walk around while children were working. The rest of the time I tried to follow one target

group and followed the same patterns as during the workshop. Observations were recorded as field notes and audio-recordings were transcribed.

Reliability, however, is not only a matter of how the researcher conducts the research but how the data are analysed. After each fieldwork episode I revisited my 'rough' thematic categories in the field notes and tried to code them. A rough analysis, thus, took place as soon as I had acquired some data. Through constant re-reading of the data of each domain of enquiry, more distinctive explanations or characteristics emerged that had not been apparent before. In this way, categories were formed that would focus on issues that either arose in all sets of data or were unique.

Children's interviews

As Greig and Taylor (1999) have argued, insufficient consideration is often given to the differences between undertaking research with a child and with adult subjects. One of the aims of this study however, was to gather and analyse children's recollections and memories of the visit, highlighting issues that might help or lead to further studies. Getting children to talk was vital, which is not an easy thing to achieve. Asking a particular question may lead children to answer in a particular way (Wilson and Powel, 2001:5). At the same time children may be aware of the researcher's expectations and try to give him/her an equivalent answer, which could also be the case for an adult (Greene and Hill 2005:9). Greene and Hill (2005:11-12) also point out that despite researchers' attempts and willingness to include children in the process of research, children's voices are still often translated, interpreted and published by adults.

Children's memory and accuracy in reference to time or measurement is a complicated matter (Wilson and Powel, 2001:5-6). For this reason, in the present study, children's interviews were treated as accounts that could be analysed in conjunction with observations in and outside the classroom and with the teachers' or museum professionals' accounts. For that matter, I thought that it would be more effective to have group interviews, as arguably children would feel more at ease and less threatened (Lancy, 2001:13; Scourfield et al., 2006:29).

It was important to allow children to give free narrative accounts (Wilson and Powel, 2001:49). These accounts also needed to be directed or triggered by my questions so that we could talk about the visit and specific issues related to it. It was difficult to ensure that children would not try to please me with their answers, but allowing them to talk to each other and to me within their own 'territory' (their classroom) might reduce this possibility. Consequently, the free accounts were 'guided' by my interview schedule, so that the group interview would not end with individual lengthy accounts or a chaotic discussion amongst the children of the group (Scourfield et al., 2006:27-28), but would allow them to talk to each other and recall their stories or memories. My main interview schedule had the aim of engaging children in talking about the visit: to recall what they did, what they liked or what they did not like, as well as trying to engage them in a conversation about historical issues they had encountered during their visit.

Issues of language and vocabulary, keeping to the point, establishing trust, and the possibility of children lying can all affect validity and reliability. What I did to

overcome this problem was to use the same interview questions in all cases and be very consistent with the analytical categories.

Professionals' interviews: teachers and museum staff

As explained in the first part of the chapter, and throughout the thesis, the study looked at the relationship between museums and schools in depth, analysing professionals' interpretations of policies and exploring what discourses might underlie the implementation of these policies. Interviewing was a way to come up with material that a questionnaire would not reveal in detail and in such depth (Gillham, 2000:10). Since I required an 'in-depth' response, semi-structured interviews were the most appropriate option (Gillham, 2000:19). Semi-structured interviews could allow the interviewees to express themselves and expand on issues that I might not have thought of (see Silverman, 2001). A structured interview, in contrast, might be over-directive due to the need for standardised responses, while what I chose to do was to make sure that my interviewees would understand the questions in the same way (Silverman, 2001). The main goal of the interviews was to see how professionals conceived knowledge and history, and at the same time how they communicated those with the general public and with schools in particular.

Ethical issues

Before starting my research a number of ethical issues needed to be taken into account. Honesty can be considered a very important part of the ethical rules that should

characterise the relationship between researcher and participants (De Laine, 2000:29, 57). Arguably, no matter how responsible and self-aware the researcher is, no one knows where the relationships established in the field may lead (Kornblum, 1996:5). However, being honest to both my participants and myself was the initial and most important principle that would shape my relationships in the field. This required further decisions that would ensure the protection of my participants, both children and adults. Thus, in addition to being honest about the aims and intended uses of the research and the establishment of relationships of trust, it was important to ensure participants' anonymity and informed consent. There were two main participants' groups whose anonymity and informed consent required different approaches: children and professionals.

Research Ethics Committee

One of the compulsory procedures for the research was to submit the research design to the Research Ethics Committee of Cardiff University, School of Social Sciences. Together with the research design all of the documentation sent to participants, which included consent forms and project information (see Appendix 3i to iv), were also submitted. The Research Ethics Committee granted approval for the research. This gave me confidence that my project had been approved by experienced researchers, which was also of help in negotiating access and approaching participants (Oliver, 2003:41).

Anonymity

Professionals

In order to preserve participants' anonymity, some distortion of the truth may, on occasion, be necessary. This may lead to some deception of the readership (French, 1997:120). The decision to preserve my professional participants' anonymity had to be considered in the light of this perspective as the readers would not be able to identify the people behind the views presented in the thesis. Interestingly, Oliver (2003:89) distinguishes private from public institutions in relation to the anonymity of research participants. He argues that public institutions should be completely open to researchers and to public scrutiny. Private companies, on the other hand, may have objections to publicising certain views or databases due to competition. My professional participants came from public institutions, with the NMW being an institution that embraces co-operation with researchers and various bodies as its main organisational policy. In this sense, I could have made their job titles and positions known to the readers, if not their names. However, as Wales is a small country, the individuals working at certain museums and schools, as well as the history advisers might be identified, as in other cases where local knowledge and previous studies have made participants identifiable (Creig et al., 1999:150).

Thus, I decided to keep all my participants' identities anonymous by not referring either to their positions or their names (see Chapters Five and Six). This decision was taken in order to ensure my participants' protection from harm in case they made a

statement that could be used against them in the future. Even in cases where interviewees stated both their names and their responsibilities during their interviews, I still have not exposed their role or identities in the thesis. This decision reflected what they consented to, which was to participate in a way that would protect them from being identified (Sieber, 1992: 52, 53). Furthermore, I decided not to refer to the professionals' gender or the geographical area they were responsible for.

These adjustments in the narrative affect the ways in which I present the findings, but not the findings themselves. My aim was to study specific policies and the ways in which individuals working in specific institutions interpreted and implemented them. Thus disclosing participants' rank or identity was not relevant to my aims and would not contribute to public or academic knowledge on this topic.

Children

Doing research with children involves a series of questions about children's rights. In my case, the problem was to ensure children's anonymity and their protection from physical or psychological harm. One way of ensuring children's physical and psychological protection was through the teacher being present during the observations and in the classroom. Furthermore, the research did not probe sensitive areas, as these were defined by the University Research Ethics Committee, such as personal and family issues, religion, class or sexual orientation. It only included observation of behaviours, talk and the ways in which the history curriculum was implemented. This involved minimal risk (Sieber, 1992: 121). Nevertheless, to reassure teachers and parents that even a minimal risk would not be present, I first talked to the head teachers

of the participant schools. I then sent a project information pack (see Appendix 3i), together with consent letters for the teachers and parents (Appendix 3ii, 3iii, 3iv). I assured them that I would ensure children's anonymity and that I would use children's photographs strictly for academic purposes.

At the same time, just as my adult participants were protected from being identified by their colleagues or their superiors, I also had to protect the children from similar issues. It was important to reassure children that their identities and their views would not be revealed to their teachers or parents (Masson, 1996:50), thus establishing a trusting relationship with them, too (Fine and Sandstrom: 1988:52). This would also enable children to be more honest and more relaxed, and at the same time it ensured their right to anonymity in reference to their teachers and parents. This was part of my effort to ensure that children understood what my research was about, which is further explained in the following section.

Informed Consent

Informed consent can be seen as a benchmark for ethical practice (Lee-Treweek and Linkogle, 2000:17). In my study, apart from the adult consent, issues of children's informed consent also arose.

Professionals

My adherence to honesty included establishing an ongoing open communication process with my participants (Sieber, 1992: 38), which would enable us to discuss my research and give them the reassurance and confidence that they could withdraw their

consent or any part of the information they gave me at any time. Project information was a first step to gain participants' active consent (Appendices Three i, ii and iii). The research, including the main aims of my study, the research methods, the focus of the interviews and observations, issues of anonymity and where my study was going to be published, were explained as clearly as possible. It was also stated that the participants could withdraw at any time if they wished.

After the head teachers, the museum staff and advisers were contacted; this pack was tailored to each professional group and sent to the participants. Finally, the interview questions were emailed to the participants, thus giving them the opportunity to think them through or discuss them with their superiors. This also gave them the opportunity not to answer questions that they did not feel comfortable with. Finally, the fact that I maintained contact with the National Museum of Wales for almost four years during my research and all the participants had my contact details, gave them the opportunity to reach me at anytime in case they wanted to withdraw or they had any queries.

Children

A second concern was whether children could actually comprehend my research details (Oliver, 2003:22) and hence actively consent to participate. Parents and teachers were informed and gave their consent for their children to take part, based on their views about my study. However, how could I ensure that children were adequately informed about what they were consenting to? Arguably, reliance on the consent of others does not give the child the opportunity to be informed about what they are going to

participate in and interpret what is happening (Masson, 1996:34-35). The project information had been straightforward for the adults, even though adults' ability to fully understand research may also be contested (Archard, 1993:66-67; Prior, 2003:12). Nevertheless, children could not deal with the complexities of an adult's research in written format and so this consent form was not given to them.

I thus wanted to communicate my study to children in a way that would give them the opportunity to understand what they were going to participate in. I first presented myself, my research and recording tools in the classroom. I had also asked the teachers to inform the children about who I was before I met them. The reason for asking them to do so was because teachers knew their pupils and they would best know how to present who I was and why I would be there. The teachers and I explained to the children that I wanted to hear their views and was not there to test them. We reassured them that they were free to say whatever they wanted during our interview and that the teacher would not know what each child had said. We made sure they understood that there was no right or wrong answer, and this was something that I kept reminding them of before each interview (Field notes). After I introduced myself and my study to the pupils during my pre-visit observations, I encouraged them to ask me anything they wanted to. In most cases children asked me about what a 'University' was or about Greece (my country of origin). Some children asked me what I was supposed to do with my study and if I was going to write a book. I told them that I was going to write a book for the University, which would be a type of exam for me. I explained that a PhD was a higher level degree that one could do after the University (Pre-visit field notes).

Some children were curious about my old tape recorder, and they asked to examine it and see how it recorded. During the observations some children were surprised at how many field notes I was taking. They asked questions regarding my notes and what I was going to do with them. When I explained that I was going to include them in my book they looked rather impressed (Field notes).

I was certain that the children understood what I was doing, as they were curious about the methods and they eagerly participated in the study. Children had the chance to ask questions about and participate in the research. They were given the opportunity to express their views about what I was doing and decide if they wanted to be part of it or not. The children seemed at ease with me, my methods, and my presence as a researcher, with the possible exception of one girl who started crying during a workshop. But this may still have been an indicator of her eagerness to 'do well' in the re-enacting, which might have been re-enforced by my presence (see Chapter Seven).

In one case, a child wanted to participate in the study, despite the fact that his parents had not given their consent, which may be typical of children of that age (Fine and Sandstrom, 1988:52; Sieber, 1992:115). I did not include that child in any of the interview groups and I did not video record this class (see following section). In this case the trusting relationship that was established between the teachers, the parents and me, as well as the requirements of the Research Ethics Committee eventually determined the child's participation. This enthusiasm though, was an additional sign that this child wanted to be included in the study that was generally accepted by the peers and the teachers. As children are regarded as agents that have a voice that,

according to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Archard, 1993:58), should be listened to, the least I could do was to listen to children's voices and give them the opportunity to understand for themselves what I was doing, even if, as in the above case, I finally had to respect the adults' and internal organisational decisions regarding informed consent.

Recording data

Before entering the field, I had decided to use field notes, photos, video and voice recording as means of recording the data. The reality however was different. It turned out that the best way to do observations in the interactive environment of the museum visit was by taking field notes whilst I was voice recording the whole session. A video camera could not be used on most occasions, because there were always some parents who had not given their consent for their child to be monitored. As a result, as children were interacting and intermingling with each other during the workshops and in the classroom, opportunities to video record were limited.

Another reason for not relying on a video camera was that I would have been unable to make notes of my immediate thoughts during the observations. I valued my field notes more than recorded footage. This is why the voice recorder was on at all times, so that I could take notes during the activity and at the same time make sure that the whole session would be audio recorded at the very least. Thus, when I returned home the lessons and activities could be re-visited, and further notes could be taken

down. The voice recordings also helped me in terms of language barriers as I could check the meaning of terms that I did not know or had not caught later on in the day.

Before the fieldwork: negotiation of access

The researcher constantly faces challenges during fieldwork that have to be overcome.

As De Laine remarks (2000:35)

...nothing remains the same in the field. The research design changes, fieldwork sites and hosts change, relationships and even the social world changes and fieldworkers themselves are changed by experience.

This makes fieldwork research and social research altogether a matter of constant negotiations. Most researchers proceed with 'opportunity' sampling and 'snowballing' (Delamont, 2002:83; Kirk and Miller, 1986; Lofland and Lofland, 1995:38). I do not interpret De Laine's argument as a researcher's powerlessness to be a master of their own decisions but as an inherent characteristic of any social setting.

I had already contacted some other local museums and I also met one of the then history advisers in February 2006 in order to map out the situation in school history and get some advice on accessing schools. It was during our meeting that I heard for the first time that the NC was going to be revised in 2008 because 'they want a development of skills' (Pre-field notes, 20/02/2006). This was very valuable for me as I gained information about issues and organisational strategies that I could not have otherwise easily found.

As soon as the research design was finalised I had a long meeting with a member of the museum staff of St Fagans: NHM (M5), during which I was given valuable information about how the NMW worked and implemented its education programmes and policy. I explained what I was looking at and the museum professional, M5, asked me to make a presentation of my findings for St Fagans: NHM after the completion of the research. M5 also pointed out the fact that I should include Welsh-speaking schools in my study because 'there is a different cultural ethos' (Diary, 07/02/2006) in Welsh medium schools. M5 also reiterated that there were not only the museum history workshops but also one-off projects that I could look at. Despite the fact that I had explained that the language barrier excluded me from studying Welsh medium schools, M5 insisted that I should find a translator and just attend as an observer. M5's expectations, and persistence, over my including Welsh medium schools placed my research in a framework where I was encouraged, and yet was unable, to adjust my aims in order to fit in with the institution. Apart from that, we agreed that I would present my findings to the museum as soon as I finished my research. M5 emailed certain seniors informing them about my study and that I would complete it by 2008. I still do not know who these people were but I refrained from asking out of courtesy, believing that this would contribute to a good first impression (Diary, 14/03/2006) and the beginning of a trustful relationship (Bailey, 1996:60; Delamont, 2002). At that initial stage I felt obliged and grateful to these first people who could put my research into motion.

The reason for this rather descriptive account is to highlight that a researcher can face conflicting interests when they have to adhere to their own choices but at the same time be flexible to the demands of others. On the one hand it was important to be confident about my chosen methods and my research aims, which I did not negotiate. In return, however, I realised that I had to accept the terms of the museum if I wanted to begin my research.

Access

Familiarising myself with the setting

After this first meeting and before starting my research I started visiting St Fagans: NHM, making notes on schools that were visiting and familiarising myself with the setting. Approaches like symbolic interactionism explain the importance of methodological blankness prior to the field work, as social life is a result of interactions not external rules (Blumer, 1976; Jacob, 1987). I drew upon views, however, that claim that a researcher should not enter the field from a completely neutral stance but rather with a flexible approach, within a negotiable framework (Kirk and Miller, 1986). This would also prevent the researcher from feeling ignorant about what is happening in the setting that is going to be studied (Delamont, 2002: 114). I am convinced that if I had not spent many days at St Fagans: NHM, I would have lost precious time in familiarising myself with the place, the people who work there and what the museum has to offer.

Access to museum staff

During our meeting, M5 proposed some key people that I could interview, most of whom were from the education sector. However, when I tried to explain that one of my goals would be to talk to the Director General as I was also looking at the general policy of the NMW and how this influenced leaning provision, M5 discouraged me from even trying by saying 'It is so hard to reach him. Even students who do research on identity cannot' (Pre-field work notes 14/03/2006). Whilst this indicated that research on 'identity' was ranked of higher importance than my own topic, an interesting finding in itself, this did not seem to be something I could insist upon.

The relationship between M5 and myself that was established during this meeting was based on my dependence on the help of this member of the staff and for a while it remained as such. This can be a trap for a novice researcher who wants to start their fieldwork with even the slightest bit of help. First contacts are important for the first steps of any research but the relationship between gatekeepers and the novice researcher has to be constantly re-negotiated.

I realised that despite my own independent efforts, ultimately, some of these higher-position staff proved impossible to access, as my first contact pointed out from the beginning. This made me appreciate the fact that gatekeepers can actually save a researcher a lot of time because they know exactly how their organisation functions and they may know the appropriate people who are willing to help. Nevertheless, the researcher should constantly negotiate with key people and alternative methods should be always kept in mind.

During the summer I finally managed to schedule some interviews with the museum staff for autumn 2006. In September of 2006 I had my first interview, three more were conducted by May of 2007 and a final one in January 2008.

School access

The need for the constant negotiation of relationships became even more apparent when I tried to obtain the schools needed to participate. At the beginning of my research I was confident that I would manage to observe one school per week. I started my fieldwork in April of 2006. It turned out to be very difficult to arrange an appointment with the member of the museum staff who had the administrative responsibility for arranging the school visits, as this member of staff was working only three times per week and this clashed with my own timetable. I finally arranged a meeting in April 2006 for the first time, during which we went through the list of schools that would be participating in the history workshops during the following month. These dates did not always coincide with my timetable, and as a result two days of the week were excluded. We eventually agreed on a number of schools and two weeks later M5 informed me that four schools had agreed to be observed. I then proceeded to contact them.

I then entered the second phase of my negotiation of access, this time with the schools, where I was negotiating with different 'representatives' in each school. In one school I negotiated with the head teacher while in the other three I arranged everything with the KS2 teacher. Secondly, each head teacher or teacher had their own preferred way of being approached: one of the teachers preferred to be contacted by email; one

head teacher required a CV first, while others were satisfied with me sending them the information pack I had prepared.

The most important issue was that the schools that had agreed to be observed had not exactly understood my research design, which was to observe the classroom before, during and after their visit. This was mainly due to the fact that the member of the staff at St Fagans: NHM, who made the first contact with the schools, did not explain my research in detail. Schools were told about a student at Cardiff University who was doing research at St Fagans: NHM and that she wanted to observe the class during the visit (Diary, May 2006). As a result, some of the schools that had agreed to be observed were not actually aware of what I wanted from them. Consequently, some schools finally refused to participate in my study; others wanted me to meet them directly at the museum and others did not have the time for me to do the follow-up visit. No matter how many letters I sent or calls I attempted to make they never came back to me to arrange a follow-up observation after the visit.

First conclusions

Consequently, by the end of the 2006 academic year, from 10th of May until 9th of June, I had observed four schools: two schools during their visit only, one during and after it and only one before, during and after the visit as was the aim. This was not what I had hoped for. Although the number of schools was satisfactory, I was not satisfied with the amount of data. These school data already generated, however, could instead

be treated as a pilot study which could give useful information but which I would use in my analysis only with caution.

Further pre-, during- and post-visit observations were completed with two schools in October, and another in November. In March 2007 I managed to observe one more school before and during the visit while the follow-up observation took place after the Easter break of 2007. Despite the fact that four further schools initially accepted to be observed, one of them stated that I had contacted them too late so there was not enough time to inform the parents. Choosing schools thus proved to be difficult as many of them were visiting on the same or over subsequent days, and so it was impossible for me to observe them all. Nine schools were finally observed, including the pilot ones.

Part C. What was lost: limitations and suggestions

Methodological limitations

As Hammersley (1992) argues, it is difficult to put everything into a research design:

We can never have everything we want and usually we can only get more of one thing as the expense of getting less of something else. (Hammersley, 1992: 85)

Research design is a matter of choices. As a result, one of the limitations of my study is a result of the chosen methodology. There are always advantages and disadvantages to the methods employed: a written account means that an observer has to take immediate decisions about what to record; video means a loss of information like smells, or events out of camera shot; audio recording can result in loss of important visual cues like

facial expressions, and it makes it difficult to identify children who speak, and takes much time to analyse and transcribe. One of the main problems of classroom observation is deciding upon the focus of attention (Wragg, 1994:4-5). At the same time, Delamont and Hamilton (1976:3-7) also point out that classroom research that depends on audiovisual techniques can lose the contextual, on-site data. They suggest, thus, that recording must illuminate rather than be the main aim of a researcher. Also, in any kind of ethnographic research there are some things that are lost, primarily because the researcher cannot be in two places at once. Thus, there will be limits to what can be achieved and observed (Ball, 1993; Woods, 1990:102).

Consequently, although I used sound and video recording I have mainly relied on my field notes. The analysis entailed going through my field notes, listening to the tapes and trying to remember and visualise the lesson. By using the specific means of recording my observations I tried to eliminate the inevitable losses. I could not avoid focusing on one activity at a time. For example, most of the classes were divided into two or more groups during the visit, so that one group was doing the workshop whilst the other was wandering around the grounds. I had to decide on my priorities: Did I want to observe all the groups during the workshop or did I want to follow one group from the beginning of the day until the end? I chose the second option because I was interested in examining the experience of a certain number of children from the moment they stepped out of the bus until the moment they left St Fagans: NHM.

Researcher's identity

My researcher's identity was dual. I am a foreigner and, particularly when I started my research, I could easily be characterised as a tourist as I had lived in Wales for less than a year in a 'protected' student world. So what chances could a tourist-researcher have in her attempt to analyse settings in a different cultural and educational context? My ethnicity could be a barrier between my interviewees and me, as Seale (1998:209) comments. In contrast, however, my observations could point out issues that a British or a Welsh researcher may not have been in a position to see due to their familiarity with the field.

Demographic issues

Changes in the demography of Wales could be the subject of another study. These changes may have affected not only St Fagans: NHM representations but also the ways in which schools use the museum, the ways in which schools decide to teach history and the ways in which children themselves understand history in and outside of the classroom. Further, as one of the main aims of St Fagans: NHM is to work with and include more ethnic minorities in its representation, an interesting piece of research could consider how schools with large numbers of different ethnic minorities and religious backgrounds respond to and negotiate what St Fagans: NHM presents as 'Welsh'. For instance, 'St Teilo's Church' workshop, which focuses on Christianity and everyday life in the Welsh tradition, as well as the Non-Conformist chapel at St Fagans: NHM grounds, raise interesting questions about how children from religions

other than Christianity might relate to the representation of Christian themes. It would also be interesting to see how other Christian faiths, such as Roman Catholic or Orthodox ones, may be related to the Non-Conformist identity of Wales. At the same time it would be interesting to examine how St Fagans: NHM is able to address these issues and engage visitors from multiple ethnic and religious backgrounds.

Welsh medium schools

Another important limitation was related to the fact that I could not include Welsh medium schools in the study, due to the language barrier. This was a practical issue which also resulted in a limitation. The staff of the museum insisted that Welsh medium schools have a completely different approach to history than the English medium ones. The language barrier did not allow me to study this different approach and analyse it in relation to the ways in which they use the National Museum of History. Therefore, further studies could also be conducted with Welsh-speaking schools in order to see if there are different implementations of the history curriculum and the *Curriculum Cymreig* as well as different ways of approaching Welsh history and a visit at St Fagans: NHM.

Geography

My findings may have variations related to the differences in schools in Wales as well as the schools in England. At the same time, there might be differences between North and South or schools from West Wales, which are characterised by different demographics and also different socioeconomic traditions. North Wales, for example,

was not as widely industrialised as South Wales, which may also affect the ways in which children may conceive of and are taught Welsh history.

Pedagogic issues

Both a practical and conceptual limitation was the fact that my study was not pedagogic, as it was not seeking to give suggestions for the teaching of history or to evaluate how and what children learnt. An in-depth pedagogic study about how activity and the museum contribute to children's learning and their historical knowledge would involve incorporating all or some of the above indicators - ethnic, religious and socioeconomic background.

As a result, my study opens the door to further pedagogic studies, which can develop aspects of my findings, especially in terms of how activity in and outside the classroom could be used towards learning history. This can also affect pedagogy plans in both museums and schools. Finally, the fact that my research was not longitudinal left many aspects of the everyday practices of both schools and museums unexamined. Additionally, as I did not re-interview the teachers, museum staff or advisers, one has to take into consideration the possibility that my interviewees may have changed their views in due course. As a result, a new study could reveal other views and practices, which, compared with my views, could form a more complete picture of the teaching of history and the NMW.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has tried to explain the methodology and the chronological phases this study went through in order to justify how the methodology was chosen and show how it enabled me to draw reliable conclusions. The experiences gained, from the day I decided to undertake the research up to the day it finished, also served to prove that any human institution is like a living organism. Any organisation has its rules and goals which follow an organised scheme (Lofland and Lofland, 1995:109), which inevitably will demand constant re-negotiation. My experiences have made me realise that a new researcher has to bear this in mind. This may help a researcher consider the need for negotiation not as deviation from their initial aims, but as a necessary process that will give them invaluable experience and open up suggestions for future research.

Chapter Five

History in the National Curriculum and museums: documents and interpretations

Introduction

The discussion so far has concentrated on the development of the National Curriculum (NC) for England and Wales as well as the development of the museum. The discussion has focused on how the general socioeconomic and political advancements of capitalism have affected the redefining of education, schooling and learning, as well as cultural representations and museum education. This analysis was mainly based on classic Marxist approaches about how class struggles also implicate struggles for ideological dominance. In the case of schooling, dominant classes infuse schools with their ideals, thus redefining knowledge and learning and the purpose of education. In the case of museums, I have discussed how the struggles between the old aristocracy and the new democratic, open-minded bourgeoisie, gave 'birth' to the public museum and explained that in the present phase of capitalism, the neoliberal state dictates certain policies that infuse market practices in cultural and educational institutions with their general aim to facilitate the market. This is done through the privatisation, or the partial privatisation, of education or health services, but mainly through the establishment of forms of governance that ask non-profitable institutions to establish partnerships and create surpluses (See Chapters Two and Three).

However, as I have also explained, this general context is negotiated and enacted by various agents, groups and classes. Even within the same class there are different approaches and tactics. The Keynesian model of capitalism and neoliberal tactics are two examples of different approaches to capitalism. That is why it is important to see how groups and classes try to gain the consent of the others. The next chapters analyse these issues: how museum staff, teachers and history advisers have negotiated and put these policies into action. At the same time I look at how these negotiations affect children's learning of history.

In this Chapter I analyse the views of the history advisers and teachers who participated in my study. During 2005-2007, when I conducted my fieldwork, there were only five history advisers in the 22 Local Authorities in Wales, who were responsible for history in primary schools. For the needs of the study they are referred to as A1-A5. I also interviewed nine teachers, referred to as T1-T9. I start with the analysis of the documents of the NC in order to analyse the context which these teachers and advisers acted.

Part A: History in the National Curriculum

Introduction

From the introduction of the History Working Group's (HWG) Final Report for History in 1990 until the latest revision of the NC for Wales in 2008, history in the National Curriculum became constrained by an increasingly tight and restrictive skills-framework, which is common for all the subjects of the NC. This has affected the place

of historical knowledge and understanding as well as chronological awareness, which have gradually been incorporated into this framework. In addition, transferable skills became dominant, whilst a pedagogy or theoretical framework supporting the specific choices disappeared with the 1995 revision. Furthermore, the focus has gradually turned to local or Welsh history, although this merely focuses on everyday life. Finally, the content of the programme of study (i.e. what is taught in each Key Stage) has been shrinking, whilst skills are dominating the NC and its subjects.

The National Curriculum for Wales (2000) proposes seven common requirements that have to be integrated within every subject of the NC. There are also five ‘aspects’ that replace the ‘key elements’ of the Revised NC (1995) skill framework. In September 2008 a more coherent skill framework was introduced, together with the common requirements and the key skills - which replaced the ‘aspects’- of each subject. As my research was completed in the summer of 2008, my analysis is mainly based on the curriculum of 2000, although I also refer to the NC for 2008, as I explain below.

In the NC of 2000 the common requirements are:

- the *Curriculum Cymreig*
- communication skills
- mathematical skills
- information technology (IT) skills
- problem-solving skills
- creative skills
- personal and social education

In the case of history at Key Stage 2 these requirements can be accomplished through five aspects:

- chronological awareness
- historical knowledge and understanding
- interpretations of history
- historical enquiry
- organisation and communication

Each of these 'key aspects' embody one or more of the common requirements.

It is also necessary to briefly discuss the basic changes in the NC for history from 1990 to 1995 because the interpretations that my interviewees gave for the NC 2000 were sometimes closer to the 1995 NC document and at others closer to the later Revised Curriculum of 2008. Occasionally, there was confusion around some of the terms that the participants used and I considered it important to analyse the changes in the NC in order to analyse the interviewees' interpretations. At the same time, I analyse the development of skills and the place of history and Welsh history by looking at the ways in which it has been presented and implemented in the various revisions of the NC. Thus, I examine the NC according to seven analytical categories: five categories corresponding to the five key skills/aspects, one category referring to Welsh history and one corresponding to how the NC regards museum education. Before moving to the NC (2000) document I analyse the main changes up to 2008.

The National Curriculum 2000 and 2008

General changes up to 2000

A detailed outline of the study units and skills of the NC for history at KS2 are presented in Appendix 1. The main changes were to historical knowledge and chronological awareness, which in the latest versions of the NC have become part of a skill/element/aspect-framework, in addition to the gradual disappearance of a coherent theoretical and pedagogic framework for history. In the first proposal for history in the NC (1989), and the Final Report of the History Working Group (HWG) and the History Committee for Wales (HCW) in 1990, historical knowledge and understanding were two distinct concepts that differed from skills. According to the HWG (1989:10) there is a relationship between knowledge, concepts and skills for history that nurtures the very essence of history as a school subject. Furthermore, in the same report we come across the main characteristics of history as a school subject and the importance of its existence. These characteristics incorporate identity and culture, understanding other cultures, and all further implications that this could have for 'our personal and intellectual development' (HWG, 1990: 5-9). There was also the concern that until this point, history had been under-represented in primary schools and taught within other subjects rather as a subject in its own right. The historical skills proposed for the first NC for history were historical enquiry, analysis, interpretation and synthesis.

In this Final Report 1990 there was also the issue of heritage. The disputed term 'heritage' was substituted by 'inheritance' and defined as:

[...] that which the past has bequeathed to us and which it is for individual people to interpret, employing knowledge and skills of history. While all people in Britain partake to a greater or lesser extent of a shared 'inheritance', they also have their own individual, group, family, etc, 'inheritances' which are inter-related. The study of history should respect and make clear this pattern of inheritance (HWG, 1990:10).

As presented in the Final Report, history that refers to heritage has been viewed with scepticism by theorists (see Phillips, 1998), as it may lead to emotion-based identifications, or serve as a means of propaganda; something the HWG (1990: 11) was also concerned about. As discussed in Chapter Three, Lowenthal (1998) believes that heritage is sentimental and something that does not necessarily have to do with historical enquiry, historical evidence or knowledge. Acknowledging the contested role of heritage, the HWG (1990) changed it to 'inheritance' and gave it an 'historical aura' as a way of teaching the history of all the inhabitants of Britain.

In contrast, in its advisory document, *Developing a Curriculum Cymreig* the Curriculum Council for Wales (CCW, 1993) suggested what could constitute a *Curriculum Cymreig*, and put heritage at the centre of the history curriculum for Wales.

Children should be given a sense of heritage, they should be given a sense of belonging, they should be aware of the importance of literature and language, should be given opportunities to appreciate creative arts and finally should have an awareness of the factors that shaped religious beliefs and practices of people in Wales (CCW, 1993:3-5).

As discussed later, Welsh history was regarded as a means to convey a sense of heritage, and the Education Reform Act 1988 was seen as an opportunity for the countries of Britain to teach their own history (CCW, 1993:3). The above extract emphasises the importance of heritage in the sense of 'belonging', literature and

language; however, it does not specify what 'language' or 'belonging' stands for. The last sentence that refers to the 'people of Wales', appears to present Wales as a country with many ethnicities, languages and beliefs.

An important issue is that the HWG tried to establish, or at least make explicit, a kind of pedagogy for historical knowledge for which it was strongly criticised in

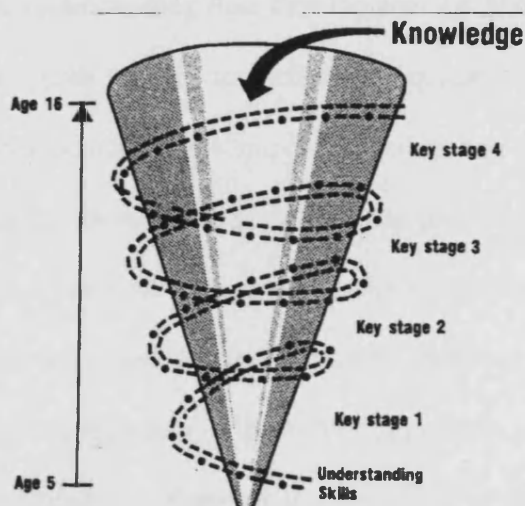


Figure 1: HWG's twin helix

conservative circles (see Chapter Two). I base this argument on the 'helix diagram'

(Figure 1), through which the HWG presented their pedagogic explanation of children's learning. The Final Report document explains the helix diagram as follows:

In this diagram (which is purely indicative and not an attempt to depict a set of precise geometrical relationships) the cone represents the broadening and necessary accumulation of historical information as a pupil moves from age 5 to age 16 through the four key stages. A pupil's growing understanding and skills are represented in the diagram by the twin helix. One helix represents increasing understanding and conceptual sophistication and the other helix represents increasing refinement and competence in performing historical tasks. The twin helix and the cone are interdependent and of equal importance; no more should be read into the diagram than that (HWG, 1990: 6).

The above extract, of what could be characterised as the HWG's pedagogic framework, appears to have similarities with Bruner's constructivist spiral curriculum. According to Bruner (1977: 13), 'a curriculum as it develops should revisit this basic idea repeatedly, building upon them until the student has grasped the full formal apparatus that goes with them'. This seems to be depicted in the HWG's twin helix diagram. The HWG approaches historical understanding and development of historical skills as parallel trajectories, which are both equally important prerequisites of historical knowledge. The Final Report 1990 points out the importance of giving the 'same weight' to all components of historical knowledge, namely 'understanding, knowledge and skills' (HWG, 1990:6). The comment that 'no more should be read into the diagram than that' is very interesting and raises questions that cannot be answered with certainty, as I have not interviewed any of the members of the HWG. A possible suggestion would be that the HWG might have tried to counteract the conservative criticism that progressive ideas were placing too much emphasis on skills. So the HWG wanted to ensure that the twin helix was emphasising the importance of both skills and understanding, without implying any pedagogic theory. However, this is just a suggestion. What is important to this study is that after the Final Report this pedagogic framework was abandoned.

In the revised NC (1995) document, five 'key elements' are introduced, which are the successor to the Attainment Targets and the predecessor to the 'key skills' (see Appendix One). These key elements - chronological awareness, range and depth in historical knowledge and understanding, historical enquiry, interpretations of history

and organisation and communication - are the components that teachers should incorporate into their teaching and assessment of children. In this revision, historical understanding and knowledge, as well as chronological understanding are presented as parts of the key elements of a history lesson. They no longer constitute independent units that together with historical skills contributed to a person's historical understanding.

The conceptual framework seems to be shifting in the Revised NC (1995). The incorporation of historical knowledge and understanding as well as chronological awareness into a multiple skills framework moves school history away from the philosophy of history contained in the Final Report of the HWG and HCW. Everyday life is still the focus of the revised NC (1995) but, as Patel (1997:215) argues, there is little incorporation of perspectives that took factors such as race, gender and class into account.

Simultaneously, the revised document of 1995 and the ones that have followed, do not position history in a conceptual, theoretical or pedagogic framework. It is worth noting that as Bloom et al. (1971:21) argue:

statements of educational objectives by national curriculum groups are often very broad in scope, on the grounds that they do not give indication of the kinds of changes to look for in students who have purportedly reached stipulated goals [...] In other words because of their vagueness they cannot serve as an instruction or evaluation model or plan.

Accordingly, I suggest that the HWG's Final Report was not a clear framework of teaching strategies or concise learning and pedagogic theory. The HWG was not suggesting teaching methods, nor did it explicitly indicate the changes that a teacher

would look for in order to evaluate whether or not a pupil has reached a certain level of development or understanding. Formulations that have developed in the revised documents of the NC, such as ‘develop critical thinking’ or ‘develop problem-solving skills’, remain vague, and, as Bloom et al. (1971:22) explain, do not help the teacher. However, the vague diagram of the Final Report, which was not theoretically supported or detailed in the document, may suggest to some extent that the HWG had taken some pedagogic issues or theories into account - or at least it is indicative that the HWG wanted to demonstrate that they had taken pedagogic issues into account. These indications are absent from the latest documents of the NC. In this sense, I suggest that since the Final Report in 1990 the NC has lost its pedagogic framework or at least it has not been clear about its pedagogic context. The pedagogic explanations of the Final Report, albeit not detailed, at least suggest Bruner’s theory as a basis upon which teachers could build their everyday practices. The HWG’s actions show an attempt at the establishment of pedagogy, which is no longer evident in the documents of the NC.

