

# The contribution of theater to the development of appropriate moral judgments

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## Abstract

The role of theater in the development of moral judgments is underrepresented in the philosophical debate. Hence, this thesis aims to answer the question: What is the appropriate role of moral emotions in generating moral judgments and could theater contribute to this role? Based on Sabine Roeser's affectual intuitionism, I claim that moral emotions should play a major role in developing moral judgments: they generate them. In line with this claim and with Roeser, I presume that ethical intuitions are paradigmatically moral emotions. Moral emotions can provide access to objective moral knowledge. However, emotions are a fallible source of moral knowledge; some are misleading and inappropriate. Therefore, we should be educated to develop more appropriate moral emotions. I argue that theater is a good medium for this education via Nussbaum's reasoning about literature and Roeser's reasoning about techno art. I highlight a few advantages of theater compared to literature and techno art. Theater promotes appropriate moral emotions by cultivating moral reflection and preparation through fostering imagination, sympathy, sensitivity, and guidance. In this way, theater contributes to the role of moral emotions generating moral judgments. Additionally, theater could even better contribute to this role by incorporating 'after talks'.

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## Introduction

The theater show *Salomonsoordeel* (2022) by director Ilay Den Boer made me finally understand the complexity of the asylum procedure. Beforehand, my judgment about the asylum procedure was unsubstantiated and only permeated by sympathy for the refugee. I have read philosophical papers and news articles about the refugee crisis, but I never learned so much about it as during the play of Den Boer. The play let me engage with three different perspectives on the asylum procedure by prompting my emotions. The play changed my moral judgment: I no longer think we should abolish the asylum procedure and open the borders. Many other theater plays evoked my emotions and changed my moral judgments. Presumably, the same occurs to other people.

Is it plausible that emotions have an impact on our moral judgment? The debate about emotions in relation to morality is comprehensive. There are two main positions regarding this topic: sentimentalism and rationalism. According to sentimentalists, such as Prinz and Hume, moral experience is emotional, but the problem with sentimentalism is that moral judgments are subjective. This theory is, therefore, exposed to the threat of relativism. Rationalists, such as Kant, and intuitionists, such as Huemer, on the other hand, believe that the moral experience is objective and rational. Their view is too abstract to do justice to lively moral experience (Roeser, 2011, p. 138). The dichotomy of sentimentalism and rationalism reflects the dichotomy between emotion and reason (Roeser, 2011, p. XVII). However, many scientists and philosophers have rejected this dichotomy.

Emotional experts like Damásio and Slovic challenge the idea that emotions and reason are separate, and philosophers like Reid see them as intertwined. Roeser reacts to the developments of emotion-scholar research, which results in the development of a new meta-ethical view, affectual intuitionism. This theory takes the important feature of the sentimentalist tradition (emphasis on emotions) and the important feature of the rationalist tradition (objectivity).

Affectual intuitionism is descriptive and combines a cognitive theory of emotions which states that emotions are rational and truth-apt, with ethical intuitionism. The theory implies that justified basic beliefs are intuitions (Roeser, 2002, p. 210). Moreover, moral intuitions are paradigmatically moral emotions (Roeser, 2011, p. 109). Moral emotions are, for example, feelings of compassion, sympathy, responsibility, guilt, and shame. Emotions can grasp moral truths, but sometimes they fail, then they are called inappropriate emotions.

The view that art forms can ignite appropriate moral emotions is widely endorsed. For example, among many others, Nussbaum writes about the educative influence of literature on moral judgments. She argues that reading novels can serve as a preparation for moral interaction. Furthermore, Roeser argues that techno art can contribute to moral reflection, and, therefore to moral development. Techno art reflects on different kinds of technologies and their potential risks. Techno-art can be sculptures, performance art, robotics, literature, paintings, and new media (Roeser & Steinert, 2019, p. 98).

As described at the beginning of this introduction, presumably, theater could contribute to moral development as well. Similarly, to literature, it seems plausible that theater promotes preparation for moral situations and cultivates moral reflection. On top of that, theater is live and brings people together. However, the philosophical underpinning of the potential of theater to generate appropriate moral emotions still needs to be explored. Therefore, the research question of this thesis is: What is the appropriate role of moral emotions in generating moral judgments and could theater contribute to this role?

This thesis could contribute to acknowledging theater's importance in promoting appropriate moral emotions. I will argue that theater contributes to moral development, which implies that theater is important for an ethical society. The academic relevance of this thesis is that it fills a gap in the philosophical literature concerning the relationship between theater and moral judgments.

In chapter one, I claim that moral emotions should play a significant role in developing moral judgments: they generate them. I describe Roeser's view of emotions as a source of objective moral knowledge and elaborate on affectual intuitionism. In the second chapter, I argue that emotions are a fallible source of moral knowledge and, therefore, require education. Via Nussbaum's philosophy about reading novels and Roeser's philosophy about techno art, I argue that theater could serve as this kind of education. Furthermore, I will show that theater has advantages over literature and techno art as a medium of emotional education.

Finally, I will conclude that theater can help develop moral judgments by providing emotional education, which cultivates appropriate moral emotions.

# 1. Moral Emotions as a Vital Source of Moral Judgments

This chapter functions as a description and limited defence of what Roeser's answer would be to the first part of my research question: What is the appropriate role of moral emotions in generating moral judgments? Her answer would be that the appropriate role of moral emotions in generating moral judgments, is significant, based on affectual intuitionism. Emotions generate judgments in the sense that they enable us to make justified basic moral beliefs (intuitions). I presume that these intuitions are the basis for all other judgments; hence emotions generate judgments. In this way, emotions can provide access to moral truths. This answer is grounded in her meta-ethical theory: affectual intuitionism.

In section 1.1, I start with the elaboration of Roeser's answer by demonstrating a major claim of affectual intuitionism: emotions indicate what we value. In section 1.2, I explain that emotions provide access to objective moral truths by elaborating on some meta-ethical underpinnings of affectual intuitionism. In section 1.3, I refute a counterargument, and I introduce the idea that not all emotions provide access to moral truths due to biases.

## 1.1 Emotions indicate what we Value

In this section, I provide Roeser's argument for the claim that moral emotions should play a significant role in developing moral judgments: emotions indicate what we value; they are a source of moral knowledge. In subsection 1.1.1, I describe emotions as indicators of what we value. In subsection 1.1.2, I elaborate on the foregoing by describing Roeser's identification of emotions with 'felt value judgments', and I briefly introduce the corresponding meta-ethical theory: affectual intuitionism.

### 1.1.1 Emotions are a Source of Moral Knowledge by indicating Values

In this subsection, I explain that emotions indicate what we value and why this leads to emotions as a vital source of moral knowledge.

Emotions indicate what we value because they express what we find important (Roeser, 2018, p. 92). An emotion can be caused by or grounded in what one finds important. For example, if one becomes angry because someone else has lied, the anger expresses that one finds honesty important. Thus, in this example, the emotion indicates the value of honesty. Hence, moral emotions indicate what we value (Roeser, 2018, p. 92). Or another

example is that feeling responsible for refugees could indicate the value of equality and justice. In addition, if the moral emotion is taken as a source of moral knowledge, it could lead to the moral judgment that refugees are treated unfairly.

Furthermore, emotions indicate what we value because they are used when perceiving the world in an evaluative sense. Moral judgments entail immediate emotional evaluation of situations. ‘...through emotions, we judge the moral value of a situation in a direct, experiential way. Moral emotions such as sympathy, compassion, shame, and guilt provide us access to the moral value of a situation, action, or person’ (Roeser, 2018, p. 92).

Why does this lead to emotions serving as a source to moral knowledge? Emotions indicating values make them an indirect source of moral knowledge. Because they serve as indicators of what we value, they can be understood as sources of moral knowledge. If one knows what the main values are, it is easy to make a judgment about a situation. One checks whether the situation meets the values and makes a moral judgment. Hence, that emotions indicate what we value makes emotions a source of moral knowledge.

Additionally, in a deliberation, the common values can become salient by investigating the present moral emotions of all participants. Roeser argues that moral emotions should be reflected upon at the starting point of moral deliberations (Roeser et al., 2002, p. 647). In the deliberation, the values indicated by the emotions are a good starting point for achieving a fruitful deliberation since they are a vital source of ethical features of situations.

A counterargument could be that emotions sometimes fail to indicate what we value. However, emotions are still a valuable source of moral judgments because many of them helps us see what we value. Furthermore, we make mistakes with our senses, and still, we think of them as a useful way of perceiving. For example, with our eyes, the stick in the water looks crooked. However, if I take the stick out of the water, the stick looks and is straight. Believing my sight led to an error, I still accept my eyes as vital sources to judgments about reality. Analogous, the same goes for moral emotions. We should not dismiss this valuable source. However, veritably not all emotions indicate what we value; therefore, emotions can indicate what we value.

In conclusion, emotions can indicate what we value because they express what we find important. In other words, emotions can be a vital source of moral knowledge by indicating values.



