Education and the Political

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Education and the Political

New Theoretical Articulations

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Tomasz Szkudlarek

TOMASZ SZKUDLAREK

INTRODUCTION: EDUCATION AND THE POLITICAL

Even though there has been a constant interest in political issues within the community of educational scholars and researchers, the connection between educational and political theories seems still to be underestimated. There is, of course, a powerful intellectual tradition of thinking about education and politics together, starting with Plato and continuing through such giants as Rousseau and Dewey, to contemporary times. This tradition is diversified, but a common feature of many significant texts written so far is that education is thought as part of large-scale political projects, often utopian, of construing "better" (rational, republican, democratic, and so on) societies. Today the situation is both similar (education is, to a large extent, a part of the neoliberal political agenda) and different, in this respect that the present "utopia", as compared to the previous ones, seems to be devoid of ethical justifications. Both education and neoliberal politics have been apparently reduced to accomplices to the hegemony of economic rationality. Education is positioned as serving the global economy, especially, as we hear, the economy of knowledge. On a national scale, and in the political dimension, this means that education supports the peculiar "politics of depoliticization". Many of the traditional responsibilities of states and many of their social functions have been redefined as personal problems and responsibilities. As such, they are capable of being imparted and are defined as a matter of learning. Learning has become the solution to nearly anything. Joblessness, inadequate retirement provisions, environmental pollution, or poor health services are no longer seen "simply" in terms of public arrangements, but as problems demanding individual awareness, knowledge, proper attitudes, skills of rational choice, and self-management. To us as educators, it may sound nice and smell like money; but it inflates the responsibilities of education far beyond their conceivable limits and, in fact, turns pedagogy into a regime of dispersed power, to a form of governmentality (in Foucault's terms, 1991) exercised in ever-changing, short-term, project-based "emergency" campaigns. Probably public education has always been involved in the execution of power. In terms of Foucault's theoretical work, its institutionalization, in the form of compulsory schooling, contributed to, and, in a way, masked the proliferation of discipline and the strategic merger of knowledge and power as political regimes, disguising them in pedagogical and pastoral attire (Szkudlarek 2003). The present form of this connection is different, then, mostly in terms of scale, atomization, and privatization. What critics of this wave of the "educationalization of social problems" (Depaepe and Smyers, 2008; Peters, 2008;

T. Szkudlarek (Ed.), Education and the Political, 1–13.

Simons and Masschelein 2008) point to, as well, is that social problems redefined as learning deficits are simultaneously excluded from more responsible political agendas. For instance, defining unemployment in terms of personal employability, and therefore as a lack of "proper" education adequate to current trends in the job market, masks the fact that it is a structural phenomenon the alleviation of which requires changes in the operation of global economy.

The imposition of economic rationality on education is parallel to a reduction of politics to the role of serving the same rationality. Political decisions, in spite of the aura of power that shines through their spectacles, follow the logic of capital: they build infrastructure and create secure conditions for the flow of transnational financial assets. Like education, politics gives up its autonomy. Economy has become the ultimate sovereign power.

Even though this picture seems to invite Marxist descriptions of the current scene, Marxism is not unproblematic. With Marxism, we remain within an idealized model of reality determined by economy and cannot move towards a more complex understanding of the educational/political scene (see, for instance, Laclau's critique of the reductionism of Marxist theory, Laclau 2005). But the search for "the theory" of the present that would offer a more multilayered picture stumbles over numerous obstacles, as if the Thatcherist slogan "there is no alternative" were really internalized and made us unlearn the ability to think in terms of possibilities. On the other hand, the present time is also a time of questioning that lack of alternatives. We are witnessing a large wave of protest and revolutionary unrest, strongly concentrated in the Mediterranean region. However, referring to the movement of indignation as an example, we may see that those movements are predominantly *negative;* they organize themselves to say "no" to the status quo, and have more difficulty in articulating their "yes" to new political agendas. As it is often the younger generation that portrays itself as betrayed by neoliberal promises, political protest becomes educational as well. This is a movement of *de-identification*, of challenging the neoliberal hegemony, and reclaiming "the political" of politics and "the educational" of education (see the papers by Biesta and Masschelein and Simons in this volume), even though there is no clarity as to what form they should take. .

We should refer here to Chantal Mouffe (2005) and to her insistence on "the return of the political" that demands an acknowledgment of heterogeneity and conflict as inextricable features of the society and that brings back the instance of decision. Mouffe refers here to Carl Schmitt, but counter to Schmitt and his critique of liberal democracy, she calls for inventing "agonistic" forms of politics, where enemies become adversaries in the democratic process. We can see nowadays that the political is back. However, it rarely takes the agonistic form postulated by Mouffe. We can also see a movement to reclaim "the educational" of education; this is especially vivid in the wave of protest against subordinating education to budgetary constraints. We urgently need to renew the debate over what education is about, apart from serving people to capital, apart from its functions of socialization to the present and qualification to the market (Biesta 2010, 2010a). In these simultaneous movements,

both education and politics try to re-invent themselves, and the first gesture here is that of de-identification from their contemporary roles: of defining what they are *not* about. Those movements should be analyzed together, we should attempt to find a common theoretical logic in them. Deprived of critical understanding and operating independently, they may produce effects that are difficult to accept. The return of the political in the form of "decisionism", as a kind of voluntarism *à la* Schmitt rather than in Mouffe's way, may lead to authoritarianism and – through the assertion of conflict and the inevitability of the friend/enemy distinction – to violence. The retreat from the market in education may close schools and universities for those who have gained (or simply bought) access to their provisions, and may seal the division between quality education for the few and mass education that gives simple qualifications to the many. The move away from the neoliberal society does not necessarily have to produce a better one just because widespread protests and civic resistance are justified. As was the case in the first decades of the twentieth century, and as may repeatedly be the case nowadays in many regions of the world, we may democratically establish undemocratic political regimes, and pedagogically construct massive educational exclusions. We need constant awareness of the directions in which those changes proceed, and a very strong notion of democracy to guide them. But that notion, again, needs to be reinvented: the highly ritualized form that democracy takes nowadays, one that reduces citizenship to occasional voting, is in the crisis of legitimacy itself.

This rapidly sketched scene of conflicts and challenges forms a background against which we can position the interests of scholars brought together in the SCAPE network. These interests are theoretical, and rarely do we address current political issues directly; instead, we aim to test theoretical languages, in terms of their explanatory power and possible consequences that could redefine education in a closer relation to the issues of democratic politics. SCAPE stands for *Studies in Culture*, *Conflict and the Political in Education*, and the network was established in 2008. The first meeting of SCAPE took place in Eskilstuna in Sweden in 2008. We met next in Vancouver, Canada, in 2009, and then in Gdańsk, Poland, in 2011. This volume is composed of papers whose drafts were presented during the Gdańsk symposium. The way we identified ourselves can be captured by the following quotation from the SCAPE web page (http://www.scape-research.net/Home.html):

> The members of SCAPE share an interest in conceptions of democratic politics as involving disagreements and struggles over the power relations in society and attendant ethico-political values. They are concerned that the more deliberative approaches see conflict only as counter-productive to democratic dialogue, and even as indicative of communicative breakdown. Instead, the participants believe that some kinds of conflict are not only inevitable but, in fact, valuable for and constitutive of democracy itself.

It is this recognition of disagreement and conflict as inevitable in democratic politics that is behind the questions and problems re-appearing in our discussions.

We are concerned not only with tensions and power structures being obliterated by a deliberative consensual understanding of politics, but also with problems and difficulties that the conflictual perspective brings to the fore. To say the least, this is a challenging perspective.

Our thinking about education in close relation to conflictual traits in political philosophy is, obviously, related to the crisis of neoliberal ideology. The way the neoliberal hegemony reconfigured the domains of education and politics obviously demands criticism. But that criticism itself often resorts to instances of "oneness", of a totalized unity – be it in rational, ethical or mythical forms – and some of them clearly endanger the project of democracy (the papers by Mendel and Säfström in this volume help to understand why such oneness can be problematic). Our efforts are, therefore, informed by the search of such theoretical languages that could give the ideas of democracy and democratic education an invigorating impulse. This is not an easy task, the social scene is extremely complex and multifaceted, and recent economic, political, and cultural changes have restructured most of the structures (including even the notion of "structure" itself) that used to provide grounds for our understanding of reality. This is certainly a time when theoretical investigations are needed not only for the sake of pure cognitive interests, but for the very practical reasons of describing and understanding the world we live in.

If what we experience is indeed a new configuration of the global space that has not yet revealed its logic, one of the more intriguing things to interrogate is whether that emerging logic allows room for "traditionally progressive" questions of equality, democracy, dialogue, human rights, and emancipation. What is behind this kind of question is the question of normativity, still unresolved since the postmodern and postcolonial debate (see the texts by Kodelja, Ruitenberg, and Szkudlarek in this volume). Not only are we not sure how human rights or emancipation can be achieved by political and educational means; we do not even know if and for whom those notions have any appeal in normative terms, and – for that matter – what normativity is nowadays in itself.

The question of normativity is linked here to that of agency, and they are both serious questions. They are still more important in the light of our previous observation that recent decades have immensely re-configured the social world. Its grammars, geographies, and architectures are nowadays different, for instance, because of the blurring of the very notion of the public sphere, through widespread policies of privatization (see Mazawi's paper in this volume). Who is in charge of what here? Are there any identifiable subjects in "network states"? We speak here of such classic notions of the humanities and social sciences as subjects, structures, agencies, and ethical responsibility.

Thinking of the social as heterogeneous (*à la* Mouffe and Laclau) means that "by itself" it cannot be totalized. If societies are structured, then, it is an outcome of hegemony, according to Laclau, an outcome attainable only by rhetoric means. Social structure is equal to discourse. The reference to rhetoric opens the possibility of linking contemporary political theory to the humanistic tradition and of describing

the political in the language of literary theory – for instance, as Koczanowicz proposes in his contribution to this volume, with a focus on Bakhtin's understanding of dialogue. This category not only seems to resolve, through references to hermeneutics and understanding, some problems with normativity that the theory of hegemony encounters, but it is well-rooted in educational theory as well.

Those exemplary questions mark some of the territory covered by the analyses provided in this volume. Its most extensive part, however, interrogates and develops concepts proposed in the political philosophy of Jacques Rancière. This inspiration is taken up and developed by Biesta, Masschelein and Simons, Ruitenberg, Mendel, and Säfström. Rancière's philosophy certainly offers one of the languages that promise new ways of understanding old social problems and that capture phenomena so far difficult to see.

The growing importance of Rancière's philosophy in educational studies stems from several traits in his work. First, it is a strong voice in debates on the possibilities of equality in education. What Rancière suggests is that we should *ignore* inequalities (by implying radical intellectual equality of the subjects of our educational endeavors) rather than trying to prevent their reproduction. Second, Rancière's work helps us understand power relations in a more subtle way, pointing to the role of aesthetics (as regimes of the sensible) as the field of policing and of subversive politics. Third, in Rancière's language we can make an important distinction between identity and subjectivity, through which we can envisage the possibilities of autonomy (subjectification) amid the forces that work towards "molding" us into existing social structures (identification). And there are more reasons why this rich philosophy has inspired several important contributions to this volume. It gives fresh and provocative meaning to old political and pedagogical concepts, and – as a serious theory should – provokes questions and collisions with other, often equally powerful theories (see, for instance, Ruitenberg's paper confronting Rancière and Derrida). There are several such collisions reported on and analyzed in this volume, and not only referring to Rancière's thought. In spite of those discussions, this collection does speak, in different voices, on one central issue: it tries to redefine the relation between education and politics, or – more precisely – between the educational and the political, in a way that keeps the democratic project alive.

Before we move to the introduction to particular texts in this volume, let me note that many concepts used so far (like de-identification, hegemony, the political, the educational, etc.) are borrowed from thinkers who keep inspiring our investigations, like Rancière, Mouffe, and Laclau – and, primarily, from the terminologies of the essays included in this volume. The readers will find explanations, contextualizations, and critical analysis of key terms in those texts themselves.

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTIONS

The papers presented in this special issue are intertwined in numerous ways, and their dialogue is dense and difficult to summarize. The questions addressed in the preceding

part of this introduction are not taken up directly in the form presented above, but all the papers are diversely situated within this problematic. As I have said before, many of these questions have been addressed in the language proposed by Rancière, whose work has inspired heated debates on democracy, arts, and education. Such papers are presented in the second part of the volume. We start with papers by Zdenko Kodelja, who addresses the classic, fundamental issues of justice and the right to education, Leszek Koczanowicz, whose paper refers to Bakhtin's concept of dialogue, André Mazawi, who speaks of the complexities of the social world that result from the blurring of private/public distinctions, and Tomasz Szkudlarek, who takes up the question of normativity in Ernesto Laclau's theory, in which complexity, or heterogeneity, gains an ontological status. We move, therefore, from classic, through dialogic, to complex and heterogeneous notions of agency. The second group of papers shares a strong Rancièrean reference. They are those written by Gert Biesta, Claudia Ruitenberg, Jan Masschelein and Maarten Simons, Maria Mendel, and Carl Anders Säfström. Let us look more closely at the main theses of the papers in this volume.

Zdenko Kodelja asks the question: *Are Duties of Justice in Education Global in Scope?* The question connects to the urgent issues of global justice, responsibility, cosmopolitanism, and to attempts at re-defining the idea of the world order. After having argued that it is possible to infer moral judgments from factual statements, and having presented the global scale of educational deprivation, Kodelja says: yes, there is a moral duty to provide justice in the access to education globally. Kodelja's text does not play with language in a way that could help us invent new metaphors to understand global issues. Instead, with analytical rigor, it moves from one explanatory option to another, presenting an array of possible ways to expand our ethical claims to the assumption of a global responsibility. The focus is on education, but the whole argument also pertains to other political issues. Kodelja's voice reminds us that politics could be rational, and that we should create rational knowledge and arguments that are relevant to global challenges. The question raised in the concluding part of the paper – the one of who should, or could be responsible for the implementation of the right to education – evokes one of the most fundamental contemporary debates, the one of agency in an over-determined, or supercomplex, reality. In other words, the claims to rights and their provisions, as proposed in this paper, are confronted, in the following texts, with the complexities and heterogeneity of contemporary policies. This confrontation calls for a need to translate the classic notions of democratic values into political and pedagogical languages that address those complexities not as mere deviations from theoretically manageable rationality, but as ontological challenges that may be transformed into pedagogical action. That will require a quest for the place of normativity in those new languages.

Leszek Koczanowicz's paper, entitled *Education for Resistance*, *Education for Consensus? Non-consensual Democracy and Education* is, in fact, a discussion about the relation between consensual vs. conflictual (antagonistic) forms of thinking about democracy. Referring to Chantal Mouffe's conception of antagonism and her postulates of agonistic democracy, Koczanowicz proposes that we make use of

Bakhtin's dialogical perspective which, as he says, can resolve the tension between those two traditions, and help us alleviate some controversies he finds in Mouffe's position. Counter to the term's *prima facie* connotations, dialogue is not merely "dialogical" here; it is not restricted to dual (subject-to-subject) exchanges. It seems, rather, to be only a minimal analytical structure that helps one to understand the manifold polyphonies of social interactions. A special role is played in this analysis by Bakhtin's notion of the superaddressee (a potential subject who "understands" the dialogic interchange and thus becomes "the third" agent involved in it) which, according to the author, can replace Laclau's and Mouffe's notion of hegemony, becoming at the same time "a constitutive outside" for what they describe as antagonistic social relations. In short, this translation of Mouffe's theory into Bakhtinian terms is intended to re-introduce a notion of understanding as the condition of democratic antagonism. It seems that we have here the first potential answer to the question of normativity: it can be grounded in understanding, if we allow for such a concept in contemporary theory. Taking into consideration that Bakhtin's work has already found numerous applications in educational theory, Koczanowicz's proposal may also help to connect educational thinking to the theories of radical democracy.

The complexities of the social and the political – in Koczanowicz's paper expressed in terms of Bakhtin's theory and aimed at supplementing theories of hegemony – find further and powerful elaboration in André Mazawi's paper called *Political Grammars of Privatization in Education.* Mazawi's text refers primarily to educational policies in the USA, Great Britain and British Columbia, Canada, but his analysis is relevant to any part of the globe where policies similar to New Public Management have found home. Mazawi's claim is that policies of privatization, as the most common feature of current changes in education, mean more than mere shifts in ownership of education. They create complex and multifaceted structures of governance that have to be understood not only in terms of the shifts in educational opportunities, but also as the indices of larger re-configurations of the relations between the state (nowadays a network state) and political communities, first of all, in terms of their territorialities and agencies:

> The territorialized force of privatized schooling markets can be … understood in relation to reconstruction of both a state with graduated forms of sovereignty, and graduated forms of membership to political community. At this juncture, new geographies of schooling are emerging … [that] not only contain or constrain political aspirations of certain groups, while enhancing those of others; they also recast the political community and the state into a complex and multifaceted regime of graduated and fragmented modes of operation (p. 55).

Such an approach makes the claims to rationality and dialogue expressed by Kodelja and Koczanowicz more problematic, and – perhaps – still more worth considering. How, within the frameworks of "networked" ontologies, do we cater for justice in education? How can we delineate responsibilities and how do we address political demands? Second, how do we maintain a dialogical approach in a situation in which

the very borders of the subject are porous and – especially when we think of social and political agents – almost impossible to define? To put it succinctly: what languages do we have at our disposal to deal with old (and valid) questions of rights, justice, responsibility, and consensuality, in a new situation of complexity that collapses our binary logics and replaces claims to sovereign agency with the notion of graduated agencies? How can such agencies be called to responsibility for politically important decisions? Education becomes here a pivotal social experience that illustrates how complex and how "unmanageable" the social world is becoming nowadays.

The following paper, *Identity and Normativity: Politics and Education* by Tomasz Szkudlarek, also deals with theories of hegemony proposed by Laclau and Mouffe, and further attempts to resolve some controversies that they appear to evoke. Laclau's theory of identity is built as an ontological one, which means that it purposefully avoids the "ontic" content of particular historical demands and particularities of the subjects construed around those demands. This is the source of Laclau's success, but, at the same time, it provokes the question of a "normative deficit", as Simon Critchley (2004) has put it. To answer this question, Laclau speaks of the normative (connected to the ontic) and the ethical (connected to the ontological) as instances that help us think of normative criteria in identity construction. Using Chantal Mouffe's *Democratic Paradox* (2005) as another instance of thinking of normativity within the theory of hegemony, Szkudlarek proposes that we need to expand Laclau's distinction between the normative and the ethical towards a triadic structure that distinguishes, within the normative, between two instances which Szkudlarek calls *the deontic* and *the deontological*, respectively. As he argues, such a triadic structure is implicitly present in Mouffe's text already. The sense of this attempt is to create a richer framework in which we can judge political and educational strategies of identity construction in terms of their normative consequences.

The second group of papers is connected with a Rancièrean perspective.

Gert Biesta, in his paper entitled *Time Out? Can Education Do and Be Done without Time?*, addresses the issue of temporality as linked to (deprivation of) freedom. The paper follows, and gives more substance to, the idea first presented in an "educational manifesto" by Biesta and Säfström (2011). Opposing both educational populism aimed at mere adaptation to what is, and idealism which is usually understood as what is not (yet), Biesta argues that what is "the educational in education" – freedom – resides in the tension between "what is" and "what is not", but the latter should not be understood in temporal terms, (as "the not *yet*"), because what matters in education would then be forever deferred. Where temporality is relevant in education is in its functions of qualification and socialization; where temporality is problematic is in relation to subjectification – a function that is more specifically educational (and, thus, not reducible to sociological or psychological dimensions). Biesta follows here the thought of Rancière (e.g. Rancière 1991), who identifies the dominant way of thinking of inequality in temporal terms, as retardation, and his understanding of politics as "staging the contradiction between the logic of police order and the logic of equality" that has to be "assumed" and

"verified" (in the meaning of "making true") in our action (p. 82). As the foundation of equality is, in Rancière's thinking, the fact that we are all speaking subjects, Biesta builds his central argument on the issue of freedom of speech (this feature will be taken up in Säfström's text as well). The child is a speaking subject, and the way this assumption is enacted is most of all through being *addressed* by the child. "My ability to speak is there when someone is addressed by my speech. And this, so we could say, is not a temporal issue at all" (p. 86). The assumption that "the child is speaking" (whatever "noises" he or she makes) and its verification in the recognition of being addressed by the situation, form "an educational act by which we are bringing into a relationship the 'what is' of the child and 'what is not' of speech, the 'what is not' of subjectivity" (p. 86).

Claudia Ruitenberg's contribution is entitled *The Double Subjectification Function of Education: Reconsidering Hospitality and Democracy*. Her point of departure is the controversy (expressed by Rancière) between Rancière's notion of democracy and Derrida's notion of hospitality. As Ruitenberg notices, a number of authors in educational theory refer to Derrida and Rancière simultaneously; therefore this controversy needs careful scrutiny. Ruitenberg's answer is built up with references to Biesta and his insistence that education is concerned with subjectification, and "for subjectification both hospitality and democracy are relevant concepts" (p. 91). She notes that democracy (as a possibility of claiming space) and hospitality (as giving space to the other), or – in other words – the political and ethical perspectives of subjectification – do not have to be contradictory; moreover, both those perspectives are crucial as each other's "watchdogs" in education. She observes that Derrida's notion of hospitality is addressed to those who are in position to be hosts to the others (they are not, to say the least, homeless for instance), while Rancière is concerned with those who have to claim their place in the social, as the police order makes them invisible. As Ruitenberg says, however,

> The question is not which of these projects we should try to tackle – helping the included open up the spaces they inhabit, or helping the excluded claim the space – but how we can tackle both. … When it comes to the subjectification function of education, then, "subjectification" in the Rancièrean sense of creating a space where political subjectivity can emerge, and "subjectification" in the Levinasian/Derridean sense of creating a space where singular subjectivity can emerge, need not be incompatible aims. … They may well serve as each other's corrective or watchdog. Hospitality calls attention to the risk that the formation of a collective political subject … can result in new exclusions and inhospitalities …, democracy calls attention to the risk that an openness to the singular Other can leave the host blind to structural and contingent arrangements that unevenly distribute the positions from which hospitality is offered or sought (pp. 101–103).

The next paper in the volume – Jan Masschelein's and Maarten Simon's *The Politics of the University: Movements of (de-)Identification and the Invention of Public Pedagogic Forms* – proposes a "counter-history" of the university which, as the

authors say, is not an institution, but "the name for the association [of scholars and students] where public thinking takes place". In a temporal sense, it operates in "a time of suspension" (*scholé*) and involves numerous layers of de-identification ("we are no disciples, no pupils, no apprentices, ... no clergymen, ... but students and scholars", p. 107). Therefore the university is a dangerous place, constantly tamed and "crystallized" in ways that suppress its "experimental movements and inventions" by the sacred forces of Philosophy, Faculty, Science, Excellence, etc., that create the "victorious" history of the university. The counter-history of the university "as a movement" outlined in this text involves, instead, what is specific to the university – particular public pedagogic forms (the public lecture and the seminar) that are linked to the movements of de-identification (*we are not...*) and profanation (in the sense of setting things "free for the common people"). The authors lead us through a series of such profanations: of the book, which gave birth to the public lecture; of reason, the profanation of which means – according to Kant – "the freedom to make public use of one's reason in all matters"; of culture and time, which is the source of the postmodern university; up to the recent profanation of production and communication that gives rise to the "entrepreneurial" university. This last profanation gathers the subjects who are "all" producers – of their own selves – that invest in their learning to sell themselves on the market. This "crystallization" is subject to de-identification in contemporary educational protest movements. With a move of profanation of thinking and communication, taking place simultaneously with the growing role of screen-text culture's replacing book-text culture, and creating a "democracy of thought and communication" that seems not to need those who "teach how to think, to speak, to communicate" (p. 116), there comes the challenge to invent new public pedagogic forms that could, again, gather "students and professors that are interested in something, and that thing becomes an issue that gathers a thinking public" (p. 117).

The paper by Maria Mendel (*Towards the Ignorant Gdańsk Citizen: Place-Based Collective Identity*, *Knowledge to Refuse*, *and the Refusal to Know*) explores another field of identification, de-identification, and subjectification. Her text is based on empirical research on how the local community of the city of Gdańsk remembers and forgets a spectacular event from the post-war history of the city, when eleven Nazi concentration camp personnel, accused of persecuting the inmates of that camp, were hanged before the eyes of some 200,000 onlookers. The execution itself is interpreted here as a ritual enforced by the authorities, whose rationale was to erase the German past of the city and integrate its new, mostly immigrant population around a spectacular symbol of passage into a new, post-war world. However, the event has been almost entirely forgotten, which makes Mendel ponder over the role of non-memory, which she links to ignorance in Rancière's and Biesta's terms, in identification and subjectification. The fact that such a spectacular event has been erased from the collective memory speaks of a complex of guilt and the refusal to accept the enforced identification with post-war reality, when the whole country was violently re-shaped in territorial and political terms. It suggests that the enforced rite of passage "did not work" and that it might have produced subversive effects of de-identification, which

gave room for unpredicted forms of subjectification, based on place and space rather than on the temporal dimension. In theoretical terms, the conceptions of identification, subjectification, and ignorance (*refusal to know*) are, thus, supplemented by an instance of the *knowledge to refuse*, a competence to ignore the given.

Carl Anders Säfström's paper *Stop Making Sense! And Hear the Wrong People Speak* is another interesting attempt at drawing educational conclusions from Jacques Rancière's work. What is the object of contestation in this article is a national curriculum (in its exemplary Swedish form) that is aimed at creating "the One" of collective identity. So constructed, the One seems to perform two functions: it creates a fictional and depoliticized moral subject ("we are good"; the evil – as Säfström illustrates by Swedish language coursebooks written for immigrants – comes from the outside), and it obliterates internal divisions, for example, the inequality between rich and poor. Following Rancière, we can educate people in equality only when we *assume* that they are equal. However, the whole police order of the nation-state implies otherwise and masks inequalities with national oneness. Therefore those who assume equality as the point of departure in education "speak nonsense"; they situate themselves not only beyond the police order, but also beyond rationality. In Rancière, it is language, its poetic functions, and the fact that we all are "speaking subjects" capable of bringing new elements to the social, that make us equal as subjects. Hence Säfström's claim expressed in the title of the paper: stop making sense (do not follow the known, the sensible, as it has been made visible), hear others ("the wrong" ones, those who have something different to say) speak (this is not meaningless noise, this is speech). Such disruptions in the fabric of schooling let democracy – as a clash between the "police" order that structures the aesthetic rules of visibility and invisibility, and the practices that make assumptions of equality true – *happen* in schools.

> What is learning if not to make intelligible what was before unintelligible? That is, in order to learn something which is not already perceived as something understandable within a given scheme of things, one has to embrace a fundamental distrust of that scheme and be prepared to see something one has not seen before. … The art in teaching, its poetry, is to hear "the wrong people speak". And when that happens in the social context of a classroom, that classroom can indeed become a community of poets (pp. 140–141).

DO WE HAVE A THEORY?

The papers presented in this volume are diverse in their ways of dealing with the relation between politics and education. The languages applied here, from the analytical through theories of dialogue, heterogeneity, hegemony, and the network state, to that of politics as the clash between the police order of what there is with the radical assumption of equality that "is not", but demands "verification", offer a broad theoretical spectrum in which we can trace the "adventures" of identity,

subjectivity, agency, and normativity; of exclusion and possibility; of democracy, the educational, and the political in temporal and in spatial perspectives. Those "adventures" sometimes mean that the language applied in the whole volume, as stemming from diverse theoretical sources, cannot be adequately unified. We do not, therefore, have a (singular) theory, at least not in terms of conceptual uniformity. However, this deficit may be seen as an important position in itself. I think that this is precisely one of the features of our network's debates: no meaning is fixed, conflicts are not only played between clearly defined agents, but are intrinsic to the very nature of the political and the educational – to the very *relations* that *precede* any constitution of agency as such.

One of the examples of this situation is the notion of identity. In Laclau's theory (as recounted by Szkudlarek) identity is a desired, yet ultimately impossible, condition of the social. In the texts inspired by Rancière (Biesta, Masschelein and Simons, Mendel, and Säfström), we have references to the notion of identification with connotations that make problematic an understanding of identity in terms of "desire". Identification is opposed here to subjectification. This tension relates to the fact that Rancière originally understands emancipation as pertaining to individuals (hence they have to "claim space" for their subjectivity, between or against the socially structured police orders that "identify" them in certain ways), rather than to social systems. On the other hand, in Laclau and in Mouffe (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985, Laclau, 2005) we have the notion of identity and emancipation as pertaining – in a way that is stronger than in Rancière's work – to social structures, understood, first of all, as discursive structures. Identity (or totality) in Laclau is an "impossible" (never fully attainable but always striven for) object of desire. This is, in my opinion, a happy semantic discrepancy: it points to the inextricable tension *within* the structure of identity that, to put it simply, both *connects* us to the social and sets us *against* it, both gives us agency and limits it in a "closure" of identification. We can see attempts to speak of both those dimensions simultaneously: for instance, by trying to build a bridge between Rancière and Derrida (in Claudia Ruitenberg's paper); or by pointing to a sequential movement of enforced identification and ignorance of memory, which leads to a kind of subjectification, in Maria Mendel's text. Incidentally, the notion of ignorance as an instance of emancipation and subjectification can be seen here as a resourceful way out from the limits of the Foucauldian power/knowledge structure: if we have got accustomed to the idea that power operates through knowledge, it is not surprising that the idea of ignorance has at last begun its emancipatory career.

As I said before, we do not have *a theory.* The papers collected in this volume present a kind of in-between position that gradually develops in the course of our seminars and publications, and – as we hope – gradually translates itself into a more coherent language, which has a potential of grasping current problems with understanding politics and education in their multifaceted relations and in their multidimensional crises. Rather than being a cause for despair, those complexities and critical tensions should be treated as signs of democratic possibilities and of education that can regain its meaning, going beyond its function of "serving people

to capital". As seems clear from many topics addressed in this volume, we do not postulate substituting this weakening function with that of preparing people for democracy as something that does not *yet* exist. Democracy – as we can read in the papers by scholars referring to Rancièrean categories – has to be practiced here and now, by assuming a radical equality that inevitably sets itself in conflict with the existing police orders of "the sensible". This is the context – called "politics" by Rancière and "the political" by Mouffe and Laclau – in which meaningful education takes place. We hope that the overall message of this collection is clear enough to invite its readers to a further discussion of these issues.

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ARE DUTIES OF JUSTICE IN EDUCATION GLOBAL IN SCOPE?

The main aim of this essay is to give some reasons why duties of social justice – as regards education – are not only duties to compatriots but rather duties to all persons, at least in cases when "a state fails to provide persons in some other country what they are owed" (Moellendorf, 2002, p. 42).

Let me start by mentioning two facts: first, more than a hundred million children are deprived of the most basic education[1]. Most of these children live in poor countries. Second, there are rich countries and many rich people with the sufficient resources and the capacity to reduce the number of those children who are deprived of the most basic education. The question[2], therefore, is whether governments and well-off people in rich countries ought to help to reduce the deprivation of basic education in poor countries.

At first glance it seems that we cannot reasonably answer this question because, according to Hume, "ought" cannot be derived from "is", or in other words, "moral conclusions cannot be derived from non-moral premises, values from facts" (Pidgen, 1991, p. 423). Therefore, we can derive neither an affirmative nor a negative answer to the question as to whether the governments and well-off individuals in rich countries ought to help to reduce the deprivation of basic education in poor countries from the aforementioned fact that more than a hundred million children are deprived of the most basic education. However, it seems that this problem can be solved, because the impossibility of deriving "ought" from "is" is a matter of formal logic, that is, "the conclusions of a valid inference are contained within the premises. You do not get out what you have not put in. Hence if 'ought' appears in the conclusion of an argument, but not in the premises, the inference is not logically valid" (p. 432). Therefore, if we replace the non-moral premise (a factual preposition which describes how the world is) with a moral one, the answer to whether we ought to help, which is a moral judgment that prescribes how the world should be, is logically possible.

Consequently, the first step that we have to take in order to achieve this answer is to replace the aforementioned statement – that in the contemporary world we live in, more than a hundred million children are deprived of the most basic education – with the statement which expresses a moral judgment on this matter. Such a judgment can be the following: suffering from the deprivation of basic education is something bad. We can argue that it is a bad thing because basic education is, according to Stefano

T. Szkudlarek (Ed.), Education and the Political, 15–23.

Maffettone, one of the basic rights that we can conceive, as Henry Shue does – "as a sort of meta-rights, namely rights without which no other rights or opportunities may be enjoyed" (Maffetone, 2006, pp. 21–23). Persons without any basic education "often do not know what rights they have and what they can do to use and defend them" (Nickel, 2003, online). In addition, without a basic education, their abilities to participate fully and effectively in the economic and political life of their societies are very limited. The same can be said for their abilities, which are, in John Rawls's opinion, equally, if not even more important, namely the abilities to enjoy the culture of their societies "and to take a part in its affairs, and in this way to provide for each individual a secure sense of his own worth" (Rawls, 1971, p. 101). Because of these and some other reasons, basic education is recognized as an important human right, which is not only a moral right, but also a legal right. As such, it is guaranteed by international documents on human rights which many countries have accepted and ratified. Consequently, they are legally obliged to provide basic education to everyone. However, despite this, this right to basic education is violated in many countries. As a result, more than a hundred million children are, as we have already seen, deprived of the most basic education. And this is bad. I believe that most people would agree with this. Even more, the claim that suffering from the deprivation of basic education is something very bad, is difficult to refute reasonably.

If we accept this claim – and I think that we should do so – then it is possible to take the second step toward answering the question of whether we ought to help to reduce the deprivation of basic education in poor countries.

What we need to do now is to substitute the first of two premises of the famous argument put forward by Peter Singer in his article "Famine, Affluence and Morality", in support of the thesis that the well-off people in rich countries have a moral duty to help poor people in poor countries. The first premise in his persuasive argument is: "Suffering and death from lack of food, shelter, and medical care are bad" (Singer, 2008, p. 3)[3].

After replacing the first premise, the two premises of Singer's reconstructed argument are:

1. Suffering from the deprivation of basic education is something very bad.
2. "If it is in our power to prevent something very bad from happening, without thereby sacrificing anything of comparable moral importance, we ought, morally, to do it"(p. 3)[4].

What is important to stress here is that, according to Singer, the application of the second premise does not imply that moral obligation of the rich people depends either on the physical proximity or distance between rich and poor, or on the fact that there are many rich people who can help (pp. 4–5).

On the one hand, he argues that mere distance in space is in itself irrelevant to the determination of what one ought to do. "If we accept any principle of impartiality, universalizability, equality, or whatever", says Singer, "we cannot discriminate against someone merely because he is far away from us" (p. 4). This is, in fact, his

answer to the following frequently used objection to help poor countries: "suffering outside one's country just is not something one has a duty to help alleviate, because those suffering belong to a different society, and hence a different moral community. Duties arise between members of single communities, bound by ties of mutual co-operation and reciprocity" (Dower, 2000, p. 279).

On the other hand, he refuses the view that numbers diminish moral obligation. In his opinion "it does not matter morally to the question, what you ought to do, how many people could help the situation" (p. 5). In addition, it seems that he also thinks "that the causes of poverty are irrelevant to our moral obligations to the world's poor"[5].

Consider now, once again, the two aforementioned premises:

1. Suffering from the deprivation of basic education is something very bad.
2. If it is in our power to prevent something very bad from happening, without thereby sacrificing anything of comparable moral importance, we ought, morally, to do it.

