



Department of Education

FIVE PROFESSORS ON EDUCATION
AND DEMOCRACY

INAUGURAL LECTURES
1999–2003

Editor:
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- ABSTRACT -

This report brings together the inaugural lectures of the five professors at the Department of Education, Örebro University, from 1999 to 2003. The main aim of the collection is to show how a common interest in the relationship between education and democracy has united all these professors and created a specific environment for educational research. In the first lecture by Tomas Englund, from 1999, two strands of educational research are stressed, didactic research and philosophy of education. Members of the research group Education & Democracy are said to be united in a belief in education as an important and potentially significant force in the achievement of democracy, and the possible development of a deliberative attitude in education is underlined. Agneta Linné, who was appointed professor of education and didactic research in 2002, explores in her lecture education as a scientific discipline, using the concepts time and history, pedagogical space, narrative identity and narrative imagination. She raises the question of narrative perspectives and biography as potential tools for research on democratic dimensions of education. Bernt Gustavsson, made professor of education with a focus on democracy in 2002, analyses the never ending problem of the relation between the universal, for instance human rights as possible values for all, and the particular, in the form of the right of local communities and identities to their culture on the basis of recognition of difference. He underlines the potential of the hermeneutic tradition and how "bildung" may mediate between the universal and the particular. Gert Biesta, guest professor from 2001, argues in his lecture that we should understand democracy not only as a problem for education, but also as

an educational problem in its own right. He proposes an educational definition of democracy as the situation in which all human beings can be subjects. Finally, Lars Løvlie, guest professor 2003–2004, also refers to the “bildung” concept, but introduces the concept of the body into what he calls “cyberbildung”, which does not break entirely with traditional aspects of “bildung”, but may even contribute to them. According to the phenomenological approach he sketches, there are no hard and fast walls between belonging to different worlds and being situated.

Keywords: inaugural lectures, educational research, didactic research, philosophy of education.

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INTRODUCTION

by

Tomas Englund

The Department of Education at Örebro university is 2004 run by three full professors: Tomas Englund, full time professor from 1999 (part-time from 1993), Bernt Gustavsson, full time professor from 2002 and Agneta Linné, full time professor from 2002. In the department there are also two guest professors: Gert Biesta, 2001–2007, guest professor of Education and Democratic Citizenship and with the ordinary position of professor of Educational Theory at Exeter university, England and Lars Løvlie 2003–2004, guest professor at the International Science Center, Örebro university and with an ordinary position as professor in Education at Oslo university, Norway and second honorary doctor in education at Örebro university 2003 (the first honorary doctor in education was professor Cleo Cherryholmes, Michigan State university, USA).

In this report the inaugural lectures by all these five professors are collected. The main aim of this collection is to show how a common interest of the relationship of education and democracy has unified all these professors and created a specific environment for educational research. The Department of Education at Örebro university is also a strategic part of the university's first profile: Human environment, communicative processes and conditions of democracy. Within that profile five new professorships (in education, media and communication studies, history, political science and sociology) were installed in 2000. Bernt Gustavsson became professor of education within the democratic profile 2002. To strengthen the teacher education one new professorship in education, with a focus on didactics and teacher education, was also installed in 2000. Agneta Linné became professor of education with this direction 2002. A sixth profile of the university on didactics and democracy is under investigation.

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AT ÖREBRO UNIVERSITY

- January 1997 the Department of Teacher Education and the discipline of education/educational research (until 1996 part of the Department of the Social Sciences) are amalgamated into one department, the Department of Education. Leif Ribom is the first dean of the department.
- January 1998 Carsten Ljunggren becomes the dean of the department.

- January 1999 Örebro university receives its university status. Tomas Englund becomes full time professor of the department (part time from 1993 while professor at Stockholm Institute of Education –1996 and Uppsala university 1996–1998).
- February 2000 Professor Cleo Cherryholmes, Michigan State university USA becomes the first honorary doctor at Örebro university.
- January 2001 Gert Biesta becomes guest professor of the Department of Education.
- September 2002 Bernt Gustavsson becomes professor of education and democracy. Agneta Linné becomes professor of education, didactic research and teacher education.
- February 2003 Professor Lars Løvlie, Oslo university, Norway becomes honorary doctor at Örebro university.
- July 2003 Lars Løvlie becomes guest professor of the Department of Education and the International Science Center of Örebro university.
- July 2003 Ninni Wahlström becomes the dean of the department.

ONGOING RESEARCH PROJECTS

The teacher in the transformation of the Swedish society 1940–2003: The ‘good’ teacher as a discursive construction on different societal arenas (The Bank of Tercentenary Foundation). The project runs from 2001 to 2005 and has an annual turnover of 3 millions, in sum 15 million SEK. In this project there are 8 researchers from Örebro university and 5 researchers from three other universities in Sweden. The project is led by Tomas Englund. Other researchers from the Department of Education are Lars Erikson, Kajsa Falkner, Owe Lindberg, Agneta Linné, Kerstin Skog-Östlin, Ulrika Tornberg, Matilda Wiklund and Moira von Wright.