### 1.1.2 Emotions as ‘Felt Value Judgments’

In this subsection, I describe affectual intuitionism and explain that according to this theory, emotions should be understood as ‘felt value judgments’. Furthermore, this theory claims that intuitions are paradigmatically moral emotions. In this subsection I elaborate on the foregoing of emotions as indicators of what we value.

Affectual intuitionism combines the cognitive theory of emotions with intuitionism. The cognitive theory of emotions understands emotions as complex states which comprise cognitive and affective aspects (Roeser, 2011, p. 139). Particular intuitions are basic moral beliefs; they reflect evaluative ethical features of the world. They track moral truth and provide access to moral truths (Roeser, 2020, p. 1922).

According to affectual intuitionism, emotions enable us to make justified basic moral beliefs and Roeser identifies those beliefs with intuitions (Roeser, 2020, p. 1931). These intuitions are the basis for all other judgments; hence emotions can generate judgments. This theory claims that particular ethical intuitions are paradigmatically moral emotions. In line with Roeser, I use the term ‘paradigmatically’ because whether emotions are a source of moral knowledge depends on the situation and the agent (Roeser, 2020, p. 1922).

Moral emotions are focused on moral aspects of situations. They let us see salient features of situations that purely rational states would easily overlook. Emotions shape the way we see the world in an evaluative sense. An account of emotions as cognitive and affective states allows for the possibility that paradigmatically, moral emotions are normative, veridical, appropriate; emotions are states that track evaluative features of the world (Roeser, 2011, p. 150).

A moral emotion is a judgment about a situation, including the corresponding feeling and value. The central idea of affectual intuitionism is that emotions’ cognitive and affective aspects cannot be pulled apart; the feeling and judgment interact undisguisable (Roeser, 2011, p. 174). Roeser explains this idea of moral emotions as ‘felt value judgment’ with the example of the moral emotion of guilt. If one feels guilty, the feeling is accompanied by the judgment that one did something wrong. The feeling can be direct and involve bodily experiences and Roeser calls it the ‘pangs’ of guilt. The disagreeable feeling of guilt is ‘inherently intertwined with the judgment of wrongness (Roeser, 2011, p. 150).

How are these ‘felt value judgments’ made? They are basic experience, but there is

data and argument that foster the generation of our intuition (Roeser, 2011, p. 120). People perceive features of a situation with the senses. But the morally wrong- or rightness is not perceivable with our eyes or ears. For a moral emotion or intuition, we need to perceive and, the perceived features, allow us to make a moral intuition. The moral intuition or emotion is not deduced from the empirical facts. Then the is-ought problem would occur. I will elaborate on this in subsection 1.2.5.

In conclusion, moral emotions can indicate what we value and can be a vital source of moral knowledge. According to affectual intuitionism, moral intuitions are paradigmatically emotions. Since they have cognitive and affective aspects, they should be understood as ‘felt value judgments’. Emotions as indicators of what we value, is the main argument for Roeser’s answer that moral emotions generate judgments. In other words, moral emotions play a significant role in generating moral judgments: they generate them. Emotions enable us to make intuitions. In the next section, I demonstrate in another way that the role of moral emotions is generating judgments. I display affectual intuitionism as a plausible theory by elaborating on the main claims and some theoretical underpinnings of affectual intuitionism. According to this theory, emotions can provide access to objective moral truths, hence moral emotions generate moral judgments.

## 1.2 Affectual Intuitionism

In this section, I ground the statement that emotions serve as indicators of what we value by elaborating on the corresponding meta-ethical view of the statement. I describe affectual intuitionism by elaborating on some meta-ethical underpinnings of the theory and briefly describe some arguments for these underpinnings. Affectual intuitionism is a combination of intuitionism and the cognitive theory of emotions.

In subsection 1.2.1, I briefly examine intuitionism and explain Roeser’s adjustment of the ‘affectual’ to classical forms of intuitionism. In respectively subsections 1.2.2, 1.2.3 and 1.2.4, I will describe some features of the theory: foundationalism, moral realism, and non-inferentiality. In 1.2.5, I describe how affectual intuitionism deals with the is/ought gap. Lastly, in 1.2.6, I explain that affectual intuitionism is next to a descriptive theory also a normative theory.

### 1.2.1 Affectual Intuitionism: the ‘Affectual’

The main difference between affectual intuitionism and other classical forms of intuitionism is the emphasis on emotions, the ‘affectual.’ First, I describe ethical intuitionism, afterwards I explain Roeser’s adjustment of the ‘affectual’.

Ethical intuitionism is a meta-ethical view, which claims that certain moral truths can be known inferentially; moral truths can be known through intuitions. Intuitions are not deduced from other beliefs. According to classical intuitionism, moral language is objective, non-natural, and truth-apt. In other words, moral properties exist independently of human minds; they are distinctive from natural properties and are right or wrong. Intuitions are basic beliefs. For example, killing people is wrong, is an intuition that requires no further explanation (Roeser, 2011, p. 5).

An intuition is a belief that is not justified by any other belief, but according to Roeser, holding a particular intuition also entails an affective attitude. Keeping a particular intuition means one feels the corresponding attitude; one must relate to the belief. Merely having an intuition without relating to the intuition is not the same as having a moral intuition/ judgment. Uttering disapproval without a sense of abhorrence could be the utterance of a lie or nonsense. Moral emotions entail this affective component. What is distinctive about her view is that non-inferential moral beliefs can be moral emotions.

In other words, as Roeser argues, believing a particular moral judgment means having a particular opinion (cognitive) and being attached or connected to that opinion (affective) (Roeser, 2011, p. 150). Moral emotions, understood as this caring attitude, makes room for the possibility of being a ‘felt value judgment’ (Roeser, 2020, p. 138). For example, the moral emotion of sympathy towards a homeless person could serve as the feeling of the judgment that the value of equality is not realized. In contrast, if one would utter that the homeless person is pathetic without feeling sorry for him, he does not hold the intuition.

In conclusion, according to affectual intuitionism, some moral beliefs can be justified independently of inference; these beliefs are called intuitions. Roeser’s distinctive addition to this idea is that holding a particular intuition involves having an affective attitude, a moral emotion. This makes room for the previously described idea of emotions as ‘felt value judgment’s’ and that they generate moral judgments. I will briefly examine some technical details of affectual intuitionism in the next subsections.

### 1.2.2 Affectual Intuitionism: Foundationalism

Affectual intuitionism is a form of classical intuitionism, and one of the core elements of

classical intuitionism is foundationalism. Foundationalism means that there are intuitions which are justified basic beliefs and these beliefs stand on themselves. In other words, there are self-evident basic beliefs (Roeser, 2002, p. 20).

An argument for foundationalism and at the same time, a counterargument to *infinitism* is the argument of *regressum ad infinitum*. We should believe that there are self-evident beliefs because they function as ‘regress stoppers (Roeser, 2002, p. 163). Otherwise, the defence of a moral judgment would never stop or be circular. ‘Some beliefs are justified insofar as they are derived from other beliefs, but to avoid an infinite regress or circularity, there has to be a class of non-derived beliefs’ (Roeser, 2002, p. 20).

In short, foundationalism means that intuitions can be self-evident. Those intuitions present objective moral knowledge, which brings me to the second meta-ethical underpinning of affectual intuitionism: moral realism.

### 1.2.3 Affectual Intuitionism: Moral Realism

Affectual intuitionism is a form of moral realism; it involves the belief that there is an objective moral truth (Roeser, 2011, p. 27). Moral realism implies that moral judgments state something about the world. These moral judgments are true insofar as they correspond to the external world, which is independent of human minds (Rockmore, 2004, p. 4).

An argument for moral realism is that it avoids ethical relativism by endorsing objective moral truth. Moral facts can be true or false because of the independence of our minds. Roeser wanted to avoid relativism, as described in the introduction. Her attempt to find a way to avoid relativism while at the same time emphasizing the importance of emotions is done by acknowledging an objective moral reality and endorsing the cognitive theory of emotions. Emotions serve as direct or non-inferential attempts to understand these moral truths, leading me to the following feature of affectual intuitionism: non-inferentiality (Roeser, 2020, p. 1924).

### 1.2.4 Affectual Intuitionism: Non-Inferentiality

Affectual intuitionism involves believing in non-reductive propositions. There are two kinds of moral realists: naturalists and non-naturalists. Intuitionists fall under the latter; according to affectual intuitionism, moral knowledge is not derived from natural facts. Endorsing affectual intuitionism means being an intuitionist who believes there are non-reductive moral properties (Roeser, 2002, p. 14).

Furthermore, the truth value of moral intuitions is not dependent or inferred from other psychological states or premises. A situation is not good because God prescribes it or because of the categorical imperative. The situation is good because situations possess this kind of moral property. Good and bad are properties of actions and habits (Roeser, 2002, p. 41).

In short, the technical details of affectual intuitionism entail foundationalism, moral realism, and non-inferentiality. Below, I will explain how Roeser goes from descriptive to normative evaluations, endorsing non-inferentiality.