The conclusion, which follows if we accept both premises and assume that people in rich countries can prevent the deprivation of basic education in poor countries, is: people in rich countries have a moral obligation to help those in poor countries. Therefore, the answer to the question – of whether we ought to help to reduce the deprivation of basic education in poor countries – is affirmative. But, how should we understand "ought to"? According to Singer, it should be understood as a duty. Therefore, we have a duty to help to reduce the deprivation of basic education in poor countries. This means that such help should not be considered as an act of charity or what "philosophers and theologians have called 'supererogatory' – an act that it would be good to do, but not wrong not to do" (Singer, 2008, p. 7)[6]. Charity is not an obligation. It is "something that we are free to do or to omit" (O'Neill, 2008, p. 147)[7]. The claim that we have a duty to help others is, therefore, much more demanding than is usually the case in our understanding of our moral obligations. The usual interpretation of one's strict duty is: not to harm others. But helping others is morally optional (Singer, 2008, pp. 6–9).

But why do we have a duty to help others? "Some would see it as a specific duty to alleviate suffering; others as an important implication of a more general duty of beneficence – a duty to promote good, of which reducing evil is an important part. Again, the duty may be based on an appeal to justice: either to the realization of rights or to some principle of 'social justice' which requires that we all have a responsibility to ensure that everyone's basic needs are met" (Dower, 2000, p. 278).

However, our moral duty to help to reduce the deprivation of basic education in poor countries because we ought to reduce evil and promote good, is quite different from our duty to do this as a matter of justice. For, the "idea of justice does not simply cover what individuals do to one another but also covers the general structures" in a society (pp. 274–5). In Singer's analysis, as we have seen, a duty bearer is mostly an individual facing a moral choice, although the government is

not excluded either. But "the problem with such an approach is", as Michael Blake claims, "that, in the domestic arena, we have a focus not simply upon individual morality, but upon the moral evaluations of social institutions and practices", that is to say, upon, "social justice, as distinct from morality" (Blake, 2005, online). The theory of "liberal justice does not concern itself primarily with such moral choices as Singer discusses, but with the ... legitimacy of the social system within which these choices are made. It analyzes", what Rawls calls, "the basic structure of society, rather than simply the individual decisions made as to the use of resources. A fuller extension of the globalization of morality, therefore, requires an examination of the form and nature of the global society, so as to inquire as to whether the liberal principles ought not to hold at the global level as well" (ibid.). Blake thinks that "a logical extension of Singer's analysis, then, is the examination of the institutions and practices which hold sway in the global arena, to see if these might not be governed by the same liberal principles which are generally applied only within the domestic context" (ibid.).

There have been a lot of interesting discussions about this problem during the last two or three decades. One of their main aims has been, as Philippe Van Parijs says, to find an answer to the following question: Should global justice be understood as social justice in the sense that the principles of justice, accepted at the national level, should be extended to all mankind, or should global justice be, just the opposite, understood as an inter-national justice, which requires the development of the principles that would enable fair interactions between nations or countries, which should be quite different from those principles that allow inter-individual equity within nations or nation states (Van Parijs, Vandelvelde, 2005)? This is the context in which the problem of global social justice and education should be discussed as well.

Some philosophers are convinced that the principles of justice, accepted at the national level, should also be applied to the world as a whole, although in this case, that principle would have to be put into practice by institutions other than those at the national level. Such principles are, for instance, the principles of equality, equal opportunities, equal educational opportunities, and so forth. Global justice, understood in this way, is nothing more than social justice extended beyond the borders of nation states. This means that the principle of equality should also determine justice at the global level (Miller, 2005). On the other hand, David Miller calls into question the correctness of such theories of global justice which understand global justice as the realization of the principle of equality at the global level. However, Miller's opposition to these views on global justice do not derive from his possible indifference to global inequality. On the contrary, he finds the magnitude of global inequality both evident and shocking. He is also of the opinion that a just world would be a world in which there would be much less inequality than there is today. However, global inequality is relevant to him because of its effects rather than because it is unjust in and of itself. The main target of his critical analysis is the most persuasive and most authentic version of global egalitarianism advocated by several prominent political philosophers, i.e., the global equality of opportunity. Its essence

lies in the fact that people with approximately equal talents and motivation must have equal life chances (for example, equal educational opportunities), regardless of the society in which they were born. This principle can therefore be understood as the global version of Rawls's principle of fair equality of opportunities (ibid). What seems to be even much more controversial is whether his principle of difference should be included in the concept of global justice as well. Although Rawls himself in The Law of Peoples says that in the international sphere different principles should be applied, some other philosophers think just the opposite. Darrel Moellendorf, for instance, defends the idea of the global difference principle (Moellendorf, 2002).

But even if the concept of global justice includes only the principle of global equality of opportunity, we would – if Miller's interpretation is right – find ourselves in major difficulties due to the fact that we could no longer rely on a common cultural understanding that would tell us what criteria it is appropriate to use when trying to compare different options at the international level. Since, for example, education has various forms in different parts of the world, the question is how we should judge whether a child in country A has better or worse educational opportunities than a child in country B.

Proponents of global egalitarianism, faced with this problem, could reply that at least in those cases when country A (any country in sub-Saharan Africa) is compared with country B (any EU Member State), no reasonable person could be in doubt that the educational opportunities available to children in country A are much worse than those available to children in country B[8]. Miller admits that in such extreme cases it really becomes evident that the options available to the average children in Nigeria are much fewer than those available to the average children in France; and also that the existence of countries where basic education is not provided shows global injustice.

But he does not think that global egalitarianism, based on the principle of equal opportunities, can solve the problem of global injustice. On the contrary, he rejects the idea of global egalitarianism not simply because it would be utopian in a political sense, but also, if not first of all, because he is persuaded that it is based on the wrong principle (Miller, 2005, p. 59)[9]. For this reason he claims that "we need to work out new principles appropriate to the human relationships that exist at the transnational level" (Miller, 2008, p. 391). One such principle of global justice is for him "the universal protection of basic human rights" (ibid., p. 391). Since education is here understood as one of the basic human needs ("the conditions that must be met if a person is to have a minimally decent life in the society to which he or she belongs"), and basic human rights are defined as "rights to those freedoms, resources and bodily states that allow basic human needs to be fulfilled" (ibid., p. 391), it follows that the right to education must be universally protected as well.

According to Miller, therefore, the obligation to respect human rights worldwide is one of the conditions for global justice. A similar idea can also be found in the Preamble to The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, whose very first paragraph states, inter alia, that the recognition of human rights which are the same for all people

is the foundation of justice in the world[10]. It follows from this that justice in this world is greatly endangered if human rights – upon which global justice stands – are denied or violated. This also applies to violations of the right to education, which is guaranteed to everyone in Article 26, whose first paragraph says: "Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education is compulsory" (The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Art. 26.1)[11]. There is no doubt that this right, the exercise of which appears to be taken for granted in the developed world, is violated for many people and in many places. We can see this easily from the already mentioned information that more than one hundred million children are deprived of the most basic education. These and similar figures are indicative of two things. On the one hand, they bear witness to the injustice suffered by millions of children in different parts of the world; on the other hand, they highlight the huge differences in the global distribution of educational opportunities. Because educational opportunities are essential to ensuring equal opportunities and because without equality of opportunity there is no social justice, it is clear that great injustices are being done in the world in which we live. However, the injustices resulting from violations of the right to basic education as one of the fundamental human rights are far from being equally distributed. They mainly take place in the most underdeveloped and extremely poor countries. Hence, nationality or membership of a particular nation is today a much stronger factor affecting the inequality of opportunity than are race, gender, or even talent and ability, as it is nationality that determines different educational opportunities and access to labor markets and to quite unequal systems of social rights (Van Parijs, 2001). This, however, stands in stark contrast to the traditional concept of social justice, which requires that those who have the same abilities and equal will to learn must have not just equal opportunities for education, but also for success in education, irrespective of their social status, race, nationality, religion, etc. But is it necessary and appropriate to expand this understanding of justice to the global level? As we have seen, there is no unique answer to this question, which is one of the two key questions of global justice.

The answer of the proponents of global egalitarianism would probably be affirmative as their position is based on cosmopolitanism, in which it is assumed in a moral sense that every human being has the same value. To them, therefore, the nationality of a person is a completely arbitrary characteristic from a moral standpoint, and it should not affect whether or not someone has the opportunity to get an education. If, however, we accept this cosmopolitan argument, it immediately gives rise to the question of who in that case has the obligation to ensure equal opportunities for education to all people on the global level. One of the ways in which we can try to get the answer is the correspondent theory of rights and duties. Put simply, this means that every right has as its consequence the duty of someone else, either not to impede the subject of the right in exercising that right (when the right is freedom) or to provide conditions for exercising the right (in the case of social rights, for instance). As the right to education is one of the social rights, the person to whom

the correspondent obligation belongs must ensure conditions for its realization to the holder of the right. The aforementioned Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent international conventions and covenants on human rights impose this obligation on States Parties. They have a legal obligation to ensure conditions for the exercise of these rights in their territory. The right to basic education is ensured by the majority of countries. However, some do not fulfill this duty. Some of them probably because they are so poor that they cannot do so, while others because they prefer to spend money on arming children with guns rather than with knowledge. The sad thing is that when it comes to violations of the right to basic education, the international community is, at the very least, helpless, if not even disinterested. In any case, at the international or global level, there are no appropriate mechanisms in place to enable effective action in cases where countries do not fulfil their duties, and, thus, violate this important human right. In such cases, according to Onora O'Neill, the role of the state should be assumed, or at least supplemented, by international institutions, transnational corporations, and nongovernmental organizations (O'Neill, 2001). This means that the protection of the right to basic education is not only a matter of local social justice, and, consequently, a duty of a particular state, but also a duty of global social justice, that is, a duty of justice in education which is global in scope.

At the end we can therefore conclude that the answer to the initially posed question as to whether duties of social justice in education are global in scope is affirmative. Both institutional and personal ethics approaches to global justice show that the duty to secure basic education is not limited to the governments of particular states. Basic education is a human right which should be universally protected. In other words, it must be protected for children everywhere. If a particular state which is first responsible for assuring basic education to their citizens is so poor that it is not able to do this, other institutions and individuals of the rich countries have a duty to prevent the violation of this right. This duty is a duty of global social justice also because it is an injustice if children anywhere in the world are left without basic education.

NOTES

[1] A few years ago more than 121 million children were deprived of the most basic education, 15% of girls did not attend primary school in as many as 70 countries and in sub-Saharan Africa alone more than 45 million children did not have an opportunity to acquire elementary education (Spadano, 2005, p. 110).

[2] A very similar question has already been posed by Nigel Dower in the context of world poverty (Dower, 2000, p. 273).

[3] However, his argument is also "deliberately vague, since he wants his conclusions to follow logically from a variety of ethical positions—from his own consequentialism, on which we would have a duty to transfer our own resources to the point where marginal utility could not be increased, to a comparatively weaker position which would only entail that we give up wealth until something 'of moral importance,' needs be sacrificed" (Blake, 2005).

[4] By saying that "without thereby sacrificing anything of comparable of moral importance" Singer means "without causing anything else comparably bad to happen, or doing something that is wrong in itself, or failing to promote some moral good, comparable in significance to the bad thing that we can

prevent" (Singer, 2008, p. 3). Singer gives an explanation on how to understand the second premise in the following way: "If I am walking past a shallow pond and see a child drowning in it, I ought to wade in and pull the child out. This will mean getting my clothes muddy, but this is insignificant, while the death of the child would presumably be a very bad thing" (p. 3).

[5] David Miller (2007, p. 237) argues that Singer's the drowning child example is "a very bad analogy for thinking about responsibility for global poverty" since he "asks no questions about outcome responsibility for global poverty: he does not ask why so many are poor, whether responsibility lies with rich nations, with the governments of poor nations, etc. – he treats poverty as if it were a natural phenomenon like earthquake" (Ibid., pp. 234–7).

[6] "Supererogation" is a term which means "paying out more than is due (SUPER-EROGARE)", and it is used as a name "of actions that go beyond the call of duty".

[7] Charity lies beyond one's duty. It is not required by justice: giving what is owed to one as his right. For this reason it is not the fulfillment of a duty for others' rights.

[8] However, the problem set forth by Miller is not a technical problem of measurement. It is rather the problem of how to determine what constitutes equality of opportunity in a culturally pluralistic world in which different societies create goods in different ways and also value and rank them differently. Namely, the problem of measurement does not occur just because it is, for example, difficult to determine how many educational opportunities a regular child in society A has, but also because the importance of education compared to other goods varies depending on location or the society in which the child lives. Such judgments are, therefore, possible only in extreme cases. And even then it may turn out that what appears as inequality is in fact extreme poverty (Miller, 2005).

[9] For, as he says, if we set equality as our goal at the global level, justice will be so much beyond a realistic reach that most people will abandon every effort to achieve it.

[10] "Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity of all members of human society and of the equal and unalienable rights of the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world." (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Introduction).

[11] The second part of this paragraph is not formulated as a right that the government must provide to everyone, but rather as an aim which the government should try to achieve; "Technical and professional education shall be made generally available. Higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit."

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EDUCATION FOR RESISTANCE, EDUCATION FOR CONSENSUS?

Non-Consensual Democracy and Education

Since the beginning of reflections on democracy and politics, it has been clear that social and political life entails, at the same time, conflict and harmony. The Ancient Greeks' preoccupation with the issue of conflict and harmony in the *polis* led them to acknowledge that conflict was both inevitable and at the same time illegitimate, and the central question was how the community could avoid it. For this reason they differentiated between two concepts of conflict: conflict understood as *stasis* is distinctive from that understood as *polemos;* the first is conflict between friends, the latter between enemies (Vlassopoulos, 2010, pp. 80–81). Bernard Yack, whose account of Aristotelian thought I follow here, notes that "[I]t is primary *political friends* who become *class enemies* in Aristotle's account. In other words, it is primary those who have mutual expectations characteristic of members of political communities who turn the division between rich and poor into the main source of their social conflict" (Yack, 1993, p. 219). Yack argues convincingly that "[T]he citizens who engage in stasis in Aristotelian political communities act within the expectations created by political justice and political friendship. The ways in which they engage in social conflict will reflect **something of the bonds that shape their shared life**" (Yack, 1993, p. 219, my emphasis). What is crucial here is that the same forces that hold the members of a political community together also set in motion an argument about the concept of justice. This argument is thus the main source of conflict.

> Sharing in political community prompts citizens to put forward for public approval their understanding of justice as the basis for the community's standards of mutual accountability. The variety of interests and characters among them, along with an understandable tendency to exaggerate their own interests, ensure that they will put forward *competing* conceptions of justice. Political decisions about which understanding of justice to enshrine in laws and other public standards are, as a result, bound to inspire the perceptions of injustice and the kind of resentment that lead to stasis. (Yack 1993, p. 220)

In other words, we can say that conflict-as-*stasis* can appear only in among people who already accept a reciprocity of obligations and who try to universalize their idea of justice as mandatory for whole community. They are at the same time political

T. Szkudlarek (Ed.), Education and the Political, 25–39.

friends and class enemies. I will not discuss Aristotle's views on conflict at length, but would like to stress some features that correspond to contemporary discussions on this topic. First, as Yack states, the problem of conflict and social harmony can be acknowledged meaningfully only in a political community, as distinct from other kinds of community. Political community, as I have mentioned, is community of mutual obligations of which its members are conscious. Secondly, although Aristotle insists on moral education, he is aware that it does not secure the elimination of conflict in the *polis*. If the main task of the state is to facilitate the possibility of a "good life" for its citizens, then we have a circular relation between moral education, the state, and the "good life". These elements are inevitably linked with each other and each of them requires the other ones. Thirdly and probably most importantly, Aristotle's position against Socrates' claim "that the greater the unity of the state the better" can be exemplified as follows:

> Is it not obvious that a state may at length attain such a degree of unity as to be no longer a state? Since the nature of a state is to be a plurality, and in tending to greater unity, from being a state, it becomes a family, and from being a family, an individual; for the family may be said to be more than the state, and the individual than the family. So that we ought not to attain this greatest unity if we could, for it would be the destruction of the state. Again a state is not made up only of so many men, but of different kinds of men. (Aristotle 2007, p. 20–21)

For this reason Aristotle confirms once again inevitability of differentiation within the state, and argues that the introduction of the unity into the state leads to its destruction as the state; at the same time, the state cannot exist as a political community without the recognition of mutual obligations and a shared concept of justice.

Obviously, it is always risky to transform the ideas of a different culture and history to contemporary societies, and, therefore, my intention in evoking Aristotle's concept of politics is merely to show that even in the beginnings of political theory, it was quite clear that conflict is an extension of harmonious relations. If citizens were not friends in the sense of accepting the idea of mutual responsibility, they could not get into conflict understood as the struggle over competitive notions of justice. This lesson of Aristotle's was hardly remembered when the model of modern democracies was formed, despite the great interest in ancient political thought at the time. Roughly speaking, the reason for this negligence was the focus on the moral virtues of citizens in the public sphere, which was much more prominent with the Romans than with the Greeks. This focus can be traced to the rise of liberalism as the dominant ideology of the "new moral order", to use Charles Taylor's phrase (Taylor 2003, pp. 8–9). The main problem of modernity, as it is well known, is to find a glue for social relations. If "…modernity is the epoch in which the destruction of the world followed the collective attempt to master it" (Connolley 1993, p. 1), then one of the main ways of mastering chaos is moral education that can convert people into conscious citizens. But what does it mean to be "conscious citizen" and how can

education contribute to create societies of conscious citizens? I think that Richard Rorty rightly points out that there are two main ways of educating people: one is concerned with people's mental faculty—the best example is Kant's ethics—and the second with the "progress of sentiment", as Rorty calls it following Annette Baier (Rorty 1998, pp. 167–185). Rorty evokes David Hume and Friedrich Nietzsche as the proponents of sentimental education, but in fact it was Jean-Jacques Rousseau who sought the solution to political problems in the development of citizens' sentimental faculties. As Martha Nussbaum claims: "Jean-Jacques Rousseau made the learning of basic human weakness central to his whole scheme for education, saying that only cognizance of that weakness makes us sociable and turns us to humanity; thus our very inadequacy can become the basis of our hope of a decent community" (Nussbaum 2010, p. 34). We can agree that sentiment, as a point of reference for education is more effective than an appeal to reason.

I think, however, that neither Kant's moral rigorism nor Rousseau's insistence on teaching human inadequacy is enough as a basis for democratic education, for both inherited a defect in liberal theory. It has always been a problem for liberalism how to proceed from individual virtue to social virtue. Even the highest perfection of citizens does not entail the same perfection of society. In other words, liberalism has not been able to resolve the problem of forming collective identities and, by the same token, of the proper form of education for democracy. Moreover, as Biesta notes drawing on Jacques Rancière's concept of democracy, education for democracy is not merely "producing" subjects capable of dealing with democratic procedures, but rather the democratic subject "has to be understood as emerging again and again in new and different ways through its very engagement with democratic processes and practices" (Biesta 2011, p. 97). As forms of individual subjectivization are always in dialectical relations with forms of collective identities, we need to undertake research into the terrain of liberal political theory in order to establish the ways in which we can trace the emergence of the democratic subject. To do this, I would like to describe briefly some aspects of the history of liberal theory with reference to the formation of collective identity.

This problem of liberal theory gave rise to two types of critique. The first critique, which can be associated with the right wing of the political scene, argues that the source of collective identity can be located in the fixed values of nation and religion. The second critique, which can be associated with left-wing politics, argues that the source of collective identity is to be found in the economic structure of society. The conservative critique of liberalism, which started just after the French Revolution, locates the sources of collective identity in the culture of a nation. An individual is always constituted by the values of a group to which he or she belongs, and it is an illusion to think that the individual's autonomy and freedom can originate from other sources. The Romantic response to the Enlightenment consists in the idea that society or community is always prior to an individual, and that an individual forms his or her identity upon the collective identity of a community. A good example of such an attitude is Johann Gottfried Herder's thought. As Isaiah Berlin observes,

"For Herder man is shaped by, and must be defined in terms of, his association with others" (Berlin 1993, p. 192). From this perspective the problem of the constitution of collective identity cannot be posed; collective identities are simply prior to an individual. The only problem is to explain how it is possible for society to have dispersed into individual atoms that do not constitute a totality. Such a situation can be understood as a degeneration of the "spirit of community" expressed in a nation or religion. It is for this reason that Herder very much detests the state as a form of ritual, empty consent (Berlin 1993, p. 185).

Nevertheless, Herder considers this decay of community spirit to be deceptive, because the spirit of community will survive and can always be re-activated. The paradigmatic situation of such reactivation is that of war, when a society has to form a totality in the face of an external threat. It seems that the extreme expression of this tendency is modern nationalism as it developed at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. In Ernst Jünger's famous essay *Total Mobilization*, an individual finds in war the deep roots of his or her existence, in the identification of his or her fate with that of the nation. For political theory, however, the most interesting idea is Carl Schmitt's political theology, which developed somewhat later, in the 1920s and 1930s. He paradoxically shows the limits of conservative theory by purging it of the aura of romantic sentimentalism. He depicts politics as the struggle of pure collective identities, which, in fact, are reduced to the dimension of friend/enemy. He argues that it is hardly possible to nourish the liberal illusion that a compromise is always possible. Instead he speaks of the unity of society as an effect of violence, the will of a sovereign. Schmitt reverses the famous aphorism of Clausewitz that "war is a mere continuation of politics by other means": for Schmitt, politics is a mere continuation of war. The unity of society is thus always imposed from the outside as an effect of the will of a sovereign who is not bound by any laws – or, strictly speaking, his will itself is a source of law. "All law is 'situational law.' The sovereign produces and guarantees the situation in its totality. He has the monopoly over this last decision" (Schmitt 1988, p. 13).

The leftist critique of liberalism originated in Karl Marx's claims that in all existing societies collective identities were perpetuated by the division of labor, which, in turn, split society into opposing classes constituted by their economic interests. This is apparent already in *The German Ideology*:

> …the division of labor implies the contradiction between the interest of separate individuals or the individual family and the communal interest of all individuals who enter into relationships with one another. And indeed, this communal interest does not exist merely in the imagination as the 'general interest' but first of all in reality, as the mutual interdependence of the individuals among whom the labor is divided. (Marx 1978, p. 160)

The views and actions of individuals are determined mainly by their location in the economic structure of a society: "…as soon as the distribution of labour comes into being, each man has a particular, exclusive sphere of activity which is forced

upon him and from which he cannot escape" (Marx 1978, p. 160). This location is obviously a source of collective identity, and it also forms the inevitability of the conflict between the opposed identities. People can seek a compromise but their economic determination has sentenced them to struggle, so one of the most famous of Marx' and Engels' statements reads: "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle" (Marx and Engels 1978, p. 473). As is well known, the history of Marxism has been defined to a great extent by discussion about the limits of this determination and the margin of freedom which individuals enjoy in their endeavors. Engels in his late letters tries to correct what he considers a misinterpretation of Marx's thought, showing that not only the economic situation, but also other factors, such as political forms, philosophical theories, and religious views, can influence "the course of the historical struggles" (Engels 1978, p. 760).

However, the principle of determination was not undermined until the work of Vladimir Lenin and Antonio Gramsci. Lenin approaches this problem from the position of political practice, arguing that introducing a "true" class-consciousness into the mentality of working class is the task of a group of determined revolutionaries organized into the Communist Party. For political theory, Antonio Gramsci's concept of cultural hegemony is probably the most important as it changes the idea of determination and collective identity from the realm of economy to that of culture. Hegemony is to some extent independent of economic determination; it is rather a cultural construction, which has to be imposed on society by a group of "organic intellectuals". The idea of cultural hegemony can explain the integrity of society but at the price of loosening the Marxian scheme of determination. Class struggle becomes mainly a cultural struggle and hegemony is constructed inside a culture. Such hegemony is always fragile and can be replaced by another hegemony. His statement that what is certain is only the struggle, not its result, in fact undermines the eschatological message of Marxism.

What is characteristic for these two above-mentioned orientations (economic determinism and cultural hegemony) is their insistence on the unity of people as the main factor in organizing a political system. In fact this unity is at least latently present and educational activity has to be directed at re-activation of this lost or damaged unity. Therefore, the argument between the (neo)Marxist system of values and that of liberalism has been mainly associated with discussion about the place of collectivism in social life. This discussion is largely misleading, as proponents of liberalism as important as John Dewey and George Herbert Mead were quite clear that the individual self is inevitably social and there is an intimate link between democracy, communication, and the self. Therefore, they insisted that democracy needs community, but this community is one of shared actions and beliefs, not values, action, and democracy. From these premises, they developed an interesting theory of education, where they established a clear link between the self, action, and democracy. The most important work in this area is of course Dewey's book *Democracy and Education*, which marks a break point in educational theory (Dewey 2008), but Mead also had a clear concept of education stemming from his social and dialogical

perspective. For him, education is a process of conveying meaning through the process of communication. This process is of social and creative character as meaning arises only as a socially mediated creative action of the individual (Biesta and Tröhler 2008). However, the pragmatic approach to liberal democracy, as well as to educational theory, was not acknowledged properly in Europe, as it was considered to be a form activist philosophy, an American version of Nietzscheanism (Joas 1993, pp. 94–106).

After WWII, liberalism had to be re-thought, and the re-construction took two different directions. On the one hand, the dialogical perspective was introduced as a significant part of liberal theory. Jürgen Habermas—following, to some extent, the pragmatic tradition—shows that liberalism needs a dialogical perspective in order to proceed from the autonomous individual to collective decisions based on consensus. As is well known, he insists that the logical structure of human communication will lead to consensus if there are no external obstacles that can distort or damage communication. Claude Lefort, by contrast, depicts democracy as an unstable system of social tensions in which antagonism is inevitable. However, Lefort states that if we are aware of these setbacks of democracy, then we can protect it from the temptations of totalitarianism. Democracy is a system of constant internal struggle because it differs from other political forms that are organized around "empty space." The previous political regimes were organized around clear symbols. For instance in the Medieval Ages such symbol was the King or strictly speaking his body, real or imagined (Kantorowicz 1957). But of course symbols can be connected to concepts like nation or social class. Such symbolic concepts are the source of the legitimization of power. In democracy, power is legitimized by the will of people, but one can always have problems how to define "people". Thus the fight for a valid definition of "people" is built into this system. Antagonism is, hence, essential to democracy, while, at the same time, it is a threat for democratic society and the source of its strength. Democracy has to define and redefine itself constantly, as it is a system that needs constant change. On the other hand, it is also in constant danger of falling into totalitarianism where empty space is filled by a clear definition of "the people." Bernard Flynn defines these relations in Lefort as follows:

> Within a democracy the source of legitimate power is 'the people' but who is to speak in the name of the people? According to Lefort, political life in a modern democracy is a continual debate on just this question. No one can claim to be authorized *a priori* to speak in the people's name; each person's claim must be discursively validated and every claim is always subjected to challenge. The legitimate spokesperson for the people cannot be established with certainty; it is always 'up for grabs' and as such it engenders an anxiety. The political anxiety which is endemic to democracy is experienced most intensely in times of crisis; it has as its 'object' the possibility that the symbolically empty place will become *really* empty, which is to say, no one will be able to establish legitimacy and this would mean that the symbolic place of power would fall into the real. (Flynn 2005, p. xxv)

From the point of view of an individual these two concepts of democracy, antagonistic and consensual, seem to convey very different messages. As Flynn argues, according to Lefort political anxiety is endemic to democracy. Democracy appears, thus, as a very demanding system in which citizens have to endure a constant state of ambiguity and unpredictability, and to be prepared for continuous changes. Democracy in Dewey's philosophy can be described as "institutionalized revolution", and one can easily claim that it is hardly comfortable to live in such circumstances. For this reason we can assume that besides structural sources there are very important psychological sources of "totalitarian temptations." They appear as a result of this instability of democracy, which has to be reflected in the eyes of citizens as a system which never gives them a sense of ultimate security. Consequently the endurance of democracy needs to be confirmed all the time in the democratic struggle.

The consensual model of democracy seems to offer more consolation as it presumes that, at least potentially, we can achieve consensual agreement on all important societal issues. This possibility is guaranteed by the structure of human communication according to the conditions described in the Habermasian "ideal communicative situation." The relation between the self, communication, and political involvements is depicted as mutually interdependent in an unrestricted way. For Habermas, such a relation opens a way to a new paradigm of rationality based on understanding (Habermas 1991, pp. 391–392). This rationality, regardless of how distant and difficult it would be, is always possible in every act of human communication. Again, a struggle is necessary for this potentiality to emerge, but in this case we have at any rate the solid ground of language as a vehicle for achieving consensus.

Each model of democracy needs a different kind of educational involvement. Unfortunately, Lefort's political thought never became an significant source for educational theory, although his idea of citizenship seems to me a very promising tool for reflection on education, as, in his theory, citizenship is linked not to a particular political option, but to the acceptance of empty space as the center of democratic society (Blackell 2006). Thus, for the Lefortian concept of democracy an educational ideal would be to prepare people for critical reflections in order to resist a totalitarian temptation as well as their personal temptation of meaning, to borrow a phrase form Slavoj Žižek, who speaks about a longing for endowing contingent events with meanings[1]. Habermas's concept of democracy has attracted the attention of educators, as, for the Habermasian communicative action model of democracy, the normative and educational aspect lies in the preparation for rational language use in which mutual validity claims could open a way for approaching the "ideal communicative situation." Schools should not be places for education of experts, but rather institutions of civil society defending the lifeworld from the invasion of the system (Crick and Joldersma 2007).

In this discussion between the consensual and antagonistic models of democracy, Chantal Mouffe's notion of agonistic democracy needs special attention as a developed version of Lefort's conception of democracy. She expands this idea of democracy to include the Schmittian critique of liberalism, but with the clear

intention of improving liberal democracy instead of discarding it, as Schmitt himself proposes:

> Certainly, liberalism needs to be taken to task in so far as, in its rationalist and individualistic formulation, it is unable to acknowledge the ineradicability of antagonism and the impossibility of a final reconciliation through reason; moreover, its incapacity to grasp the collective dimension of social life as constitutive, and the fact that political subjects are always collective subjects have very damaging consequences for democratic politics. But those problems, once identified, can be tackled. What is called for is the elaboration of truly 'political liberalism'. Contrary to the Rawlsian version of political liberalism, this would be a liberalism that comes to terms with 'the political' in its dimension of conflict/antagonism, and acknowledges that the social is always instituted politically through hegemonic configurations. (Mouffe 1999, p. 4)

The liberalism proposed by Mouffe is a liberalism of collective identities with the necessity of antagonism inherited in society. Liberal ideas can be preserved by converting antagonism into agonism and enemies into adversaries. This process of the domestication of antagonism has never been described, but we know its beginnings—the contradictory forces of society caused by different collective identities—and the outcome: a society full of contradistinctions and conflicts but with all social forces recognizing the validity of other forces. These features of Mouffe's social theory have been appropriated by educational theory as a corrective to the concept of citizenship in deliberative democracy. As Ruitneberg writes:

> [W]hen citizenship education takes into account the nature of the political as necessarily conflictual and constituted by power, it must seek to augment the limited treatment of disagreement in the deliberative approaches on which it is often based. In order to prepare students for active participation in the public realm not only as volunteers and single-issue campaigners but as political adversaries, radical democratic citizenship education must recognize and educate political emotions, and foster an understanding of the role of power in the political, as well as of the fundamental differences in the interpretation and implementation of equality and liberty proposed by the political ''left'' and ''right''. (Ruitneberg 2009, p. 281)

Ruitenberg's approach is obviously legitimated but one needs to be more precise in showing how deliberative democracy can be supplemented by the antagonistic/agonistic perspective. In order to do this we have to discuss some ambiguous points in Mouffe's conception. I think that at least two issues seem in need of elaboration. First, how it is possible that the political can be reconstructed in such a way that antagonism changes into agonism? And second, is this reconstruction of the political a normative process, which needs citizens' conscious activity, or a result of the "objective" development of democracy taking more and more of social space? In short, if turning antagonism into agonism is an ethical task[2], then we should identify

which and whose task it is and how it is possible to facilitate the transformation from antagonism to agonism. Mouffe puts it explicitly: "To foster allegiance to its institutions, a democratic system requires the availability of those contending forms of citizenship identification. They provide the terrain in which passion can be mobilized around democratic objectives and antagonism transformed into agonism" (Mouffe 2000, p. 104). However this idea of mobilizing passions for the defense of democratic ideas does not show convincingly what could be a cornerstone of such a mobilization. Mouffe resolves this problem using the concept of the "constitutive outside" as a deconstructive condition of the emergence of the dimension of antagonism/agonism in the political: "…the outside has to be incommensurable with the inside, and at the same time, the condition of emergence of the latter" (Mouffe 2000, p. 12). She continues that:

> [U]nderstood in that way, the constitutive outside allows us to tackle the conditions of emergence of an antagonism….If collective identities can only be established on the mode of an us/them, it is clear that, under certain conditions, they can always become transformed into antagonistic relations. Antagonism then can never be eliminated and it constitutes an ever-present possibility in politics. A key task of democratic politics is therefore to create the conditions that would make it less likely for such a possibility to emerge. (Mouffe 2000, p. 13)

Further, she specifies that adversaries can be defined "in a paradoxical way as 'friendly enemies', that is, persons who are friends because they share a common symbolic space but also enemies because they want to organize this common symbolic space in a different way" (Mouffe 2000, p. 13). Again, we can ask if sharing a symbolic space inevitably leads to the mobilization of passions in the defense of democracy. It seems that it is not enough, and there are some critiques directed at the deficiencies of Mouffe's position. The thrust of this critique is to show that what we really need for democracy to work is much more than merely the transformation of enemies into adversaries. As Rummens points out: "Democratic adversaries share a common symbolic space only if their common reference to the core values of liberty and equality is indeed understood by all parties as a *common* reference. This presupposes a minimal discursive overlap between the adversarial positions in the sense of an at least partially shared and therefore debatable understanding of the meaning of these values" (Rummens 2009, p. 283). These critiques have important consequences for educational theory. If we are to implement Mouffe's theory in our education for democracy we have to conceptualize what is this "minimal discursive overlap" postulated by Rummens. It is quite clear that what we need for solving this problem is a theory of democracy which would go beyond the contradiction between the antagonistic and consensual models of democracy. Only such a model could provide us with suggestions as to modes of subjectivization in a democratic society.

In order to overcome the contradiction between the antagonistic and consensual models of democracy, I propose the model of non-consensual democracy based on Mikhail Bakhtin's dialogical perspective. Although Bakhtin's approach has

been widely discussed in educational studies, it is mainly appropriated as a tool for transforming the process of learning from the monological assimilation of knowledge to a more active process of taking into account different voices, that is, a transformation from authoritative to internally persuasive discourse (Lillejord and Dysthe 2008). This stress on internally persuasive dialogue enables scholars to make a link between Bakhtin's ideas and critical pedagogy (Rule 2011) and with other important theories in educational studies (Matusov 2007). I greatly value the application of Bakhtin's ideas to various areas of education, but my own approach is different. I attempt to show that dialogue in democracy transcends both the antagonistic and consensual perspective. Therefore, I argue that, while basing one's position on on Bakhtin's thinking, it is possible to build a concept of non-consensual democracy, which, in turn, entails a new concept of the political subject. I do not, thus, intend to apply Bakhtin dialogism indirectly to educational theory, but rather I show some implications of non-consensual democracy for creating political subjectivity.

This dialogic model aims at two dimensions of the problem of democracy. On the one hand, it shows that liberalism needs a dialogic approach to explain how collective identities are created. On the other hand, it demonstrates that, although liberal society cannot avoid antagonism, it can develop a sense of mutual understanding if it engages in a dialogue. For these reasons I would like to employ Bakhtin's concept of dialogue in three overlapping areas.

First, I intend to show that Bakhtin's notion of dialogue can create a valid alternative to consensual as well as antagonistic models of social life. Second, I show that the descriptive and normative features of dialogue open up space for the construction of a political but also educational strategy. Third, I demonstrate that dialogue as present in all human relations is a bridge between everyday life communication and the sphere of politics, which casts doubt on the tendency to separate the "political" from other spheres of human interactions.

