To live educationally – to develop curriculum in line with cosmopolitan inheritance

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Is it possible to develop a next step in research juxtaposing "curriculum as cosmopolitan inheritance with recent curriculum inquiry on educating the human capacity for critical dialogue and deliberation", David Hansen (2008) asks and clarifies: "Can the willingness and the skills to deliberate critically across difference be conceived as an ongoing world inheritance?" (Hansen 2008 p. 307). If we interpret deliberation / deliberative communication "as an endeavour to ensure that each individual takes a stand by listening, deliberating, seeking arguments and evaluating, while at the same time there is a collective effort to find values and norms on which everyone can agree" (cf. Englund 2006), we can make an attempt to elaborate and analyse the preconditions for what we could call a cosmopolitan deliberation.

To begin with, there is the still existing and all-pervading political problem of how to organize publics capable of imagining and bringing into existence cosmopolitan governing institutions. Consequently, cosmopolitan inquiry "would start with the problems of cosmopolitan disorder as presented – migrations, illegal immigrations, humanitarian breakdowns – and further define them by establishing conditions under which affected people can be heard, relevant facts determined, questions refined for investigation, and ends tentatively projected" (Waks 2008, cf. Benhabib 2002, 2006). In her *Claims of Culture* (2002), Benhabib defends the universalist deliberative democracy model and balances it against demands for a legal pluralism that would countenance a coexistence of jurisdictional systems for different cultural and religious traditions and accept varieties of institutional design for societies with strong ethnic, cultural and linguistic cleavages. She argues that there are three normative conditions of universalist deliberative democracy which these pluralist structures cannot violate: egalitarian reciprocity, voluntary self-ascription and freedom of exit and association

(for a critical discussion of Benhabib concerning principles for educational organization, especially the question of voluntary self-ascription, see Englund 2011, cf. also Englund 2010).

To develop deliberative attitudes, 'deliberativeness' and transactional listening (Waks 2011), the practical intelligence of actors must, as I will argue, be nurtured through schools as encounters being a function of knowledge, education and culture. Any study of the public and its problems today must aim at cross cultural communication through the formation of nascent publics, and must take account of the barriers that inhibit it. By using conceptual perspectives developed by Dewey, humans are made for communication (Dewey 1916/1985, Englund 1999, 2000ab), Habermas on normative rationalization (1996, cf. Englund 2009), the institutionalization of deliberative processes (cf. Englund 2010) with cosmopolitan hope based on universal reason (Nussbaum 1997, 2010) seeing human development as development of the capacity to transcend local prejudices of one's immediate context, I will exemplify and critically investigate different ameliorative and deliberative educational practices.

Deliberative communication as a way to develop a cosmopolitan curriculum and orientation

In earlier works (Englund 1996, 2000a), I have, inspired especially by Dewey (1916/1985 chap. 7) and Habermas, tried to develop a democratic conception of education of today. Drawing on the pragmatic tradition, classic and neopragmatism, I am pointing out how both Dewey (1916/1985 chap. 1-3) and Habermas (1987, 1996) focus on communication as a democratic way of life creating new visions for the relationship between democracy and education through communication. Many works on deliberative democracy are also inspired by pragmatism, especially Dewey's (1927/1988) *The Public and its Problems*, and are explicitly based on the need for the education of citizens with deliberative capabilities (Gutmann & Thompson 1996). Thus, an ongoing deliberative democracy requires citizens with well-established deliberative attitudes, and a society that rests on the

ideas of deliberative democracy is a long-term project: 'democratic deliberation requires *equal opportunity of access to political influence*' (Knight & Johnson 1997, p 280; emphases in original). This implies that some institutions are given a central role, with the educational system holding, perhaps, the most important potential in such a long-term project. It can lay the foundations for developing deliberative capacities.