### 1.2.5 Affectual Intuitionism: From Descriptive to Normative

The feature of non-inferentiality is linked with a nonreductive moral realist view, which entails that empirical and moral properties differ. They are two distinct kinds of facts: descriptive and normative. The descriptive statements involve 'is'-statements and normative 'ought'-statements (Roeser, 2011, p. 40). An 'ought'-statement could not be derived from an 'is'-statement. Our potential to make an intuition fills this gap. The basis belief bridges the is/ought gap (Roeser, 2011, p. 130). Emotions enable this potentiality, and therefore, emotions generate moral judgments.

One arrives at the normative statements from the descriptive ones through the faculty of moral emotion or intuition. This faculty enables us to conclude that an act is wrong or right based on the contributing relevant features of a situation. The descriptive facts help to arrive at the normative belief; one prepares for forming a moral judgment. One observes as many relevant descriptive facts of a situation as possible to have an intuition (Roeser, 2011, p. 129). The descriptive facts are preliminaries that enable us to make a moral judgment, but the moral judgment is more than the sum of those facts (Roeser, 2011, p. 129).

In general, intuitionists believe that we can directly perceive real existing moral properties, for example, of actions, states of affairs or persons. According to them, we can do so through conscience, intuition, or an act of moral thinking, to give examples of notions that intuitionists use. We observe a nonmoral property, by, for example, sight or hearing, but only through moral intuition do we perceive moral properties. Beings without a moral faculty or a capacity of moral thinking might witness the same descriptive base properties (e.g., somebody getting beaten up by somebody else), but they would not be able to comprehend the resultant moral properties (that beating

somebody is morally wrong) (Roeser, 2011, p. 41).

The role of emotions in generating moral judgment is that they generate them. We need empirical observations, and out of these observations, we generate a judgment. Emotions cause this generation because when making a moral judgment, we use empirical observations as input and produce a normative statement via our emotions. Moral experiences are based on emotions (Roeser, 2011, p. 137).

Emotions could be understood as fulfilling the role of non-inferential judgments of intuitions. As described earlier, they bridge the is-ought gap and enable us to make moral judgments. Emotions consider the context and provide an overall judgment, with empirical facts as input (Roeser, 2011, p. 136). Emotions make the particular basic belief, and general principles can be derived from these particular basic beliefs.

#### 1.2.6 Affectual Intuitionism: Normative Theory

Affectual intuitionism is a descriptive and normative theory. It claims that we should take our emotions seriously, as for intuitionists, ethical intuitions must be taken seriously (Roeser, 2011, p. 164). Affectual intuitionism is normative in the sense that it prescribes what the role of emotions in making a moral judgment is and should be. The appropriate role of moral emotions is significant because a judgment is only right if it, at least at a certain stage, involves an emotion (Roeser, 2002, p. 163). Emotions should generate judgments. Emotions can give a correct sense of the moral status of a moral situation; they even justify the judgment (Roeser, 2011, p. 157).

In other words, moral emotions make moral judgment possible, but which moral judgments? It is possible to express a moral judgment without a moral emotion, but then you are not a good judge, according to Roeser (Roeser, 2002, p. 163). However, some moral judgments solely incorporate emotion, in the sense that the judgment is inferred from a basic belief. This basic belief has been incorporating the direct moral emotional experience. General moral judgments as principles are deduced from direct moral particular experiences. The direct experiences involved emotions.

If somebody would say, 'I really think that the way he treats his wife is morally wrong, but I do not care', we would think that this person is severely deprived; he does not understand what it means to hold a moral judgment in the right way, namely

that holding a moral judgment involves having a certain attitude (Roeser, 2002, p. 163).

The emotions had been present and constitute a particular intuition (basic belief) because the initial moral experience involves an emotion. Intuitions are based on the concrete experience, Roeser endorses Zagzebski. ‘As Zagzebski argues, moral knowledge starts from concrete, emotional experiences, from where we form more general moral judgment by ‘thinning’ out the initial, emotional judgment. General moral judgments are either less intensely felt, or not felt at all’ (Roeser, 2011, p. 152).

In conclusion, I argued that emotions could not solely serve as a source of moral judgments; they should serve as a vital source of moral judgments. To make good judgments, one should consult one’s emotions. Therefore, the appropriate role of moral emotions in generating moral judgment is generating them. At least at a certain stage, emotions should play a vital role because they constitute moral basic beliefs. This claim is grounded in affectual intuitionism, a form of intuitionism that emphasizes emotion’s role in generating moral judgments. In the next section, I will provide a counterargument for the claim of moral emotions as a source to moral judgement and dive into certain moral emotions’ biased character.

### 1.3 Refutation of the Objection to Emotions viewed as a Source of Moral Knowledge

This is the last section serving as an argumentation for the idea that emotions generate moral judgments and, thus, play a significant role in the development of moral judgment. In this section, I will first describe an objection to the argument above that moral emotions can be a vital source of moral judgments. The objection is that moral emotions are like gut reactions and, therefore, unreliable. Afterwards, I refute that objection (section 1.3.1). In subsection 1.3.2, I will describe the problem of unreliableness of moral emotions due to biases. The problem of biases shows that emotions can be appropriate and inappropriate. Inappropriate ones would generate wrong moral judgments.

#### 1.3.1 Moral Emotions are not Irrational

An opposing view to the idea that moral emotions could be a vital source of moral judgment, is that moral emotions should not generate moral judgments because they are irrational and

similar to gut reactions. Gut feelings are spontaneous and instinctive reactions.

However, not all moral emotions are like gut reactions, according to Roeser (Roeser, 2011, p. 167). Moral emotions and gut reactions overlap but do not coincide. They do not coincide because moral emotions and intuitions are often based on (un)conscious reflection. Even though moral emotions are non-inferential (non-deductive), they are consciously reflected and justified, not via naturalistic properties or deductive arguments. Furthermore, judgments do not have to be about the preceding feeling. Moral emotions are comparable to breathing, they both are a precondition for judging, but the judgment does not have to be about them (Roeser, 2002, p. 161). Moral emotions enable us to make appropriate justified moral judgments (Roeser, 2002, p. 162). Below, I will elaborate on the reflecting ability of moral emotions.

There are four ways of reflecting upon emotions. Firstly, the human faculty of emotion is a reflecting faculty. Emotions can be the subject and object of reflection. Following the cognitive theory of emotions, I endorse the idea that emotions have their own critical potential. Emotions should be used to examine other emotions critically. They are simultaneously the subject and object of critical reflection (Roeser, 2006, p. 698).

Second- and third-order emotions correct the first-order emotions. Critically reflecting on an emotion involves determining whether an emotion is appropriate or not. Whether an emotion is appropriate or not is given by nonreductive moral truths. To have access to those truths we need moral emotions, therefore it is logical that emotions have a self-reflecting ability (Roeser, 2011, p. 156). In other words, to check if an emotion is right, we have to consult the objective moral truths; we have access to these truths by our emotions. Therefore, emotions themselves have a critical reflection.

Another way of reflecting on emotions is caused by art. Art causes critical engagement with our emotions.<sup>1</sup> Thirdly, there is a role to be played by deliberation and reflection. Fourthly, not only can emotions critically interact with reason and improve it, is also the other way around: reason can correct our moral emotions. Affectual intuitionism allows for reason to correct inappropriate moral emotions (Roeser, 2011, p. 176) ‘Affectual intuitionism can allow for reason to correct the sometimes overwhelming or misleading force of emotions’ (Roeser, 2011, p. 176).

In short, the justification and reflection of moral emotions make moral emotions more reliable than gut reactions. However, justification and reflection are not necessary to be a

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<sup>1</sup> In the next chapter, I will elaborate on this phenomenon.



genuine moral emotion, as explained in section 1.2.2. But inherently to moral emotions is that they involve the possibility of reflection.

### 1.3.2 The Problem of Biases

Moral emotions can be a vital source for moral judgments, yet they can also be unsuitable due to biases. I call this the problem of biases. In this subsection, I will elaborate on the biased character of moral emotions, which can make them inappropriate.

Psychologist Daniel Kahneman (2011) demonstrated that emotions are often grounded in heuristics, leading to biased emotions. Emotions frequently rely on simplistic rules of thumb, which are generally correct but occasionally result in errors (Sunstein, 2010, p. 3). Heuristics has captured complex cases and situations and the heuristics prescribe how to act in the situation. However, heuristics often fail to represent the entirety of a situation accurately; they tend to oversimplify and generalize. Consequently, heuristics can lead to wrong conclusions.