2000 and 2008: The skills framework

In 2000 the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) (formerly the Curriculum and Assessment Authority (ACAC) and after a two-year consultation period and open discussion, introduced a revised curriculum for Wales (see Chapter Two and One). The term ‘study units’, which had been introduced in the Final Report, is removed and the subjects to be taught are placed under the general title of

‘programme of study’, which also include the key aspects. In my analysis I use the term ‘subject’; these subjects were the following:

- Life in early Wales and Britain (One choice among the earliest peoples, the Iron Age Celtic or the Romans)
- Life in Wales and Britain in **either** Tudor **or** the Stuart times
- Life in modern Wales and Britain (This refers to history of the nineteenth and early twentieth century)
- A historical topic in the local context (Pupils should investigate either an in-depth study of crucial changes e.g. industrialisation or population growth, or a short-time study on the effects of one important event. Pupils should be taught about the development of at least one aspect of life, e.g. house life or farming or writing or food or transport) (ACCAC, 2000a: 8-9).

These subjects form what is described as ‘aspect’, section or ‘statement’ of programme of study in previous NC documents. There is not an equivalent scheme that was substituted for the key elements, which are no longer used in the document of 2000 (ACCAC, 2000a). However, the term ‘aspect’ of the subject (ACCAC, 2000a: 5) in the NC (2000) document could be used to describe the former key elements.

In the NC for History in England, the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE, 1999:6) explain that ‘the knowledge, skills and understanding are the aspects of history in which the students make progress’. The separation of knowledge from skills and understanding are explicit in the DfEE (1996) document but the ACCAC (2000) does not make this distinction clear. In the documents of the NC (ACCAC, 2000) for Wales, historical understanding and knowledge, chronological awareness, enquiry skills, interpretation and communication and organisation skills are grouped together under a common scheme. Although this is not yet named, it seems to

serve the purpose of promoting and ‘working for’ what was later to be named as a ‘common requirement’.

In the 2008 Revised NC for history in Wales this vague ‘aspects’ framework is explicitly named as ‘key skills’. The skills-framework includes four skills, or else transferable skills or competencies, as they are also referred to in the literature (see Chapters One and Two). These skills have to be incorporated into the specific skills of each subject:

- Developing thinking: planning, developing and reflecting.

The historical skills that contribute to this are enquiry and interpretation.

- Developing communication: oracy, reading, writing and wider communication.

History contributes to this skill through the skill of enquiry of aural and written sources and the skill of communication of findings and ideas.

- Developing ICT: finding, developing, creating and presenting information and ideas. History contributes to ICT through the use of technology in enquiries and through presentation of findings.

- Developing number using: mathematical information, calculating, and interpreting and presenting findings. Through chronological awareness, using conventions relating to time, and making use of data, *e.g. census returns*, children are expected to develop number using. (ACCAC, 2008: 6)

With the NC (2008), skills have become more explicit and the layout of the NC has been designed to help define and achieve the above transferable skills and the common requirements. I argue that the incorporation of knowledge within a framework of skills has been the main reason why historical knowledge and chronological awareness has been neglected. Historical knowledge and chronological awareness were referred to separately from historical skills in previous NC documents (ACCAC, 2008:13). It can be argued that the integration of historical knowledge and chronological awareness under the title 'skills', and the integration of these skills into a common skills framework can essentially downgrade knowledge into a competence (Bernstein, 2000). This imbalance and fluidity in the teaching of skills is part of the general changes taking place in education that increasingly align it to the world of employment. In the next section I discuss whether or not historical knowledge and chronological awareness have started to lose their significance in the advisers' and teachers' minds.

Skills and Common Requirements

After briefly presenting the main changes to the NC of 2000, I now analyse each historical skill separately. However, a summary of the main historical periods that are studied at KS2 is appropriate at this stage of the discussion (see also Appendix One):

Life in Early Wales and Britain (~~either~~ the earliest peoples ~~or~~ Iron Age Celtic society ~~or~~ the Romans; Life in Wales and Britain in either Tudor or Stuart Times; Life in Modern Wales and Britain) and a historical Topic in local context (ACCAC, 2000a:8).

The term 'skill' in the NC of 2000 is not used in the same way as in the 2008 version. I use the term skills throughout my analysis as they refer to the same concept that started as key elements, became vague 'aspects' and finally were placed explicitly under the title of 'skills'.

1. Chronological awareness

The first skill that children should be taught is chronological awareness. The NC (2000) describes this skill as 'the pupil's ability to use chronological frameworks and conventions that describe the passing of time, e.g. BC, AD, century, decade' (ACCAC, 2000a:9). Therefore, chronological awareness is a child's ability to conceive of the essence of the passage of time, as well as use some historical terms to indicate this passage of time.

This ability, however, was questioned by the majority of teachers and advisers, who claimed that KS2 children were not able to get a sense of chronology. Thus, two of the advisers claimed that:

Children under the age of 11 don't have the sense of chronology. They understand AD, BC but they don't have a sense of chronology. (A1 interview)

To get the sense of chronology is difficult even for adults. That is why I encourage the use of a timeline...We cannot ignore chronology but historical knowledge is not only a repetition of facts, treaties and wars. I think it is more the general picture. (A4 interview)

When they were questioned about their views on chronology and chronological gaps in the NC, A1, A5 and A2 commented that the main point was not for the children to learn dry facts and dates but to learn how to investigate for themselves. These

advisers claimed that the most important thing was for the child to cover the major periods of history regardless of the examples the teacher had chosen to teach.

A5: Well the only thing I would say is that just before the KS2 programme is set out there is a focus statement, which describes what the learner should generally know when they finish the period of study. What we would say I think is that...again if you were the teacher and I was giving you some advice I would say before we decide on those topics that we want to look at... let's look at the statement. What are these things meaning here? [...]
(A5 interview)

E: So do you think it is easy for a primary school child to grasp the meaning of chronology?

A5: What we need is a teacher who will go through the periods and will introduce children to the everyday life, to give them the essence of time, to give them examples of different periods. So you can talk about what houses looked like...You know what I mean? So you just introduce them to what we call the "past", and it's later that they will do the other things. (A5 interview)

Well, the consultation document is built around skills. And what we've been looking at is reducing the amount of content so there's more time to address the skills and I think it's going to take a little while to get the balance exactly right, because you need a substantial element of both. You can't do the one without the other, whichever one you choose. I think as well there's the added strand, if you want,; the fact that there are now historical skills and thinking skills and the two need to be married together. What I don't want to see is the historical skills to be submerged. [...] So the general message has to be: there needs to be some content in order to develop the skills through more active learning approaches. But...I think there will be some time before it establishes itself, to get the right balance.
(A2 interview)

But then again in a Junior school you cannot cover everything. So what people have realised is that there's no point in trying because whatever you include someone would say "You've missed this out". The early versions of the NC were more like "you are going to teach this, this and this. [...] What we're encouraging them to do is to cover less content and concentrate on the quality of the experience of the children. How much are they involved

to learning for themselves? How much they've been encouraged to think about what they are finding out? (A1 interview)

Two key conclusions can be drawn from these statements. In the first two cases the advisers are convinced that it is very difficult to teach a sense of chronological awareness. Therefore, A2's advice to teachers is to use the timeline. The other two advisers claim that the main point should be the general picture and a balance (A3), as well as skills (A4).

Teachers had similar opinions to A1, A2, A3 and A4:

Now, that [a ruler-style timeline going round the class, where all the historical periods are represented in chronological order] worked very well when we were building up each time and we were going closer and closer to present so the children could see at the end of each year...they could even fill in their little time, their little slot of what they've done all the time and maybe in their books when they have their own account. It is more tricky this year because we've got on to this rolling programme. But what we will do as well is that in the end of teaching the topic we would look at sort of timelines and where the Celts fit, where the Tudors fit... because we've already done the Tudors so they would have known of that and pick up features they would already know. (T8 interview)

Just with history because it's so far away from their understanding of time you tend to find that children get a concept of say 100 years ago. (T6 interview)

These views show two main issues. In the first case the timeline is used to place historical periods in a chronological order; however, the 'rolling programme' of the school (T8 interview) resulted in teaching the Tudors first and the Celts the following year. The question is whether a timeline is an adequate tool that would help children to understand the sequence of periods, which are not taught in the right chronological order. In the second case, T6 takes for granted that a child cannot acquire the essence of

time and chronology. However, Stow and Haydn (2000) suggest that from the age of six, children begin to distinguish and categorise pictures according to their era, and that by the age of nine, children accurately recall dates and are able to place periods in the correct century. Thus, the assumption that children cannot understand the essence of time is not adequately based on research. Furthermore, the NC itself expects pupils at KS2 to learn about the transition from one period to another and the characteristics of a period. This part of chronological awareness and the connections between various periods seemed to be neglected not only by the teachers I interviewed but by the advisers as well.

Respondent T4 spoke of another approach to chronological awareness. T4 regarded chronological awareness as the memorisation of dates, a special skill that could be taught through a kind of game. T4 integrated it into a game during the lunch break at St Fagans: NHM, where the teachers provided random dates and the children had to match the event according to the date as fast as they could. The following extract from T4's interview, in combination with the chronology game during the museum visit, suggests two main things: first of all, that chronology for this teacher is the memorisation of dates and thus a desirable skill; secondly, that T4's attitude towards chronology seems to be based on personal experiences as a pupil:

With the dates, when I was in school I was in a very strict school and we had all these dates and if you didn't know them you were in trouble. With this lot, you heard me play the game the other day the way we've done it the game they're learning dates because they want to...And I've got this pupil who may not be good at other things but she's discovered that she's got a skill at learning dates! (T4 interview)

From the above extract and from what the advisers and the rest of the teachers said, chronological awareness is regarded as something that is difficult to acquire. The interviewees seem to be in agreement that children find it difficult to grasp the essence of time. In contrast, T5's aim is chronological awareness. In order to achieve this T5 uses the time line to help children grasp a sense of the sequential order of historical periods

The interviewees seem to be in agreement that children find it difficult to grasp the essence of time. Additionally, all teachers have failed to acknowledge an important characteristic of chronological awareness: that chronological awareness is more than the understanding of the sequence of events and it cannot be acquired just by looking at a timeline and by a child's ability to place the Romans before the Tudors. This is just one aspect. The passing of time is what we need to understand in order to comprehend the continuity of history, and hence the development of society and our world. Stow and Haydn (2000:85) explain that although chronological understanding may be difficult, it is an essential part of a child's historical understanding and that the meaning of historical evidence 'derives from the time-frame itself'. They argue that the aim of a teacher should not be to make a child produce a 'chronicle' of the past, but be able to construct coherent explanations and understand 'relationships' between events. This distinction has to be clear for the teacher and for the child (Stow and Haydn, 2000: 86).

Therefore, some historians and the NC regard chronological awareness as a means of specifying the connections between historical events. The questions are: to what extent are children able to understand chronology at all? To what extent can

teachers' and advisers' attitudes towards chronology actually determine children's chronological awareness? And, finally, to what extent does the NC actually neglect chronological awareness? With regard to this last question, the study suggests that the way in which the NC for history has been revised has led to the neglect of chronological awareness as described above. The 1995 NC document states that chronological awareness related to children's understanding of the 'changes' within various historical periods (ACAC (1995:99). The 2008 NC states that children have to be given opportunities to 'use timelines to sequence events and use appropriate key words to estimate, measure and describe the passage of time' (ACCAC, 2008: 12). In both cases chronology is being reduced to timelines. According to the NC 2008, children are no longer required to use 'chronological frameworks' or conventions like AD or BC (ACCAC, 2000b:8).

The inclusion of chronological awareness in the NC demonstrates that it is an integral 'aspect' of history. So why do some teachers and advisers perceive it as a difficult issue? Why do some of them regard it as merely a memorisation of dates and therefore of limited importance? One suggestion, based on the above assumptions, is that the answer lies in the layout of the NC and the fact that chronological awareness since the 1995 NC has been included in the skills/aspects/elements framework and is no longer regarded as a historical concept *per se*. Moreover, chronological understanding loses its essence due to the chronological gaps and fluid directions of the NC.

After the acknowledgement that there is a chronological gap between the study of the Celts and the Tudors, the revised National Curriculum for Wales (2008) introduced

a new historical period: The Age of Princes. This addition does not apply to the NC for England. However, it has been introduced as one alternative to the Tudors and the Stuarts and children should be taught about ‘the daily life of people living **either** in the Age of the Princes **or** in the time of the Tudors **or** the time of the Stuarts’ (ACCAC, 2008:12). Therefore, it is doubtful whether this chronological gap can be bridged since The Age of the Princes is still an optional theme. The extent to which this addition will help the closing of a chronological gap remains to be seen.

2. Historical knowledge and understanding

The second skill the NC tries to teach to children is historical knowledge and understanding. Both teachers and advisers seemed to interpret historical knowledge as memorisation of facts and dates. The NC (2000) presents three essential characteristics of historical knowledge and understanding. The first thing that children should be taught in order to acquire historical knowledge is the ‘characteristics of the periods studied and the diversity of experience within each one’ (ACCAC, 2000a:9). The second characteristic of historical knowledge and understanding is the ability to identify and describe the main events, situations and changes within and across periods (ACCAC, 2000a:9). Also, in the focus statement of the NC for History we read that, for the subject Early Wales and Britain, pupils:

...should be taught about the ways in which its [British Isles] societies were shaped by different people and factors and about the ways of life in the societies studied (ACCAC, 2000a:9).

As we move on to later historical periods, as with the subject of Life in Wales and Britain in either the Tudor or the Stuart times, we see that the phrase ‘ways that the society was shaped’ has been erased. The pupils have to be taught about ‘...the way of life of people at all levels of society, illuminated by a study of significant individuals and well documented events of the period’ (ACCAC, 2000a:9). The same goes for the subject Life in Modern Wales and Britain. The ability to know the characteristics of the societies studied and the diversity of experience in each is presented as the first key component of historical understanding in the NC. However, there is no suggestion for understanding the societal connections of these two periods in the NC. Finally, the third characteristic of historical knowledge and understanding, according to the NC, is the pupil’s ability to identify the causes and consequences of some events and changes (ACCAC, 2000a:9).

In the revised NC (2008), historical knowledge and understanding includes the ability of children to ‘identify differences between ways of life at different times; identify significant people and describe events within and across periods; understand why people did things, what caused specific events and the consequences of those events’ (ACCAC, 2008:12). The definition of historical knowledge and understanding has changed completely: the definition, ‘learning about the characteristics and diversity of a period’, has been replaced by the phrase ‘identifying differences between ways of life’. The definition of historical knowledge and understanding has significantly changed: the statement, ‘learning about the characteristics and diversity of a period’, has been replaced by the phrase ‘identifying differences between ways of life’.

Historical understanding seems to focus on descriptions and identifications. There is no mention of pupils learning about changes within and across the periods, or about situations. This approach does not encourage the more in-depth study of a period, since children do not have to learn about the characteristics of a period.

Despite the differences between the earlier NC (2000) and the latter NC (2008) regarding what constitutes historical knowledge and understanding, the majority of the advisers seemed to have a different approach towards historical knowledge and understanding. Some of them saw it as information about events and dates and usually did not regard it as a priority aim or as one of the skills:

We help schools to plan their programmes from a skills point of view, not just “we are learning about this, we are learning about that”. It’s “how are we going to learn about”. That’s the really important thing [...]. We have to make children ask questions for themselves. ‘What it’s made of...’ (A1 interview)

The aims of history? It’s children to explore the skills. Encourage them to come to their own interpretations. They have to explore the evidence. (A4 interview)

E: So, historical knowledge is the amount of information that a child or a person acquires or like...if they know how to use this information?

A2: I think that’s the most important skill. Well, there are so many choices in the NC and you’ll find out that some schools opt to do certain units so you cannot be categorical. But if you are equipping them through their investigations to find and use and evaluate use sources critically then they can apply that to any historical context. I mean that’s what you are working towards by the end of KS3. So we are putting down the roots at KS2. (A2 interview)

There are two main points here. First, importance is placed on teaching children how to investigate issues in history. Secondly, I come to the conclusion that the advisers do not regard historical knowledge as one of the skills, despite the fact that it is included in the skills framework of the NC. According to the advisers, historical knowledge and understanding seem to be the content of the programme of study, whilst the NC defines it as the meaning of the main characteristics of the periods, connections, and causes and effects. The interviewees framed skills as thinking skills that could lead to historical knowledge and to knowledge for life in general. As A5 explained:

The main idea is to educate people, open their minds and let them think for themselves. The new document is what I would call a framework for teaching in which we say here are the skills, everybody who is studying history should develop these five skills the historian use but will need in life in general. Then you develop those skills by exploring not just periods of history but events, episodes, people at different times in the past and the job of the teacher is to link it all together really. (A5 interview)

Consequently, although all of the advisers talked about these five skills, none of them regarded historical knowledge as one of them.

Confusion about what constitutes historical knowledge and understanding, however, can be identified even in the revised document of the NC (2008). In the programme of study for KS2 in the section that explains the aims of the teaching of history we read:

Pupils should develop their historical skills, knowledge and understanding through learning about a range of historical contexts (ACCAC, 2008:12).

This statement clearly separates skills from knowledge and understanding, but this contradicts the skills framework, in which knowledge is included.

The neglect of historical knowledge and understanding, and its exclusion from the skill-framework in the minds of my interviewees cannot be coincidental. The advisers viewed historical knowledge as having a very different essence from skills. The fact that historical understanding was originally separated from skills in the first NC, and that it is still considered separate in other parts of the NC (2000; 2008) reflects the proposition that historical knowledge cannot be a skill - at least not in the minds of people implementing the NC, such as the advisers. The fact that it has become part of the skill framework and that the common requirements and the skill-framework of the NC (2008) are central to the NC, diminishes the aim of historical knowledge for teachers. This is obvious from how advisers suggest that teachers should have as their main aims, which is the development of enquiry and the notion of 'how we learn' rather than 'what we learn'.

3. Interpretations of history

According to the NC, pupils should be taught to 'Identify the different ways in which the past is represented and interpreted, e.g. in films and television programmes, museums, artists' reconstructions, historians' views, and to suggest reasons for these' (ACCAC, 2000a:8).

As discussed above, the main focus of history for interviewees seemed to be the teaching of interpretation and enquiry skills. All of the advisers believed that it was very important to teach a child different interpretations of history and mentioned the

contribution of museums in conjunction with other resources like the Internet, photographs and archives, in the cultivation of this skill.

It makes it [teaching interpretation skills] easier for children to appreciate the idea. Why has this house been removed from North Wales to Cardiff? How did the museum know how to reconstruct and then go back to the census returns, artefacts? (A4 interview)

That's the big challenge [teaching the notion of interpretation] you know. I think one of the things we want to get teachers to think about is the issue of interpretation and what you've chosen and why you've chosen it and what people think. What made different historians get different views of the past. And I think that's why in Wales we changed the curriculum the way we have. (A5 interview)

Both these statements indicate ways of teaching historical interpretation to children, either at museums, or through a discussion about people's incentives and motives for making one choice over another. Despite these suggestions, only T5 mentioned that she was trying to make children understand the issue of interpretation:

I also like to raise that as an issue of interpretation because I explained to children that these cottages have been dismantled and been moved on-site and assembled and the interiors in particular are somebody's interpretation of what the house should look like at that period. (T5 interview)

The way T5 tried to teach interpretation follows the guidelines or suggestions of the teacher workshop at St Fagans: NHM (see Chapter Seven). The advisers, however, did not consider interpretation an easy task.

Set the question about the enquiry that led this actor to do this interpretation. That's a valid question for the pupils to ask. (A4 interview)

That's [teaching interpretation] the big challenge you know. I think one of the things we want to get teachers to think about is the issue of interpretation and what you've chosen and why you've chosen it and what

people think. What made different historians get different views of the past. And I think that's why in Wales we changed the Curriculum the way we have. So we start off with an idea...so, yeah, if we look at nineteenth century we may decide to look at women's position. So we pose the question "Has life of women improved in nineteenth century?" And we get them to look at materials: photographs. (A5 interview)

Similar answers were given by the rest of the advisers. Although none of them believed that interpretation was something that a child could not grasp, they questioned how we could make them understand it. All interviewees suggested that the best way to do this was by putting questions to children in reference to a photograph or a museum visit so that they will start thinking about various views as well as testing their own.

The main finding here is that both chronological awareness and interpretation were regarded as equally difficult issues for a child to grasp. Nonetheless, it was only chronology that was neglected, not interpretation. A possible explanation might be that this is a consequence of the approach of the NC, which tries to teach specific skills. Following the main skills framework, these are thinking, presentation, numeracy, literacy and ICT. Historical interpretation contributes towards these skills by enabling the use of ICT for finding various resources and the presentation of various different views and ideas (ACCAC, 2008:6).

4. Historical enquiry

The enquiry skill in the NC requires that children should be 'taught to use a range of sources including representations, interpretations, and, where appropriate, ICT to investigate historical topics as well as to ask and answer questions' (ACCAC, 2000a:8).

For history advisers, enquiry was the most important skill and one of the central aims of history teaching. As A3 said, 'children should be detectives of history'. Adviser A5 suggested that the main aim was to plan 'a series of investigations' and as A4 put it 'we have to show children to explore the skills. Encourage them to come to their own interpretations'.

The teachers also expressed similar ideas. All claimed that they focused on basic questions that might enable children to find information about the topic under study:

The activities that I like to do tend to be enquiry activities where as far as it's possible they discover things for themselves. (T5 interview)

I think it's just good teaching practice getting children to ask questions and children do tend to ask questions. Why did that change from one house to another? You can see this morning's lesson. (T2 interview)

I want them to sit there like they do making their questions and I want them to sit there when they've got free time to find that information and do what they are doing in the classroom. (T4 interview)

One of the issues raised during the interviews was that most advisers, apart from A5, tended to focus mainly on enquiry that concerned houses, objects and information about the living conditions of the people of the specific period. Adviser A5 suggested that children could explore the position of women and that the teacher could help them raise questions about women's current position.

The enquiry suggested by other advisers was based on census returns, archives and houses. This could provide evidence for the population and living conditions in the local area during the specific period studied. Enquiry into census returns and statistics are also suggested as ways in which history can contribute to the development of

numeracy skills (ACCAC, 2008: 6). The revised NC (2008) places the study of everyday life in a more central position than the previous documents did. In the Curriculum of 2000, however, this is not explicit. Although the main focus is indeed everyday life, 'causes and consequences, characteristics of a period etc' are also mentioned in the description of skills and in the focus statements. The majority of the advisers and teachers concentrated on demographic evidence and, as mentioned above, on finding out relations between objects as the main way to teach enquiry. They concentrated on the enquiry *per se*, and the first conclusions that could be drawn from a census return.

For example, T5 explained that children were encouraged to draw conclusions on how big the families were 'back then', on death rates or to find connections with the present families of the area (T5 interview). This can be a very interesting activity that can accustom children to the idea of how demography has changed in the area. They can also be familiarised with the use of the archives as a source of historical information. My point, however, is that during my study, no connections were made with the general historical and social contexts of the area. This approach to historical enquiry may lead to an imbalanced curriculum that pays attention to the 'facts and numbers', such as statistics and census returns in order to make assumptions about the demographic situation in a specific period, whilst it neglects wider issues and characteristics of the historical period in question. I refer to Stow and Haydn's (2000) argument again - that the 'enquiry gains its character of the time-frame'. Children cannot make an enquiry to draw assumptions about the population if they are unaware

of the general historical context. For example, why was the area they study poor or wealthy? Who was considered poor and who was considered rich at the end of the nineteenth century in Wales? If the context is absent, I argue that the study of census returns cannot become history. It remains a means of historical enquiry that has not helped the child form a complete idea of the historical frame that resulted in the census studied (see also Chapters Six and Seven).

5. Organisation and Communication

In the NC for Wales we read that in order to develop this skill pupils should be taught to:

1. Select, recall and organise historical information, *e.g. group material from different sources under headings, organise material for a wall display*
2. Use appropriate vocabulary *e.g. trade, agriculture, invention, archaeology, saint, factory system, public health*
3. Present results with increasing independence in a variety of ways, including visual and oral presentations, extended writing and the use of ICT (ACCAC, 2000a:8).

This skill was not explicitly mentioned by the advisers or teachers but it was integrated into their talk about interpretations of history and enquiry, and how children are encouraged to use ICT and various resources. As I have argued, organisation and communication skills are the main way for a child to improve their ICT and literacy skills and these are also integrated into any aspect of the history lesson.

6. Welsh History

Curriculum Cymreig is one of the common requirements of the NC for Wales. With *Curriculum Cymreig* the NC seeks to integrate a Welsh aspect into every one of its

subjects. *Curriculum Cymreig* can be covered in history if children ‘develop and apply knowledge and understanding of the cultural, economic, environmental historical and linguistic characteristics of Wales’ (ACCAC, 2000a:5). In the ‘focus statement’¹² for KS2 it is stated that ‘Pupils should be taught about the ways of life of different people in these periods of history, drawing on important developments, key events and notable people in their locality, Wales and Britain’ (ACCAC, 2000a:8). In the revised document of 2008, everyday life in Wales becomes the main focus of history for the KS2 and is linked to some examples from Britain and other countries (ACCAC 2008:12). The Anglo-centric, kings-centred character of school history, which many scholars have criticised (Phillips, 1998:15), is gradually changing.

Most of the advisers’ views on what constituted Welsh history and how it should be taught coincided with the following opinion.

I would be very disappointed if they didn’t tell the pupils about the history of the country that they live in, no matter where they may have come from, but the citizens of Wales should know about the land they live in and perhaps the national institutions that determine things like their education, health, travel and national institutions like the library and the museum and things that help us interpret our own history. I think that in order to define this identity that is Welsh history we would look at more general patterns and more general processes that would be more pertinent to many areas of Wales not just your local area. And then there is another little branch perhaps to the links that Wales has forged with other countries particularly perhaps with England our closest neighbour, but also when you are referring to global citizenship perhaps to other areas in Europe and the World. (A4 interview)

¹² Statement that gives details about the aims of the school subject in each Key Stage.

The advisers similarly commented that Welsh history was a complicated net of relations which A3 termed 'patterns'. This adviser also talked about institutions that shaped life in the country.

Adviser A5, on the other hand, was more precise about what teachers should want from Welsh history, but expressed the view that this might never be achieved:

So in three years you may not do Welsh history at all or if you are interested in a specific event you may do only Welsh history....So what we do is giving teachers a framework of what they should teach...we have these skills....Teachers' job is to bring all these together. (A5 interview)

That's the main point: how do we teach Welsh history? If you are a KS2 school child until the age of 11 you are expected to be introduced to something that has to do with the Welsh language and Welsh themes: maybe one or two stories and things like that. And *then* between the age of 11 and 14 the teacher will make sure that there is something about Wales in the main history, even if that's main examples or...you know what I mean. [...]. So by the time you are 14 you realise that Wales is different to England. But...what I am trying to say really is that there's no way to make sure it happens. (A5 interview)

Here, this adviser suggests a scheme of work according to which KS2 pupils could be introduced to Welsh themes. Over time, children would be able to distinguish Welsh history from that of other countries. However, A5 does not seem convinced as to how or if we could do this. A5 even suggests that this may not happen at all. It can be suggested that through A5's words, one could trace the problematic absence of a clear pedagogy and teaching framework. Maybe this will change with the revised NC (2008), in which Welsh history becomes central.

Some advisers, however, expressed concern that the lack of resources for Welsh history made many teachers turn to and draw from English publications. One adviser

saw museums as the main resource for teaching Welsh history although there were periods like the Tudors that could not be combined with the Welsh context.

If the teacher isn't experienced they will look at the colourful English publishers and use them as sources for their studies. Now, in Wales, we have the "Needs Identification Panel" that would allow us to ask for Government help in order to publish some resources. So these resources have been published in the past to support this Welsh dimension within the periods like the Tudor age but the range of it isn't as wide and far reaching as what you'd have if you were teaching the same period in England publication, but not as many as in England. (A4 interview)

Consequently, a revision of the NC may not be enough for Welsh history to be taught in ways that will explain its complexities. The lack of resources also needs addressing.

However, the more central the use of the museum becomes, the more we may have to come face to face with the problem of heritage discussed earlier. As mentioned before, the Education Reform Act 1988 gave the opportunity for the development of the *Curriculum Cymreig*. The CCW emphasised the important role that schooling has to play in the appreciation of different cultures and languages, in understanding and empathy, and in appreciating the multi-layered character of Wales. The CCW proposes:

that history should help pupils to make sense of their own pasts and of their own Welshness; understand more completely the Wales in which they live by being aware of the political, economic, social and cultural history of Wales as a whole; recognize the common and diverse characteristics, strands and features which over the centuries have made up Welsh identity, including the social, cultural and ethnic diversity of Wales and the experiences of Wales and the experiences of men, women and children; see the place of Wales in British, European and world history and the interrelations between them; develop and awareness of the links between history, geography, languages and cultures within Wales (CCW, 1993: 10).

The nature of history in the NC is also explained as enquiry into the past in the document *Progress in History* by the Cardiff Advisory Centre for Education (2003, no page number). Within this document it is pointed out that the essence of the study of history is that children should acquire ‘positive thoughts about their heritage and culture’, global citizenship and the ‘otherness’ of the past:

The past that influences all aspects of our lives and our community can be investigated in an active way, which will help children understand the present world, the “otherness” of the past, the “global citizenship” and to acquire positive thoughts about their heritage and Culture. And this is the nature of history. Consequently, in order to firmly get the grip of history we have to learn how to look for evidence, we have to interpret, we have to understand the concepts of “significance, specificity, time, chronology, sequence, cause, motive, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference, progress and regression” (Cardiff Advisory Centre for Education, 2003, no page numbers).

There are no significant differences between the documents of 1993 and the later advisory document of 2003. The aim is still heritage and culture in relation to global citizenship; however, the ‘otherness’ of the past in conjunction with the ‘positive thoughts’ that children have to develop about ‘their culture and heritage’ raises questions.

First, ‘otherness of the past’ can be interpreted as something completely different from ‘continuity’. As argued, from various ideological perspectives, history is about finding the relations and processes that have led from the past to the present (Collingwood, 1978; Manheim, 1971:36; Marx, 1950a, 1950b; Marx and Engels, 1970:5). Secondly, culture, heritage and past may not always be accompanied by ‘positive thoughts’. From a Marxist perspective, one’s knowledge should aim at

relating the social with the material and the past with the present, in order to be able to understand the present and change it (Eagleton, 2006; Hobsbawm, 1985, 1997). Following this perspective, the past may help younger generations to make assumptions about their culture and history in general, but this does not mean that these assumptions will always be positive. Regarding the past as ‘other’ may lead us to eulogise parts of our convenient present and discard the inconvenient parts of the past as distant and ‘vanishing others’ (Dicks, 2000a). However, this may prevent us from making these connections between the past and the present.

Thus, positive thoughts and heritage do not always equate to history, as discussed in the previous chapter. The History Working Group’s Final Report of 1990 replaced heritage with inheritance so that it would not be associated with propaganda or other non-history implications. Nevertheless, thirteen years later, heritage is mentioned once again in an advisory document. This, and the fact that Welsh and local history are the starting point of the programme study of history at KS2, raises questions about the direction of Welsh history in the future.

Part B. History in museums

Introduction

In this section I detail and explain that advisers believed, in general, that museums could improve children’s understanding of history. They felt that museums are able to give children experiences that the classroom cannot offer. They believed that these experiences could trigger children’s memories, help them develop the skills of enquiry

and contribute to the discovery of children's different learning styles. Some scepticism was expressed by some advisers over the case of re-enactment and living history, and the majority pointed out the importance of teachers helping children acquire the notion of interpretation after a visit.

The teachers seemed more enthusiastic about museum education and re-enactment than the advisers and they too regard learning out of the classroom as a means of improving children's memory and historical understanding. They believed that the experience and empathy acquired during role play in the museum workshops could also help children acquire better historical understanding, and only one reported the improvement of children's interpretation skill as their aim (A5 interview). It was clear from some of the teachers' views that they used empathy as a way for children to put themselves in other people's shoes. This approach, however, may encourage children to feel sorry for the people of the past, instead of helping them understand the differences between now and then and the ways in which humanity and civilisation has developed.

When discussing St Fagans: NHM, all of the advisers claimed that it presented some aspects of Welsh history. They also pointed out the importance of the first hand experience that St Fagans: NHM offered, and the opportunity that it provided for the teaching of interpretation skills. Teachers seemed quite happy with what St Fagans: NHM had to offer in terms of Welsh history. Finally, with regard to the study of local history, the advisers seemed to prefer the local museums whilst the teachers' views varied.

First-hand experience and living history

The majority of the advisers and teachers I interviewed considered experience a pathway to memory, entertainment and an opportunity to teach historical skills (see Luff, 2000). They expressed concerns about how museums could interpret and represent the past; however they all seemed to believe that a visit can be the starting point for further historical lessons when they return to the school classroom. Four out of the five advisers spoke strongly about their belief that active learning in the sense of either living history or just handling objects makes something memorable:

Children remember something when they are engaged actively. (A3 interview)

And the more our senses are switched on the more we learn [...]. So I think what places like St Fagans have to offer them, firstly is real experience. They can show them things that genuinely are old. And that is quite an emotional feel about seeing something that really was around at that time.
(A1 interview)

The same advisers explained that the different learning environment of the museum could engage more children because it is relaxed. Hence, through a museum visit we could discover more about children's individual learning styles and cultivate more of their potential. All but one of the advisers expressed scepticism over the accuracy of museums' interpretations, and the quality of their workshops. Various approaches were proposed as to how to deal with this. One of the advisers thought that it was worth paying any price as long as it accustomed children to the museum environment:

Active learning engages the pupils. Some can question the simplicity, the language and accuracy. But it makes it memorable for children and then they can come back with their parents, so it's worth paying that price [...].
(A4 interview)

Three other advisers expressed the view that museums sometimes may be 'authoritative' in a sense that they 'impose' meanings and interpretations, which we tend to accept without question:

Is it accurate though? Sometimes we take what museums offer as a Gospel [...]. (A3 interview)

Oh I would definitely go there (St Fagans). It's fantastic, really good, you know. But, going back to the main point, you've got to take your children back to the classroom and you say "Let's look at some more information, more material about...what...all the questions you want to find answers to...and investigate like that. (A5 interview)

Museums sometimes can be authoritative. So you have to ask the question: 'What was it *really* like to be a Victorian?' (A2 interview)

One adviser was of the opinion that museums and heritage have become an entertainment industry which raises concerns about their quality as educational resources:

The problem with a lot of these things [places where the artificial environments are presented as the real life experience] is that they often turn the past into entertainment. They are using the past for fun, rather than history and history study, which is a different thing altogether, isn't it? We have this problem in Britain that the past has become part of the entertainment industry. Wherever you go on holiday there will a sort of historical experience advertised to you. And I think that to some extent a lot of museums are trying to or are adopting that model and doing the same sort of thing. So, the study of history is different from the way museums are trying to present themselves. (A5 interview)

Consequently, all but one of the advisers expressed some concern about whether a museum visit has an 'historical' or 'entertainment' character; however, they did also acknowledge the importance of museum visits and workshops in getting children to be

active and in stimulating their senses. All the advisers agreed on the importance of the after-visit activities that could make up for the possible inadequacies of the museum.

All the teachers cited experience as their main goal of their museum visit, so that children can understand or 'envisage' (T7 interview) things that they saw in books. However, two teachers actually used the word 'empathy' as their main goal from museum education, a term that only one adviser used:

I think [it] is very important to understand many of the children come from pretty affluent social background here and I want them to gain some sort of understanding when this was the plan, let's go back to the census returns and see how many people lived there in 1861. My goodness it was nine people! How on earth [did] nine people fit into that house? (T5 interview)

T6: It [St Fagans] gives them an opportunity to be a Celt or be in the Victorian school room for a very short amount of time and that is very important. St F is one of the main places that we get that sort of history from...

E: What's the main purpose of the activities you do after the visit?

T6: The idea is to take their experience of being in this environment for half an hour, two hours or so and then get them to re-live, to empathise with how people lived, reacted in the past. And so [I] want them to write something like a historical story so you capitalise their idea of being in that environment for a certain amount of time. (T6 interview)

The debates about re-enactment as a way of encouraging empathy, and empathy as a central element of historical knowledge, were discussed in Chapter Three. I explained that despite the fact that empathy has been accepted as a means to historical understanding and knowledge (Harris, 2003; Samuel, 1989b), it has mainly been regarded as problematic, particularly when it means that we try to place ourselves in the lives of others and imagine 'how it was like' for them (Knight, 1989; Stockley, 1983).

This can lead to misconceptions and invented stories (Dickinson and Lee, 1984) or an 'empty' activity with no clear aim (Harris, 2003:36).

Three main conclusions can be drawn from the teachers' views above. In the first case, T9's view that children should feel lucky and grateful for how they live their lives today follows an 'emotional' approach to history that presents the hard past in comparison to the painless present. This supports arguments like Knight's (1989:45) that teachers encourage children to sympathise with the sadness of, say, a starving peasant, an oppressed minority or an orphaned child. As Low-Beer (1989) also claims, empathy for teachers frequently equals the appeal to our emotions. As Lee (1983:39) explains, however, sympathy may conceal a further danger: agreement. Empathy, however, recognises the appropriateness of feelings, without sharing them. Harris (2003:36-37) suggests how to make use of empathy through activities where students would have to make a decision in a given situation of the past or where they would have to focus on real people. In both cases the main focus would be an historical enquiry about these people's lives, with children consciously separating themselves from these figures of the past. This regards empathy not as a 'projection of ourselves in the past situation' (Harris, 2003:37) but, as Cairns (1989:14) also argues, as a way of thinking about how characters would react, according to the historical context in which they were acting. Cairns (1989:14) also suggests that empathy is a way of judging characters' acts rather than sympathising with them

As Dicks (2000a) suggests in her study of the Rhondda Heritage Park (RHP), there are various ways in which visitors to the RHP interpret the past. These

interpretations are strongly related to how the visitors' personal memories and the exhibition space are intertwined. In general, however, as Dicks (2000a:232) argues, it is how each visitor 'frames' the past in relation to the present that is at stake and determines each visitor's historical understanding. Her study suggests three categories of visitors in regard to the ways in which they relate the past to the present: some of the visitors regarded the past as 'other' and as something that had long gone; on the contrary, the visitors of the second category made comparisons between the past and the present in order to find continuities between them; and finally, the visitors of the last category saw historical change as the substitution of one type of experiences with another (Dicks, 2000a:233-238).