To this end I have developed the idea of deliberative communication (Englund 2000b, 2006) as consisting of five components: (1) that different views are confronted with one another and arguments for these different views are given time and space to be articulated and presented in the classroom (cf. Habermas 1987, 1990, 1996; Gutmann & Thompson 1996); (2) that there is tolerance and respect for the concrete other and that participants learn to listen to the other person's argument (Habermas 1987, 1996; Benhabib 1992); (3) that elements of collective will formation are present, i.e. an endeavour to reach consensus or at least temporary agreements and/or to draw attention to differences (Habermas 1987, 1996; Gutmann & Thompson 1996); (4) that authorities/traditional views (represented, for example, by parents and traditions in different senses as well as the teacher) can be questioned and that there are opportunities to challenge one's own tradition (Gutmann 1987; Nussbaum 1997); (5) that there also (outside of the classroom) is scope and a permissive atmosphere for students to communicate and deliberate without teacher control, i.e. for the continuation of argumentative discussions between students with the aim of solving problems or shedding light on them from different points of view (Hoel 2001, for a short presentation of the model of deliberative communication, see Englund, 2006). I have further developed the implications of this model in many earlier contributions (Englund 2006, Englund ed. 2007) and what I will do here is first to relate to the ongoing and often heated discussion between deliberation and agonism as 'models' for classroom discussion[1] and present a preliminary solution to this struggle between two models and after that I will try to widen the perspective on deliberation seeing it in terms of 'to live educationally'.

[1] Englund ed. (2007), Ruitenberg 2009

Deliberation or agonism?

I will give some basic arguments why to prefer deliberation to develop a cosmopolitan orientation while at the same time listen to the challenge from agonism.[2] (1) First I find the critique versus Habermas from Mouffe (2000, 2005) and her followers often unjust when giving Habermas a conflict-free, rationalist view, especially concerning how the pursuit of consensus is developed, a view that he does not have (at least in my and others way of reading him). I find rather, with reference to Erman (2009), deliberation as constitutive of conflict, i.e. starting from different, struggling views of anything (cf. my p.1 in my characterization of deliberative communication). (2) Secondly, I think that some of the ideals of agonism are not suitable for discussions in the classroom or at least might be transformed. As I see it, deliberation puts the conflict, the problem, the different views of anything in focus while agonism rather puts the focus of the different (often ethnic) identities of the persons involved, not the problem (whatever it is) in itself in focus.[3] I would believe that putting the personal identities in focus rather leads to struggles between persons, i.e. views built in to and deeply rooted in identities making deliberation over the problem in itself more difficult and also to come together in a common attempt to define the problem. 3) Thirdly, identitybased discussions, differing from where discussions are focused on a problem, also tend to bring passion to the discussion (which also is explicitly underlined in agonism saying that deliberative theorists underestimate emotions)[4] – a passion that I think, from a deliberative and

[2] This field is growing very fast and there are many aspects possible to discuss. What I am doing here is just to point at some crucial issues, while I at the same time want to stress that I find more of similarities that differences between the two approaches, differences in many ways overstated by Mouffe. I also think it is necessary to distinguish between two levels of this discussion, its implications on a societal level and a classroom level, where I am, in this text, mainly interested in the classroom level of discussion.

[3] Ruitenberg (2009) goes as far as "to propose that a radical democratic citizenship education would be an education of political adversaries" (p.269).

[4] However, this aspect has to be analysed (by the teacher) situationally. There are of course occasions where passion has to be brought in if the school class is indifferent.

cosmopolitan perspective, would be hesitant to promote.[5] I think, from a deliberative point of view rather, that passion in the classroom if possible has to be (self-)controlled and nuanced (or at least pursued in that direction), still giving room for commitment in the argumentative process, and that a main guideline for classroom discussion has to be, as Nel Noddings has remarked in her critique of Habermas, "to help students learn how to conduct ideal conversations" (Noddings 1994/2002 p. 122), even if she noticed the risk of the ideal being too rationalistic. The role of rational, ideal conversation might work as an instrument of power for the teacher[6] and there might be, as Richard Bernstein (2010) comments the debate on deliberative democracy, comparing Dewey and Habermas,

> a tendency to overemphasize the role and potential power of rational argumentation. Dewey was never happy with the way in which philosophers and political theorists characterized reason – especially when they sharply distinguished reason from emotion, desire, and passion. He preferred to speak about intelligence and intelligent action. Intelligence is not the name of a special faculty. Rather, it designates a cluster of habits and dispositions that includes attentiveness to details, imagination and passionate commitment.[7] What is most essential for Dewey is the *embodiment* of intelligence in everyday practices (Bernstein 2010 p. 85)

However, there are many more aspects in the debate on deliberation / agonism to comment upon and one specific thing is if we should follow the Habermas/Mouffe-debate or if we, as I would prefer and prioritize in the

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[5] Young people often tend to exaggerate and make conflicts person-bounded, which I think in many cases would be a threat to and a risk using violence. With that I do not mean that conflicts should be negated, not at all because they are constitutive for deliberation, but they have to be situated in the structures where they belong (something of which there of course also may be very different views upon, different views which have to be deliberated upon).