Education as deliberative communication – preconditions, possibilities and consequences (The Swedish Research Council). The project runs from 2002 to 2004 and has an annual turnover of 1,3 millions, in sum around 4 million SEK. Mainly researchers from the Department of Education and 2 from The Department of the Social Sciences (Sociology and Political Science) at Örebro university. The project is led by Tomas Englund. Other researchers from the Department of Education are Ylva Boman, Kjell Gustavsson, Eva Hultin, Kent Larsson, Carsten Ljunggren and Moira von Wright.

What about equivalence? The concept of equivalence and its different interpretations in different contexts, in different educational policy levels and school practices (The Swedish Research Council). The project runs from 2003 to 2005 and has an annual turnover of 1 million, in sum 3 million SEK. In this project there are 5 researchers from the Department of Education and 1 one from Linköping university. The project is led by Tomas Englund. Other researchers from the Department of Education are Guadalupe Francia, Lazaro Moreno Herrera, Ann Quennerstedt and Ninni Wahlström.

The project *Knowledge in practice* investigates how different forms of knowledge is used in connection to certain activities. The point of departure is three forms of knowledge, brought from the aristotelian tradition, episteme – scientific knowledge, techne – practical-productive knowledge, and phronesis – practical wisdom. Different professions and subjects are described, such as building boats, playing music, making art, sports, being a teacher. People connected to these activities investigate or express themselves what sort of knowledge which is used and produced in these areas. The project is led by Bernt Gustavsson. Other researchers from the Department of Education are Britt-Marie Gustavsson and Ulla Olsson.

Practical knowledge meets academia: continuity and change in teacher education (The Swedish Research Council). The project analyses conceptions of knowledge over time within three teacher-training traditions. It runs from 2004 to 2006 and has an annual turnover of 2,2 millions, in sum 6,5 million SEK. 10 researchers from the Department of Education and from Uppsala University

and Stockholm Institute of Education collaborate. The project is led by Agneta Linné in collaboration with Boel Englund, Stockholm. Researcher from the Department of Education is Britt Tellgren.

Shaping the public sphere: a collective biography of Stockholm women 1880–1920 (The Swedish Bank Tercentenary Foundation). The project analyses a number of prominent women's strategies from the private to the public. It runs from 2000 to 2005, turnover in sum 6 million SEK. 15 researchers from Örebro, Uppsala and Stockholm universities and Stockholm Institute of Education collaborate. Researchers from the Department of Education are Agneta Linné and Kerstin Skog-Östlin. The project is led by Donald Broady, Uppsala.

Praxis and Gender (The Swedish Research Council). Runs 2004, turnover 400.000 SEK. 9 researchers and teacher educators from the Department of Education and from Uppsala University and Stockholm Institute of Education collaborate. Researchers from the Department of Education are Agneta Linné and Britt Tellgren. The project is led by Birgitta Sandström, Stockholm.

ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS AND RESEARCH GROUPS

Today the Department of Education holds five associate professors (Sangeeta Bagga-Gupta, Carsten Ljunggren, Claes Nilholm, Lars Ryhammar and Moira von Wright) and there are 33 doctorate students mainly related to two research groups:

- *Education & Democracy*. Tomas Englund.
- *Communication, culture and diversity. Deaf studies*. Sangeeta Bagga-Gupta and Claes Nilholm.

DISSERTATIONS

The dissertations are published within the series Örebro Studies in Education. The titles issued so far are listed beneath. English translation within parenthesis.

- Domfors, Lars-Åke (2000): *Döfstumslärare – specialpedagog – lärare för döva och hörselskadade. En lärarutbildnings innehåll och rationalitetsförskjutningar* (Teacher of the deaf-mute – teacher of special education – teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing. The content and rationality changes of a teacher education program). Örebro Studies in Education 1.
- Rapp, Stephan (2001): *Rektor – garant för elevernas rättssäkerhet?* (The headteacher – a guarantee for pupils' legal security?) Örebro Studies in Education 2.
- Wahlström, Ninni (2002): *Om det förändrade ansvaret för skolan. Vägen till mål- och resultatstyrning och några av dess konsekvenser* (On the shift of responsibility for compulsory schooling. The path to management by objectives and results and some of its consequences). Örebro Studies in Education 3.
- Boman, Ylva (2002): *Utbildningspolitik i det andra moderna. Om skolans normativa villkor* (Educational policy in second modernity. On the normative conditions of education). Örebro Studies in Education 4.
- Lindberg, Owe (2002): *Talet om lärarutbildning* (Teacher education: How we talk about it and what it means). Örebro Studies in Education 5.
- Liljestrand, Johan (2002): *Klassrummet som diskussionsarena* (The classroom as an arena for discussions). Örebro Studies in Education 6.
- Nilsson, Lena (2003): *Hälsoarbetets möte med skolan i teori och praktik* (The encounter between health promotion and schools in theory and in practice). Örebro Studies in Education 7.
- Göhl-Muigai, Ann-Kristin (2004): *Talet om ansvar i förskolans styrdokument 1945–1998. En textanalys* (The question of responsibility in the pre-school goal documents 1945–1998. A text analysis). Örebro Studies in Education 8.