Analysing the ways in which the teachers of my study framed the past in light of the present, it seemed that they took a similar approach to the first category of RHP visitors. By encouraging children to feel lucky about having their comfortable lives and by expecting children to 'feel' the hardships of the past, they regarded the past as 'other', as something difficult, which was long forgotten. Indeed, children did usually seem to regard the past with disdain, but that was not always the case, as I explain in Chapter Seven. In some cases they expressed their likes or dislikes according to their impressions of the museum workshop. In any case, children formed an opinion of the past based on the emotions they formed during the visit. This corresponds to Jordanova's (2000:145) view that in order for museums to make everyday life accessible, they have to make generalisations that mainly appeal to visitors' emotions. She finds this one of the problematic characteristics of museums.

Welsh history at St Fagans

When I discussed St Fagans: NHM's contribution to the teaching of history with the teachers and advisers, our talk focused on Welsh and local history. This was not surprising as we were speaking about the National History Museum. The arguments presented above are actually applied to St Fagans: NHM as well. These arguments include the fact that the museum offers a first-hand experience and that one of its concerns is the issue of interpretation. Museum professionals would like to make clear that the interpretation of the museum may not be the only one and that we have to find a way to make children understand this. Therefore, the main focus of this section is advisers' and teachers' views of St Fagans: NHM as a place where Welsh history is represented, and the ways in which St Fagans: NHM tries to deliver these ideas to children. Advisers were clearer when they spoke about St Fagans: NHM and its presentation of Welsh history, as they knew what to expect from the museum in terms of Welsh history. Most of the teachers however, had to think about what I had asked regarding this topic, before giving me an answer.

Two advisers expressed the view that it was difficult to define what 'Welsh' was. They pointed out that the opportunity that St Fagans: NHM gave us was to learn about Wales. One of the advisers pointed out that children from North Wales should go to St Fagans: NHM in order to see the buildings or objects that had been taken from their own area to St Fagans: NHM. Adviser A2 expressed the view that:

St Fagans makes aspects of Welsh history accessible. Whatever the interpretations they give is irrelevant. The main point is that they make it accessible. (A2 interview)

As read in the quote below, A5 believes that St Fagans: NHM presents the history of South and South West Wales. It could be argued that A5's question summarises the views of those advisers who talk about 'aspects of Welsh history'. A5's comment also suggests that St Fagans: NHM is a folk museum and one should not expect a folk museum to teach an issue as complicated as Welsh history.

St Fagans gives an idea of South and South West Wales. It gives the idea of this folk life. The question is: should it be the job of a museum to get across to the *Curriculum Cymreig*? Because the *Curriculum Cymreig*, that's the understanding of the history of Wales, is a varied and very complicated thing. And what it means to be Welsh in different parts of Wales is different, isn't it? (A5 interview)

A similarly interesting point of view demonstrated that despite the fact that St Fagans: NHM was a folk museum, it was still a good resource for history teaching:

I mean it's obviously a folk museum for Wales but they offer a very good insight into things. (T6 interview)

Teachers, like T8, regarded St Fagans: NHM as a good resource for Welsh history.

E: In general when it comes to Welsh history, how do you think St F represents that? Do you think that a visitor and a child can understand Welsh history during a visit?

T8: Yes, I suppose so, yes. And as well as you said you have to make sure that you don't just go there for the visit and then leave it. It is important that I suppose the children have some knowledge obviously, the children have been learning about the Celts before they went there and we had discussed about Wales because you try to give them all sorts of examples. (T8 interview)

Two teachers also noted that St Fagans was convenient for the school. T7's words also correspond to T3's views:

We tend to use St F a lot because it's cheap to take the children there. So, we go to St F because it's such a good resource and it's on our doorstep [...]. St F is close we do lots of Welsh history through them really. We do look at certain aspects... We look at St David's day, we look at the saints that were based around Wales and things that come up... we look at the church life ... (T7 interview)

One teacher expressed the view that there was no industrial Wales at St Fagans: NHM but explained that the school used the Big Pit for the industrial history of Wales. In general, however, all teachers believed that St Fagans was a good resource. The fact that T7 and T3 mentioned the convenience of the museum coincides with the views of one adviser that resources can dictate the subjects schools choose to teach in history. The fact that St Fagans: NHM is still regarded as 'a folk' rather than a national history museum is further discussed in the following chapter.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have analysed how the NC has gradually but steadily included historical knowledge and chronological understanding in multiple skill frameworks. These frameworks neglect knowledge in favour of various transferable skills, while it puts specific skills at the forefront: interpretation and enquiry. I have suggested that this imbalance is due to the NC framework that promotes specific basic skills (numeracy, ICT and literacy). This imbalance affected my interviewees' conception of what constituted skills and what constituted knowledge, which resulted in misunderstandings and misconceptions.

The main finding to emerge from the interviews with the advisers is that there was an imbalance in the teaching of historical skills. Although there are five key skills in the NC for history in the National Curriculum, interpretation and inquiry were the ones the advisers were mainly concerned about, while historical knowledge and chronological awareness were regarded as desirable but secondary. In some cases there seemed to be confusion among the history advisers and teachers as to what the NC defines as historical skills. The majority of them regarded interpretation and enquiry as skills, which may lead in later stages to chronological awareness and historical knowledge.

At the same time, chronological awareness was perceived by all teachers and advisers as difficult to achieve, and historical knowledge was perceived as the learning of events. As a result, the teaching of history seemed to focus on historical enquiry and interpretation, while historical knowledge and chronological awareness were treated as 'relics' of the traditional subject orientated history teaching. However, the NC of 2000 clearly states that chronological awareness, historical knowledge and understanding, interpretations of history, historical enquiry and organisation and communication are all skills that pupils should be taught during each Key Stage.

Thus, I question whether this confusion around what constitutes historical knowledge and understanding and chronological awareness, or this kind of imbalance in the teaching of skills, are a consequence of the design of the NC. Has this design promoted a specific model of history that neglects knowledge? Does the layout of the NC make the teaching of skills that itself established, problematic? As this confusion is

not only present at the micro level of the school but also at the advisers' level, the first conclusion in this chapter is that the NC and especially the revised document of 2008 promote the learning of 'transferable skills' in general and historical skills, including knowledge and chronological awareness. It could be suggested that this model of school of history is a result of the general education policy that combines education with employment and therefore has the cultivation of IT, literacy and mathematics as its actual goals.

A second conclusion is that with the exception of one adviser, none of the other advisers or teachers questioned this division between knowledge and understanding and skills. Three of the advisers spoke about a balance between knowledge and skills. However, for all but one of the interviewees, knowledge took the same meaning as content knowledge and information. The same applied for chronological awareness: Everyone except this adviser interpreted chronological awareness as the skill of memorising dates and learning about the sequence of periods. All professionals seemed very positive about the shift of the NC away from 'knowledge', that is the content knowledge as my interviewees interpreted it.

Thus, this study could suggest that the debates and the progressive ideas about active and skill orientated leaning of history may still be embedded in my interviewees' minds. They did not question whether these ideas had been adopted by another hegemonic political discourse. At least they did not express any relevant concerns during the interviews. It might be the case that the ways in which these ideas have been

used by the dominant hegemonic forces have convinced these professionals that there is a progressive shift in the NC.

The third main finding is that since the Final Report of 1990 until the revised NC (2008) there has been a need for, and an attempt to, shift the NC towards Welsh and local history at KS2. I argue, however, that this shift concerns everyday life only, and my study has shown that in many cases, the Welsh 'element' is not made explicit to the children. The advisers, for example, acknowledged that a lack of resources meant there were times when teachers could not incorporate Welsh history into the period studied and this mainly applied to the Tudor period. Indeed, from the interviews with the teachers, I have concluded that the location of the school and its resources play a crucial part in what the teacher is able to teach as Welsh history.

Finally, it has been discussed that, despite the fact that two of the advisers showed some scepticism, all of the interviewees acknowledged the importance of museum education, primarily because it offered a completely different learning environment. They regarded active learning and museum education as pathways to memory due to the fact that museums can offer the 'real' and can stimulate senses. This stimulation of senses was also proposed as a factor that could make children more interested in history or even have a better understanding. Despite criticism about the inefficiencies, the authoritative nature, or the low quality that a museum may have, the interviewees agreed that it was the teacher who had to turn a visit into a history lesson.

Chapter Six

The National Museum of Wales: Policies and interpretations

Introduction

Chapter Three discussed how museums have responded to neoliberal agendas; how heritage has been debated in relation to the history it represents, and how learning in museums has developed in conjunction with the changing role of the museum itself. It also presented the changes that St Fagans: National History Museum (NHM) and the National Museum of Wales (NMW) have undergone from their foundation to the present day.

This chapter analyses whether and how the NMW and St Fagans: NHM have become part of this general context, as suggested by their policy documents and the museum professionals' interviews. Part A analyses the policy of NMW, with particular emphasis on the latest strategy, *World Class Museum of Learning*. As the NMW shares its broad ambitions with the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG), the policies of the museum are analysed in relation to the wider political agendas of the WAG, whose own policies have been inspired by the Lisbon Agenda (see Chapter One). Additionally, the aim of the chapter is to look at the ways in which the museum professionals regard these changes and how they seem to negotiate them.

Part B focuses on the changes that St Fagans: NHM has undergone, particularly by analysing its new role, as a 'one-stop venue for history' of Wales, through the

analysis of its documents and the interviewees' views. Finally, Part C looks at the ways in which

St Fagans: NHM works with school children and the National Curriculum (NC). I analyse the museum staff's views on the importance of the museum in children's learning as well as the notions of history that they promote through the workshops.

Part A. World-Class Museum of Learning

Introduction

In this section I analyse the latest policy document of the National Museum of Wales, entitled *World Class Museum of Learning*, and the interviews with members of the museum staff in conjunction with readings of the Welsh Assembly Government's policies. My interviewees comprised a mix of people working in various positions at the NMW and St Fagans: National History Museum. The St Fagans: NHM has its own directorate staff, but as one of the seven sites of the NMW, it has to comply with the general policy as determined by the NMW. Therefore my interviewees were members of St Fagans: NHM staff as well as members of the NMW. As described in my Methods Chapter I wanted to interview members of staff who were responsible for various positions in the NMW, in order to understand the general approach of the museum. Thus, I interviewed staff from a range of departments within the NMW and St Fagans: NHM. As explained in the Methods Chapter, I decided to keep the identity of my interviewees anonymous, both to protect their identities and because their position

within the hierarchy of the NMW staff would not affect my analysis. For the needs of my study, I refer to them as M1-7.

The NMW and the WAG

‘The NMW is an independent chartered body and registered charity which receives its principal funding through grant-in-aid from the Welsh Assembly Government as an ASPB (Assembly Sponsored Public Body)’ (NMW, 2007:3, see Chapter Three). This means that the NMW assists the WAG by implementing specific objectives of its policies. This is becoming more explicit in the latest Annual Reports, Corporate, Development and Operational Plans and the Remit Letter, from which I begin my analysis.

I argue that the changes to the NMW are part of a new regime of governance, which defines relations between the museum and the WAG. The *Vision for a World Class Museum of Learning* (2004) was the pioneering document that reflects this close relationship between the two organisations. Although I completed my data collection from the museum staff in 2007, the *Operational Plan* of 2008/2009 of the NMW¹³ clearly states for the first time that the NMW is developing into a learning organisation:

...a Pilot Evaluation Plan is also attached...which illustrates how we will develop the methods we use to measure the success of our work against all our vision objectives, using evaluation techniques that will help in our ongoing development as a ‘learning organization’ (NMW, 2008b:5).

¹³ The Operational Plan was designed according to the *One Wales* agenda, an agreement between the Labour and the Plaid Cymru groups of the National Assembly, which was signed in June 2007.

Thus, the *Remit Letter* of 2008, which was issued to the NMW by the Minister for Heritage and referred to the ways through which the NMW could facilitate the WAG, explains that all ASPBs are expected to contribute to the realisation of the aspirations of *One Wales* (NMW 2008c:2). This letter defines the precise frameworks of the NMW's duties, stating that:

...we will review the governance of public bodies in Wales to ensure their alignment with this improvement agenda to maintain continual improvement in services following the recommendations of the Beecham Report, Beyond Boundaries: Citizen-centred local services for Wales (NMW, 2008c:2, document italics).

This new regime of governance is part of a whole set of relations between the neoliberal state, institutions and individuals, where market values are at the core of all aspects of society (Brown, 2003:3). In this context, institutions may have to redefine their goals, policies and visions to comply with the demands of the market in order to ensure their funding. Therefore, the NMW has a specific role to play. In the *Remit Letter* we read the WAG's commitments to and plans for the NMW:

We will continue to promote Wales actively in external markets, drawing on our unique assets in culture, history and environment (NMW, 2008c:2).

Later on in the document, the Minister suggests that the NMW during 2008/2009 should:

[...] Continue to maximize efficiency gains as identified through the Delivering the Connections agenda through working with other bodies, and ensuring that any surpluses generated are reinvested into the wider work of the Museum.

Continue to evaluate all opportunities for income generation through the Museum's enterprise company and where appropriate through added value activities (NMW, 2008c: 3).

From the above, I argue that the NMW is acquiring the characteristics of an enterprise. It has to 'maximise efficiency', 'evaluate all opportunities for income generation' and 'reinvest'. Its strategies will be monitored according to *Delivering Directions*, a five year action plan for delivering services in Wales. This document complements the *Better Country* and claims to promote dialogue and engagement with the public in order to make public organisations more efficient (WAG, 2005).

The Plan will be revised and updated at least yearly to take account of experience so far across the public service and new thinking about how to take forward the agenda (WAG, 2005:1).

Therefore, the museum has to collaborate with other public funded bodies (such as the National Library of Wales, Coast National Authority) and at the same time it has to effectively manage its income.

The museum also has to promote culture as a way of ensuring economic growth. As stated in the *Creative Future* (see Chapter One), 'Culture has an intrinsic value, but it also brings economic benefits' (WAG, 2002:3) and 'equally, we must extract the maximum economic benefit from all that we invest in cultural policy' (WAG, 2002:3).

Culture is also regarded as a way to secure social cohesion (WAG, 2002:4). First, the WAG wishes to promote social cohesion through culture. As discussed in Chapter One, social cohesion is not an exclusive neoliberal idea. Arguably, dominant ideologies have always been trying to obtain the consent of the dominated strata and make their aims a common matter (see Gramsci, 1971; Marx, 2006; Marx and Engels, 1992).

Liberal ideologists (see Beveridge, 1995; Galbraith, 1977) believed in social cohesion as a way towards social progress; that is a social progress in their terms of a regulated capitalism. As a result, social cohesion is not a neoliberal idea but a part of the struggle of dominant ideologies to acquire social cohesion and the consent of other classes and groups. As discussed in Chapter Three, this could be traced to the fact that the bourgeoisie in the nineteenth century tried to unite people under the idea of 'common past', for the former's needs (Lenin, 1932; Nairn, 1977).

It can be suggested that social cohesion takes the meaning that the dominant ideology wants it to take, when there is a need to unite classes and individuals under a common aim. Within neoliberal policies, social cohesion seems to unite people under the 'common' and 'inevitable' aim of being financially successful. The WAG (2002:2) policies, as presented in Chapter One, call upon everybody's contribution to the creation of a confident and economically prosperous country. Once more, social cohesion is needed in order for the dominant political and ideological aims to be promoted. These policies, however, take the present economic and political situation for granted and they do not leave space for questioning or changes.

The WAG also promotes culture as a way towards regeneration and regional development, as directed by the EU (WAG, 2002:12). These policies use culture for the purposes of economic gain and benefits, encouraging private sector investment at the same time. Investment and private sponsoring of culture means that culture is often dismissed in terms of numbers and profit, which may also have an impact on the museum's decisions. It is also stressed that the WAG seeks to 'support the development

of competitive cultural enterprises' (WAG, 2002:6). Therefore the WAG creates a framework within which the National Museum and any ASPB has to fit, even if this means adjusting its own plans accordingly. This framework is a framework for 'enterprise'.

In *Creative Future* (WAG: 2002), the WAG states that the NMW has to examine the feasibility of the creation of other gallery spaces across Wales, create a Wales Institute of Music, and develop a 'one-stop venue' for an overview of Welsh history (WAG, 2002:40, 44). If heritage and culture are regarded as exports, as Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, (1998:153) claims, and a way of creating economically profitable areas by turning a location into a destination, then the WAG's plans for St Fagans : NHM can be read as a means of promoting economic prosperity through partnerships and attracting tourism. In this way, as I discuss later, history is regarded by the WAG as a commodity.

The NMW and WAG documents state that economic prosperity and regeneration are not the only things that culture and the NMW could contribute to:

We [the NMW] share a broad common vision with our sponsoring body, the Welsh Assembly Government that is working to create a confident, outward-looking Wales. In achieving this, encouraging sustainable development, tackling social disadvantage and promoting equal opportunities have been identified as priority areas for action in the Welsh Assembly Government's strategic plan (Plan for Wales, 2001). Through our collections and expertise, and by promoting accessible learning as an everyday part of museum visiting, we have a vital role to play in providing the opportunities for lifelong learning that are needed to support the delivery of this agenda (NMW, 2003:5).

Thus, social disadvantage and inequalities are expected to be tackled by the museum through the opportunities that are generated by its collections. The vision of the WAG

concerning inclusion and equality do sound promising and democratic. However, when contextualising these claims in relation to wider concerns about competitiveness in the globalised world, in response to which the WAG wants to promote a new profile of Wales, questions need to be raised regarding the extent to which these inequalities will be tackled in the workforce and economy. Currently, museums are places where inequalities can be addressed and even tackled in a symbolic way by representing more cultures, more communities, or more age groups. Does this mean however, that in the 'real world' inequalities can be tackled?

The NMW's suggestion about how it can contribute to an inclusive society is addressed in the following:

This Plan is built around addressing five strategic issues that have formed the framework of our planning documents for the past three years and defined our relationship with the Welsh Assembly Government:

- We must ensure that what we offer is widely recognised as relevant to the needs of an inclusive society
- We must continue to make our collections and the knowledge inherent in them, ever more widely accessible
- We must ensure that we can properly look after the collections and estates entrusted to its care
- We must promote leadership and effective management, and develop an open-minded organisational culture
- We must improve our funding base to enable us to achieve our priorities

Each is delivered through long-term core objectives, measured by performance indicators (NMW, 2003: 6).

In this text there is promising terminology regarding an inclusive society and how the museum will try to make its collections accessible to all. At the same time, there are terms in the above quote that refer to the fact that, as Rose, (1999: 142) argues, social behaviour in the knowledge economy is defined in economic terms. There are terms

that are indicative of the fact that all organisational and personal practices and behaviours, respectively, are generally redefined within a context of managerialism and entrepreneurialism (Ball, 2007). The NMW uses a vague but optimistic language with terms like ‘open-minded organizational culture’ or ‘relevance’ and ‘inclusive society’, but within the context of its managerial policy. ‘Inclusive society’ stands next to ‘performance indicators’, which, as argued in previous chapters, conveys ‘inclusivity or ‘relevance’ and ‘needs of society’ a managerial and entrepreneurial essence. It appears that what the NMW has to offer is reduced to numbers, ‘performance indicators’, and a measurable quantity. In this neoliberal context, museums may not only address the middle class as Bourdieu (1998; 1991) argues. In the case of the knowledge economy, the museum has to attract the working class to increase its numbers. Inclusion, therefore, can become part of the neoliberal rhetoric of ‘information technology’, ‘flexibility’, ‘mutual obligation’ and ‘enterprise’ (Davies and Bansel, 2007:254). These ideas are reproduced in every document of the NMW, with sometimes ambiguous results in terms of the content of the culture, knowledge, or history it will promote.

The economic dimension of the aims of the NMW is evident elsewhere. In the *Development Plan* of 2006-2016, which was introduced after the *World class Museum of Learning Vision* was published, the museum defines seven areas that the *Vision* will address:

- Developing our museum spaces and bringing the visitor experience to life
- Sustaining flourishing, well used collections
- Helping our visitors to make sense of the world
- Listening to and learning from our audiences and partners
- Communicating locally and globally

- Becoming an organization that learns and that builds on its successes
- Building our resources to deliver these key developments (NMW, 2005b:4).

Terms like ‘sustainability’, ‘communicating’ and ‘flourishing well-used collections’ are indicative of neoliberal rhetoric. In new economic terms, it is figures and numbers that usually identify the success of a product. As has been argued so far (see Chapter Three), a drive for increased numbers can open the door to wider cultural, ethnic or class groups. Nevertheless, it has to be noted, that, as argued in Chapter Three, it is not certain whether this opening will go some way towards creating democratic citizens, or whether it will increase visitor numbers and, consequently, present ‘performance indicators’.

Additionally, the term ‘world class’ is linked to economic agendas. In WAG’s paper, *Wales: A Vibrant Economy* (2005), which details the Welsh Assembly Government’s strategic framework for economic development, the term ‘world class’ is used to describe the support that must be ensured for firms in Wales. This support is described as the ‘close work between the public and private sectors on business advice and finance’ (WAG, 2005:6). The use of the term ‘world class’ in the NMW’s *Vision* links the economic strategies of the WAG with the NMW strategies.

In this section, the relationship between the NMW and the neoliberal policies of the WAG has been analysed. It has been suggested that, as in any neoliberal setting, democratic values of inclusion or issues of ‘using well the resources’ take on an ambiguous meaning because they have been created in a neoliberal context where

everything has to be designed according to market values. However, these issues are negotiated not only at a policy-making level but also at the level of practice (Tlili, 2008). As a result, the superficial democratisation and inclusion, which neoliberalism champions, may be finally implemented in museums in multiple and unexpected ways. My interview analysis will endeavour to shed light on this issue.

Learning in the Vision

The National Museum has to facilitate the WAG's policies that mainly seek to promote culture as a means of national economic development in a superficially inclusive environment. Within this framework, learning is also redefined for the museum. As explained in Chapters One and Three, learning in museums has taken on a constructivist meaning, whereby visitors are helped to learn 'how to learn'; and to experience. However, as argued in Chapter Two, learning how to learn takes on the abstract meaning of gaining undefined skills, – and in general, everything can be regarded as learning.

Just as school education creates highly individualised learners who have to be the entrepreneurs of their lives (Brown, 2003:6), so museums are also transformed into facilitators of learning, providers of information and creators of 'experiences'. For the NMW, the subjective experience of the visitor or the child during their visit is considered to be learning and knowledge, which reflects constructivist claims. My argument is that since the NMW has to facilitate these policies, its whole *Vision* facilitates and reproduces the neoliberal discourses of the knowledge economy and

entrepreneurship, where the citizen is left to take responsibility for their own learning paths. Thus individuals are responsible for additional knowledge that they may gain after the visit to the museum. In this context, education, as a term, is abandoned in favour of learning, which is considered to be more democratic and interactive. In effect however, this also means that the visitor is left responsible for gaining what they want from the visit. This brings us back to the transformation of learners into individuals who have the responsibility for their own knowledge and have to choose their own 'lifelong learning' course.

At the same time, knowledge is reduced to a skill and an abstract notion of experience. In Chapters One, Two and Five I suggest that one reason for this is that capitalism seeks to create flexible workers, ready to 'reprogram themselves' according to changes in production needs (Castells, 1997). I argue that experiential learning, as adopted by museums, reinforces this flexible learning, not by promoting a complete theoretical and practical knowledge, as defined in Chapter One, but rather the learning of skills or learning through experiences. When introduced in 2004, the *World Class Museum of Learning* described the organisation's purpose as 'Inspiring people to make sense of the world through memory, reason and imagination' (NMW, 2005:3). This definition is rather vague, as anything can be regarded as knowledge, be it memory, senses or fun. It draws upon constructivist views where knowledge and understanding are transformed into skills for managing experience (Carr, 2007:8) and the main goal of learning is to make and form one's own conclusions according to one's own experiences of the world (Pollard, 1990:244; von Glasersfeld, 1989).

Although the NMW does not explicitly refer to its theoretical orientation in terms of learning, as I discussed in Chapter Three, constructivism has been adopted by museum theorists as a convenient theory for learning at museums, and which places its main emphasis on experiences. Learning takes the form of an interactive process, where one has to 'learn' 'how to learn'. This is clearly reflected in the museum staff's interviews. I quote three interviewees' views with regard to knowledge and museums:

We are far more interested in helping people how to think for themselves. A part of the process of people.... to care about their community, about their country, about the world is giving them issues to think about, helping them to think [...]. Museums have, I suppose, the raw material for knowledge and they also have quite a lot of knowledge. But it's the real thing, isn't it? (M2 interview)

So, socialisation skills, different kinds of communication skills... em ... awareness of things that you might be...you might think they are having to do with citizenship, like, what do I understand with the society and the world around me...So, I think that's an interesting second dimension as well as delivering the knowledge through our collections and through our places that are supporting teaching but you can also be... "but hang on a minute! What about all this other stuff", which is really important... (M3 interview)

I think people create their own knowledge. There is no canon of knowledge you want them to take away. I think it's getting them involved with processes and how to think questions. How to create the knowledge they have and what do they mean by the knowledge they have and perhaps see other types of... I think that knowledge changes all the time. (M5 interview)

Respondent M2 viewed the museum's aim as helping people learn how to think but at the same time believes that museums have 'a lot of knowledge' to give, through experience. M2 believes that this experiential learning can promote issues of citizenship and community understanding. M3 clearly states and explains the dual aim of the NMW, which is to give knowledge through the collections and to help people develop

other skills, such as socialisation and communication skills. M5 expresses the view that people create their own knowledge, that it is something that changes all the time, and that it is the aim of the museum to make people ask questions. M5, consequently, rejects the views of M2 and M3, that museums, through their collections have knowledge or essence to present to people. I would infer that, according to M5, it is more important to encourage people to form questions than to help them find the answer.

These statements are interesting due to their contrasting nature, and due to the fact that they reveal that the staff of the museum have contrasting opinions as to what knowledge is. These conflicting views may indicate ideological differences between the museum and the WAG, which are not expressed in policy documents. They may also be indicative of the reasons why the museum chooses to let visitors create their own knowledge. It passes the responsibility of determining what visitors are going to learn to the visitors themselves or the teacher. The museum thus disclaims its original role, as proposed in the Royal Charter of 1907, to 'educate people' (NMW, 2008e: 1) and the belief that the visitor can gain knowledge and be educated from their visit (Jenkins, 1957:17). Instead, the museum equips the visitor with images and experiences, and it is up to them to transform this into personal knowledge. This approach can alleviate the problem of how to reconcile the various ideological differences and conflicting views amongst the members of staff.



Figure 2: The *Rhyd-Y-Car* Cottages

Part B: St Fagans: from Folk to National History Museum

1948: Welsh Folk Museum

Having presented the general *Vision* of the NMW and its new approach to learning, I now analyse the ways in which these changes have affected the development of St Fagans: NHM and how history is presented through its collections, particularly in its history workshops for primary schools.

The Welsh Folk Museum at St Fagans opened in 1948. The view of its founder, Iorwerth Peate, was that an open-air museum should consist of two parts: a building where there is a systematic display of the materials of life and culture, which would be

a very helpful resource for any researcher, and the open-air section that presents national life in its environment (1956:5). As discussed in Chapter Three, 'folk', for Peate, was the study of 'man's material, mental and spiritual struggle towards civilization, which dated back to before the industrialization of the nation' (Peate, 1972:17).

The over-representation of rural Wales 'ended' in 1987, when the *Rhyd-Y-Car* (Figure 2) ironworkers' cottages were rebuilt at St Fagans: NHM. For the interviewees this was a turning point for St Fagans: NHM as this inclusion of industrialised Wales indicated the beginning of a wider representation of the people of Wales. They acknowledged the fact that industrial life had been under-represented at St Fagans: NHM and so the addition of the *Rhyd-Y-Car* cottages was welcomed as a way through which more people in Wales could identify with the Museum.

Em... but then as you get in the 1970s and the 1980s in Wales then there is this recognition then that this museum wasn't representing the lives of the areas around it really, the industrialised areas. (M7 interview)

E: Do you think that SF contributes to the understanding of the Welsh history or Welsh identity?

M6: Again this has changed over the years. The people who start that at the beginning were from Welsh speaking rural nationalistic idea of representing Wales as this kind of place with cottages, and that was good, obviously. But I think since the building of the industrial buildings that has contributed more to the museum I'd say that 50 or 60 per cent more people are coming to the museum from that background so they can relate more to the museum. (M6 interview)

However, from what one can read in the *Annual Report 1988-1989*, questions could be raised about the reasons for presenting industrial Wales at St Fagans: NHM and the future representation of this industrial past:

The success of the *Merthyr Day* in July 1987 when the *Rhyd-Y-Car* Cottages were officially opened prompted the staff to organise a *Day of the Valleys* on 28 May 1988. It was felt that the Folk Museum should become more involved with the representation of the culture of the industrialised regions of Wales for the South Wales Valleys are as relevant to the story of Welsh people as the remotest part of Snowdonia (NMW, 1988:26).

Was it really the success of the *Merthyr Day* that resulted in the museum's greater involvement in the representation of the industrialised Valleys? What if this day had not been successful? I suggest that the above quote shows that the museum, at least at that time and on this occasion, substantially prioritised visitors' responses to its initiatives. It seems that this feedback determined the way that history was represented in the museum and determined what could be further represented or promoted. Thus the museum had its own visions and ideas, which it presented to the public and then waited for a response. Since the event was considered a 'success', St Fagans: NHM embraced the continuation of the project, which in this instance was the representation of a specific chapter of Welsh history.

As M6 commented (M6 interview), the addition of industrial Wales to St Fagans: NHM was something that might have made 'people' identify with the Museum. 'People' for M6 meant the working class of South Wales, which until then had been excluded from museum representations. According to M6, numbers rose because people felt that the Museum now represented their history as well. The main issue here is the extent to which the museum was ready to abandon a project if the public response was not positive. All of the museum interviewees felt confident that the representation of industrial Wales was an important turning point for the representation of Welsh

history at the museum. The way it is presented in the Annual Report however, suggests that it was the success that led to the realisation, not the other way round.

1995: Museum Of Welsh Life

'St Fagans: Welsh Folk Museum' changed its name to 'St Fagans: Museum of Welsh Life' in 1995 and M3 stated that this was 'a good name'. The NMW proudly mentions the fact that '*The Western Mail* was one of the main voices welcoming the alteration' (NMW, 1994:6). The museum changed its name to be closer to the translation of *Amgueddfa Werin*. With the addition of the history of industrial Wales there was a need for a more representative name.

The representation of industrial Wales at St Fagans: NHM can also be traced back to the 1995 re-erection of the Oakdale Workmen's Institute. This was originally built in 1916 and funded by a loan from the Tredegar Iron and Coal Company to the miners, which they repaid over the ensuing years (NMW, 2005e:31). The visitors' guide dedicates two pages to it, describing the Institute as a beautiful building with a library, reading rooms, committee room, offices and a concert hall. The guide states that it was a place 'built' by the miners for the miners and by the company and their families for educational and cultural activities (NMW, 2005e:31-32). This lengthy presentation and the fact that the building is mentioned in all the general descriptions of the NHM underlines the significance that the museum gives to the building.

However, none of my interviewees acknowledged the importance of the Oakdale Workmen's Institute. Although they all referred to the *Rhyd-Y-Car* cottages as a turning

point for the museum the Institute was not mentioned I tried to understand the reasons for this omission. I went back to my school data and realised that children did not use the Institute as part of any workshop. Also, the school activities programme at St Fagans: NHM regarding the nineteenth and twentieth centuries did not include the Institute either. Only one school in my study, which participated in '*Maestir School*', actually visited the Institute and wandered around, albeit without any comments or discussions during this visit. The interviewees seemed to have forgotten it as a representative of working class history, while it was not used for, or in conjunction with, any history workshop. The guide may present it as a 'splendid' building but there is no mention that many of these institutes were centres for the social activities of the working class or places for their political development and consciousness (Francis and Smith, 1998:9-10).

It is not easy to be certain about whether this was the case in the 1990s, as there are no relevant sources. At the moment, the guides and my interviews show that a building that could have been symbolic of the working class of Wales at St Fagans: NHM has been ignored, whilst the *Rhyd-Y-Car* cottages remain fresh in the memory and are used by all schools. My suggestion in the following section is that history, as presented at St Fagans: NHM can still be characterised as folk history. The museum insists on promoting the material aspect of the lives of the people of Wales in a descriptive way, with few discernible political dimensions, as Kavanagh (2007:50) also concludes. The main themes and aspects of life are presented outside a political or economic context and within the peaceful context of social cohesion and 'inclusion'. As

a result, they gain a melancholic grandeur associated with what Dicks (2000a) would call ‘the vanishing other’, an approach that is apparent in one of my interviewees’ words, as I discuss later.

People look back at these ‘difficult’ days with a feeling that they belong to a forgotten past. M1 acknowledged that social struggles are omitted at St Fagans: NHM but there is no mention in either the interviews or museum documents of any plan to include them. As Mason (2007b:162) suggests, there might be many reasons for the inclusion of the *Rhyd-Y-Car* cottages (see Chapter Three). In addition to these suggestions, I later argue that, at least in the opinion of one of my interviewees, the inclusion of industrialised Wales at St Fagans: NHM is justified and presented as a result of the need for preserving this ‘vanishing community’.

2005: National History Museum

The latest change to the NMW came with the *Vision for a World Class Museum of Learning* when the NMW assumed the role of a learning organisation. The main role for St Fagans: NHM, as presented in the *Vision* and as expressed by the interviewees, is to become the site of the NMW, where the history of Wales will be represented. Additionally, archaeology and collections, combined with new interpretations of the buildings, would contribute to an expanded and more complete learning experience. The need to create a ‘one-stop’ venue for history was the WAG’s plan for St Fagans: NHM, as set out by their cultural policy, *Creative Future* (WAG, 2002:4). The NMW’s *Development Plan 2006-2016* defines these plans as follows:

Stage 1: the reconceptualization of the whole site as a history museum including the re-interpretation of the existing buildings within a new intellectual framework including the possible creation of an open-air archaeology zone

Stage 2: the redisplay of Gallery 1 on the theme of identities. This will include archaeological material and will open in 2007 as part of the centenary celebrations

Stage 3: Deliver the NHM through the creation of additional gallery spaces using historical and archaeological material at St Fagans thus allowing the vacated space at the NM Cardiff to be incorporated into the development of the National Museum of Natural History. In achieving this we will follow a consultative and experimental approach to find out the most effective way to display these important collections to visitors (NMW, 2005 b: 8).

The strategy for NHM will be to enhance:

the range of interpretation at St Fagans to give a clear historical timeline and opportunities to explore the complex layers of personal experiences that formed the societies and individuals who live in Wales today. This will be the first phase of the creation of a national museum of archaeology and history at St Fagans (NMW, 2005c, no page numbers).

There are three main issues raised by these statements. The first is that archaeology is to be combined with the buildings and collections, in order to give a more holistic view of the history of the building. According to interviewees, the resurrection of St Teilo's church was considered to have been very effective because the visitors were given the opportunity to see all stages of reconstruction.

The second issue raised in these extracts concerns the themes of *Oriel 1* (Gallery 1) and the theme of identity that the new Gallery deals with. I link the issue of identity with the 'layers of personal experiences' that are mentioned in the second extract. Most of my interviewees expressed the belief that the new *Oriel 1* gave increased opportunities for the visitors to expand their range of historical interpretation as well as

filling some of the gaps created by the static nature of the buildings. Two interviewees focused on the absence of certain buildings, such as the pub; one acknowledged that aspects of political history were missing, and two said that the aim of St Fagans: NHM was to represent social and not political history.

These views are indicative of the history that St Fagans: NHM promotes: a social history of everyday life based on buildings and objects and the absence of political history. As I argue later on however, social history cannot be properly studied or presented without its political dimensions. *Oriel 1* at St Fagans: NHM has recently opened in order to contextualise the museum grounds. Visitors can combine the visit to the buildings with a visit to the collections of *Oriel 1*, where they could acquire further information about Wales and its people. However, the main focus of *Oriel 1* is on 'identities'. The theme of identities is presented through four themes:

- Welsh language and the struggles for its establishment
- Everyday life traditions (including customs of death)
- Welsh culture through music, sports and national events like the Eisteddfod
- Immigration and beliefs in Wales

A visitor can get an idea of Wales' accomplishments in arts and sports by using touch screens, listening to the stories of the people of Wales, and listening to music from a digital juke box that contains songs by Welsh artists. In the section on beliefs there is an animation film created by three Welsh schools - a project that was an initiative of St Fagans: NHM. There are also displays where modern objects are intermingled with old

ones, as well as a 'commodity dresser' that contains modern everyday-life objects provided by members of community. These objects change frequently.

