Educating the global village

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We are proud to present this Special Issue on *Educating the Global Village*, which consists of philosophical papers presented at a research seminar on Toleration in Malmo 10-11 March 2010 and some special invited contributions. Here, Nordic philosophers of education invite in-depth philosophical discussions and debate on ideals, beliefs and practices – pretty and ugly – of toleration and citizenship education in the present.

The world is becoming a smaller place. The new world order – characterized by new patterns of migration, transnational identities, multiple citizenships, and the materialization of a global virtual network society – carries a new design for social and political norms that contest long-established ideals, beliefs and practices of citizenship and of education. Thus, vital questions of moral, ethical, political and social concerns are being evoked, such as equal respect, mutual recognition, and toleration. Taking the Nordic experiences as a starting point, the authors of this issue all perform diligent philosophical analysis of these topics.

Overall, this issue draws attention to the current situation in regards to Nordic citizenship education and the ways in which this situation re-evokes questions of equal respect, mutual recognition, and toleration. Each paper addresses different aspects of these concerns: In their article "On reflexivity and suspension: perspectives on a cosmopolitan attitude in education*",* Jan-Erik Mansikka and Gunilla Holm discuss cosmopolitanism as an educational attitude. Further, Gudmundur Frimannsson,

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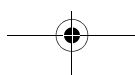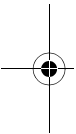
in his article on "Cosmopolitanism, nationalism, citizenship and the classroom" questions the notions of cosmopolitanism versus patriotism as an educational ideal. Elisabeth Langmann, in "Rethinking the place of tolerance", questions the notion of tolerance as a discursive act that forecloses the possibility of welcoming something new and unforeseen at the limit of our global or cosmopolitan selves.

Kirsten Hyldgaard also questions the fact that the current debate concerning tolerance is dominated by the implicit assumption that this issue is of universal interest and relevance. Turning to the French philosopher Alain Badiou, she – in her article on "Becoming indifferent to differences" – shows how the pressing question is not how we should deal with differences – celebrate, respect, tolerate or fight them – but rather how an event can render differences inconsequential. Moreover, Sari Roman Lagerspetz in "Learning to recognize" holds that the notion of recognition is stronger than toleration, since toleration usually denotes the mere acceptance of differences while recognition also contains the additional element of respecting and willingness to listening to opposing others.

In contrast, Anna Elisabetta Galeotti argues that it is neither "toleration" nor "mutual recognition", but rather the principle of "equal respect" that is crucial, as it is the only principle shared by all main alternative justifications for liberal-democratic legitimacy: Equal respect is thus the only principle making overlapping consensus possible. However, the somewhat disquieting title of the very last article included in this special issue – "Reality is catching up with me" – is a reminder on the necessity of rereading the current situation. Here, Einar Sundsdal and Torill Strand argue that if Nordic philosophers of education search for wise courses of action, they certainly need to re-consider con-

ventional beliefs and common knowledge on the present situation and people's actual experiences of it.

Citizenship education within a new world order

In the Nordic countries, a group of five small nation-states at the outskirts of Europe, the state plays a crucial role in the education and welfare of the citizens. Important principles of the Nordic welfare state model - in which public education is a key pillar - are equality of opportunities, equitable distribution of wealth, and public responsibility for those unable to avail themselves of the minimal provisions for a good life. The Nordic model thus comes forward as a distinctive combination of democracy, welfare and capitalism. Within such a model, an ideal citizen is expected to promote the generous values of the state: freedom, equality and solidarity: "All benefit; all are dependent; and all will presumably feel obliged to pay" (Esping-Andersen, 2000, p. 163). However, with the emergence of a new world order vital questions concerning an ideal citizenship are being evoked (Kymlicka & Norman, 1994).

In his now classic text on citizenship and social class, Marshall (1950, p. 36) argued that citizenship is:

a status bestowed on those who are full members of a community. All who possess the status are equal with respect to the rights and duties with which the status is endowed. There is no universal principle that determines what those rights and duties shall be, but societies in which citizenship is a developing institution create an image of an ideal citizenship against which achievements can be measured and towards which aspirations can be directed.

Marshall thus points to the close connections between images of the welfare state, democ-

racy and an ideal citizenship. But as citizenship also expresses a person's membership of a political community, citizenship is not only about certain rights and responsibilities. Citizenship concerns identity. This is expressed in the post-war Nordic image of the ideal citizen, in which the person's integration with the nation - or rather the person's identification with a shared, national identity - was crucial.