JOURNAL

The department is the centre of the journal *Utbildning & Demokrati – tidskrift för didaktik och utbildningspolitik* (Education & Democracy – journal of didactics and educational policy) with three issues/year. Editors: Ylva Boman and Tomas Englund. Editorial board: Maria Alsbjer, Eva Forsberg, Bernt Gustavsson, Eva Hagström, Agneta Linné, Ulrika Tornberg, Moira von Wright and Johan Öhman.

INDEX OF THE JOURNAL

All articles in the journal have so far been published in either Swedish, Danish or Norwegian with abstracts in English. The theme of each number is here presented in English.

Vol 1, 1992

- 1) Education and democracy – a new journal
- 2) Text and context – didactics today
- 3) Schools and the human environment

Vol 2, 1993

- 1) Teaching as communication
- 2) Teacher education in focus
- 3) A mixed issue

Vol 3, 1994

- 1) The education policy shift
- 2) Metacognition
- 3) Current educational policy

Vol 4, 1995

- 1) The content of education, students' impact and german didactics
- 2) Text and reading
- 3) Didactics and gender

Vol 5, 1996

- 1) Community, pluralism, care and communication
- 2) To evaluate Swedish teacher education
- 3) The didactics of Swedish as a school subject

Vol 6, 1997

- 1) Democracy, schools and teacher education
- 2) Schools and democracy – schools for qualified conversation
- 3) The body in educational and didactic theory

Vol 7, 1998

- 1) New school – and old: Views on publications from the School Committee of 1997
- 2) Didactics
- 3) Didactic perspectives on the science subjects

Vol 8, 1999

- 1) Democracy, autonomy and community
- 2) Teacher education between restructuring and rethinking
- 3) Multiculturalisms – conceptions of multiculturalism and schooling

Vol 9, 2000

- 1) Higher education and democracy
- 2) The many faces of education
- 3) Pragmatism – politics and philosophy

Vol 10, 2001

- 1) Technology, culture and education
- 2) The United Nation's convention on children's rights – a source to important research questions about children and their conditions
- 3) George Herbert Mead and the challenges of intersubjectivity

Vol 11, 2002

- 1) Educational policy
- 2) Adult education and adult education research
- 3) Social scientific perspectives on education

Vol 12, 2003

- 1) Horizons of research – democratic dimensions in education
- 2) The subject of Swedish as subject of democracy
- 3) About knowledge and democracy in concrete school settings

Vol 13, 2004

- 1) Knowledge and democracy
- 2) Special education and democracy
- 3) The multicultural foreign language classroom: an arena for democratic experiences (all articles in English)

CONFERENCES ARRANGED BY THE JOURNAL
UTBILDNING & DEMOKRATI
IN COOPERATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

December 11–12, 2000

Higher education, democracy and citizenship

Contributions published in *Utbildning & Demokrati*, 9(1) and in *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, 21(4/5)

April 17–18, 2002

Educational policy

Contributions published in *Utbildning & Demokrati*, 11(1,3)

November 5–6, 2003

The subject of Swedish as subject of democracy

Contributions published in *Utbildning & Demokrati*, 12(2)

November 13, 2003

Special education and democracy

Contributions published in *Utbildning & Demokrati*, 12(3)

October 6–8, 2004

The multicultural foreign language classroom: an arena for democratic experiences

Contributions published in *Utbildning & Demokrati*, 13(3)

March 9–12, 2006

The Department of Education, Örebro university will arrange the annual conference of the Nordic Educational Research Association.

EDUCATION AND DEMOCRACY

INAUGURAL LECTURE AT ÖREBRO UNIVERSITY
FEBRUARY 5 1999*

Tomas Englund

SOME PERSONAL NOTES

I am very pleased to be able to give this inaugural lecture at the new Örebro University. This can be explained in many ways but especially through my special relationship to the new university. Let me start with some short reflections over this. I began my university studies here, when the university college of Örebro (as a branch department of Uppsala university) was created in 1967. With fantastic seminars led by Bengt Almerud in political science and Thore Hammarland in economic history. I was also a teacher in economic history during the 1970s and had plans of continuing in that field, but eventually educational studies and Uppsala received all of my attention. As a graduate student, first in economic history and later on in educational research as a researcher and a teacher, I have developed into a master commuter between Örebro and Uppsala during more than 25 years of work, but that period has now reached its end.