Here, I will describe an illustrative example. Consider a situation where one seeks to find a replacement for one's job as a janitor. Imagine a man of colour who offers himself for the job. Possibly one would have more difficulties seriously considering him compared to a man with white skin. One possibly could have the fear that the man of colour would not be punctual, which is the most crucial aspect of the job. If that fear is followed upon, consciously or unconsciously, then the person who tries to find replacement for the job, would be misled based on the representativeness heuristic (Sunstein, 2010, p. 4). One makes a mental shortcut to judge whether the man of colour would be suitable for the job. One judges him as unsuitable because of the stereotype that men of colour tend to struggle with punctuality. Therefore, one might judge that it is morally right to refuse the man of colour based on the value of being on time, while the man may be punctual.

This judgment is rooted in a stereotype, which can be attributed to the fact that the person possibly is embedded in an institutionally racist society. In this kind of society, there are many representations in films and media of people of colour, who have difficulties with punctuality. The heuristic helped the person incorrectly because one should give both men equal job opportunities. In this example is the fear an unsuitable source of the judgment. This example illustrates that emotions are sometimes biased due to their reliance on heuristics, leading to potential errors in moral judgments. Consequently, moral emotions are not always reliable (the problem of biases).

In conclusion, based on affectual intuitionism, moral emotions can be a vital source of

moral judgments. To believe a moral judgment entails an affective attitude. Hence, moral emotions should, at least at a certain stage, play a role in generating moral judgments. The appropriate role of moral emotions in generating moral judgments is significant, since many of them indicate what we value and provide access to moral truths. However, not all emotions indicate what we value; some emotions fail to provide access to moral truths due to biases.

Even though emotions are no guarantee for success, it is important not to dismiss them entirely as a vital source of moral judgments. There is a need to differentiate between wrong and right emotions. We should assess whether an emotion is appropriate or inappropriate. Taking appropriate (the right) emotions into consideration would lead to better moral judgments. It is necessary to identify and promote the stimulation of appropriate moral emotions. Therefore, moral emotional education is needed. In the next chapter, I build upon this conclusion by exploring theater as a perspective that can facilitate the stimulation of appropriate moral emotions. I will argue in favor of utilizing theater as a suitable medium for facilitating moral education and emphasize some advantages of theater compared to other art forms.

## 2. Theater cultivates Appropriate Moral Emotions

In this chapter, I will explore the contribution of theater in generating better moral judgments by promoting appropriate moral emotions. In the previous chapter, I argued that, based on affectual intuitionism, moral emotions can play a vital role in the development of moral judgements but that they can mislead as well. Therefore, we should be educated to develop more good emotions causing the generation of better judgments. In this chapter I will examine how this education should look like and which medium could function as this education.

In the first section, I elaborate on the differentiation between appropriate and inappropriate emotions. After having discussed the requirement of education in obtaining moral emotions, I will turn to the characteristics essential to the medium of this education.

In the second and third section, I argue that literature and techno-art could lead to more appropriate moral emotions, as stated by Nussbaum and Roeser, respectively.

In the fourth section, I advocate that their arguments for techno-art and literature also apply to theater, which means that theater could serve as education for moral emotions. Furthermore, I will point towards some advantages of theater compared to literature and techno-art as a medium for this education. Lastly, I will end with a concrete proposal for the theater industry. Where-in after-talks are introduced to increase the contribution of theater to moral development.

### 2.1 Moral Emotions require Education

In this section, I argue that moral emotions require education. This section fills the gap between the argumentation based on affectual intuitionism and the exploration of theater in relation to moral development. In 2.1.1, I show that emotions are fallible; I differentiate between appropriate and inappropriate emotions. In 2.1.2, I elaborate explicitly on the requirement of education. In section, in 2.1.3, I show which features should be possessed by a medium which serves as emotional education.

#### 2.1.1 Moral Emotions are Fallible

In this subsection, I explain the difference between appropriate and inappropriate moral emotions.

As described, I endorse moral realism, which implies the existence of objective moral truths, mind independent. Once we try to grasp these objective moral truths, our fallible epistemic resource is our emotional faculty (Roeser, 2020, p. 1924). According to Roeser, our emotions serve as direct means through which we perceive the moral aspects of the world, allowing us to gain insight into the objective moral truths (Roeser, 2018, p. 91). However, the emotions can fail to grasp these moral truths. When the emotions succeed or fail to indicate those moral truths they are referred to as appropriate or inappropriate respectively (Roeser, 2011, p. 151). In line with the cognitive theory of emotions, if emotions inaccurately reflect the world, they might be considered as ‘unfitting’, if they do that accurately they are ‘fitting’.

Because of this dual character of emotions with respect to objective moral truths, it is possible that two individuals see the same situation but hold contrasting moral intuition about it. In such cases, one of them might possess the appropriate moral emotion in alignment with the objective moral truth (indicating an objective moral truth), while the other individual may exhibit an inappropriate moral emotion. Alternatively, it is possible that both individuals are mistaken, then they would both have an inappropriate moral emotion. Consequently, moral emotions can vary among individuals

Emotions provide access to objective moral truths, ‘they are the ‘the windows on the world,’ by which we are receptive to the evaluative aspects of the world’ (Roeser, 2011, p. 154). Following this metaphor, it is possible that a window distorts the view. The window in this metaphor represents an inappropriate moral emotion and the view the objective moral truth. A moral emotion could fail to reveal the right objective moral status an action encloses.

... our emotional capacities too can mislead us by not working properly or by being misguided by stereotypical reactions. Emotions can let us zoom in and focus on moral salience, but to follow this photographic metaphor, it can mean that other things get blurred (Roeser, 2011, p. 155).

Inappropriate emotions are anchored in stereotypes, triggered by irrelevant influences, and dependent on personality and culture (Roeser et al., 2020, 648). An example of an inappropriate emotion is a biased emotion, grounded in a prejudice, leading to an error in moral judgment as if the window is decorated with a transparent drawing. Another person in the same situation could have overcome or do not possess the particular prejudice, and would therefore, not have the inappropriate moral emotion. For instance, one individual fears the

man of colour crossing the streets and the other does not fear the same person in the same situation.

Another way of describing appropriate moral emotions is in the connection with what we value. Appropriate moral emotions are in line with what we value, inappropriate moral emotions are the ones which are not in line with what we value.

Though Roeser does not elaborate extensively on what the objective moral truths are, it seems plausible that it has something to do with the care for others. Since sympathy forms the emotional basis for our moral faculty, which can be understood as a capacity for moral thinking or generating appropriate moral emotions (Roeser, 2002, p. 164). I will elaborate on this in 2.2.2 and 2.3.1.

In summary, from the distinction between appropriate and inappropriate emotions, it can be concluded that emotions are important, yet fallible sources of insight in moral truths (Roeser, 2020B, p. 1933). In the rest of this thesis, I build upon this problem of inappropriate emotions, by providing ways of stimulating appropriate emotions. To promote appropriate moral emotions, it is essential to engage in reflection, deliberation, and to cultivate appropriate moral emotions (Roeser, 2020B, p. 1933). This brings us to the requirement of education.

### 2.1.2 Moral Emotions require Education

To achieve moral development, appropriate moral emotions should be encouraged in contrast to inappropriate moral emotions.

To generate more appropriate moral emotions, education of moral emotions is needed. Inappropriate moral emotions can be grounded in self-interest. For example, I could steal an apple to validate it because I am hungry. In this example, my feeling of justice (emotions) leads to the inappropriate moral judgment that I should be allowed to steal. My feeling of justice is grounded in self-interest and leads to the inappropriate moral judgment.

As argued in chapter one, emotions can be of vital importance to make basic moral beliefs. If self-centered or biased inappropriate moral emotions are a vast source of moral judgments, many inappropriate moral judgments will be generated. Therefore, appropriate moral emotions should be cultivated for actualizing more moral interaction. Education is a well-regulated source of this cultivation (Roeser 2002, p. 189).

If one adopts affectual intuitionism, this also has repercussion for our views on moral

education: moral education is not only a matter of arguing or rationality, nor it is only a matter of developing narrativity, but it also means that in education we should evoke or appeal to emotions in discussions and explanations, and we should provide an environment in which sensitivity can be developed (Roeser, 2002, p. 189).

I claim that moral emotions need education, appropriate moral emotions must be cultivated and refined. As the above citation indicates, Roesers would probably agree. Roeser hints a couple of times to the idea that emotions should be educated (Roeser, 2020, p. 129). She seems to suggest a refinement of appropriate moral emotions, as compassion and feeling of responsibility will improve our access to basic moral beliefs (Steinert, 2020, p. 1917).

In short, in line with Roeser, education of emotions is needed to gain access to the objective moral truths. This education should cultivate appropriate moral emotions and sensitivity. In the next sections, I will investigate what are important features of emotional education.

### 2.1.3 Important Features of Emotional Education

In this subsection, I will describe which components should be stimulated in a medium which could serve as emotional education. From here on, I will call the stimulation of a component or capacity as imagination: a feature. The aim of the education is to contribute to moral development by promoting appropriate moral emotions. The features that I will describe are derived from the reasoning of Nussbaum and Roeser about literature and techno art. After this section, in 2.2 and 2.3, I describe their reasoning.