[6] However, notify my point 4, in deliberative communication the stress of the possibility of questioning of authorities, also the teacher.

[7] Trying to separate passion from commitment as I have done, we here have an alternative. But primarily, it persuades me of that the difference between agonism and deliberative communication (at least as I understand them) is not that big, instead they are rather close to each other and the main difference is around identity or problem in focus and its respective appropriateness for use in the classroom.

following, develop and compare our specific models for deliberative and/or agonistic discussions within classrooms in schools without losing the relation to the Habermas/Mouffe-debate but not putting their debate in focus[8].

In that case I mean that we have to reflect upon, as I already have mentioned, the specific conditions of classrooms with teacher-students-relationships and other institutional conditions (cf. Bingham & Sidorkin 2004, Englund ed. 2004). Thus, I find it very important to go on with comparing, differentiating and valuating activities like classroom discussions (cf. Hess 2009, Liljestrand 2002, 2011, Ljunggren & Unemar Öst 2010), to develop deliberative attitudes, 'deliberativeness' including transactional listening (cf. Waks 2011), where the practical intelligence of actors must be nurtured through schools as encounters being a function of knowledge, education and culture.

Agonism as a link to deliberation

As said earlier in this paper I see deliberation, in the classroom and also outside of it[9], as an ideal to strive for 'to live educationally', but I will at the same time underline the need to listen to the challenge from agonism, especially in the classroom when different ethnic identities encounter each other. Mouffe means that identities establish only through an us/them-distinction and that the aim of democratic politics will be to transform "the 'them' from being perceived as enemies 'to be destroyed' to being recognized as 'friendly enemies', which means to transform the conflictual relation from an *antagonistic* to an *agonistic* one. The latter is a relation between adversaries, i.e. between 'legitimate enemies' who subscribe to the ethico-political principles of agonistic democracy" (Erman 2009, p 1044 with reference to Mouffe 2000 pp 101-102, cf. Ruitenberg 2009). So, in a way, this specific move to agonism, if starting from antagonistic identities,

[8] As said, I find many of Mouffe's characterizations of Habermas flawed and unjust.

[9] Cf. especially my fifth point characterizing deliberative communication.

can also be seen as a precondition for taking the next desirable step, i.e. from agonism to deliberation by also transcending the different identities and putting the 'problem' in focus. This step can also be seen as a move from underlining group and/or cultural identities to a cosmopolitan orientation.

Deliberation

Deliberations in which different views, conceptions and values are put forward and tested against each other can be used in most school subjects. Educational conversations of this kind may be seen as a complementary and alternative means of knowledge formation as meaning-making, with qualities different from those of the teaching and learning we usually associate with traditional mediation and reproduction of knowledge.

In deliberative communication, everyone has to reflect upon his or her views and assumptions by listening, deliberating, seeking arguments and evaluating in relation to concrete others. Communication of this kind incorporates a collective search for common frames of reference, but also offers scope to analyse what you are not agreed on and why. Deliberative communication can, for one thing, offer special possibilities in the multicultural school of today, as a framework for encounters between different cultures (cf. Englund 2011) and the promotion of a cosmopolitan orientation (cf. Englund 2012a). It thus has an important part to play in developing the democratic value base of schooling and a cosmopolitan pluralism, which among other things is about the right to have different views and perspectives.

Mutual trust, then, can be created and sustained through institutions such as schools to the extent that they establish the conditions for engagement in deliberative communication. It can also be created through the development of a sense of responsibility to the concrete other. The degree to which these two dimensions are achieved informs us, or so I have argued, to what extent those concerned are being educated as cosmopolitans.

Deliberation and transactional listening

Consequently, I think it is necessary to stress and further qualify the earlier point 2 in my characterization of deliberative communication, "that there is tolerance and respect for the concrete other and that participants learn to listen to the other person's argument". Concerning 'to learn to listen' I find the remark important how "Dewey distinguished between negative one-way or straight-line listening and positive *transactional* listening-in-conversation" (Waks 2011 p. 194), specified for the first time by Dewey (as far as I know) in his *The Public and its Problem* 1927 and later on in his *Knowing and the Known* (1949) as well as in many of his works between these two (cf. Garrison 1996, 2005, Wahlström 2012, Waks 2011).