There is no mention of miners' struggles, political history or the underlying hardships of everyday life back then. The idea, according to the museum interviewees, is to combine the inside with the outdoor experience. The industrialisation period is hidden somewhere inside the *Rhyd-Y-Car* cottages and the Workmen's Institute, and the visitor has to find it for themselves. Visitors cannot uncover aspects of life in industrialised Wales, or the economic and social impacts of the de-industrialisation of Wales and Britain. One can visit the Big Pit: National Coal Museum or the National Waterfront Museum in Swansea for the history of industrialised Wales, the labour movement in Wales and more political history. Nonetheless, it is problematic when political implications are excluded from a museum that has been renamed the 'National History Museum' and whose ambition is to present the whole of Welsh history.

St Fagans: NHM claims that it focuses on personal experiences and identities. The notion of identity, however, is constructed by the museum itself. Its ambition is to present the 'multi-layered' personal experiences that would include various identities in Wales. However it has constructed the theme of identities, by choosing to include some aspects of the lives of the people of Wales and ignore others. As a result, it chooses to focus on language, rugby, community, beliefs and art. These are arguably usual themes that are associated with Wales and can be used to identify both a person from Wales and the identity of a nation (Scourfield et al., 2006:9). Thus the NMW remains the 'powerful agent' (Canergie, 2006:73), choosing which areas it wants to prioritise, and

thereby creating a framework within which the participant communities or individuals have to work or participate. Personal experiences and identities, therefore, are expressed within a given framework determined by the NMW.

‘One-stop shop’ for history

According to the St Fagans: NHM visitors’ guide and website, the museum explores aspects of everyday life in Wales and it states that its objective is to present social history and industrial collections. The interviewees also explained that there was a need for a ‘one-stop’ place where the history of Wales would be presented. In this section I argue that the representation of Welsh history at St Fagans: NHM still focuses on the material aspects of everyday-life objects used in everyday cultural, working and domestic life, with little difference from the initial folk approach. However, because of the new knowledge economy and the neoliberal discourses of superficial democratic inclusion and multiculturalism, the representation may include more communities, ethnic minorities and classes, albeit still in a reminiscent ‘folk’ way that exists outside of any meaningful political and economic context.

According to the St Fagans: NHM visitors’ guide and website, the basic aim of the museum is to represent and interpret the daily life of the people of Wales:

St Fagans explores all aspects of how people in Wales have lived, worked and spent their leisure time. Like generations of visitors, you will be inspired by its celebration of Welsh traditions and lifestyles

The Social & Cultural History Department is based at St Fagans: National History Museum. The primary purpose of St Fagans is to illustrate and interpret the daily life and work of the people of Wales from the Middle Ages to the present day (NMW 2008a, no page numbers).

Social history and industrial collections at Amgueddfa Cymru provide a unique insight into the rich heritage and culture of Wales. Spanning an era when Wales was the first industrial nation of the world, our collections help us understand how people lived, worked, and spent their leisure time, from the Middle Ages to the present day (NMW, 2008d, no page numbers)

The interviewees explained how the need for a single site that would present history led to the re-conceptualisation of St Fagans: NHM:

At the moment if you were a visitor to Cardiff, let's say you go to Wales and you've got one day and you were interested in learning about the history of Wales from museums, you would have to go to two sites, the National Museum in Cardiff for archaeology, which takes you up to the sixteenth century and then to St Fagans, which takes [you] from the sixteenth century to date but only for social history. It doesn't mention political history or anything like that or industrial history. For the industrial history you need to go to several of our other sites. So, the idea grew for one site that would tell a continuous story. And all to that came the idea that we should be calling St Fagans something new and we've agreed that it should be called the 'National History Museum'. (M2 interview)

M2 expressed the opinion that it was the need for a continuous story that led to the idea of a National History Museum. This national history however, according to M2, is by no means political or industrial. Neither M2, nor any other interviewees, referred to the WAG's role in the renaming of St Fagans: NHM. It was only M4 who expressed the opinion that this need was partly 'inspired' by the Welsh Assembly Government:

And within St Fagans...ah...it's really difficult...em, it was partly as well to do with the Assembly, having an aspiration, they wanted a one-stop shop for history...that's the way they termed it [laughs] but...there was the kind of a...ah...pressure from the Assembly that as a national museum we should really be providing a particular visitor to Wales, I think, with this...a warm place that they can go and get the history of Wales. (M4 interview)

Thus the staff and the policy documents describe the need for change as a result of the aim of the NMW, and St Fagans: NHM in particular, to present a complete

picture of the history of Wales and its development through the years. It was only M4 who presented this aspiration of the Assembly's with, what I would describe as courteous irony, that the WAG actually wanted a 'shop' and an 'enjoyable place' for Welsh history. Describing the museum as a shop reinforces the earlier argument about the direct connection between museum institutions and the market, and the fact that there is a conflict amongst the members of the Museum and probably also between the Museum and the WAG. 'Shop' implies something commercial, a place of financial exchange and profit. If the visitors do not buy then the museum has to sell something else. This was the point I made earlier about the *Merthyr Day*. I believe that it might have been the success of this event that made the museum acknowledge the need for the representation of industrialised Wales. This decision however, was taken before devolution. In the post-devolution era, the NMW still has to comply with the market but has to do so by implementing the WAG's policies. What I argue is that if the WAG expects specific performance indicators from the NMW, one of which is the increase of visitor numbers, then the visitors' turnout at a NMW event may influence one representation of history over another.

This, of course, is not something negative. This is what supporters and enthusiasts of the new museum declare as the main advantage of its marketisation or commodification: that despite its negative implications, marketisation has opened the doors to inclusion. The question here is whether the end should justify the means. Inclusion and wider representation within a 'commodified' (Urry, 2002:95) cultural or museum context is also more likely to acquire the characteristics of commodification.

Although visitor numbers may be increasing, and their social, economic or cultural background may be more diverse, how 'their' history is represented is the factor that will determine the characteristics of inclusion. It is this argument that is further developed in the following section.

Social history at St Fagans: NHM

The interviewees in the study believed that when St Fagans: NHM was the Welsh Folk Museum industrial Wales was under-represented, when it should have been part of the museum. They also approved of the change of name to the Museum of Welsh Life. At the same time M7 expressed the quintessence of the definition that St Fagans: NHM gives to social history at the moment. M7 defined social history, and history from below, as the representation of everyday life. However, social history or history from below is not only the material life of ordinary people and the way they spend their leisure time. As I suggest, social history also includes the contexts and complex socio-political and economic relations that resulted in this life.

M7 expressed the view that the aim of St Fagans: NHM, since its establishment, has been to 'deal with the history of ordinary people and not just queens and kings', which remains the case today but in a different context.

I mean just think about what was pioneering about St Fagans in the UK, at least, was that when it was set up...it was one of the first museums to emphasise that ordinary people are part of history and that history is not only just the story of kings and queens and politicians, movers and shakers, so it's history from below. But what's happened over the last few decades really was to expand that definition of whose story we're telling, to be more inclusive and to reflect changes in Welsh society. (M7 interview)

In this passage there is a different use of the term history from below. History from below is not the history that Peate and the co-founders of the Folk museum initially wanted to represent. As explained in Chapter Three, the main purpose of the original Folk museum at St Fagans: NHM was to present and promote Welsh arts and crafts and to facilitate the study of folk life. History from below, in contrast, is a term introduced by specific British Marxist historians in the 1960s and 1970s, who wanted to shift the subject of the study history towards the study of the working class peoples' lives and struggles. They looked at the history of industrialisation and capitalism and the effect this had on ordinary people's lives in addition to challenging the ideas of a continuous united nation (Hill, 1989; Samuel, 1989a). This was, therefore, a leftist and Marxist approach, which was not a mainstream theory to follow.

It is not suggested here that M7 uses this term out of ignorance; rather it is suggested that such language is indicative of how the new economy has been using terms and ideas that have been promoted or explored by different, more radical ideologies. It might also be indicative of how, neoliberal forces, by using radical ideas, have managed to get other groups and individuals' consent towards the former's aims. The radical left idea of history from below and social history is used within another hegemonic discourse, which is that of a de-politicised history of everyday life. In this case, the interviewee uses the term 'inclusive' in conjunction with 'history of ordinary people' and 'history from below' as presented in most of the documents of the WAG and the NMW and not according to their original meaning. This history from below would include more communities but in an environment where, as M2 explained,

political and industrial history will not be included. Therefore, a different notion is given to the term 'history from below', restricting it to one aspect of the history of ordinary people, which is their material life. The interesting thing is that none of the interviewees, with one exception, challenged this view.

M7 also expressed the following view, which is indicative of the historical representations at St Fagans: NHM:

Em, but then as you get in the seventies and the eighties in Wales then there is this recognition then that this museum wasn't representing the lives of the areas around it really, the industrialised areas. And that the industry that created these communities was itself in decline and that way of life was in decline. So, we...that was taken on board. Eh...and of course now it's looking at how we as a minority, nation, culture...you know, how do we survive in a global age. (M7 interview)

There are two main conclusions that can be drawn from this quote that reinforce the argument that history at St Fagans is a 'reformed' folk representation. First, it is acknowledged that industrial Wales entered the grounds of St Fagans: NHM as a declining community just as the rural communities had entered the museum when it was first established. In other words, St Fagans: NHM chose, like many open-air museums (see Debary, 2004), to represent industrial communities after they had declined in a nostalgic and a-political way.

Within this environment of specific historical representation, it is quite probable for both visitors, and maybe the staff, to acquire a partial understanding of history. 'Industrial' is equated with the industrial relics of the lost communities, just as rural houses were once representative of the lost rural and pure past. This 'cherry picking' of elements that constitute social history is problematic (Jordanova, 2000:38). In addition

to ideological misconceptions, it can also lead to generalisations that appeal to visitors' emotions in order for everyday life in the past to be made more accessible (Jordanova, 2000:145). Generally, this argument recalls debates about the sentimental essence of heritage, as presented in Chapter Three.

The second conclusion to be drawn from this quote concerns the inevitability of globalisation and the need for 'survival' being embedded in the interviewee's mind. Survival goes hand in hand with economic survival and with what the market dictates, and this causes necessities and inevitabilities (Davies and Bansel, 2007:251). In this case, 'survival' is interwoven with nation, national identity and a national museum. There is a sense of struggle here, where we have to survive in a *de facto* situation, in which 'of course' (M7), we all have to find our way. By listening to M7's view about the inevitability of globalisation, we are reminded of the claims that neoliberal policies are particularly adopted by small nations because of the fear that a denial will mean exclusion and economic failures (Saul, 2005; Sklar, 1980). It may also be indicative of the possibility that individuals who hold key places in cultural organisations have accepted neoliberal advocates' voices, like Blair's (2005), that it is naive to go against globalisation. The complete effect of this consent is yet to be seen, as my interviews indicate that there are different voices within the NMW, which shows that the struggle and negotiation is ongoing

Part C. Learning history at St Fagans: National History Museum

So far, I have discussed the ways in which the NMW has helped the WAG in accomplishing some of its main objectives. I have also shown the meaning that learning holds for the NMW, as well as how history is presented at St Fagans: NHM, as part of this ideological framework. In this section I analyse the how museum staff interviewees regard the relationship between the museum and schools, their conceptions of school history, how St Fagans: NHM tries to communicate history to children under its new role as a site representing the National History of Wales.

St Fagans and the National Curriculum

Schools constitute a large percentage of St Fagans: NHM visitors. The interviewees viewed the NC as a link between the schools and St Fagans: NHM. There was also the opinion that the NMW was the facilitator that helped the WAG to implement the NC for history in schools. Schools can be a constant ‘source’ of visitors as they usually return on a regular basis, and additionally, children can play the role of ‘motivator’ for their families. Therefore, the NC is considered to be both a facilitator and a way for the museum to assist the WAG. I demonstrate that some interviewees wanted to place much more emphasis on the work that was being done with communities and adult learning as well as general, one-off projects organised by the museum and schools other than the history workshops. My data suggests the absence of a coherent and explicit pedagogic framework concerning these workshops, which, with the exception of the ‘Tudors’, have remained virtually unchanged through the years.

St Fagans: NHM promotes and advertises its potential as a place relevant to the teaching of other subjects in the NC, such as environmental issues. It presents history and the historical environment that it offers as a facilitator for any curriculum subject, such as science, in relation to environmental issues or ecology, literacy, citizenship, art and the *Curriculum Cymreig* in general. Drawing upon my interviewees' data I suggest that many of the museum staff held the misconception that chronological awareness and historical knowledge were not included in the skills that the NC suggested for history. Along with some of the history advisers and teachers, some of the museum staff also believed that enquiry and interpretation were skills; and these were the skills that should be given attention. I have interpreted this confusion as an indicator that the emphasis on learning within the NC, and at the NMW, has been shifting towards enquiry and interpretation, to the extent that these are the concepts and aims that are most embedded in the consciousness of the staff of both sectors.

More specifically, M2 argued that a lot of the museum's resources go to schools:

Historically we have paid a great deal of attention to schools. Last year we had 1.5 million visits to our sites. 1.5 million! Of all those, 300,000 were schoolchildren. But a lot of our education activity is toward schools because they have a particular NC, they have a particular need, they know about us, they come year after year, the same teachers bring their classes... *So a lot of our education resources do go to schools.* We don't think that with our existing resources we can do much more. (M2 interview; italics indicate interviewee's emphasis)

Here M2 presented schools as a constant and regular source of visitors that the museum could depend on, and for that reason, there was a lot of investment in school services. Therefore, a steady relationship has been established that justifies the expenditure, and

the NC has been one of the catalysts for this. M3 also viewed the museum as a 'complementary component' between the government and the NC and saw the NMW's role as to assist the Government with the implementation of the NC:

M2: I think it's changed since the eighties with the introduction of the strict Curriculum and of course in the late nineties with the Welsh curriculum developing an even greater distinctiveness. And we are under pressure of being an arm of Government in making sure that one arm of the Government assists the other arm of Government. So we have to provide for certain kinds of service because no one else would. So in that sense we are a complementary component of the education system. We recognise that we are different, we are special and we play with that ambiguous role.

E: So would you say that the NC directs you when it comes to schools?

M2: I don't think the NC directs us. No. I think it directs teachers. So therefore, if we want to attract teachers we have to recognise that they are directed by the NC. So if we don't provide things that are relevant to the NC, we are not relevant to teachers. (M3 interview)

The argument drawn upon in these quotes is that there are roles that the NMW has to play in order to assist the WAG, but that this is also helpful for the museum as it can establish continuous contact with schools and children. This 'ambiguous' role, as M3 labelled it, concerns the WAG rather than the NC itself. All of the interviewees stated that the NC was a reference point, a tool that helps the NMW to establish relations with schools.

M7 had similar views about the importance of 'formal education' in the work of the museum, but there was also an attempt to point out the holistic meaning that the NMW and St Fagans: NHM gives to learning:

Em, but in terms of aiming I don't think is all about aiming at children only. That's one. Museums are about learning right across the board. Em, there are particular ways in dealing with education, em, with formal education

groups so, that's only one part but very important part of what we do. (M7 interview)

This quotation indicates that there are other groups or communities that the museum wants to target its learning provision towards. M2's comment that much of the resources go to schools, because they come back as they have a specific NC, is indicative that schools form an established audience of the museum. M5's interview and attempts to show further projects that St Fagans: NHM was conducting with schools, and M7's explanation that museum learning was not only, or primarily, about schools, demonstrates the need for the museum to make its broader learning initiatives widely known. In these two interviews the impression is given that, although workshops have been enriched and run for many years, they may not be at the forefront of the museum's future planning and re-invention. This impression is reinforced by the fact that history activities are not mentioned in any of the NMW Development Plans, although they are one of the main attractions for schools.

Simultaneously, there is no explicit pedagogic framework to support the history workshops at St Fagans: NHM. These are described in detail in the brochure for school activities that one can download (www.museumwales.ac.uk/media). Its main title of 'Bringing learning to life' is a vague statement and does not explain the reasons behind the layout of the workshops. Historical re-enactment, dressing up, and making a Celtic jewel are all grouped together under this title, yet the brochure fails to explain the pedagogic approach behind these activities. In the following chapter I consider whether

this omission in the documents is covered during the training sessions that teachers have to participate in before bringing their pupils to the workshop.

St Fagans: NHM and teaching of history

In this section I further explore the lack of a pedagogic theory behind the design of a workshop or activity, apart from the belief that children gain experience of the 'real thing' in history. I also address why some of the workshops have remained unchanged, or in the cases where they have changed, whether or not they have kept to a tried and tested formula.

The Tudor workshops have been enriched in terms of content: 'St Teilo's church' workshop has been added to the 'Costume' workshop, where children dress up as Tudors. The '*Maestir* School' workshop has remained the same since its introduction in the 1970s, while in the 'Celtic Village' the focus remains on archaeology and creation, as children are asked to 'make' jewels and build an ancient Celtic wall. It is still based on the concept of re-enactment, as the archaeology-educator is dressed up as a Celt and takes the children on a 'journey' through the Iron Age. Therefore it appears that what the museum wants to achieve through its workshops is to help children interact with objects and buildings, to re-enact history, stimulate feelings and offer a general 'living learning'. As M1 explained:

Children come to interact with an interpreter. So you could say that they have a richer experience. (M1 interview)

The main aims of a history workshop are not clearly stated in the museum documents and so I have tried to clarify the pedagogic framework behind them throughout my

interviews. As previously presented (also see Appendix Two) the history workshops for

KS2 at St Fagans are:

1. 'The Iron Age Celts', where the objective is for children to 'Develop knowledge and understanding of the archaeology of the Iron Age Village, and what life might have been like for its inhabitants' (NMW, 2008 a). This is followed by activities during which the children make jewels, wattle and daub walls and discuss everyday life in the Iron Age, with an archaeologist dressed up as a Celt.
2. 'The Tudors'; 'St Teilo's Church'; 'The Tudor Costume'; and 'On the trail of the Tudors', during which children compare two Tudor houses, visit St Teilo's church and 'Handle replica Tudor objects and develop historical enquiry skills' (NMW, 2008a, no page numbers).
3. Daily life in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: '*Gwalia* Stores': See what shopping was like in an industrial community during the 1920s. 'Toys': Test your skills on traditional toys. '*Maestir* School': An opportunity for teachers and pupils to re-enact a school lesson during the 1890s; 'Victorian Costume': Experience the clothes worn by the rich with replica costumes based on examples from the Museum's collections. 'Grandma's washday': Experience washing before the advent of the washing machine; 'The home front during World War Two': Experience what life would have been like for an evacuee in Wales; '*Rhyd-y-Car*': Visit the row of houses from Merthyr Tydfil and explore the differences between ways of life in 1805, 1855 and 1895 or 1927, 1955 and 1985 (NMW, 2008a, no page numbers).

The discussion in this section involves the general aims and content of the workshops.

When my research was conducted, teachers had to attend a training session in order to participate in the Victorian workshop (See Chapter Seven). It was also compulsory for them to participate in training sessions for the new Tudor activities and the Celtic Village. In our discussions, M5 pointed out that it was very important that teachers used the workshop as an opportunity to investigate various issues of the period, such as women's roles in Victorian society, back in the classroom (field notes). Furthermore,

M5 insisted that teachers should use the workshop as a resource for teaching children about interpretation, and recommended that teachers should let them make their own interpretations (field notes). What was also interesting was the way that M5 regarded history and interpretation, both during our preliminary discussions and our interview:

Interpretation is changing the past. Some aspects of these interpretations are false because we're in 2008. Well that's difficult but I think it's worth it [teaching it]. There is no truth. But we have tried to create a story. Because there is not really an absolute right. I think it's worth trying to teach them that. (field notes)

In my interview with M5 we also talked about the Museum's contribution to the teaching of interpretation:

E: So what do you want to achieve through these workshops?

M5: I think in the curriculum you can find five, sort of, skills. The 'interpretations of history' is one that teachers tend not to do at all. And it is difficult. It's easier to say something that 'it was like this' instead of questioning it. And I think that's something that we try to approach them to do make them do that in the museum. [...]. (M5 interview)

Thus, for M5, there is no 'truth' in the representation of a building. The museum chooses a period of time of a building in order to tell a story, which is only a partial representation. What is of particular interest here is that M5 expresses a view that all interpretations are actually 'faulty' and that 'there is no truth'. Here, three different elements are intermingled: interpretations of history in the museum, interpretations of history in general and interpretations as a priority for school history. There is also the belief that 'teachers tend not to do interpretations at all' (M5 interview).

From a pedagogic perspective M5's views are close to constructivist approaches to knowledge, which propose that knowledge is what we do, to make sense of the world

(Pollard, 1990:244). These views, however, are similar to relativistic views that see history as a product of man, and so there can be no truth (Carr, 1961). At the same time, M5 not only spoke about the problem of the representations of history in the museum, but also expressed views on interpretations of history as a discipline and as a way of teaching. M5 spoke of the museum's contribution to the teaching of interpretations of history. Without me arguing that M5 wished to interfere with the schools' curriculum, or show any expertise on the matter, M5 expressed views on history that went beyond museological/heritage debates and entered the field of historical debates and the way that teachers of NC should teach history. This is indicative that museums and schools are two institutions where either compatible or divergent approaches to history or teaching develop. It would be interesting to see if and how professionals from both institutions could contribute to debates on pedagogy and teaching methods.

Aside from interpretation, cultivating enquiry skills is also a part of what the museum tries to help teachers to do:

I think then there's also the enquiry [one of the skills in the NC]...developing the enquiry skills and to see continuity, to be able to compare rural and industrial and processes and something that they remember, something that they enjoy. I think it's difficult. (M5 interview)

The main point of enquiry for M5 was that 'The child has to be able to compare the industrial with the rural' and see 'processes' and 'continuity'. The main question is whether this enquiry is only a 'comparison' between superficial similarities or differences as they are expressed through objects, or whether it goes further in

searching for processes, causes and effects. I explore this in greater detail in the next chapter.

Furthermore, some of the interviewees, with the exception of M5, regarded interpretation and enquiry as the only skills required by the National Curriculum. M5 knew the five skills required by the NC and expressed the view that interpretation and enquiry was where the museum could particularly assist teachers. However, three interviewees held some misconceptions as to what the NC determined as skills and knowledge:

M1: Probably [the priority of NC in history] is to introduce children to the concepts of different ways of thinking. That history isn't just one thing. If you get children to think that there's no wrong and right maybe they will learn to use this in other aspects. (M6 interview)

E: What do you think are the main priorities of the NC for history?

M1: I suppose it gives emphasis on the interpretation. I'm not an expert of history but what we have is very good resources to enable teachers to encourage children to reflect on interpretation. (M1 interview)

These interviewees considered only interpretation and enquiry to be skills in the NC, which coincides with some of my advisers' and teacher interviewees' views, analysed in Chapter Five. In Chapter Five I propose that these views may have been a result of the integration of historical knowledge and enquiry in the skills framework. I believe this may be the case for the museum interviewees. When knowledge is placed into the skills framework, as argued in previous chapters, it becomes a capacity and is conceived as the mere acquisition of information rather than an entity of information, skills and understanding. As such, this is not a priority for the NC.

Welsh History

A further outcome of the museum's emphasis on interpretation is that the workshops seem to be designed to help children understand the different interpretations of history, grab their attention and make them think. From what the interviewees said in regard to history workshops for schools at St Fagans: NHM, the understanding of Welsh identity and history were not among the priorities for history activities. As discussed in the previous section, the issue of 'identification' was raised by one of the interviewees as a means of making any visitor interested in something related to history. All of the interviewees spoke about the importance of including the history of the people of Wales in the National History Museum. However, the complicated, multi-level Welsh history that all my interviewees talked about was not a specific target of the history workshops for schools at St Fagans: NHM. This issue is explored in detail in the following chapter.

In contrast, Welsh identity at St Fagans: NHM is seen as part of citizenship and the *Curriculum Cymreig*:

M4: I think we can help in exploring issues of identity as part of citizenship. (M4 interview)

[Belonging]

Take a tour of the gallery *Oriel 1*. You can learn about the diversity and history of Wales. Themes include Voices, Beliefs, Family and Nation. 30 minute teacher-led activity (NMW, 2008a, no page numbers).

Consequently, this 'diversity' of Wales and its history, which both the interviewees talk about and the brochure explains, are not part of the specially-designed-for-history workshops. There seems to be a selection of particular topics and activities that fit in a

historical workshop and others that fit in a citizenship lesson led by a teacher. Interpretation, enquiry and objects of everyday life seem to be at the centre of the history workshops organised by St Fagans: NHM, whilst the more complicated ideas, such as the diversity of Wales and its history, are left to the teacher to organise an activity for. Thus the priorities of workshops at St. Fagans: National History Museum as perceived by the interviewees and stated in the museum's documents, are:

- Interpretation
- Enquiry
- To combine archaeology with history
- Experiences
- Engage people's attention through something they can be identified with.

In contrast, what seems to be absent, or at least not explicit amongst the museum's priorities for history activities are:

- Aspects that distinguish Welsh history from, or link it to, other countries of Britain
- Chronological awareness
- Political history
- Causations in history

Although further research is required in order to uncover the reasons behind this selection, I propose that the museum avoids presenting complicated issues in its history workshops to avoid accusations of 'taking sides' in history or making explicit their historical views. It is interesting that despite the museum staff's talk about interpretations of history, the museum does not actually offer one itself, apart from the way it has rebuilt and restored the buildings. Furthermore, the museum's insistence on teachers trying to make children understand the concept of history as an interpretation

is a highly interesting issue. Combining this with my analysis so far, namely the way in which culture is used for economic regeneration by attracting investors, could explain why a museum like St Fagans: NHM does not want to advocate a specific view on history.

At the same time, however, it is probable that this approach of leaving everything open to interpretation may be a way towards a more democratic or more inclusive museum. In this case, experiential learning and a-political history, which are promoted through the neoliberal driven WAG Visions, may indeed lead the visitor to look for more information. The fact that there are different approaches among the interviewees as to what may constitute knowledge might be indicative of multiple and multi-layered negotiations within the museum. The fact that these negotiations of, or even objections to, official policies are not expressed in the interviews may be due to their sense of professionalism.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed the NMW's *Vision for a World Class Museum of Learning*. I suggest that it is directly linked to the WAG's plans for a society that promotes lifelong learning in which the individual is responsible for his/her own learning. At the same time, the museum itself has become a learning organisation, where learning is regarded as a way to attract visitors and expand the museum's connections and partnerships. These plans are an outcome of neoliberal policies that commodify culture and marketise the public sector.

In this context, learning takes on a blurred meaning of experiencing and making sense of the world for the museum. It has been argued so far that within this framework, St Fagans: NHM chooses to represent the material aspects of everyday life history and personal experiences, which are integrated in a specific framework of themes, where social struggles and political history are not evident. Its workshops for history still seem to pick up some aspects of history and Welsh history whilst neglecting others. St Fagans: NHM chooses to concentrate on interpretation and enquiry skills as well as offering children 'real life' experiences.

In contrast however, the study suggests that experiential learning and the fact that the museum claims that it wants to learn from its visitors, might be a way towards a democratic museum. The museum interviewees sounded confident in this objective. The fact that there is an aim to listen to the visitors might give the possibility of the audience having a say in the decision-making at the NMW. Although this perspective can be challenged by the fact that St Fagans: NHM chooses to neglect aspects of social history, a more substantial democratisation of the NMW may be achieved in the years to come. The fact that the analysis suggests that there are different approaches and possible underlying, contrasting views among interviewees, might be a sign of radical developments and deviations from a neoliberal agenda at the NMW in the future.

Chapter Seven

‘There and back again’: the children’s stories

Introduction

In this chapter I use my school data to examine the relationship between the National Museum of Wales (NMW) and the National Curriculum (NC). The chapter is divided into two parts. In Part A, children’s responses to the workshops and the role play are analysed. I look at the ways in which children interacted with their peers, their teachers and the museum, and I will show how these reactions can be related to history. To connect this analysis to the NC and the work that is done on returning to the classroom, I divide Part B according to seven analytical categories. The first five are equivalent to the five key skills of the NC for history. The sixth category refers to the integration of history into other subjects, and the seventh category refers to Welsh history. To answer my research questions I analyse my school findings together with the corresponding views of the museum staff.

As previously explained, the National Curriculum for Wales has proposed seven common requirements that have to be integrated into each subject. As these common requirements changed slightly in September 2008, after the completion of my research in the summer of 2008, my analysis of school data are still based on the Curriculum of 2000. The common requirements are: the *Curriculum Cymreig*, communication skills, mathematical skills, information technology skills, problem-solving skills, creative

skills, and personal and social education. In the case of history at Key Stage 2, these requirements could be accomplished through five key skills: chronological awareness, historical knowledge and understanding, interpretations of history, historical enquiry, organisation and communication. Each of these key elements embodies one or more of the common requirements.

In addition, the National Museum of Wales has its own visions for learning, which also have the aim of re-enforcing enquiry and 'how-to-learn' styles of learning. I show that St Fagans: NHM aims to promote 'learning through doing' by reinforcing the experiences of children so that they will go back to school and seek information on their own. At the same time the museum also tries to help teachers to teach interpretations of history.

Before moving on to my analysis, I present the details about the schools that took part in my study in Table 1. Table 1 presents information of socio-economic status of the school, according to free school meal entitlement (FSM) data, as these were generated from recent ESTYN Reports. The table also shows the proportion of ethnic minority pupils within the participant school population, as this was presented in ESTYN Reports. During the period of my study and according to the ESTYN Reports that took place from 2002 to 2006 the average free school meal eligibility of Wales was 18.8%. As discussed in Chapter Four, between 2001 and 2007, the percentage of people in Wales from minority ethnic groups increased from 2.1 % to 2.9 % (National Statistics, 2010). The majority of ethnic minority groups are concentrated in South Wales, mainly in the cities of Cardiff, Newport and Swansea (see Gorard et al., 2004;

National Statistics, 2008, 2010; NAW, 2001 to 2009). In 2007 these groups made up almost 10% of the Cardiff population, 5.5% of the population of Newport and 2.5% of Swansea's population. In 2007, the non-white British ethnic background for the primary and secondary school population was 9.5% in South Central Wales (Mixed: 2.9; Asian: 3.5, Black: 1.5 Chinese: 0.3; Other: 1.3) and 3.7% in South East Wales (Mixed: 1.2; Asian: 1.6; Black: 0.3; Chinese: 0.2; Other: 0.4) (National Statistics, 2008). At the national level, 8.2% of primary school population and 7.2% of the secondary school population were of non-white British ethnic background (NAW, 2008). Additionally, according to the 2001 census, 4% of the population in Cardiff was Muslim (the largest in the country), whilst at the national level, Muslims accounted for less than 1% of the population (National Statistics, 2004:2). The National Statistics for Schools do not give details about the religious background of the pupils and neither do the ESTYN reports.

Table 1 also shows the history workshops that each school participated in at St Fagans: NHM, the age group of the children, and the research methods I used with each school. Schools are named as S1-9 and the teachers of the classes that participated in the study are named as T1-9. The pupils are abbreviated as P and a number. Occasionally, when I narrate an incident I use pseudonyms, i.e. 'Paul' or 'the fire extinguisher girl' in order to keep the flow of the narration of certain incidents.

School					Methods
Name	Profile			Activity	
	FSM eligibility	First language at home	Ethnic background		
S1 Year 5	1.5%	English	No information ¹⁴	<i>Maestir School Rhyd-Y-Car</i>	Observation: during the visit
S2 Year 4	4%	English	No information	Tudor Costume Tudor Cottages	Observation: during and after the visit Interviews: teacher; children
S3 Year 5	approx. 37%	No information	No information	<i>Maestir School; Rhyd-Y-Car;</i>	Observation: before and during the visit Interviews: teacher
S4 Year 5	Just under 30%	No information	No information	<i>Maestir School-Rhyd-Y-Car;</i> filled in questionnaires; Victorian chapel; Playground; Shop	Observation: before, during and after the visit Interviews: teacher; children
S5 Year 5	2.3%	English:95 % Welsh: 4% Other:1% (not specified)	No information	<i>Maestir School Rhyd-Y-Car</i>	Observation: before (whole day history lesson), during and after (whole day history lesson) the visit Interviews: children

¹⁴ According to the ESTYN Report. In all the classes of the 'no information' schools I observed, there were no pupils from other religious or ethnic backgrounds.

					(before and after the visit); teacher
S6 Year 3	29%	Ten different languages (not specified). No Welsh	50% (various)	The Celtic village; Walk around the grounds	Observation: before, during and after the visit; Interviews: teacher; children (after the visit)
S7 Year 4	30%	English	28% (various)	St Teilo's Church Tudor houses	Observation: during and after the visit Interviews: teacher; children (open discussion before the visit; interviews after the visit)
S8 Year 4	9%.	English	No information	Celtic village Walk around the grounds	Observation: before, during and after the visit Interviews: teacher; children (open discussion before the visit; interviews after the visit)
S9 Year 4	18%	English (of all but one family)	Not information	Victorian school (the teacher had recently done the teacher training course at St Fagans)	Observation: before, during and after the visit Interviews: teacher; children (open discussion before the visit; interviews after the visit)

Table 1: School profiles, activities and research methods

Table 1 shows that the study sample consisted of various ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds (see also Chapter Four). Four schools were significantly

below the Welsh average for FSM entitlement, one school was just below the average, and four schools were significantly above the Welsh average. Two schools had a significant ethnic minority population. The reports for the rest of the schools did not give specific information about the ethnic background of the pupils, but as stated, this was indicative of the non-significant numbers of ethnic minorities. Of this sample one school had 1% of children with a first language other than English or Welsh, whilst in a second school one family had a first language other than English or Welsh.

Part A. The visit: children's experiences and active learning

When I conducted my research, in 2006 to 2008 (see Appendix Two) St Fagans: NHM ran three main workshops for each of the three historical periods studied at KS2, namely the Tudors, the Victorians and the Celts. The workshops were the 'Tudor costume', the 'Victorian school of *Maestir*' and the 'Celtic village'. Since the completion of the rebuilding of St Teilo's church, in 2007, the church has been used as a resource for a number of workshops. The workshop that I observed was one of the first that took place there, and it concerned the general history of the church and everyday life in the Tudor times. The other two workshops I was present at, the 'Tudor costume' and the 'Victorian *Maestir* School' were based on role play. Children were dressed up as wealthy and poor Tudors or Victorian school children. The Celtic village could also be described as a role play workshop but in this instance only the educator/archaeologist dressed up in costume. In addition to these workshops, each of

which lasted approximately one and a half hours, a day at St Fagans: NHM included a visit to some of the reconstructed cottages and houses, either related to the period studied or to what the class have already been taught at school. It also included lunch, playtime and a visit to the shop. In other words it was a whole day out.

In my analysis I look at the workshops as organised activities. During the workshop children are in an environment organised by the museum according to its own historical and educational targets. I explore how children responded to these organised activities and their participation in these sessions. I also look at the visit to the museum grounds and the other activities such as lunch, play and shopping, in order to see how children interacted with the environment of St Fagans, their way of dealing with the place, the relations that may develop with their peers, and any historical understandings that they may gain through this process. Thus, whenever I refer to the 'visit', I mean the whole day at St Fagans, from 10:00 in the morning when the children arrived until the school's departure at around 14:00, while 'the workshop' refers to the organised activity itself.

In this first section I discuss the teachers' views on the significance of active learning, empathy and experiences, as well as the ways in which children participate in the workshops. I explore how and if these experiences are related to history as a subject. Drawing from my school data, my main argument is that a visit to St Fagans can have a very positive effect on children's social and personal development, both through the activities they engage in and the ways in which they use the place to create

their own games and memories. However, this development is not always connected with historical understandings and skills development.

Before the Visit

Children were familiar with what they were going to see and do at St Fagans: NHM before the visit. In all cases this familiarity was a result of various school activities, what the teacher had told them, and what they had heard from older pupils who had participated in the same workshops in previous years. For example in S4, an older class re-enacted what they had done at the Victorian school workshop the previous year, and so the children and parents were familiar with what they were going to do. Thus, a pattern of visit preparation was already established in the school, which not only involved the class but also parents. Consequently, for the schools in my sample the museum activity acquired a dual 'mission'; it engaged the community of the school and prepared the younger pupils for the activity itself. In the class of S5, some children were cautious of what they were going to face. They expected fun, but were also anxious about the possibility of something unpleasant occurring. As T4 explained:

With the information last year we went with the school, we came back to school and we enacted in front of all the parents and all the school and that was really good because when I did this lesson with the class this year they could remember seeing the class last year so it did help me with this year, and when we did it again this year the class that will come up next year will at least have a little bit of a memory of what is going on. (T4 interview)

Not only were children familiar with what they were going to do, but they also anticipated the extent of 'fun' they would have. During the interviews before the visit all children were looking forward to going. They were aware of the activities they

would be participating in, and they had already formed an opinion about them. They were convinced that the workshop would be fun but at the same time they were sceptical about certain activities.

E: Do you think it would be fun then?

P4: Yes, unless you will be caned. (S5, children's interview)

For most children the museum visit was associated with fun. However, some 'painful' activities, like the one referred to above, when a child expressed concern about being caned during the '*Maestir* School', were anticipated with a degree of anxiety and as something that would spoil the anticipated fun. Although children knew that it was a role play and they would only be acting, they were still afraid of being caned or at least they pretended to be scared for the sake of the role play. This fear could also have been explained by the fact that older children's scary myths, with regard to a certain situation or experience, have a decisive effect on younger children's anticipation of this unknown situation (see Pugsley et al., 1996). This reaction may be also related to what I discuss later on regarding whether children are able to empathise, and to understand what is real and what is not during a role play. Are they in a position to empathise to such a level that they express feelings of fear before the visit? Because of my presence, before the visit, the teachers spent some time asking children to relate what they had been taught in history that year. Some teachers asked children to show me their school history books. In S6, this introduction, questioning and discussion took place with both classes that were going to participate in the workshop. The teacher of S5 (T5) had prepared a whole-day history lesson for me whereas in a 'normal' day they would have

just spent one hour covering history and the visit. This session, therefore, may not have reflected the reality of an ordinary, everyday lesson.