More interesting than those personal events may be that I, as a part-time and acting professor here in Örebro, since 1993, have had the privilege to take part in the establishment of a specific department of education. This also means that I, among my colleagues of professors, have the longest experience as a professor at this university. The Department of Education was created January 1 1997 as a unification of the discipline of education – up until then it had been one of the disciplines within the Department of the Social Sciences – and the Department for Teacher Education. This new and nationally unique department became a department which has created specific conditions for teaching and research.

EARLIER INAUGURAL LECTURES

One thing that does seem a little strange is that this is the third time in a rather short period that I am holding an inaugural lecture. This is the type of thing which one generally does once, possibly twice in a lifetime, however, due to some specific circumstances, among which is the fact that Örebro university now exists, this is the third time for me. At the Stockholm Institute of Education where I was installed 1994 as the successor of the opponent of my doctoral disputation, Ulf P. Lundgren¹, I performed an inaugural lecture with the title *The future tasks of educational research*² which I will refer to in the following. I then stressed that educational research has as its task to analyse what I called the processes of socialization and communication as meaning creating

processes. This implies that these processes are either interactive or reciprocal and that they are contingent i.e. not given a priori.

In the same lecture I made a distinction between, and I still strongly support the claim, that two main questions can be underlined as part of the task of analysing processes of socialization and communication as meaning creating processes, namely:

- the question of selection (the choice of content) – which factors determine the content?
- the question of institution (what kind of institution is the school? What kind of institution is the university?) – and who has the authority to determine its content and character?

At Uppsala University, where I returned after a relatively short period as professor in Stockholm, and where I was installed 1996 I made an attempt to deepen the second question in a political philosophical perspective with the inaugural lecture *The rights of children and adolescents to a pluralistic education*³. The concept of rights and especially education as a citizenship right has been an important reference point for me in an analysis of the different expectations on education. I have expressed this as being a point of tension between education as a civil right and education as a social right.⁴

An underlying message in that lecture and in my educational research is that questions around rights, social justice, solidarity, equality, and democracy, i.e. concepts usually seen as being essentially contested and the normative interpretations of the meanings of these concepts are especially legitimate and urgent scientific problems, not least in the way in which they relate to education. These concepts, or if you prefer, values, are also those which we historically have named as being the overriding values of school and the value base of schooling. One central question is how this value base is conceptualised – as univocal or as contradictory and basically contested.⁵ Analyses of these kinds of concepts are also examples of what we are doing in the research group I am conducting. This is a multifaceted activity that I am very proud of because the research group consists of so many eminent researchers and together they make up a particularly exciting research group. The research group SOC-INN (The content of socialization and the dimensions of citizenship) consists of more than twenty researchers from Uppsala, Stockholm and Örebro.⁶ The orientations of the research are firstly, the didactic and the interest of the question of selection of content and secondly, questions of political and pedagogical philosophy with different centres of gravity.

DIDACTIC RESEARCH

The didactic research grew out of the curriculum theory during the 1980s primarily in Uppsala and it has been related to the constitution of The Centre for Didactics at the Institute for Teacher Education at Uppsala University. Dissertations within that field have shed light on possibilities of content selections within different school subject areas such as citizenship education (Englund 1986ab, Roth 2000, Westlin 2000, Liljestrand 2002, Larsson 2004), science education (Östman 1995), sports education (Gustavsson 1994), media education (Ljunggren 1996), home economics (Hjälmeskog 2000), language education (Tornberg 2000), drama education (Sternudd 2000) etc. and have analysed consequences of different selections of content.⁷

The didactic research mentioned is internationally established and positively evaluated in the internationally based evaluation of educational research in Sweden.⁸ This research has been further developed methodologically, for example concerning new forms for text analysis with pragmatic inspiration.⁹ With these perspectives as a starting point I hope to be able to further develop the didactic research as a special Didactic Forum has recently been created.¹⁰ In addition to the curriculum theory based didactic research, important supplementary research was carried out during that time in Uppsala and where one dissertation also was produced. This research is based on sociology of science and has produced history of science analyses of education as a science concerning its preconditions for analysing teaching content.¹¹ This metaresearch of our own discipline will also be further developed within the research group and at the department.¹²

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

If we then move to the question of institution, which of course in some respects also is present in the didactic analyses, we have in the research group successively developed analyses of the relationship between education and democracy on more explicit philosophical perspectives – pragmatic and other political philosophical perspectives. This research has been developed in Uppsala and Stockholm as well as here in Örebro.¹³ An attempt to summarize this kind of research would be to describe it as being about the role of education concerning citizenship, community and identity formation in a multicultural society. But among the analyses, past and present, there are also analyses of the relationship between parents and schools, the question of

students' voices and analyses of central concepts within educational policy and the value base of schooling such as democracy, equivalence, solidarity etc. In this research there are historical and text analyses of educational policy documents as well as classroom research.¹⁴

I think I would venture to state that the members of the research group – even if they of course have different views on many questions – will be unified in *a belief of education as an important and potentially significant force*, i.e. that education – even if there are numerous examples of its meaninglessness – can be a central instance and institution in the achievement of democracy and as a precondition for strengthening democracy and it is out of this interest that our research is created. What then, in more precise terms, do we mean by establishing education as a significant force for strengthening democracy? As central components in what I see as education for democracy I mean that education

- firstly needs necessary resources and that is the first point on the agenda
- secondly needs to be arranged according to a political climate and system that supports such a direction towards democracy.