The outcome of stimulating cultivating appropriate moral emotions can be accomplished through reflection. Reflection is needed for moral development because reflection, considering other perspectives, allows for the ability to determine which emotions are appropriate and which are not. Because reflection gives insight in the level of self-interest, ambiguities, and biases. In other words, if we reflect upon different emotions and perspectives and thus moral judgments, we can come closer to appropriate moral emotions. Hence, we come close to the objective moral truths (Roeser, 2020B, p.1923).

Furthermore, it seems reasonable that development, in general, can be attained through practice. Improving one's ability to make three-points shots in basketball is achieved by practice, moral development follows a similar pattern. Engaging in multiple practices of moral interaction is essential for enhancing one's moral capabilities. Thus, by reflection upon the stealing, one will learn about the egoistic motor of the action and therefore gets a change

to generate appropriate moral emotions instead of egoistic ones. Furthermore, with every repetition of this situation, the individual trains the reflecting capability and the generation of appropriate moral emotions. Therefore, moral intuitions can change by training.

In order to determine what the most effective form of moral education is, it is important to identify the specific elements that need to be practiced and which are conducive to moral reflection. Since, reflection is essential for practicing moral interactions effectively, it is evident that these elements overlap. The elements that should be practiced to achieve moral development also contribute to the process of reflection.

I will argue that the following four elements are conducive to the moral practice and/or the moral reflection. These elements are beneficial for moral development and should be contained by the medium of education. Firstly, imagination plays a crucial role in considering various viewpoints because by employing imagination, one can envision alternative perspectives. Imagination makes understanding possible and leads to mutual recognition, leading to appropriate moral emotions because it extends the concerns to others (Nussbaum, 1997, p. 88). This concern must be fueled by understanding, which brings me to the second characteristic: sympathy.

Secondly, sympathy is needed for moral development as it motivates to imagine the perspective of others. Through sympathy, one becomes attuned to the emotional state of another person and sympathy as well extends the concerns to others (Roeser, 2011, p. 155). In other words, to determine if someone is suffering our sympathy and imagination occur together. Through them we can understand particular signs as suffering.

Moral experience is initially based on sympathy, both in day-to-day situations as well as in great, tragic, or touching situations. We imagine what it must be like to be in the other person's situation. We do not reason in an abstract, deductive fashion. Rather, our sympathy and imagination are invoked: We see the other person in front our eyes and try to imagine what they are feeling (Roeser, 2011, p. 153).

However, sympathy will be empty without attention. Attention to all the relevant details in a moral situation and the ability to perceive to moral cases is necessary. I call that (moral sensitivity). In order to have appropriate moral emotions one has to grasp all the details which are relevant in a moral situation. The medium of education should involve the stimulation of sensitivity in order to prepare for moral interactions. Without sympathy the preliminary facts

are less likely to be perceived, and therefore it would be more difficult to make an appropriate moral intuition.

Lastly, to be good prepared for moral interactions, guidance is needed. Guidance can present valuable perspectives. If a medium could provide additional insight and perspectives that otherwise might be overlooked, the medium would be more suitable for moral education. Imagine the analogy with shooting three-points, it is conducive to practicing three-points if someone else or a video explains how to shoot and where to place your hands and feet. Guidance is needed to develop something, in this basketball shooting, which in this example symbolizes appropriate moral emotions.

In summary, emotional education is required and for a medium to serve as an education for moral emotions, it has to stimulate as much as possible of the following elements: imagination, sympathy, reflection, guidance, moral preparation and sensitivity. In the following sections, I will demonstrate that art forms possess many of these features. Especially theater will appear to be a good medium to function as the education of moral emotion.

## 2.2 Literature as Education because it serves as Preparation

In this section, I will demonstrate that literature could serve as education for moral emotions. My argument is my interpretation of Nussbaum, her main claim is that reading novels could serve as a preparation for moral situations. Below, I will dive into Nussbaum's reasoning about the positive influence of novels on the following concepts: imagination and empathy, sympathy, sensitivity, and, lastly, the preparation for moral situation.

### 2.2.1 Reading Novels promote Imagination

Reading novels appeals to our imagination because reading a novel is prominently imagining a situation, the characters, and other important elements (Nussbaum, 1990, p. 65). Narratives, especially narratives in novels, provide a means of gaining knowledge of characters and their lives. In this way, reading novels can promote the ability to imagine what it is like in someone else's life, and, therefore, the reader trains, the faculty of imagining.

How do books appeal to our imagination? The book's capacity to appeal to our emotions enables us to exceed boundaries in our thoughts, allowing for special experiences. In this way, our imagination is invoked. Literature can achieve the reader understands another



person, gender, or culture better. We are, via writer's tricks, deceived into thinking in a different way than we usually do (Nussbaum, 1990, p. 47).

However, more is needed, a sadist could imagine/ empathize with the experiences of the victim. Therefore, sympathy is needed for moral interaction as well. While reading, one is potentially deceived into the story in a sympathetic way. Therefore, reading potentially promotes the appropriate moral emotion: sympathy. Moreover, imagination is the first step to sympathy. Only by imagining the possible consequences, perspectives, and reasons a sympathetic response to other people's needs is possible. For example, you must imagine the urgency of their needs to feel sympathetic feelings towards one another.

In short, novels promote imagination, which is conducive to appropriate moral emotions because it leads to understanding. Moreover, imagination is the first step to sympathy; therefore, reading fosters sympathy as well. In the following subsection, I elaborate on sympathy.

### 2.2.2. Reading Novels promotes Sympathy

Reading novels could serve as education for emotions because it can promote sympathy. In 2.2.1, I demonstrated that novels increase imagination and understanding, which could foster sympathy. I use modest language because Nussbaum only argues that a few books lead to more sympathy, and even those books can fail to achieve this aim (Nussbaum, 1990, p. 165). Examples of novels which potentially stimulate the imagination and sympathy are *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens and *Ulysses* by James Joyce. In these books the reader gets aware of the live circumstances, values, and motivations of others. Reading these books stimulate the imagination because they teach the reader to attribute live, emotions, and thought to people, whose insides are hidden (Nussbaum, 1997, p. 89).

Due to our imagination, one improves the understanding of other people's needs and how the past and future shape those needs (Nussbaum, 1990, p. 47). Reading helps to extend our humanity towards the 'different,' toward people one ought to reject as 'the other' (Nussbaum, 1997, p. 86). One empathizes with them, while reading their story. Novels cultivate sympathetic responses to another's needs and help better understand the other (Nussbaum, 1997, p. 90). Consequently, we can have more respect (moral emotion) for people who were strangers before.

In other words, reading might promote sympathy, which means that someone else's suffering is characterized as something which should be relieved. Imagination is required for sympathy because to feel that the suffering should be relieved, you must put yourself in the

shoes of the sufferer, which is only possible with your imagination.

In short, novels foster, sympathetic vision of the different. Books could extend our humanity towards people we have previously rejected as the other.

### 2.2.3. Reading Novels promotes Sensitivity

Literature also strengthens our attentive capacities: sensitivity. Novels can foster this because novels describe moral cases in a detailed manner with respect to different characters, with attention to the personal and the particular of a situation ((Nussbaum, 1990, p. 166). The reader empathizes with the different choices of the characters because of the detailed description and, in this way, practices his moral discernment for those situations in real life (Nussbaum, 1990, p. 62).

Moreover, novels are attentive to the ambiguities of moral situations: the nuances (Martin, 2017, p. 181). They are more sensitive to the feelings of the persons involved and foster imagination. The details in novels invoke the reader to discern good responsiveness to the concrete, which is essential for appropriate ethical judgments. Therefore, reading, and interpreting novels could help to sharpen one's attention to important details of moral situations (Nussbaum, 1990, p. 166).

The sensitivity must be trained because life is normally filled with routine. Nussbaum assumes that often we do not live thoroughly, we live incompletely sentient, and reading could make us more sentient (Nussbaum, 1990, p. 47).

The point is that in the activity of literary imagining, we are led to imagine and describe with greater precision, focusing our attention on each word, feeling each event more keenly— whereas much of actual life goes by without that heightened awareness, and is thus, in a certain sense, not fully or thoroughly lived (Nussbaum, 1990, p. 47).

In short, reading novels can be seen as a valuable practice for real life. Reading contributes to the cultivation of appropriate moral emotions by fostering sensitivity, awareness (moral case) details.

### 2.2.4 Reading Novels: Preparation for Moral Situations and serves as Guide

Above I have provided three arguments for why reading novels could serve as education for moral emotions. Reading novels promote imagination, sympathy, and the sensitivity. These

factors together lead to reading novels as a valuable preparation for moral practice.

Furthermore, reading novels can serve as preparation for moral practices because reading is practicing our moral thinking (Nussbaum, 1990, p. 164). Novels are suitable for this because reading a novel is practicing putting yourself into someone else's world and feelings. It is an activity in which you have moral attention to what is written. Reading a novel '...involves not only a friendly participation in the adventures of the concrete characters, but also an attempt to see the novel as a paradigm of something that might happen in his or her own life' (Nussbaum, 1990, p.166).