I found that all the teachers followed similar methods to prepare for the visit. For example, they all used pictures as stimuli for a conversation. Another common characteristic was that the teachers whose class were to visit the Victorian school tried to explain to the children that the whole workshop would be a re-enactment. They tried to make clear that the strictness of the teacher and the punishments would all be part of a play. This was something that was also pointed out in the training session at St Fagan: NHM. Children had to know that the activity was not real as there had been cases where children had burst into tears (field notes, training session, Part 1). This also had to be emphasised to parents because there was an incident where one parent became annoyed when a teacher pretended to hit the child with the cane.

And the children obviously pretended to cry. She really entered to the spirit of it which was really great. To the point that one of the mums was absolutely outraged! Why on earth would I hit this child? They hadn't realised that it was a play act thing! (T5 interview)

In conclusion, most of the teachers used photographs or drawings of the equivalent historical period they were studying to engage children in a discussion. The artificial nature of the re-enactment at '*Maestir* School' had to be explained to the children in order to make them realise that it would be only pretence and play. Children, however, still expressed various feelings about what was going to happen during the workshop.

Workshops

General issues

During the workshop

My observations during the workshops, together with interviews with the children, support the main argument of this thesis about the importance that is currently placed in these settings on activity in learning. This is based on the idea that when a child is in an 'active learning' environment, they are likely to be engaged in more learning activities or tasks than they would have been at school (Hooper-Greenhill, 1995:49). Arguably, children are more eager to participate in activities when they are in an active learning environment than when they are in the classroom, even if the activity is just drawing a house interior. At the same time, the museum environment and various activities stimulate feelings. My argument is that feelings and emotions do not necessarily contribute to historical knowledge and understanding. The importance of activity in learning does not mainly lie with the motivation and expression of emotions, but, according to Vygotsky (2008), with the inner processes that a child undergoes in order to transform these feelings and emotions into knowledge.

In Chapters Two and Three I analysed the main differences between Lave and Wenger's (1991) situated learning, the constructivist approach, and activity theory, which is based on Vygotsky's (1987) theory of play and activity. Vygotsky examined psychology

As part of history of science, as a concrete context and [...] from the viewpoint of their [individuals'] correspondence to reality they [individuals] are meant to cognize. We wish to obtain a clear idea of the essence of individual and social psychology as two aspects of a single science... (Vygotsky, 1987:1).

The Vygotskian and Neo-Vygotskian approach to psychology is a synthesis of social and individual phenomena, which is used to explain the child's development and activity within the context of this synthesis: the individual and the social frame. Vygotsky and the Neo-Vygotskians have discussed an education system that would guide the child through activities that would unlock inner procedures and thus help them to improve themselves (Davydov et al., 2003: 69). Soviet psychologists also regarded activity as people's interaction with objects, in order to understand their properties and social functions, and to act upon them (Leontyev, 1978: 1). They argued that children should be encouraged to give context and meaning to their knowledge about objects, through their play (El'konin, 2000:8). Organising an activity should therefore be a means to gain further knowledge and not a goal *per se*.

From my observations, I conclude that activities organised by the museum and their subsequent integration into school based lessons, did not go any further than seeking to stir emotions and introduce new concepts that remained uncultivated. In general, children appeared to participate enthusiastically in the re-enactment workshops. They were excited during the role play and seemed to actually 'live' the moments during the 'Maestir School', the 'Celtic village', and the 'Tudor costume' workshops. There were some apparently bored pupils who tended to stare out of the window, but there rarely were more than three or four such cases in each classroom. They laughed secretly when their classmates were being punished or caned in the dim Victorian school and they made fun of their classmate 'Paul' when he wore his Tudor 'tights', during the 'Tudor Costume'. They seemed eager to handle objects and try to

guess what their function was. Booth's (1983) research on history teaching methods demonstrated that active methods of learning were more popular among pupils. Whether the task was to answer a question or to handle an object, the children always participated with more enthusiasm than when they were back in the classroom.

There are one or two important aspects worthy of note, which can be related to the ways in which children responded to re-enactment: the first was the way in which children integrated their everyday activities into re-enactment, and the second was how children conceived reality, which is also explained in the section entitled 'The rest of the visit'.

Firstly, during the '*Maestir School*' workshop, S9 children were given replicas of Victorian toys to play with, like hoops, spinning tops, and 'cup and ball' (a wooden cone with a string attached to a wooden ball, where the player has to swing the ball into the cup). The children of S9, which was the only school from those I observed that played in the yard of '*Maestir School*', played with these old fashioned toys but also discovered new uses for them. They used the spinning top to write on the ground; a group of boys used its string as a lasso and played cowboys. The same toys were given to S7, who participated in the 'St Teilo's Church' workshop after their visit to the church. In this case children seemed very enthusiastic to play with the old fashioned toys, but they did not invent other games using these toys. This difference may be an indication that the re-enactment school break of '*Maestir School*' workshop might have worked for children as their real-life school break would have. For them it seemed to be

their everyday school break both as Victorians and as children of the present. This may be indicative that children were actually ‘living’ their role as ‘Victorian’ pupils.

This observation also suggests that children adjust ‘traditional’ games into their contemporary experiences, as other studies have also suggested (see Blatchford, 1994:21-22). However, I cannot say whether and to what extent the ‘*Maestir School*’ workshop created the circumstances for these inventive games. This would need to be based on more extensive observation of playground behaviour of the pupils during their everyday school break, which was not one of my aims. This observation, however, in conjunction with my argument about the contribution of the museum environment discussed later on, indicates an environment that helped children’s inventiveness and maybe gave them the opportunity to explore games that they had not done before.

Another important observation was that, contrary to studies showing that fighting is quite a frequent game in the school playground (see Boulton, 1994), there was no fighting in any of the cases I observed. There were many other games taking place that frequently occurred in the school playground, like running around the buildings, hide and seek, hand-clapping games at the playground of St Fagans: NHM and story-telling, but not fighting. It could be argued that the grounds of St Fagans: NHM gave children the opportunity to transfer their everyday games to the museum setting and invent more games, but also to leave aside more aggressive expressions of playing, like fighting, although of course fighting is not always an aggressive expression in the playground (Boulton, 1994:54). Nevertheless, this is an important point that could warrant further study.

The second point was that of ‘reality’ and the extent to which children realised the distinction between reality and acting. An S9 girl, who was sitting at the table next to me and had been trying to follow the teacher’s stern instructions, burst into tears when she found some difficulty in writing with her ink pen. One of the parent guardians tried to calm her down, first in the classroom, and then outside in the yard. I also went outside at some point just in case it had been my presence that scared her or placed her under this kind of pressure to do everything perfectly, but I realised that I was not a central factor in this incident. There are two possible answers to what caused her such distress: it was either the fact that the child took her role very seriously, or it was something related to her personal goals or feelings.

Regardless of what the inner reasons were, it was the specific environment of role playing in the museum that appears to be behind this somewhat extreme behaviour. Although I did not witness any other incidents like this, the fact that similar cases have been noted by teachers and St Fagan’s co-ordinators strongly suggests that a re-enactment situation can stir up a variety of strong emotions. These reactions were different from those that other studies suggest occur in children’s everyday game-play practices, such as when they ‘play schools’ (acting out make-believe roles of pupils and teachers). During these everyday play practices, children usually allocate the roles themselves and act out ‘punishment’ as fun (Opie and Opie, 1969:333). During ‘*Maestir School*’, punishment was also greeted by laughs. In contrast however, during the workshop, the occasional extreme reactions I mentioned above may suggest that there is a difference between a specific museum role play and role play as it occurs in

the school playground and during everyday playtime. It may show, for instance, that children, when assigned a situation to enact by adults, may not always be able to distinguish reality from their obligation to perform as part of the curriculum. This is an important issue that also suggests the need for further pedagogic study: to what extent is a re-enactment assignment at museums perceived by children as similar to the everyday role play they engage in during their playtimes? This reinforces my argument that, as discussed in the following chapter, there is a need for further study of pedagogical practice in museums.

Similar issues concerning ‘reality’ came up during and following the ‘Celtic village’ workshop (Figures 3 and 4), although in this instance it was during a discussion as opposed to emotional activity discussed above. On our way to the Celtic village, children from S8 were talking about whether *Caradoc*, the character the archaeologist impersonated, was a real Celt, and, consequently, whether all the things they were looking at and touching (Figure 4) were actually real.

Reality, thus, was an issue that concerned children during the workshop. This requires further psychological and pedagogic study. My concern was to see how this issue was negotiated on return to the school.



Figure 3: The Celtic Village

Back in the classroom

These discussions were brought back into the class during our interviews:

P4: Do you know the smoke? It wasn't real

E: Do you think it wasn't real?

P4, 2, 3: No it wasn't

P1: Maybe they did have some real [...]

E: Why do you think it wasn't real?

P4: No because if he was a real Celt he wouldn't have his jacket and he had a bag to carry about

P3: He was one of the guards of the houses I think. I saw him the last time I went

...

P1: ...It wasn't a real skull...

P4: I know

E: Wasn't it?

P3: When I touched it, it was fake

E: Ah! I thought it was real

P4: It looked real [...]

(S8, after visit, children's interview)

A group of children are asked to go to the computer, pick up one of the photos taken during the visit and write about it. One girl is choosing a photo of the interior of the Celtic hut and she strangely focuses on the fire extinguisher that was in the hut. She is looking at it a lot! Then she goes to the teacher and asks what this was for. 'Oh that's for us' says the teacher. (S8, after visit, field notes).

Children were asked to draw pictures of the Celtic hut, the Celtic warrior and his wife. They started doing this a week before I visited the school and they were now completing their pictures. I walked around the tables. Three children – girls - had drawn a modern house, with the roof and windows and the Celt warrior with his wife! (S4, after visit, field notes)

It was impressive for me to see how the ‘fire extinguisher girl’ realised that this is an odd thing to find in a Celtic hut. She realised that this was a modern piece of equipment and not a Celtic artefact, although she did have to ask for help in order to explain its presence. The children of the interview group also seemed confused about what was real and what was not. Even the smoke for P4 must have been fake, a part of the whole replica of the Celtic hut. The fact that the girls drew the Celtic hut as if it was a ‘modern’ house’ but drew the Celts as Celts, is noteworthy. I would expect them to draw a more convincing picture, given the fact that they had already seen and played in a Celtic hut during the visit. It was also notable that such a level of confusion from such a large number of children seemed to be more in relation to the Celtic hut than the Victorian school.



Figure 4: Inside the Celtic hut

There are various explanations for these observations, as well as the extreme emotions caused by the re-enactment. Studies conducted with pre-schoolers concerning role playing in story telling show that children experience the various episodes in which they are engaged as real, and often cry (El'koninova, 2001:40). Therefore, they do not simply enact the story but actually live it (El'koninova, 2001: 45). Despite the fact that my research was conducted with primary school children and not pre-schoolers (see El'koninova's, 2001), I can apply this insight to the episodes I detailed above, as some of the children still had difficulty in distinguishing the line between reality and play. Maybe the children concerned had not yet reached the level of development required in order to understand this distinction. According to El'koninova's view, the moment that a child assumes a role as constitutive, this indicates a step towards his or her development (El'koninova, 2001:32). Thus, re-enactment at the museum could give the

child a decisive opportunity for making this developmental step. Equally important here would be the moment when the adult, in this case the teacher, helps the child to draw distinctions between the imagined world and reality (El'koninova, 2001:45).

The children of S8 tried to solve the problem of reality by themselves through discussion, without the teacher's involvement. The 'fire extinguisher girl' was puzzled and chose to ask the teacher, who gave her a factual answer. The girls who drew a modern Celtic house were left to express themselves as such. This led me to draw two preliminary conclusions, although detailed research on child's behavior and intellectual development would be needed. Firstly, children had the opportunity to engage in a conversation in order to solve a problem. Arguably, 'the transformation of a problem situation into a learning situation is the preliminary phase of learning activity' (Repkin, 2003:29). In the above cases I argue that the learning potential of re-enactment in the museum and the buildings at the museum created the circumstances for the children to form their own problem-solving interacting environment by engaging in conversation with one another. It also gave them incentives to figure out for themselves what was real and what was artificial. It was the museum activity, the 'out-of-context' environment of the museum (Lave and Wenger, 1991:35) that gave children the opportunity to come face to face with notions that they may have not encountered previously at school.

My second conclusion was that children engaged in such a discussion because I was there to interview them. It also became apparent that these issues had puzzled children individually, and in the case of the 'fire extinguisher', the pupil decided to ask

the teacher to solve her intellectual questioning. The problem, however, is that important issues such as the nature of reality were not raised by any teacher, at least not in my presence. Teachers did not try to take the activity a step further and create these interactive situations that could have engaged children in discussions like the one I had with them; indeed, the teachers may not even have been aware of them. Consequently, the role play acted as an incentive that 'unlocks the circle of internal mental processes that opens it up to the objective world' (Leontiev, 1977: 5), but the teachers' role could have been more decisive in trying to encourage and facilitate conversations or creating activities that would have unlocked and given voice to those internal mental processes. I analyse this issue further in the following section.

This argument, of course, is closely related to the extent to which teachers are able to encourage various types of group work and interaction between the pupils. For example, the conclusions of the ORACLE study, conducted from 1975-1980, showed that in classes averaging 30 pupils, there was a high degree of individualisation. In their attempts to keep the class busy and quiet, teachers did not have the time or the energy to interact with the pupils, which resulted in teachers neglecting wider pedagogical considerations (Galton et al., 1980:157-158). As a result, the children may have been engaged in conversations that teachers may not have been able to listen to and direct towards work tasks, rather than general chat.

Twenty years after the first ORACLE research, the ORACLE 1996 study on the same schools showed that despite the fact that in absolute terms, teachers interacted more with their pupils, in relative terms, the amount of interaction time was the same as

the time spent in the 1976 classrooms (Galton et al., 1999:105). This means that the classroom of 1996 involved more group work than the classroom of 1976, with children talking more to each other. However, the interaction between the pupils was not necessarily work-related, and the teacher did not have the time for one-to-one interaction with the children (Galton et al., 1999). In this sense, the interaction between teacher and pupil was relatively the same in 1996 as it was in 1976.

In my study, children were also split into groups but in most cases were given a specific written task, which was not actually helping the interaction. The only exception was T8, who, after giving groups a pile of photographs of the visit and the 'Celtic village' workshop, asked them to write an account of the visit, which was a task that all teachers set. Contrary to other teachers, however, T8 asked children to discuss the task and the visit. T8 then discussed the visit with the children individually, paying particular attention to those who had faced problems with starting the task.

T8 was the only teacher who asked children to discuss the task between them. Other teachers asked children to do the same task but expected them to work individually. However, as was the case with all the teachers, T8 had to focus on the task, rather than stimulate discussions of the kind I had had with the children. This is evidently because, as a researcher, I had the time to engage in such discussions. For example, although 'fire extinguisher' girl asked her teacher a question that indicated some confusion, T8 did not take the time to guide the child, to solve the problem by herself. The teacher might also have taken the opportunity to open up a discussion with the classroom about what was real and what was not. Maybe the girl did understand the

use of the fire extinguisher, but there may have been other children who were still puzzled. Lack of time or specific teaching style may explain why the teacher chose to just give a quick answer. Pedagogic research on the learning that occurs during and after the workshop, and the ways in which children differentiate between the real from the artificial during re-enactment would be necessary in order to help teachers to identify these problems and to help children overcome them.

The rest of the visit

Visiting the grounds: stories and jokes

In this section I examine the importance of children's activities during their visit to the museum grounds. These activities helped the children construct different relations with their peers and assisted in developing their historical skills, the nature of which is examined in Part B of the chapter. In this section I look at the common stories and games created throughout the visit, and their subsequent impact on children's recall and impression of the visit. I conclude that, as during the workshop, children were also more eager to participate in activities at the museum and that their stories and games followed them back to school, where they were integrated into our interviews and their own discussions.

Even when the children had to fill in questionnaires or draw a picture of a house interior, the visit to the museum's reconstructed houses and cottages was not as fixed, organised and history lesson-oriented as the workshops. The visit gave children the opportunity to work together, such as when a specific task was set for them, and to

interact during the creation of their own games. These games and stories produced memories and in some cases, as I argue later, knowledge that followed the children into the classroom.



Figure 5: The C-i-irculaa pigsty

Walking from one house to another gave children time to create their own stories, jokes and games. One of the most indicative cases of how jokes and play could follow the child to the classroom and actually became part of a history lesson was the ‘C-i-irculaa’ (Figure 5) incident within S9. To have some material for the ‘*Maestir School*’ questions (see Appendix Two), a teacher made the ‘mistake’ of saying to her children in a distinct posh accent that ‘The shape of the pig’s house is ‘c-i-irculaa’. One of the

boys picked it up immediately, started laughing and kept repeating it and by the end of the day 'c-i-irculaa' had become the motto for the whole class.

In another case, when S8 was doing 'the wattle and daub', a girl, 'Jud', became stuck in the mud and almost fell in. This incident was still a focus of the children's interviews two weeks later when I visited the school for my observations. Similarly, the rumour spread by some of the boys of S6 that they saw ghosts in one of the farmhouses, was still a major topic in the children's interviews, three weeks after I visited the school for an observation. When S4 visited the Victorian chapel, the teacher explained that poor people used to sit upstairs and rich people on the ground floor. This caused pandemonium among the children, who tried to take the ground floor seats in order to be one of the rich. A wooden case in one of the small rooms of the 'posh' Tudor house was the centre of excited discussions among the children of all three schools during the Tudor workshops:

Hey, there is a coffin in this room! Children are rushing to see the coffin. Teachers are approaching. A boy grabs a classmate to show him the 'coffin'. (S6, during the visit, field notes)

P4: It looked like a coffin but it wasn't. It looked like a coffin but it wasn't

P1: Yes

P3: There was a coffin in there!

P6: Yeah, I know. I looked at it and thought might be a dead man in there

(S6 after visit, children's interview)

A group of boys just showed up from the back yard running and shouting to another group of girls who were about to go to the back yard. 'There is a ghost back there, there is!' Girls looked at them suspiciously but they still went back to the yard. Boys tried the same story on another group of girls. They were suspicious, they

kind of seemed afraid but they went to the back yard. (S3, during the visit, field notes)

These were all examples of how children created their own games and stories during the visit. They seemed to own the place. The museum environment seemed to children with a blank canvas where they could freely organise their own interaction and socialisation. They played in groups, they invented names and stories about objects and they even felt free to make fun of what their teacher had said. These opportunities for children to develop a more relaxed relationship with people from their school environment, even the teacher, can make museums invaluable resources for children's development.

Stories, and especially spooky stories and songs, are common among primary school children. As Opies (1959: 32-40) point out, children after the age of ten seem to find the matter of death funny, and at the same time, enjoy telling spooky stories and creating a 'spooky atmosphere'. This 'spooky atmosphere' I realised, was facilitated by the museum itself. The old buildings and the grounds of the museum worked as an impetus for children to tell spooky stories.

It was the museum grounds, I argue, that gave children the opportunity for this interaction, which was completely the opposite from the solitary interaction between multimedia computer-mediated communication and visitors that other researchers have found. As Heath and vom Lehn (2008:71) found in their study on interactivity at museums with multimedia, where the visitor has to interact with a computer, the computer tended to disrupt social interaction. In contrast, a museum environment, like

St Fagans: NHM, encourages the development of social interaction between the members of the class. This is more evident during the visit to the houses than during the organised activities that are fixed and assign specific roles to each pupil.

When I returned to the schools, I realised that these stories, plays and jokes, created during the visit, were the first things that the children recalled in the classroom. For example, when writing their impressions of their day at St Fagans, the majority of the S9 children wrote that 'Miss said that the house was 'circula-aa'. They also repeated this phrase during their interview, still laughing as they recalled the incident.

The visit therefore created a whole new set of relations between the teacher and the pupils. Making fun of what a teacher said during the visit seemed to be subconsciously legitimised as a St Fagans' experience and therefore was permitted to be written down in children's memoirs of the visit. Arguably, jokes are a common way for children to establish their identities in the playground (see Knapp and Knapp, 1976; Measor and Woods 1984). Knapp and Knapp (1976:93) comment that jokes may also compensate for a possible sense of 'powerlessness' in the classroom. Measor and Woods (1984:111-113) explain that jokes used by twelve year olds serve as neutralisers of the power differences, as a way to transform a boring reality and as a way to make the subject relevant to their culture. They also argue that some teachers can manipulate jokes, while others cannot (Measor and Woods, 1984:112). It seems that the museum gives another dimension to the joke, allowing both teacher and pupils to establish a code of silence that entitles them to have their shared memory and to joke about it. This, arguably, can be part of a teaching approach that involves humour as a way

towards fraternisation (Measor and Woods, 1984:85). There is one further point of note, however: in the museum context, contacts between the teacher and the pupils were not as officious and managerial as they have been observed to be during school break time (Blatchford, 1994:30). On the contrary, the less formal environment of the museum gave the joke a light hearted character and the honour, in turn, of being written down in the narrative about the day at St Fagans: NHM.

Other factors and incidents that can influence children's visits

The grounds

Pupils also experienced various incidents or engaged in various activities during their visit, which they kept on referring to during their interviews. These activities included the playground, the shop and gazing the animals in the grounds of St Fagans: NHM, and, in two cases, the presence of other schools or groups that interfered with their visit or their play. The long hours of walking and wandering around the grounds were also memorable to the children.

P1: Oh you know what I liked? The animals!

P3: Oh yeah the animals! The piggy!

P1: I liked the lambs!

P2: The piggies are nice

(M School, After visit, Children's interview)

E: What was the thing you didn't like then?

Ps: The French teenagers!

(S4, after visit, Children's interview).

P2: But what was the worst part was that there was one park under five that was open but the park over five was closed and we couldn't play in the park!

P6: Last time we played, didn't we?

P4: I didn't go last time

(S2, after visit, Group A)

P1: I got really tired!

(S2, after visit, children's interview, Group B)

This interaction started from the time they entered the museum grounds. Most of them expected to find me there, at the museum, waiting for their bus. This first impression of me waiting for them and of them waving at me from the bus was what they still remembered when we got back to school when we were discussing the visit.

E: What is the first thing that comes to your mind?

....

P2....I remember I saw you first!

(S8, after visit, children's interviews)

All living and non-living aspects of the museum seemed to influence the children's memories of the visit. For example, in all but one case, children were looking forward to going to the shop. Many children mentioned the shop as the best part of the visit.

Senses

When asked 'What did you/didn't you like?' many of the pupils' answers were associated with sensory experiences: 'It was smoky in there'; 'The house stunk; I wouldn't like to live in these round houses...because it gets smoky'.

P3: When I touched it, it was fake

The educator gives the Sir Edward's garment to the children on the front row and asks them to touch it. The she gives them Squire John's trousers to touch them and asks them if they feel any difference (field notes, S2, visit).

Senses, especially smell, seemed to evoke memories of the visit. Touch was another significant sense that helped children understand a society of the past. Senses are part of what the museum and teachers mean by 'experience'. For the museum, experience is a style of learning (NMW, 2005a) but it also motivates empathy. In the following section I discuss whether, and if so, to what extent, the NMW and the teachers believed that these experiences and empathy constitute historical knowledge.

Measor and Woods' (1984) study shows that certain activities that include intense smell and physical activity have less appeal for girls than the boys. In contrast, the physical activities at St Fagans: NHM, such as playing in the Victorian school back yard or making the 'wattle and daub', seemed to engage both genders in the same manner, whilst the 'smoky' and the 'stinky' house interiors had the same appeal for both genders. The same was observed amongst the ethnic minority groups. Boys and girls from all ethnic backgrounds I observed participated in the physical activities in the same way and with the same excitement. I argue that, as with the jokes, it seemed to be the St Fagans: NHM environment itself, and the feeling of the day out, made all pupils eager to participate in the activity, and that gave the activity a more accessible character. Jokes, activities, plays and smells seemed to become a communal experience at the open-air museum, as opposed to in the classroom. For this conclusion to be adequately supported, however, longitudinal ethnographic research that compares the cultures and identities of pupils in the classroom and at the museum is required.

Part B. From collective experiences to historical skills: children's perceptions of history

In this second part of the chapter I analyse how the NC tries to teach historical skills to children. I divide this part into seven sections according to the structure of the NC. The first five sections apply to each of the skills for history in the NC. The sixth section relates to the Common Requirements, which the NC expects teachers to integrate into all subjects, including History Maths, English, and ICT. Finally, the seventh section refers to the specific Common Requirement, the *Curriculum Cymreig*, which history implements by applying all periods/subjects within the Welsh context. My main argument is that although teachers and the staff of St Fagans: NHM were enthusiastic about encouraging children towards historical enquiry, they actually encouraged children to conduct an enquiry about objects and make superficial typological connections. Moreover, chronological awareness was restricted to the memorisation of some dates and not to the understanding of the continuity of historical periods and the processes that formed the period studied (see also Chapter Five). As such, the children were unable to understand causations in history, or what constitutes the conditions of wealth and poverty in each period.

Similarly, Welsh history was taught by describing everyday life in Wales rather than explaining it. Furthermore, in cases such as the Tudor period, the Welsh situation was not always taught explicitly. Even during the museum workshops, Henry VIII and Elizabeth I were the main figures who dominated a typical discussion, with little if any reference to the wider Welsh or social context of the period.

Chronological Awareness

The NC defines the skill of chronological awareness as the pupil's ability to use chronological frameworks and conventions which describe the passing of time, e.g. BC, AD, century or decade (ACCAC, 2000a:9). In the cases I observed, neither the museum nor the teachers helped the children acquire chronological awareness. As analysed in Chapter Five, the attitude towards chronological awareness was connected to the teachers' own experiences or views on this matter. Additionally, teachers and advisers viewed chronological awareness as the memorisation of dates, and it was not regarded as the ability to use chronological frameworks and describe the passing of time.

More specifically, during the 'Celtic Village', S8 children were asked by *Madoc* – (the archaeologist impersonating a Celtic warrior) to tell him when they thought the Celts lived. The children's answers ranged from 100 to one million years ago. Their class, following the rolling programme, had been taught about the Tudors the year before I observed them, while during the period of my study they were learning about the Celts. This chronological inconsistency in the teaching of historical periods may have been one reason why the children were not able to grasp the meaning of the passing of time. T8 used a timeline (see Chapter Five) which is a ruler that shows historical periods in chronological order. This tool was also utilised by most of the other teachers in my study.

Another example of children finding it difficult to grasp the problematic concept of time came from an interview with one of the groups from S7:

P4: How many years ago was it [the Iron Age]?

E: How many years do you think?

P4: 200 years, 100 years...

P3: It was when the Tudors were alive

E: Yeah, so how many years was that?

(They talk all together: Two are trying to find the date)

P4: So it was 45 years

P5: You mean 450

P4: Yeah

(S7, after the visit, children's interview, Group B)

In S6, children were asked to draw Celtic houses. Some of them drew the huts they saw at the Celtic village but a couple of them drew a modern house with a Celt next to it. This may suggest that children were unable to distinguish the past from the present. Their teacher, for example, believed that children were not able to understand the essence of time.

Just with history because it's so far away from their understanding of time you tend to find that children get a concept of say 100 years ago. (T6 interview)

The question here is: if that is the case, are we going to leave children with this misconception until they grow older? As already mentioned, Stow and Haydn (2000) suggest that from the age of six, the child starts being able to distinguish between eras and categorise pictures accordingly. This means that a child can understand the essence of time and teachers should try to help them do so, instead of simply assuming that children 'cannot understand'. Besides, the NC itself expects children to learn about the continuity of history and the passing of time, which means that teachers and the museum should try to work together in this direction.

Another approach to chronological awareness was detailed by T4. As discussed in Chapter Five, T4 regarded chronological awareness as the memorisation of dates, as a

special skill, and as an annoying and boring obligation from her own school years. Therefore she did not insist on teaching chronology. Only T5 set out to teach chronological awareness, but this was not a priority for the other teachers. Even so, T5 also used the timeline but only to help children grasp a chronological sequence of historical periods and nothing more. Timelines alone may not be enough for children to understand the passing of time and the differences between historical periods. Visualising historical periods on a ruler cannot help children understand the characteristics that distinguish one period from another or the actual processes that characterise each period. Questions therefore need to be addressed regarding the extent to which children are able to understand chronology through specific learning practices and the extent to which teachers' attitudes towards chronology can actually determine children's chronological awareness.

At the same time, the NC does not actually suggest chronological understanding as a flowing and integral part of historical knowledge. Chronological awareness does not refer to the memorisation of dates, but to a person's ability to 'construct coherent explanations and understand 'relationships' of events and this distinction has to be clear for the teacher and for the child' (Stow and Haydn, 2000:86). Chronological awareness, therefore, is an integral part of our historical knowledge and understanding. In the case of S4, for example, children could recall dates. Nonetheless this is not indicative of understanding processes, which, interwoven with the passing of time, leads to an appreciation of the characteristics of a period. Needless to say, determining whether or not this skill of memorising dates can eventually lead to chronological awareness

requires detailed pedagogic research. This neglect of chronological awareness has its negative effect on the rest of the 'skills'; historical knowledge and understanding, interpretation and enquiry.

Historical Knowledge and Understanding

The second skill the NC tries to inspire in children is historical knowledge and understanding. The NC presents three essential elements or characteristics of historical knowledge and understanding. I analyse the first two under the title of 'Understanding a different society', where I argue that the NC, despite its directions, is not formed in a way that helps children understand societies of the past and the transition from one society to the other. In the second category, I look at causality in history and I argue that, despite the directives of the NC, children do not, at least from what I observed, actually learn to explore the causes behind a historical event. Through my analysis of the classroom observations, interviews and documents, I conclude that the museum does not help children to learn how to understand social relations in the periods studied.

Empathy, experiences and history

There are general issues, as a result of the re-enactment, that could be more relevant to the child's general personal and social development. However this is not the focus of the present study. This study concentrates to the children's historical understanding as a result of their participation in the history workshops at St Fagans: NHM. The majority of the children vividly lived out the re-enactment; they were puzzled by the division between reality and artificiality; they were exposed to issues that they had not

encountered before, and they had the opportunity to play, invent new games, and find novel forms of interaction with each other and their teacher. They also had the chance to reflect upon these issues when they returned to the classroom. I noted, however, that teachers did not try to exploit the opportunity that the museum afforded them by raising issues that may have concerned the children. In this section I turn to the historical aspect of the visit. I explain that teachers seemed more concerned about the historical aspect of the workshop, which was in fact the purpose of their visit anyway.

The main motive for teachers bringing their classes to St Fagans: NHM appeared to be the opportunity to develop children's experiences and empathy in order for them to acquire a better historical understanding. Therefore, I explore the way in which the NMW and teachers regard historical empathy and re-enactment in the cases I observed. As learning for the NMW is 'what people do when they want to make sense of the world' (NMW, 2005c, no page numbers), I conclude that, as far as the museum is concerned, experience through re-enactment constitutes learning. In contrast, empathy and experience for the teachers of my study was a pathway to memory that could lead to historical understanding. At the same time, empathy sometimes had the opposite results from what the teachers had expected. It eventually led to misconceptions that arose from children being left to make their own assumptions, based on the emotions they experienced during their workshop.

Consequently, following the definition of historical knowledge I gave in Chapters One and Two, I conclude that NMW and St Fagans seem to follow a constructivist approach to learning. In addition, the historical re-enactment that characterises history

workshops at St Fagans promotes an approach to historical knowledge that seeks to stir up emotions, rather than assisting children in learning about the processes that created the historical conditions they are studying.

As explained in Chapter Five, the majority of the teachers I interviewed regarded experiences as a pathway to memory. The meaning the teachers ascribed to experience was any type of active participation, like making or constructing something, touching objects to understand their texture, looking at and walking in and out of houses of the past, or, finally, re-enacting a historical event. These experiences were their main goal of their museum visit, so that children can actually understand or 'envisage' (T7) things they saw in the books.

The other important issue is that this emotional approach, and the idea of empathy, appealed to the teachers. However, children were not given an opportunity through activity and interaction to reflect on these emotional issues. Children re-enacted a Victorian school environment, they visited some small houses, and they learnt about how difficult life could be for a Celtic child, but there was no opportunity for them to discuss or analyse their feelings and thoughts. In these instances, re-enactment was not followed up by learning in the classroom. Zuckerman (2003:183) explains that:

The learning activity does not develop the initially non reflective ability, such as trustfulness, empathy, mimetic behaviour and spontaneous flight of imagination. [...] These talents are promoted by other activities which are enriched by the learning activity but not substituted by it.

As previously discussed, the education system should encourage the child, through activities, to 'unlock inner procedures' that will bring them to a position where they can 'improve themselves' (Davydov et al., 2003:69; Elkonin, 2000). The curriculum or the educator must also strike a balance between various activities because, according to Zuckerman (2003:184), building only the learning activity without taking into account the effects that this may have in children's development may 'result in a lopsided child development'. During my research, this latter issue seemed to be the case. A learning environment, defined as a shared problem space Haenen et al. (2003:246) that invites students to participate in a process of negotiation and co-construction of knowledge, was not created in 'my' classes. Indeed, an activity was provided in a learning environment different to that of the classroom. The main characteristic of this activity was to stimulate the children's minds through emotive experiences.

Children were also expected to empathise with the life in the past. Empathy took on another meaning in the case where the teacher wanted the children to share the feelings or the life of people from the past in order to write a better 'historical story'. Empathy was a means to a better historical understanding. Empathising for this teacher equalled understanding. However, as Stockley (1983) observes, teachers or adults are not always in a position to identify what could make a child empathise. Low-Beer (1989:9) explains that feelings can be unexpected and we may fail to feel what we have anticipated supporting. Therefore, she argues, empathy cannot be easily assessed as it seeks to stimulate feelings or certain thoughts.

In my research, many children actually found the *Rhyd-Y-Car* cottages and the circular Celtic houses quite exciting and cosy, rather than proof of a life of hardships. In other cases, some boys said that they would have preferred working in the fields than going to school (S2, children's interview). In these instances empathy did not work in the way the teachers wanted it to; as a medium of understanding a historical period. Based primarily on emotions, the teachers expected children to feel lucky that they did not have to work hard in the fields. The emotions of an adult, however, can be different from those of a child. As a result, some of the children of my study did not share the same feelings about the past as their teachers.

Children may have gained a better grasp of the hardships of the industrial Victorian Wales and Britain or of the life in Celtic times if they had studied further issues rather than their experience being based on empathy alone. I would agree with those who argue that there are cases in which there is no need to ask students to empathise in order to study different views or achieve historical understanding (Harris, 2003; Low-Beer, 1989:10). In my study, for example, the ways in which empathy was used to appeal to their feelings had the opposite effect of helping them to understand a past society. I expand this argument below.

Understanding a different society

According to the NC, the first lesson that children should be taught in order to acquire historical knowledge is the 'characteristics of the periods studied and the diversity of experience within each one' (ACCAC, 2000a:9). The second characteristic of historical

‘Early Wales and Britain’, the pupils ‘...should be taught about the ways in which its [British Isles] societies were shaped by different people and factors and about the ways of life in the societies studied’ (ACCAC, 2000a:9, my emphasis). As discussed in Chapter Five, we see that the phrase ‘ways that the society was shaped’ disappears as we move on to the explanation of later historical periods, like the subject of ‘Life in Wales and Britain’ in either the Tudor or Stuart Times. The pupils have to be taught about ‘...the way of life of people at all levels of society, illuminated by a study of significant individuals and well documented events of the period’ (ACCAC, 2000a:9). The same applies for the subject of ‘Life in Modern Wales and Britain’. Although the first element that is presented for historical understanding is the ability to know the characteristics of the societies studied, and the diversity of experience in each, there is no suggestion for making societal connections regarding these two periods in the NC.

It could be argued that in the workshops for history at St Fagans: NHM, connections between past and present are constantly made. M5 explained in our interview that ‘The Tudor workshops are mainly object- and building-oriented’, and based on my data I argue that this was the case for all the workshops. Connections between the past and the present were limited to artefacts, objects and discussion about the ways in which objects and buildings define the different between historic and present lifestyles.

This is of course an aspect that the NC promotes but it constitutes only one aspect of historical knowledge: the understanding of everyday life through everyday objects and housing. However, there were no further discussions about the general contexts and conditions that surrounded these objects. In my interviews with the children, they frequently repeated some of the terms that had arisen before, during and after the visit. This indicated that some new information was acquired. Whether this information was going to be part of the children's historical knowledge or whether it was just a mechanical repetition that may turn into knowledge, I am not in a position to tell, as this is not a longitudinal study.

Furthermore, the museum educators' attempts to make connections between the past and the present were not always either successful or meaningful. In some cases connections and similarities were imposed on the children. In the 'Tudor Times' workshop children were asked to find evidence that suggested that specific farm houses were poor or rich and to estimate the price of the house in pounds. I discuss the first task later on. The second task could not lead to historical understanding, as estimating costs is a complicated concept for children. Their answers ranged from a thousand pounds to ten thousand pounds. Some of them were asking their teachers to suggest an answer.

In another case, when S7 was participating in the 'Tudor' workshop, the educator insisted on finding similarities between an object from the Tudor era and a modern one; however, children could not identify any:

Then the educator shows something. Something that she claims that looks like a Nintendo [There was a discussion before about what was their favourite pastime on a Sunday and most of them said playing Nintendo]

The children are strongly disagreeing with a big “Nooooo”, that is “No way miss. This is not even close to a Nintendo”

P: It looks like a mirror

Again there is a lively reaction and discussion about what the thing looks like

P: It looks like a mirror. What we’ve got here is what we call a “horn book”.