However, concerning both these points there has been an educational policy shift during the 1990s and this shift has in serious respects deteriorated the preconditions for an education for democracy – in our group we have also analysed these changes more thoroughly in a book called just the *Educational Policy Shift?* (Englund ed. 1995).

My own standpoint is that education for democracy concerning its content and character

- firstly ought to create space for different perspectives
- secondly ought to be communicative, i.e. create space for intense verbal and written reviews, for qualified communication in seminars around different perspectives and interpretations; different perspectives on whatever – so that the common participants are given the opportunity to develop their different standpoints and views as well as presenting arguments for them.¹⁵

A DELIBERATIVE ATTITUDE

The development of a *deliberative* attitude, an education that is based on the idea of an ongoing written and verbal communication, does not characterize the Swedish education society of today. It is more or less

based on the idea of knowledge mediation of solid and univocal pieces of knowledge and the evaluation of these. I mean that we, in the world of education, have a common challenge – not just in a society which continues to favour and rewards a view of education as being a question of simplified order and efficiency but also in the context that is surrounding us here and now, i.e. Örebro University – to create a communicative university with more examples of communicative forms of education, rather than univocal knowledge mediation.

It is also my view that our department of education and its model for teacher education with a combination of advanced lectures and recurrent intense seminars where these lectures and texts are communicated in small groups, ought to be included in all courses for all undergraduate students. Nor should the undergraduate education of the university resemble anything like the force-feeding of information, which seems to be common nowadays. Here I rely on the recently created Didactic Forum and a future debate of the character of the undergraduate education.

I also believe that it is important to convey such a debate and state explicitly these propositions in a societal and educational climate which has begun to regard education within an instrumental perspective and solely in terms of, efficiency and knowledge mediation with an ever-increasing level of student turnover. Students and teachers in schools and universities here have a common interest while we, at the same time, have to tackle an ongoing and devastating education rhetoric in the mass media – most notably led by Hans Bergström of the national broadsheet the DN – who in no way attempts to understand the complexity of education, and especially not its communicative character. Perhaps it's also here – in the awareness that the problem of schools is our common concern and that everyone is permitted to and expected to have an opinion of the tasks of schools – that educational research stands before its greatest challenge.

Thus, if we put questions of the kind which I have referred to we can come close to language and texts for, about and within education in a special way – with the perspective that *the discourse of education mainly constitutes the reality of schools*. But there are different discourses and texts and talks are social acts in the world.¹⁶ Education is about socialization into language, but the language, different uses of language, imply different preconditions for conceptualizing the world, to perspectivize the world in different ways and to reflect over it. The consequences of education, the meaning creation, also implies different political and moral attitudes.

SOURCES OF INSPIRATION

It is also in relation to these types of perspectives and questions that we in the research group turn to traditions and international figures such as the classical pragmatism with names like John Dewey and George Herbert Mead and within the late modern pragmatism names like Jürgen Habermas and Cleo Cherryholmes.

I have had the privilege of thoroughly examining the Swedish translation of John Dewey's *Democracy and Education* from 1916, a work that displays a different side to Dewey in contrast to the progressivistic 'learning-by-doing-Dewey' which has dominated the Swedish debate and many times been misinterpreted. Dewey's *Democracy and Education* places the question of education as communication in the foreground and also states preconditions for communication as fundamental criteria for democracy.¹⁷ Like George Herbert Mead Dewey stresses the interactive and communicative character of education and what kind of possibilities this implies. Here I mean that the relatively unknown analyses made by Mead have an enormous potential for the understanding of the nature of communication.¹⁸

Jürgen Habermas – who among other things has used the analyses made by Mead in his great *The Theory of Communicative Action* – is, among current thinkers, another important inspirational source for a view of education which transcends a traditional perspective of knowledge mediation and instead underlines *the importance of the dialogue for communicative competence and collective will-formation* – the creation of a public that has to define itself (cf. Ljunggren 1996), growing citizens as potential participants in collective endeavours and priorities (Habermas 1988, 1996).

Cleo Cherryholmes¹⁹ (1988) is the American researcher who with his *Power and Criticism* has been an important link in pointing out the significance of the language, of the vocabulary. The question of the vocabulary, the social science researcher's *choice between cynicism and a language of possibilities*²⁰ is a problematic which – as I see it – leads to furthering the critical attitude towards modernity, but at the same time still retaining some of its fundamental values, values earlier characterized as essentially contested concepts such as democracy, solidarity, equality and justice, values worth striving for.