Reading novels could be a proper preparation for moral situations since the reader has a certain distance from the story, which make it easier to comprehend the situation. Therefore, novels function as excellent moral guides. The moral significance of fiction often offers clearer comprehension compared to the moral significance of real-life situations. Inherent to reading a moral interaction in a novel is a certain distance. Experiencing a moral interaction in real life lacks that distance and is therefore more direct and could be more overwhelming.

The overwhelmingness could lead to inappropriate emotions, as so-called 'vulgar heat emotions': jealousies or anger (Nussbaum, 1990, p. 166). Since the story is not ours, we do not find ourselves caught up in the 'vulgar heat emotions'. Thus, reading a novel causes an emotional experience which shows the way without the 'vulgar heat emotions' (inappropriate moral emotions) (Nussbaum, 1990, p. 48).

Moreover, reading is a proper preparation because reading a novel extends beyond our life (Nussbaum, 1990, p. 47). We have never lived enough. Our lives are confined and small due to the nature of our psyche, the time, and place. Fortunately, through a novel, we may reflect and feel what might otherwise be too distant for us (Nussbaum, 1990, p. 47).

Reading novels could lead to less inappropriate emotions because reading thoroughly and responding appropriately involves both appropriate feelings and critical reflection (Nussbaum, 1990, p. 53). Those two are intricately linked to each other (Nussbaum, 1990, p. 15). Novels are profoundly committed to emotions; their interaction with their readers occurs centrally through emotions. Novels represent and activate emotions. These emotions contribute to more appropriate moral emotions (Nussbaum, 1990, p. 40).

In conclusion, literature could serve as moral education, as reading novels promotes imagination, sympathy, sensitivity and serves as a guide and as preparation for moral situations. As described in 2.1.3, reflection is also an important feature of a medium that would serve as emotional education. Roeser argues that techno art promotes reflection about

technological risks. Hence, in the following section, I will demonstrate Roeser's reasoning about techno art increasing moral development. The description of Nussbaum and Roeser's reasoning will provide a framework, as described in 2.1.3, which could be applied to theater as form for emotional education.

## 2.3 Techno Art as Education because it contributes to Reflection

In this section, I will demonstrate that techno art could serve as education for moral emotions. My argument is my interpretation of Roeser. Her main claim is that techno art is beneficial for moral reflection.

In subsection 2.3.1, I examine the features of reflection, imagination, sympathy, and guidance in relation to techno art. In subsection 2.3.2, I connect the stimulated reflection by techno art to the promotion of appropriate moral emotions. In this whole section, we will see that the directness of techno-art is the main characteristic leading to reflection and, therefore, moral development. In contrast, a research paper normally does not prompt your emotions, and therefore, provides a less direct experience. A research paper could only explore moral dimensions of technologies on a less tangible and visible way (Roeser et al., 2020, 650). Due to the absence of the direct experience, there is a smaller chance the emotions are prompted, and, therefore, the stimulation of appropriate moral emotions is less plausible. With techno art the opposite is the case. It causes a direct experience.

### 2.3.1 Techno Art stimulates Reflection, Imagination, Sympathy, and Guidance

In the analyses of Roeser is stated that techno art promotes imagination, serves as guidance, and ignites sympathy and empathy. These results can be, next to reflection, a consequence of the direct experiential nature of this art form (Roeser et al., 2020, p. 651).

Firstly, the audience's direct experience caused by techno art stimulates imagination and leads to the creation of a new narrative (Roeser et al., 2020, p. 650). The stimulation of imagination follows the same line of thought as with literature.

Secondly, the occurrence of reflection is a bit more indirect, stimulated by the other four results (Roeser et al., 2020, p. 652). Techno art facilitates the reflective process through its direct experiential nature because of it this direct experience, it promotes imagination, serves as guidance, and ignites sympathy and empathy. Possibly the reflection causes the inappropriateness of inappropriate moral emotions to become salient. It seems plausible that

through this process of becoming salient, the inappropriate moral emotions dissolve. In other words, a greater reflection leads to more appropriate moral emotions. If one reflects with one another on their judgments and ideas, one could uncover self-centered ideas or invalid assumptions.

Thirdly, Roeser claims that techno art can increase sympathy. As demonstrated, abstract problems are made more tangible and can therefore appeal to our emotions (Roeser et al., 2020, p. 651). Roeser claims that the emotions that are fostered in techno art cause a kind of care. The experience caused by techno art makes something tangible and possible to sympathize with. On contrast, abstract numbers and facts about suffering worldwide fail to cause this. Therefore, techno-art could lead to stimulate sympathy (Roeser et al., 2020, p. 649).

Fourthly, techno-art serves as a guide by providing additional insights and perspectives that otherwise might be overlooked by giving rise to insightful moral emotions. I will more elaborate here on the guidance potentiality of techno art, than the other components because Nussbaum was not that extensive about this aspect. An example is an artwork about climate change, made with technology. The modern artist Olafur Eliasson uses technology to make large blocks of ice and then melt them to call attention to melting polar caps. Climate change will be experienced differently through this piece of art (Hornby, 2017, p. 65).

In this example, there is a direct experience which appeals and give rise to insightful moral emotions. These emotions could be fear, feeling of-urgency, or anger. The artwork serves as a guide because the artwork provides a perspective (urgency of action) through the emersion of the direct experience. The direct experience appeals to our emotions possibly because it is overwhelming; I mean overwhelming in a less intense sense than when it gives rise to 'vulgar heat' emotions. The overwhelming feature is probably caused because the artwork making the abstract future tangible, which leads me to my second argument.

Techno art serves as a guide because techno art can stimulate a change of narrative, by making abstract problem more concrete and tangible (Roeser et al., 2020, p. 652). Techno art stimulates emotional engagement with moral problems because of its concreteness. In this emotional response, a new narrative could arise via the ignition of imagination. The new narrative challenges our old narrative. If the narrative is too abstract the audience feels not called to change their narrative.

How is techno art able to achieve a call for change of narrative? Techno art helps people think about the unfamiliar and elicits certain emotional responses to unfamiliar scenarios. The techno artwork can broaden our narrow personal perspective through the

stimulation of emotions. Techno art provides unexplored avenues (Roeser et al., 2020, p. 653). Artists can provide these avenues because with their more developed imagination, they can imagine these avenues.

In short, techno art gives rise to concrete experience, which will challenge the imagination and it serves as guide and could lead to more sympathy. This concrete experience is possible due to the appeal to moral emotions.

### 2.3.2 Connecting Techno Art's stimulation of Reflection to Appropriate Moral Emotions

In this subsection, I will shortly explain why the factors of the previous subsection stimulate the reflection.

Firstly, imaginations lead to an increase of respect because when you can imagine the other person's perspective, it is easier to deliberate with the other person in a respectful way. That, in turn, could lead to less polarization which would be beneficial for the deliberation. When one deliberate in a respectful way, one tries to start with a common ground. For that one has to become aware of the opponent's viewpoint, which follows from the respect. Often as a consequence, one finds out that their viewpoints exhibit more similarities than presupposed, leading to less polarization (Roeser et al., 2020, p. 647).

Secondly, more sympathy means one feels connected to someone else, consequently, one will be more willing to listen to the other. Even though one disagrees with the other person's perspective. This heightened sympathy engenders a greater inclination for people to actively listen to one another. Techno art is thereby fostering an environment conducive to moral reflection.

Thirdly, an increase in guidance leads to a greater reflection. The guidance generates several valuable perspectives, and these could improve the reflection. A reflection without several valuable perspectives or aims is at risk to lack valuable content. For instance, if I reflect on which clothes to wear but I do not have options, my reflection probably does not involve much valuable content.

In other words, techno-art makes emotional engagement with a particular case possible. A greater reflection leads to more appropriate moral emotions. If one reflects with one another on their judgments, biases, and ideas. It is possible that they uncover self-centered ideas or invalid assumptions.

In conclusion, I interpreted Roeser's reasoning by structuring it into one main argument: techno art could stimulate reflection. Her sub arguments are an increase of imagination, serving as a guide and an increase of sympathy. Moral emotions become more

appropriate if we reflect more on them and techno art is beneficial for the reflection. Techno art facilitates this reflective process through its direct experiential nature.

I have argued earlier that moral emotions generate moral judgments, but that emotional education is required. Literature and techno art could facilitate this education. In the remaining of this thesis, I will argue that theater could even better facilitate this education; I demonstrate that it shows a few advantages compared to the other art forms.

## 2.4 Introduction Application to Theater

In this section, I introduce the application of Nussbaum's and Roeser's reasoning to theater. This introduction is a part of my argument that theater could contribute to generating more appropriate moral emotions. As demonstrated in chapter one, sometimes, emotions mislead. Therefore, it is important to educate how to generate more appropriate than inappropriate emotions. With the application, I show that theater could serve to facilitate that kind of education. To establish a solid foundation for the examination of theater as a medium of emotional education, I will use Jolie Vreeburg's (2017) doctoral thesis on the power of theater in relation to society.