The main feature of dialogue, which is important for political theory, is its orientation toward understanding. "Responsive understanding is a fundamental force, one that participates in the formulation of discourse, and it is moreover an *active* understanding, one that discourse senses as resistance or support enriching the discourse" (Bakhtin 1981, pp. 280–1). Therefore, we should not expect that involvement in dialogue automatically leads us to achieving a consensus. On the contrary, as one of the commentators of Bakhtin's thought says: "Each participant in dialogue brings pre-existing expectations and 'frames of meaning' to bear on the comprehension of concrete discourse" (Gardiner 1992, p. 38).

For this reason, for Bakhtin the dialogical approach to language is very different from that of logic: "…logical and semantically referential relationships, in order to become dialogic, must be embodied, that is, they must enter another sphere of existence: they must become discourse, that is, an utterance, and receive an author, that is a creator of the given utterance whose position is expressed" (Bakhtin 1993, p. 184). Dialogical relations are always subjective, and, as a consequence, they convey in a dialogue a tension, which may appear between different subjects.

However, dialogical relation is also a basis for agreement as far as it is, at same time, a basis for mutual understanding. "With explanation there is only one consciousness, one subject; with comprehension there are two consciousnesses and two subjects. There can be no dialogic relation with an object, and therefore explanation has no dialogic aspects…Understanding is always dialogic to some degree" (Bakhtin 1994, p. 111). This dialogical character of understanding constructs an ethical space, which constitutes a framework for human action. However, as I have shown earlier, dialogue is simultaneously language-bound, and, as dialogical relation, it is an existential relation between acting human beings. The tension between the concrete dimension of dialogue and its objective reference to instances of culture brings into dialogue all contradictions that appear within social life.

These features of Bakhtin's idea of dialogue make it at least a corrective to Laclau and Mouffe's notion of hegemony. The hegemony that is a central category of their book *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (1985) is, to put it briefly, the ability of a particular group in society to impose its own categories on whole society. The authors refer to Lacan's concept of language, especially to his idea of the primacy of the signifier over the signified. Empty signifiers, which carry general meanings become substituted by a particular group with its own specific contents. For instance "democracy" is a very general term, which can mean various political systems and institutions. If a certain group imposes its own understanding of democracy on an entire society, it thus secures a monopolistic position in social discourse. Bakhtin, in his idea of the role of the superaddresee in dialogue, also sees a possibility of the introduction of hegemonic elements into conversation. However, this is a different kind of hegemony. This is clear if we compare the concept of hegemony with Bakhtin's idea of the superaddresee: "Understanding itself enters as a dialogic element in the dialogic system and somehow changes its total sense. The person who understands inevitably becomes a third party in the dialogue…but the dialogic position of this third party is a quite special one…But in addition to this addressee (the second party), the author of the utterance … presupposes a higher superaddressee (third), whose absolutely just responsive understanding is presumed, either in some metaphysical distance or in distant historical time" (Bakhtin 1994, p. 126). Such a configuration of dialogue assures that there is no privileged position which could be an ultimate instance of understanding. The reference to the superaddressee does not close the discussion; on the contrary, such a reference becomes the next step in a never-ending dialogue. The appeal to a superaddressee can be understood as a hegemonic intervention in the political discourse. Such an appeal changes the trajectory of discourse, as this ploy can shift the level of political negotiation from seeking compromise in the public sphere to the negotiation of political identities. It would seem that, at this point, dialogue ceases to work and is frozen into a monologue. But if we remember Bakhtin's observation that even monologic utterances have their dialogical moment, then the authoritative character of such utterances is weakened. By the same token, one can say that hegemony as a party in dialogue contradicts itself and becomes a part in the polyphonic, multi-voiced nature of the social.

Such an understanding of dialogue opens space for the supplementation of the formal concept of hegemony by a more concrete and historical analysis. This was postulated by Ann Smith in her book on Laclau and Mouffe. She writes: "Competing articulations never work on a signifier as if it were blank space; every floating signifier has some meaning – albeit one that is always open to subversive recitation – insofar as it bears the fading traces of past articulations. The effectiveness of a political discourse, in other words, is not merely a question of its formal characteristics" (Smith 1998, p. 82). Smith, thus, suggests that Laclau's and Mouffe's formalistic approach to politics is at least partly insufficient, and that it needs to be supplemented with some historical analysis. For instance, if we look at such an empty signifier as democracy we realize that actually in a concrete historical situation it is never "empty" as it bears marks of the past. In other words, we have always to deal with two sides of the social: abstract (formal) and concrete (content), and we need to take into account the dialectics of these two sides if we are to investigate a specific political situation.

Bakhtin would agree that dialogue always has two sides: on the one hand, it is a formal characteristic of language; on the other hand, it is always an expression of living social relations. This dual characteristic of every activity introduces contradiction into social relations. As Holquist and Clark argue:

> A dialogue in Bakhtin's system is a datum from experience that can serve as an economical paradigm for a theory encompassing more global dimensions. In an exchange between two speaking subjects, what each says to the other is difficult to describe in terms of language alone. The talk is segmented not only by words and sentences but also by protocols that determine who is talking. The different ways in which speakers indicate appropriate points for others to respond are enormously varied, depending on the topic, the speakers, and the context of the utterance. But the relations between utterances are always conditioned by the potential response of the other. Thus, these relations are part of communication and cannot be adequately dealt with in terms of the language system alone. (Clark and Holquist 1984, p. 217)

What, then, is the significance of Bakhtin's views for political theory? I think that his ideas allow us to treat society as a place of never-ending dialogue between the utterances (texts) of different social groups. This polyphonic nature of society does not entail hegemony as necessary for a society to exist. Dialogue and polyphony exist also between monologic utterances, and if we refer this principle to society, we have to arrive at the conclusion that a conversation between even arbitrary voices is always possible. On the other hand, no conclusion can close discussion, compromise can always be cast into question, and the reference to instances situated beyond the immediate range of particular discussion (including transcendental and Habermasian quasi-transcendental conditions) becomes an element of this discussion. I believe that taking advantage of Bakhtin's concept of dialogue makes it possible to develop

a new path in political theory showing that the opposition between antagonism and dialogue can be overcome at least under certain social conditions.

The idea of dialogue, thus, becomes a part of normative political theory, which can be a corrective to Mouffe's notion of antagonism. As I have mentioned above, dialogue permeates all spheres of social life, but it is always threatened by the possibility of its falling into monologism (totalitarianism) or into excessive dialogism (anarchism) (Matusov 2007). In both cases, there is no shared perspective which marks true dialogue. However, if such a perspective is embedded in all layers of social life, dialogue forms what Mouffe calls the "constitutive outside" which can be equated with "responsive understanding". For Mouffe, the constitutive outside is "an exterior to the community that is the very condition of its existence" (Mouffe 2005, p. 85). As I have mentioned earlier, Mouffe claims that in democratic society it is enough to share a common symbolic space, but her critics argue that she never provides a broad description of this space, suggesting instead that it just includes the acceptance of basic rules of democratic procedure. However, Mouffe is probably right that we cannot return to the pre-modern concept of common good as a glue for communal life. Therefore, we face a serious problem in finding a perspective on social life that would provide us with some insights into the common values of the community, but that would not threaten the diversity of the community. I propose reflexive understanding as a point of departure for building such a perspective.

To understand the meaning of the word "dialogue" means not to find a common normative background, bur rather to grasp, as far as is possible, the consequences which the word has for both conceptual systems: that of the speaker and that of the listener. Nobody is, however, in a position to be outside dialogical exchange. Thus, understanding is always a partial understanding, in which one deals with a chain of linguistic interactions: the utterance constructed in view of the expected-response-to-the-utterance, the real response, the changed meaning of the primary utterance in view of the real response, the utterance-response, and so on. Each of these cells in the construction of meaning is formed against the background of the conceptual systems (horizons) of the speaker and the listener. The process of understanding is, thus, not just a coming to terms with the other, but it resembles rather a struggle for the colonization of "an alien conceptual horizon of the listener". However, this attempt at colonization is always doomed to fail, as, instead of colonization, we have to deal with an exchange of meanings, which serve as constant points of departure for the construction of more and more complicated relations between two conceptual systems. This process is embedded in dialogical relations, but to become part and parcel of a democratic constitutive outside, it has to be activated through the conscious endeavors of social forces anxious to protect and develop democracy.

Such an understanding does not mean consensus, but, on the contrary, it presupposes conflicts and misinterpretations of the other's intentions. Democracy, which is, at the social level, an incarnation of the dialogical perspective, is composed of conflict

as well as of consensus. The task of political, ethical, and educational theory is to promote responsive understanding as the constitutive outside of democratic society.

NOTES

[1] It has been used in the film Examined Life produced by Canadian TV in 2008, directed by Astra Taylor

[2] I owe the idea that agonism is an ethical task to Diogo Sardinha who presented it at the symposium on Chantal Mouffe's thought organized by Westminster University in November 2010 in London. In personal communication, he provided me with some important insights on this issue.

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GRAMMARS OF PRIVATIZATION, SCHOOLING, AND THE "NETWORK STATE"[1]

I

In her book, *Hidden Markets: The New Education Privatization*, Patricia Burch (2009) observes that the "center of gravity in public policy has shifted. Once considered relatively fringe, market principles of competition, consumerism, and incentives linked to performance, have become accepted policy strategies for improving social outcomes" (p. 1). As part of this process, Jill Blackmore (2000) points out that "more flexible delivery regimes" (p. 147) have been introduced. These regimes place increased demands on teachers and parents (in both cases largely women) to work well beyond school hours and the school site. She further adds that, as "educational labor and costs are increasingly privatized, capital begins to recolonize the family as a site of production as well as consumption" (p. 147). Mark Bray's (2009) extensive study of private tutoring captures the economic and corporate ecologies involved in the privatization of educational labor. He aptly shows how private tutoring devolves the costs of public schooling unto families and guardians in the form of thriving tutoring markets, reminiscent of a "shadow education" system. Andy Hargreaves (2003), Michael Peters with A.C. Begley (2006) and Segall (2006) (among many others) further argue that, in its current complexion, the "knowledge society" operates as a potent neo-liberal banner under which the privatization and commodification of education and knowledge de-professionalizes teaching, exacerbating the "ontological insecurity experienced by teachers" (Keddie, Mills, & Pendergast, 2011, pp. 76, 87)[2].

The select literature cursorily reviewed above bears witness to the intense debates and controversies that continue to unfold over the role of market and quasi-market mechanisms as drivers of school reform (Walford, 1996; Taylor, 2002; Ball, 2009)[3]. In these debates, questions are raised whether public schools are like businesses, and whether schools could or should be improved through business involvement[4]. As a result, concerns over the playing out of privatization in the field of schooling are high on the political agenda. Concerns are raised not only over the shifting of ownership of educational provision away from publicly constituted bodies to the private sector, and its consequences in terms of fiscal efficiency and budgetary accountability. Concerns are also raised over the political ramifications of privatization for the delimitation of the state's role in relation to the wider society, as well as over the school's capacity to contribute to a vibrant, democratic, and inclusive political community (Labaree, 2011). Still, other writers are concerned that privatization weakens the political community's

T. Szkudlarek (Ed.), Education and the Political, 41–59.

engagement, participation, and influence over educational policymaking, "because the chain of contractors and subcontractors obscures clear lines of responsibility" (Cucchiara, Gold, & Simon, 2011). Hence, modes of ownership and modes of affiliation to the political community – i.e. citizenship – are tightly linked when unpacking the debates around privatization in the field of schooling.

For Seyla Benhabib (2002), citizenship expresses "membership in a [territorially] bounded community", which "can be disaggregated into three components: collective identity, privileges of political membership and social rights and benefits" (p. 454). How privatization in the field of schooling affects these three components, their institutional articulations, and their reconfiguration in relation to each other is of concern to the present essay for several reasons. First, privatization seeks new ownership and market horizons located across established territorial or spatial boundaries. Secondly, privatization raises questions regarding entitlement to services, not necessarily as of right by virtue of membership in the political community, but by virtue of an individual's or a group's location and power in a marketplace, as consumers or consumer groups. Thirdly, privatization raises questions regarding the bases upon which an individual or a social group are both recognized as members and authorized to participate in a political community and influence policy-making. If so, how does privatization in the field of schooling – as the shifting of educational ownership from public to private sector providers – affect not only the articulations of the "affiliative order" that sustains the political community, but also the legitimacy, authority, and sovereignty of the state to which it relates?

In the subsequent parts of this essay, I tentatively explore select aspects of this broad question. In section II, I start by examining how the public and private sectors are situated in relation to each other over the field of schooling. My aim is to highlight the ecologies – social, political, economic, and cultural – that make privatization in the field of schooling a multifaceted and highly charged political issue. In section III, I discuss how privatization in the field of schooling reconfigures state institutions, the forms and structure of ownership of educational services, and the meanings attached to the governance of educational provision. I expand this discussion as part of section IV, in which I examine more specifically the multifaceted relationships between modes of privatization and parental school choice policies. Here, I argue that school choice normalizes differences in social and cultural capital ownership, translating them into hierarchical and differential spatial constructions of schooling. Yet, school choice also determines the political resources available to social actors to move across social and territorial space. The spatial dimension of school choice is taken up in greater detail in section V. There, I draw on the work of Saskia Sassen to clarify how configurations of what counts as private and what counts as public attributes of schooling are linked to shifting configurations of territory, state authority, and citizenship rights – ultimately articulating what Carnoy and Castells refer to as a "network state"; a decentered state that operates through coordinated networks of social and corporate actors, public and private. In this section, I illustrate the centrality of privatized modes of schooling for the new territorial articulations

of the "network state" in the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Province of British Columbia (in Canada). Finally, in section VI, I conclude by arguing that privatization should be more broadly understood in relation to the emergence of novel articulations of a re-territorialized state and a fragmented political community.

II

Modes of ownership – whether public or private – cannot be accounted for adequately without reference to the underpinning conceptions of state power. Mark Olssen (1996) captures this relationship, as he compares conceptions of state power under classical liberalism and neo-liberalism:

> Whereas classical liberalism represents a negative conception of state power in that the individual was to be taken as an object to be freed from the interventions of the state, neo-liberalism has come to represent a positive conception of the state's role in creating the appropriate market *by providing the conditions*, *laws and institutions necessary for its operation*. … [T]he shift from classical liberalism to neo-liberalism … involves a change in subject position from 'homo economicus', who naturally behaves out of self-interest and is relatively detached from the state, *to 'manipulatable man'*, *who is created by the state and who is continually encouraged to be 'perpetually responsive'*. … In this model the … state will see to it that each one makes a continual enterprise of ourselves … in what seems to be a process of governing without governing. (Olssen, 1996, p. 340; emphases added)

Olssen's (1996) observation suggests that the institution of ownership represents more than a mere economic arrangement. It stands for a political construct underpinned by culturalized conceptions of state power, society, the public sphere, and the individual. Privatization – as the shifting of ownership regimes from the public to the private sector – hinges therefore on the institutional, legal, and ideological arrangements that authorize such a shift, considering it a legitimate part of an established mode of political organization.

Terminologies abound with regard to what privatization stands for, adding to analytic confusion. Maia Cucchiara, Eva Gold, and Elaine Simon (2011) point out that "[s]cholars interested in this phenomenon have used a number of terms – from privatization to marketization to commercialization – to describe the various ways that schools are shaped by the private sector" (p. 2464). While marketization encompasses privatization, it "indexes a more general shift to the embrace of business-oriented principles and highlights" (p. 2464). With regard to privatization in the field of schooling, they more specifically point out that,

> 'Privatization' generally refers to policies and practices designed to bring the power of the private sector to bear upon the operations of public institutions, such as the management of public schools by private companies and the increase in school choice. (Cucchiara, Gold, & Simon, 2011, p. 2464)

It bears noting, however, that "bring[ing] the power of the private sector to bear on the operations of public institutions" ultimately means shifting the modes of ownership of educational provision, whether in whole or in part, from public to private sector actors. The latter comprise non-governmental for-profit and not for-profit organizations, as well as corporations and larger economic conglomerates.

Stephen Ball and Deborah Youdell (2007, p. 36) identify two inter-related "key types" of privatization in the field of schooling, both associated with the global *political* rise of neo-liberalism, since the 1980s:

> **Privatisation in Public Education or 'endogenous' privatization**
>
> These forms of privatisation involve the importing of ideas, techniques and practices from the private sector in order to make the public sector more like businesses and more business-like.
>
> **Privatisation of Public Education or 'exogenous' privatization**
>
> These forms o[f] privatization involve the opening up of public education services to private sector participation on a for-profit basis and using the private sector to design, manage or deliver aspects of public education. (Ball & Youdell, 2007, p. 13)

Ball and Youdell (2007) consider these two types of privatization as context-dependent, "influenced by the political and social histories and norms in these contexts" (p. 36). Elsewhere, Ball (2005) emphatically observes that "'privatisation' in education is increasingly complex and increasingly totalising and that it inserts a new ethical framework into educational practices of a whole variety of kinds" (p. 140). In that sense, Ball and Youdell's (2007) distinction between endogenous and exogenous privatization reflects the contradictory, vulnerable and situated arrangements that underpin schooling. How endogenous and exogenous forms of privatization play out in particular contexts, largely depends on political agendas in which the state, social movements, community based groups, non-governmental organizations, and corporate actors, are all invested, and the distinctive notions of the public good they seek to promote.

Janelle Scott and Catherine DiMartino (2009) highlight the meanings of privatization from a *governance* perspective. For them, privatization is less about shifts in the modes of ownership of educational provision, and more about who controls and manages the distribution of educational resources. They therefore state that privatization in the field of schooling represents

> …a range of reforms that redistribute resources and control over most aspects of schooling away from traditional public governance structures to a disparate assemblage of parents, teachers, school leaders, community members, private sector actors, and private organizations. (p. 433)

Scott and DiMartino (2009) then propose a "typology" of five overlapping "forms of privatization," each capturing a type of strategic "actor" (individual or

corporate) involved in the "proliferation" of privatization reforms in the field of education:

> The *gatekeepers* form of privatization, which "describes individuals, organizations, and the practices they initiate that create the environment for private sector actors to operate in a public education environment."
>
> The *partners* form of privatization in which "individuals and organizations … enter into collaborative relationships with schools and school districts, often contributing as much as they gain from the relationship."
>
> The *rivals* form of privatization in which individuals and organizations seek "to expand their market share and put low-performing public schools 'out of business.'"
>
> The *managers* form of privatization, in which individuals and organizations are "oriented toward whole school or partial school district governance. They aspire to make key decisions over schooling and seek the authority and public funding they deem necessary to execute their work."
>
> The *profitseekers* form of privatization, which refers to "organizations or individuals whose central motivation is to make money."
>
> (Scott & DiMartino, 2009, pp. 439–440)

Scott and DiMartino (2009) argue that their typology captures not only the administrative, economic, and technical aspects of educational privatization, but also its underemphasized "political and social aspects" (p. 433).

It bears noting that both Ball and Youdell (2007) and Scott and DiMartino (2009) approach privatization as a plural and multifaceted phenomenon, enmeshed in wider social and political struggles among a range of social and corporate actors. In that sense, the public and private sectors are intertwined along complex articulations. This observation lead Chris Higgins and Kathleen Knight Abowitz (2011) to observe that the "traditional, formalist" distinction between public and private sectors in relation to privatization "has now collapsed": "definition-defying amalgams of private philanthropists, foundations, nonprofits, parent groups, for-profit businesses, teachers' unions, and government institutions now are competing and sometimes collaborating in the creation of a brave new world of schooling", "forcing us to articulate anew the civic substance of schooling" (pp. 375–376).

III

The multifaceted and intertwined private-public enmeshments underpinning schooling are well captured by Kenneth Saltman's (2005) study of the Edison school corporation in the United States. The Edison corporation is an "educational management organization" (EMO), a "managers" form of privatization, as described

by Scott and DiMartino (2009). EMOs are hired to run public schools on behalf of public school districts. Saltman explains:

> [while p]rivate schools collect tuition from parents or guardians for private educational services[,] … EMOs like Edison seek contracts with school districts or states to run public schools for profit. These companies aim to use tax money to run public schools and extract profits for investors from the money that would otherwise go to pay for smaller class sizes, more books and other supplies, and higher teacher salaries. (Saltman, 2005, p. 2)

What is indicative in the Edison case – echoes of which are found, for instance, in the *No Child Left Behind* legislation in the United States (Burch, 2009; Mitchell, 2003, pp. 398–399), and in the outsourcing of aspects of school management in the United Kingdom (Griggs, 2012, p. 85) – is not exclusively the setting-up of private corporations that target public education funds. It is rather the phenomenon that publicly constituted bodies of governance are implicated in two overlapping processes. First, publicly constituted bodies enter into contractual relations with private corporations, to run a service on the former's behalf. Here, we must problematize that institutional and constitutional leap of faith by virtue of which an authorized derogation produces a new type of hybrid public official. Situated in the domain of private corporate organizations, this official claims jurisdiction over the domain of constitutionally enacted and rights-based provision of a public service and its administration. At the same time, as Burch (2009) shows for the United States, senior state officials, involved in setting and implementing legislation on school privatization, trade their public positions (jobs) "for lucrative positions as executives within lobbying firms or firms involved in the direct sale" (pp. 52–53) of privatization-related products, whether to the state or to school districts. The result is the consolidation of fluid social and professional networks of influence through "privatization intermediaries" (Burch, 2009, p. 44). These networks are in constant shift, with officials moving between publicly held positions and positions held within economic corporations. Intermediaries "carry ideas back and forth across the worlds of public agencies and private firms" (p. 53).

Clearly then, contractual relations described by Saltman (2005, 2009) and Burch (2009) involve both informal and formal relationships operating *within* and *across* economic sectors, communities, non-governmental organizations, corporations, and constituted bodies of government. These relationships effectively morph into *networked* institutional and organizational arrangements, and new modes of government and governance, referred to by Martin Carnoy and Manuel Castells (2001) as indicative of the mode of operation of the "network state":

> A state made of shared institutions, and enacted by bargaining and interactive iteration all along the chain of decision making: national governments, co-national governments, supra-national bodies, international institutions, governments of nationalities, regional governments, local governments,

> and NGOs (in our conception: neo-governmental organizations). Decision-making and representation take place all along the chain, not necessarily in the hierarchical, pre-scripted order. This new state functions as a network, in which all nodes interact, and are equally necessary for the performance of the state's functions. (Carnoy & Castells, 2001, p. 14)

This morphing of the state into a nodal network composed of state and non-state corporate actors introduces new forms of cultural politics, new forms of legislation, and new modalities of political culture and action. More than anything, it institutes, in the words of Aihwa Ong (2006), forms of "graduated sovereignty", in which states move "from being administrators of a watertight national entity to regulators of diverse spaces and populations that link with global markets" (p. 78). Ball and Youdell (2007) more explicitly point to the emergence of "a new architecture of government", which transcends the conventional forms of bureaucratic regulation, giving rise to a "polycentric state" (p. 38), whose sovereignty – in terms of power and authority – does not lie in its unitary bureaucratic embodiment, but rather in its capacity to negotiate and facilitate action across fragmented territorial and spatial sites, or as Olssen (1996, p. 340) puts it, in its capacity to govern without governing. It is in that sense that Brinton Milward and Keith Provan (2000) refer to the "hollow state" as

> … any joint production situation where a government agency relies on others (firms, nonprofits, or other government agencies) to jointly deliver services. Carried to extreme, it refers to a government that as a matter of public policy has chosen to contract out all its production capability to third parties, perhaps retaining only a systems integration function that is responsible for negotiating, monitoring, and evaluating contracts. Obviously, a great deal of territory is between these two extremes, but while hollowness varies from case to case, the central task of the hollow state does not – this is to arrange networks rather than carry out the traditional task of government, which is to manage hierarchies. (Milward & Provan, 2000, p. 362)

We have come full circle at this point, revealing the intricate relations between privatization, as a shift in the modes of ownership and production, and conceptions of state sovereignty, power, and authority. Applied to the field of schooling, the "network state" assumes a mediating and "coordinating role" in setting policies and overseeing their implementation along joint public-private configurations. More specifically, Carnoy and Castells (2001) point out:

> The ideological functions of schooling are increasingly localized and customized to subsets of the national collective. Thus, the state diversifies the mechanisms and levels of its key functions (accumulation, reproduction, domination and legitimation), and distributes its performance along the network. The nation state becomes an important, coordinating node in this interaction, but it does not concentrate either the power or the responsibility to respond to conflicting pressures. (p. 14)

This "networking" of the educational policy field ushers in new modes of ownership and new modes of institutional and professional affiliation, yet also new modes of *graduated* (i.e., scaled, measured) state sovereignty. Thus, Ball (2009) refers to "representatives of the private sector operat[ing] inside of government and [being] part of the 'policy creation community'" (p. 89). He concludes that, "in the process parts of *the state and some of its activities are privatised*" (p. 96; emphasis in the original). For Gustav Karlsen (2000), what may be perceived as a de-centered state system reflects a form of "decentralized [state] centralism" that "promote[s] commercialization and privatization in the field of education" (p. 536).

At this juncture, what deserves attention are the *practices* introduced into spaces once deemed as public, and those introduced into spaces once deemed as private. Their novel configurations create culturalized *nodal* expressions of what now stands for public commitments in the field of schooling. These culturalized nodal articulations are also associated with discourses that seek to naturalize the re-configured public-private lines of demarcation that frame diverse forms of schooling (Ball, 2009, pp. 86–87). Discourses refer, for instance, to independent school, charter school, special-identity school, homeschooling, school choice, school vouchers, to name but a few. Nor do these discourses spare the internal organization of the state-run (public) school and its internal and external governance. They rather sharpen distinctions *among and within* state-run schools to their kinds and types, along new terminologies regarding what constitutes their 'publicness'. This nomenclature references, for instance, "enhanced programs", "mini-schools", "thematic schools", "magnet schools", "sports academies", "dual academies", "community schools", and more recently (and quite differently), "personalized learning". It also captures new *authorized and recognized* modalities of association between corporate, state, community, and social actors in the form of nodal instantiations of "partnership" between state-run schools (and schools more generally) and private sector actors. These nodal instantiations legitimize mixes of public and private domains. School commercialism marks perhaps one of the most visible manifestations of this "increased scope and intensity of corporate intrusion into the classroom" (Sukarieh & Tannock, 2009, p. 771), "raising fundamental and difficult questions about the corporate role in reshaping and directing the very core nature of 'public' education" (p. 782).

Far from remaining abstract modalities of speech, nodal instantiations of public-private partnerships powerfully re-shape not only the meanings attached to state sovereignty but also, to borrow from Jacques Rancière (2004), our very "political aesthetics of the sensible" (p. 13), in terms of how the sensory manifestations of schooling come to be recognized as such. 'Colored epistemologies' of schooling emerge, through which policies and practices are referred to as "shadow education", "gray education", "silver lining", "cream-skimming", or "golden opportunities", to invoke only a few expressions. As I suggest in greater detail in subsequent sections, these new "epistemologies of seeing" associated with privatization institute new "fields of visibility" (Brighenti, 2007), through which schooling is made sense of in

relation to shifting imaginings of state sovereignty on the one hand, and in relation to modes of social cohesion and sociality on the other hand.

IV

School choice presents a central "epistemology of seeing" within the larger context of the "network state". It also represents one of the more controversial aspects of privatization in the field of schooling. While school choice could be thought of independently of privatization (Goldring & Philipps, 2008, pp. 210–211), Salomone (2003) nonetheless states that the language of choice "evokes images of parents and students as free agents in an educational market" (p. 254). Martha Minow (2011) emphatically notes that school choice "permeates entire school systems" (p. 834), and converts "schooling to private desires" (p. 848). It implies "market mechanisms and consumer sovereignty— rather than public debate and explicit priorities over the big questions about the purposes and design of schooling" (p. 845).

Controversies over school choice policies focus on their enactment of spatial and institutional dynamics that mediate parents' capacity to move across and within diverse types of schooling in their pursuit of quality education for their children. Proponents emphasize that school "choice tends to break down existing biases of social advantage" (Moe, 2001, p. 112). Opponents respond that market economics highlight the segregating effects of "concentrated disadvantage" on the life-chances of students, both across and within schools (Feinberg & Lubienski, 2008; Noden, 2010; Owens, 2010).

Yet, if school choice policies continue to raise concerns, it is not so much over parents' right to choose, but rather over the extent of equity available to parents who desire to pursue their top choices in heavily stratified and deeply fragmented societies (Bell, 2008, p. 144). On this point, Ellen Goldring and Kristie Phillips (2008) agree that parents' social capital operates as "a key mechanism in brokering information about [school] choice options" (p. 227). Nonetheless, they optimistically speculate that in the United States, "more and more educational choices will become available to parents because of greater supply", reduced financial and accounting barriers, and due to greater access to information and transportation (p. 228); a conclusion largely shared by Stephen Gorard, Chris Taylor, and John Fitz (2003) for the United Kingdom.

Critics respond by pointing out that school choice is not only about markets and supply and demand. Nor can it be rendered equitable simply through the introduction of school vouchers and other policy instruments to offset socio-economic effects on access equity to diverse forms of schooling. They argue that the introduction of school choice should be approached as part of a larger agenda that goes beyond the problematic of parents' rights to choose, and beyond the question of school accountability and efficiency. For these critics, school choice steeped in market economics reconfigures social cohesion and its correlative bases of political power (Carnoy, 1998, 2000; Mitchell, 2003). It also affects the geographic/spatial articulations of schooling.

Critics also remind us that "school choice has come to mean many different beguiling things" (Minow, 2011, p. 843), at different points in time, for different social groups. It has been invoked for contradictory purposes: to uphold "individual religious and contractual liberty", to resist "racial desegregation" or to promote "racial desegregation", "educational opportunity", and "pluralism and school reform," or, still, to advocate for a return to a "separate but equal" regime (Minow, 2011). Walter Feinberg (2008) goes even much farther. He observes that "the appeal of choice" can be explained in part as a "backlash" considerably generated by "desegregation and school busing orders to achieve racial integration, as well as the mandated mainstreaming of children with disabilities" (p. 219) that were initially undertaken during the 1960s and 1970s. Over this backdrop, the meanings of school choice – and by implication, what school markets stand for – are intelligible in relation to larger political agendas, not just market economics. The latter can hide the former, through "alliances" and "political strategies" (Burch, 2009, p. 13). This is well illustrated by Lance Fusarelli (2003) who points out that school choice – especially the introduction of school vouchers and charter school legislation – serves as tool in the hands of policy makers to "extract significant concessions (such as the end of teacher tenure and beginnings of a merit-based pay) from the [teachers'] unions, concessions that would have been unthinkable even a decade earlier" (p. 152). Fusarelli adds that, otherwise, school choice policies are "simply *decentralization redux* – and may pose little threat to an educational system that has proven resistant to multiple efforts towards decentralization over the past century" (p. 149)[5]. William Segall's (2006, p. 187) discussion of why neo-liberal school reform policies target teachers' unions and teacher labor conditions resonates with Fusarelli's argument. Accordingly, the issue at stake when approaching privatization in the field of schooling is the mobilization of school choice *and* of market economics as a platform seeking to reposition the state and the political community, and their institutional underpinnings, in relation to each other. This repositioning hinges on the reconfiguration of the professional autonomy and employment conditions of educators working *within* different types of schools, and their re-alignment along non-unionized, fluid, and politically weak labor markets. This process represents a significant shift in the meanings of schooling. From a driving-force of a nation-building project through schooling (Mitchell, 2003, pp. 390–391), the state is re-cast and re-enacted along a new *modus operandi* that consolidates new social geographies in relation to which different constituencies can now be located.

V

In the previous sections I argued that the intertwined public-private lines of demarcation introduce new nodal instantiations of state policy making and politics, under the form of the "network state". These instantiations introduce new modes of visibility into the field of schooling, and new forms of civic and political engagement, parental school choice schemes being perhaps their most emblematic

expression. In that sense, the emergence of the "network state" (with its graduated forms of sovereignty) and the introduction of school choice (as a civic mode of public participation) cannot be understood independently. Their intersection is foundational to the enactment of hybrid modes of educational ownership and provision within the context of privatization. Yet, I reckon that even under this conceptualization it is still quite difficult to understand how and why particular public-private configurations have been dislodged, destabilized, or otherwise re-configured at particular points in time, and differently across contexts.

Saskia Sassen (2006) offers some points for reflection in that regard, which I consider relevant for the matter under consideration. Sassen observes that "[g]overnments have long shared regulatory authority with private actors" (p. 187). However, the assemblages that underpin private-public lines of demarcation reflect dynamically shifting "contents, shapes, and interdependencies" (p. 4) between historically situated forms of a nation-state's territoriality, political authority, and rights. These situated forms "make legible the presence of diverse spatio-temporal orders within the putatively unitary time-space of the national" (p. 398).

Central to Sassen's conceptualization is that new forms of territoriality are choreographed precisely through the creation of new "mixes" of public-private forms of authority and rights (p. 195), determining what stands for an un/authorized and an un/recognized citizen (pp. 294–295)[6]. Sassen argues that a new public-private mix "denaturalizes what has often unwittingly become naturalized – the national constitution of territory, authority, and rights, and the global constitution of their undoing" (p. 406). It introduces "novel spatio-temporal orders into the national" (p. 397), which ultimately destabilize existing meanings of citizenship, and more "specifically the citizen as a rights-bearing subject" (p. 294).

Drawing on Sassen's work, I argue that configurations of public-private lines of demarcation mediate shifts in the territorial bases of the state's authority and the delimitation of its jurisdiction over various constituencies, those residing within its 'national' territory as well as those located beyond its borders. Within this context, emerging modes of schooling operate as instruments through which the "network state" appropriates or even generates new constituencies, while locking them into non-commensurate markets of opportunity. For example, modes of privatized schooling – such as corporate charter schools or offshore schools, to name but a few – enact institutional spatio-temporal orders that re-position diverse social groups, within and outside of a state's territory, thus re-formatting and re-calibrating both the national territory and the constitutive contours of the political community. These new modes of schooling, privatized as they are, generate *graduated* modes of citizenship, each characterized by distinct articulations of rights in relation to the state's authority and power, as I illustrate below in due course.

Here, it bears noting that the centrality of the territorializing force of the school is manifest in all major school reforms undertaken over the past few decades. Whether one refers to the introduction of comprehensive high schools, magnet schools, charter schools, or of varied forms of private schools. In all these cases, it is difficult to

dissociate the emergence of novel modes of schooling from the territorial dimensions that accompanied their enactment, and the differential spatial relations these reforms established among diverse social groups and communities. The amendment of school catchment areas (or their revoking), the delimitation of school district boundaries, the rezoning of educational priority areas, or the very introduction of parental school choice schemes and vouchers, all these offer vivid illustrations of the intertwined interplay between the constantly shifting territorial bases of schooling and their underpinning modes of governance and networked state authority.

The territorializing force of privatized schooling markets has been observed in different national and policy contexts. For instance, referring to the reconstruction of New Orleans following the 2005 destructive Atlantic hurricane, popularly known as Katerina, Kristen Buras (2011) indicates that educational reforms were characterized by a "complete charterization" (p. 296) of schools. Policies allowed "educational entrepreneurs engage in conquest through takeover charter schools, producing an urban space economy that bolsters their own class and race interests" (p. 323). What stands out here is the implication of schools in the politics of intra-national spatial "containment" and regulation (I also think here of schooling in the French *banlieues* or suburbs, for example). Schools facilitate the re-ordering of constituencies across the state's territory, in relation to social opportunities, political power and civic and political participation. Yet, territorial "containment" is but one indicative aspect of the implication of privatized school markets in redefining the spatial contours of the political community.