Where is educational research going with the directions mentioned? Will it be a soft research, a research for an equal society of citizens in a time where other values are becoming dominant? Yes, perhaps, but in that case we are in good female company. Analyses of this com-

plexity have perhaps been most thoroughly worked out by female researchers e.g. Amy Gutmann (1987) who predicted the values of democratic education and the possibilities of deliberative democracy (Gutmann & Thompson 1996), Seyla Benhabib (1992, 1996) who further developed the discourse ethics and Martha Nussbaum (1997) who has tried to revitalize the concept of *phronesis* from Aristoteles and has pleaded for a need of *narrative imagination* – implying enlarged preconditions for understanding different cultures – within higher education.²¹ After all, it is about regarding educational questions from a perspective of values where democracy is one of the central directions for communication and mutual respect (cf. Dewey 1916).

Notes

*Footnotes and references are updated.

1. Ulf P. Lundgren was at the time of my disputation (1986) professor at the Stockholm Institute of Education, between 1991 and 1999 he was the director-general of the National Agency for Education and since 2000 he is professor at Uppsala university.
2. The inaugural lecture in Stockholm 1994 is published in *Pedagogisk forskning* 1(1), pp. 40–53 (Englund 1996a).
3. The inaugural lecture in Uppsala 1996 is published in *Utbildning och Demokrati* 6(1), pp. 5–15 (Englund 1997a).
4. cf. Englund 1993a, 1994c.
5. This specific problematic I conceptualise as crucial in many respects when we come close to the role of citizenship education which schooling has in a broad sense. Here there are (historically and simultaneously) all kinds of conceptions from narrow limitations of value mediation – that it is the task of schools to contribute to the internalization of determined values – to communicative attitudes including spaces for public debate of value questions. The attitude to and the treatment of the values just mentioned, such as democracy, justice etc, will be specifically central. It is also educational research of that kind that is in focus within the project *Democracy, autonomy and community* (cf. note 12) and educational research concentrated to the value base of schooling.
6. This was the situation in 1999. Until Spring 2004 17 dissertations have been produced, the group has changed its name to *Education and Democracy* and today the group is more concentrated to Örebro, but still with some members from other Swedish Universities. Dissertations at Uppsala university (U), Stockholm Institute of Education (S) and Örebro university (Ö) produced by members of the research group and advised by me are as follows: Carl-Anders Säfström (1994) Uppsala, Kjell Gustafsson (1994) U, Leif Östman (1995) U, Carsten Ljunggren (1996) U, Pirjo Lahdenperä (1997) Stockholm, Lars Svedberg (2000) S, Eva Forsberg (2000) U, Mia-Marie Sternudd (2000) U, Karin Hjalmeskog (2000) U, Ulrika Tornberg (2000) U, Moira von Wright (2000) S, Anders Westlin (2001) U, Klas Roth (2001) S, Ylva Boman (2002) Örebro, Owe Lindberg (2002) Ö, Johan Liljestränd (2002) Ö, Ann-Kristin Göhl-Muigai (2004) Ö.

7. The didactic research was related to a small but six-year-project financed by the National Agency for Education: *Teaching practice, meaning and citizenship education: a didactic perspective*. For presentations in English of my didactic perspective, see Englund 1996b, 1997b, 1998ab. A collection of papers, developed out of some of the dissertations within the project mentioned and some from the project *Democracy, Autonomy and Community* (cf. note 13), see Englund ed. 2004 where there also is a documentation from these projects.
8. For an independent description and evaluation of the research of the group see Achtenhagen et al. 1997, pp. 50–53, 109, 112, 160–161 and ch. 8.
9. Carl-Anders Säfström and Leif Östman eds. (1999).
10. From 2002 a new project *Education as deliberative communication – preconditions, possibilities, consequences* financed by the Swedish Research Council and its Committee for Educational Science has further developed and amalgamated the didactic, the political and pedagogical philosophical directions of the research group. Within this project the idea of deliberative democracy developed by Habermas is in the foreground and the idea of the development of deliberative communication (cf. Boman 2003, Carleheden 2002, 2003, Englund 2000a, 2001a, 2002a, 2003).
11. Englund 1992, 1996a, Säfström 1992, 1994.
12. Cf. Karnung 2001, Englund 2004.
13. The political philosophical perspectives on schooling and education and the relation between education and democracy has been developed primarily within the project *Democracy, Autonomy and Community* financed by the National Agency for Education during the late 1990s and the first years of the 21st Century. Within that project around fifteen researchers from the group have been engaged and besides an extensive cooperation with researchers from other disciplines and with educational researchers from the Department of Education, Oslo University have been established. The project is documented in Englund ed. (2004). Dissertations produced within the project are Ljunggren (1996), Lahdenperä (1997), Svedberg (2000), Forsberg (2000), von Wright (2000), Roth (2000) and Boman (2002).
14. Among ongoing doctoral studies advised by me within the research group and not yet presented as dissertations I will mention studies 'on the relationship between parents and schools' (Erikson), 'on writing in higher education' (Hagström), 'on teachers talk on and creating of their curricula' (Pettersson), 'on the concept of equivalence in Swedish educational policy at a local level' (Quennerstedt), 'on deliberation in social studies education' (Larsson) and 'on deliberation in mother tongue education' (Hultin), cf. the short presentations of the ongoing research projects. The latest dissertation produced within the research group is by Göhl-Muigai (2004) and is a text analysis of the concept of responsibility in educational policy documents for the public day care system.
15. I have in many earlier works tried to elaborate on this idea, see for example Englund 1993b, 1994d, 1995. In recent years the idea have been transformed and developed in terms of deliberative communication, see Englund 1998c, 1999b, 2000a, 2001a, 2002a, 2003, cf. note 10.
16. At the same time that this inaugural lecture was held I had two studies forthcoming that dealt with the discourse about two central concepts within education, the concepts of equivalence/equal dignity (Englund 1999a) and the concept of democracy (Englund 1999b).
17. Cf. Englund 1999c, 2000b, 2001b.
18. The production of Mead – which is of special character because it mainly consists of students' notes of his lectures – is seeing a strong revival now. Among new reconstruc-