At that time, the good Nordic citizen, who most likely was educated by the state, carried virtues and responsibilities promoting the "common culture" of the nation. However, with extensive and intensified contacts within, across and beyond national borders, people now tend to hold multiple loyalties, hybrid identities and more than one national residency. The current situation thus calls for new images of "the good citizen". Consequently, the authors of this special issue reminds of the pitfalls of blindly adopting an outdated image of an ideal citizenship. But what should be seen as the virtues and responsibilities of today's Nordic citizens? And how should we educate for such a citizenship?

Taking the fact that we need to move "away from stable and mono-cultural conception of identity towards an ideal where reflexivity and openness lies at the bottom of a cultural citizenship and hybrid identities", Jan-Erik Mansikka and Gunilla Holm discuss the implication of a cosmopolitan attitude within education. The term *cosmopolitanism* derives from Greek *kosmo polités* (citizen of the world) and expresses an idea that all human beings, regardless of national, religious, cultural or political affiliations, should be seen as members of the same community (Strand, 2010). In their article "On reflexivity and suspension" Mansikka and Holm show how cosmopolitanism refers to a certain meta-cultural position that promotes intercultural engagement rather than privileged national identities.

Thus, the global village becomes the locus of ethical, political and educational concerns. Mansikka and Holm reveal ways in which such an outlook entails a unique openness towards exceptional situations and also offers opportunities to re-read one's own cultural narrative. Nevertheless, when it comes to citizenship education, we are still left with the dilemmas of "deep diversities" (Taylor, 1994) versus patriotism (Habermas, 1994; Nussbaum, 1996). Or in other words, a dilemma between - on the one hand; the recognition of the pluralities in the ways of belonging and the multiple conceptions of citizenship coexisting within the same state, and - on the other hand; the acknowledgment of a shared identity and set of values as a basis for national unity.

In his article on "Cosmopolitanism, nationalism, citizenship and the classroom", Gudmundur Frimannsson makes a distinction between ethical and political cosmopolitanism, while arguing that an ethical cosmopolitanism should serve as basis for any cosmopolitan position. Taking an ethical outlook, Frimannsson argues that cosmopolitanism does not necessarily contradict nationalism. But nationalism can be a dangerous force if not constrained by other obligations. To Frimannsson, ethical cosmopolitanism is a reasonable way of describing our moral obligations as universal; "everyone has rights and duties towards all other persons irrespective of the context in which they live".

Such universal moral obligations do not have to contradict the rights and duties towards our close neighbours: Our obligations towards our fellow countrymen can be seen as on par with the obligations to humanity at large. Frimannsson thus shows that there are no necessary contradictions between nationalism and cosmopolitanism, as soon national customs and symbols are suspended by an ethical cosmopolitanism. But to what degree

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may a cosmopolitan attitude entail toleration towards customs and symbols different from those of the majority? And what may be the limit of toleration? Is it right to tolerate what is wrong or bad? That seems to be some of the many deeply controversial issues connected with tolerance.

Toleration

The contradictions of tolerance are many. At one hand its realization is an attractive expression of real freedom existing here and now, realizing freedom of speech and giving license to participate in the search for truth common to mankind. At the other hand tolerance seems much more dubious in character, joining the liberal regard for individual ends with condescending superiority and indulgence, or even arrogance (Magris, 2001). It can be clarifying to reserve the term *tolerance* to mutual relations between human beings (i.e. the interpersonal attitude) and to use the more technical term *toleration* in relation to social order, politics, political institutions (i.e. the social practise and the political principle). However, the use of common language gives no clear distinction.

Tolerance is foremost a negative concept, "the disposition to refrain from exercising one's power of interference on others' disliked actions and behaviours which are considered important for both the tolerator and the tolerated" (Galeotti, 2001; 2002 [**ref?**, p.**?**]).

In the social sphere, the term *recognition* is often used, signalising a positive attitude to diversity and to difference without the negative heritage of toleration. On the other hand many recent discussions in political philosophy prefer the term 'neutrality', referring to the neutrality of liberal states towards individual values and preferences.