The case of schooling in the Province of British Columbia (BC), Canada, illustrates well additional aspects of the territorializing force of schooling. Schooling is a provincial responsibility in BC, where territorially elected school districts operate. Entrepreneurial market initiatives, undertaken both by the provincial state and by school districts since the early 2000s, following the amendment of the School Act in 2002, have been instrumental in re-shaping BC's schooling landscape. As Gerald Fallon and Jerald Paquette's (2009) analysis shows, the provincial state's legislation – particularly *Bill 34* – "brought a new institution to the public schools in BC: the School District Business Company" (p. 146). Fallon and Paquette (2009) point out that the intent of this legislation is to "stimulate – and protect – market-sensitive behaviors among school districts – locally and internationally – in order to support and finance part of their current operations and growth" (p. 146). Over the last decade, with greater government support directed to private schools (Schuetze et al., 2011), some argue that this policy signals greater care to administer a cost-effective school system, particularly given declining student enrollments in many school districts. Others, however, observe that with the amendment of BC's School Act, highly competitive school markets with strategic neo-liberal engagements transcend the BC provincial context and its immediate economic contingencies (Kuehn, 2002; Fallon & Paquette, 2009).

Within this BC context, the International Education Branch in the Ministry of Education plays a central role in extending what is known as "offshore BC school

programs" to communities located well beyond the Province[7]. Offshore BC school programs are remarkable on several counts. First, while regulated entirely as part of the "non-public" schooling in target countries, owners of "offshore schools are in fact allowed to make a profit" (Schuetze, 2008, p. 10). As Hans Schuetze's (2008) report also shows, the operation of these school programs abroad, for instance in the People's Republic of China (PRC), cannot have materialized without the implicit and explicit support and agreement of China's government, for whom BC school programs offer, *inter alia*, new venues for education that are consonant with its own policies on school expansion and privatization, particularly in large urban megalopolises. At the same time, offshore BC school programs are modeled along BC public schools. The very same government that oversees public schools within BC also oversees offshore school programs in the PRC, in fact, creating new forms of schooling, which now extend to public schools, independent schools, homeschooling, and offshore schools, as legitimate forms of schooling.

Secondly, offshore school programs make it possible for the provincial state to reposition itself in relation to BC's political community and to market economics (whether national or global) alike. They shift the lines of demarcation between public and private schools serving different constituencies, in BC *versus* other countries, re-aligning them under new regulative jurisdictions. As part of this re-alignment, offshore school programs are brought into the provincial state's orbit of influence, consolidating *inter-national* political-economic fields of schooling through nodal instantiations of shared interests between governments, owners, and spatially-situated (urban) constituencies, each with their own agendas and aspirations. Moreover, in the BC case, the provincial and federal states use their constitutionally sovereign authorities to cooperate and carve strategic advantages in a competitive schooling market in recruiting international students, in ways that other competitors in the field of private and international schooling cannot easily achieve[8].

Thirdly, and as a corollary of the previous two points, BC offshore school programs expand the provincial state's jurisdiction over new geographic territories and over new categories of children and youth residing abroad, or enrolled within BC in English as Second Language (ESL) programs, thus creating *graduated* forms of political affiliation. These form the basis of a new regime for accessing Canadian citizenship, by providing a novel path for potential immigration through enrollment in offshore schools. To use Sassen's terminology, this linkage between attendance of an offshore school program (say in China, Qatar, or Egypt), and potential future studies and/or immigration into Canada, represents the creation of novel, un-recognized, yet authorized, forms of citizenship. It also identifies specific groups of applicants as better positioned to enter the country, as permanent residents, for a range of purposes. Thus, through offshore BC school programs the state creates a pool of *potential* (future) citizens located abroad, who effectively become an extended, nuanced, and graduated public, in relation to which aspects of public policy apply within BC. In sum, BC's case tangibly illustrates not only the emergence of BC as a "network state", in which state and non-state actors in the private sector are

involved in asserting their agendas over the field of policy making. BC's case also shows the multifaceted and complex lines of demarcation between the private and public sectors in ways that compel us to reconsider how the state's public policy re-aligns itself with privatized market-based courses of action to recalibrate its public policies. Far from disappearing or retrenching itself, the shifting lines of demarcation between what constitutes the private and what constitutes the public, open new spaces for the state to re-organize and re-assert its authority, even more forcefully, extending it over constituencies located both within and beyond its borders. These new forms of authority – and their correlative affiliative regimes – are consolidated by a web of regulative instruments, agreements, treaties, acts of legislation, and by political and economic alliances[9]. New publics are thus forged; and graduated modes of affiliation enacted. These reconfigure the contours of the political community, the institutional articulations of citizenship and the modes of its obtention.

VI

Privatization in the field of schooling is a multifaceted and dynamic phenomenon. It expresses more than just a shift in modes of governance or in the modes of ownership of educational provision. It stands for a wide range of intersecting dynamics, unfolding as part of economic formations, political alliances, social struggles, corporate agendas, and the articulation of new modes of political organization under the rubric of the "network state". In the process, both the sovereignty of the state, and the modes of affiliation to the political community reflect complex and multifaceted articulations of privatized markets, and nodal networks of action in which private and public sector actors are engaged.

Within this context, privatization in the field of schooling emerges as deeply enmeshed in struggles over questions of territory, sovereignty, authority, and rights. It reflects the "redistribution of power within the state [as] a consequence of changes in both the national and international political economy" (Sassen, 2006, pp. 170–171), yet also, the redistribution of power and sovereignty with agents located outside of the state. Central to this process stands the territorializing power of the school as an institution embedded simultaneously in the politics of social difference *and* in the spatial politics of differentiation. At this juncture, the grammars of privatization powerfully shape modes of social and political organization, and their correlative institutional modes of affiliation, whether within national contexts or globally.

Researchers seem to agree that privatization in the field of schooling has spread, as part of complex nodal networks, which operate at the interstices of state and non-state, public and private, for profit and not–for profit organizations and initiatives. Notwithstanding, this phenomenon plays out quite differently within and across national, sub-national, and regional contexts, being "heavily influenced by the particularities of the specific national context" and by "the political structures and culture of the nation state" (Ball & Youdell, 2007, p. 36).

The dynamics of privatization in the field of schooling are therefore highly indicative for the very re-positioning and re-calibrating of the state – as organized forms of power, sovereignty, and authority – in relation to the political community through new modes of ownership and new modes of citizenship. Rather than expressing the state's retrenchment, demise, "de-nationalization", or ultimate disappearance the present essay suggests that the hollowness of the "network state" may be a manifestation of a new form of power and sovereignty, precisely because it is devoid of a rigid substantive claim regarding its 'publicness'. Under those conditions, it seems that the "network state" would be capable of reconfiguring and deploying its nodal and shared networks of influence more flexibly across the private-public lines of demarcation, incorporating them into its most intimate structures as the basis for a new *modus operandi*. This process occurs not only in relation to budgeting and outsourcing (governance) of schooling, but also in terms of the consolidation of hybrid trajectories that characterize the careers and fields of action of senior officials who move between the private and public sectors.

The territorializing force of privatized schooling markets can be better understood in relation to this restructuration, of both a state with graduated forms of sovereignty, *and* graduated forms of membership to the political community. At this juncture, new geographies of schooling are recasting the political community and the state into a complex and multifaceted regime of "*graduated*" and fragmented modes of operation. This regime extends its reach far beyond 'national' borders, creating a myriad of superimposed and overlapping constituencies, subject to multiple states of jurisdiction, and moving within intra- and inter-national fields of politics. Within this context, privatization in the field of schooling allows states to share, in a politico-economic con-dominium of sorts, their influence over the trajectories of individuals and groups both within and beyond their 'national' borders.

Accounting for privatization in the field of schooling requires therefore critical research into the neo-liberal agendas of power, regulation, and surveillance, and their effects on the articulation of modes of private and public ownership within the context of a much-transformed state. It also requires further research into the intertwined dynamics of private and public sector actors, in terms of how they are operationalized as part of the structures and cultures of schooling and classrooms, the working conditions of teachers, the modes of learning and identification of students, and the ultimate enactment of new forms of spatially situated political communities of difference.

NOTES

[1] An earlier short version of this essay was presented as a keynote lecture entitled "The political grammar of privatization in education: Civitas, respublica and the politics of difference," at the International Seminar on Privatization of Education (ISPE): Current International Trends, held at the University of Geneva, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Geneva (Switzerland), 17 December 2010. A revised and much expanded version entitled "Political grammars of privatization in education" was presented at the Third Symposium on Studies of Conflict, Culture and the Political in

Education (SCAPE), under the theme "Conflict and the Political: Rethinking Theories in Education", held at the University of Gdańsk, Gdańsk (Poland), 6–7 May 2011. The present version benefited from the critical insights and generous collegial feedback of Gérald Fallon and Audrey Addi-Raccah, to both of whom I express my gratitude. Thank you as well to discussant Magdalena Prusinowska, Tomasz Szkudlarek, Jalil Akkari, Colleen Loomis, an Anonymous MJES Reviewer, and to ISPE and SCAPE organizers and participants for their invitations, comments and questions. Responsibility for the contents remains entirely mine.

[2] In his book, *Teaching in the Knowledge Society: Education in the Age of Insecurity*, Andy Hargreaves (2003) points out that "the knowledge society" – an emblematic neo-liberal policy construction (Peters & Begley, 2006) – "has been redirecting resources… from the public purse to private pockets … It craves higher standards of teaching and learning, yet it has also subjected teachers to public attacks; eroded their autonomy of judgement and conditions of work; created epidemics of standardization and overregulation; and provoked tidal waves of resignation and early retirement, crises of recruitment, and shortages of eager and able educational leaders" (Hargreaves, 2003, p. 10).

[3] Walford (1996) observes that quasi-markets in the field of schooling "differ in some fundamental ways aspects from classical free markets both in respect to the demand and supply side. One essential difference is that money need not change hands between the 'purchaser' and the 'supplier'. A second is that society forces all families to make some sort of purchase from what is already on offer, or convince those with power to enforce that the family is providing a similar 'product' itself" (p. 8). He further points out that, "The quasi-market of schools is potentially not just hard on suppliers, but can directly affect those families and children who have been unlucky enough to have made an inappropriate purchase. There is no 'money back guarantee' with schooling" (p. 9). See also, Ball & Youdell (2007, pp. 16–17).

[4] For these debates, see: Godwin and Remerer (2002, pp. 65–97), Fernández and Sundström (2011).

[5] Fusarelli's point resonates with the arguments made by Godwin and Kemerer (2003, pp. 229–231) and Buss (1999) for the United States. It also resonates with a study undertaken by Carnoy (1998) of a voucher reform introduced in Chile and which sought to de-unionize and de-regulate the teaching profession as a matter of political agenda.

[6] Sassen (2006, pp. 294–321) illustrates how shifts in public-private forms of authority construct "types" of citizens: some being recognized but not authorized (e.g., undocumented immigrants), others being authorized but remaining unrecognized (e.g., minoritized citizens, mothers).

[7] A BC Ministry of Education online statement explains what "offshore BC school programs" are: "The International Education Branch administers the Ministry of Education's cost recovery program which inspects and certifies British Columbia (B.C.) educational programs offered in schools in other countries that employ B.C. certified teachers and maintain adequate facilities" (British Columbia, Ministry of Education, 2012, May 6). In May 2012, 30 licensed BC offshore school programs were in operation in six countries. Six additional programs had a "Candidate" status, with "full certification [generally obtained] within six to eight months" (British Columbia. Ministry of Education, 2012, May 28). Schuetze (2008) reports that offshore schools in China are "owned" by Chinese nationals who do not have "a professional educational background as a teacher and administrator." All owners "have made their money in other industries such as textiles and real estate and are now investing their money in education in order to make profit." Owners have "close political connections both with officials at various levels of government and high ranking party officials" in China (p. 14). Boards with a majority of Chinese nationals, including the principal, run offshore schools (pp. 15–16). The Province of Ontario (Canada) has also initiated the operation of offshore schools (p. 11).

[8] For instance, the BC government signed an agreement with federal Canadian immigration authorities to facilitate "co-operation on immigration" (Canada. Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2004). According to the BC Ministry of Education, this "Agreement includes the facilitation of timely issuance of study permits (student visas) to Canada for graduates from BC-certified programs at offshore schools" (British Columbia, Ministry of Education, 2010). Inter alia, section 2.3 of Annex I (International Students) stipulates that one of the goals of the Agreement is to: "Recognize British Columbia's long-term economic development objectives through the international student movement. International students can help forge and develop future trade, business and educational links between British Columbia/Canada and other countries (Canada. Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2004, April 5). Section 2.5 of Annex I more specifically seeks to facilitate visa "processing for students

with Dogwood certificates" and in sub-clause 1 Canada's federal government recognizes "British Columbia's goal of supporting the Offshore School Certification Program" (Ibid.).

[9] BC's entrepreneurial initiatives do not occur just at the level of state policies. They are further complemented by school district-based policies that are part of a different study and are therefore not discussed here in any way. BC school districts admit international fee-paying school students who attend public schools and classrooms within BC, with an income of more than 129 million Canadian dollars reported for 2006–2007 (Schuetze et al., 2011). BC's school districts entrepreneurial activities are not only steeped in market economics, whether locally or globally. They are indicative of the increasing blurred lines of demarcation between private and public realms, in ways which re-cast established systems and modes of governance along new modes of operation, and I further argue, creates new affiliative regimes that reconfigure the body politic towards new forms of political membership.

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IDENTITY AND NORMATIVITY: POLITICS AND EDUCATION

In this paper I focus on the problem of normativity as it has been identified and discussed in relation to Ernesto Laclau's theory of identity. The main feature of this theory is that it proposes a universal structure where various forms of identification are described in the same political logic. In his analysis of populism, Laclau clearly argued that understanding how social identities are constructed is impossible when we try to theorize the "ontic" content of particular ideologies, demands, etc.; what is needed is understanding those movements in terms of their "ontological" political logic which is linked to the desire for a fullness of society (Laclau 2005).

This theory has an immense explanatory power and, apart from serving political theory, it tells much about any striving for identity, and it is an important intellectual tool to understand how identities are constructed pedagogically (Szkudlarek 2007, 2011; Ruitenberg 2011). However, it is not uncontroversial. The fact that Laclau builds his theory in ontological rather than ontic terms (that is, focusing on the "logic" of identity construction, rather than on the "contents" of particular identities), poses several questions as to the possibility of ethical or normative judgments concerning particular strategies of identification. Pedagogically, this is an important issue. First, we know that in education "content matters" not only in terms of what information we provide in educational settings, but also with regard to the formal consequences implied by the content[1]. In this context, the radical division Laclau makes between the ontic and the ontological may be problematic. Second, in educational settings one can try to impose various, even most peculiar identities, and we definitely need criteria to distinguish between possible forms of identification, also in terms of their normative consequences. In Laclau, all identities are built through the work of "empty signifiers" – terms that have no ontic content – and only by virtue of this can they integrate heterogeneous demands in one social structure. But how do we judge those tools of identification in terms of their possible consequences? How can we tell the difference before we learn what consequences they bring to the social?

The question of the alleged "normative deficit" in Laclau's theory, precisely because of its ontological character, has been raised by Simon Critchley, and I will refer to the discussion between Critchley and Laclau on this issue. I will also turn to Chantal Mouffe, whose work is closely connected to that of Laclau's. In that work, the question of how to address ethics in the political finds a very vivid exposition.

T. Szkudlarek (Ed.), Education and the Political, 61–74.

LACLAU'S IDENTITY

Let us start with a brief description of the basic tenets of Laclau's theory of identity. Its key elements are the following:

– The objectivity of the social, or its structure, is of a discursive nature. This means that identity is construed by means of rhetoric.
– Identities are built around *demands* that are prior to the existence of social groups or structures. This means that social groups are formed because of a "lack" that creates those demands. In a more general sense, no group, or no society, can exist "as such"; they are always related to unfulfilled desires of "fullness" or "true existence". Laclau puts it radically: society is ontologically impossible, but politically necessary – we can never establish ourselves, but we cannot stop trying either. This is analogical to the psychoanalytical notion of the subject being "a subject of desire".
– The process of identification starts with *exclusion*, which creates "the constitutive outside" for the identity-to-come. All identities are differential; they are always set "against" something. Laclau's theory in this respect continues and counters that of Hegel's, where identity is built in a logical relation to difference (which is in fact a negative element within the subject itself, projected outside as an "object"). This is why it is possible, in Hegel, to bring difference back in a gesture of synthesis that overcomes difference and restores totality. Laclau is radical in this question: no totality is ontologically possible; the social always remains heterogeneous. Therefore, Hegel's notion of difference has to be replaced with that of exclusion. The excluded element is part of the heterogeneous social, but it does *not* take part in the identity-to-come, it is "a constitutive outside". Consequently, such identity will never become totality – "society" will never be "full".
– The aforementioned impossibility means that unfulfilled demands are numerous and diverse. They are ultimately heterogeneous, i.e., there is no conceptual framework in which they can be united. However, they share a common element – they are all defined *against* the excluded element. This means that such heterogeneous demands are *equivalent* in relation to one another as long as they all oppose the excluded (e.g., the foreign power, the *ancien régime*, the rich, etc.). Those demands form a "chain of equivalence" that is the first element of any developing identity.
– Each element of the chain has a double status. It is particular (it represents a given demand, like freedom of speech or higher social benefits) and universal (it is equivalent with other demands that oppose the excluded).
– As there is no logical or conceptual framework through which such an equivalent articulation could gain positive identity, this task has to be completed in a different way. One of the elements of the chain has to assume the role of representing the whole. It still remains a particular demand, but that demand starts to be seen as "central" in the establishment of the new identity. Due to the lack of conceptual (logical) representation, such representation must be based on a "radical"

(arbitrary, not determined) investment of the meaning of the whole into the particular, which is thus "elevated to the dignity of the Thing" in Freudian terms. In an example given by Laclau (2005), the demand of creating an independent trade union, called "Solidarność", gave a name to the broad populist movement in the revolution against communist power in Poland in 1980. This is what Laclau means by hegemony.

– In semiotic terms, hegemony so created is a *catachresis* (an articulation of heterogeneous elements that cannot be represented by a literal term; in older texts Laclau spoke of *metaphor* here as well). It also has a *mythical* dimension – it represents "the impossible whole". This element is *an empty signifier*: it has no "ontic" referent; it represents what cannot be represented, the impossible totality (identity) of the society.
– Once so created and elevated, the empty signifier works "backwards", or retroactively, on the whole chain of equivalence, so that all its elements become united "in the name" of that empty signifier[2].

As we can see, this theory speaks of the "political logic" of identification (called by Laclau *ontological*), which means that it is independent of the (*ontic*) content of political demands and struggles. In the above mentioned example, the 1980 revolution in Poland could as well have been identified by the signifiers of freedom, equality, or national independence; there was no structural, ontological determination behind the fact that it was the trade union and its particular name that took the role of representing the whole[3]. What was ontological in it was that *some* demand did have to assume the role of representing the whole chain of demands.

This feature of Laclau's theory raises the very important question as to whether it "does matter" what signifiers are applied in formative processes. In short, if we want to insist that it *does* matter whether they evoke fascist or socialist ideas, for that matter, we have to deal with the important question of how we judge possible identities in terms of their political, ethical and pedagogical consequences, given that they are all achieved along the same structural regularity, in which it is precisely the *emptiness* of their signifiers that makes the whole effort possible.

The way Laclau deals with this issue is by pointing to the fact that no ontological structure can work *per se*, it is always "incorporated" into the ontic. What this means is that no identity is built in a social vacuum, that the ontological structure Laclau describes always works through "something" that has a given ontic content. It is always grounded, or socially and historically situated, and *this is where normative judgments are made*. The consequence of this position is that, when asking the question of the ethical consequences of given identification procedures, we always have to think of the universal together with the particular; we have to return to the ontic and make judgments on the basis of the particular content of the here-and-now where the identity is to be built.

This trait finds an important form in Laclau's distinction between *the ethical* and *the normative* (2000). The former is linked to the ontological dimension of identity,

to the very "constructedness" of the social; the latter will be linked to the ontic (content). In more detail:

> A hegemonic approach would fully accept that the moment of the ethical is the moment of the universality of the community, the moment in which, beyond any particularism, the universal speaks by itself. The other side of it, however, is that society consists only of particularities, and that in this sense, all universality will have to be incarnated in something that is utterly incommensurable with it. This point is crucial: there is no logical transition from an unavoidable ethical moment, in which the fullness of the society manifests itself as an empty symbol, to any particular normative order. There is an ethical *investment* in particular normative orders, but no normative order which is, [is] in and for itself, ethical. (2000, p. 81)

This incommensurability of the ethical and the normative is the very ground for hegemony. "Hegemony … is the name for this unstable relation between the *ethical* and *the normative*, our way of addressing this infinite process of investments which draws its dignity from its very failure" (p. 81).

The domain where this "unstable relation" is negotiated is politics. While analyzing how this negotiation takes place, Laclau rejects two extreme positions: that of universalistic ethics (even in its minimalist varieties like those proposed by Habermas or Rawls) and that of "pure decisionism" – "the notion of the decision as an original *fiat*" (p. 82). What remains between those extremes as a "non-universalistic limit" to "pure" decisionism is "the ensemble of sedimented practices constituting the normative framework of a certain society" (p. 82). Further:

> [T]he radical ethical investment looks, on the one side, like a *pure* decision, on the other it has to be collectively accepted. From this point of view it operates as a surface of inscription of something external to itself – as a principle of *articulation*. … The subject who takes the decision is only *partially* a subject; he is also a background of sedimented practices organizing a normative framework which operates as a limitation on the horizon of options. (pp. 82–83)

To sum up, this argument contradicts doubts as to the indifference of Laclau's theory to ethical issues, introducing into the process of identity formation two instances: the ethical, which is the impossible fullness of society that operates on the ontological level through empty signifiers, and the normative, which is constituted by sedimented practices that bring a certain closure or limit to the arbitrariness of identification. In other words, not all signifiers can be used in the process, although that limit does not belong to their nature. It is, instead, rooted in concrete practices of the people who construe their identity in a given socio-historical setting. Convincing as it is, this argument does not seem to resolve all the problems we may encounter when particular ethical / normative structures are analyzed in their operation. I will return to this below.

NORMATIVITY AND THE SOCIAL

Those topics come back several years later in Laclau's exchange with Simon Critchley. Critchley (2004) acknowledges the fact that Laclau, in his discussion with Butler and Žižek, clearly addressed ethical issues, but he still has some doubts about the above mentioned distinction between the ethical and the normative as the solution of the "normative deficit". A part of Critchley's argument about making links to the ontic stronger refers to the issue of the "formalism" of Laclau's notion of identity (hence the suggestion that form and content are supplementary and transitive). Critchley concludes his argument this way:

> I can't see why one should so insistently want to emphasize the content-free character of the ethical. In my view, formal meta-ethics must be linked to normative ethical claims. One of the great virtues of Laclau's work is that it shows us how to hegemonize a specific normative picture into effective and transformative political action. (Critchley 2004, p. 121)

To simplify this, what Critchley says is that the link between the ontic and the ontological "works" in Laclau only in one direction, upwards: from the particular (a collection of demands) to the universal (identity). But why not make it operational backwardly, that is, from the ethical to the normative?

Laclau's answer to these concerns is very informative, and it clarifies much of what he has presented before. It also comprises several ideas that make the problem of how to relate this political philosophy to the pedagogical more visible. Answering the question of the formalism of his theory, Laclau repeats that the notion of the empty signifier has nothing to do with a formal structure. Form is always a form of something, while what empty signifiers denote is precisely the *lack* of something. This "experience of the fullness of being as that which is essentially lacking" is "the root of the ethical" (Laclau 2004, p. 286). Giving an example, he notes:

> Justice is an empty term and not a formal conceptual determination because it is the mere positive reverse of a situation lived originally in negative terms: deprivation, dislocation, disorder, etc. This is what creates the distance between what is and what ought to be, which is the root of any ethical experience and reflection. And what I say about justice could be said about other terms such as 'truth', 'faithfulness', 'honesty', 'goodness', etc. What I am arguing is that **there is a series of terms whose semantic consists in pointing to an absent fullness,** to an absolutely empty space deprived of any formal determination. It is in that sense that I have spoken of the 'universal': not as an ultimate content that all things share, but as something that necessarily eludes all of them. (p. 286, my emphasis)

This is – I believe – a very clear statement of "how formal" Laclau's theory is. As to the issue of "the normative deficit" that Critchley addressed, Laclau reasserts his understanding of radical investment, which means that the normative cannot be

derived from the ethical, while it can appear as an effect of hegemony or *investment*. In more technical terms, the link between the empty signifier and the normative to which it connects in the gesture of hegemony, cannot be seen as determined by either side of the relation. This, however, does not mean that "anything goes":

> If the investment is truly radical, doesn't that involve that 'anything goes', that there is no possibility of objective criteria to choose one rather than other course of action? My answer is that **that would be the case if moral choice had as its only starting point the ethical side of the equation – i.e. if we just started from the signifiers of emptiness/fullness and were offered a series of alternative normative orders as possible objects of ethical investment.** … But the ethical subject constituted through this investment is never an unencumbered moral subject; it fully participates in a **normative order not all of which is put into question at the same time. That is the reason why moral argument can … appeal to shared values which are presented as grounds for preferring some courses of action rather than others.** Not all ethical investments are possible at the given time. So moral choice finds neither its unique source in the ethical nor in the normative, but in the endless negotiation between both. (2004, pp. 287–278, my emphasis)

EMPTY SIGNIFIERS, EDUCATION AND NORMATIVITY

How can we transfer this theory to education? Apart from obvious connections (such as that all education is about identity construction), I want to point to two more detailed issues. Let us begin with the observation that "terms whose semantic consists in pointing to an absent fullness" (op.cit., p. 286; which, by the way, is an almost perfect definition of *value*) are *created* by pedagogical means in systematic practices of cultural production in schools and other educational institutions that circulate certain notions in repetitive practices, decontextualize them, canonize them so that they become "sacred" and "unquestionably elevated", and distribute them so that a canon of values and commonplace symbols can be created. These terms are, initially, empty in a very technical sense: through repetitiveness, boredom, or the impossibility of asking questions about their meaning, they become "mere words of importance". Some of them are immediately linked to some kind of "absent fullness" in curricula (for instance, in endless debates around "pedagogically productive" topics like "what is true friendship" or "is common good superior to individual happiness", where the proliferation of individual voices and cultural traditions make one another questionable, leaving the students disoriented but convinced of the "depth" of the issue), while others populate repositories of meaningless signifiers that can be used "when the time comes". When we relate this picture to what Laclau says of the ethical as "a positive negation of negative experience" (which is why empty signifiers are not forms of anything, they cannot relate to any positive content), we have to remember that empty signifiers are at our disposal *before* we

experience deprivation, because to know that it is *deprivation* that we experience, we must know that there is something we are being deprived of. And that "something" may already have the form of a name of the unknown; it can be an "empty signifier prefab" that we have gained through schooling or from newspaper columns before we consciously experience any lack of fullness. All of this requires systematic instruction, through schools or churches, newspapers or television. Not only for the sake of mastering the code of access to such verbal repositories (which we call literacy), but also for that of providing for repetitiveness and decontextualization, which seem to be *the* technological regimes of empty signifier prefabrication. In this respect, we must look upon schools, churches, television, and whatever public media we invent as *factories of empty signifiers*.

Another pedagogical reference pertains to the passage where Laclau argues that "anything could be possible" in creating the social, only "if we just started from the signifiers of emptiness/fullness and were offered a series of alternative normative orders as possible objects of ethical investment" (p. 287). The problem is that **in schools we can do this.** Schools are, of course, immersed in social realities and their normative orders. But they have also assumed tasks that are *not* meant to socialize people to societies as they are: one of the main theoretical distinctions in educational theory is that between socialization and education (or, in Biesta's more precise terms, between socialization and subjectification, Biesta 2010). Here education is understood in terms of *displacing* the young from their milieux (*to educe* means *to draw out*) and prepare them not only for the worlds that are, but for those that ought to be as well. This is a classic Platonic trait: Plato's cave has become the founding myth for liberal education in European civilization. But Plato's true world of ideas – also in his prescription – must be made accessible through the creation of artificial realities where people are cultivated. Indeed, behind the closed doors of classrooms some activities and some normative orders are deliberately different from those outside, and they are designed as such. Of course the school is not *entirely* devoted to "incarnating the absent fullness" into pedagogically designed, ideational (in Znaniecki's terms, 1986, originally 1927) normative realities that imitate the worlds that ought to be rather than those that are. We cannot deny, however, that such intentional practices exist and that they create artificial normative orders, which disrupt the normative as it presently exists. We cannot, therefore, ignore the possibility that in some periods of history such disruptive practices dominate over those that are familiarized and are, thus, capable of eliminating alien forms of the social, and that, therefore, it is not impossible to see "the ontic as it is" as *impotent* in blocking the emergence of forms of the social that are not commonly acceptable; or in preventing the emergence of forms that do find popular acceptance, but are ethically problematic. As Laclau's theory clearly addresses the issue of exclusion as fundamental in identity construction, let us evoke an example of "juridical exceptionalism" that seems to illustrate this problem.

According to Rosen (2005), the contemporary debate on the *Rechtsstaat* in Denmark is marked by an ambiguity between "cosmopolitan universalism" and "communitarian existentialism", with a clear shift toward the latter, focused on the

security of the people. On that basis, the policy of the Ministry of Integration (sic!) includes clandestine procedures based on secret service data that allow for denying certain persons the right to enter the country *before* they might become subject to the discourse of universal human rights. In terms of Laclau's theory, "integration" is not merely a figure of Orwellian newspeak here: integration is *really* possible when somebody is excluded from the very possibility of being included. In the Australian context (Billings 2011), such exclusions in immigration policy are based on the way of entering the country. "Irregular maritime arrivals" (which is "boat people" put in legal jargon) are subject to the denial of standard rights; they are considered "unlawful non-citizens" and are kept in offshore island camps. Such procedures relate to a "Schmittian turn toward legal decisionism", as Rosen says (although Billings links them to the colonial heritage), where the distinction between the legal and the ethical is blurred. As opposed to more traditional forms of suspending human rights through the temporal introduction of martial law (both authors refer to Agamben), in both those cases of exceptionalism we have *spatial* distinctions: there are places created where rights do not apply, and where "universal" procedures are addressed only to "particular personalities": first a decision is made who a person is, then it is decided whether this person is subject to human rights. This is a clear divorce from the modern discourse in which abstract law precedes personality.

> Law becomes an adverb applied to different degrees depending on the specific political context. As a general rule, *under normal circumstances*, the norm concerning equal rights for all is upheld. However, personal legal status in the paranoid 'age of terror' is, more than ever, and even *de jure*, characterized by continuous subjugation to the judicial-political test. Only certain life forms qualify for legal rights and the judicial-political system constantly judges whether individuals fall within the accepted categories. (Rosen 2005, p. 160)

How can we deal with such cases? The trouble is that in democratic societies there *must be political consent* for such legal practices; they must be accepted as "normal" ways of serving the fantasies of security. The practices of exclusion, as we know from Laclau, are unavoidable in identity construction. But if that is part of the universal, why, then, does this phenomenon provoke anger and indignation? Is that a matter of *whom* we exclude? Of *how* we do it? As it seems here, Laclau's idea of the normative embedded in a given socio-historical context as the instance on which to build our judgment of political decisions, does not help us to judge that context as such, unless we build a meta-normative structure that – as I believe – will have to situate itself somewhere between Laclau's *the ethical* (which is always empty) and *the normative*, as he defines it.

This hypothetical instance of "another" normativity can be identified by expanding both original instances (the ethical and the normative). We may be here at the point from which the whole enterprise of populating the radical distance between those two pillars should be started. Even if – as Laclau maintains – it will involve just another round of radical investments (Laclau 2004, p. 291), of which I am, by the way,

certain, this is work to be done. We may be searching, then, for *meta-normativity* here that has some ontic content which can help us judge the *forms of the social as such*, as it is precisely those forms that create the context of normative claims that are the very subject of political concerns. Second, we may be looking for ways of making the ethical "contaminated", or specific in a way that can bring some distinctions between various forms it can take, and make us capable of *judging the emptiness*[4]. The question, in both of these options, is how to expand the domain of the normative and / or of the ethical so that a broader range of issues can become subject to ethical discourse – without falling into the trap so brilliantly identified by Chantal Mouffe.

I think a brief reference to Chantal Mouffe can be helpful in introducing us to this problem. On this basis, I will try to suggest a possible shift in our understanding of the normative (the attempt at expanding the first, normative "bridging pillar"). An attempt at expanding the ethical (the second pillar) is not possible within the scope of this paper.

EXPANDING THE NORMATIVE: CHANTAL MOUFFE

Chantal Mouffe's argument presented in "The Democratic Paradox" (2005) is a discussion with proponents of deliberative democracy (Rawls and Habermas) who try to overcome the crisis of democratic institutions in their form known as "aggregative democracy". As Mouffe notes, both proponents of deliberative democracy propose ways to minimalize power relations (the more democracy, the less power is needed) through forms of consensuality: moral in Rawls, and rational in Habermas. Mouffe challenges these positions, following Carl Schmitt, who criticizes liberal thought for its inability to address the political: "In a very systematic fashion liberal thought evades or ignores state and politics and moves instead in a typical always recurring polarity of two heterogeneous spheres, namely ethics and economics" (Schmitt 1976, after Mouffe 2005, p. 99). Mouffe's comment is the following: "Indeed, to the aggregative model, inspired by economics, the only alternative deliberative democrats can oppose is one that collapses politics into ethics" (Mouffe 2005, p. 99). What we need instead is a return to the political, in the form first proposed in her and Laclau's *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy.* She reminds us:

> The central thesis of the book is that social objectivity is constituted through acts of power. This implies that any social objectivity is ultimately political and that it has to show traces of exclusion which governs its constitution. This point of convergence – or rather mutual collapse – between objectivity and power is what we meant by "hegemony". ... [I]f we accept that relations of power are constitutive of the social, then the main question of democratic politics is not how to eliminate power but how to constitute forms of power more compatible with democratic values. (2005, pp. 99–100)

Those values are first described by Mouffe in negative terms: "The democratic character of a society can only be given by the fact that no limited social actor can

attribute to herself or himself the representation of the totality and claim to have the 'mastery' of the foundation" (2005, p. 100). Later, after the introduction of the idea of agonistic pluralism as a postulated form of antagonism, Mouffe is more clear about these values:

> The novelty of democratic politics is not the overcoming of us/them opposition – which is an impossibility – but the different way in which it is established. … The aim of democratic politics is to construct the 'them' in such a way that it is no longer perceived as enemy to be destroyed, but as an 'adversary', that is, somebody whose ideas we combat but whose rights to defend those ideas we do not put into question. This is the real meaning of liberal—democratic tolerance … . An adversary is an enemy, but a legitimate enemy, one with whom we have a **shared adhesion to the ethico-political principles of liberal democracy: liberty and equality**. (pp. 101–102, my emphasis)

And finally:

> Introducing the category of the 'adversary' requires complexifying the notion of antagonism and distinguishing two different **forms** in which it can emerge, *antagonism* properly speaking and *agonism*. *Antagonism* is struggle between enemies, while *agonism* is struggle between adversaries.... [T]he aim of democratic politics is to transform *antagonism* into *agonism*. This requires providing channels through which collective passions will be given ways to express themselves over issues which, while allowing enough possibility for identification, will not construct the opponent as an enemy but as an adversary. (p. 103, my emphasis)

There is an apparent inconsistency within this argument. The starting point for Mouffe is a critique of the idea of deliberative democracy that is doomed to oppose the dominance of economy by a plea to ethics. Mouffe proposes that we recognize the antagonistic nature of the political and the inevitability of political decisions (and responsibilities) in the construction of the social. To oppose Schmitt, in turn, who says that liberal democracy is impossible, Mouffe says that antagonism should take the form of *agonism* which is – interestingly – supported by *ethical* references ("a shared adhesion to the ethico-political principles of liberal democracy: liberty and equality", p. 102). It is this complexity that looks like the ambiguity of the ethical in her argument that I wish to take up, and through which I want to make a connection to the problem of normativity in Laclau.