- tions of Mead's works I would of course like to mention the eminent dissertation made by one of the members of the research group, Moira von Wright 2000.
19. Cleo Cherryholmes (1988, 1999) has been of utmost importance for the research group and he has visited Sweden and the group several times during the 1980s and 1990s. Cleo Cherryholmes was appointed as the first honorary doctor of Örebro University in 2000.
 20. cf. Cherryholmes 1988, p. 179, Rorty 1982, p. 203.
 21. Martha Nussbaum has after the time for my inaugural lecture visited Örebro university in December 2000 as a key note speaker at the conference *Higher education, democracy and citizenship*. The papers from the conference are collected in *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, 21(4–5), guest editor Tomas Englund (2002b). Seyla Benhabib will act as the key note speaker at the forthcoming conference for the Association of the Nordic Research Community (NFPF/NERA) in Örebro in March 2006.

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TIME, SPACE, AND NARRATIVE

A STORY ABOUT EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH
AND TEACHER EDUCATION

Agneta Linné

THE RIGHT TO SPEAK – AND ABOUT WHAT

The inaugural lecture belongs to a very special genre. It is the ritual according to which a new master is authorised to speak. When inaugurated at his chair at Collège de France in 1982, Pierre Bourdieu referred to the inaugural lecture as the medium by which the speech of a new master is being institutionalised as a legitimate discourse, uttered by the person who has been granted this right to speak.¹ The observant reader notices the words *master* and *his*. On this special occasion, when the right to speak is bestowed upon me as a new holder of a chair in education, and when I am expected to live up to what was mentioned above, it may also be noticed that the master actually can be a *she*. In educational science in Sweden, this has been made possible only in the last twenty years.² Certainly it makes a difference – a difference that entails a responsibility. I will come back to that later.

As the genre has been developing, installandi have often used the inaugural lecture of one of their predecessors as a starting point; in particular, the lecture of Bertil Hammer has been referred to. Hammer was the very first Swedish professor holding a chair in education. His inaugural lecture (in 1910, at Uppsala University) had the title *Om pedagogiska problem och forskningsmetoder* [On educational problems and research methods], and he defined the new scientific discipline in relation to three major problems. The first was to “seek to establish the goal of education, as far as is indicated by the historical and cultural formation of mankind; this will be the mission of a *philosophical or teleological education*”. The second major problem was to “study the process of upbringing in detail, such as it appears in the single individual; in other words, to investigate the biological and psychological conditions that determine the child’s development: *individual or psychological education*”. And finally, the third major problem implied “studying education on the whole as a social phenomenon, of which the historical and social conditions need to be clarified: *social (including historical) education*” (Hammer 1910, in Lindberg & Berge 1988, p. 33, my translation).

Hammer emphasised the importance of studying the goal of education as well as education as a social phenomenon in its historical and cultural context. When it came to the goal of education, he talks about “trying to interpret the aim of education from the course of culture; it could then be considered transmission of culture between generations.” The task was to study education and culture, and the ideals of education (*Bildung*), as far as their relations to cultural development on the whole were concerned.

Education is not an activity for which laws should be written, but rather a process of life, a developmental process, new generations that grow up and grow into social life and culture, a piece of history: the history of the transmission of a cultural heritage from generation to generation, Hammer declared. It follows that one cannot regard educational research a technology, or by that means an application of methods.