In 2.4.1, I start with defining theater; In 2.4.2, I briefly describe some similarities and differences between Nussbaum and Roeser's reasoning, as preparation for the application and comparison in the following section.

### 2.4.1 Defining Theater

In this subsection, I define theater and demonstrate why I apply Nussbaum's and Roeser's reasoning to theater instead of film.

In line with Vreeburg, I define theater as a performance that entails an interaction where one subject in general, performs while the other perceives, even though these roles may intertwine. Moreover, theater is an art form; therefore, it is perceived from an aesthetic viewpoint. The spectator actively interprets the play (Vreeburg, 2017, p. 49). In addition, I take the broad concept of theater, including spoken word, performance art, and cabaret.

Theater does not involve film, and I refrain from examining film as facilitating medium of emotional education in place of theater. Imagination is one of the key features of a good medium. While a film can utilize diverse settings and temporal shifts within its narrative, theater is limited to a fixed location and time. As a result, theater demands more of

the audience’s imagination, leading me to an exceptional quality of theater (Vreeburg, 2017, p. 18),

Theater is exceptionally interesting because it is the only art form that totally realizes itself in “the here and now” (Vreeburg, 2017, p. 15). Theater has a beginning and an ending and is take place in a specific location where performers and audience come together. Every moment during a theater performance is unique and unrepeatabe. If it is not live or if there is an intermediary technology, such as a screen or a recording, it is no theater. This aspect of liveness and coming together are incredibly valuable and scarce qualities in this modern era, which is characterized by the upcoming online world. Literature and techno art do not possess these qualities or advantages.

In short, theater is a performance art form which realizes itself in a specific space and time: it is always live. This aspect of liveness causes more stimulation of the imagination and is, therefore, the reason that I refrain from examining film.

#### 2.4.2 Similarities and Differences between Nussbaum and Roeser

In this subsection, I will shortly elaborate on the similarities and the differences between Nussbaum’s and Roeser’s reasoning about literature and techno art.

The features described in 2.1.3 are helpful for a medium to function as emotional education. Nussbaum and Roeser argued that literature and techno art could serve as this education, since these art form possess many of the features. Below I start with presenting a table to facilitate a clear presentation of the differences and similarities between the two art forms as examined by Nussbaum and Roeser. The different valuable elements for a medium to serve as moral education are linked to the two art forms.

Table 1: Comparison Literature and Techno Art

Feature	Literature (Nussbaum)	Techno art (Roeser)
Reflection		√
Practice	√	
Imagination	√	√
Sympathy	√	√
Sensitivity	√	
Guidance	√	√



As one can see in the table, their arguments show many similarities and a few differences. They emphasize three same components as arguments that the art form discussed, could function as emotional education. A difference is that Roeser's focus on techno art as stimulating reflection and characteristic to Nussbaum is the argument that reading novels is an excellent preparation for moral situations. Roeser and Nussbaum recognize the role of imagination as a crucial step in fostering moral development, albeit with slightly different perspectives. Roeser sees imagination mainly as beneficial for reflection and Nussbaum as the initial step towards cultivating sympathy and as contribution to the preparation for moral situations.

Secondly, sympathy is one of the core elements of both their accounts about art contributing to moral development. The minor difference is that Roeser considers sympathy as a tool for moral reflection and Nussbaum as a capacity for moral development in general. Lastly, they both represent art as something which could serve as a guide and stimulates sensitivity.

In conclusion, theater is a live performance, which stimulates the imagination even more. Nussbaum and Roeser show a few differences and many similarities in their reasoning regarding the art forms. Literature and techno art possess many features, as displayed in the table. In the following section, I will analyze whether theater promotes these components and emphasize some advantages of theater compared to the other two art forms.

## 2.5 Theater is a Good Medium for Education of Emotions

In this section, I apply Nussbaum's and Roeser's reasoning to theater and describe some advantages of theater compared to literature and techno art. I argue that the features: reflection, preparation, imagination, sympathy, guidance, and sensitivity apply to theater as well. These features are important components of a medium that could function as emotional education. In this way theater, is likely to contribute to the role of moral emotions generating moral judgments. In addition, I will elaborate on some advantages: theater is live and brings people together, which makes an 'after talk' possible.

In 2.5.1, I argue that theater stimulates reflection because it nurtures doubt. . In 2.5.2, I explore the components of imagination and sensitivity in relation to theater. In 2.5.3, I examine theater's stimulation of sympathy, imagination, and guidance. Lastly, in 2.5.4, I will introduce a proposal for the theater industry to promote moral development even more.

### 2.5.1 Theater promotes Reflection

In this subsection, I will start with the application. I will assert that theater serves as a valuable resource for moral reflection, highlighting the significance of an increase in doubt, sensitivity, imagination, and sympathy. I start with a new component: increase of doubt. This component is an advantage of theater compared to the other art forms.

Theater is an excellent source for moral reflection and deliberation because doubt is often stimulated. In theater, the audience is affected and the foreign can be perceived, which could result in the increase of doubt. Only from the point of not knowing can fruitful reflection occur. Cultivating doubt is crucial because, without it, one may struggle to genuinely listen and consider another person's perspective in the reflection.

Doubt is stimulated because theater can make the foreign familiar. Theater is an illustration of the saying: *show don't tell*. Imagine a theater show about racism. For example, this theater show would not be a lecture about Black Lives Matter. The theater director aims to present a statement and carefully considers how to engage the audience's emotions through acting, movement, lighting, set design, sound, and silence. Art, including theater, excels in embracing ambiguities, making paradoxes tangible, and making both sides of a story sensible. This evidently cultivated doubt. In contrast, language, apart from artistic and philosophical writing, aims to be clear and unambiguous in order to diminish doubt.

Modern theater performances often aim to cultivate a feeling of doubt in the audience nowadays. For example, Dutch theater maker Anoeek Nuyens described that theater is not a lecture but shows doubts and searches (Nuyens, 2013). Furthermore, theater cultivates reflection because it produces a direct experience, similar to the other art forms (Vreeburg, 2017, p. 70).

This direct experience stimulates imagination, sensitivity, and sympathy. Due to these appeals, theater helps to reflect and understand all possible themes and topics of which you could think. It provides an opportunity for the audience to reflect on moral issues. Theater can present arguments or actions in a way that allows the audience to experience them. Furthermore, this kind of presentation of arguments and actions with theatrical elements evokes emotions.

In short, theater contributes to moral reflection because it stimulates doubt which is conducive to reflection. Hence, the cultivation of doubt is an advantage of theater compared to literature and techno art. Furthermore, similar to the other art forms, it stimulates the features beneficial to reflection because it causes a direct experience. In the following subsections, I will elaborate on the relation of the other five components. In the next

subsection, I will elaborate on imagination and sensitivity because the sense of doubt of this subsection, arises from the ‘openness’ to the different. How that ‘openness’ works is through imagination and sensitivity.

### 2.5.2 Theater promotes Imagination and Sensitivity

In this subsection, I explain how theater nurtures our imagination and strengthens sensitivity.

Firstly, theater, much like literature, encourages imagination for similar reasons as literature and techno art. Theater nurtures imagination because theater allows the spectators to experience the emotions and environment of a character other than themselves.

As described in 2.4.1, theater stimulates the imagination more than the other art forms since theater is confined to a certain time and place. The aspect of liveness makes the inclination to imagine more prominent than while one reads a book because the liveness of the performer appeals to the audience directly. The task of the creator and performer is to provide some aspects of this world which will be created. The spectator has to connect the different elements and complete their story in their head (Vreeburg, 2017, p. 37). Thus, the feature of liveness stimulates the imagination.

An opposing view to the idea that theater leads to more imagination than books is that one could claim that the theater audience has to imagine less than someone who reads a book. In a book, the reader only receives words; in theater particular images are already made. Theater, in contrast to books, happens at a certain place and time, which makes it more tangible, for example, by the décor (Vreeburg, 2017, p. 18). Or a play about patience could take hours. This would result in less stimulation of imagination.

However, the time and place of the narrative exhibited in theater switches often. The performers appeal to the audience’s imagination to make the switch. For example, as an actor refers to the scene before as five days ago, the audience quickly imagines that time has passed. Or if an actor says that he likes the sun like it is here, in Spain, the audience imagines that they are in Spain.

Here, I will explore the other feature of this subsection: sensitivity. Like literature, theater trains one’s sensitivity. In theater, the audience must choose where to focus their attention during the performance. The sensitivity is especially trained because the spectator has to decide where to look. This is in contrast with film, for example, where the camera position steers more (Vreeburg, 2017, p. 19). To stimulate the sensitivity most intensely, the spectator should be responsible for where to look. Sensitivity is about attention to detail,

which is, therefore, trained by theater. A theater is filled with details about a situation. Moreover, the spectator has to decide for himself which details he will perceive. Therefore, similar to literature, theater trains you to see the details and all the aspects of a situation.