THE SPACE FOR ETHICS

Where is the legitimate space for ethics, then? It has been de-legitimized, on the one hand, and it re-appears, on the other, in the move to legitimize the agonistic (rather than antagonistic) *form* of the political. Perhaps we could relate this dual structure to Laclau's distinction between *the normative* and *the ethical*: is it possible that

ethics denounced by Mouffe, following Schmitt, is in fact normativity, while her appeal to agonism is ethical in Laclau's terms? There are two problems with such an interpretation. First, if agonism is a form of antagonism, we have to remember that the ethical, as Laclau understands it, is "empty" and has "no form". Still more obviously, it has no content, while in Mouffe agonism is characterized by "a shared adhesion to the ethico-political principles of liberal democracy: liberty and equality". Agonism is, therefore, *not* "the ethical" in Laclau's understanding. That instance appears in Mouffe elsewhere – in her last chapter she refers to ethics of psychoanalysis as that which makes no false promises: "there can never be a final solution" (p. 139). The consequence is that we either have to declare Mouffe's argument self-contradictory (references to ethics are obliterating the nature of the political that is antagonistic, but we need a *more ethical* form of antagonism, which is agonism), or we must acknowledge that Mouffe speaks of *two different instances of normativity* different from the ethical. How can we define them?

What I propose is that we distinguish between *deontic* and *deontological* normativity. Let us read Mouffe's argument in this context. The first instance is "ethics" denounced by Schmitt that should not be mixed with the political. First of all, as I understand Mouffe, because it speaks to the *content* of particular policies that are grounded in the social "as it is" (Laclau's *normativity*) and – through such "reification" – obliterates the conflictual nature of the political. This is *the deontic* in my understanding. The second instance is a set of preferences pertaining to the *forms of the social* that can be construed as *possible incarnations of the political*. That I will call *the deontological.* It, too, is grounded in "what there is", but in a displaced and imaginary manner that can only be understood if we include the *pedagogical* dimension of social life that *transcends the social* in its present form to "educe" its subjects toward the not-yet existent.

It seems that this distinction can help us avoid a paradoxical reading of Mouffe's *Democratic Paradox*, where the claim against ethics is legitimized as *ethical* when it refers to agonism rather than antagonism (why, otherwise, is it better to have adversaries rather than enemies?).

What seems to be missing in the theoretical structure we have discussed so far is the very possibility of defining *a place for normative judgments referring to forms of the social.* In spite of the lack of such a label, this is what Mouffe is actually doing: she is giving *content* (liberty and equality) to the way we *ought to* understand the *form* (agonistic rather than antagonistic) of the social. We are speaking therefore of *the form* that was missing in the theory: *agonism* is a *form* of ontological antagonism. We can now clarify the notions of the deontic and the deontological proposed here, and summarize the argument concerning the "normative deficit" in Laclau's theory.

THE DEONTIC, THE DEONTOLOGICAL, THE ETHICAL, AND THE ROLE OF EDUCATION

To sum up, there seem to be three instances at work here. The deontic, as a normative system that is grounded in the *content* of the social; the deontological, which addresses

possible forms the social can take in the course of hegemonic practices; and the ethical which pertains to the *impossible fullness* of society. While the last instance remains detached from normative content, the deontological seems to be open to such connections, and, as a domain of possibility, it can also be a testing ground for our imaginaries inspired by the semantics of empty signifiers. As I have already said, the question how those deontological judgments are linked (if they are at all) to the ethical in Laclau's terms, or what mediating (or "mediumic") signifiers there are between the deontological (pertaining to the forms of the social) and the ethical (as the very possibility of *striving* for the social that stems from the impossibility of its ultimate accomplishment), remains a subject for further consideration. However, at this stage of the analysis, I can point to one normative criterion that can work in the aforementioned sphere of imaginaries, bridging the ethical and the deontological. As I have mentioned, identities are built in relation to exclusion. It is not *im*possible to turn this ontological feature into a deontological normative criterion and judge the possible forms of the social that are projected in particular hegemonic practices in terms of *who* or what and *how we exclude* on the way to identity. This is what Mouffe is doing in her appeal for agonism. This is also why we can oppose practices like juridical exceptionalism described before, even though here-and-now they are "normatively acceptable" in societies driven by security panic.

Let me return to the pedagogical. The argument presented above can easily be related to how ethics is discussed in education. We certainly have a lot of "the deontic" there; school curricula and media debates are full of normative content that helps learners to adapt to the societies they live in. On the other hand, as I have mentioned, education is also driven by a utopian desire to strive for *different* social realities. Those have to be imagined among possible forms of the social that given values (pedagogically produced as empty signifiers) can find room in, inspiring the utopian drive that builds distance to the normative "as it is". This issue can be illustrated with how Piotr Zamojski (2010) sees the presence of normativity in education:

> The normative dimension of educational action resides neither in its aim … nor in its content …, but in the very fact that such action is a set of interactions between people who relate one to another in different ways. Regardless whether we agree or not that such relations can be symmetric and free of violence, we have to acknowledge their bipolar potential. They can be devastating or developmentally creative for those who take part in them. Moreover, as educational processes are significant socially, those relations and interactions that constitute educational action may have devastating or creative effect on the social totality within which that action is performed. … Educational action cannot, therefore, be considered as a question of morality …; it transcends the borders of the social and thus, therefore, it becomes an ethical question. (pp. 336–337)

If we understand normativity as grounded in the various *forms* educational relations can take, and morality as referring to the ontic content of social norms "as they

are", we can have a similar argument to the one I have tried to propose: there is a normative dimension in the *forms* that the social / the educational *can* take, which connects to the ethical in manners that are different from a here-and-now morality, or deontic (deontological) normativity. In educational settings, we can inspire "immoral" forms of interactions that are absent from social realities and create new forms of normativity and test new forms of the political. In this way Mouffe's agonistic pluralism derives from and can be implemented in pedagogical practice.

NOTES

[1] Laclau denies that his theory speaks of "formal" aspects of identity. Still, in terms of pedagogical applications and normative problems, we will have to consider whether his theory should not be supplemented with some ways of theorizing the formal. I will refer to this issue later in this text.

[2] This highly condensed reconstruction lacks, of course, numerous and important features. For a full account, see especially Laclau 1990, 2005, 2007, and Laclau and Mouffe 1985.

[3] This does not mean that it is not possible to point to some rhetorical conditions here. See Szkudlarek 2011.

[4] In another essay, I have suggested that there is a possibility that empty signifiers used in political hegemonic struggles may have performative features and that they differ in that respect (Szkudlarek 2011).

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TIME OUT: CAN EDUCATION DO AND BE DONE WITHOUT TIME?

INTRODUCTION

In 2010 Carl Anders Säfström and I wrote a manifesto for education (Biesta & Säfström, 2011). The manifesto responds to a number of current issues in educational practice, policy and research. The main discursive device we use in the manifesto is to position what is educational about education – something to which we refer as 'freedom' – as being 'beyond' two options that, in different guises, tend to appear in discussions about education as each other's opposite. In educational policy and wider discussions about education these options appear as populism and idealism. Populism, so we argue, "shows itself through the simplification of educational concerns by either reducing them to matters of individual taste or to matters of instrumental choice. It shows itself through a depiction of educational processes as simple, one-dimensional and straightforward, to be managed by teachers through the ordering of knowledge and the ordering of students, based on scientific evidence about "what works"" (Biesta & Säfström, 2011, p. 540). Idealism, on the other hand, "shows itself through overbearing expectations about what education should achieve. Here education is linked up with projects such as democracy, solidarity, inclusion, tolerance, social justice and peace, even in societies marked by deep social conflict or war" (p. 540). As education never seems to be able to live up to expectations that come either from the side of populism or from the side of idealism, it is constantly being manoeuvred into a position of defence. From here, we show that "some try to counter populism with idealism, arguing that the solution lies in getting the agenda for education 'right.' Others counter idealism with populism, arguing that with better scientific evidence and better techniques we will eventually be able to fix education and make it work" (p. 540).

The opposition between populism and idealism can be read as a particular manifestation of a more general opposition between education orientated towards 'what is' and education orientated towards 'what is not.' Both orientations, so we argue, pose a threat to the possibility of freedom. Education under the aegis of 'what is' becomes a form of adaptation. "This can either be adaptation to the 'what is' of society, in which case education becomes socialisation. Or it can be adaptation to the 'what is' of the individual child or student, thus starting from such 'facts' as the gifted child, the child with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, the student with learning difficulties, and so on" (p. 541). In both cases, however, education loses its orientation

T. Szkudlarek (Ed.), Education and the Political, 75–88.

towards freedom, it loses its interest in an 'excess' that announces something new and unforeseen. We argue, however, that the solution for this problem is not to put education under the aegis of the 'what is not,' because if we go there, we tie up education with utopian dreams. "To keep education away from pure utopia is not a question of pessimism but a matter of not saddling up education with unattainable hopes that defer freedom rather than that they would make it possible in the here and now" (p. 541).We summarise this by saying that "(t)o tie education to the 'what is' is to hand over responsibility for education to forces outside of education, whereas to tie education to the 'what is not' is to hand over education to the thin air of an unattainable future" (p. 541).

Since what matters educationally about education – freedom – runs the risk of disappearing when we tie education either to "what is" or to "what is not", we suggest that the proper location for education is in the *tension* between "what is" and "what is not." While the educational tradition is, in a sense, familiar with this tension – we can find the idea, for example, in the antinomies that, according to proponents of *Geisteswissenschaftliche Pädagogik*, characterise the reality of education – the most common reading of this tension is one where the "what is not" is understood in temporal terms, that is as the "what is not *yet.*" The "what is not *yet"* is seen as something that, although it is not "yet" here and now, is expected to arrive at some point in the future. This is perhaps most strongly visible in the way in which the idea of freedom itself figures in modern educational discourse, namely as something that is supposed to arrive at the end of education when the child has learned enough – or in other discourses: has grown enough, has developed enough – so as to be able to take responsibility for its own actions and thus reach a state of emancipation. Yet the problem with conceiving of the "what is not" in terms of the "what is not *yet"* and thus to see education as a process that will deliver its promises at some point in the future, is that the question of freedom disappears from the here and now and thus "runs the risk of being *forever* deferred," as we put it in the manifesto (p. 540). If it is the case that freedom expresses that which is properly educational about education, then this manoeuvre runs the risk of locating the educational structurally in a place beyond reach – as always to come but never fully there (or, to be more precise: never fully *here*). Could it be, therefore, that we need to take temporality out of education in order to be able to capture the essence of education – or, in less essentialist language: to make sure that what matters educationally about education doesn't drop out?

This is indeed what we have in mind when, in the manifesto, we hint at an educational logic that, unlike the temporal logic of modern education, is explicitly non-temporal. It is what we have in mind when we say that education needs to stay in the tension between "what is" and "what is not", and not in the tension between "what is" and "what is not *yet.*" After Rancière, but not identical with Rancière, we refer to the tension between "what is" and "what is not" as *dissensus.* It is the moment where speech as different from repetition might happen. It is the moment where subjectification as different from identification might happen. It is therefore *not* the moment where existing identity positions are picked up through repetition (not even

if the repetition is not entirely perfect, as slippage is not automatically speech), nor is it about the future promise of speech. It rather is about what is spoken here and now, right in front of us. This, as we try to argue, is not to take history out of education, but rather to take history seriously, to believe that history can be *made*, because history is not the unfolding of a programme, but an imperfect sequence of events.

As the manifesto is only a short text, much is left unspoken and unexplored. In this paper I therefore want to engage in more detail with the question whether it is possible to take time out of education, to think and do education outside of the confines of a certain temporality. On the one hand I aim to explore in more detail the role of time and temporality in our understanding of education. On the other hand I will attempt to articulate in more detail what it might mean to enact education in a non-temporal way, that is, as a "form" of dissensus.

THE TIME OF EDUCATION

It may well be quite difficult *not* to think of education in temporal terms, as a certain temporality seems to be pervasive in educational thought and practice. Let us first, therefore, look at the way in which time plays a role in education so that we have an idea of the roles time does play, and the ways in which time plays these roles. I will do this through a discussion of six (clusters of) concepts: change, learning, development, schooling, the child, and progress.

The first concept is that of *change*, and many would indeed argue that change is the core "business" of education, both the education of children and the education of adults. After all, if education does not result in any change, one might well say that education has failed or hasn't happened – albeit that some changes may take a long time to become visible or take effect. The act of education can thus be seen as supporting change, promoting change, facilitating change, even of forcing change. And such change is almost always understood in terms of a process that literally takes time. Change, after all, is a shift from one state of affairs to another state of affairs and thus assumes a certain trajectory in order to get from A to B. In education such trajectories always come with value judgements, that is, judgements about the desirability of change. This is why education can be said to have a teleological structure (I return to the issue of teleology below) in that it is has an orientation towards some desirable "outcome" (which leaves open the question who can or should define this outcome and who can our should "desire" this outcome, and also the question to what extent the "outcome" is or should be fully definable).

From change we can easily move to *learning*, because learning can be seen as a particular form of change – and perhaps it is the form that is generally favoured by educators and educationalists. On the basic but nonetheless widely accepted definition of learning as any more or less permanent change (further specified, for example, as change in cognition, or understanding, or mastery, or skill) that is not the result of maturation, we can argue that what has been said about change can also be said about learning, in that when we have learned something we have changed,

and that the process that has led to this change is understood as a learning process. Thus we get definitions of education as supporting, promoting, facilitating or forcing learning, where learning is seen as a process that takes time. Learning is a process that gets the learner from a particular state of affairs to another state of affairs where the learner has learned something and, in most but not all cases, *realises* that he or she has learned something.

A third concept that plays a central role in education is that of *development*. While development may be seen as a psychological concept – and in a sense it is just that – it continues to structure educational thought and practice, perhaps from Schleiermacher, who saw education as the response of society to the fact of human development, via Piaget and Vygostkij, who both conceived of education as the promotion of development (albeit with different views about the logic of this process), via Kohlberg's views on the promotion of the development of moral reasoning, to neuroscience and its claims about the educational promotion of the development of the brain. Development is perhaps the temporal notion *par excellance*, as it carries with it notions of temporal unfolding (in teleological readings of development) or growth-over-time (in non-teleological notions of development). Perhaps we could even say that developmental arguments have had the greatest influence on the temporal construction of education, either through the idea that education needs to *follow* development (which is one way in which Piaget's work has been taken up) or that education can, to a certain degree, *lead or promote* development (which is one way in which Vygotskij's work has been taken up). While pragmatism, particularly through Dewey, criticised a teleological notion of development and replaced it with the notion of 'growth,' it did keep the temporal structure of education in place, not only by arguing, as Dewey did, that the problem of education lies in achieving co-ordination between individual and social factors – a process that obviously takes time – but even more so by understanding education as the transformation of experience – a thoroughly temporal process.

Perhaps it is important at this point to mention that the conception of time that we can find in the notions of change, learning and development is a *linear* conception of time, not a *cyclical* one. One could even say that the ideas of change, learning and development only make sense within the confines of a linear conception of time, so that to understand education in terms of change, learning and development only became possible with the advance of a linear conception of time itself – an advance that is generally seen as belonging to the rise of a modern worldview and modern society. It is this conception of time that gave rise to the modern idea of what Mollenhauer (1986) refers to as educational time (*Bildungszeit*) (for this see Schaffar 2009, pp. 137–140). Mollenhauer emphasises that the newly developed possibility to provide an exact measurement of time not only resulted in a whole new conception of time, but also led to a temporalisation of life and an economisation of time, the latter being exemplified in the idea that 'time is money.' The new conception of time and the new temporalisation of life had a profound impact on the organisation of schooling, both with regard to the structure and to the

content of schooling. Here Mollenhauer points at the remarkable fact that within a few decennia all over Europe schooling became organised in terms of a particular temporal logic in which education became understood as a linear advance in time, that is as 'progressus' or 'progressio' (see Mollenhauer 1986, p. 80). In order for this to be possible, education had to be organised in homogeneous groups of children with roughly the same level of development which, in turn, required that the content of education had to be divided up in small temporal units, so that progress in learning would become possible and could be assessed. Hence the need for time-tables and curricula (understood as temporal trajectories for progression) and hence the rise of a more general concern for the linear advance of the educational process, ideally without interruption (see ibid.). It is also interesting to see that the aims and ends of education became themselves increasingly defined in terms of time rather than with reference to particular achievements. The school day is over, for example, when time is up, not when learning has finished. Compulsory schooling ends at a certain age, not when a particular level of achievement is reached. It is time, therefore, that structures the educational process, rather than that the process has control over the time it needs (see ibid.).

If the modern construction of schooling shows us how a particular notion of temporality became the organising principle of the *environment* for education, the conception of the *child* that emerged at the same time shows how this notion of temporality moved to the very centre of our conception of the child, both in a general sense and more specifically our conception of the child as an educable being (captured in the German notion of *Bildsamkeit*). The child – the modern child – is understood as a "not-yet", as "in development" and as "in need of education" first and foremost in order to support or promote this development. This is perhaps expressed most poignantly, at least at first sight, in Kant's dictum that the human being can only become human through education ("Der Mensch kann nur Mensch werden durch Erziehung", Kant 1982(1803), p. 699). The "not-yet-ness" of the child, the fact that the child needs time in order to become and in order to arrive, not only functions as an argument why education is necessary but also functions as a justification for education. *One could say*, *therefore*, *that it is not only this child that needs education; it is also education that needs this particular child.* When we move from the level of "pedagogics" (*Pädagogik*) to that of didactics we can find a similar way of thinking in the notion of the learner (see also Biesta 2010a), as the learner is precisely defined as the one who is not yet there, the one who lacks something, who is in need of education, and who needs to teacher to fill this lack – either directly through instruction or indirectly by being given tasks that will result in the learning that will fill the lack. *And again we can say that just as much as this learner needs teaching*, *it is also teaching that needs this particular learner.*

It is perhaps not too far fetched to note that the temporal construction of the child – and for that matter the temporal construction of the learner – exemplifies a colonial way of thinking in which the other (the child, the learner) is defined as lacking and as "being-in-need-of", *so that* the educator can be in a position to fill the lack and

meet the need. While this obviously raises questions of power – questions that are, of course, not unfamiliar to the educational tradition – what I wish to highlight here is the way in which time figures in this colonial relationship. Johannes Fabian, in his book *Time and the Other* (Fabian 1983), has coined the notion of "allochronism" to refer to the way in which modern anthropology constructs its object precisely by denying the simultaneous existence of anthropologists and their objects of study, so that their objects of study become placed in another time. The modern conception of the child as 'not-yet' and 'in-need-of' works in a similar way by separating the time of the child from the time of the educator, so that education, understood as the activity that bridges the temporal gap, becomes necessary and justified in one and the same move. Schaffar (2009, pp. 107–108) correctly argues, in my view, that what we are encountering here are not empirical facts but rather moral or, as I prefer to call them, normative standpoints. The particular, i.e., temporal construction of the child is, therefore, not an empirical phenomenon – which is not to say that empirical facts do not matter – but first and foremost a normative and therefore an educational and a political choice. I will return to this below.

The final concept I wish to add to the list is the idea of *progress*, i.e., the idea that education is an instrument for progress: the progress of the child, the progress of the community, the progress of the nation, and even the progress of humanity as a whole. Progress, so we might say, structures the entire educational project in terms of a temporal logic in which the future is supposed to be better than the present and in which education is the mediating instrument to bring this better future about. What counts as better has a number of different dimensions. Some of them are material – such as the often heard promise that education is the motor of the knowledge economy that will deliver competitive advantage in the global playing field; or the idea that education is an investment in one's future earning power. Others are slightly less material or are indirectly material, such as the idea of education as an investment in one's social and cultural capital, often on the assumption that such capitals can be "cashed in" at a later date. And finally we find educational progress understood in terms of the trajectory towards equality, emancipation and freedom.

What this brief exploration of six key educational concepts shows, is how pervasive time – and more specifically a linear conception of time – is in the vocabulary of education we appear to be most familiar with and in the ways in which educational processes and practices are being understood, enacted, theorised and researched. While there is much more to say about each of concepts and about their history and their politics, my exploration is first and foremost meant to indicate the challenge we face when we try to see whether it is possible to take time out of the educational equation. To this task I will now turn.

TIME OUT?

So far I have shown that a certain notion of temporality is pervasive in educational thought and practice with regard to three different dimensions: the understanding

of the process of education or, to be more precise, the understanding of education as process (change, learning, development); the temporal construction of schooling; and the way in which education creates its object (the child or the learner as a "not yet"). Because education seems to be so fundamentally caught up with a particular notion of temporality – not only at the level of ideas but also at the level of the whole educational infrastructure, up to the very bricks and mortar out of which schools are built, and definitely with regard to the prevailing "common sense" about education – the suggestion to take time out of the educational equation may be quite counter-intuitive. But we shouldn't lose sight of what motivated my exercise in the first place, which was the suggestion that if we tie education either to "what is" or "what is not" the very "thing" that makes education educational – and here I quickly put the word "freedom" – runs the risk of disappearing from the scene. While "freedom" is of course a big and complicated concept, I take it that many would agree that in some shape or form freedom matters for education. While, again, many would object to the idea that education would mean total freedom on the side of the student – total freedom in the sense of just doing what one wants to do – the distinction between education and brainwashing is generally accepted as a valid distinction for educational thought and practice (which is not to suggest that it is easy to articulate where brainwashing ends and education begins). Also, it is generally accepted that teachers do not produce their students, but educate them – in the same way as children are not made by parents but born to them.

While "freedom" works as a general concept to indicate that what matters in education is not just the acquisition of knowledge and skills or the reproduction of existing social, cultural and political orders – which are the two functions of education to which I have referred as qualification and socialisation respectively (see Biesta 2010b) – perhaps a more precise concept to hint at what matters educationally in education is the idea of subjectivity, that is, of the human being as a subject of action and responsibility. This highlights a third 'function' of education, to which I have referred as the subjectification function of education, that is, the way in which education impacts on subjectivity. While the language of functions of education in a sense looks at education from the outside – it can be characterised as a sociological language – we can also think of qualification, socialisation and subjectification as three areas or dimensions of educational interest or educational purpose; three dimensions with regard to which educators can express an interest, and thus three dimensions in which they can aim to "achieve" something. (I am deliberately vague in my formulations here in order to try to stay away from language that is explicitly temporal.) While the temporal logic of modern education might perhaps be appropriate in the domains of qualification and socialisation – which is a point for further discussion – the question I wish to focus on concerns the subjectification dimension of education, that is, the question whether the educational interest in subjectivity necessarily needs to be articulated in temporal terms, or whether it is possible – and desirable – to take time out of the equation.

Part of the inspiration for my argument comes from Rancière, albeit that I will use other sources as well (which will also allow me to show, briefly, some remarkable

resemblances between Rancière's ideas and Continental educational theory). Unlike Rancière, however, I am for the argument in this paper, less interested in questions of equality and more in question of subjectivity, so my reading of Rancière will be partial and selective. What is relevant, however, about Rancière's approach to the question of equality is precisely his critique of a temporal understanding of *in*equality and a temporal approach to the "achievement" of equality, one where equality is always projected into the future and thus becomes something that disappears from the present. Rancière's critique of the idea of progress and of education's role in bringing about equality is precisely aimed at this temporal construction of inequality. Rancière links this to what he refers to as the "pedagogical fiction" which is "the representation of inequality as a *retard* in one's development" (Rancière, 1991, p. 119). This definition puts the educator in the position of always being ahead of the one who needs to be educated in order to become equal. Rancière warns, however, that as soon as we embark upon such a trajectory – a trajectory that starts from the assumption of *in*equality – we will never be able to reach equality. "Never will the student catch up with the master, nor the people with its enlightened elite; but the hope of getting there makes them advance along the good road, the one of perfected explications." (ibid., p. 120)

Rancière's argument is that as long as we project equality into the future and see it as something that has to be brought about through particular interventions and activities that aim to overcome existing inequality – such as the education of the masses or the integral pedagogicization of society – we will never reach equality but will simply reproduce inequality. The way out of this predicament, so Rancière suggests, is to bring equality into the here and now and *by making it into an assumption for our actions*. To act on the basis of the assumption of the equality is a matter of the constant *verification* of this assumption – not in order to check whether the assumption *is* true *in abstracto*, but in order to *practice* the truth of the assumption, that is, to *make* it true in always concrete situations. As Rancière puts it in *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*, the problem is not to prove or disprove that all intelligence is equal, but to see "what can be done under that supposition" (Rancière 1991, p. 146)

Rancière suggests that the name of the practice of the verification of the supposition of equality is "politics." Politics is therefore neither the practice that brings about or produces equality; nor is equality the principle that needs to be advanced through the activity of politics. What makes an act political is when it "stages" the contradiction between the logic of the police order and the logic of equality, i.e., when it brings into a relationship two unconnected, heterogeneous and incommensurable worlds: the police order and equality. This is why dissensus lies at the heart of political acts. Dissensus, however, should not be understood as a conflict or "a quarrel" (Rancière 2010) – as that would assume that the parties involved in the conflict would already exist and have an identity. Dissensus is "a gap in the very configuration of sensible concepts, a dissociation introduced into the correspondence between ways of being and ways of doing, seeing and speaking" (ibid., p. 15).

What we have here, then, is a critique of a temporal definition of *in*equality, a critique of a temporal approach to the achievement of equality, and also what we might call a non-temporal alternative, where rather than to put equality into a distant future it is brought into the here and now as an assumption to inform our action; an assumption that needs verification in the literal sense of the word, that is, that it needs to be *made* true (*veritas* and *facere*) in our actions, not proven to be true in our reflections. To act on the basis of the assumption of equality creates a moment of dissensus – it "stages" dissensus, in Rancière's terms – because it introduces an incommensurable element into the existing distribution of the sensible. Equality thus appears as "what is not" in relation to "what is." But equality does not appear as what is not *yet*, thus projecting it into an unattainable future; equality *co-exists* with inequality, which is precisely why it creates a gap "in the very configuration of sensible concepts" (p. 15). In this way the staging of dissensus thus creates a tension between "what is" and "what is not."

EDUCATION AND THE FREEDOM OF SPEECH

If this provides a general structure for thinking about temporality, time, and the possibility to think education without time, let me now bring this to an issue that, in my view, is closer to the question of subjectivity, which is the question of speech. The common way to engage with the question of speech in education is to ask how children learn to speak and, more generally, how they learn to communicate. This immediately puts speech at the end of a trajectory, where some kind of learning is supposed to lead to the ability to speak or the capacity for speech. There is a lot of developmental information that might be relevant here and, looking at it from an empirical angle, it is quite difficult to deny that to learn to speak is a kind of developmental process that takes time. It is almost evident – and perhaps some would even claim self-evident – that at a certain moment in time a child is unable to produce words whereas at a later moment in time the child has acquired this ability. But what happens if we start from a different question: not how do children learn to speak, but how is it possible for the child to speak? How is it possible for the child to be a subject of speech or a speaking subject?

For this we first need to establish that it is not possible to speak in isolation. One can produce sounds in isolation, but one cannot speak in isolation, that is, one cannot utter sounds that mean or have meaning. (This goes back to Wittgenstein's so-called "private language argument", which is actually an argument *against* the possibility of a private language.) One way out is to say that in order to transform sounds into speech one needs to learn what one's sounds mean, which implies that others need to tell you what your sounds mean, others need to explain your sounds. This immediately puts us back on the temporal trajectory, the trajectory of learning. The problem with that is not the temporal trajectory in itself, but the fact that in this way of understanding what it means to learn to speak the only speech that is made possible is the speech of the other, that is, the speech that already exists. Here, to

learn to speak becomes a process of socialisation into an existing order of speech, and the speech that is made possible in this way is speech as repetition. It is speech, in other words, where the subject has dropped out and identity – as identification with an existing order of speech – has taken over. Also note that on this trajectory the guiding assumption on the side of the educator is that the child cannot *yet* speak. It starts from the assumption of incapacity.

Against the background of everything I have said so far, it is relatively easy to see that the alternative option I am working towards is one that starts from the assumption of capacity, i.e., that starts from the assumption that child is able to speak or, to keep the discussion away from matters of ability and disability, that starts from the assumption *that the child is speaking*. This is an assumption to inform our actions – it is an opinion, as Rancière would call it – not an empirical truth-claim that needs verification in the epistemological sense of the word. It is an assumption that needs to be verified in the practical sense of the word, that is, *in action*. So, how might this assumption be enacted? I can see three qualitatively different options.

The first one, which has become quite popular in educational discussions recently, is to say that to enact the assumption that the child is speaking means to *listen* to the child. There is something I like about this suggestion, as it is indeed true that to listen enacts the assumption that the person one is listening to is speaking, or has something to say. But there is also something I don't like about this suggestion, perhaps first and foremost the fact that listening keeps the sovereignty of the listener mostly in place – the listener remains in control of what he or she wants to hear, even if the listener is an active listener. And perhaps I am also concerned that listening may get us too much into question about interpretation, understanding and translation, and thus runs the risk of bringing the question of speech back to that of repetition, i.e., trying to decipher meaning rather than to acknowledge a speaking being.

A second option, also popular in recent educational discussions, is that of *recognition*. Here the enactment of the assumption that the child is speaking would take the form of me recognising that the other is speaking and me recognising the other as a speaking being. I am aware of the large body of literature on recognition, and do not have the possibility within the confines of this paper to engage with this literature in any detail. Intuitively, however, my concern about recognition – perhaps even more than listening – is that it always seems to operate from a position of power, where I claim the power to recognise you as a speaking being or not and where I therefore make your existence dependent upon my decision either to recognise you or not to recognise your. (I am aware of the further complexities of work in this area, particularly the issue concerning mutual recognition and the subsequent struggle for recognition.)

Rather than listening or recognition, I prefer to approach the enactment of the assumption that the child is speaking in terms of the experience of *being addressed*. While listening and recognition can be configured as acts of benevolence, "being addressed" works in the opposite direction. It is not for me to recognise the other, but rather to recognise that the other is addressing me – that I am being addressed

by another human being—and to act upon this recognition (which suggests that if any recognition is involved, it is recognition that is directed towards the self, not the other). To say, therefore, that the child is speaking, to act on the assumption that the child is speaking, is not to make an empirical claim, but to make a choice, a choice that is at the very same time political and educational. But we must be careful with the word "choice" in order not to fall back on the idea that it lies within the powers of my choice to be addressed by the other or not. Zygmunt Bauman's reading of Levinas is helpful here, in that he clarifies that the responsibility that is at stake in how we are being addressed by the other is not our responsibility for the other – as this responsibility exists anyway – but the responsibility we take for this responsibility (see Bauman 1993). The responsibility for the other is a given, so we might say; our choice is whether we take responsibility for this responsibility or not.

If Rancière refers to this as an assumption or a supposition – he writes, for example, that the emancipatory schoolmaster acts on the basis of the assumption that "the human child is first of all a speaking being" (Ranciere 1991, p. 11), and even more strongly that the emancipatory schoolmaster "*demands* speech, that is to say, the manifestation of an intelligence that wasn't aware of itself or that had given up" (ibid., p. 29; emphasis added) – Glenn Hudak in a recent paper (Hudak 2011) uses the language of presumptions. What is interesting about Hudak's paper is that it focuses on educators working with "youth labeled as autistic" (Hudak 2011, p. 58). It thus focuses on a "category" – and I immediately apologise for the word "category" here – where the general assumption appears to be one of individuals who are unable to speak, communicate or even relate. One could of course accept this definition and use it as the assumption to guide one's actions. In that case any educational activity would simply repeat what is already assumed to be there. It would be tied to what allegedly *is*. Hudak, however, argues for the opposite case, suggesting that the possibility for education is precisely opened up when the educator acts on basis of three presumptions: the presumption of *competence*, the presumption of *imagination* and the presumption of *intimacy*. And each time Hudak makes the point that the onus is not on the young person to communicate and relate in an "accepted" manner, so to speak, but on the educator "to figure out how we can help those with physical impairments better communicate their experience, and hence be included into discussions rather than remaining on the sideline, spoken for by others" (ibid., p. 61).

Biklen and Cardinal (1997, quoted in Hudak 2011, p. 61) make the point as follows: "We do not expects readers to believe as a matter of faith that certain people can do things they have not demonstrated themselves capable of doing. … [However] adopting the conception of 'presuming competence' places an onus of responsibility on educators and researchers to figure out how the person using facilitation, or any educational undertaking, can better demonstrate ability." The task for the "outsider", therefore, "is not to interpret the world for those labeled autistic [but rather] to presume that the person labeled autistic is a thinking, feeling person" (ibid., p. 61). Hudak makes similar points in relation to the other two presumptions – those of imagination and intimacy – and with regard to all three presumptions he

argues that they pose "at once a philosophical and political challenge" (ibid., p. 66), in that they not only require us to fundamentally rethink what it means to speak, communicate and relate, but, by acting upon these assumptions, also challenge "dominant structures of power" (ibid.) and dominant definitions "of what it means to be human" (ibid., p. 62; see also Biesta 2006, p. 1). And this, as Hudak concludes, is not only relevant "for those labeled 'disabled'" but actually for "all of us" (Hudak 2011, p. 69).

If I now return to the question how it is possible for the child to be a subject of speech or a speaking subject, I wish to suggest that the answer that is emerging from what has been said so far is an answer in which time no longer plays a role. Speech is no longer a matter of becoming a competent speaker; it is no longer a matter of development and the acquisition of a competence. It is not even a matter of me making an effort to speak and be understood. My "ability" to speak is there when someone is addressed by my speech. And this, so we could say, is not a temporal issue at all. It either is "there" or it is not "there." What Hudak's example show so vividly, is that for someone to be a speaking subject and a subject of speech, language as we know it is actually not even the issue. Just as those who are able to generate well-formed sentences may not be able to speak at all, so those who lack the ability to generate such well-formed sentences may well be able to speak.

Following this line of thinking through, we can also say something about the special role or position of the educator as the one who needs to act on the assumption that the child is speaking – and the enactment of this assumption is not a matter of listening to or the recognition of the child, but is an enactment of the recognition that one is being addressed. The interesting thing is that the recognition that one is being addressed does not operate on the empirical plane. At least in the more extreme cases where the sounds children make are not the well-formed words and sentences we are familiar with – for example the "babble" of very young children or the silence of children labeled autistic – to act on the assumption that the child is speaking is precisely to bring in an incommensurable element into the situation, a tension between "what is" – the child who is not speaking – and "what is not" – the assumption that the child is speaking, the presuppositions of competence, imagination and intimacy. It is to bring into relationship two unconnected, heterogeneous and incommensurable worlds, to use Rancière's language. It is, therefore, a moment of dissensus – and in this sense we follow, in the manifesto, Rancière's ideas. But rather than to call this act a political act – which would be the case when the two incommensurable worlds that are brought together are called the police order and equality, I wish to suggest that what we have here is an *educational* act by which we are bringing into a relationship the "what is" of the child and the "what is not" of speech, the "what is not" of subjectivity.

Heitger (1988, quoted in Schaffer 2009 p. 109) makes a similar point with regard to the idea of the child's educability (*Bildsamkeit*) when she argues that the assumption of educability ought to be independent of the empirical condition of human beings, both in general and for each particular human being. She explains: "Denn Bildsamkeit ist eben nicht eine Aussage über die konkretee Situation des

Menschen, über sein zufälliges Sein hier und jetzt, sondern über sein Sein als Menschsein. Erst aufgrund dieser Voraussetung kann die gegenständliche Frage nach individuallen Anlagen und Begabungen gestellt wereden." This also means that the assumption of educability implies "eine Forderung an den Erzieher" – the onus is on the educator. The very idea of a child or a human being thus comes with the assumption of educability which, as Schaffar emphasises, is a moral demand, not an empirical fact (Schaffar 2009 p. 109).