It is quite obvious that the straight-line listening is a dominant feature in schools of today and that it is supported politically by strong forces (Simon 2005, Englund 2012b). However, the transactional listening is always there as a potential and a possibility, it is a human gift that could be nurtured, developed and realized in and through communication, and it can be facilitated and qualified more or less by what is going on in the classroom, especially by how the teacher acts, builds relations to the students and communicates with them and how different communicative forms between the students are encouraged by the teacher and through the curriculum.

To live educationally in deliberative communication

Can we then learn 'to live educationally', to continuously reconstruct our experiences, using the results of that experience to shape subsequent experiences? David Hansen (2011) stresses that education involves the development of dynamic habits and characterizes the most fundamental art of all, in a cosmopolitan perspective, as "the habit of keeping habit itself responsive, dynamic, and expansive. That ability positions the person to develop her or his bent as fully as circumstances permit while also interacting richly and responsively with other people" (Hansen 2011 p. 122).

As Dewey often underlines, the key point in human interaction and democratic behaviour is how to respond to conflicts and as Richard

Bernstein (2010) also points out referring to Dewey in this respect: "For what is the faith of democracy in the role of consultation, of conference, of persuasion, of discussion in the formation of public opinion, which in the long run is self-corrective, except faith in the capacity of the intelligence of the common man to respond with commonsense to the free play of facts and ideas which are secured by effective guarantees of free inquiry, free assembly and free communication?" (Dewey 1939/1991 p. 227, cf Bernstein 2010 p. 85). And Richard Bernstein comments and develops:

> This is the practical issue that any living democracy confronts. One must work toward developing a culture in which plurality and difference of opinion are encouraged. Dewey emphasized that without creative conflict there is the danger of complacency and stagnation. But a democracy degenerates into a sheer contest of wills and a naked power struggle if there is not a serious attempt to engage in deliberation and public debate – if there is not a serious attempt to establish shared communal values in which there is reciprocal trust and respect (Bernstein 2010 p. 85).

Can we also promote a cosmopolitan orientation to live educationally by developing the curriculum in a way that encourages democracy and open communication in Dewey's sense, seeing controversial questions in the democracy and understanding democracy as he stated as early as 1888 that "[D]emocracy, in a word, is social , that is to say, an ethical conception, and upon its ethical significance is based its significance as governmental. Democracy is a form of government only because it is a form of moral and spiritual association" (Dewey 1888/1975 p. 240).

Educational institutions are still one possible arena for nurturing dialogue and communication – although, as said, the straight-line listening is a dominant feature – and in "any effort to make democracy more deliberative, the single most important institution outside government is the educational system" (Gutmann & Thompson 1996 p. 359). It is also in this respect that we once again can remind us the question from David Hansen: "Can the willingness and the skills to deliberate critically across difference be conceived as an ongoing world inheritance?" (Hansen 2008 p. 307) and his reflections on Dewey as a cosmopolitan:

> The tasks of a cosmopolitan-minded education are diffuse and can never be met through a formal program or even a thousand such endeavours, however useful each one of them may be. Like democracy itself, cosmopolitanism is not a solution to a problem – as if our unstable and unwieldly human conditions admits of some kind of final treatment – but rather a way of dwelling that keeps self, other, and world in generative touch. Dewey as cosmopolitan philosopher helps us understand how meaningful this typically quite ordinary, everyday achievement can be, as well as why these countless on-the ground gestures offer promising soil in which to grow just human relations (Hansen 2009 p. 116)

From Martha Nussbaum (1987) we have the 'proposal' of critical self-examination, learning to see oneself as a world citizen and what she calls narrative imagination: the ability to think intelligently about other people's situations and to learn to respond well to them" (cf. Hansen 2011 p. 112).

(1) My proposal would be to use deliberative communication first to create a deeper learning by means of that the learners themselves verbalise their arguments and their knowing. Thus, the act of meaning-creation, implying change, expresses itself in argumentation and communication.

(2) Secondly, a sense of community at different levels, both within the classroom and in relation to the greater society which the school class is a part of, will develop by means of that deliberative communication within the classroom being used as a weak public sphere, where the questions of the (big) public sphere also will take place within the classroom initiated by students or the teacher. This means that learning and meaning-creation is directly related to a process of developing a citizen competence.

(3) Thirdly, this also implies that the judgement ability of the learners will be developed by means of that the deliberative communication also integrates value issues that questions the dichotomy between facts and values and make room for deliberation over moral and political issues and problems.

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