Sensitivity is also stimulated because a theater shows moral cases in a detailed manner with respect to different characters, with attention to the personal and the particular of a situation. In theater, discussions about freedom in a global sense are uncommon. Instead, theater portrays how individuals navigate and respond to the concept of freedom in their unique ways. The emphasis lies in exploring the diverse perspectives and approaches individuals take when faced with questions of personal liberty.

A counterargument of Nussbaum to theater as a valuable means for moral development because it promotes sensitivity could be the lack of direct contact. She argues that unique of certain novels is that they speak directly and personally to the reader (Nussbaum, 1990, p. 65, 66). However, theater is just as direct as a novel and promotes sensitivity. Think about a comedian who asks questions to the audience. Alternatively, a spoken word artist normally performs a text with a tremendous urgency, which could cause the listener feels the lived necessity of the spoken word artist. Theater speaks as direct or even more directly to the perceiver.

In conclusion, theater also strengthens imagination and sensitivity. Additionally, theater shows the advantage of stimulating imagination even more since theater is live.

### 2.5.3 Theater promotes Sympathy, serves as Guide and Preparation for Moral Situations

In this subsection, I will demonstrate theater promotes sympathy, guidance and that theater can serve as an excellent source for moral preparation.

Firstly, theater allows one to empathize with stories, which is the first stage in gaining sympathy. Much like in novels, we are led into the story and touched through our emotions. Theater extends recognition and understanding because you are deceived into a particular perspective by the appeal to your senses and emotions. For example, it is likely that your concern is extended after watching a play about homeless people. It is plausible that sympathy towards homeless people is increased.

Secondly, guidance is stimulated for the same reason as apply to literature and techno art. In theater one also creates a narrative that functions as guide, and the distance which leads to less 'vulgar heat' or inappropriate emotions inherently to literature is also a quality of theater. Therefore, theater is a good medium to provide guidance.

Thirdly, similar to literature, and other art forms, theater allows you to put yourself in

someone else's perspective. This is an argument for theater as a preparation for moral situations because to have appropriate moral emotions, you have to take others into consideration. Attending the theater serves as a preparation for moral situations. I already argued that the components are stimulated, and thus, similar to the other art forms, the preparation for moral situations is also facilitated by theater.

In addition, like reading, watching theater is a good medium for preparation of moral situations because one already had the chance to think of comparable situations portrayed in the theater. Theater makes you aware and teaches you about moral dilemmas. It cultivated sympathy and can serve as guidance by appealing to the emotions and by showing a narrative and several perspectives. In summary, theater promotes sympathy and guidance, and is well suited to serve as preparation for moral situations. These features are promoted by theater for the same reasons as the other art forms. Theater has the advantage of generating interactions, these interactions make theater even more suitable for preparation of moral situation. In the next subsection, I will build upon the fact that theater requires people to come together. I describe a proposal: organizing 'after talks' in theater, which would lead to even more appropriate emotions.

#### 2.5.4 Proposal: 'After talks'

In this subsection, I introduce a proposal of how theater could even more promote moral development. I have advocated that moral emotions are conducive to moral judgments but can also be misleading. Therefore, we should be educated to develop more appropriate emotions. Theater is a good medium to function as this kind of education. Below, I will elaborate on a way in which theater could, even more, contribute to the role of emotions in generating moral judgments.

One way to enhance the role of theater in cultivating appropriate moral emotions is by implementing post-performance discussions or 'after-talk' sessions. In an 'after talk,' the audience, a moderator and possibly some performers, discuss the topic of the theater play. The 'after talk' is reflecting about the topic and the aim is to listen and understand each other. Below I will provide some arguments for this proposal.

The main argument for my proposal of organizing after-talks, is that they strengthen theater's contribution to reflection by providing an immediate platform for actualizing and engaging in the reflective process. The features of section 2.4 and 2,5, can all be ignited in 'after talks' because it is a real-life reflection with a group. Imagination, sympathy and the feature of being a preparation for moral situations are facilitated by an 'after talk'. As

described, theater can contribute to moral reflection by appealing to emotions. An after-talk strengthens this by immediately using the situation in which people are together at a specific time in a specific space. It capitalizes on the shared experience of watching a performance

I will elaborate on this latter aspect: making use of the connection of the audience. The connection is constituted by watching a show together. The other people in the audience are not your friends immediately, but they will be less likely to feel like strangers because you experienced some form of suffering and joy together. Moreover, theater contributes to moral reflection and serves as a preparation for moral situations, which is even more strengthened by an after-talk. I will demonstrate this below.

‘After talks’ should make use of the same methods as peer review sessions and Socratic Dialogue. First, we make sure we discuss the same situation. Theater has the advantage that it could begin with the perspectives taken by a particular performer and discuss that perspective in order to come to the ideas and opinions of the audience. In discussing the theme of the performance, moral dilemmas could arise. An ‘after talk’ itself gives rise to moral situations because in a group discussion friction and disagreement arises.

Furthermore, that the features are stimulated is also beneficial for theater as preparation for moral situations. ‘After talks’ in theater serve as a good preparation for moral situations. One watches a theater show, and one is deemed to deliberate with others. One is invited to apply what one has just learned. In a well-functioning moral deliberation, one listens to the other participant. Listening does not solely mean being silent. It implies imagining someone else’s living and feeling world.

In conclusion, theater serves as a good medium for emotional education, as argued in chapter one, emotions need education to generate appropriate moral judgments. Theater serves as a good medium for emotional education because it possesses many features and shows some advantages compared to literature and techno art. These features and the advantages lead to more appropriate moral emotions since they are all conducive to reflection and or preparations for moral situations. As discussed, in 2.1.3 reflection and a preparation to moral situations, promote appropriate moral emotions. Below, I present the table of section 3.1, but this time I include theater as art form. As represented, theater possesses the advantage compared to the other art forms in that it picks the positive sides of both art forms. As described and displayed in the table, theater possesses all discussed features. The advantages of theater are as follows. Firstly, theater stimulates doubt which is beneficial for the reflection. Secondly, the liveness aspect promotes the imagination. The last advantage is

that theater carries the possibility of an ‘after talk.’ By organizing ‘after talks’ theater could even better fulfill the role of contributing to moral development by realizing ‘after talks.

Table 2: Comparison Literature, Techno Art, and Theater

Feature	Literature (Nussbaum)	Techno art (Roeser)	Theater
Reflection		√	√
Practice	√		√
Imagination	√	√	√
Sympathy	√	√	√
Guidance	√	√	√
Sensitivity	√		√
Doubt			√
Life			√
‘After talk’			√

## Conclusion

In chapter one, I concluded that, based on Roeser's affectual intuitionism, the appropriate role of moral emotions is to generate moral judgments. The role of emotions should be significant because they enable us to make justified basic beliefs (intuitions). Intuitions are paradigmatically moral emotions. However, not all moral emotions are intuitions; inappropriate ones fail to present objective moral truths. Hence, inappropriate moral emotions fail to generate appropriate moral judgments. Therefore, we need emotional education to promote appropriate moral emotions.

In chapter two, I concluded that theater could contribute to this role by serving as emotional education, generating better moral judgements. This education of theater leads to promoting appropriate moral emotions, by cultivating moral reflection and preparation of moral situations through fostering imagination, sympathy, sensitivity, and guidance.

Literature and techno art also possess many of these features, as described by Nussbaum and Roeser. However, theater has advantages compared to literature and techno art, for being a medium of emotional education. It picks the positive sides of both art forms and has other advantages that all contribute to the two main emotional education components a medium should foster: reflection and preparation for moral situations. These advantages are being live; stimulating doubt and carrying the possibility of an 'after talk'. I proposed 'after talks' as a way in which theater could, even more, contribute to the role of emotions in generating moral judgments

To conclude, in this thesis I have argued that theater can help develop moral judgments by providing emotional education, which results in the cultivation of appropriate moral emotions. This would result in better moral judgment because emotions generate moral judgments. Furthermore, theater has a few advantages compared to literature and techno art, for being a medium of emotional education. This is my answer to the research question of this thesis is: What is the appropriate role of moral emotions in generating moral judgments, and could theater contribute to this role?

A limitation of my approach is that I do not criticize a theory of philosopher. In the end, I found out that my critique of Roeser was not valid. I focused on the application and line of thought instead of the critique. For further research, it would be interesting to scrutinize what the requirements of theatrical 'after talks' should be to cultivate reflection and the preparation for moral situations. A description of requirements and a detailed manual



could arise from that research. I would suggest Ilay Den Boer would contribute to his research because in *The Salomonsoordeel* the after-talk is positioned into the play. In *Salomonsoordeel*, there are many breaks in which an after-talk of the scene before takes place. This form did even an extra appeal to the emotional reflection of the audience.

Finally, it is my sincere hope that this thesis has shown that theater can help develop appropriate moral judgment. Hence, I advise you all to go to theater more often.

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