Books were so expensive and school was so expensive... (S7, visit, field notes)

Therefore, the evidence that the children were asked to find, and the connections with the present they were asked to make, concerned mainly objects, and some of these connections were occasionally manufactured. The educator had an opinion, which she presented to the children, instead of letting them first try to find similarities between the two objects themselves.

There was also the potential for generalisation in what the educator said to the children, for example, that in Tudor Times people played *knappan* ‘all together’ and that Tudor people were either very rich and ‘lucky’, like Henry the VIII, or were poor farmers, with a hard life.

M: Now at the time of Henry the VIII... he lived in a very, very luxurious house, with lots of servants, lots of nice clothes, jewels, crowns but most of the people were not so lucky, especially in Pontarddulais where the church [St Teilo’s] comes from. In Tudor times were mainly people working in the farms. Children and adults were working hard all the time to feed the family and to keep them fed over the winter. And another thing that we know that they did is that they would have come to church every Sunday. We know this because it was the law. What do you like to do on Sunday?

P1: Lying in bed

P2: Lying in bed all day!

P3: Go on the Play-station

P4: Church

P5: Play football.

M: In Tudor times a very popular thing to do would be to play sports in the church yard. What do you usually expect to see find in a church yard?

P1: Graves?

P2: People praying?

M: In Tudor times there was one day of the week when you could meet your friends because you were busy farming and then you could play a game together as a village. (And then she shows a *knappan* ball and she asks the children to repeat the name again. She explains that it was a very popular game in West Wales). (S7, visit, audio taped and field notes)

The above dialogue created an over-simplified vision of Tudor times as it divided people into the very rich and the farmers, whose lives were difficult. However, the educator could have made a substantial connection between the past and the present if she had helped children realise that a contemporary farmer's life is still difficult - as they have to work outside, their income depends on the weather etc - although not as difficult as the Tudor farmer's life. The child has to realise that it is the changes in technology and society that are responsible for contemporary farmers living an easier life than during the time of the Tudors. Difficulties in the everyday life of past eras, as mentioned in the previous section, might not have only been due to poverty but to a lack of the resources we have today, which have been a result of technological progress. The fact that their houses were 'stinky' was because of the prevalent conditions of the time, not necessarily because of their poverty.

As also pointed out by The Historical Association's report:

Sometimes pupils get the impression that all children who worked in industry in Victorian times had the same experience and that the negative experiences of work were confined to urban areas (HA, 2007:25).

Later on in the same document we read:

If, for example, the Tudors are taught so that there is little reference to the role of women and children in society, religious issues of the period or the role of the wider world in the development of the prosperity of the period, then children are likely to have an incomplete and possibly stereotypical view of the period (HA, 2001:25).

Children were left with the impression from the workshop at St Fagans that Tudor times were all about poor and rich people with no levels in between.

On the contrary, connections between the everyday life of a Celt and life today appeared more explicit and helpful for the children in the 'Celtic Village' activity. The questions asked by T6 concerning the Celtic life, i.e. 'What did they hunt? Who did they fight? What jobs did they do?' (S6, after visit, field notes), and the connections with the present, i.e. 'Who did the Celts fight? Imagine Cardiff City vs. Swansea. They wouldn't like each other would they?' (T6, after visit, field notes), were more helpful for the child to make a connection between 'then' and 'now' due to the nature of the Iron Age society. The Iron Age society was a self-sufficient society and the relations among the members of the tribe as well as the relations among the Celtic tribes can be easily comprehended by a child. Furthermore, questions referring to Celtic art and Celtic crafts were adequate for a child to understand a simple society. It can be more difficult to explain more advanced and complex societies though, such as the Tudors or the Victorians.

The children of my study were not helped to understand basic characteristics of the Tudor and Victorian society. Instead, the children were left to form a view about who was rich and poor in the Tudor times based on their experiences. Thus, I came face to face with Lee's (1984: 111) argument that:

Familiarity with content in a modern context is often cited by teachers as a major obstacle to imagination: children may simply assume that familiar beliefs and goals were current in the period they were studying, with anachronistic results.

Almost 25 years on, this statement seems still to be the case, as illustrated in the following extract from the S6 children's interview:

P1: And they probably didn't have many rooms in the house if you were not rich and it will be damp and it would be smelly. But if you were rich like Henry the VIII you would have palaces and big houses...

P4: I know! I've been to Hertford Court and that was massive

P1:...if you were not so rich you'd have a house with some rooms, I'd say four rooms or two rooms like the poor house there was only one room with a wooden board where everyone slept and they just put straw on it... (S6, after visit, children's interview, Group A).

In Group B the following discussion took place:

P1: And then we went to the farmer's houses and we saw some animals

P2: We went inside the house, the poor farm house and it stank in there

P3: There was no chimney

P1: There was a little hole like a fire place

E: In the poor one?

P: Yes. (S6, after visit, children's interview, Group B)

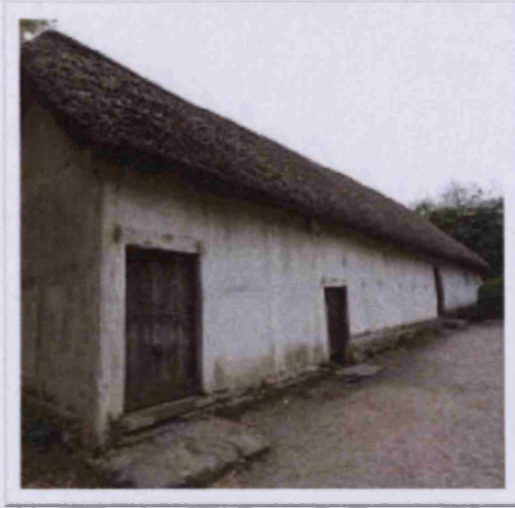


Figure 6: The poor Tudor house



Figure 7: The 'rich' Tudor house

The 'poor' house (Figure 6) the children referred to was actually a rich farmhouse but different from the 'rich' (Figure 7) farmhouse. The children from S2 also had this misunderstanding. Children could not actually distinguish the difference between rich

and poor in the historical context they were studying. Their perception of what could be rich and poor was based on their senses and personal experiences. It was not made clear to them that wealth in Tudor times came from the land, and that therefore having a farmhouse like that constituted wealth.

These observations raise questions concerning children's development in relation to their ability to understand concepts and move beyond their personal conception of the world. Although my study is not orientated around cognitive psychology, I do suggest some explanations for my findings, which, of course, require further study. As analysed in Chapter Two, Piaget and Inhelder (1967) suggest that children are 'egocentric' and therefore unable to grasp meanings and relations that are outside their own experiences. Can children, think for themselves, 'free' from their familiar world (Donaldson, 1978), and understand connections and processes in history? However, Piaget and Inhelder's egocentrism has been highly criticised (see Butterworth, 1987:65; El'konin, 2000:7; Leontyev, 1977: 3, 29) on the grounds that they have been unable to show how a child is developing from one stage to another. Piaget's explanation sees children as individuals isolated from their society, 'egocentric' therefore, who adapt themselves to society, which is viewed as the world of adults (El'konin, 2000:8-9).

Following the sociocultural approach, I argue that children are not 'egocentric' and that their mental development is subject to historical changes. In this sense, a child's development is not something fixed; rather it changes according to historical circumstances. Therefore, as I suggested above, an education system, a lesson or a curriculum should be designed in a way that helps children understand interrelations

between artefacts and their social context. The NC expects children to be taught about these relations, but from my observations this did not take place. What this study suggests is that this omission or neglect takes place because it is not a priority either for the NC or for the museum. I will analyse this further in the following sections.

‘How’ versus ‘why’

According to the NC, the third element of historical knowledge and understanding is the pupil’s ability to identify the causes and consequences of certain events (ACCAC, 2000a:9). Thus, question and answer tasks structured around finding evidence and the reasons behind something dominating the workshops, the before-and-after-visit lessons, the NC targets for history and the NMW learning vision. This came across in teachers’ interviews:

E: I realised that you always ask the children “Why” that happened. You always come back to that. Is that one of your aims?

T2: I think it’s just good teaching practice to getting children to ask questions and children do tend to ask questions. Why did that change from one house to another? You can see this morning’s lesson. (T2 interview)

However, finding causes and effects was not present in children’s activities in and outside the classroom. When children participated in the Victorian school, they were told about and ‘experienced’ the ‘Welsh Not’ ¹⁵ and the strictness of the Victorian era but they did not learn why the teacher was strict. This, of course, was a difficult issue to

¹⁵ A wooden piece, with the initials WN (Welsh Not), which was hung with a rope around the necks of those pupils who spoke Welsh. This punishment took place at Welsh schools of the late nineteenth century. It is worth noting that one of my interviewees (T4) pointed out that some people wrongly believe that it is called the ‘Welsh Knot’.

talk about in a role play museum workshop. However, when children returned to school they were never asked why they thought the Welsh language was not allowed to be spoken at school in Victorian Wales. There was no further discussion about the social circumstances that led to the formation of the houses and their development either. As a result, children were not able to understand these further relations and processes in history. Children knew that there were poor people, they knew that there were different types of houses, they were able to find the proofs that constituted a poor and a rich house, but these things explained only one aspect of the historical period studied. In their interviews and after-visit activities the children kept repeating how hard it was to be a child in Victorian or Celtic times or even, in the case of S2 and S5, how hard it was to be a girl back in the Victorian and Tudor times. This, however, could not indicate anything more than sympathy towards poor people of the past. Therefore, although the questions asked by the teachers or the museum educator helped children discover the 'hows' of history they did not help them to move beyond this and discover the 'whys'.

Is this important? According to the definition I have given for history it is, and this is something that is supported by historians of various, and sometimes conflicting, ideological backgrounds. The object of history is mainly 'why' something happened and not 'what' happened (see Carr, 1987; Hobsbawm, 2007). We start with what we see, which is what happened. This is important to know. However, our aim is to understand why this happened. Finding the causations in history is an integral part of

historical knowledge and understanding and it directly influences our interpretations of history.

Interpretations of history

According to the NC, pupils should be taught to ‘identify the different ways in which the past is represented and interpreted, *e.g. in films and television programmes, museums, artists’ reconstructions, historians’ views*, and to suggest reasons for these’ (ACCAC, 2000:8). From my data I conclude that one of the museum’s main interests is to make its visitors aware that the buildings they see are but one interpretation. The problematic nature of the buildings lies with the fact that it is a multiple complex of transpositions and that a historian should be able to show these transpositions (Whyte, 2006:153). Thus, the museum tries to make this clear to its visitors, and at the same time it tries to encourage them to construct their own interpretations. However, not much work was done by the teachers or the museum educators to make children understand this difficult concept of interpretation.

On the part of the teachers, only T5 mentioned that she tried to make children understand the issue of interpretation, which seems to go hand in hand with the museum’s philosophy:

I also like to raise that as an issue of interpretation because I explained to children that these cottages have been dismantled and been moved on site and assembled and the interiors in particular are somebody’s interpretation of what the house should look like at that period. (T5 interview)

T5, however, did not spend time with the pupils either individually, in groups, or in addressing the class as a whole, in order to discuss the issue of interpretation. A simple

reference did not seem to interest the pupils. In our interviews children did not mention anything about interpretation, only about the issue of 'reality' (see next section).

Also, throughout the Victorian training session at St Fagans, the co-ordinator made it clear to the children that the workshop as well as the school itself was formed according to the museum's interpretation. However, it was only during the 'St Teilo's Church' workshop, that the educator mentioned that the way the church was redecorated was the result of the museum's interpretation. This reference was not further developed or spoken of during the after-visit lesson though.

Historical Enquiry

With regard to historical enquiry the NC expects children to be taught to use a range of sources, including representations, interpretations and, where appropriate, ICT, to investigate historical topics as well as to ask and answer questions. Drawing upon my findings so far, like Lee (1983:28, 29), I argue that historical enquiry is limited to a technical and simplistic approach, where children are asked simply to identify objects. They are unable, therefore, to make connections between these objects and other phenomena that characterise the historical period studied. I now present a passage from my before-the-visit observation field notes:

There is a photo of a Victorian classroom on the black board. The teacher says:

T5: I am going to ask you one thing **that caught your eye**. Nothing else.
Just one thing that caught your eye

P1: They seem to be working together

P2: Poor house

T5: Yeah poor house. It doesn't have a carpet like us. It has flag stones.

P3: There is a big wooden...

T5: Big wooden... What's that? It's a fire place isn't it? A wooden construction where you drop beams

P3: Chairs

P4: Cage

(They are discussing what sort of birds there could be in the cage)

P5: Slates

T5: Slate boards

P6: There is this little boy in the window

T5: What you think he is doing? Is he sleeping? Why do you think he might want to be by the window in that particular room?

Children: He could have been naughty

T5: He could have been naughty, yeah... We'll come back to that... **Look at the evidence** [teacher's emphasis]

P: Maybe he wanted a bit of light

T5: Could be... We don't know. Looking at the evidence at that picture it's mostly... what could we say about the place? Is it mostly bright? Is it mostly dark?

P: It is dark in places

T5: Yeah. There are candles and things like that. You also have to remember that this is a painting and the artist has chosen to highlight certain areas to catch your eye...

(S5, field notes, before the visit, 16/10/2006)

Here, the teacher used a picture to facilitate a conversation amongst the pupils, with the aim to make them 'look at the evidence' in a picture. If we look back at T5's interview, the teacher explains that 'The activities that I like to do tend to be enquiry activities where as far as it's possible they discover things for themselves'. All of the schools also made use of ICT in order to find information and different sources. However, I return to the argument that although the children 'were looking at evidence' in the picture of a specific Victorian school, there was no further discussion about schooling during Victorian times. Once again, only sympathy was encouraged and superficial enquiry merely searched for objects and pity.

Parallels could be drawn between the way in which historical enquiry was limited to a superficial enquiry and Collingwood's (1978:82-83) criticism of the way in which archaeology 'invaded ancient history' and methodology at Oxford University. He expressed the view that after the excavations in Cnossos in Crete by Arthur Evans at the beginning of the century, the teaching of Greek history at the University became 'dry'. Ancient history was replaced by archaeology. Historians lost sight of the aim of finding out the reasons and the motives behind particular outcomes, in favour of a focus on the discovery of material remains.

Furthermore, Hobsbawm (1997) argues that

Even the best of such [historical] sources- let's say demographic ones about births, marriages and deaths – only illuminate certain areas of what people did, felt and thought. What we must normally do is to put together a wide variety of often fragmentary information (Hobsbawm, 1997:277).

From a Marxist perspective, Hobsbawm reaches the same conclusion that over- relying on one kind of source cannot give the historian or student of history the 'explanations' behind a historical period or event. History, as Hobsbawm (1997:284) claims, is not about discovering the past but explaining it.

Throughout my observation, I experienced what Collinwood (1978) and Hobsbawm (1997) criticise. The teacher did not help children explain the past but merely to discover it. The children were expected to be 'detectives of history', as one of the advisers (A3) commented. However, they were not encouraged to think historically, which would have been to look at the processes behind the picture and behind any census return. Historical enquiry, as suggested above with regard to chronological

awareness, cannot simply be 'dry' descriptions. They have to be interlinked. Enquiry has to focus on the 'whys' and the 'hows' within a given period of history in order to understand this period better. These types of enquiry, when brought together, could then constitute historical knowledge and understanding.

Organisation and communication

In the NC for Wales we read that in order to develop the skills of organisation and communication, pupils should be taught to:

1. select, recall and organise historical information, *e.g. group material from different sources under headings, organise material for a wall display*
2. use appropriate vocabulary *e.g. trade, agriculture, invention, archaeology, saint, factory system, public health*
3. present results with increasing independence in a variety of ways, including visual and oral presentations, extended writing and the use of ICT (ACCAC, 2000a:9).

It was observed that some children discussed issues that could be described as more philosophical. As I argued before, although many children were able to draw and make consistent presentations, the content of these were limited to description. Needless to say, terms like 'trade, public health or system' were never mentioned in any lesson I observed.

In their interviews, children talked about issues that had been raised during discussions either in the classroom or during the workshop. An example was the discussion about what was considered fashionable:

E:...What do you think P2? What it would look like to live back then [the Tudor times]?

P2: Very old, very non fashion clothes!

P1: They didn't think that their clothes were old fashion! They probably think that our clothes now would be unfashionable. (S2, after visit, children's interview)

This discussion related to the 'Tudor Costume' workshop in which the class had participated in and so clothes and fashion seemed at the forefront of children's minds. Thus children were able to make connections between the past and the present and think about how aspects of people's ideas about dress may change through the ages. Nevertheless, during my study, I did not come across a history lesson in which children were asked to write an essay on matters such as these, or where they were encouraged to contribute to a conversation like the one discussed above. Once again, aspects of children's rich experience and their thoughts, whether related to history or not, were left largely unexplored by the teacher, at least during the particular days of my observations.

History and common requirements

In addition to historical skills, the NC encourages the integration of maths, English and ICT in all subjects, whenever possible, through its common requirements. Most of the teachers in my study did integrate ICT and literacy into their history lessons. When it came to literacy, however, teachers did not try to encourage children to pay attention to spelling while they were writing their history essay, which made the development of literacy through history problematic. This is not to suggest that literacy has to be taught through history. However, language and the skill of presenting an historical essay and

argument should be considered an integral part of history. As such, it should not be integrated into a history lesson some times and ignored at other times.

Furthermore, a drawing of a Victorian school that was shown to the pupils of S5, also served the purpose of a literacy lesson. T5 wrote down words that children had used to describe the similarities and differences between the Victorian and their own classroom in two columns, and asked the pupils to identify which were nouns and which were adjectives. During our discussion at lunch break T5 explained that the desired goal was to integrate literacy into other subjects. T8 also integrated literacy into the teaching of history:

But I would say English, most of the teaching in the Juniors is very history and English. I mean depending on the topic, I mean certain things... If they are looking at the census returns, when they are doing a local study and a lot of IT skills and as well it can be...if you are using the internet for research, em...that can be sort of very much of IT-based. But I find here that it is usually English that's sort of worked well... (T8 interview)

This integration of English was an opportunity for the children to learn how to write properly and helped them to develop their language skills. However, T8 did not require her pupils to pay attention to spelling in their written accounts or essays about the visit. This was the case for the rest of the schools. In S5, even the best essays from a previous museum visit that were hanging on a wall had spelling mistakes. As a result, instead of children being encouraged to write correctly in all cases, so that history and language can be developed simultaneously, it appears that literacy is isolated from history and treated as a separate skill.

Welsh history

Curriculum Cymreig is one of the common requirements of the NC for Wales and proposes that every subject, where possible, should be taught with reference to Wales. For history, *Curriculum Cymreig* can be covered in history through developing and applying ‘knowledge and understanding of the cultural, economic, environmental historical and linguistic characteristics of Wales’ (ACCAC, 2000a:5). In this section I argue that apart from a few infrequent references, the workshops at St Fagans: NHM do not succeed in distinguishing the Welsh aspect of the periods presented. The majority of the school history lessons observed also failed to make this clear.

St Fagans’ workshops make reference to the Welsh context but these are not always explicit. The ‘Celtic Village’ and ‘*Maestir* School’ are more closely related to Welsh history. ‘*Maestir* School’ refers to issues such as the ‘Welsh not’, whilst the ‘Celtic Village’ is easily associated with Wales, the fights against the Romans and the Silures (the tribe who lived in South Wales). Moreover, during the Victorian school training course, the co-ordinator tried to give teachers a number of options as to which historical issues they could draw upon in the school itself; these included the issue of inspections, the closure of the rural schools, women’s role, or difficulties in attendance.

In the end, however, strictness and the ‘Welsh not’ were the main characteristics of the role play during the Victorian workshop that referred to Wales. Only T9, who had recently done the training course, mentioned during the re-enactment of the Victorian teacher that they were waiting for the inspector. However, it was just a comment with no further explanation to the class. Nothing else linked Wales with the

Victorian era. There was no mention of education in Wales and no mention of the reasons for the banning of the Welsh language. Once again children received a generalised understanding of each era and its associated everyday life. Back in the school context, during our interviews, none of the children made any connections with Wales. They all referred to 'the Victorians' or the 'Tudors' as a unity throughout Britain. They made, as mentioned above, some distinctions between boys and girls in the Victorian era, as they talked about this extensively in the classroom, and because during the workshop, following the Victorian rule, boys played in a separate area from the girls.

The Tudors

The most problematic historical period in terms of both historical understanding and the presentation of Welsh history was the Tudor period. As stated previously, the NC and the workshops did not help children overcome misconceptions about some historical periods, including the Tudors. In her interview, M5 was explicit that the Tudor workshops were based on objects. A4 (Adviser 4) pointed out that Welsh teachers mainly use English resources to teach the Tudors, which actually referred to England.

Also, neither the museum nor the NC delivered a clear picture of Wales in the Tudor period. T2 expressed the view that the Welsh farmhouses at St Fagans: NHM were not representative of Wales and that during the history workshops at St Fagans: NHM

We are not looking at Welsh houses or Welsh Costumes; we are looking at Tudor houses and Tudor costumes (T2)

The above assumption was evident in the content of the Tudor workshops, when the main questions asked concerned Henry VIII and Elizabeth I. Furthermore, the only reference to Wales was the fact that the characters of 'Sir Edward' and his wife 'Blanche' lived in the big mansion at St Fagans: NHM.

S7 took part in the 'St Teilo's Church' workshop and the following is an extract from a dialogue between the educator and the children at the start of the session:

St F: We are going to tell the Story of the Tudors now. Name one

Pupils: Henry the VIII! [all together-like chanting]

ST F: Wonderful. Now, Henry the VIII was the king right? What do we know about him?

What kind of person?

P1: Bad tempered! Selfish! Rich! Clever! Greedy! Had six wives

P2: [She repeats every answer. Children: Not very keen on answering]

St F: So we now know quite a few things about Henry. But some things we kind of guess. Do you think that he lived in a house like the ones you saw?

Pupils: Nooooooo!

St F: No, he lived in a really nice, big palace. What was it called?

Pupils: [immediate reactions from some. You can hear an impatient child. There are few goes. They remember the "Hert..."...They try] Hertford

St F: He lived in a luxurious house: Lots of servants, lots of beautiful clothes while most people worked in a farm, especially in the area that St Teilo's Church is coming from...

(S7, visit, field notes- audio recording)

Here, the only link that was made between St Teilo's Church and the lives of Welsh people in the wider Tudor period was Henry VIII. The museum co-ordinator seemed quite satisfied with the answers that children gave concerning Henry VII'S character. The co-ordinator then moved on, talking again about Henry VIII and comparing his house to a farmer's. Later on in St Teilo's Church there was a discussion about the *knappan*, the great great great grandfather of rugby, and the references to Wales were frequent and stronger. However, as explained in the previous section, children seemed to believe that people in Tudor times were living happily together, with no further portrayals presented or discussed. History, therefore, remained Anglo-centric during the workshop, relating the whole Tudor period in Wales to one king. In fact, the session could be interpreted as promoting the Welsh stereotype of rural Wales, the dominance of the church and rugby, and the stereotypical and inextricable idea of English authority, encapsulated in the famous figure of Henry VIII. The relationship between Henry VIII and Wales, or the relationship between the Tudor dynasty and Wales, was not explained. The geographical and political boundaries between England and Wales and Scotland and the ways in which Britain was divided at the time of the Tudors was not explained either.

Conclusion

In terms of museum education, it is encouraging that during the visit children socialised and used the place and artefacts to create innovative games. They also had the opportunity to test their emotions and discuss issues that they may not have had the

chance to explore in the classroom. Activity in the museum environment can be invaluable in these ways for a child's development. However, the kind of historical knowledge that was promoted in the specific museum workshops, and interpreted back on returning to the classroom was incomplete. Thus, in relation to the definition of historical knowledge as adopted in the present study (see Chapter One) we see that school history, as taught through the NC, and at St Fagans: NHM workshops, presents a rather descriptive and superficial picture of the everyday life in the past. Although the museum offers some additional ideas for history lessons, it remains to be seen if the teachers can succeed in integrating these options into the NC in meaningful ways. In their attempt to understand the society of the past, children draw on their experiences as a form of knowledge. Indeed, from the constructivist perspective adopted by the NMW, experience can in fact be, or lead to, knowledge. The above analysis, however, has shown that this is questionable, since further reflection and connections need to be made. Furthermore, it is problematic when children leave the classroom and the museum with historical misconceptions. At the same time, during the workshops, Welsh history seems to be restricted to folklore and stereotyped ideas about Welsh identity.

Chapter Eight

Conclusions and reflections

Introduction

This thesis has studied the relationship between schools in Wales and the educational provision at the National Museum of Wales and how each has mediated history in the National Curriculum (NC) for England and Wales. As explained in Chapter One, the study draws upon Marxist approaches, starting with aspects of dialectical materialism on how history develops through class struggles over the ownership of the means of production and the role of the capitalist state as a mediator of capitalist ideology through its institutions (Engels, 1975; Marx and Engels, 1970; 1971). At the same time the study draws upon Gramscian views on how these general politico-economic agendas are negotiated at institutional levels and how same ideas are chosen by different hegemonic discourses for different causes (Gramsci, 1971; 1978).

Drawing upon the above theoretical views, the relationship between museums and schools in regards to the teaching of history has been studied in relation to the ways in which history in the NC and historical representation at museums have been forged out of a neoliberal agenda. The thesis considers that such an agenda promotes the privatisation and marketisation of museums and education, as well as certain ideological discourses regarding the influence of globalisation and neoliberalism. The first argument of the thesis is that marketisation of education and museums is

reflected in how particular forms of knowledge and knowledge acquisition are promoted through the school curricula, namely the acquisition of transferable skills. Secondly, it argues that neoliberalism is evident in the ways in which museums, heritage parks and cultural institutions represent history and the ways in which they try to attract visitors, thus bringing their inclusion and learning agendas into question.

Positioning itself within the above theoretical framework, this study has discussed the fact that debates around the prioritisation of subject knowledge over historical skills are not neoliberal in essence, but that they have been the subject of ideological debates since the 1960s, and part of wider pedagogic debates contending the need for child-centred versus subject-based curricula. Similarly, the effects of marketisation, the achievement of inclusion, and active learning in museums has also been debated and, associated with the regeneration of places through tourism (see Arantes, 2007; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998; Zukin, 1995), in addition to the commercialisation (see Balm and Holcomb, 2003), or democratisation of culture (see Samuel, 1989b).

These debates have also been considered by the study as parts of hegemonic struggles, according to Gramsci's (1978) terms, that ideas may be co-opted by two different hegemonic forces and can be used in different ways, according to the ideological and political aim of each force. As such, the division of knowledge within the neoliberal context seems to have taken the form of the division of knowledge into subject and content knowledge and skills, with an emphasis on the latter. Similarly, progressive notions like active learning and lifelong learning have also been used in

accordance with economic performativity and competitiveness, which demand a flexible workforce that will be skill-educated and easily reprogrammed (see Castells, 2000; Sklar, 1980). Likewise, democratic ideas about how museums can work as agents of social inclusion (see Vergo, 1989) have been regarded with scepticism, as they seem to be acquiring the meaning of increasing visitors' numbers, due to underfunding (see Macdonald, 1998a, b).

The study has focused on Wales because it is argued that since its devolution in 1999, Welsh educational policies have taken a different approach from those in England. For that reason St Fagans: National History Museum, which claims to present the history of the people of Wales, was chosen to be studied. Another reason why St Fagans: NHM was chosen, was because it was an open-air museum. Open-air and, in general, 'new museums' have been the targets of criticism within heritage debates, due to the manner through which they represent history (see Hewison, 1987; Mills, 2003). As a national history museum, St Fagans: NHM was an ideal case study for exploring these debates about heritage in conjunction with the debates of history as a school subject.

The study involved interviews with key members of the museum staff, teachers and history advisers. The aim was to listen to their views about museum education and history in the NC and to analyse how a history lesson was actually practiced at St Fagans: NHM and at school. Therefore, observations of classes were conducted before, during and after schools visit. Furthermore, children were interviewed in order for me

to acquire a broader view of the relationship between history lessons, as stipulated by the NC and as received by children.

This final chapter brings the findings of the study and the literature together to present a comprehensive picture of the relationship between the NMW, the WAG and their 'mediator', the National Curriculum for History for Wales. It is divided into three parts, each of which relates to the three broad categories of my findings: learning and knowledge, the museum education, and history in the NC and in museums. Each part discusses the issues raised from my study relating to the NMW and the NC for Wales, how they are connected to a wider picture of neoliberalism, and how the participants of the study interpret and put them into action.

Part A. Education, learning, knowledge and neoliberalism

Knowledge and skills in the primary school curriculum

Since World War II there has been a constant attempt by both Labour and Conservative governments to connect education with employment. Within new forms of capitalism, school education has entered the market and has been partially privatised, as many other public sectors have (Ball, 2007). This includes health, energy, transport and culture. As explained in Chapters One and Two, the neoliberal ideology sets out new arrangements, with the aim of removing restrictions to free trade. In this context, various sectors have either been fully privatised, or they have been obliged to search for alternative sources of funding, and to adopt business administration practices due to a

reduction in public resources (De Siqueira, 2005:7). Thus, new partnerships have emerged and sectors that traditionally belonged to the welfare state, and regarded as a public good, have now passed into the hands of private companies, with the state working as facilitator of this aim. Thus, although educational or cultural sectors, like state schools or national museums, may not be 'profitable' in the sense of producing surplus value, they have to play a role in attracting investors and establishing partnerships (Ball, 2007). It is through these roles that they contribute to the profits of private companies. In neoliberalism everything is 'dictated by market rationality' (Brown, 2003:10) and therefore everything contributes to the market or to an economic cause.

Accordingly, schools and curricula are reformed and asked to reproduce a 'financially-driven knowledge' (Carnoy, 1999); that is, whatever complies the demands of the labour market. On the other hand, there are proponents that demand child-centred and progressive curricula, which can contradict the financially driven school system (see for example, Anthony, 1979; Lawton, 1992). As a result, at least in the case of England and Wales, two main forces have been struggling and have been responsible for the final shape of the NC; those who advocate a child-centred education and those who promote a market orientated education system. These debates, which date from the 1960s, focus on whether the priority should be given to content knowledge or skills, albeit approached from different angles. Those who campaign for the traditional knowledge and subject or content-based curricula tend to be associated with conservative ideologies that promote an elitist education, whilst advocates for

progressive, child-centred curricula propose new ideas for democratic schooling, with new subjects and activity orientated lessons, based on the child's needs (see Chapter Two).

These child-centred ideas reflect the need for a more democratic and child-centred education (Anthony, 1979; Central Advisory Council for Education, 1967). Despite the fact that the shift from content-based to skill-based curricula has been a desirable aim of progressive and child-centred agendas, these ideas have been used by dominant ideologies (see Halpin, 1990; Hartley, 2003:87; Morrison and Ridley, 1988), such as neoliberalism, for certain socioeconomic and ideological aims. In the present context of globalisation, which is supported by neoliberal policies, capitalism requires a fast adjustable labour force (Ball, 2007). One of the sectors it can accomplish this in is education, starting from cultivating interpersonal skills and personal creativity in primary and nursery education (Scase, 2003:53) and basic technology and IT skills later in life (European Council, 2004:93). In accordance with other theorists' views (see Carr, 2007), this study has suggested that the integration of knowledge and understanding in the skills framework results in the formation of two types of people: the vocationally skilled and the 'educated', between whom there is a significant difference (Carr, 2007:5). The division of knowledge into skills and theoretical or content knowledge is problematic (Bernstein, 2000; Carr, 2007) and it arguably leads to further class and social divisions. When knowledge is not regarded as the sum of theory and practice, it loses its integrity and, according to Bernstein (2000) it becomes a capacity itself. Bernstein (2000) explains that capacities are impersonal, while

knowledge is characterised by the individual's character and commitments. As a result, from Bernstein's perspective, knowledge in its holistic, undivided form, integrates, amongst other aspects, personal elements and therefore constitutes something deeper than the acquisition of a capacity. Bernstein (2000) argues, however, that this personal character of knowledge is an impediment for the market, which is interested in a skill-learning workforce, adjusted to the market rather than the individual's needs.

Similarly, but from a different perspective, Marx and Engels (1970:52) explain in the *German Ideology* that historically, the division of labour occurred when mental labour was divided from material labour. It is this division between mental and material labour, not only between the working and ruling classes, but also within the ruling class, that results in the division between the 'thinkers', who are the ideologists, and the 'receptive' ones, who are actually the active members of society (they work and produce) but have less time to 'make up ideas' about themselves (Marx and Engels, 1970:65). As a result, the easily-acquired skills cater for the need of capital to find cheap, easily disposable labour. As Castells (2000) explains, the only difference is that the middle class and upper class may have access to better education in a proper organisational environment than the traditional working class. In any case, the class divisions will be furthered instead of eliminated. As Marx (2006:2) argues (see Chapter Two), as the division of labour increases, so labour is simplified. The more easily learned the work is the less its production and the expense of its acquisition cost. As a result, the special skill of the labourer becomes worthless and wages decline. Therefore, as discussed in the Introduction, and in Chapters Two and Five, this division of

theoretical and content knowledge from skills leads to the perpetuation of class divisions.

It has been argued throughout the thesis that this distinction between mental and manual labour is reflected at school level by the separation of knowledge and skills. This separation starts in primary schools through the creation of a skill-measurable curriculum (Bernstein, 2000:87) and moves on to higher education. Learning transferable skills and skills that are mostly needed in the labour market, however, is presented by neoliberal policies as the only way towards a prosperous and inclusive society (European Council 2004; WAG, 2007, 2003). People's skills must be constantly renewed to enable them to meet the challenges of ever-evolving technologies, increasing internationalisation and demographic changes (European Commission, 2008). Lifelong learning is regarded as 'an essential policy for the development of citizenship, social cohesion and employment' (European Council, 2004: 87). Arguably (see Ball, 2007), lifelong learning is presented as a route to the economic prosperity of individuals and countries and the argument that is used is that knowledge quickly becomes outdated due to technological progress and the fact that citizens have to be ready to respond to these as well as other demographic and cultural changes. This is of course an issue, but it does not justify the separation between theory and practice. There could be a balance between the two, as my interviewees' explained. Their separation indicates the above socio-political and economic aims of neoliberalism. Simultaneously, neoliberalism creates 'inevitable' and highly individualised citizens (Ball, 2007; Brown, 2003; Sklar, 1980). Survival goes hand in hand with

economic survival and with what the market dictates, causing necessities and inevitabilities (Davies and Bansel, 2007:251), while citizens have to take decisions in this pre-given context (Brown, 2003:6). Decisions about work, health and training that were once part of welfare state must now be made by individuals (Davies and Bansel, 2007).

It has been argued in the thesis that despite the fact that the term 'skill' is used frequently, its definition and span are wide and sometimes vague. Drawing upon Pring's (2004:106) assertion that although skills are everywhere and they also include everything, the study suggests that skills are vague because they are adaptable to the needs of the market. The WAG or EU documents analysed in the thesis define those skills as numeracy, IT, literacy, foreign languages, learning how to learn, and general entrepreneurial and social skills or 'competencies' (see European Parliament and Council, 2006). These documents have one thing in common; their suggestion that in order to prosper economically, one has to meet the needs of the employers (e.g. DfES, 2004:21).

The main argument, therefore, as presented in the policy documents discussed in this study, is that individuals have to adjust their needs to those of the employers' and learn the skills that are required in most employment posts. As explained above, the more easily these skills are acquired, the more dispensable they are, as technology evolves and employers' demands change. At the same time, as Bernstein (2000) argues, learning skills only makes knowledge impersonal, with no trace of the individual's interests, inclinations or character. Thus, an impersonal skill-orientated knowledge can

also create individuals who will easily be transferred from one job to the other, regardless of what they would really like to do. Not all individuals will be able to have access to the knowledge they would like to acquire, as education will direct them to learn skills that the market needs. If one is equipped with basic knowledge of IT, numeracy and literacy in their own, and in a foreign language, then they can be trained in new skills according to what is needed in the market. Consequently, skills are fluid (Pring, 2004) as they change according to these needs. Therefore, citizens do not need to develop knowledge in the holistic sense that has been described so far, but to learn general and easily disposable competencies, in order to compete for employment positions.

In contrast, though, from a Gramscian perspective, one has to take into account the fact that lifelong learning, as any idea, is a contestable concept that can be turned over to different political purposes. The neoliberal construction of the idea of lifelong learning, as discussed above, uses it to promote the individual's sense of responsibility for his or her own economic fortunes. Yet the idea of lifelong learning can have a humanistic content as well, which could be seized on and radicalised to mean something rather different; learning not as a means towards an end but as a lifelong end in itself. If, as argued by Marxist thinkers (see Eagleton, 2006:70; Marx, 1950b; Vygotsky, 1962), the purpose of knowledge is not only to comprehend but also to change our world, then lifelong learning could acquire a similar meaning. It could be argued that a possible product of this society that promotes continuous learning may be people who are inquisitive and curious; people who are as capable of learning to see

injustice and meaningless amidst the luxuries of consumer capitalism as they are learning to use new productive technologies and adapt to new organisational forms. This, then, would be in complete contrast to the individualistic essence that neoliberalism gives to lifelong learning, which is learning in order to compete for an employment post and improve one's personal financial situation. Despite the fact that the present study has not been able to trace these radical perspectives that can challenge the individualistic notion of the neoliberal notion of lifelong learning, it has highlighted voices that question and criticise. Hence, it could be argued that it still remains to be seen how and whether dominated groups and individuals will contest neoliberal definitions of learning and use it to their advantage.