In her article "Rethinking the place of tolerance in education", Elisabeth Lang-

mann discusses the ambivalent character and risk of tolerance in its distance to the concrete Other. Using Bernhard Waldenfels's (ref?) distinction between otherness and alienness, Langmann argues that educators should be able to respond to the alienness of the Other, having the "possibility of welcoming the unforeseen and unexpected" just as it confronts us. Here we do not need to ask for a difference between the same and the other and to tell the tolerable from the intolerable before we can engage with the plurality. The otherness of the otherness, Langmann quotes Waldenfels, "disturbs our intentions before being understood in this or that sense". Thus, Langmann prefers a *tolerance of difference* (alienness) to a *tolerance of diversity* (otherness); a distinction which may become important "in the complex and often ambivalent and affective circumstances" of particular encounters in education.

If Langmann has some reservations against the usefulness in educational situations of some competing theories of toleration based on reason, Kirsten Hyldgaard suggests what she calls a "So what?" position towards the concept of tolerance. In her article "Becoming indifferent to differences" she reveals how the concept of tolerance loses its hegemonic status, as soon we realize how the concept is holding a considerable position within a particular theoretical context, whereas it is of minor or of no importance within other discourses. Following Alain Badiou, she presents an argument explaining "why toleration is not an issue in Badiou's work". Badiou considers equality to be universal and axiomatic for his political philosophy. In contrast, Badiou maintains *tolerance* to presuppose some particular conduct in respect to democratic principles.

It is not an independent phenomenon. Conceptually, in presupposing "an idea of difference that is linked to identity", tolerance refers to particular group-identities

which demands to be respected or tolerated. In contrast to that presupposition, Badiou's own conception of difference is linked to a conception of the singularity of the subject. Hyldgaard compares that singularity to the *unconscious* in Lacanian psychoanalysis. According to Hyldgaard, tolerance presupposes knowledge of what the tolerated phenomena means. Denying such unified meaning of for instance "headscarves", she finds that "the pedagogical implications of the debate may be of a paternalistic nature".

Recognition

In her article "Learning to recognize", Sari Roman-Lagerspetz argues that recognition is a stronger notion than toleration. *Toleration*, one of the central topics of political philosophy, usually denotes the acceptance of cultural, religious and political differences. Toleration is a matter of putting up with what you oppose. *Recognition*, however, denotes a deep and mutual respect of the other. Recognition is therefore used by several contemporary philosophers in their efforts to conceptualize moral aspects of struggles over identity and difference (Fraser & Honneth, 2003; Galeotti, 2002; Honneth, 2004; Ricoeur, 2005).

The notion of *recognition* can be traced back to Hegel's concept of *Anerkennung,* which points to a reciprocal determination of the relation to oneself and intersubjectivity. The idea is that any form of consciousness, also my self-consciousness, emerges from an intersubjective condition: My self-consciousness is conditioned by my awareness and acknowledgment of other, self-conscious subjects as self-conscious subjects and also my recognition of them as similarly recognizing *me* as a self-conscious subject.

To Hegel, this pattern of mutual recognition provides the matrix within which individual self-consciousnesses can exist as such. Consequently, there are constant struggles for recognition. However, these struggles plays out differently within different social spheres: Within the private sphere, the struggles are about love and friendship; Within the legal sphere, the struggles are about equality of rights; And within the solidarity sphere (of our cultural, workplace or political communities), the struggles for recognition are "about the appropriate evaluation of individuals' or groups' social contribution" (Honneth 2004, p. 353). In other words, the desire for mutual recognition; love, respect, and justice towards achievements, is a never-ending course. Sari Roman-Lagerspetz sees this course as an ongoing learning process.

In her article, Roman-Lagerspetz points to the pertinence of mutual recognition in today's societies. However, mutual recognition can never be implemented by the force of law or taught to people as a dogma. By contrast, people grow into processes of mutual recognition already from early childhood, through their day-to-day encounter with the other. Roman-Lagerspetz thus argues that educational institutions have a central role in today's societies, as they provide spaces in which people can learn to recognize. In education, groups holding contrasting cultural, religious and political values and beliefs can experience a mutual mirroring of these values and beliefs. And next, develop a potential capacity of acknowledging such contrasting values and beliefs as permanent and valuable parts of a free and open society. However, the dilemma between the recognition of pluralities and the acknowledgment of a shared set of values as a basis for national unity remains unresolved. In short; what binds the citizens of a nation together?

Equal respect

In the discussion of the nature and justification of liberal democracy and in particular in the discussions initiated by the political philosophy developed by John Rawls (e.g. ref?), *neutrality* is a pivotal term. However, recent discussions have challenged neutrality as being the foundation of liberal democracy, either pointing out that liberal democracy is indifferent or that it is relativistic with respect to moral truth. In contrast, allegedly the claimed value-neutrality has some particular implications that promote secular values, whereas it seems to offence some moral or religious values. However, in her article on equal respect, Anna Elisabetta Galeotti defends political liberalism against the charge of being "a political order appealing only to those who are already liberals".