DISCUSSION

My ambition with this paper has been to explore whether it is possible to think and do education without time. I have focused the discussion on one particular – but in my view crucial – aspect of education, that is the way in which education has anything to do with the possibility of subjectivity, where subjectivity is seen as different from identity, and thus the subjectification function of education is seen as different from the socialisation function. I have, on the one hand, tried to show how pervasive a linear conception of time is in modern educational thought and practice and have, on the other hand – by focusing on the question how the child can be a subject of speech, tried to indicate that to come to speech is not a temporal process where we slowly gain the competency to speak. We speak when others are being addressed by us. This is not something that takes time; it is, in a sense, instantaneous: it is either "there" or it is not "there." I have not only tried to outline this in a general sense – that is in terms of the possibility of speech and its intersubjective origins – but have also tried to highlight the role of the educator in this, which, in turn, allowed me to say in a more precise manner what Carl Anders Säfström and I may have had in mind when we located the educational moment of education in the tension between "what is" and "what is not" and when we referred to that not only as the moment of dissensus but also as the moment of speech as different from repetition and as the moment of subjectification. I am aware that the ideas that I have presented in this paper do not address all possible dimensions of education, freedom, subjectivity and speech, but I hope that they provide sufficient starting points for a discussion around the question how much time we actually need for education or, to formulate it from the other side, whether it is possible and desirable to take time out if we want to get at what makes education educational

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THE DOUBLE SUBJECTIFICATION FUNCTION OF EDUCATION

Reconsidering Hospitality and Democracy

INTRODUCTION

In recent years philosophers of education have used the ideas of both Jacques Derrida and Jacques Rancière to rethink the ethical and political possibilities and responsibilities of education (for example, Biesta, 2001, 2010b; Masschelein, 1996; Masschelein & Simons, 2010; Peters, 2003, 2009; Ruitenberg, 2010, 2011). The work of Rancière and Derrida is especially generative for educational scholars because, to paint it in very broad strokes, both Rancière and Derrida are concerned with the ways in which a given social order is involved in assigning and excluding, and education is one of the central institutions of a social order.

Derrida has called attention to the exclusive force of binary conceptual schemas such as presence/absence or self/other, as well as to the exclusion of people from a social order structured on such schemas. He has observed that while such exclusion occurs, it never occurs completely, as a binary inevitably deconstructs itself, which is to say that the border between the two sides of the binary is permeable and exposes the two sides to each other. In the case of the binary "citizen/foreigner", which characterizes those within and outside the demos, the deconstruction of the border can be characterized as *hospitality*. Indeed, Derrida (2002) writes, "hospitality—this is a name or an example of deconstruction" (p. 364). Derrida's writing on democracy has typically invoked "democracy-to-come," not as a description of a better democratic government, but as a reference to the ways in which the borders of anything called "democracy" undo themselves. "Democracy-to-come" goes beyond the laws that govern democracy, and beyond the nation-state boundaries within which democracies can be said to exist, and is not a reference to a set of practices, but an expression of the hospitality inherent in the concept of democracy. This expression "takes into account the absolute and intrinsic historicity of the only system that welcomes in itself, in its very concept, that expression of auto-immunity called the right to self-critique and perfectibility" (Derrida, 2005, pp. 86–87).

Rancière has focused on the way in which social arrangements assign people to social ranks and locations and expect their understandings and ideas to remain confined to those ranks and locations. He has documented how people have, throughout history, refused to remain confined to these social ranks and locations, and have

T. Szkudlarek (Ed.), Education and the Political, 89–105.

entered social roles and places they were not supposed to occupy. Rancière refers to such border-crossing practices as *democracy*: "Democracy is … the institution of politics itself, the system of forms of subjectification through which any order of distribution of bodies into functions corresponding to their 'nature' and places corresponding to their functions is undermined" (Rancière, 1995/1999, p. 101).

On more than one occasion, Rancière has distanced his conception of democracy from the conception of democracy advanced by Derrida. In particular, he has argued that Derrida's emphasis on the Other as who or what is always outside the present system, as an unforeseeable future or arrival, is at odds with the idea of democracy itself. In doing so, he has set up a sharp dichotomy between Derrida's work and his own. Thus, if the work of these two thinkers is as incompatible as Rancière makes it out to be, educational scholars who have made use of the work of both will have to choose between them, or, at least, attend carefully to the tensions.

But is such a dichotomy the only or the best way to characterize the differences between Rancière's and Derrida's work? In this essay I examine whether there are other ways of understanding the differences and tensions. In order to do that, I begin by explaining how this question of compatibility and tension between Derrida's and Rancière's work is a question that matters for education. Then I turn my attention to three interpretations of the alleged incommensurability of their writings. First, I examine how Derrida's and Rancière's work seems to me to have a different focus—in the literal sense of the word as the focus of a lens that needs to be adjusted when shifting from a close-up to a wide-angle view. What I mean by this is that, while Rancière offers a compelling analysis of conflicts between groups that are or are not included in the polity, Derrida's work allows for a fine-grained analysis of the internal fabric of the groups or political movements that seek change. Second, I take a closer look at Rancière's claim that equality and singularity are incommensurable. Perhaps Rancière and Derrida employ different conceptions of equality, or perhaps there is room for singularity in relations based on equality? Third, I examine Todd May's (2011) suggestion that Derrida and Rancière are looking at the issue as if through opposite ends of a telescope, Rancière writing from the perspective of the marginalized, Derrida writing from the perspective of those with privilege to relinquish.

SUBJECTIFICATION AS EDUCATIONAL INTEREST

The question of an alleged tension between hospitality and democracy is of central importance not just to scholars who have drawn from the work of Derrida and Rancière, but to the very concept of education. In other words, what I aim to offer is not a form of applied philosophy in which education is the object and recipient of philosophical work, but rather a set of philosophical questions about education. My argument is not that we should, following Derrida, strive to make education more hospitable and, following Rancière, more democratic, because we have determined in general, outside of the sphere of education, that hospitability and democracy are

both desirable and that, therefore, education should have these qualities as well. No, the point is that the very concept of education becomes meaningless if it is not, at least in part, concerned with people becoming subjects, i.e., with "subjectification"[1]. In an argument for education that creates a space for subjectification, both hospitality and democracy are relevant concepts. Hospitality, in Derrida's view, is centrally concerned with creating space and giving place, and democracy, in Rancière's view, is about the political capacity of everyone to claim a space that is not predetermined by the existing order. Both hospitality and democracy, thus, are concerned with subjectification, which makes them of educational significance.

In asserting this I agree with Gert Biesta, who has argued on several occasions that education must take an interest in subjectification. In *Beyond Learning* Biesta (2006) argues that "it is the very task and responsibility of education to keep in existence a space in which freedom can appear, a space in which unique, singular individuals can come into the world" (p. 95). Biesta here uses the work of Hannah Arendt to frame the idea of unique, singular individuals coming into the world, and he frames this process of coming into the world as a process of coming into subjectivity. Biesta stresses that, seen through the lens of Arendt's work, this subjectification is a process of coming into *political* subjectivity because "Arendt holds that *my* subjectivity is only possible in the situation in which others can be subjects as well" (p. 135). Democracy, then, is a requirement for subjectification, because "democracy can precisely be understood as the situation in which everyone has the opportunity to *be* a subject, that is, to act and, through their actions, bring their beginnings into the world of plurality and difference" (p. 135). This is the "worldly" aspect of the space education should establish and maintain, the space in which individuals can come into the world: "one can bring one's beginnings into the world but one needs a world—a world made up of other 'beginners'—in order to come into this world" (p. 53). In order to discuss the singularity and uniqueness of those who enter the world, Biesta turns to the work of Emmanuel Levinas. From the perspective of Levinas's work Biesta argues that, when I come into the world, I do so not as an already-subject who initiates this entry, but as one who responds and who is

> …already positioned from the outside by a responsibility that is older than the ego. What makes me unique in this assignation, what singularizes me, what "makes" me into a unique, singular being … is the fact that *I* am responsible and that *I* cannot slip away from this assignation. (p. 54)

Although Levinas clearly goes further than Arendt in decentering subjectivity, Biesta does not discuss the differences between Levinas's and Arendt's conceptions of subjectivity, presumably because he does not perceive any such differences to pose a challenge to his argument for subjectification as the primary task of education.

In his essay "On the Weakness of Education", Biesta (2010a) distinguishes the qualification, socialization and subjectification functions of education and writes that "it is only through the interest in subjectification that education can be more than just socialization" (p. 360). In other words, a concern with subjectification is a necessary

condition for the practices we refer to as "education" to be education rather than, for example, training or schooling. Biesta here uses Levinas's work (but not Arendt's) to discuss this subjectification function of education because, he argues, "Levinas's work is uniquely concerned with the question of subjectivity and the process of subjectification" (p. 359). Characteristic of Levinas's philosophy is that subjectivity is radically decentered: the subject emerges as subject only in response to the Other. It should be emphasized that subjectivity, in this view, is about the singularity or "uniqueness of each individual human being" (p. 359). Biesta summarizes Levinas's conception of subjectification by saying that subjectivity emerges only in situations in which I am addressed by the Other, situations of my "'*being-in-question*,' as it is only in those situations … that the self is assigned to be a self, that the self is *singularized*" (p. 361, emphasis in original). Education, on this view, is education only to the extent that it offers the conditions in which human beings can be-in-question and emerge as subjects in response.

In his book *Learning Democracy in School and Society*, Biesta (2011) reiterates his argument for subjectification but uses the work of Rancière to frame the concept of subjectification. Here Biesta argues for subjectification not as a central function of education in general, but rather as a form of "civic learning." Seen through the lens of Rancière's work, subjectification as the process of coming into subjectivity is inevitably political, but this political quality is different from the political quality of subjectivity as discussed by Arendt. Remember that subjectivity for Arendt is political because "Arendt holds that *my* subjectivity is only possible in the situation in which others can be subjects as well" (Biesta, 2006, p. 135). For Rancière, people become political subjects when they contest the borders of an existing political order to make themselves visible and audible. Political subjectification is a coming into presence by shifting the "distribution of the sensible" so that one can now be seen and heard in an order in which one was previously invisible and inaudible (Rancière, 2000/2004; see also Ruitenberg, 2010). Political subjectification, then, is a process of naming a *dispute*—an aspect that Biesta does not discuss here but that is quite central to Rancière's conception of political subjectivity. Moreover, this contestatory or dissensual nature is different from the ways in which Levinas and Arendt conceive of subjectivity.

Biesta's work reveals a tension very similar to the one between hospitality in the Derridean sense and democracy in the Rancièrean sense that I identified in the introduction. One way of capturing this tension is to say that, according to the view of the subject found in Levinas's and Derrida's work, one of the central conditions of subjectification or becoming-subject is that I am addressed. This is an inescapable existential condition, and subjectivity emerges in the response to this address. By contrast, according to the view of the subject found in Rancière's work, being addressed is not a central condition of becoming-subject. In fact, it is the lack of being addressed in a concrete social order (to use Rancière's term: "police order") that provokes the dispute in which I can emerge as subject[2].

Is it possible, then, to argue that education ought to establish and keep in existence a space in which subjectivity can emerge, and to conceive of this subjectivity in both the ethical sense (as do Levinas and Derrida), and the political sense (as does Rancière)? The question is not whether these kinds of subjectivity are the same, for clearly they are not, but *whether both can emerge in the same educational space*. If education establishes a space in which singular subjectivity can emerge, would that space also be conducive to the emergence of political subjectivity, and vice versa, or are the two kinds of subjectivity at odds with each other to the point that the emergence of one precludes or hinders the emergence of the other?

RANCIÈRE'S DICHOTOMY

Let us analyze Rancière's claims about the gap that separates his work from Derrida's in greater detail. In his essay "Should Democracy Come? Ethics and Politics in Derrida" (2009), Rancière argues that, while Derrida uses the term "democracy," he stretches the concept beyond recognition by eliminating one of its necessary conditions, *viz.* equality. In Rancière's view, Derrida puts hospitality in the place of democracy, substitutes the *hospes* for the *demos*, and presents an apolitical conception of hospitality. "His democracy actually is a democracy without demos. What is absent in his view of politics is the idea of the political subject, of the political capacity" (Rancière, 2009, p. 278).

The reason for the absence of democracy in Derrida's work, argues Rancière, is that there is an insurmountable tension between the equality that is at the heart of the very concept of democracy, and the singularity that is at the heart of Derrida's philosophy. For Rancière, central to the ideas of politics and democracy themselves is "something that Derrida cannot endorse, namely the idea of substitutability, the indifference to difference or the equivalence of the same and the other" (p. 278).

Indeed, Derrida has written about the violence that the idea of substitutability would inflict on the singularity and alterity of the other. For example, about treating a person as an example, he writes:

> When I say "for example," I immediately say that I could substitute another example; if I say "you, for example," I imply that it could be someone else; which is why it is such a terrible phrase that says to someone "you, for example," since it inscribes chance and substitution, possible replaceability in the address to the other. (Derrida, 2002, pp. 409–410)

That the Other is "singular" means precisely that s/he is unique and irreplaceable, so treating the Other as just any other (*n'importe qui*) denies this singularity.

In the essay "Does Democracy Mean Something?" (2010), a revised version of an essay with the same title in the earlier collection *Adieu Derrida* (2007), Rancière again considers the way in which Derrida contrasts the actual forms of government called "democracy" today with "democracy to come." The latter, notes Rancière,

is defined by its openness to the incoming of the Other, and this is precisely what juxtaposes it to Rancière's own conception of politics:

> Otherness does not come to politics from the outside, for the precise reason that it already has its own otherness, its own principle of heterogeneity. Indeed, democracy *is* this principle of otherness. (Rancière, 2010, p. 53)

Rancière agrees with the contrast between the temporality of democracy-as-government and the temporality of democracy-to-come that Derrida sets up, and he has commented more recently on the importance of different temporalities that escape and interrupt the dominant sense of democracy and politics as having their "proper time" in, for example, electoral cycles (Rancière, 2011). However, Rancière (2010) argues that:

> Something gets lost in this opposition between an *institution* and a *transcendental horizon*. What disappears is democracy as a practice. What disappears is the political invention of the Other or the *heteron*; that is the political process of subjectivation, which continually creates newcomers, new subjects that enact the equal power of anyone and everyone and construct new words about community in the given world. (p. 59)

In other words, the conception of "democracy to come" is too ethical and not political enough for Rancière, who sees it as relying on an "ethical overstatement of otherness" (p. 60) which eclipses the need for political interventions today. Rancière closes the essay by recalling that Derrida, in *Specters of Marx*, called for a New International, and commenting:

> But the forms that this new International can and must take on are not clear. The main issue, in my view, is whether it will be conceptualized in political or "ethical" terms. If we conceptualize it politically, then the "infinite respect for the other" cannot take the form of an infinite wait for the Event or the Messiah, but instead the democratic shape of an otherness that has a multiplicity of forms of inscription and of forms of alteration or dissensus. (p. 61)

Particularly striking is Rancière's insistence on the need to choose either a political or an ethical conceptualization of a democratic future. The question of the kind(s) of subjectivity education should take an interest in—ethical, political, or both—hinges on this dichotomy.

THE CLOSE-UP AND THE WIDE-ANGLE VIEW

Let me address first the possibility that Derrida's conception of hospitality and Rancière's conception of democracy are not so much incompatible, but have a different focus, in the sense that Rancière's work analyzes how groups can claim a space in the political order, while Derrida's work calls attention to the relations within these groups. May (2011) underscores that the question of the relation or

tension between ethics and politics focuses on the relation or tension between the political project of a democratic movement in relation to the existing order, and the relations within that democratic movement, that is, among its own members. He refers to these relations among members of a democratic movement as "the internal character or texture" of the movement, and notes that Rancière does not address these relations in any detail, "except to note that they are based on a certain trust." May turns to the concept of friendship to elaborate this bond of trust, and then criticizes Derrida's view of friendship. However, I question May's choice of friendship as the most helpful concept to think through the "internal character or texture" of a political group. May acknowledges that actual friendships are inevitably exclusive: one can only be friends with a limited number of people: "There must of necessity be an inside and an outside, the inside including those one has been able to construct friendship with and the outside consisting in everyone else." Although May argues that it is not actual friendships he is interested in here, but rather particular "tools" or "virtues" that friendship models and actualizes, such as "temporal thickness" (i.e., having a history together) and being "other-regarding" outside of an economy of debts, it seems to me that this does not address the potential exclusivity of the kinds of bonds constructed with these tools.

Nancy Fraser's (1986) comments on ethics and politics, and on what I earlier called the "wide-angle" and "close-up" view, are helpful here. Fraser makes these comments in response to an article by Seyla Benhabib (1986), who argues for a discourse ethics that employs a relational rather than autonomous conception of the self. Benhabib points out that moral theory has, by and large, focused on interactions between the self and a "generalized other" (p. 410). Instead, she argues, when we take the self to be relational rather than autonomous, we must focus on interactions between the self and a "concrete other" (p. 410). Only when the concrete other comes into view can we see how "friendship, love and care" play a role in interactions with others (p. 411). Fraser (1986) argues that friendship, love and care are "terms drawn largely from intimate relationships" and that, for that reason, they do "not on the surface seem adequate for political contexts in which relationships are not intimate" (p. 427). She refines Benhabib's distinction between the generalized and the concrete other by subdividing the concrete other into the "individualized concrete other" (p. 427) and the "collective concrete other" (p. 428). Where friendship, love, and care are relevant ethical considerations in personal interactions between a self and an individualized concrete other, they are not what matter in the political interactions of collective concrete others. "If the elaboration of the standpoint of the individualized concrete other eventuates in an ethic of care and responsibility, then perhaps the elaboration of the standpoint of the collective concrete other leads to an *ethic of solidarity*" (p. 428). Solidarity is not a personal but a political ethic, "the sort of ethic which is attuned to the contestatory activities of social movements" (p. 428).

May has also used the concept of solidarity, although in his 2011 address he does not distinguish between personal friendship and political solidarity, but rather considers friendship "both a model for and a route into democratic politics." In his

2007 article "Jacques Rancière and the ethics of equality," he addresses the concept of solidarity without connecting it to friendship:

> In political action, the tapestry of this weaving together of cognitive and affective elements around the presupposition of equality has a name, although that name is rarely reflected upon. It is *solidarity*. Political solidarity is nothing other than the operation of the presupposition of equality internal to the collective subject of political action. It arises in the ethical character of that collective subject, a subject that itself arises only on the basis of its action. When one joins a picket line, or speaks publicly about the oppression of the Palestinians or the Tibetans or the Chechnyans, or attends a meeting whose goal is to organize around issues of fair housing, or brings one's bicycle to a ride with Critical Mass, one … joins the creation of a political subject (which does not mean sacrificing one's own being to it). One acts, in concert with others, on the presupposition of the equality of any and every speaking being. (p. 33)

I quote May at length here not only to underscore Fraser's distinction between the political value of solidarity and the personal value of friendship. May refers to the political subject as a *collective* rather than *individual* subject, and shows that, in addition to the relations or conflicts of this collective political subject with other collective political subjects (or, more likely, with the police order), we can and should examine the relations "internal to the collective subject of political action." Regarding these relations, May then makes the important observation that, while they are based on the presupposition of equality, joining a collective political subject does not mean sacrificing "one's own being" to it. In other words, *the presupposition of equality is not a presupposition of sameness*, and one can join a collective political subject without losing one's singularity.

Judith Butler, in her contribution to the symposium and volume *Derrida and the Time of the Political* (2009), argues that "it is within the scene of politics that the ethical relation emerges" and that Derrida's work impels us "to rethink the relevant collectivities of politics" (p. 296). The scene of politics is a scene of collectivities; while the success of these collectivities in addressing or seeking to be addressed by each other depends, in part, on their internal cohesiveness, I agree with Butler that "the point of politics is not to assemble a 'we' who can speak or, indeed, sing in unison, a 'we' who knows or expresses itself as a unified nation or, indeed, as the human as such" (p. 298). Instead, an attention to the ethical relation in the scene of politics is an attention to the way in which this "we" is constructed, and at whose expense:

> To think the "we"—that crux of politics—is precisely to realize that it references a host of other pronominal problems, the "I" and the "you" among them. For if the "we" is constituted through its exercise (one performative dimension of democracy), then it … forms itself only on the condition of a negotiation with alterity. No collectivity comes into being by suddenly exercising a speech act

> in common; rather, a covenant is presupposed by the act of address, a promise is implicitly made in the act of addressing another truthfully. (p. 299)

The internal fabric or texture of a political movement, then, is constantly being recreated through forms of address that must come to grips with the singularity of the individual members. While externally, that is, on the scene of politics, the movement struggles to be addressed as a movement of, to use Rancière's terms, "speaking beings," the movement's members must struggle internally with the ethical aspects of address[3]. Coming to grips with the ethical relations within a group that makes political demands involves asking questions such as:

> How is it that every "we" is negotiated through a set of exchanges that requires that the "I" rethink itself on the basis of the "you," without whom it could not exist socially? And to what extent does the "we" form itself through an exclusion that casts a population outside its jurisdiction? (Butler, 2009, p. 299)

Thus, while Rancière's work analyzes the way in which a group of people makes the political demand to be heard and seen as equal speaking beings and, in doing so, makes the political demand that the borders of the political order are shifted, Derrida's work allows us to pay attention to the internal relations that make up the political group.

Schools are one of the primary sites where a "we" is constituted, although, according to Rancière, this is hardly ever a political "we" and more likely a "we" of the police order. A truly political "we" may be created in schools in spite of the latter's implication in the police order but it is more likely to emerge in other spaces, such as neighborhood groups and trade unions. The educational function of subjectification is fulfilled in one sense when a collective political subject in the Rancièrean sense can emerge. However, the question remains whether and how, in the constitution of that collective political subject, spaces can be created where individual, singular subjectivity can emerge. How might we create spaces in which a hospitable political subject can take place, a *demos* that posits an assembled but not a unified "we," and is interrupted by the demands of hospitality?[4]

ARE "EQUALITY" AND "EQUALITY" THE SAME?

I have already concluded, based on May's argument for solidarity, that the presupposition of equality, so central to Rancière's work, is not a presupposition of sameness. This presupposition of equality, then, merits closer scrutiny. Does Rancière's conception of equality support his claim that "Derrida cannot endorse … the idea of substitutability, the indifference to difference or the equivalence of the same and the other" (Rancière, 2009, p. 278)?

May (2011) writes that friendships of the kind that have political significance are characterized by a fundamental equality between the friends:

> I look at my friend as an equal, not because he or she is equal in measure to me but because equality of this type is, to a certain and of course immeasurable

> extent, beyond measure. The equality here is an equality of two or more people who take one another not as equals in this or that characteristic but, we might say, as equals, period.

He then adds that "this equality is, in Rancière's view, the basis for democratic politics." May does not address the fact that friends are not only equals but that one can only be a friend of a *particular* other, not of *just any* other (*n'importe qui*). A friend, while equal to me in the immeasurable way that May describes, is also a singular Other whose alterity confronts me. If May is interested in enactments of equality as models and motivations for the egalitarian politics that Rancière advocates, friendship may not be the best concept to turn to. The figure of the friend is a figure of unsubstitutability *par excellence*, so, to the extent that May posits it here as a figure of equality, this must be an equality that is *not* at odds with unsubstitutability; the friend is characterized by both equality and unsubstitutability.

So what does Rancière mean by "equality" and how does it relate to its three possible opposites: difference, alterity, and disparity? In its everyday use, "equality" can mean *sameness*, which would oppose it to difference and/or alterity[5]. Equality can also mean *parity*, which would opposite it to disparity or hierarchical difference, inequality of rank or status. May (2009) notes of Rancière's conception of equality that it is not an equality of any particular quality or characteristic of an individual or group, but an equality of intelligence, where "intelligence" should not be taken in the psychological and quantifiable sense that allows us to distinguish persons of higher and lower intelligence. May explains "intelligence" in this Rancièrean sense as follows:

> We are, unless we are deeply damaged in some way, capable of creating meaningful lives with one another, talking with one another, understanding one another, and reasoning about ourselves and our situations. Our social and political contexts, while sometimes difficult and complex, do not involve essential mysteries that we are in principle incapable of comprehending without the assistance of a savant of some sort. In short, we are capable of formulating and carrying out our lives with one another. This, in Rancière's view, is the assumption—the presupposition of equality—with which politics begins. (p. 7)

"Equality," for Rancière, is not an ontological principle but a political one; it is a principle that is posited with the purpose of "restoring the contingency of domination to a prior contingency" (Rancière, 2003, par. 14), and then verified. In other words, by positing that people are equal as speaking beings who have lives and relationships, and a view of those lives and relationships, any inequality that appears is contingent upon a social order (Rancière would say "police order") that sets up such inequality. Rancière does not deny that the way in which people live their lives and the views they have about these lives are diverse, but from the standpoint of democracy, this inequality-as-difference is not what matters.

For Derrida equality and singularity are part of the aporetic nature of democracy. While there is a tension between the two, this tension is irresolvable as both aspects are needed for democracy to maintain a relation to justice. In *The Politics of Friendship* Derrida (1994/1997) writes:

> There is no democracy without respect for irreducible singularity or alterity, but there is no democracy without the "community of friends" …, without the calculation of majorities, without identifiable, stabilizable, representable subjects, all equal. These two laws are irreducible one to the other. Tragically irreconcilable and forever wounding. The wound itself opens with the necessity of having to *count* one's friends, to count the others, in the economy of one's own, there where every other is altogether other. But where every other is *equally* altogether other. (p. 22)

Derrida here points at two different kinds of equality: the equality-as-parity on which the concept of democracy is based, and the equality-as-commonality of every Other being as other as anyone else, the equality in the phrase "*tout autre est tout autre*." The last line in the passage I quoted is particularly salient: "Every other is *equally* altogether other (*tout autre est également tout autre*): what we have in common is that we are all Other to everyone else.

> The access to the dignity of the other is the access to the singularity of the other's absolute difference, certainly, but this is only possible by means of *a certain indifference*, by means of a neutralization of differences (social, economic, ethnic, sexual, etc.). Exceeding all knowledge and objective determination, this neutralization alone allows one an access to dignity, that is, to the fact that everyone, *every one* is worth as much as the other, precisely beyond all value: *priceless*. (Derrida, 1992/2002, p. 325)

Not only are we all equally Other to everyone else, this also means we have an equal, and equally incalculable, worth. According to Derrida, we are thus equal in our singularity and alterity, and according to Rancière we are equal in intelligence. While these are not the same principles, neither are they incompatible. There is no reason to assume that being counted as an equally intelligent and speaking being precludes being addressed as a singular being.

In an interview with Giovanna Borradori, on the question of whether sovereignty can be thought outside a state-model, even if it becomes an international meta-state, Derrida (2003) further speaks to the way in which singularity and equality must co-exist in the *demos* of democracy:

> The demos is *at once* the incalculable singularity of anyone, before any "subject," the possible undoing of the social bond by a secret to be respected, beyond all citizenship, beyond every "state," … *and* the universality of rational calculation, of the equality of citizens before the law, the social bond of being together, with or without contract. (p. 120)

Once again, Derrida does not replace the *demos* with the *hospes*, as Rancière charges, but argues that democracy must hold the two figures of incalculable singularity and calculable equality in tension. Indeed Derrida does not endorse equality as principle by itself, only when it is troubled by singularity and alterity, but he does not dismiss the importance of equality for democracy.

BOTH ENDS OF THE TELESCOPE

May (2011) provides a slightly different analysis of the tension between Derrida's and Rancière's work. In his address "Friendship as Resistance" he argues that certain kinds of friendship can offer political resistance to the dominant figures of neoliberalism by showing "meaningful ways of conducting our lives with one another." The figures May is referring to are those of the consumer and of the entrepreneur, and friendship shows that it is possible to treat each other as neither objects of consumption nor objects of investment but as equals. May argues that friendship is a model congruous with Rancière's argument for equality at the heart of politics, and that Derrida's arguments about the deconstruction of the friend/enemy binary miss the political point of friendship:

> [Derrida's] view addresses those who are the beneficiaries of inequality, those who see themselves as among the included rather than the excluded. His discourse seeks to discover (and create) pores in the border the self-perceived included might have erected between themselves and those they exclude. Rancière's view, alternately, is addressed in the first place to the excluded. It is a framework of solidarity for those who seek to struggle, not for those against whom struggle might be directed.

This is a compelling argument. Derrida's work on hospitality, forgiveness, and other forms of the gift indeed appears to be aimed at those in a position to give, rather than those who have had no choice but to hold out their hand. Of course, Derrida's point has been precisely that the sharp distinctions between these two figures don't hold, and that, for example, the host is indebted to the guest rather than the other way around, but nonetheless, I agree with May that Derrida's work appears addressed to those who can recognize themselves in the position of host, forgiver, or giver more generally. In May's view, then, Derrida and Rancière approach the issue of exclusion from different angles, with the former calling on those who are already included (and know it) to practice hospitality, and the latter calling on those who are excluded (and know it) to enact democracy. May concludes that, when it comes to politics and democracy, "Derrida is looking through the wrong end of the telescope."

This is consistent with Rancière's contention that Derrida offers little to those who are excluded. Rancière (2009) writes about Derrida's objection to the simple application of rules and laws:

> Those who suffer from one of more of the "ten plagues"[6] would, in most cases, be glad that there exists a "simple" rule "placidly" applicable to their case,

> rather than being subjected to the arbitrariness of unlimited state power and corrupt administration. (p. 282)

Rancière is facetious, of course, in suggesting that, by questioning whether rules and laws can ever be enough, Derrida is on the side of arbitrary and corrupt power and government. However, the critique that Derrida's arguments are addressed to those who have or have access to a home from which they can offer hospitality and not to those pounding on the door to find a place, is justified and important.

Here, it seems to me, the realities of educational practice can help to break this dichotomy. The question is not which of these projects we should try to tackle—helping the included open up the spaces they inhabit, or helping the excluded claim a space—but how we can tackle *both*. For the majority of people in educational contexts in which the scholars of SCAPE work—Europe and North America—find themselves both on the side of the excluded and on the side of the included. This is particularly clear at the university level where, as Kathleen McCormick (1992) notes, "many students … are members of a middle class that is closer to an 'oppressor' than an 'oppressed' class" while, at the same time, "in a capitalist society, as subjects for ideology, the middle class occupies a much more contradictory subject position, functioning simultaneously as both oppressor and oppressed" (p. 128, n 2). More generally speaking, the attention to the multiplicity and intersectionality of identities has shown that many students and teachers, at all levels, find themselves in both the position of having unearned privilege, for example by being white or male, and in the position of being marginalized, for example by being gay or having a disability. Depending on the context in which I find myself, I may be struggling to have my voice heard as the voice of a speaking being, but I may also be confronted with an Other who is excluded by the systems that support me. The educational challenge is therefore, to borrow May's metaphor, to look through both ends of the telescope. Moreover, from the perspective of Levinasian-Derridean ethics, I am compelled to look through the end of the telescope that allows me to see the Other as vulnerable and calling me to respond regardless of the political position I find myself in.

CONCLUSION

Rancière (2009) begins his analysis of Derrida's approach to politics and democracy with the important observation that Derrida and he share the view "that democracy is something more than one form of government among others, that it is an excess with respect to any form of government" (p. 275). I agree with his subsequent assessment that he and Derrida conceive of the excess differently: for Rancière it is a political excess, for Derrida an ethical one (p. 276).

However, Rancière's conclusions about the incompatibility between these two perspectives seem overblown. Rancière ignores important distinctions between the ways he and Derrida use the terms "equality" and "difference." These distinctions mean that it cannot be assumed that when Rancière argues for "equality," this

undermines Derrida's argument for "difference." A good example of this is the following claim by Rancière (2009):

> What the democracy to come can oppose to the practice of the nation-states is … the commitment to an absolute other, an "other" who can never become the same as us, who cannot be substituted. We can add: an "other" who cannot stage his or her otherness, who cannot put on the stage the relationship between his or her inclusion and his or her exclusion. (p. 280)

Rancière demonstrates here that he cannot suspend his own conceptions of "otherness" and "exclusion" long enough to see that they are, ironically, unsubstitutable for Derrida's conceptions. Derrida's argument for "democracy to come" indeed requires a commitment to an absolute and unsubstitutable Other. However, the clause "we can add" hides a change in register that introduces a misconception. The Other's otherness-as-alterity may be absolute, but that does not mean that the Other cannot politically stage her or his otherness-as-difference or otherness-as-exclusion. The exclusion that, in Rancière's work, provokes the dispute that he refers to here as "staging otherness" is not an exclusion based on alterity but on inequality-as-disparity.

My analysis suggests that hospitality as elaborated by Derrida and democracy as elaborated by Rancière are not incompatible. When it comes to the subjectification function of education, then, "subjectification" in the Rancièrean sense of creating a space where political subjectivity can emerge, and "subjectification" in the Levinasian/Derridean sense of creating a space where singular subjectivity can emerge, need not be incompatible aims. It is, philosophically speaking, conceivable that education can create a space in which a human being is addressed and can emerge as singular subject in response to that address, and in which that same human being emerges as speaking being in the political sense, by joining a collective political subject that names a dispute.

Two questions remain, an educational one and a philosophical one, and I will address them briefly in this order. With either one conception of subjectivity, it is already quite challenging not to see the subjectification function of education be eclipsed by the other functions of socialization and qualification. When we now posit that it is a *double* subjectification, the challenge is compounded. Education that takes an interest in subjectification in this double sense must attend to the ways in which students can become political speaking beings (see Biesta, 2010b), as well as to the ways they can become singular subjects in response to the Other. And while, as I have argued in this essay, these two forms of subjectivity need not be at odds with each other, the educational challenge will be to keep ethical subjectification from eclipsing political subjectification, and vice versa.

But even if we agree that Derrida's conception of hospitality and Rancière's conception of democracy, and the respective versions of subjectivity and subjectification these entail, are not incompatible, the question remains whether they imply or need each other[7], or how they might benefit from each other's company. It would appear that Derrida's ethic of hospitality does not imply or need democracy

in the Rancièrean sense, as an openness to the Other at an interpersonal level can be extended within what Rancière would call a police order. Conversely, democratic contestation seeks to break open the "police order," demanding a change to its borders, and such contestation does not, in and of itself, imply or need an ethic of hospitality. However, I cautiously posit here that while Derrida's hospitality and Rancière's democracy may not need or imply each other, they may well serve as each other's corrective or watchdog. Hospitality calls attention to the risk that the formation of a collective political subject that enacts democracy can result in new exclusions and inhospitalities, for example in the internal fabric of that political subject. On the other side, democracy calls attention to the risk that an openness to the singular Other can leave the host blind to the structural and contingent arrangements that unevenly distribute the positions from which hospitality is offered or sought. The experience of contingent inequality that compels me to assert my equality, the experience of a singular subject that calls me to respond, and the productive tension between these two, are all significant experiences in education that has an interest in subjectification.

NOTES

[1] I use the term "subjectification" here as it is the term used by Biesta as well as in certain translations of Rancière's work (e.g., *Disagreement*, 1995/1999). However, the term Rancière uses in French is *subjectivation* and this term is used in other English translations (e.g., "Does democracy mean something?", 2010) and commentaries (e.g., Tanke, 2011).

[2] For Arendt, subjectivity is dependent on others—I need a world of others to come into—but subjectivity does not seem to emerge, as it does for Levinas, in the response to the Other to whom I am responsible. While not autonomous, Arendtian subjectivity is not decentered in the same way it is for Levinas, nor is it centrally concerned with the borders of the political order.

[3] Doris Lessing's (1985) novel *The Good Terrorist* vividly illustrates the possible inconsistencies between the political project of and ethical relations within a political movement.

[4] Seyla Benhabib's (2004) concept of "democratic iteration" is interesting to explore in this regard. Benhabib makes use Derrida's work on the concept of iteration to propose a demos that reiterates itself and, in doing so, questions and resignifies itself and its boundaries, so as to make room for those who have political agency but lack formal citizenship.

[5] I cannot dwell on this here but do not want to pass over the distinction between "difference" and "alterity," certainly in the work of Levinas, who writes: "Alterity is not at all the fact that there is a difference, that facing me there is someone who has a different nose than mine, different colour eyes, another character. It is not difference, but alterity" (in Levinas et al., 1988, p. 170).