National Curriculum for England and Wales

The findings of this study have suggested that, in the case of history at least, the progressive ideas, of moving away from traditional knowledge and the memorisation of dates and kings, have also been used by the advocates of neoliberalism. They have been used not towards the formation of progressive forms of curricula but towards curricula where knowledge is downgraded into one of the skills within multiple skill-frameworks.

Following the Education Reform Act of 1988 (Chapter Two), the main changes and revisions to the NC for England and Wales have also been part of the general context I described above. I discussed that, since the *Dearing Report* (1994) the National Curriculum has been slimmed down with more emphasis being given to IT,

literacy and numeracy. One rationale was to make the assessment 'more manageable' (ACAC, 1994a:8).

The need for tighter and more controllable assessment was in direct conflict with the child-centred views as contained in the *Plowden Report* (1967) or, in the case of history, the History Working Group (HWG) Reports. As discussed previously in this chapter, ideas for a progressive curriculum, such as an emphasis on activity and the cultivation of skills, have been used in a way that are intended to benefit employers rather than the child. Educationalists (Hartley, 2003; Smith, 2004:498) doubt whether applying democratic pedagogies in a policy framework that actually works in the opposite direction is feasible.

As discussed in Chapters One and Two, international and EU agreements, like the post-World War II General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) (see Footnote 2, Chapter One), the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), which was signed in 1995, or the Bologna Declaration (1999), bind governments to facilitate the free market and to help it permeate services, including education. The school curricula that are created within the neoliberal context will also work towards this direction. As a result, in this globalised economy, the NC has been accused of producing specific kinds of students, teachers, topics and activities, which are subject to the needs of employers and market forces (Ball, 1993; Goodson and Marsh, 1996).

National Curriculum for Wales: what is different?

It has been emphasised throughout this study that the NC for Wales shares the aim of facilitating the market. Following Saul's (2005) view that smaller nations tend to accept neoliberal policies because of fear that denial will mean exclusion and economic casualties, this aim may be even stronger in Wales. The data from the present study suggests that neoliberal agendas are reproduced in the main policy documents of the WAG, and that the NC, with the integration of its common requirements into the subject skills, is introducing a tighter framework of skills. At an institutional level, one of the museum interviewees expressed the view about the inevitability of globalisation, in which Wales has to 'survive'. In general, museum professionals, teachers and advisers accepted the need for historical skills to precede knowledge, which is interpreted by the majority of interviewees as content knowledge only. There were, however, variations among them in terms of definitions, the importance of knowledge, or the priority of certain skills over others. As explained in the previous section, these variations can be indicative of underlying ideological or personal struggles, between those who set out political frames and the agents who are asked to implement them

The findings of this study point out scepticism as to whether these opposing views are heard or have managed to create policies that deviate from a neoliberal context. Optimistic views (see Daugherty et al., 2002; Jones, 2002:356) that policies like the *Learning Country*, designed especially to tackle the problems of Wales and New Labour policies in Wales, have rejected 'market' based solutions (Reynolds, 2008:757) could be questioned in the light of the findings of the study. There may have

been sectors where the *Learning Country* promoted different policies from those in England (Daugherty et al., 2002), such as early and higher education, but the study does not cover these areas.

In contrast, in its focus on skills, the *Learning Country* seems to be a collection of the neoliberal agendas introduced around the world. This focus on skills and lifelong learning, link education with training and support the importance of complying with employers' needs. At the same time, they also promote the idea that the purpose of lifelong learning is to lead to inclusion and social justice, which are also repeated in other policy documents that are underpinned by neoliberal ideas. I have expressed scepticism, however, about the feasibility of social justice when these go hand in hand with market needs. These two contradictory aims have also been evident in the controversies within both the Conservative and Labour Parties that have resulted in policies that have not yet succeeded in eliminating inequalities (see also Gewirtz, 2002).

My study has shown a certain approach towards history, which goes beyond the way it is promoted through the NC. First, during the period in which the research was conducted, there were only five history advisers in the 22 LEAs in Wales. This raises questions about the importance and the status of history in the NC, especially in an era when the WAG wants to promote a Welsh identity and the *Learning Country* talks about the development of regional provisions that aim at:

...an enriched curriculum and extended learning experiences in recognition that all pupils have a range of abilities, talents and learning needs. In doing so, we will ensure that more able and talented pupils have access to a range

of opportunities and challenges to nurture their skills and ensure they reach their full potential (DfELLS, 2006: 6).

This also raises questions about why the WAG wants this development, and the extent to which the 'full potential' of history can be realised if it is neglected at the level of policy implementation.

Secondly, the analysis of the interviews has indicated some misconceptions among four of the five history advisers, and all but one of the staff members of the NMW, as to what constitutes skills and knowledge in the NC. Despite the fact that the NC presents five key skills for history, interpretation and inquiry were the ones that interviewees were concerned about and referred to as 'skills'. The NC expects teachers to teach 'historical knowledge and understanding' and 'chronological awareness'. However, these two skills were regarded as desirable but secondary by the majority of the professionals interviewed. The integration of historical knowledge and understanding and chronological awareness in the framework of skills has resulted in them being defined as content-based knowledge and the memorisation of dates and historical information.

As a result, drawing upon my data, it can be concluded that the teaching of history seems to focus on historical enquiry and interpretation, whereas historical knowledge and chronological awareness are treated more as relics of the traditional history teaching. The data analysis suggests that this confusion is the outcome of the NC incorporating historical knowledge into the skills framework. Despite the fact that this finding refers to historical knowledge and not to a detailed study of other

curriculum subjects and their advisers' views, it demonstrates the problem of separating skills from knowledge. The analysis suggests that since the NC is downgrading knowledge and understanding into frameworks of skills, it also downgrades it in the interviewees' minds; they interpret knowledge as the acquisition of mere information and the memorisation of dates, which they do not regard as the main aim of history learning. Naturally, there might be other reasons for this interpretation, including teachers' personal experiences (see Chapter Five) and their enthusiasm about the current approach to history, which emphasises historical enquiry. It might also indicate these professionals' consent to the ways in which knowledge is becoming one of the historical skills. I argue, however, that from the moment knowledge and understanding become elements of the historical skills-framework, they take on the characteristics of skills and this might lead different individuals to interpret knowledge and understanding in disparate ways.

Part B. Museums and neoliberalism

Learning in organisations

As traditional school knowledge is regarded as 'problematic' (Gee et al., 1996:5) in the present form of capitalism, 'learning how to learn' is substituting knowledge. Simultaneously, lifelong learning is promoted in organisations other than schools (Gee et al., 1996:5). However, from the 1990s onwards, learning has not only been regarded as a means of personal development but a core policy for organisational development,

and as a key way for professionals to learn more effectively, which will eventually generate better results for businesses (Easterby-Smith and Araujo, 1999:1).

Many organisations adopt learning as a component of their development. Organisational learning is particularly associated with action learning approaches, according to which learning is achieved in a shared problem-solving environment (Margerison, 1994:115). One of the main characteristics of learning in an organisation is that it takes on an experiential and skill-flexible meaning, engaging all levels of an institution and reconstructing meanings and views within that institution (Gould, 2004:3-4). Thus, 'customisation', which is the design of products and services 'perfectly dovetailed to the needs, desires and identities of the individual on the basis of their differences' (Gee et al., 1996:43), becomes one of the main characteristics of managing and designing production. This may be accomplished through organisational learning.

Critics of neoliberalism, however, believe that these needs and decisions, which individuals take to be their own, are actually created by the same neoliberal discourse in which everything takes on economic meaning (Brown, 2003; Rose, 1999). In that sense, it could be argued that listening to the needs of the customers has not primarily been taken on board as a policy in order to benefit the public but in order to help an organisation to increase its profits or other measurable outputs and surpluses. Hall (2009b) also claims that the ways in which visitors at museums interpret a representation in a museum cannot always be predictable. Theorists from different backgrounds, like Featherstone (1991), also refer to the perspective that radical forms

of culture can emanate through the culture of consumerism and they will be challenging consumerism itself. These forms, which in Gramscian (Gramsci, 1978) terms would be analysed as hegemonic struggles, were not explicit in the present study. However, they may become apparent in other studies in different institutions or even in the same context of the NMW and Welsh schools in a few years' time.

Democratisation of museums: an alibi for the neoliberal state?

Museums are not usually enterprises that seek to generate profit. Nonetheless, both local and national museums have to 'demonstrate that they are doing something about social inclusion' (Tlili, 2008:136) and the creation of 'surpluses' (NMW, 2008c:3). As explained in Chapters One and Three, under the neoliberal regime of governance, national museums are intertwined with the goals of the government-sponsor. At the same time, museums, as with the majority of the public-funded organisations, have to generate partnerships with the public and private sector in order to either promote governmental policies or generate income (see Ball, 2007; De Siqueira, 2005). The market practices that museums have to acquire, and their contribution to the promotion of governmental directions or visions, has been one of the reasons why heritage, despite its enthusiasts, has been strongly related to economic and marketing policies (Arantes, 2007; Balm and Holcomb, 2003). Therefore, new museums have also been criticised for commodifying both the past and culture (Dyson, 2005; Hewison, 1987; Urry, 2002), and for their a-political and visual representation of history (Mills, 2003). As a result, despite the developments of museology over the last four decades, which has paved the

way for more open and democratic museums, the under-funding and market practices that the museums have to take on board generate scepticism about the aims of the museum in the twenty first century.

It has been argued in the thesis that as museums have to meet their own goals and the goals of their sponsors, which may be the state, private sector or a combination of both, they may be highly selective as to which voices they listen to and how they present them so as not to jeopardise their funding. As in the case of the 'newseum' (Gans, 2002) the voices that are heard are similar to the 'voices' of the sponsors. In the case of the regeneration of the area of the Rhondda Valley in Wales, the transformation of the old coal mine into the Rhondda Heritage Park took place amidst tense discussions amongst the local authorities, the sponsors and the miners' communities in regards to the aims of the Heritage Park and its representations of history (Dicks, 2000 a, b).

How does the National Museum of Wales fit into this context? The first conclusion drawn from the study is that the NMW seeks to facilitate the WAG's plans for lifelong learning, inclusion, sustainability and regeneration through partnerships, the enhancement of the international profile of Wales and the implementation of the NC. At the same time, transformation of the NMW into a 'World-class Museum of Learning' and its transformation into 'a learning organization' (NMW, 2008b:5) has given it some characteristics of a business institution. Consequently, its role becomes dual: it works as a facilitator of the WAG's policies by encouraging partnerships with communities and other organisations or through the facilitation of the NC, and as a

learning organisation for its own development. The NMW does not have any option but to adopt this role and managerial strategy.

As discussed in Chapter Six, the government/sponsor expects the museum to work for economic benefits for the public and the private sector, as well as to work with other bodies (private and public) in order to create 'surpluses' that will be reinvested (NMW, 2008c:3). The NMW acquires the characteristics of an enterprise, with learning as its development strategy, and is expected to create its own surplus as governmental support decreases in the neoliberal context. Within its policy documents and its cultural strategies, the WAG assigns specific tasks to the NMW and its sites and thereby establishes and reinforces a regime of governance for the museum. This is indicative of how the neoliberal state pervades all sectors of society, thus facilitating market practices (see De Siqueira, 2005; WTO, 1998).

The interviews with the NMW staff, however, made evident that they were aware that some of the museum's decisions were taken because, to some extent, this is what the WAG requires. One showed a courteous disagreement with the fact that the WAG regarded St Fagans: NHM, as a one-stop shop for history. There were also different views amongst the staff in reference to historical representations. For example there were those who did not want St Fagans: NHM to present political history while there was the interviewee who acknowledged that not representing political history at St Fagans: NHM was an omission. These differences may be indicative of the fact that ideological and strategy issues are negotiated in the NMW, as in any organisation.

A second point refers to the meaning that social history takes at St Fagans: NHM and its implications. As already discussed in previous chapters, the de-politisation of social history can be problematic (Jordanova, 2000). Arguably, this makes it even more difficult for the needs of the less powerful to be heard, while when the less powerful politicise their needs there is resistance and new groups and identities emerge (Apple, 2000:65-66). This omission of the political forms my main argument about St Fagans: NHM and museums that promote a non-political history. A non-political representation of history may silence the voices of the oppressed, which the museum believes that it represents.

Thirdly, contrary to what Bourdieu and Darbel (1991) argue in regard to the museums of the last decades of the twentieth century, my findings suggest that museums like the NMW, which undertake the role of facilitating regeneration and economic policies, stop addressing only the elite, middle class. Instead, they seek to attract the working class, minorities, immigrants and various ages with cultural capital that is different from that associated with the 'traditional' museum (Dicks, 2000a, b). St Fagans: NHM, for example, organises pilot projects in association with Cardiff schools and local companies in order to reach more local communities and engage wider audiences. During one of these projects, which was completed in 2006, St Fagans: NHM joined forces with a local animation company and schools from areas with high numbers of ethnic minority groups, as well as schools from areas such as North Wales where there are low numbers of ethnic minority groups. The animation film that was the outcome of the project became part of the 'Beliefs' section at *Oriel 1* (Gallery 1).

The 'commodity dresser' (see Chapter Six) was also presented by my interviewees as an attempt to engage communities and schools and make people feel they are part of the representations of the museums. Attempts like this can create optimism about democratisation of museums (see Housley, 2006; Ross, 2004) and can encourage greater involvement of people in the museum.

Based on the analysis that has developed in the thesis, it can be suggested that these outcomes can be regarded with scepticism: capitalism instead of improving the education level of the working class, re-enforces class divisions by providing skills education for a fast changing and flexible working class, middle class and some strata of the upper classes, and by creating a leader/educated elite. Due to this division in education, the working class and even the middle classes may not be able to learn history, for example, in the complete holistic sense I have been describing so far. As a result, those classes educated in this skill orientated schooling will have certain cultural capital that will enable them to identify themselves with certain types of museums. These types are more likely to be the increasingly customised and market orientated heritage parks, which may, arguably, beautify or simplify aspects of history.

Therefore, my research expresses the concern that museums may try to degrade what they offer, so that it can be compatible with the cultural capital that derives from an education that promotes skills and fragmented knowledge. As a result, the museum may not want to bridge a gap that education may have created. Instead, it may choose to downgrade its own potential to that of the level of knowledge that neoliberal education policies are also aiming for. This is evident in my study, in the ways that

history is represented at St Fagans: NHM and the ways in which it is taught to children through its organised workshops.

Furthermore, museums can become territories where the neoliberal state can boast that it can tackle inequalities, but in essence equalities are still present in the real life. By asking national museums, such as the NMW, to include a wider spectrum of citizens in their practice by involving communities and ethnic minorities in various activities, governments claim that they do something about tackling inequalities. However, as Mannheim (1971) claims, democratisation of culture in terms of greater numbers of visitors may not always work towards a political democratisation. Opening the gates of museums and culture to greater numbers of visitors does not necessarily mean that it will lead to democracy.

The museum, then, may not be able to become a place where substantial inclusion is promoted, that is, through accustoming its visitors with social, cultural and political issues, which sometimes are not pleasant to demonstrate. For example, from a Marxist perspective, acquiring historical knowledge and understanding is not only important for the sake of history but because it can contribute to people's understanding of the present. If we understand the present and where the problems we are facing today originate, we may be able to act upon the present and change it. This is what could make inclusion more substantial in a democratic society: to be able to think historically and actively participate not only in a museum project but in the political sphere of a community or a country. Here I do not necessarily mean politics in the sense of political parties but in the Aristotelian sense of *polis*, the active participation in the

formation and function of a society. In this way, this form of historical understanding would also contribute towards developing citizenship.

Furthermore, as discussed above, sometimes museums present non-political or non-disturbing aspects of history. There are however exhibitions dealing with disturbing issues, like slavery or child death, but they are often presented as a matter of the past with no connotations of or relation to present, equivalent situations. Let us, for example, take St Fagans: NHM and the ways in which it represents history. From my observations at *Oriel I* I have concluded that minorities and the lives of ordinary people of Wales are presented against a sanitised background, with no reference to racism or domestic violence, unemployment, labour movements, etc. This assumption may question the motives which lie beneath the need of the neoliberal state to promote inclusion at museums. This aim may be covering up the fact that inequalities in the wider social, economic and cultural context have at the very least remained the same if not broadened further: there is still minority underachievement in education; there is still unemployment and racism. So, the neoliberal state can secure an alibi for trying to include the under-represented communities/classes/minorities in the cultural sector, without actually raising standards in the wider context and without giving the under-represented groups the chance to struggle against these inequalities.

This last claim is raised by the fact that in some cases museums consciously exclude political themes in historical representation (Gans, 2002; Mills, 2003). This exclusion cannot easily lead to political democratisation. Being political can be disturbing and its purpose is to raise debates or even struggles, as Apple (2000) argues.

As argued so far, and in the following section, it is claimed that the purpose of knowledge and understanding is the active involvement in our society, both as individuals and as political beings who are responsible for the world they live in and their own history (Eagleton, 2006). The question that this thesis raises is that if cultural institutions, like museums, give the same history-learning options to the public as those given at school, museums may not be able to give the public an opportunity to think historically either. Given the fact that museums are seeking to attract bigger numbers of visitors, and therefore sponsors, they may have to represent the entertaining, happy-ending aspects of history. In other words, they may have to drop their standards in favour of something that is easily accepted by the audiences.

It is not suggested here that museums should be elite institutions that would transmit norms of a 'good old education' like those nostalgic voices that Touraine (2000:37) criticises. On the contrary, the study expresses scepticism about the fact that museums may be turned into places where the visitor can get some easily-consumed and a-political historical information. This leads to the suggestion that museums, given the progressive steps which were taken from the 1960s onwards, could be places where the visitor would be able to see and think about those aspects of history that have not been taught at school. Museums might be places to raise democratic or political awareness as well as the historical understanding of the visitors who are educated by a skill orientated curricula.

It is not suggested that museums should not be working with the state, either. Referring to her experiences in the Costa-Rica National Museum, San Roman

(1992:27) explains that it is not necessarily a negative thing for national museums to collaborate with governments or their policies. She also points out, however, that museums should 'never lose the scientific and objective base of historical events or other subjects covered'. In contrast, the NMW, appears to have compromised its representations of history and the ways in which it 'teaches' history to primary school children. It aligns its representations and school activities with the WAG's aims for inclusion, skills in the National Curriculum and the creation of a bilingual and multicultural identity for Wales.

As a result, it can be argued that, despite the negotiations that may be taking place within the NMW, the final strategies of the NMW seemed to be parts of and formed in compliance with the WAG's visions, which are in turn in compliance with neo-liberal agendas. The staff was willing to include communities and ethnic minorities, and they believed that the museum could raise awareness on historical and social issues. However, the conscious exclusion of political history cannot easily lead to the understanding of the present situation in order for the audiences to act upon and change it.

Part C. History

History in the NC for Wales

All the above arguments also apply to some extent to the teaching of history in the NC and to the representation and teaching of history at St Fagans. In the 1990 Final Report for History in the NC, historical knowledge and understanding were two different

conceptions that at the same time were not included in the category of skills. The Final Report of the History Working Group (HWG) (1990:10) stated that there was a relationship between knowledge, concepts and skills for history that actually 'nurtures the very essence of the subject'. Thus, in the first steps of the formation of the NC, history was conceived in a holistic way, according to which historical understanding and chronological awareness were the main goals that could be accomplished through the historical skills of enquiry and interpretation. The HWG's History Committee for Wales (HCW), following the HWG's directions, specifically defined Welsh history as 'the history of a distinct people and nation, whose distinct identity had to be perceived within the history of the British Isles as a whole' (HCW, 1990: 13).

As discussed in Chapter Two, the then Prime Minister, Mrs Thatcher herself interfered in this Final Report, as it was not deemed British-orientated enough. After the first rejection of her plans, the 1993 Dearing Report proposed revisions for the NC, which were finalised in 1995. Since this revised document onwards, historical knowledge and understanding, as well as chronological understanding, have been incorporated in an increasingly tighter skills framework (see also Appendix One). My research in schools has shown that this integration may be responsible for problems that have also been identified by other reports (e.g. HA, 2007). For example, children tend to explain historical issues in anachronistic terms. This brings us back to the argument about the separation of knowledge from the knower and the ways this has affected historical knowledge.

After the Plowden Report in 1967 the term 'new history' alluded to an attempt at a pedagogic and child-centred approach to the teaching of history (Phillips, 1998). The term 'new history', which had been used in many ways, from many schools of history (see Chapter Two), was used in Britain at that time to describe a new history, that departed from the kings and queens traditional, Anglicised history. It would focus instead on the study of everyday life and also on the development of historical skills. However, after the 1990 Final Report, the holistic approach to history was abandoned.

Cutting history into pieces to make it serve specific skills can be problematic. In *The German Ideology*, Marx and Engels (1970), criticising the idealism of the German philosophers, explain the integral relationship between human history and the history of industry and exchange. To understand human history one has to understand those human relations where class struggles and changes in the relations of production were based (Marx and Engels, 1992:1). Other schools of history do not regard changes in the relations of production as the main historical process. However, the majority of historians from Thucydides to Carr have conceived history as the sum of interconnected social relations, causes and effects (Berkhofer, 1995; Carr, 1961; Collingwood, 1978; Hobsbawm, 2007; Stow and Haydn, 2000).

In line with the above beliefs, Nash (1990:437) argues that 'the fundamental task of the school is to enable students to learn to comprehend the nature of the social and material world and to act upon it'. The children in the present study had opportunities to study the material world rather than the social world. Although the museum and the teachers held the belief that children were taught about processes that underlie history

through historical enquiry, my study has shown that these processes were constructed in a superficial way and the children had not always comprehended the characteristics of the historical period they were studying.

Arguably, British education policies do not give clear pedagogical advice (Hamilton, 1999:136; Hartley, 2003:90) and, since its implementation, the NC failed to take into account children as 'developing social individuals' (Pollard, 1996:316). Therefore, further research has to address these issues. The main argument here is that without pedagogic research, as defined in the beginning of this study and throughout my thesis, it is not possible to actually know how or when a child learns concepts in order to teach them. The teachers and advisers in my study were usually supposing what a child could or could not understand through their own experiences or based on some personal reading. None of them, however, was supported by pedagogic guidelines.

The NC itself expects children at Key Stage 2 to be able to distinguish the characteristics of different periods and be able to talk about causes and effects. The fact that, after so many years of theorists trying to develop pedagogy, the NC still has not developed either a consistent pedagogy on what children can do or learn at a certain age, or about how activities can help children learn, is both interesting and problematic. A reason for this could be the fact that the NC is skills-orientated for a specific reason, and that is to create a specific type of citizen, or rather two types of citizens.

Furthermore, the fact that the NC for history selects the topics that should be taught in a random order cannot help teachers to assist their pupils in grasping the

sequencing of historical periods and explore their interrelations. A child in Wales at the time of the study was not being taught about what happened after the Celts were defeated by the Romans or what happened in the years between the Celts and the Stuarts or the Tudors. The revised NC for History for Wales of 2008 tries to fill this gap by adding the 'Age of Princes', which is still, however, an optional subject. Having a scattered view about historical events does not lead to a consistent historical interpretation and enquiry because, arguably, it is the time-frame and the characteristics of the period that give enquiry its substance (Stow and Haydn, 2000:86). Ultimately, historical skills cannot be adequately taught within this multi-skills curriculum, since basic elements of historical and chronological understanding are omitted. The study does not advocate a linear, teleological Hegelian or Empiricist approach to history (see Chapter Two). However, it does argue that a consistent study of the past, as this is expressed through artefacts and material life in relation to the study of the human relations and struggles behind that object, is necessary in order to understand our present (Eagleton, 2006; Hobsbawm, 1985, 1997; Marx, 1950a and b). In order to do so, a child has to understand the continuity of history, and have a background of historical knowledge and understanding. Being a 'detective of history', which A3 sets as a focal point in the teaching of history is not enough. As Kriekouki-Nakou (1996) argues in her study, being a detective of history can lead the student to some rational questions but pupils' thoughts and answers to these questions 'refer to an a-historical present, or to an unhistorical past or future, and there was no sense of historical orientation' (Kriekouki-Nakou, 1996: 239).

At the same time, although strict chronology has been removed, history is still subject-orientated, in the sense that subjects have been replaced by the task of teaching certain transferable skills. At the same time, skills are still taught through broad categories, such as transport, housing, etc. The desire to move away from the restriction of formalistic academic historical knowledge has been substituted by the new knowledge of knowing skills, which negates 'the underlying unity of knowledge, the unity of body and brain' (Aronowitz and DiFazio, 1994: 88) and the personality of the individual (Bernstein, 2000).

Consequently, history in the NC is becoming increasingly fragmented whereby some subjects and concepts are selected to be taught as others are neglected. In this way, historical skills have been given much attention, while historical knowledge and understanding, as well as chronological awareness are usually neglected, as negative remnants of a linear, memorisation-orientated, traditional model of history teaching. As a result of this unbalanced history learning, children end up having misconceptions and reach a-historical conclusions, as discussed later on in this chapter.

Welsh history in the National Curriculum

Up until 2008, Welsh history had been taught in Welsh schools within the wider British and global context. The history KS2 curriculum revised in 2008 is basically Welsh and local with some British examples. The premise is that starting from a local context may help the child understand wider issues because they are building on issues immediately known to them. However, with this revision, history is focusing too much on the

locality and a KS2 child might not have the opportunity to place their history within a wider context.

At the same time, history is becoming more and more de-politicised. Thus, according to the NC 2000, a child had to study how to: identify and describe the main events, situations and changes within and across periods; identify the causes and consequences of some events and changes; and, study the everyday life in conjunction with main events (ACCAC, 2000a:8). The NC of 2008 expects pupils to be taught about the characteristics of the periods studied and identify and describe the main events, situations and changes, as well as causes and effects (ACCAC, 2008: 13-14). However, 'aspects' of everyday life are not included in the proposed subjects. 'Life in industrialized Wales' is not even mentioned in the programme of study, while the focus is on pastimes, education, clothing, housing and transport. My study suggests that even during the implementation of the NC 2000 the study of everyday life focused on and was limited to comparisons and studies on material culture, like houses and clothing, without these being situated in a wider context.

History at St Fagans: NHM

The research illustrates that the workshops for industrialised Wales at St Fagans: NHM also focus on material domestic culture without addressing its implications. The NC 2000 and the representations of history at St Fagans: NHM might be indicative of the fact that the WAG has not yet achieved the promotion of a history that would be holistic and representative of all aspects of Welsh life. The WAG claims that it wants to

promote a confident Wales, (NMW, 2003; WAG, 2003) its unique character and the Welsh language. However, the present study suggests that the industrial history of Wales, which includes social and political struggles, as well as disturbing issues such as poverty, unemployment and violence, is avoided. Instead, 'confident Wales' seems to be taken to mean a country where class inequalities are put aside and working class history is relegated to distressing remnants of the past. A possible outcome is creating a 'folk' history of industrial Wales, praising the present Wales, which, after having survived difficult times, now lives under circumstances of social cohesion. As the teacher participants (T8 and T9) commented after the visit to St Fagans: NHM, 'we should be grateful for what we have now'. On the other hand, the adviser A3 pointed out the importance of making comparisons between the poor and the rich of the past to those of the present.

With the exception of advisers A3 and A5, these seemed to be the approaches adopted for Welsh history, by both the teachers in my study, the advisers, and by St Fagans: National History Museum. Social history or history from below, as represented at St Fagans: NHM, is a partial presentation, being mainly based on buildings and objects rather than on the socio-political conditions that created or contextualised them (Hobsbawm, 1985; Jordanova, 2000).

As discussed in the previous section, the changes at *Oriel 1* focus on a limited set of topics, whilst neglecting social movements and struggles, including the trade union movement. They focus on language, identity, immigration and migration, music and customs, whilst the political and economic, as well as the 'disturbing' dimensions of

these themes, are not represented (Kavanagh, 2007:50) also points out. St Fagans: NHM is moving towards a partial democratisation. It listens to people, includes communities in its displays and organises activities with them but in a context that supports its own agenda. Industrial Wales is to be found at Big Pit and the Waterfront Museum but not in the National History Museum. St Fagans: NHM, thus, seems to take on a folklore form, with the only difference being that it includes the folklores of other countries too. The buildings that are linked with industrial Wales, such as *Rhyd-Y-Car* cottages are also studied as mere 'buildings'. The Oakdale Workmen's Institute, which also represents social and working class history, is not used at all during the workshops. It is not a coincidence that a teacher (T7) still regards St Fagans: NHM as a folk museum. I suggest that the way in which St Fagans: NHM represents Welsh history is the reason why some people still view it as a folk museum.

Activity and re-enactment

The workshops for history at St Fagans: NHM also neglect basic aspects of political or social history, which the NC expects children to be aware of. The museum chooses to concentrate on interpretation and on offering the children experiences. The workshops follow a tried and tested formula, which despite attracting schools for the last thirty years, has no specific pedagogic justification apart from the fact that the museum wants to offer a lively experience. Furthermore, the complexities of Welsh history and the diverse character of Wales, which all museum interviewees presented as being priorities for the NHM, were not mentioned as aims of the history workshops.

In the flagship documents of learning at St Fagans: NHM and the NMW there is no pedagogic explanation or theoretical framework for the suggested use of museums. There is no clear pedagogy behind the mentioned activities or the re-enactment at the workshops, and the only learning objectives mentioned are 'engagement with experience'. Despite the scepticism of about historical re-enactment (Lee, 1984), it is still promoted as one of the museum's strong points. Through my observations I concluded that the museum environment created the opportunities for children to think about issues they had not thought about before. An interactive problem-solving environment (Haenen et al., 2003:246) might have helped the children 'improve' themselves (Davydov et al., 2003: 69; El'konin: 2000) and therefore give answers to the issues raised during the visit. A problem situation, for example the problem that children had in understanding the reality of the re-enactment, could have been transformed, through activity, into a learning situation (Repkin, 2003:29). Furthermore, during the visit the children socialised, used the place and artefacts to create innovative games, and had the opportunity to test their emotions and discuss issues that they may have not had the chance to discuss in the classroom. Such activity in the museum environment can be invaluable for a child's development.

Nevertheless, the history workshops at St Fagans: NHM did not try to introduce children to concepts more complicated than a simple comparison between buildings. The problem is that this did not take place in the classroom either, and it was not encouraged by the teachers or the NC. Consequently, the teachers' role was not decisive in taking the experiences of the activities further, as Vygotsky (1962) would

suggest, in order for learning to take place. In their attempt to understand a society of the past, the children used their own experiences and emotions during the re-enactment, which led them to partial or, in some cases, unexpected conclusions. For example, some children in my study said that they would have liked to live in a Celtic hut or in the small Victorian house. During the 'Maestir School' workshop, many children laughed at their fellow classmates, who, re-enacting the Welsh speaking pupils, had to wear the 'Welsh not' as a punishment. Without an explanation and further discussion about the historical period studied, complicated issues can be entertainment rather than the stimuli for historical thinking. My argument here is that a sentimental approach to history may lead to misconceptions, especially when we are dealing with children's emotions and experiences, and this is why history has been conceived of as separate from emotion (see Lowenthal, 1998).

It has been argued in the thesis that this approach to history is part of the general customisation of the museum. Re-enactment workshops are popular with schools. The teachers I interviewed were happy to participate and take their classes every year. The 'Victorian school' has been almost the same for the last forty years and the rest of the workshops follow the same 'tried and tested' pattern. The workshops may have always been successful in terms of school visitor numbers but it seems that their pedagogic value has not been revisited and subjected to questioning.

The data in this study suggests that active learning has been used by neoliberal hegemonic rhetoric in a way that promotes experiential learning and general activities of re-enactment. An oppositional approach could be based on Marx's (1950b:367)

critique that 'philosophers have only interpreted the world; the point, however, is to change it'. As discussed in Chapters One and Two, this implies that the highest form of learning is either politics or production, depending on the Marxist approach one takes. Either way, the concepts of learning and knowledge can be broadened so as to include activities, like work, social struggles and political activism, which the dominant ideologies do not want to draw attention to. As a result, a possible notion of an active learner under a different hegemonic discourse could be someone who does not simply interact and re-enact, but who also actively participates in society and tries to change it. In other words, the idea of the active learner is potentially explosive. The contest becomes one between the promotion of active learning as a means of adjusting young people to the fast-changing demands of an irrational and uncertain world, and the promotion of active learning as a means of enabling young people to change that world and to understand it.

It seems that St Fagans: NHM has been using the same approach to re-enactment for history workshops for many years, with no attempt to design activities that would enable young children to act upon their social world. Even re-enactment activities can be updated and engage children in other aspects of life in the past. The *Rhyd-Y-Car* cottages, for example, could be used for the re-enactment of the difficulties of workers' lives. The teacher could then relate this to the hardships of life in the present. Older children could have a workshop about the life of the workers in Wales in the Oakdale Workmen's Institute and re-enact a trade union meeting. An activity could be shaped to show how Wales has welcomed immigrant workers or show Welsh workers' solidarity

movements, like those that document Indian workers' movements (Francis and Smith, 1998:162). Also, St Fagans: NHM itself could be a place where children can start learning about issues of kingship and parliament and engage in discussions about the Civil War. 'Maestir School' could be transformed into a Victorian classroom where an inspector could come and command the closure of the school. This could facilitate discussions amongst the children and teachers about how everyday life would be from then on and how the lives of children would change after the closure of the school. This activity could then be taken back to the modern classroom, and through re-enactment or discussions, children can realise that the closure of a school is not only a thing of the past and that, if it takes place, it can affect the lives of a whole community at any point in history. In fact, there are many activities other than the traditional Victorian dressing up that could help children further understand concepts and practices of everyday life and also place them in a wider social context.

Towards a pedagogy for museums?

As explained in Chapter Four, one of the main reasons the study observed KS2 classes was because there were no workshops for older children. This forms the basis for my concluding thoughts and could be a possible subject for future studies. The museum interviewee, M5, explained that 'it is difficult to find out what interests a teenager' and that 'KS3 and 4 are more exam orientated'.

The first point indicates that there is a lack of pedagogic research at museums today, as there is a lack of consistent, research-based pedagogy for schools in England

(Simon, 1995) and in Britain in general (see Hamilton, 1999; Hartley, 2003; Yates, 2009). The second point is that trying to integrate progressive pedagogies and extracurricular activities into an assessment orientated education system may not be feasible after the age of 11. This argument brings us back to the concerns that child-centred, theoretically-informed curricula cannot easily take place due to high costs (Hartley, 2003:90). Another reason might be the fact that assessment becomes the priority of the curricula in neoliberal education, in order to facilitate the world of employment and provide data to facilitate the education market, such as school choice. In short, the absence of workshops for older children and the fact that the main workshops have remained unaltered for many years, not only at St Fagans: NHM but also in museums throughout Britain (see Attingham Trust Report, 2004), suggests that history workshops do not follow a pedagogical formula, but rather follow a popular one. Popular practices do not necessarily mean scientific practices. If resources are allocated according to numbers and popularity, and not towards pedagogic, historical or general educational research, then the learning value of workshops becomes questionable.

Vergo (1989: 58) points to the significance of the educational and didactic role of the new museum, suggesting that this role should be developed by the new museology. However, twenty years on, the findings of the study suggest that education and didactic purposes are not among the priorities of the NMW, and this may also be the case for many museums that have chosen to prioritise entertainment and experience over knowledge-based education. Furthermore, museums place experiential knowledge and

activities that provide experiences at the forefront of their educational provision aims, which is the main characteristic of constructivism (Hein, 2006; von Glasersfeld, 1989; Witcomb, 2006). For constructivists and for situated learning, activity is learning and constitutes knowledge. However, the NMW does not explicitly express pedagogical views; rather, it embraces scattered ideas about experience. Also, the fact that there are no workshops for older children may not only be due to the fact that the NC is exam orientated, but that museums are reluctant to deal with political or wider aspects of history (see Chapter Three). Judging from the above, in conjunction with the neutralised representations of history at St Fagans: NHM and the fact that the child is left alone to make assumptions based on their experiences, I suggest that learning through experience at St Fagans: NHM may cover up an absence of an informed and rigorous pedagogy.

Conclusion

This thesis has argued that the National Museum of Wales and the National Curriculum for History for Wales follow parallel trajectories with regard to historical knowledge and learning in general. Both lack a coherent pedagogic framework in terms of activity, they regard skills as the core of learning and they tend to regard knowledge as the memorisation of information. Also, they both serve the same policies: the NC is designed to prepare the child for the labour market by teaching them transferable skills, whilst the NMW facilitates the WAG's policies by using culture and institutions as places for learning and promoting neoliberal ideologies. Under the neoliberal policies

of the WAG, it is very difficult for the NMW to move away from customising its learning services and its representations of history. As a result, both museum and schooling are developed together within a neoliberal context of teaching skills and fluid notions of history.

The findings of the study have demonstrated that it is doubtful whether the WAG, through the NC and together with the NMW can succeed in presenting the multiple levels of Welsh history that my interviewees talked about. In the workshops at St Fagans: NHM, Welsh history is not made explicit, and in the few cases it is discussed, it is restricted to objects and feelings. The NC, especially the last revised document of 2008 in Wales, has been shifting its focus towards the study of everyday life. The NC of 2008 also tries to place much more emphasis on local history. The study, however, has suggested that this emphasis is restricted to superficial connections and to transferable skills. It remains to be seen in practice what opportunities the revised NC (2008) will give to teachers to teach Welsh history. At the moment, the insufficient number of history advisers in Wales indicates that history is not given a main priority by the WAG. Instead it has been superseded by a focus on broader school effectiveness.