Frequently it is asked: "How can an abstemious secularism respond to the powerful challenge of radical and unreasonable world-views?" Galeotti argues that the reason to support liberal principles and democratic institutions is the moral principle of equal respect, not some allegedly venerable religious or philosophical ideas of Jewish-Christian provenience particular for European traditions and hence lacking the ability for being universally acknowledged. The principle of equal respect, Galeotti argues, is a test for any acceptable justification of liberal legitimacy because "alleged violation of equal respect is the reason why each position rejects the other modes of legitimacy". Thus, equal respect must be a principle shared by all parts.

Based on an additional consideration of the role of truth for politics and for human life, Galeotti argues an even stronger thesis. Equal Respect is indeed the grounding moral principle of liberal democracy: "Truth should win over by the force of its reasons and not by the reasons of force." Not to in-feriorize other people is morally more important than to affirm one's truth. Thus, the principle shows the injustice of paternalistic imposition of alleged norms to other and of making other people inferior.

It provides a moral reason for democracy which does not consist in simply giving up personal deep convictions for the sake of consensus and peace, as usually associated with the neutralist foundation of liberal democratic legitimacy, but to seek truth "backed by the reciprocal demand of respect". In a far-reaching formulation, Galeotti here draws "a line between believing something to be true and wanting to impose it against other's will", giving "the same credit to their sincerity and integrity which we want to have recognized by them". Consequently, we are again facing a vital dilemma concerning citizenship education in the present: Who are we to educate the global village if we do not take into account people's actual ways of seeing and being in the world?

Educating the global village

Theories and philosophies of education are normative theories, they present ideals, prescribe preferred repertoires of actions, and describe valued attitudes and behaviour. But while doing so; what are the perspectives, values and ambitions of such theories? And what may be the legitimacy of these perspectives, values and ambitions in today's world of change? In the very last article of this issue, "Reality is catching up with me*",* Einar Sundsdal and Torill Strand considers these questions, while asking: Do Nordic philosophers of education have anything to learn from empirical studies?

Taking the current situation, it seems pertinent to remind of the old insight from William James. In a 1907 lecture on pragmatism, he pointed to the fact that:

what we say about the reality depends on the perspective into which we throw it. The *that* of it is its own; but the *what* depends on the *which*; and the which depends on *us*. (James, 1978, p. 108; italics in original)

Moreover, Stephen Toulmin (1990) discloses how Western philosophy carries a whole cosmogony, a deep-seated image of how a perfect well-ordered society can come into existence by the use of words. On the basis on a thorough analysis of Western philosophy he claims that the pursuit for abstract neatness and theoretical simplicity has "blinded the successors of Descartes to the unavoidable complexities of concrete human experience" (Toulmin, 1990, p. 201). A Westernized image of a harmonious, well-order, orderly and rational society thus contrast the worldly, lively and creative hubbub of todays' societies. Accordingly, there are some pitfalls of blindly adopting visions of education deeply embedded in a long-lasting European philosophical discourse and to displace it into the current situation: Educational ideals and practices based on a biased philosophy of the West may not only come to marginalise non-Western representations, visions and experiences, but also undermine the ambition itself of citizenship education in the present.

Sundsdal and Strand take this perspective, while arguing that empirical studies easily can contribute to the philosophy of education, without threatening the discourse. Using an example on "cosmopolitan thinking" within education, they illustrate how empirical based knowledge on peoples' ways of just thinking can elucidate the philosophical discussion on the ideal of cosmopolitan thinking. In discussing this example, Sundsdal and Strand show how empirical based knowledge may both have a restrictive and an enlightenment function. Used in a restrictive manner, the empirical data allows us to question how plausible the educational ideals, prescriptions or descriptions appear, given the knowledge we have. By contrast, when the ambition is to broaden the scope of knowledge, we may use empirical generated knowledge to illuminate our inquiries. "The function of enlightenment is, for example, demonstrated when we acquire new ideas, ask new questions, add depths of explanation, or generate new theory." Overall, whether used restrictive or illuminative, empirical awareness may help to increase the social significance and power of contemporary philosophy of education.

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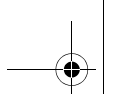
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