[6] This is a reference to what Derrida (1993/1994) has called the "plagues of the 'new world order" (pp. 100–104), including injustices such as homelessness and statelessness, the arms industry and trade, and inter-ethnic wars.

[7] I am grateful to the anonymous reviewer for this question.

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THE POLITICS OF THE UNIVERSITY[1]

Movements of (de-)Identification and the Invention of Public Pedagogic Forms

Our starting thesis is that the university is not the name of an institution. It is the name of a particular *universitas*, that is, an association of scholars and students, which means precisely of people who are not members (not yet, or no longer, members) of a professional, civic, religious, or economic institution, or organization (e.g. guild, religious order, civil service, or administration), people who do not gather around some defined production aim or under some defined rule, but around some "thing". As we will elaborate later, this association articulates, therefore, a movement of de-identification – *we are no disciples*, *no pupils*, *no apprentices*, *no civil servants*, *no clergymen*, *no trainees*, *no appointed teachers*, *but students and scholars*. It has an essentially experimental dimension. Experimental in the sense that words, objects, practices, knowledge are disconnected from their sacred and/or regular usage (in the sense of being under a "rule" or "law") and from all sorts of appropriations, and start provoking thinking, *in public and "in the presence" of these things (words*, *objects*, *practices*, *knowledge) which become common things*, *or are communized.* The university is the name for the association where *public thinking* takes place, and, as such, it names a movement of de-identification which is at once a movement of communization and of profanation or de-appropriation. As Agamben puts it: "[p]ure, profane, freed from sacred names is that thing that is set free for the common use by people" (Agamben 2005, p. 96). Something becomes de-appropriated or disconnected from particular interests (of social groups, professions, markets, and states), and from particular usages (in the sphere of production and reproduction, or in the sphere of religious practices). This movement of de-identification and profanation is a dangerous movement, for in its attempt to make public thinking possible it disturbs, questions, or disrupts all kinds of stabilizations, fixations, or crystallizations (such as "nature", "human reason", "culture", "the discipline"). A movement has no real beginning and no end; it has no specific cause nor a particular aim. It occurs and "takes/finds place". It happens in the present, and articulates that present as a gap in between past and future, to use the words of Hannah Arendt, in between what is possible and what is actual (Arendt 1961). This means that students and scholars move in a time of suspension (not of accumulation or re-production), that is the particular time of study and thought or of *scholé* (as "free time" or

T. Szkudlarek (Ed.), Education and the Political, 107–119.

”unproductive time”). The university, as the site of that public movement of de-identification, communization, profanation, and suspension, is potentially dangerous for all those who have particular interests, and who are attached to crystals and everything else that suppresses public thinking in order to safeguard a sustained line between past and future, and between the possible and the actual. Therefore, because of that fear, movements or associations where public thinking takes place are tamed and neutralized. There are overt, straightforward strategies for taming the university: politics (the state) or religion (the church). But there are also less overt attempts to tame the university: granting it the status of an institution (oriented towards an idea, a common future, a glorious past, humanity) is one attempt; creating sacred faculties and celebrating its scientific methodology or mobilizing its inhabitants to produce excellence are other attempts. There is a rich university history, but, as is often the case, it is the history of the victors, of those who manage to tame the disruptive or suspending movement of public thinking. The history of the university as movement is yet to be told.

Clearly, this history would not be the common history of the university, its official inauguration and its timely reforms. This common history of the university is all too often the history of institutionalization in view of strengthening its own self-understanding: the royal history of scholastic philosophy, the victorious history of university faculties, the national history of academic freedom, the progressive history of modern science, the social history of academic service, and the economic history of excellent universities. Instead of focusing on experimental movements and inventions, on margins and attempts which seem to constitute the university from its origins, these histories, in their persist concern to name and celebrate what is sacred, address what has crystallized (using capitals): Philosophy, Faculty, Freedom, Science, Service, and Excellence. The history of experimentation and invention we have in mind would be the history “before”, or rather beyond, any such sacred crystallization[1]. This history could start, we wish to suggest, from the thesis that what is unique about the university is not one of her institutional characteristics (e.g. being a combination of research, teaching, and service in a single institution, or being oriented towards an idea, e.g., the idea of *Bildung*), but her specific *public pedagogic forms*, which articulate the movement of public study and public thought, which is always, at once, as we suggested above, a movement of de-identification and profanation. In fact, the institutional history of the university actually reads as a story on the de-formation of the university’s public form. A public, pedagogic form where something is for common use is indeed dangerous or disruptive for all those who seek to protect specific “private” interests. The sacred history could be regarded as part of the neutralization or taming of the university, that is, attempts to safeguard particular interests and identities, a specific order, and common usages, by looking for institutional features and sacred names. Perhaps today, especially today when facing privatization at every level, we think it is important to tell a short counter-history as a morphology of those experimental movements and inventions aimed at shaping a public, pedagogic form. Perhaps this history prepares for experimentation

and (re-)invention in the present condition. Our concern, thus, is not that of a historian; instead, we draw some sketches for a history of the present, and in order to "live the present otherwise" (Foucault, 1984, p. 790).

THE PROFANATION OF THE BOOK

Universities have been called the most important legacy that the Middle Ages has offered us. Their origin lies in a particular gathering which included a particular pedagogical form. As a particular kind of study and teaching, the university ensured a particular kind of life detached from the immediate demands of the economic and social world, and from the orders of the cathedral schools and monasteries out of which they originated (Verger, 1992; Illich, 1991). The model of this gathering was the medieval association called *universitas*. The term was used to indicate all kinds of associations and, therefore, needed to be specified: the *universitas magistrorum et scholarium* or the *universitas studii*. It is crucial to note that it was not an association of teachers and pupils or masters and apprentices (*operae*), but of masters (later becoming *professors*) and *students*. The first movement of de-identication, thus, can be summarized in the declaration: *We are no pupils*, *disciples*, *apprentices*, *but students.* This declaration involves a de-identification with practices of initiation or preparation to become part of particular social, cultural, vocational, or religious groups. What is affirmed is that time for study is "free time" (*scholé*), that is, time where social, religious or economic concerns are suspended and free to get involved with the text. The university, then, was a new form of *scholé*, of *public* study (outside the seclusion of the monastery cell), and its inhabitants were masters and/or students, for whom the search for truth and knowledge was not a private calling, but a public activity. Its core was a particular form of public lecture that was bound to the birth of the "book-text", which no longer appeared as the symbol of a cosmic and divine reality, but as the materialization of abstractions and concepts, that is, of thoughts (Illich, 1992). A major invention of the medieval university is the written text as optical object (and therefore readable – instead of audible – in the sense we are used to today[3]). The book-text, indeed, is available for *public study*, and makes *public study* actually possible. The invention of the readable text allows words to become disconnected from a particular usage by a particular group, and, in that sense, they are no longer "sacred". This book-text asks for interpretation and commentary and is no longer a medium of immediate reception. The public lecture was a *collegium*, a reading together and the gathering of a thinking public around a common text. The available book-text includes a profanation, that is, an availability for public use. The public gathered around the text is not just an audience (of listeners), but a reading public. Claiming "We are students", therefore, comes down to saying: we are (independent) readers. This public reading did not require obedience, but a critical-interpreting attitude related to an *amor veritatis* and *amor sciendi* (Verger, 1992). It had no direct use for any profession, but led to the right (and sometimes the duty) to lecture publicly at all European universities (*licentia ubique docendi*).

We cannot go into the fortunes of this medieval invention, and it is clear that right from the beginning it went with all kind of strategies to tame its public form (e.g. by turning the association into a kind of professional guild and by "disciplining" the knowledge and the words, binding them to new rules and "faculties"), and it was bound to a persistent experience of living according to a divine order and its moral law. Obviously, the attempts to neutralize this act of profanation and to tame the perceived religious, social and political dangers of written/readable texts are numerous, but it is a crucial movement in inventing a public, pedagogic form. The words are set free, but they are immediately tamed by the fact that they are bound to new rules and to disciplined usages.

THE PROFANATION OF REASON

The modern university, we contend, originates as the profanation of reason: reason is no longer subjugated to the state or the church, but becomes autonomous. The learned person (*der Gelehrte*) affirms: I am not a civil servant, no clergymen or appointed teacher, but a *scholar*. This movement articulates an attempt to invent a public, pedagogic form beyond the nation state and its civic and juridical framing of human affairs. What is claimed for – as Immanuel Kant articulates very strongly – is a public sphere, where reasoning is a goal in itself and, in view of which, the public sphere that the state claims for itself is only a place for the private use of reason and obedience. What is at stake in this movement is a de-identification with the private use of reason and all sorts of domestication of reason, but at the same time an affirmation of the public use of reason. In his famous essay "What is Enlightenment?" Kant relates the Enlightenment to freedom in "the most innocuous form of all – freedom to make public use of one's reason in all matters" (Kant 1784/1977, p. 55). Kant continues by clarifying that he means by the public use of one's own reason, the "use which anyone may make of it as a *man of learning* (*ein Gelehrter*) addressing the entire *reading public*" (ibid., p. 55). As man of learning, one is a world citizen, who, as Kant says, is not *instructing* pupils, but who "publicly voices his thoughts" and "imparts them to the public" (ibid., p. 56). A man of learning (a scholar, in the English translation of his text) is "addressing the real public (i.e. the world at large)" and speaks "in his own person" (ibid., p. 57). Indeed, learned individuals put "before the public their thoughts," with "no fear of phantoms" (ibid., p. 59). And, as Kant states, *anyone* can be this figure of the scholar, a figure which is characterized by an equalizing ethos, addressing the other under the assumption of equality – that is, the profanation of reason as something everybody can use when not lazy or faint-hearted – and speaking in her own name, so demonstrating an ethos to risk oneself. This is at once an *experimental ethos*, because the scholar exposes herself to the limits (of the institutions of the state and the church) and transforms the issue one is speaking about into a public issue, that is, one makes it public.

However, this publicly voicing of one's thoughts is limited. As Kant states, as a scholar one addresses a *reading* public. At this point – and this applies to Kant

himself – the public use of reason is tamed by outlining the limits within which the correct use of reason should stay. Kant now starts to address his readers as "judges" (i.e., people who are submitting themselves to a tribunal, in this case, the tribunal of reason). Kant's attempt to define the "right" use of reason is about the taming of the public use of reason and the neutralization of the university's public, pedagogic form.

Moreover, other forms of taming arise: the claim that reason (1) has to find its ground in philosophy as the general, foundational "science"; the claim that reason (2) has to be cultivated through the study of national culture and language; and the claim that (3) there is a distinction between norms and facts. When speaking of the modern university, most often reference is made to the German model, which von Humboldt instituted at the University of Berlin, which was widely copied (as well as modified) all over the world, and which still served as a leading model for the post-war expansion of tertiary education in the west. This modern university became in fact an "institution" with the nation state and national culture as its main point of reference (and constituting people as citizens of a nation state) (Readings 1996). What is at stake in this university is the study of culture and language. Culture here is the sum of knowledge that is studied (in research), as well as the cultivation and development of one's character as a result of that study (in teaching and learning). Hence, the German "research" university is at the same time an institution for *Bildung* or the general edification of "cultivated *subjects"*. Its definition was, in essence, a cultural and non-utilitarian one. Therefore, the modern university (at least in the German tradition) did not aim to train the administrators (functionaries) of the state, but to educate the (enlightened) citizens or "subjects" of a state with its own language and culture. In this context the humanities played a central role in the cultivation of reason, which in itself can be seen as an attempt to tame (discipline and shape) the public use of that reason. "University of reason" or "university of culture" are the sacred names of the related processes of crystallization (Latour 2004).

THE PROFANATION OF CULTURE AND OF TIME

The post-modern university originates from the third movement that claims: *This institution is not the university and we are no generation (no modern subject)*, *but students*. These claims echo the de-identification in 1968 with forms of authority based on culture (and all other forms of paternalism) and with a rigid nation-based and bureaucratically organized academic system. Claiming that the *institution* is not the university, that what it is to be student should not be equated with the object of the institutionalized pedagogy of enlightenment, means that study and teaching content are disconnected from the sacred, modern project of cultivation. It is claiming: *we are no "subjects" of an authoritative cultural and national tradition*, *we are autonomous subjects*, *we are autonomous readers*, reading being to construct, to imagine and to improvise our own life and our own world (implying a profanation of the national culture and language, which contributed also in creating the conditions for the

capitalization and economization of knowledge in the universities from the 1970s onwards). Being a student is being part of a movement, and hence the inauguration of a present moment and situation between past and future. The affirmation of being a student becomes at once the affirmation of a revolutionary event and of an enthusiasm that transcends history. The students refuse the university of reason and (national) culture. They refuse either to conceive of themselves as being an immature generation inserted in a tradition, or to become intellectuals as new gatekeepers of culture who speak on behalf of all those who cannot speak for themselves. The affirmation of being a student, here, is the de-identification both with being an immature, powerless child or a mature, authoritative adult. As Readings writes, what matters is "that the narrative of *Bildung* – of simple passage from infancy to adulthood, from dependency to emancipation (the Kantian narrative of enlightenment that characterizes the knowledge process itself in modernity) – has been rejected by the students in the name of an uncertainty" (Readings, 1996, p. 147). What is broken down is the "arrow of time" (pointing to the enlightened future) that was institutionalized in the "university of reason" or the "university of culture" (Latour 2004). What is interrupted is any teleological understanding of being a student under the banner of cultivation or reason. And all other "social positions" for that matter. The public sphere enters the university, the power of collective deliberation and imagination is unleashed, and both past and future are reframed from within that powerful public sphere.

Professors can no longer profess in the name of (their) culture or in the name of the future their knowledge holds for the new generation. And students no longer carry the stamp of the "arrow of time" that the modern university of reason or culture imprinted them with, and they no longer reach for a detached social and political position as intellectual. Being a student is being marked with at once an enthusiasm and an openness and uncertainty. What is invented is a new public, pedagogic form to gather students and professors, and to organize and "live" the university. The involved profanation of culture and institutions opens up a form for students and professors to imagine collectively the future (and past), and to seek time and space for study, for research, for teaching, for public discussion inside or outside the dismantled institutions. Students and professors do not *have* specific interests, but as part of a public sphere they *are* interested and attached to a world beyond national culture, rigid bureaucracy, and institutional logic. Clearly and very quickly, revolutionary enthusiasm is again canalized, movements are institutionalized, student leaders turn out to be candidate politicians (for institutionalized parties), and public attachment becomes reframed in the logic of "service for society". Moreover, the humanities have contributed to the taming by starting to show that no "autonomous reading" is actually possible. They emphasize context, history, and social background. They "relate" and "de-construct" (they contextualize, historicize, sociologize, situate, demystify, etc.; see e.g., Rancière 2005). Yet, the profanation of the sacred divide between generations, the sacred character of what should be transmitted (knowledge and culture) and the sacred "arrow of time" (time having a defined *telos*, being "progress") has inaugurated attempts to shape a public, pedagogic form.

PUBLIC PEDAGOGIC FORMS

Before turning to the last movement of de-identification and profanation that we will indicate, in order to offer a last element of our short counter-history of the university, we wish to pause a moment to summarize some important common features of the movement of the university in its various appearances. Indeed, as we have briefly tried to elaborate, notwithstanding the endless variety of attempts for taming, from its invention as *universitas magistrorum et scholarium* (or *universitas studii*) in the Middle Ages onwards, the university includes, as its core, the assembly of students and scholars involved in public study, preoccupied with the search for truth, and partaking in the public communication of truth. These assemblies articulate in particular pedagogic forms which are public forms. These are forms *sui generis*, where a matter is turned into public matter (into a "thing", or "world"), where a matter is given the power to call a thinking public into being. These are forms that gather together a public of students and professors, that is, of learners and academics turned into public figures. These forms, in fact, materialize the gap between past and future, making public the experimental movement of thought (rather than the re-production of knowledge) and making "things" speak (rather than making them known). They are forms of public thought and public experiments, and they are strictly bound to the presence of the figures of the student and the scholar/professor. The paradigmatic (not exclusive) figures of this pedagogic form are the public lecture[4] and the seminar.

The public lecture as a public pedagogic form, given by a professor to a more or less large audience of students, is a way to give things the power to make us think, to turn a matter into a matter of concern or a public matter. Giving a public lecture actually turns the figure of the academic into the public figure of the professor. This figure, contrary to conventional wisdom, does not pre-exist the event of the lecture itself. This figure is not a researcher presenting matters of fact and how knowledge about these facts was produced. The professor can be rather described as a concerned truth-teller, a professor "speaks" in her own name, out of love for the truth and for the world, and not out of the submission to a tribunal, be it the tribunal of reason or of the academic disciplines. She displays an experimental ethos of public reasoning that also brings into play these disciplines itself and what they entail as judgments. Professing gives objects the power to make us slow down and stand still and to be with, next to, near to, close to, in touch with, and in the company of those objects that are starting to concern us. In this sense, the professor adds something and does not only offer knowledge; in a way she brings to life and offers a voice to what is not simply speaking out of and for itself. She is making heard things/persons in such a way that we reconsider how we think and relate to them. As for the professor, so also for the students as audience: it does not pre-exist the event, and therefore you could say that the lecture (when it works) makes the audience "happen" (Readings, 1996). People become an audience of students because they are slowed down by a provocation to think, that is, to become attached to the issue at hand, and to question it and to be questioned by it (Stengers, 2005). Public lectures, thus, are associated

with the emergence of new consciousness, or an overtaking of the self that extends one's own, private affairs, by making things into a public affair (cf. Rancière 2008).

The second paradigmatic figure of the public pedagogic form that constitutes the university is the seminar. Similar to the lecture, the seminar is a public gathering. But the number of students is usually much fewer, the arrangement of the room is different, as is the relation between students (who are positioned differently). Roland Barthes (1984) calls the seminar "a pure form of floating", a form that does not destroy anything but that dis-orientates the "law". It traces a space of floating that constantly disrupts, or re- or dis-orientates, the three spaces that are present: the institutional one (fixing the frequency, schedule, location, syllabus); the space of teaching (indicating a transfer between the director of the seminar and the audience) which becomes a horizontal relation between students; and the space of inscription (inscribing the way of gathering). The seminar produces differences: slowly the originality or singularity of the bodies taken one for one appears, the reproduction of roles and affirmations of discourses is broken, and destinations and objectives are "undone". What happens at that point is that something – a text for instance – becomes a matter of interest. In putting a text on the table, discussing the text on an equal basis – institutional positions and personal opinions being suspended – the text becomes real, it turns into some-thing to talk about, a thing to refer to, something that provokes thinking and discussion. The magic of the seminar exactly disappears at the moment that the text no longer is a something, and thinking in public becomes a ritual of exchanging personal opinions and impressions. According to Barthes, it stops being a collective experiment where something is at stake, and turns into a pathetic therapeutic session.

However, today, the challenges for the university as public pedagogic form, as form of public thought, might be more invasive and pervasive than is suggested by Barthes, which brings us to the last movement.

THE PROFANATION OF PRODUCTION AND COMMUNICATION

As we have stated above, from the 1970s onwards we can observe processes of the increasing capitalization and economization of knowledge in the universities. However, these processes affecting the university reflect a more general transformation of our lives into businesses: enterprises that are actually never closed. Even when on vacation, or while sleeping and eating, we are busy producing energy – and as everything else, these have become issues of calculation, of optimal balance. It seems as if life itself has become an enterprise, and we have become entrepreneurial selves and entrepreneurs of the self. Who we are – as an employee, a husband or wife, a friend, a student, a teacher – should now be regarded as the result of a production process that seeks to meet one's own needs or the needs of others. The self, then, is a product, the result of a productive use of human and other resources. As entrepreneurs – that is, the artists of capitalist societies – we now embrace the virtues of flexibility, innovation, and productive creativity. One of the

most valuable production forces of this entrepreneurial self is her learning force; a force that produces new competencies, that adds value to the self, and fuels the accumulation of one's human capital. For this entrepreneurial self, the present is the possible *productive* gap in between past and future – the past being the available resources and the future the estimated returns. For the entrepreneurial self, the past and future are always virtually present in a calculative frame. Time here is productive time, or more precisely, time of investment, that is, a permanent calculation in view of future returns and useful resources. For the entrepreneurial student, the activity of studying – or more precisely, learning as the accumulation of human capital or building credits – is now an act of investment, thinking of rates of return. Therefore, any pedagogy, or any instruction today, comes very close to the provision of incentives – it is through incentives that students become benevolent, and teachers have the impression they still have something to say. For entrepreneurial selves, and certainly students and teachers, time thus is always occupied – a condition articulated today very clearly in the notions of "permanent" or "permanence". Time for the entrepreneurial self is a resource, or even a product, and hence it is something that can and should be managed. Time management becomes indispensable in an age of permanency. It is the managerial art of setting new priorities by calculating possible gains and estimating the needs. That is also what the hidden curriculum of the current organization of education, which stresses individual learning trajectories, modules, choice, and permanent/formative (portfolio) assessment, teaches young people: time is not something you receive, nor something that is given, but a resource that can and should be managed, or something you produce in setting priorities. In that sense, indeed, there is no time, and we have no time. And probably, the same holds true for places and for things.

Entrepreneurial selves do not on occasion enter market places, but actually inhabit markets; the market is their home. Entrepreneurship is the ethos of the market place, and it includes the extraordinary imaginary force to see all outside as a possible new market. Perhaps the current use of the notions "global" or "globalized" articulates that actually there are no places, or that all places are marketized, occupied. A sensitiveness for niches and productive innovation is indispensable in a *globalized world*. And hence students, or teachers – in their entrepreneurial brilliance – are not just producers, but at the same time global marketers; there is no production of new competencies, no construction of identities without market studies, and without marketing the produced self. Entrepreneurship means the self is to be produced, advertized and sold. In other words, employability becomes the challenge in a globalized world, and that is exactly what transformed educational institutions teach young people: get used to managing the ongoing capitalization and marketization of your life. Related to this specific spatial and temporal mindset, every-thing is either a resource or a product, that is, the input or output of a production process. Even more, for the entrepreneur, each product is a new resource, and a possible new input – she understands the art of sampling, recycling, pop-art. Perhaps students today, inhabiting a globalized world, are trained in these arts; they have to be. For

them, in their entrepreneurial imagination, what is available is a resource, and a resource is available. In fact: it is all a *matter of resources*.

Regarding the processes of capitalization and marketization, which transform the time of study into productive time or time of investment, and the commons into resources, we should perhaps refer to a new movement of collective de-identification which is signaled by the slogan of protesting students in Germany: *We are no human capital!*[5] In today's discourses on the university, the term "students" has been replaced by that of "learners" and these have become synonymous with the resources to be exploited, the talents to be mobilized, the object of investment, the guarantee of a country's competitiveness, or, when addressing the possible disobedient component of human capital, the customers to be seduced. Perhaps the de-identification of protesting students should at once be regarded as an affirmation: *we are no human capital*, *we are no learners*, *we are students*. And somewhere perhaps we hear a related concern: *we are no entrepreneurs*, *no knowledge producers*, *no knowledge transmitters*, *no innovators*, *we are professors*. Maybe this articulates indeed a de-identification with the logic of production, the ethos of calculation, choice, and flexibility, and the profanation of the time of investment. It could be regarded as an attempt to break through one's personalized circle of learning or production, which aims at the endless accumulation of credits or research output. What is at stake is the profanation of the (productive) *time* of knowledge production, transmission, and innovation, and the (competitive) *space* of learning environments and human capital circulation and mobilization.

But perhaps, we should acknowledge also another profanation. Despite previous movements of profanation, and despite massification and democratization, the academic community has continued to address its public as a public of *readers*, people with erudition, carriers and representatives of culture or reason. Perhaps today, we are witnessing a profanation of thinking and communication; that is, thinking and speaking become disconnected from cultures, languages, and their spatio-temporal fixations. Just as the movement of the *universitas* was made possible by the invention of the book-text, the invention and appearance of the "screen-text" (in the late 1970s and early 1980s) which changes the text from a pure optical "thing", into a (virtual) interface, has made it possible for the text to become a medium not of disciplining or cultivation, but of communication and communization. To say "We are students" means now: we are communicators and communizers. Indeed, what else does the so-called consumer, network, online student – often criticized or ridiculed by academics who embrace tradition and the idea of cultivation and reason – articulate other than that everyone is able to think, to speak, or to communicate. Of course, this democracy in thought and communication – and the clear message *you*, *academics*, *do not have to teach us to think*, *to speak*, *to communicate* – could be perceived by the fearful as undermining the very foundations of the university. This message is particularly frightening for those academics who (still) embrace the idea that thinking and communication cannot be disconnected from culture and language, and that writing and reading books are the obligatory passage points to

enter the kingdom of truth. Such a message is specifically a harsh one for those post-modern academics – the last inhabitants of the university of reason or culture – who want to *explain* exactly that, and how we are all captured by language, embedded within cultures, trapped within an endless series of representations and sentenced to an endless construction and reconstruction of reality. Isn't the message here: *stop thinking about the (im)possibility of thinking*, *stop talking about the (im)possibility of communication*, *but start thinking and talking about something*. However, once more (part of) the humanities seems to be trying to tame this communication and communization by attempting to refer the words and the things again to their own "proper" meaning, in the context of identity-politics or diversity discourses (once again, they are indicating appropriations). After the spatial turn, that is, the shift from modernization to globalization, (part of) the humanities seek to shape the destiny of humanity again. In the global environment, the concern is no longer about orientation but about position. The discourses concerning identity and diversity articulate this concern. The current focus on cosmopolitanism, that is, the global citizen, could be regarded as the ultimate expression thereof. The global citizen is not Kant's world citizen. The world citizen is the one who transgresses (national) culture and local knowledge and embraces universal reason (she is a traveler in time), while the global citizen transgresses local politics of identity and diversity and incorporates mutual understanding (she is a traveler in space). But both are a tamed version of humanity, not representing humanity on the move without destiny, but representing humanity on a journey to assume, in one way or another, the idea of coming home. This is again a tamed version of the humanities, organized as travel agencies, and, hence, enabling people to leave their homes and know the world, but at the same time concerned with bringing them back home. However, to assume a radical democracy in thought and communication comes down to assuming everyone is able to communicate and think, and consequently experiencing thinking and speaking, thought and language as "pure means" without end or destination, as means to be collectively involved with a matter of concern (Agamben, 2000). Indeed, maybe this profanation of communication inaugurates the invention of new pedagogic forms (cfr., Simons et al, 2011), including also a profanation of production. These forms are to be welcomed, as is any site where students and professors are interested in something and where that thing becomes an issue that gathers a thinking public.

OUR CONCERN: *STUDIA PAEDAGOGICA*

Perhaps today, we should try to find out what helps to make academics become professors (again) and learners become students. We should think again about how to turn a text, a virus, or a river into a cause for thinking. How to design the scene in such a way that thinking proceeds in the presence of the issue or thing? How to conceive of the scene of lecturing for example, its architecture (the inside and outside of the habitat), its technology of speech, its material way of bringing together students? How to avoid a lecture or a seminar becoming merely a performance or spectacle, and

to make sure that it remains a public act of truth telling? How to construct a certain closeness or nearness (both spatially and temporally), in order to be able to think "in the presence of"? How to get time and space to become concerned and engaged in collective study? How to use new information and communication technologies to provoke public thinking and collective study and to invent new pedagogic forms? These questions on the "architecture and didactics of the public university" are a major concern for any *studia paedagogica*, but ones which we cannot discuss in further detail here. The counter-history we have offered has constituted an attempt to articulate the unique movement and the public form of the university. As such, we hope it functions as well as an attempt to transform the current gathering around the university itself from a discussion concerning matters of performance (output, indicators, rankings), needs (assessments, satisfaction rates, responsiveness), and resources (available human capital, financial resources), into a gathering around a matter of public concern. Perhaps this counter-history can invite experimentation and (re-)invention of the university as public pedagogic form in the present condition.

NOTES

[1] This article integrates ideas that are developed in other texts: Masschelein & Simons (2010, 2011), Simons (2011).

[2] For elements of such a history and some more extensive elaboration see: Masschelein, J, & M. Simons (2010).

[3] F. Kittler (1987, 2004) has elaborated the idea that the university is an institution for pursuing, processing, storing, (re-)producing, and disseminating 'knowledge' that was strongly tied to the invention of the printed book (where students are no longer cheap copy-machines, but can really 'read') as the medium through and in which this was possible. Kittler analyses the university primarily as a media system and claims that today through the computer there is a new medium, which allows for a unification of the humanities and natural sciences. Although Kittler explicitly goes into the practice of lecturing and giving seminars, he mainly conceives of these as knowledge-related practices from the viewpoint of 'media' (media form the infrastructural basis or quasi-transcendental condition for experience and understanding). We contend, however, that lecturing and giving seminars are (not only media systems or discourse networks but) particular pedagogic forms, which are grammatized in particular spatial and temporal architectures (e.g. the lecture hall, the seminar room) and in fact materialize and make public the movement of thought (rather than the production of knowledge).

[4] For the public lecture see more extensively: Masschelein, J. & Simons, M. (2011).

[5] See: http://www.linksruck.de/artikel_421.html

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TOWARD THE IGNORANT GDAŃSK CITIZEN

Place-based Collective Identity, *Knowledge to Refuse*, *and the Refusal to Know*

The city of Gdańsk has a dramatic history of displacements. After World War II, the end of which for the city meant nearly total annihilation, following the heavy bombardment by Soviet artillery, the vast majority of its German population was expelled from the ruins of the town. A new population of Gdańsk citizens gradually moved into the ruins and the houses that remained in the districts outside the town's center. They were refugees displaced by Soviet troops from the eastern parts of pre-war Poland and its neighboring countries, people who lost their homes and families in other parts of Poland, those who moved in from the suburbs and villages surrounding the town, or vagabonds and "pioneers" who searched for new opportunities in a place where everything had to be started from scratch. The new population did not have a common history, and they all moved into a place that had; but that history was hardly theirs.

Turning this collection of dislocated immigrants into a community required intensive work on the reconstruction of identities and memory. This was the task undertaken by the new Polish administration installed with the support of Soviet troops, with at least partial support from schools, intellectuals, churches, and cultural workers. Poland – and Gdańsk as part of Poland – had to be reinvented within the new borders imposed by the events of WWII, and that included a reconstruction of its memory.

This paper deals with how Gdańsk citizens remember and do not remember their place of life. The data was gathered in 2010 as part of the project called "Identity and Locality: Pohulanka 1946. Building on (non)memory". The project was conducted by eleven researchers and social pedagogues from the University of Gdańsk, in cooperation with the government of the city. It was part of the events marking the twentieth anniversary of the reconstruction of local self-government in Poland, following the 1989 democratic upheaval, which to large an extent was the result of political protest movements initiated in Gdańsk. The project involved research and educational components. The latter were aimed at "unforgetting" the repressed memories so that a more conscious understanding of the city's past and a more inclusive collective identity could be made possible. The research part was composed of seven tasks involving biographical research (including autobiographical data furnished by the author of this paper), textual data analysis, critical discourse

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analysis, micro-history, and a quantitative survey. We gathered data from eleven individual biographical narrative interviews and one focus interview, 375 survey questionnaires, over 200 Internet forum posts, two individual micro-histories, and we also analyzed two fictional books by local authors.

We also organized a conference where the results of our analyses were presented, and where we invited – as guest speakers – some local writers and politicians, whose presentations became an additional source of secondary data.

In an attempt to understand how the post-war identity of citizens of Poland was shaped, the study focused on how and what Gdańsk citizens remember from one of the most dramatic events of the post-war history of the city – the hanging of eleven persons charged with persecuting inmates of the Nazi concentration camp in Stutthoff. The execution took place on 4 July 1946 at Pohulanka Street. About 200,000 onlookers watched this execution. The local authorities declared this day a public holiday, and crowds of workers, students, and "ordinary people" were transported to the site of execution. To collect data on this specific event, we interviewed students of the University of the Third Age at the University of Gdańsk, as well as native citizens who remembered the day of the event and/or remembered how it was acted out before and after (for instance in children's games) and circulated in daily conversations across the city. We also analyzed secondary data, such as narratives presented on publicly available Internet forums. We interviewed representatives of professional groups of "memory workers", like tourist guides and local writers.

Our main interpretative framework drew on the theory of ritual developed by Arnold van Gennep and Rene Girard[1]. This means that we analyzed the Pohulanka execution not in historical terms, as a result of a war-crime trial, but rather as a collective *rite de passage* (van Gennep 2006 [1909]) and as a scapegoating ritual (Girard 1987), the function of which was – intentionally or not – to erase the former identities of the loose collection of immigrants and turn them into a new community of Gdańsk citizens, whose identity was projected on the erasure of the city's German past and on the exclusion of memories of their places of origin.

GDAŃSK: CEMETERIES, MYTHS, IDENTITY

Among elderly people whom we interviewed, Gdańsk is remembered as composed of places marked by death. Such places could be single graves located among city trees, elegant parks full of Sunday strollers, as well as wild bushes. Children's logic led them to think that they were all cemeteries, only "different" from those elsewhere, and thus typical of Gdańsk. *Gdańsk is made of cemeteries*, a respondent said in regard to these children's stories (Mendel 2010b, pp. 347–348).

Pohulanka Street was one such death site. In my childhood, it was a place covered with thick greenery whose name, even though it was formally a street, was never used as an address. I was told by my mother to pray for the dead while we were passing Pohulanka on the bus, and I was never told why. Interestingly, it still has an aura of a forgotten place in the very center of a large city, with no visible function that would

define its shape. The participants in our study speak of "knowing" and "not knowing" about what had happened there. It is a simultaneous gesture of recalling and avoiding that place described as attracting and provoking fear in children's "playing hangman"[2] and in adults' calls to prayer. The characteristic description of this phenomenon in the narratives of Third Age University students, who were children at the time of the event, is the overlapping recurrence of the following phrases: *I did not know...* and *I have always known* (Zbierzchowska 2010, pp. 325–327).

The "non-memory" of the city's past is, in a way, filled with myths. Gdańsk has distinguishable historical and literary descriptions that substantially contribute to its mythologization, which, it seems, replaces remembering. The myths are numerous. First, there is a certain myth of "firstness" in the recent history of the city. One of the historical exhibitions recently used in promotional campaigns of the city stated that "It All Started Here", referring to the outbreak of World War II (with the shelling of a Polish military base by a German battleship in September 1939) and to the protest movement that erased communism from Central and Eastern Europe (strikes in the shipyards that gave birth to *Solidarność* in 1980). The myth of the fight for freedom has been used in the city's campaign in its bid to become European Capital of Culture in 2011, when the local authorities promoted the city with the slogan "Culture of Freedom and Freedom of Culture". In the often acclaimed novels by Stefan Chwin and Paweł Huelle, Gdańsk's history is presented as complex, half-conscious, displaced and rooted in places that "say" things the heroes cannot understand – because they are all haunted by the "absent presence" of Germans. And there is Günther Grass: his novels played the most significant role in the construction of the mythologies of Gdańsk. These historicized mythologies are often oriented toward the unspoken guilt of living in somebody else's houses, soothed by a nostalgia informed by a lyrical vision of the multicultural past of the city *à la* Grass, and by popular books with photographs of everyday life of the former inhabitants of the city.