One could argue that the WAG has missed the opportunity given to Wales by the political devolution in 1999 to promote Welsh history and to develop a 'Welsh' curriculum. This weakening of history, however, has been common in both England and Wales. The attempts of the Final Report of 1990 faced strident polemics by the supporters of neoliberalism. The arguments for a new history and for new curricula were abandoned before they were even put into practice. This is obvious as we come

across more and more policies, introduced both by the WAG and EU countries and at an international level, which firmly position education in relation to the needs of employers. In these policies, learning skills is presented as the primary means for achieving personal and national prosperity and, through these policies, employers' and market needs are becoming our own.

The interviewees of the study, with the exception of two advisers and one teacher, were very positive about active learning at museums. Additionally, despite the fact that the interviewees acknowledged that there should be a balance in the teaching of skills and knowledge, none of them regarded knowledge as a totality of theory and practice; they all gave knowledge the meaning of memorisation.

The thesis has concluded that this division of knowledge complies with what are perceived to be employers' requirements. With the exception of one museum interviewee, who discreetly expressed criticism about the financial terminology that the WAG had used in reference to St Fagans: NHM, there was no reference amongst teachers and museum interviewees about the experiential, skill orientated character of history teaching. There were voices that talked about insufficient funding or the need to balance out the NC so that what they defined as knowledge, chronology and skills could be taught in a balance; but none of the interviewees seemed to find the division of knowledge into content knowledge and practice as problematic.

As a result, the study regards the professionals' views more in accordance rather than in contrast with the division of knowledge and experiential learning. The analysis does not imply in any case that these professionals have given their consent to the

neoliberal discourses of education. The thesis has tried to point out that the use of progressive terminology by dominant ideologies may have succeeded in acquiring the consent of those professionals and educationalists who want to see changes in education and cultural representation. Although the questioning voices of the study do not seem to be dominant, they may form the basis for arguing for substantial changes and negotiations in the teaching of history in the future.

Overall, however, and judging from the observational data, the study concludes that neoliberal discourses are still very prominent. The implementation of the education policies studied works towards the creation of easily re-programmed, basic-skilled classes with no holistic knowledge that would incorporate theory and practice. Knowledge is still synonymous with content and the concentration on historical skills is considered innovative. The children of the study left the classroom with historical misconceptions, nonetheless. These ideologies that are likely to intensify social inequalities seem to be hidden under the promising terminology of social justice, lifelong learning and inclusion, which, up until now, have not been realised or widely challenged.

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Appendix One

Revisions of the National Curriculum for History in Wales: 1988-2008

Key Stages

Key Stage	Age	
KS 1	5-7	Primary Education
KS 2	7-11	
KS 3	11-14	Secondary education
KS 4	14-16	

A. 1990: Final Report

The final Report for history was submitted in 1990 by the History Working Group (HWG), which was established in 1989. It was distributed to Local Education Authorities (LEAs) in England and Wales and to a number of organizations for comment. Simultaneously, the Secretary of State for Wales appointed the History Committee for Wales (HCW), which also submitted a final report in the light of the final recommendations of the HWG (HCW, 1990:v).

History in the Final Report of 1990 was compulsory for all Key Stages. Both bodies followed the same framework. Within this framework the HCW set the guidelines for Welsh History.

Historical knowledge

In this final Report, historical knowledge and understanding were two different conceptions that were also different from “skills”, and all of them have been given an equal attention (HWG, 1990: 6). The ‘nature of historical knowledge takes the meaning of understanding, rather than information or content and this should be the objective of the study of history. In order to achieve knowledge both information and content are essential (HWG, 1990: 7) and together with chronology, heritage and interpretations, they comprise the essence of history (HWG, 1990:7).

Chronology took the form of the sequence of events as a framework or map which gives significance and coherence to the study of history (HWG, 1990:7). Heritage was substituted by ‘inheritance’ implying ‘that which the past has bequeathed to us’ and which is for individual people to interpret, employing knowledge and skills of history. While all people in Britain partake to a greater or lesser extent in a shared ‘inheritance’, they also have their own individual, group, family, etc, inheritances’ which are inter-related. The study of history should respect and make clear this pattern of inheritance (HWG, 1990:10).

Interpretations of history are regarded as an essential part of history and the reason for HWG including interpretations in the NC was in order, to respond to concerns that history would be used as propaganda (HWG, 1990: 11). Therefore it felt that interpretation was the best way for children to be taught about evidence and the difficulties of historical objectivity.

Welsh history

HCW defines Welsh history in its final report as 'the history of a distinct people and nation. That is how it has been and perceived by Welsh men and women....To insist on the separate identity of Wales is not to claim that the history of Wales should be taught in isolation...Pupils in Wales will need to understand the separate identity of Wales, the close relationship between Wales and England and the place of Wales within the history of the British Isle as a whole (HCW, 1990: 13)

Attainment Targets

The Attainment Targets (ATs) were the objectives that would help, on the one hand, to organize teaching and assessment and on the other hand it would enable pupils to acquire an increasing amount of historical information so that their skills develop and their understanding deepens (HWG, 1990:115). There were four (ATs):

1. Understanding History in its setting
2. Understanding points of views and interpretations of history

3. Acquiring and evaluating historical information
4. Organizing and communicating the results of historical study

(HWG, 1990: 115-117)

There are also Levels of attainment that should be acquired for each AT and this is according to each KS. KS1 had to acquire Levels 1-3, KS2 levels 2-5, KS3, Levels 3-7, and KS4 Levels 4-10. *The Final Report* gives an account of what concepts, foci, principals and underlying issues (political, economic/technological/scientific, social and religious, cultural and aesthetic) should be taught at each Study Unit, at each KS, giving examples and guidance to the teachers.

KS2 Attainment Targets framework is a continuation of the ATs of KS1, with the difference that pupils are expected to make more elaborate interpretations of more complicated periods of history as they move to the next KS. They should familiarise themselves with the sequence of events and the use of time terminology (AT1); they are expected to be taught to identify specific periods of time, and both the causes and effects of various events and situations by learning to compare the various events “both within and across periods” (AT2); they are expected to identify different illustrations of the past in books, photographs, museum displays etc (AT3); they are taught how to use sites, artefacts or adult stories as a source of history, so as to learn how to ask and answer questions about past. (AT4); they are also expected to learn how to

communicate their knowledge and understanding through ICT, role play etc (AT5)
(ACCAC, 2000)

Study Units

The Study Units were divided into Core, optional and school designed. The differences between the Study Units (SU according to the HCW Report) and the HWG for England are:

- *Wales* was added to the units of the history of Britain;
- the 'Ancient civilizations' SU was optional in contrast to the fact that it was a core subject for HWG.
- The SU 'Explorations and encounters: c1450-2550' of the HWG Report was omitted
- The following HCW's Optional SU was omitted in the HWG Final Report

Domestic life, families, and childhood in Roman and Victorian Times (HCW, 1990:26)

- 'Castles and Monasteries and parish churches' and 'Crafts in past societies' were added to the HCW report as an Optional SU
- School Designed SU were limited in two, while the HGW appointed Three

a. Core study units in KS2 for Wales:

1. Early Peoples: Prehistoric, Celtic and Roman Britain.
- 2 The invaders and settlers
3. The life in Tudor and Stuart tim
4. Either Wales and Britain in Victorian times or Life in Wales and Britain since 1900

b. Optional Study Units

Two of the following:

- Houses and households
- Sailors and ships
- Writing and reading
- Food and farming
- Land and transport since 1700
- Crafts in past societies
- Castles, monasteries and parish churches
- Ancient civilizations: Egypt and Greece

c. School designed history study Units

Two units had to be selected, one of which must have been on local history. If the school did not wish to take up the offer of the remaining School Designed History Study Unit the remaining option of the core History Study Units ('Wales and Britain in Victorian times' or 'Life in Wales and Britain since 1900') could be selected, or selection could be made from the list of Optional Study Units (HCW, 1990:26).

B. The Revised National Curriculum of 1995

The Curriculum Council for Wales (CCW) and Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACAC) reviewed the NC Orders in 1993 and 1994, in parallel with Sir Ron Dearing's review in England, and ACAC reviewed the NC assessment arrangements in 1995 and 1996 (ACCAC, 2000:4). The main issues they had to collect evidence for were:

- the removal of over-elaboration and prescription of the NC;
- the appropriateness of the 10 level scale of performance;

- the simplification of testing arrangements;
- ways of improving the central administration of the NC and the identification of the principles which should underpin a review of the NC in Wales.

(ACAC, 1994b: 3)

In contrast to the Final Report history was not statutory in the revised NC of 1995. In the latter, the descriptions of the requirements and the areas of study became more explicit. Also the Curriculum Cymreig was introduced as a common requirement, which incorporated Welsh history. Finally the Key Elements were introduced, which were the successor to the Attainment Targets and the predecessors of the Key Skills. More specifically:

Common Requirements:

- **Access:** Refers to the provision and arrangements that have to be done in order all pupils to have access to the programmes of study
- **Use of language:** Refers to the development of written and oral language skills
- **IT:** Refers to the opportunities that pupils should have to develop IT skills through the study Units
- **The Curriculum Cymreig:** Pupils should be given opportunities to apply the knowledge to the cultural, economic, environmental and linguistic characteristics of Wales

(Source ACAC, 1995: 95)

The Attainment Target

The four ATs of the final Report were incorporated into the Key Elements, as presented later. As a result, there was only one Attainment Target, which was the subject itself: history in our case. The AT was divided in seven (instead of Final Report's ten) Levels of performance. The achievement of Levels remained the same as it was formed in the Final Report (source ACAC, 1995: 104-105).

Study Units

- Life in Early Wales and Britain

Pupils should be taught about the ways through which societies were shaped by different people in various periods: *Earliest Peoples; Celtic Society; Later invasion and its impact on Wales and Britain: either Romans, or Irish and Anglo-Saxons or Vikings*

- Life in Wales and Britain in Tudor and Stuart times

Pupils should study again the everyday life of all levels of society illuminated by a study of significant individuals *Personalities and events; life in Tudor and Stuart Wales*

- Life in Modern Wales and Britain

Pupils should be taught about *Wales as an industrial country, the lives of people in town and country and the life and work of either the Second World War or the present day*

- A study of a historical issue or topic in a local context:

The study should be a study of the local community with a defined historical purpose and time span, have some connections to other study units, and provide the opportunity to access local historical sources

- A Study of a Historical theme

The historical “theme” should be one of the following: *houses and households; ships and sailors; writing and reading; food and farming; land and air transport; castles and religious buildings; life and beliefs in the ancient world.*

(source ACAC, 1995: 98-103)

Key elements

The Key elements build on the knowledge, understanding and skills acquired in the previous KS. The Key elements and the Study Units should be taught together and provide the basis for planning, teaching and assessment. The Key Elements are:

- Chronological awareness

Children should be taught to place events, people and changes within a chronological framework and use conventions to describe the passing of time.

- Range and depth of historical knowledge and understanding

Pupils are expected to learn the characteristic features of the periods and societies, the attitudes and ideas of the people of the past, to identify and describe causes and effects, and to make links between the main events, situations and changes within and across the periods.

- Interpretations of history

To identify and give reasons for the different ways in which the past is represented.

- Historical Enquiry

Pupils should be taught to investigate topics using a range of historical sources and to ask and answer questions and to select recorder information.

- Organization and communication

Pupils should be taught to select recall, organize and present the historical issues studied. ACAC (1995:99).

C. The revised Curriculum of 2000

In September 1997, the then parliamentary under-Secretary of State for Wales invited ACCAC to carry out a review of the National Curriculum in Wales, addressing the following

- Basic and Key Skills
- Breadth and Balance

- Manageability
- Continuity and Progression
- Work Related Education
- Personal and Social Education

(ACCAC, 2000b: 5)

With the Revised Curriculum (2000) the term 'study unit' is removed and the study of local history is incorporated into the requirement to the study of Wales and Britain in specific periods (ACCAC, 2000b: 35, Para 9.1). Castles and religious building and Life and beliefs in the Ancient world are also removed.

Common Requirements

The Common Requirements are more specific in the new revised Curriculum:

- Access to all pupils
- Curriculum Cymreig:

It retains the same definition as the NC of 1995: Pupils should be given opportunities to apply the knowledge to the cultural, economic, environmental and linguistic characteristics of Wales.

- Communication skills

Pupils should be given opportunities in their study of history to develop and apply their skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing and expressing ideas through a variety of media.

- Mathematical Skills

Pupils should be given opportunities, in their study of history to develop and apply their knowledge and skills of numbers, shape, space, measures and handling data.

- **Information Technology Skills**

Pupils should be given opportunities in their study of history to develop and apply their IT skills to obtain, prepare, process and present information and to communicate ideas with increasing independence.

- **Problem-Solving Skills**

Pupils should be given opportunities in their study of history to develop and apply their skills of asking appropriate questions, making predictions and coming to informed decisions.

- **Creative Skills**

Pupils should be given opportunities in their study of history to develop and apply their creative skills, in particular the development and expression of ideas and imagination.

- **Personal and Social Education**

Pupils should be given opportunities in their study of history to develop and apply the attitudes, values, skills, knowledge and understanding relating to personal and social education.

(ACCAC, 2000a: 4-5)

Programme of study

At Key Stage 2, pupils should be given opportunities to build on the knowledge, understanding and skills acquired at Key Stage 1. Pupils should be given opportunities to develop an awareness of the characteristics of different periods in the past, from earliest times to the present, and the ways in which they are different from each other. They should be taught about the ways of life of different people in these periods of history, drawing on important developments, key events and notable people in Wales and Britain. They should be helped to develop their understanding of chronology, to use a range of historical sources, including representations and interpretations of the past, and to organise and communicate their knowledge, understanding and skills in an increasing variety of ways (ACCAC, 2000:a 8)

Areas/topics of study

- Life in early Wales and Britain (one choice among the earliest peoples, the Iron Age Celtic or the Romans)
- Life in Wales and Britain in **either** Tudor **or** the Stuart times

Children should be taught about way of life of people at all levels of society, illuminated by a study of significant individuals and well-documented events of the period, *e.g. Bishop William Morgan and the Welsh Bible, the Civil War.*

- Life in modern Wales and Britain

It refers to history of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Children should be taught about ways of life in the country and industrial Wales in relation to

one of the main historical events of the 20th century, e.g. The Second World War.

- A historical topic in the local context

Pupils should investigate either an in depth study of crucial changes e.g. industrialisation or population growth, or a short-time study in the effects of one important event. Pupils should be taught about the development of at least one aspect of life e.g. house life or farming or writing or food or transport

(source ACCAC, 2000a: 8-9).

Aspects of history

The term 'key element' is not used in the NC for history document 2000. 'Aspect' of the subject (ACCAC, 2000a: 5) is implicitly used to describe the former key elements.

The aspects/elements remain the same as in the key elements if the 1995 document:

- Chronological Awareness

Pupils should be taught to:

1. Use chronological frameworks
2. Use conventions which describe the passing of time, *e.g. BC, AD, century, decade.*

- Historical Knowledge and Understanding

Pupils should be taught:

1. about the characteristics of the periods studied and the diversity of experience within each one
2. To identify and describe the main events, situations and changes within and across periods
3. To identify the causes and consequences of some events and changes.

- Interpretations of History

Pupils should be taught to:

1. identify the different ways in which the past is represented and interpreted, *e.g. in films and television programmes, museums, artists' reconstructions, historians' views*, and to suggest reasons for these.

- Historical Enquiry

Pupils should be taught to:

1. Use a range of sources including representations, interpretations and, where appropriate, ICT to investigate historical topics
2. Ask and answer questions about the past.

- Organization and Communication

Pupils should be taught to:

1. Select, recall and organise historical information, *e.g. group material from different sources under headings, organise material for a wall display*
2. Use appropriate vocabulary *e.g. trade, agriculture, invention, archaeology, saint, factory system, public health*

3. Present results with increasing independence in a variety of ways, including visual and oral presentations, extended writing and the use of ICT

(ACCAC, 2000: 8-9)

Attainment Target

As it the Revised Curriculum of 1995, there is one attainment Target, which is history. The levels of performance remain the same.

D. Revised curriculum of 2008

Skills-framework

With the revised curriculum a skills-framework for age 3-19 was developed in order to provide guidance about continuity and progression in developing thinking, communication, ICT and number for learners from 3–19 (ACCAC, 2008:6). This framework is applied to all subjects of the curriculum and the common requirements; whilst the subjects themselves have their own skill framework.

- Developing thinking: planning, developing and reflecting.

History contributes to this through enquiry and interpretation

- Developing communication: oracy, reading, writing and wider communication.

History contributes to this skill through enquiry of aural and written sources and the communication of findings and ideas

- Developing ICT: finding, developing, creating and presenting information and ideas

History contributes to ICT through the use of technology in enquiries and through presentation of findings.

- Developing number use: mathematical information, calculating, and interpreting and presenting findings.

Through history children are expected to develop chronological awareness, using conventions relating to time, and making use of data, *e.g. census returns and statistics*.

Common Requirements

- Curriculum Cymreig

History contributes to the Curriculum Cymreig through the teaching of local and Welsh history whereby children are helped to learn ‘about the factors that have shaped Wales and other countries today’

- Personal and Social education

History contributes by developing skills of enquiry and critical thinking; their understanding of different views and interpretations of people and events; and of the way in which people have affected their environment in the past. It gives learners an historical context for their own lives.

- Careers and the World of work

History contributes by developing children’s understanding of the factors that have shaped the world of work in the past, the ways in which social and industrial reforms have happened, the changes across different periods and within the same period, and

the changes that happened in the twentieth century. It also contributes to their readiness for a working life by developing skills of analysis, of evidence and argument, of detecting bias and prejudice, and of constructing an argument or interpretation of events based on evidence.

(ACCAC, 2008:8)

Skills in the History programme for study

Each of the following skills for history contributes to the equivalent skill of the skills-framework:

- Chronological awareness
 1. Use timelines to sequence events
 2. Use appropriate key words to estimate, measure and describe the passage of time.
- Historical knowledge and understanding
 1. Identify differences between ways of life at different times
 2. Identify significant people and describe events within and across periods
 2. Understand why people did things, what caused specific events and the consequences of those events.
- Interpretations of history
 1. Identify the ways in which the past is represented and interpreted
 2. Distinguish between 'fact' and 'opinion'
- Historical enquiry
 1. Ask and answer relevant questions about the past

2. Plan the investigative approach to be used, suggesting how to find relevant information
 3. Use a range of sources, including ICT, *e.g. artefacts, buildings and sites, adults talking about their own past, visual sources, data and appropriate written sources*
 4. Reflect on their findings and the investigative approach
 - Organisation and communication
1. Select, record, and organise historical information
 2. Communicate ideas, opinions and conclusions with increasing independence in a variety of ways, including ICT, *e.g. graphs, charts, extended writing, visual and oral presentations.*

(ACCAC, 2008: 12-13)

Range of study

After the presentation and explanation of the transferable skills, the range of study is briefly explained:

Pupils should develop their historical skills, knowledge and understanding through learning about a range of historical contexts. These should be based primarily on the local area within the wider context of Wales, but including examples from Britain and other countries. The focus should be on the characteristics of daily life during the selected contexts. One aspect of daily life (either houses and homes or food and farming or transport) should be studied in all contexts. (ACCAC, 2008: 13-14)

Pupils should be given opportunities:

To study:

- The daily life of people living in either the time of the Iron Age Celts or the Romans

- The daily life of people living either in the Age of the Princes or in the time of the Tudors or the time of the Stuarts
- changes to people's daily lives in the locality in the nineteenth century
- The differences in people's daily lives in two contrasting periods of the twentieth century

Carry out:

- Investigations into the history around them and into the life of people at different times and places in the past

Ask and answer the questions:

- What do you know about life at this time; how do you know this and how can you find out more?
- What was life like for rich and for poor people, for men, women and children,
e.g. houses, food and farming, transport, education, clothes, celebrations, pastimes?
- Were there significant changes in people's lives at this time and, if so, why?
- How have the daily lives of people at this time been represented and interpreted and why?
- What impact did people of this time have on their environment?

(ACCAC, 2008: 13-14)

Appendix Two: History workshops at St Fagans

The workshops

There were three workshops for the KS2 classes when I conducted my research. The Tudor costume and the Victorian school are based on role play. The Celtic village can also be described as a role play workshop, but in this case it is the educator/archaeologist from the museum that is dressed up as a Celt. The Tudor costume workshop stopped running in 2006. Instead, and according to the NMW's new vision to combine history and archaeology at St Fagans: NHM, the new workshop that deals with this specific period is the St Teilo's church workshop. When I am referring to the "visit", I am talking about the whole day at St Fagans: NHM, from 10:00 when the children arrive until the school's departure at around 14:00 . The visit includes workshops that last approximately 1 hour 30 minutes.

There are some common features for all the workshops. These features have to do with the organizing and timetable of the whole day. As soon as children arrive at St Fagans Museum at around 10:00, they go to the changing room where they leave their lunch boxes and dress up if the workshop requires so. Also, in order for the class to participate in a workshop, the teacher has to attend the training session first. Furthermore, due to the fact that there are usually two KS2 classes of each school doing

the workshop, when one class is participating in the workshop, the other is visiting the museum grounds and vice versa. As a result, there is not a pre-fixed succession between the workshop and the visit. It is up to the teachers to split the classes and the groups. Finally, the education staff of the museum has to set up the play time, the lunch time, and place, as well as the time of the visit to the shop for each school, so that there won't be a confusion among the schools.

The Victorians

More specifically, the Victorian School takes place in the Maestir School (1880-1916). Prior to the visit, roles are distributed to some of the children: the Welsh speaker who is going to speak in Welsh and be punished with the 'Welsh not', the left-handed pupil who is going to be punished, the pupil who slouches, the pupil-teacher etc. The pupils are given a detailed explanation about what they are supposed to do during the role play.

As soon as the bell rings, at around 10.45, the role play starts, with the teacher pretending to be strict and ready to punish them for any minor mistake or breaking of the rules. They enter the school yard where they do gymnastics, and then they line up to enter the school. At the door the teaching assistant is checking the state of their hands to see if they are dirty or not, which also indicates whether the child is working in the fields or not. The children take their seats and the "lesson" starts.

Questions

The teacher is supposed to be strict and not laugh at all during the role play. Children are trying to play their roles too. The teacher explains that when they ask a question, pupils have to raise either their right hand if they know the answer or their left hand if case they do not. The teacher asks random questions, which are mainly on children's observations as they walked to school.

The three R's

The workshop is based on the three R's - Reading, 'Riting and 'Rithmetic- the basics of a rural Victorian elementary school. The teacher uses the reading and arithmetic techniques of the Victorian era as well as new "tools", like the clicker that coordinates the reading and the lesson. The children are also asked to copy a passage using ink, pens and blotting papers.

Punishments

During the whole lesson, the children play the roles appointed to them: one pupil speaks in Welsh; the pupil teacher sneaks on them and they get the Welsh not; another one writes with their left hand and they wear the wooden rings on their left hand; another pupil slouches and they wear the posture board and the teacher pretends to hit a pupil's hand with the cane.

Play

According to the observation of the two schools there are two variations of the timetable. Either the bell rings after 30 minutes and the children go outside and play for 10 minutes with toys: the cup-and-ball, big wooden sticks, hoop and skipping ropes and they return to the classroom for arithmetic lesson, or they do all the activities in approximately 40 minutes and then play at the end of the lesson.

After the role play they have the lunch break outside, somewhere on the grounds, or indoors in the case of bad weather. At around 13.30 the class start the second part of their day at St Fagans: NHM, which includes visits to various buildings, such as the Rhyd-Y-Car cottages and the chapel which has some relevance to Victorian times.

Before the re-erection of the Rhyd-Y-Car cottages the schools were ‘...encouraged to complete their experience of Victorian times by holding a service in Welsh at Penrhiw Chapel’, while at the same time ‘the toll gate...has also been attacked by many bands of ‘Rebecca rioters’...’ (Jones and Jones, 1989:21). Today, during the training at St Fagans: NHM, the teachers are given alternatives to accompany their Victorian school, including a service at Penrhiw Chapel. Only one school from those I observed spent some time after the Victorian school Penrhiw Chapel, singing hymns.

A typical day finishes with a 15-20 minutes visit to the shop.

The Tudors

The Tudor Costume

The activity also consists of two parts: The ‘Tudor costume’ and the visit to some of the Tudor houses on the museum grounds. The two activities take place in no specific order. The ‘Tudor Costume’ takes place in a container next to the re-erection of St Teilo’s church at Landeilo, Tal-Y-Bont. In this modern construction, a museum employee responsible for the workshop welcomes the children. Four children, two girls and two boys, who have been appointed by their teacher to dress up as people of the Tudor times, are led to the cloak room and the educator explains what they are going to do. At the beginning the educator asks questions about the Tudor Times and the wives of Henry the VIII. After this the children are given a photo copy of the same portrait shown on the TV screen, which comes from the collection of St Fagans: NHM’s mansion, and she asks questions about the reasons for the severe face of the two children in the painting and about life during Tudor times. She insists on the strict character of the Tudor period.

Then she invites the children to “travel in time”: they close their eyes, they count down and as soon as they open their eyes the educator pretends to be the maid at Sir Edward’s house. The four children take their places next to her. One boy and one girl is dressed up as the rich couple of Sir Edward and Lady Blanch and the other two children are dressed up as the couple of squire John and his wife Ann.

The educator focuses on the differences in the clothes in conjunction, the differences in social rank, and the severe character of the Tudor period. Soft lace, silk, and golden threaded clothes are characteristics of the wealthy and upper classes, whilst rough, simpler clothes are for people who were not “very rich, nor very poor. More like a middle class”. The corset, the bodice and the stomacher are the tokens of female oppression.

Children are introduced to garments such as the ruff, the breeches and the farthingale. They touch each garment to feel the differences among the textiles. They are asked their opinion about each costume and whether they like the clothes of the rich or poor best.

The second part of the “Tudor Costume” activity is the visit to three houses of the Tudor period: The Hende'r-ywydd Uchaf Farmhouse (1508), Y Garreg Fawr farmhouse (1544) and Abernowydd farmhouse (1678). The school that used the questionnaires provided by the museum chose to visit the houses in chronological order whilst the school who did not complete questionnaires visited the houses starting from the “poorer” and moving on to the ‘posh’ house.

The children are asked to find out the differences in the building techniques and how these techniques, in addition to the styles of the houses changed during the Tudor times. With or without questionnaires the children are encouraged to look for evidence around the house about building techniques and about the function of the utensils, furniture and each room of the house. They are asked to make comparisons between the

three houses as well as to recall any objects we use today that resemble objects of the Tudor times. They do this either in groups or as a whole by answering their teacher's questions. One school also visited the Mansion. The teacher felt it was necessary for the children to visit it as it is a Tudor building too.

St Teilo's Church

A new workshop that started in 2006, concerning the Tudor times, was St Teilo's Church. The children are gathered in the container where they are discussed the Tudor era first. Again he main subjects again Henry the VIII and his wives, The educator also shows them some objects, like a "Hornbook", and she talks about everyday life in Tudor times, focusing on the church and *knappan*, the ancestor of rugby. She tries to make some relations between life then and life now so that she can show what things are different and what things still have relevance.

The educator also tries to explain to the children the fact that the houses at St Fagans: NHM originate from all over Wales. The children then go into the church and discuss its architectural and decoration style. At the same time the educator tries to introduce the children to the notion of 'interpretation'. She tries to explain that the specific restoration at St Teilo's church is just one of the many phases throughout the life of the church.

After the church, the children are given toys to play. These toys are used for both the 'Victorian' and the 'Tudor' workshops. After their play and lunch they visit the Tudor houses mentioned above.

The Celtic Village

The Celtic village is the only place at St Fagans: NHM that is a replica. Three huts surrounded by a wooden fence form Caradoc's village (an archaeologist impersonates a the Celt warrior, Caradoc). When S8 visited the Celtic village "Madoc" had replaced Caradoc. Madoc's workshop was, as the teacher described, closer to a history lesson.

The children initially gather outside the walls of the village where Caradoc or Madoc asks them questions about the Celts: e.g. how many years ago did I live? He then encourages children to express their own views about the function of objects they see around by asking questions. He then proceeds to tell the children the "real" answer. Similar discussions also take place inside the hut. Furthermore, Caradoc or Madoc shows the children items from everyday life in the Iron Age. He tries to point out differences between life in Iron Age and modern life. After this there are two activities: the "wattle and daub", where children make a wall out of mud and wood. They also make beaded jewels.

The second part of the visit, as there are no other relevant buildings related to the Celts, usually consists of walks around the museum grounds, playing in the playground and a visit to the shop. S8 thoroughly visited one building, while S6 went around the grounds and visited various buildings.

Appendix Three: Letters and Consent forms

i. Project Information: Sent to all interviewees and schools

Understandings of History: Schools and Museums' interaction in the teaching of history

Participant project information

Who is doing the research?

My name is Eleni Kostarigka. I am a student at Cardiff University, School of Social Science studying for my PhD.

I obtained my MSc in Education at Cardiff University in 2004. My research then was about Museum education and history workshop at the Rhondda Heritage Park and Cynon Valley Museum.

Aims of the research

My present study looks at the ways in which St Fagans: National History Museum and primary schools interact and jointly construct children's understandings of local and Welsh history. I am particularly interested in how schools make use of the museums and in the experiences a child gains from their participation in a workshop organised by the museum. I would like to explore how children anticipate the visit, what occurs during the visit and how they reflect upon the visit afterwards. Furthermore, I am interested in how teachers view St Fagans: National History Museum and how the workshops or visits fit in with the history curriculum and their goals for history.

Finally, I am interested in studying the Museum's views on representation of local and Welsh history and how their educational policy is combined with the school's policy and history curriculum.

Research activities

I will be engaged in a number of research activities including interviewing museum key staff and documenting the ways in which workshops for history are produced and received. In addition to the interviews with the museum staff I also wish to follow and observe a number of schools before, during and after their visit at St Fagans: National History Museum.

In order to have a more complete view of how the history curriculum is being delivered to primary schools as well as its notion and its aims, I am going to interview the history advisers or advisory teachers of Wales.

What will the observations involve?

The 'school visit' research activity has three parts. First, I would like to visit the class shortly before the trip in order to introduce myself to the children and the teachers, so that they can familiarise themselves with my presence and my work

The main research activity would be the school visit itself. I would like to accompany and observe the class during their activities at St Fagans: National History Museum. This would also include attending and observing them during the workshop and their following activities in the grounds of the museum.

Finally I would like to talk to the children in small groups about their visit to St Fagans: National History Museum and the workshop and if the class is engaged in any follow up activities I would welcome the opportunity to observe these as well.

Multi-media and consent

For recording data and activities I would like to use some video and audio recording, in ways that I will not disturb or intervene during a role play workshop. Children will have the opportunity to see the recording equipment prior to the school trip, and appropriate permissions will be sought from parents/guardians, teachers and children. Children and teachers will keep their anonymity and their names will be altered in the transcriptions.

What will I do with the information?

The information gathered will be transcribed and analysed as be part of my final PhD thesis. It might possibly published in articles for academic or scientific journals

Anonymity and confidentiality

When I create the transcript, I will change the names of the pupils and everyone they mention. Teachers' identities will not be mentioned either.

In case of the museum staff, all the participants will be fully informed about my project and the interviews will be conducted after their written permission. The interviews will be semi structured and tape recorded. The content of the interviews will have to do with the museum's education policies as well as with the interviewees' own thoughts and opinions about museum education and notions of history.

The information and the data collected from both interviews and observations will strictly be used by the researcher and the people closely engaged with the research. It will not be used for any other purpose and it will be kept securely to prevent unauthorised access or accidental loss in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

What if a pupil or any participant wishes to withdraw?

The participation in the project is completely voluntary and you can withdraw whenever you wish without giving a reason

Questions

If you have any questions or concerns please contact me by e-mail or by phone on the number and address listed below.

Contact details:

ii. Letter to museum staff

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Eleni Kostarigka.. I am a student at Cardiff University, School of Social Sciences studying for my PhD. I received your address from [...] who suggested that I contact you as I believe that your contribution to my research will be invaluable.

My study looks at ways in which St Fagans: National History Museum and primary schools interact and jointly construct children's understandings of local and Welsh history. In order to undertake this study, the research activities involve two sectors: St Fagans: National History Museum and Key Stage 2 primary school classes.

In order to study the ways St Fagans: National History Museum produces and represents Welsh and local history as well as to analyse their visions and educational goals I would like to interview key museum staff across a range of roles and responsibilities. The interviews will last about (how many minutes) and will explore the museum's education policies and practices in relation to the promotion of museum education and notions of history.

I enclose a leaflet with further details about my project, its aims and the methodology.

I would greatly appreciate it if we could arrange an interview meeting on...[Dates].

Thank you very much for your attention to this and I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Eleni Kostarigka

iii. Consent form for professionals

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: Participation in PhD study

Following our telephone/email conversation I am sending you a consent form attached to the project information letter addressing to the [teachers/history adviser/member of staff] who is going to participate in my study.

After reading the information please return the form completed and signed to the address written on the information letter

Thank you very much in advance

Yours sincerely

Eleni Kostarigka

-
- I confirm that I have carefully read and understood the information of Miss Kostarigka's study
 - I have had time to consider and discuss further details and queries. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw whenever I wish

Therefore:

- ☐ I agree to take part in the study
- ☐ I do not wish to take part in the study

Name of the participant

Date

Signature

iv. Consent Form for schools

Dear Parent/Guardian,

RE: Visit/Workshop at St Fagans: NHM on [Date]

My name is Eleni Kostarigka. I am a student at Cardiff University, School of Social Sciences studying for a PhD.

My study looks at the ways in which St Fagans National History Museum and primary schools, KS2 in particular, interact and jointly construct children's understandings of local and Welsh history.

As part of my study I am observing what the children and teachers do before, during and after their visit or their workshop at St Fagans. I will be using video-film and audio recording to record my observations.

If you do not want your child to be filmed please tick the box below and return this letter to [Head teacher's/teacher's name]. Alternatively, if you have any questions about my project, feel free to contact me on 07976470525, 02920 255085 or email me at kostarigkae@cf.ac.uk.

When I have finished the research the video clips and photographs will be viewed only by me and persons closely involved in my research.

Yours sincerely

- ☐ I do not wish my child [Name] to be filmed or photographed during Miss Kostarigka's research project at National History Museum St Fagans

Appendix Four: Interview questions

A. Museum Staff

1. Tell me about yourself (Main responsibilities/Why the specific museum/what sort of satisfaction you get/administrative role)
2. How would you define what you are trying to communicate through the history workshops/collections/events etc
3. What are the main changes that National History Museum/ National Museum of Wales gone through? What do they mean? How has the sense of communication changed?
4. To what extent would you say that museums have an educational role? (How should they carry out this role? Are there any particularly important aspects of museum education? How NHM succeeds in realizing them? Etc)
5. What do you think are the priorities of the National Curriculum in regards of history teaching?
6. Ideas about the interaction between the museum and schools (What do you think is going on in the classrooms and to what extent this is different for what NHM offers)
7. Welsh history and NHM (What is Welsh history for you/ The Museum's contribution to the public's and children's understandings of history)

8. Form Welsh to local: (What is local history for you? Is it part of Welsh identity?
Etc
9. How do you imagine the ideal museum education

B. Teachers

1. What have you been doing in history this year?
2. What sort of ideas you want to promote through history?
3. How would you define the notion of “local history”?
4. [How does the visit/workshop fit in with what you are trying to do?]
5. [What was the workshop about? Did you prepare the visit and how? What are you doing after the visit? What do you actually want to achieve through your after visit activities? Have you participated in any other workshops throughout the year that have to do with the history subject?]
6. What is your impression of St Fagans National History Museum?
7. What do you think St Fagans promotes as local, Welsh or National?

C. History advisers

1. Tell me about yourself (Main responsibilities/Why the specific museum/what sort of satisfaction you get/administrative role)
2. What do you think are the priorities of the National Curriculum in regards of history teaching?
3. What sort of ideas you want to promote through history?

4. What could be described as historical knowledge?
5. Curriculum and pedagogy (How history should be taught; Teaching skills or content?etc)
6. Welsh history and National Curriculum(What is Welsh history for you/ The Museum's contribution to the public's and children's understandings of history)
7. From Welsh to local: (What is local history for you? Is it part of Welsh identity? Etc
8. To what extent would you say that museums have an educational role? (How should they carry out this role? Are there any particularly important aspects of museum education? How NHM succeeds in realizing them? Etc)
9. Ideas about the interaction between the museum and schools (What do you think is going on in the classrooms? To what extent this is different for what St Fagans: NHM offers? How should a museums visit/workshop be organized? etc)
10. What is your impression of St Fagans National History Museum?
11. What do you think St Fagans promotes as local, Welsh or National?
12. How do you imagine the ideal museum education

D. Children

1. Was it the first time you visited St Fagans?
2. What did you do during your visit?
3. Did you dress up?

4. Did you find out about something new?
5. Did you enjoy the visit?
6. Did you enjoy the role play/dressing up?
7. What was it that you enjoy the most?
8. What was it that you didn't enjoy?
9. What was it about the visit that you most remember?
10. What do you think the life of the Victorians/at Tudor times looked like? This question was asked only if at least one of the children mentioned something about the life during the historical period they dealt with during their visit. I wanted to see if the pupils were interested in imagining about the lives of or if they were interested in finding out more about of people in the past, which is one of the goals of the National Curriculum for History. If the children answered that question I would try to open a discussion about their views on issues raised during their visit or through their answers, such as men and women's lives during the specific historical period, rich and poor, technology, every day lives, school, housing etc].
11. What would you like to do or see if you visit St Fagans again?
12. Would you like to add something more that we haven't talked about? Any more thoughts?