This mythological dimension of Gdańsk was very much alive in a series of invited papers on Gdańsk identity presented at our conference by writers, sociologists, and local politicians. The invitation was open-ended; we did not tell the speakers what exactly we expected, apart from telling them that they were invited to present papers on the identity of Gdańsk. Most of those speakers spoke of *myths*. This approach dominated the papers written by sociologists (Załęcki 2010, pp. 165–192), geographers (Czepczyński 2010, pp. 149–164), writers (S. Chwin 2010, pp. 19–36; Piórkowska 2010, pp. 37–43), and by the city's mayor, Paweł Adamowicz (2010, pp. 45–56). The collection of myths they presented was broad, and it was only Piórkowska – the youngest of the presenters – who overtly distanced herself from thinking of Gdańsk thorough the lens of its haunting past[3]. All these myths subscribe to a synthetic account found in an often quoted text by a German historian, Olivier Loew, written several years before the conference:

> Let us begin with 1945 – the city is in ruins, in course of "de-germanization". In a fairly spontaneous way a local myth of "Polishness", apparently always

> present here, is implanted, Reconstruction aimed at the restoration of historical monuments leads to the creation of the myth of Gdańsk's uniqueness, and eventually to the myth of a Genius Loci. The myth of Polishness, connected to the Proletarian myth, is the source of the myth of constant dissensus, and after the events of 1970 and 1980 this myth transforms into the myth of eternal rebelliousness of Gdańsk. There is also a myth of the Gdańsk of the Seas, of Multicultural Gdańsk, of Open Gdańsk, etc.. We have here, therefore, myths that are controlled top-down, like that of Polishness and Proletarianism, myths originating in intellectual circles of political opposition, like that of Genius Loci, and those that seemingly emerge automatically, like that of the uniqueness of Gdańsk (Loew 2006, p. 15).

The instances of non-memory (erasure, exclusion of particular events and their traces) and the numerous varieties of mythologization offer important insights into the processes that underpin the construction of the post-war identity of citizens of Poland. In that reconstruction, the Pohulanka execution represents a symbolic epitome of the passage from the pre-war, "chaotic" reality, to the fantasy of a more homogeneous, post-war nationality.

All Gdańsk citizens were touched by the Pohulanka execution in some way. The massively witnessed event became a spectacle that made its meaning universal. "*We all* were there*"*, said Teresa Dec, then 10-years old[4]. One could say that the Pohulanka execution stands simultaneously for a Girardian ritual of scapegoating (Girard 1987 [1986]), and for a "rite of passage" in Van Gennep's terms (Van Gennep 2006 [1909]; Mendel 2010b, pp. 351–360). The "passage" is the transition from one state of the social (i.e. social status, collective identity) to another, in three phases: separation, marginalization, and accommodation. In the Girardian meaning, the former oppressors (officers of a Nazi concentration camp, some of whom were citizens of the same city) were turned into victims of the new population of Gdańsk. The disparate collection of people without common history, ethnicity, or communal bonds, themselves victims of massive displacements, turned into a community of spectators and accomplices to violence against those who were legally qualified to become their victims. In the second sense, along the lines of Van Gennep's ideas, the experience of execution marked the liminal, "zero" point of passage, between the dispersed old and the united new identity. Here, the collective witnessing of the unspeakable event of violence formed the platform over which a community now had "something" to share. As Girard observes, events of "foundational murder" tend to be denied and replaced by ritualized gestures that signify the event in a way that does not evoke guilt. For Girard, this is how religions are conceived.

The street where the execution took place was named Pohulanka Street in 1945, as a memento of a street in Vilnius bearing the same name (more than 30% of post-war settlers were displaced from the Vilnius Region in Lithuania, incorporated into the USSR). What intensifies the aura of horror and oddity of the execution is that

the word "pohulanka" means a violent party, a carnival of joy gone out of control. Formally, the execution was "simply" a result of a war crime trial, and there were no doubts that the trial was fair. At the same time, by virtue of its spectacularity, it was meant to kill (both physically and symbolically) what was considered German, in general, and local Gdańsk German (*Danziger)*, more specifically[5]. It was then typical to refuse Germans in Gdańsk their identity, which was reflected in various actions reported in many narratives of people participating in the research project. For many years, the word "German" was spelled in the local press with a small initial letter (*german*), contravening spelling rules[6] (Załęcki 2010, pp. 168).

By its spectacular power of liminality, the Pohulanka execution was also directed "inwards", onto the very spectators that attended it. It was "meant" to destroy what was generally "previous" in them, in order to give rise to a *new Gdańsk citizen.* It erased the autochthonal and the immigrant (coming from the south or from the Polish Eastern Borderlands, and especially from Lithuania). The new citizen would neither be a German *Danziger*, nor a pre-war Polish (*Danziger* or immigrant), rural Kashubian or displaced Lithuanian; he/she would be just a citizen of the new, socialist state, cleansed of any traces reflecting previous identities.

What can we learn from the Pohulanka execution regarding the role of memory and forgetting in the shaping of identity? Using conceptual tools that make the initial reference to Girard and van Gennep more operational and fine-tuned, I want to point to two paths of interpretation.

In his book on the role of denial in identity construction, Stanley Cohen (2001) notes that people who had lived through traumatic events "could not find place in their consciousness for such an unimaginable horror … and they did not have the courage to face it. It is possible to live in a twilight between knowing and not knowing" (p. 2). This leads Cohen to reflect on the role of denial in the construction of a predictable sense of place. He states:

> [A] deeper form of denial is more universal: the inability or refusal to be continuously "facing" or "living with" unpleasant truths. Domestic and foreign problems, for example, may be avoided by the same sentiment that "worse things are happening elsewhere". In your own society, this allows you the evasive reassurance that what is happening is not so bad. And for a remote society, this locates information on a relativistic atlas of other terrible places: why should you concern yourself about this one place if even worse things are happening elsewhere? (p. 20)

Secondly, the inability to remember, or the thusly created void, is subject to sacralization. Hans Mol explains the term:

> Sacralisation is a process by means of which man has pre-eminently safeguarded and reinforced this complex of orderly interpretations of reality, rules and legitimisations. The mechanisms of sacralisation can be broken down

> in at least the following: (1) objectification (the projection of order in a beyond where it is less vulnerable to contradictions, exceptions, and contingencies – in other words a rarified realm where major outlines of order can be maintained in the face of temporal, but all-absorbing dislocations of that order); (2) commitment (the emotional anchorage in the various, proliferating, foci of identity); (3) ritual (the repetitive actions, articulations, and movements which prevent the object of sacralisation to be lost sight of); (4) myth (the integration of the various strains in a coherent, shorthand symbolic account). (Mol 1976, pp. 14–15)

Our respondents experienced a shock after receiving information about the Pohulanka horror, although they always said they had known "something". It seems they were used to living not in front of this event, but in its shadow, "in a twilight between knowing and not knowing" in Cohen's words. Referring to the mythologization mentioned by Mol as part of sacralization, we may note that religion became a very visible "glue" for the community in dealing with the memory of the Pohulanka execution. For instance, against the political climate of that time in Communist Poland, Gdańsk citizens renovated and built churches, prayed a lot and established social bonds based on religion, all this to create an identity which according to Mol (1976) becomes "a stable niche in a predictable environment" (p. 14).

UNPREDICTABILITY AND IGNORANCE: KNOWING AND NOT KNOWING, REMEMBERING AND FORGETTING

Even though the Pohulanka execution was meant to erase previously constructed subjectivities, it did not destroy them entirely. For instance, the Vilnius community settled in Gdańsk still celebrates its traditional festivals. In that sense, the Pohulanka execution can also be recognized as part of a collective self-creation rather than subjugation to a politically organized scapegoating ritual. In spite of the spectacularity of the execution, it was impossible to predict what the crowd would take home, how the ritual would develop when left on its own in individual and collective memories, what social values and attitudes it would provoke or encourage to share, what would be remembered and what would be erased, or whether it would be a prerequisite for specific behaviors. This uncertainty raises questions regarding how we make use of knowledge. Both "to know" and "not to know" constitute the unpredictable. Negotiating unpredictability in daily life creates the margin for the subject's freedom (Goffman 2000 [1959]). This aspect is clearly reflected in the identity construction strategies of Gdańsk citizens, ranging from knowledge which is memory to memory which is knowledge (Mendel 2010a, pp. 378–385). For example, the strategy of building an "intimate Gdańsk" is present in some of the narratives. In those stories, Gdańsk becomes a complex of places which often have ceased to exist but which are remembered in the private space of a narrator's life, free of places like Pohulanka

(p. 378). There is also an interesting "implant strategy" which consists in filling the empty spots of memory of some place with new details, in the light of violence that is felt as the narrator's fault (p. 379). Another strategy is the "privatization of the event", described as a conscious retention, or sealing of memory of events only in the memory of its eye-witnesses (pp. 379–380). There is also, of course, a classically Girardian "strategy of attack", in which an aggressive approach to all that could make people guilty wins in their own memory games (pp. 380–381). The analysis of these strategies of identification links to the issue of power relations. In this context, identity is formed between the extreme poles of being the oppressor and the victim. Speaking of living in heterogeneous neighborhoods, Melosik and Szkudlarek (2009) wrote that those who are oppressors usually express a tendency toward not remembering; those who are victims remember the oppression exactly, in every detail forever. In the light of what Marc Augé (2010) wrote about the forms of forgetting, for the former there is only the future, for the latter – only the past.

The above framing is very important in understanding the tensions and contradictions that underpin the constructions of identity of Gdańsk citizens; an identity torn between various sacralized myths. These myths are oppressively positioned in pre-defined narratives, maybe as the expression of the defense of autonomy, the officious work of memory for the benefit of its individual and collective owner (Demetrio 2010). Knowing and not knowing, as active forces of identification, raise the question of ignorance and the role of knowledge factors in refusal, resistance, and autonomy. Typically, we think of "good citizens" as those who "know" and "participate". What knowledge does it take to refuse (for instance, as in the examples discussed in this text, to refuse to remember) – and create spaces of freedom? At this juncture, Gert Biesta's insight, which builds on the work of Jacques Rancière, is important in clarifying this issue:

> The ignorant citizen is the one who is ignorant of a particular definition of what he or she is supposed to be as a "good citizen". The ignorant citizen is the one who, in a sense, refuses this knowledge and, through this, refuses to be domesticated, refuses to be pinned down in a pre-determined civic identity. (Biesta 2011, p. 152)

Ignorance becomes a prerequisite for creating/maintaining the autonomous existence of the subject, through the freedom of the subject's choice and decision-making. Even though it may sound disturbing, especially when we think of subjects who bear the heritage of oppression and guilt, ignorance based on the *refusal to remember* seems to apply to them as well as to people who ignore their poverty, incapability, or reasons for their exclusion. I argue, following Latour, that ritualized proceedings such as those which shaped the event known as "Pohulanka 1946", actively produce effects unrecognized by those who force others to participate in their enactment. Those proceedings may have a broader impact on specific politics, which, along the line of argument proposed by Biesta, generate new subjectivities and new identities. On the one hand, as Pohulanka research has shown, *a good Gdańsk citizen* is one

deprived of subjectivity, having been thought to be a "receiver of a new identity". On the other hand, it is equally true that *a good Gdańsk citizen* is "a ritual practitioner" who is produced by autonomously operating rites. This twofold power constructs the educational process of learning identity and subordinating the citizen.

In that twofold structure, the space of the autonomous subject seems to be a space of freedom to refuse every social routine and each common behavior, the space of ignorance and doubts, free of meanings given "once and for all". The first condition of that freedom is the *knowledge to refuse* – a competence of *knowing* that we can exercise the right of being ignorant of things that we are "supposed" to know.

To conclude, I opt for a continuous, individual and collective reconstruction of the meanings; reconstruction of the past in the present instead of a politically commercialized transposition of the former into the latter. This is the reason why I elsewhere have considered it necessary to propose a critical version of place-conscious education (Gruenewald 2003), which would be responsible for creating new trends both in the fields of the *pedagogy of memory* (Demetrio 2010) and the *pedagogy of place* (Mendel 2006).

In this sense, "the ignorant Gdańsk citizen" mentioned in the title of this essay should be understood as part of the production of the *good citizen* through education in the context of local identity and knowledge (memory). Peculiar as it is, Gdańsk citizens' ignorance becomes the knowledge that makes the human subject autonomous. It becomes the **knowledge to refuse**.

This problematic is well captured, I think, in one of the essays written specifically for this project. Barbara Piórkowska, a representative of the young generation of Gdańsk citizens and a writer whose book on Gdańsk has become an important voice for her generation (2010a), in her book and in the essay *ignores* the problem of the German presence/absence in Gdańsk, although she knows the nature of the problem and she is not indifferent to it (Piórkowska 2010a,b). As she announces on the back cover of her novel, "this is a book about Gdańsk without a single German" (Piórkowska 2010a). Such an overt declaration is neither a matter of "not knowing" nor of hostility; it is a gesture of conscious ignorance, of *refusal* to participate in the politically constructed, obligatory impossibility of coming to terms with knowing and not knowing simultaneously; a refusal to position herself in the pre-defined space of identity where only the sacralization of ourselves can make us feel secure. It is a pure act of de-identification. If there is a mythology in her text, it is *spatial* (focused on places) and autobiographical, rather than historical; it represents the world of those who built their lives *after* the imposed politics of memory and practices of oblivion that help people to survive them. Controversial as it is, this gesture has been recognized as significant for the generation of Gdańsk citizens who were *born* into this place and treat it as their home, taking the constant presence of an absent German culture, and an identity built on the collective non-memory of that presence, as the Otherness against which they have refused, in a gesture of de-identification, to define their own position.

TOWARD THINKING OF DEMOCRACY AND EDUCATION

Post-WWII citizens of Gdańsk were refused their subjectivity; they were treated as the "material" for a newly invented citizenship. To a large extent, that was the fate of other post-war Europeans as well. However, the processes evoked as means of the construction of new citizenship could not have been controlled totally, even though the regime did have immense resources to control the course of everyday lives. The new identity rituals "acted on their own"; they may have produced side effects that were beyond the control of those who initiated them. Those impersonal subjects (rituals, procedures, memories, and the acts of refusal to know) worked to shape unpredictable, indeterminable identities. Even though the political system of that time was very far from democratic, we can still learn from that experience a lesson that is very close to Gert Biesta's observation that "democracy is a process of subjectification, a process in which new political identities and subjectivities come into existence" (2011, p. 151). He further elaborates:

> …it makes sense to think of democratic politics as a process of subjectification, as a process that generates new political subjectivities and identities, then it follows that any learning involved in this process has to do with and stems from engagement with and exposure to the experiment of democracy. (2011, p. 152)

The above analysis has wide-ranging implications for the articulation of any meaningful pedagogy of memory and place-based education. As Biesta points out, this analysis signals

> …a significant departure from the conventional way in which education, citizenship and democracy are connected, as they challenge the idea that political subjectivities and identities "can be" and "have to be" fully formed before democracy can "take off" – a way of thinking which I have characterised as a socialisation conception of civic learning and democratic education. (p. 151)

In other words, we cannot "prepare" people for democracy, nor can those preparations be considered as conditions that precede the "introduction" of democracy, in a mode that could be characteristic of the discourse of republicanism in the time of Enlightenment. Democracy precedes subjectification. However, in what seems to be a result of the analysis presented here, no political system is devoid of overdetermination, resulting from the very fact that procedures, rituals, and institutions can act on their own, in spite of the "interests" in the name of which they are called to life. Their interference with intentional agencies create networks of unpredictability that can produce *knowledge to refuse*, and that is – if there are any such conditions at all – the prior, or ultimate, condition of *ignorance*, which can transform the social in the dense network of overlapping and overdetermined agencies. What is and what is not to be remembered is eventually a matter of

"strategy", the beginning of a future grounded in the everyday practices of building local identities.

NOTES

[1] Van Gennep describes rites de passage as organising the change of social statuses and following through stages of separation, marginalisation and accommodation. Girard speaks of scapegoating as a ritual process through which communities overcome their crises and manage – by participation in collective violence – to establish new social structures and identities.

[2] One participant recalled that one of the games in the courtyards of the city was "to sway a hangman".

[3] The fact that most of the speakers invited to talk about the identity of Gdańsk referred to myths may relate to the feature of identity characterised by Ernesto Laclau (1990) as being simultaneously metaphorical and mythical. This mythical dimension may, perhaps, be especially active in communities with turbulent histories that cannot be coherently narrated.

[4] http://www.trojmiasto.pl/wiadomosci/200-tys-gapio-ogladalo-egzekucje-zbrodniarzy-ze-Stutthofu-n33749.html (16.07.2009).

[5] At that time the term Nazi was not used to label the perpetrators of war atrocities – they were "just" German.

[6] In Polish, the words describing nationality are spelled with capital letters only when they apply to people; those pertaining to things are spelled with small initial letters (e.g. "He is German and he has a german car" would be correct in Polish). Depriving Germans of "their capital G" in post-war media was then a discursive act of dehumanization.

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STOP MAKING SENSE!

And Hear the Wrong People Speak

In this article I explore the idea that in order for equality to take place we do not need to ground it in anything other than simply assuming it, taking seriously the suggestion of Jacques Rancière that equality resides in the contingent conditions of all spoken language. I will explore some of the consequences of such a starting point by making problematic the notions of nation and national identity, as they are totalizing frameworks for schooling and democracy, and, as such, taken for granted in the Swedish national curriculum. National identity is here taken as an empirical example of what Rancière calls the police order, that is, of a structural inequality that makes the poor into an "evil" threat to the rich, "good" citizen. I also explore the "mode" in which it is possible to uphold such an idea of a totalizing frame, and ask how it affects citizenship and schooling. In order to find a way out of the predicaments created by the inherent nationalism of the national curriculum, I introduce the idea of the political as a split in the totalizing frame, most visible in the cleavage of interests between those who have and those who do not have access to power and wealth. I argue throughout the paper that making the split an obvious one is, by definition, already "outside" the totalizing frame. That is, one is already outside the context for making sense. As belonging to what I call "the wrong people", that is an episodic community of people who assume and confirm equality in a situation of inequality, one changes the very sense upon which totalizing frames are based. It is also only then that democracy can happen at all in schools.

THE IDEA OF A ONE AND MORAL POLITICAL DISCOURSE

Schooling, in any society, is aimed at incorporating the young into being a certain type of citizen. The role of the curriculum is to define the "mode" through which youth are to take part in a particular society, to educate them, not only through knowledge but also through values and norms defining the particularity of that society. In Sweden this is done through a national curriculum, that is, the curriculum educates the young within a frame of national identity. The curriculum, then, is not only to give directions for what is to be taught in schools, but particularly explains how this knowledge forms the Swedish identity. Schooling, then, in the context of a national curriculum, is to produce Swedish citizens, or, in other words, to direct learning (both knowledge, values, and norms), so as to reproduce that which is

T. Szkudlarek (Ed.), Education and the Political, 133–141.

supposed to be shared by all those who live in the geographical space called Sweden. National identity is essentially based on the idea of One; it is that which is supposed to be shared by all those people, over time and space, that are counted as Swedish. It is, therefore, also an idea of one organically, naturally developed society, of society as *ochlos*, indivisible in its continuous enclosure of everyone in its totality. Every Swede is what he or she is against the backdrop of an idea of a totality in which everyone has his or her place. Individualism itself is to be understood in relation to such an idea. That is, the individual "identities" are already defined within the idea of one framing national identity. This totality of one national identity takes the form of a story that frames the national curriculum, because a curriculum is foremost an expression of the image of a society, of how it understands itself. It defines the space and the image/story occupying that space. The national curriculum is to ensure that national Swedes are made and reproduced. It is, as such, an expression of how the state will ensure its own continuation (Popkewitz 2008).

In the curriculum, the image of Swedish identity is summed up as a set of basic or central values to be transmitted to everyone: "The school has the important task of imparting, instilling and forming in pupils those fundamental values on which our society is based" (Lpo94 2006, p. 1). Schooling, as a fulfillment of the curriculum, is a confirmation of an already on-going socialization of living in this "mode" called Sweden, of confirming those "fundamental values" that society already rests upon and that define who "we" are as Swedish people. Schooling does not "make" Swedes, schooling confirms what already is the case. One is born in the place and in the story occupying that space, and one is obliged, as long as one is included as Swedish, to confirm its continuation through, among other things, participation in a school for all, as defined by the curriculum. Schooling brings with it, one can say, a moral duty to be educated as that which one is already. Therefore, Swedish schools are for Swedish children, and for anyone not belonging to that category schooling tends to be problematic (Säfström 2011). But this does not mean that Swedish children, through schooling, are prepared to share the wealth and power of Swedish society equally, only that they are equally Swedish.

My point here is that the totality of national identity is one of inequality, but an inequality that is contained within a framework. In Rancière's (1999) words, the poor (who of course exist in Swedish society as well) are included as excluded. That is, everyone is supposed to have his or her place within this framework, unequally distributed in terms of power and wealth. Because this basic inequality of the social is distributed against an idea of One, there is no position from which politics can appear. Politics can only happen when the idea of One is divided, when there are antagonisms between positions absolutely different from each other and with no common frame for neutralizing them (Rancière 1999, Mouffe 2005). Such a frame reduces antagonisms to variations on a theme already given meaning within the frame. It becomes fundamentally a-political. That means, among other things, that if the idea of schooling is defined by a national curriculum that neutralizes the possibility of antagonisms between different "hegemonies", democracy cannot be

contained within such a framework. Democracy can only happen when the idea of a totality, of society as One, is divided. Democracy is always a way of dealing with a plural world (Mouffe 2005). Therefore, there are no democratic schools in Sweden, even though democracy can happen within them. When and if democracy indeed happens, though, it is always as a break with the idea of a totality in which everyone already has their place.

Using Chantal Mouffe's (2005) distinction between politics as distribution, on the one hand, and the political as a confrontation in antagonisms, on the other, one can say that in order for democratic citizenship to be political it needs to be divided. That is, it is only when distributive politics (to give each and everyone what he or she "deserves" in the One unequally organized society) is confronted with the antagonism of the political, that it can really be democratic. It is only when one acknowledges that positions are not variations of the same theme, but represent profoundly different world-views, that the political can exist as such, or that a political democracy can exist at all. The idea of One forecloses such a possibility.

For Mouffe, it is a question of transforming antagonisms to what she calls agonisms that define "the core" of a democratic citizenship. This agonism emerges when adversaries are acknowledged, when there is space for legitimate antagonisms, a space for rational disagreement rather than some kind of neutralizing frame as, for example, national identity. What is important in Mouffe's analysis is also the distinction between morality and politics, in that politics are to be strictly understood in terms of a struggle over a line separating different worldviews and friends from enemies, but in such a way as to make the struggle continuously possible, that is to accept the other as an adversary that will not go away. In other words, in order for disagreement to take place, one needs to both hear and understand the other as someone speaking and in this lies the possibility of rational disagreement. In moral discourse, on the other hand, Mouffe argues, the other is not primarily understood as someone speaking their truth, but as either good or evil. In such a discourse the other becomes an absolute evil to destroy, rather than an adversary to oppose in a society organized through institutions that can guarantee rational disagreement. This means that if schooling is based in a moral discourse promoting a society defined through one national identity, rather than as an institution guaranteeing rational disagreement, schooling becomes an example of how post-politics works, rather than what it promises to be: a place for democracy.

If being Swedish can be understood as a moral obligation, produced, among other things, by curriculum and schooling, of being in the story, as suggested above, it is also a story in which the inside is understood in terms of a fundamentally good story against outside evils (Mattlar 2008, Säfström 2011). Mattlar (2008) shows how such a story takes form in textbooks for Swedish as a second language. The "evil forces" are described as coming from "the outside" through immigration, and are characterized in terms of "dictatorship" and "oppression", "socioeconomic segregation" and "misery", "conflict" and "war", "oppression of women", "irrationality," and "chaos". Good Swedish society, on the other hand, is, in these same textbooks, described as

"democratic", "equal", "peaceful", "rational," etc. There is clearly a moral discourse of good and evil at play in these textbooks.

This means that what would in a well-functioning democracy be pictured as a legitimate political adversary is, instead, in the moral society reduced to an evil enemy coming from the "outside" and which must be dealt with in a special manner, so as not to contaminate the one good society itself. The adversary, which in a proper democracy would be a legitimate adversary acting on the basis of a worldview or hegemony different than the one currently in place, becomes, instead, an absolute enemy whose legitimacy is not only seriously questioned, but turned into an evil threat to humanity itself (Mouffe 2005, pp. 75–76). The moral political discourse dehumanizes its enemies, and, therefore, carries with it the seed for violent reactions that threatens to destroy political institutions. But the threat to political institutions does not only, for Mouffe (2005), come from the outside, but also from within. That is, social institutions can less and less account for and guarantee antagonistic political relations. Schooling is a paradigmatic example of that. In Sweden, this is most apparent in the transformation of class conflicts, ethnic conflicts, and gender conflicts into a question of discipline and order in schools (Månsson & Säfström 2010) against the backdrop of a national curriculum. The ordered school is one in which the teacher is supposed to be a strong leader who molds the students into "good" citizens – that is, citizens that accept their moral duty to take up their given place within the story of the one national identity. That is, the poor are to take up their "destiny" to be included as excluded, as having the right to exist as "the people" in a constitutional democracy at the same time as they have no power to be heard other than as noise in that same society. And as far as society and schooling reflect each other, what we are moving towards is a society in which the poor are not only included as excluded, but also questioned, on moral grounds, to establish if they have the right to be supported by the state at all, as if they are evil enemies of the good (rich) citizens. A moral discourse dehumanizes and depoliticizes the possibility of politics, the possibility of speech, of being heard, if one is not already part of the one good school and society. It makes the fundamental dispute between those who have and those who do not have access to power and wealth both silent and invisible.

THE POLITICAL FICTION CHALLENGED

The story of the one good society establishes itself as a political fiction that neutralizes the political and turns democracy into the domain of a rhetoric of good and evil. The political fiction establishes itself as a rhetoric, which, according to Rancière (1991), has war rather than reason as its principle. In rhetoric, one is not searching for real understanding; its sole aim is to take over the will of another person. Rhetoric is speech that revolts against the poetic condition for the speaking being; it is speech in order to silence someone else. "You will speak no longer, you will think no longer, you will do this: that is its program" (1991, p. 85). And it is only by being overtaken by such a program that one becomes a part of the apolitical

fiction of being a citizen in a post-political state, as opposed to being a political subject. Or as Rancière (1991) formulates it:

> We aren't saying that the citizen is the ideal man, the inhabitant of an egalitarian political heaven that masks the reality of the inequality between concrete individuals. We are saying the opposite: that there is no equality except between men, that is to say, between individuals who regard each other only as reasonable beings. The citizen, on the contrary, the inhabitant of the political fiction, is man fallen into the land of inequality. (p. 90)

Apolitical citizenship is foremost the result of a political fiction that, "since the beginning of the world", has been an expression of a passion for inequality through what Rancière (1991) calls a reciprocal subjugation (p. 90). A subjugation which has alienated the power from the people as the people have been alienated from the power: "This reciprocal subjugation is the very principle of the political fiction whose origin lies in the alienation of reason by the passion of inequality" (Rancière, 1991, p. 90).

Citizenship within the frame of national identity is not only irrational because it tends to be based on a moral obligation. It is also unreasonable because it takes the political away from the subject, and throws him or her into the land of inequality. For Ranciére, it is human beings that can be equal, not social structure. And it is social structure that defines the nature of citizenship. What I have been arguing is that this social structure, in nation states such as Sweden, tends to be based on the idea of One. Being a citizen in such a state, then, is neutralized by the story of the nation and the moral obligation to be in this story, or forever to be doomed as outside the sphere of the good citizen. The problem, in other words, is that all people who are not already Swedish, but who live in that space called Sweden as immigrants, are doomed by definition to be outside the sphere of the good citizen. But also, within the national identity of already being Swedish, some are included as excluded, as those who are part of the people but cannot use its powers, simply because they have none. What is urgently needed is a story that re-politicizes not only democracy, but also what it means to be living in a divided society, which turns the rich into good citizens and the poor into bad or evil ones.

The poor, says Rancière, are included at the same time as they are nothing. The poor are included as being part of "the people" and have freedom like anyone else, but they can in no way possess it. Therefore, the poor accordingly comprise "the part who has no part", the part which is included in the whole as the people, but counted as nothing. Rancière (1999) says "…through the existence of this part of those who have no part, of this nothing that is all, the community exists as a political community – that is, as divided by a fundamental dispute" (p. 9). This means that the political consists of a fundamental dispute over the division between those who have and those who do not have access to power and wealth. Rancière (1999) calls this fundamental division "wrong", and becoming a political subject means challenging this wrong with claims of equality. When the singular being claims her right to speak

and to be heard as any one else, while she attaches herself to "the conflict between parties of society" (p. 39), she appears as a political subject in that very same society.

By asserting the singular universal of the wrong, the subject appears as a subject of democratic politics, who is emancipated from the supposed naturalness of an unequal social order by bringing to the fore an essential conflict "over the very existence of something in common between those who have a part and those who have none" (Rancière, 1999, p. 35). Such subjectification, according to Rancière (1999), leads to a basic "reconfiguration of the field of experience" (p. 35). Specifically, it leads to a reconfiguration of the story of One in such a way, in my view, as to seriously question identification with national identity as a natural order defining society in its totality. Political subjectification is a "disidentification", a removal from a place given to the subject defined through national identity in the supposedly natural order of society, and, instead, leads to an "opening up of a subject space where anyone can be counted since it is the space where those of no account are counted" (p. 36). In other words, in order to appear as a political subject, to be counted in, one needs to separate oneself from the story of national identity – a story which is nothing other than an expression of a neutralization of an unequal society of rich and poor – and from this position ask, not what being Swedish means, but what living in a democratic society means. Such a question has to be asked without any foregrounding.

EQUALITY NEEDS NO FOREGROUNDING

Rancière (1999) claims that the social is to be understood as always already organized, administered, and unequally constructed in what he refers to as the police order. This order can be better or worse, but can never in itself be an expression of equality without limits (as in utopian models of political thought). Society is a fiction and a fiction based on inequality. Society cannot be equal. Rather, what can be equal are men and women of flesh and blood, or, more specifically, equality is a particular quality of a relationship between those who have discovered that equality needs no foregrounding. This equality is, for Rancière, an assumption we must start with, not to ground in any other way than to live it. It is verified, never made, and esthetic in character, since, when equality is verified in a social situation of inequality, it reorganizes the very condition of sense perception.

Verifying equality, as I understand it, is a form of living, or rather living in a form of action based on an assumption of equality. It is also a form, if not the form, of action in which teaching can take place. It is a form of action in which the learner is not forced to subordinate herself or himself to the teacher, but is instead verified at the very outset as equal in a situation of inequality. It is not epistemological equality/sameness, however. The teacher knows more about many things, even if not about all things. But what is verified at the outset is the ability to speak in ways that bring new meaning to the world, to speak from what unmistakably comes from the subject, regardless of its already given "identity" within the conception of the total; as poor, as powerless, as included as excluded. To be heard is, in other words, to be verified

as a speaking being in a situation marked by inequality, that is, noise is turned into discourse, into meaningful speech through assuming equality. If this speech attaches itself to the basic division between those who have and those who do not have access to power and wealth, the very common sense that keeps things in place is challenged, particularly the idea of a society as one totality in which everyone has his or her place already. Therefore, not only an act of political subjectification takes place in such teaching, but also an act of learning that emancipates.

Speech can bring new meaning to the world because it is based on the poetic condition of all language, says Rancière, and it is also precisely because of this that speech differs from rhetoric. Rhetoric is speech reduced to mastering someone else. Speech instead comes from or is made possible because of the assumption of equality and, as such, speech breaks with the rhetorical form of inequality. Rhetoric is the form in which inequality is exercised, but it is also the form in which the already established structures of domination express themselves in action. Rhetoric is impotent action, however; it is not a form of creation or praxis, in that it does not bring something new to the world which was not there already. It confirms the social inequality of who has the power to talk and who has to listen. And if someone makes noise, he or she is brought back to order by it. Speech, on the other hand, starts from that which is not already social organization; it starts from an assumption of equality. It starts in an escape from that which is already settled and made into a tool of domination. It starts in the esthetic forms of creation, in which all language continuously translates and counter translates, where meaning is not fixed but lives anew.

Since equality without ground, as Rancière (2007a, 2007b) claims, is a product of the language we live in, and since it is expressed in the poetic condition (contingent) of all spoken language, it is not containable within the police order itself. And if that is the case, the poetic life of equal men and women is in direct conflict with the police order. At the same time, though, it is only through such conflict that the order can be anything else than itself, through which it, for a moment, can be creatively changed. So any police order "needs" its poetic alteration in order to not simply fall into a total repression of anything new.

The social order, or police order, however, does not only determine a place for everyone, but also gives that place both meaning and perception. That is, if not already understood as part of the police order, of what I have called the idea of One, a singular being is not just excluded but is unintelligible from the viewpoint of the system, is made invisible, and cannot be perceived. That means that if schooling can be understood in terms of an expression of national identity as One, nothing outside this system is intelligible. For example, if schooling is an essential moral good in which there is no room for evil, then bullying is not only excluded from the idea of the good school, as being nonexistent within it, but is fundamentally unintelligible. Bullying is made invisible and imperceptible. It does not belong to what can be seen or understood. Therefore, bullying can also go on unnoticed in schools that understand themselves as good schools with good teachers (Ekerwald & Säfström

2012). And moreover, if one is not already being included and confirmed as Swedish but as an immigrant, one is systematically excluded from the very idea of schooling by definition, as an unintelligible other rather than as non-Swedish (See also The Board of Education, 1997).

To perceive inequality, on the other hand means that one already has to assume equality, and by that assumption one is already unintelligible within the police order. That means that if one sees what is not to be seen within the police order itself, then one is already part of another community of men and women who assume equality. Also, seeing thereby becomes an act through which one attaches oneself to the fundamental wrong of a divided society. In other words, one belongs to what I call "the wrong people", whenever equality is verified or claimed. It also means that poetry is the basis for political action that reconfigures the relation between perception and meaning, because it is the contingency of the poetic condition of language that makes it possible for something new to enter, something which is not already given meaning within the existing police order. The claim of equality is not a claim to exist, it is a claim to be perceived, says Rancière (1999). And in order to be perceived, one has to stop making more sense, and change sense instead: in and through a community of poets, the wrong people can speak.

CAN EDUCATION/TEACHING CONFIRM A COMMUNITY OF POETS?

What is learning, if it is not to make intelligible what was before unintelligible? That is, in order to learn something which is not already perceived as something understandable within a given scheme of things, one has to embrace a fundamental distrust of that scheme and be prepared to see something one has not seen before. So, if teaching is not only directed toward the confirmation of an already established scheme of things, which makes students "fall into the land of inequality," organized by a certain police order, it introduces a basic distrust of that order. It is an educational distrust, insofar as it reconnects knowledge claims to the questions giving rise to them. That is, insofar as the distrust reconnects knowledge to the contingent condition on which all knowledge rests, it is educational. But that means that education, at the same time, reminds us of the contingent conditions of life itself, the possibility of everything being something or anything else.

Education, then, is a double move of introducing a contingent content in a particular form based on nothing else than an assumption of equality in this life and at this moment. That is, education is an assumption of the possibility of speech on the part of both teacher and student. When teaching attaches itself to the poetic condition of all language, it wrenches itself out of the trap of rhetoric and confirms equality in a situation of inequality. But it is important to note that assuming equality does not create equality. This means that in the act of verification it is not primarily the one verified that is liberated, but the condition in which something is at all intelligible shifts, so as to see what was before not seen: the equality of all speaking beings. The poetics of teaching, then, is a truly liberating act, but that which is liberated is the

poetic condition of perception. Perception is wrenched away from an unproblematic epistemological relation of meaning and words kept in unity by the *ochlos;* that is, it is not only the meaning of words, but also how the one speaking is perceived that matters. That is, the intelligibility of words and meaning is outside that very epistemological relation. Intelligibility is rather related to "who is speaking? And where?" The art in teaching, its poetry, is to hear "the wrong people" speak. And when this happens in the social context of a classroom, that classroom can indeed become a community of poets.

Such community, though, is sporadic, in the sense that schooling is foremost about preparing the young to live as citizens, "fallen into the land of inequality". Whenever a community of poets takes shape, democracy itself takes shape, regardless if it is in a classroom or in the square in the middle of the city. And even if the totality of the social structure is not altered, the poetry of living the esthetic political life comes into the world as a certain kind of freedom. It is the freedom of the emancipated, of those who have discovered their equality with everyone else in the *demos*.

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