As far as education as a social phenomenon was concerned, the mission was to

historically study the education of peoples in their mutual interaction and struggle, and to follow the development of educational life (*Bildungsleben*) within each single people [...]. It is a question of trying to learn from history, sociology and other social sciences as fully as possible everything they know, and to tell about ennobling and destroying forces in the peoples' lives (Hammer 1910, p. 38, my translation).

In addition to this, Hammer mainly discussed what he called educational psychology. As we all know, this branch of educational research came to strongly dominate the decades that followed.

Hammer also entered upon the question whether education is a scientific discipline or not. In a way he sketched the outlines of a territorial map: Is education to be looked upon as an art (the art of upbringing) or as a science that besides adds something to the knowledge about this art of upbringing?³ Hammer clearly pointed out that education includes a *theoretical*, i.e., a scientific problem, although a dazzling illusion may make us believe that this is not the case, since at the same time education is such an overwhelmingly *practical* problem.

Or should really the educational institutions of mankind – the ideals of *Bildung*, the work of *Bildung*, the integration of new generations into our societies – should this not include any problem at all? Should it as a scientific interest be so infinitely smaller than, let us say, the flower beside the road, or the gravel that we tread upon? Certainly not (Hammer 1910, p. 39, my translation).

He finished by quoting Kant: “Education is the greatest problem, and the most difficult one that can be imposed upon man.”

In other words, the text implied a kind of practical theory – embedded in the study of how to become a human being and in the study of social and cultural [re]production.

My own research has focused upon the part of educational research that Hammer described as studying the goals of upbringing, and edu-

cation as a social phenomenon, its social and historical conditions. My starting point has been the perspective of the so-called frame factor theory, based upon the research of Urban Dahllöf (1969, 1971) and Ulf P. Lundgren (1972, 1977). Lundgren's further work, in which he developed the frame factor perspective into a curriculum theory approach, was most inspiring. It implied exceeding traditional structural theory thinking (Lundgren 1983, 1984, 1991). I have used a frame factor theory-based frame of reference as a starting point in order to make curriculum history analyses (Linné 1996, 1999a, b).

In analysing what has been considered important knowledge worth being mediated to future teachers of the elementary school at various times, ideas of how such learning comes about and what the school contents ought to be, as well as what teaching might be and how it might best be organised for learning, I have focused upon questions of stability and change, and how these matters connect to overall social courses of events. Time and space have been analysed as boundary marks, classification and framing have been used as generative concepts. The question of classification and crossing boundaries, the matter of how human beings categorise and classify their world, has been important. So has the spatial as a material reality and the concept social field as a scientific-analytic tool.

In this paper, I take the liberty of talking somewhat freely about time and history, about pedagogic space, narrative identity and narrative imagination, and about biography as a possible tool in research on democratic dimensions of education. I give the discussion a concrete form by using examples from topical research projects. At first, however, some words on educational research, education and teacher training, using the concept "field" as an analytic device.

EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH, DIDACTICS AND TEACHER TRAINING – AND PEDAGOGIC FIELDS

The selection of school content, and ideas about how this content 'best' should be mediated, has always been a critical question in the discursive field of teacher training. Strong struggles have taken place for and against various teaching models. Teacher educators have built their identities around recognised values in the didactic field. Methodological handbooks and didactic manuals can be looked upon as different poles in a field of possibilities (*champs des possibilités*).⁴ This was evident also at the time when the first chair in education was established:

Not until educational study achieves its position as a discipline at our universities, not until then can the general pedagogical standpoint of the teaching corps be raised. Hence: professors in educational science at our universities, senior lecturers at our teacher seminars! (*Svensk Läraretidning* 1904, p. 78, my translation).

Those were the appealing words of the professional organisation of elementary school teachers, headed by Fridtjuv Berg and Emil Hammarlund, and challenging the established elite of school and academy at the turn of the 19th century. These two spokesmen of the teachers also put forward a Parliamentary Bill in 1905 proposing to establish a university chair in education. And their justification was the great need for scientific knowledge related to teacher education.

When these challengers entered the territory, the existing pedagogic field shifted character. The positions of the social space were transformed. Intensive reforms took place in the arenas of school and teacher training – reforms that became part of a modernisation process.

The challengers struggled against highly static ideas of education, knowledge and learning. Such were the ideas that characterised the training of teachers from 1842 until around 1900. Such were also the basic ideas of the representatives of state power that shaped the training of the elementary school teacher into a tool for governing the compulsory school.

A widely read handbook from 1868–69, *Bidrag till Pedagogik och Metodik för Folkskolelärare* [Contributions to pedagogics and methodology for elementary school teachers], by Ludwig Anjou, Karl Kastman and Knut Kastman, contains an extensive chapter called The Theory of Teaching (my translation). The following two didactic questions are emphasised as basic:

- *What* is to be taught at the elementary school? The problem of selection, or the legitimate basis for the content of the school, is developed at length;

- *How* are you to teach at the elementary school? Here the teaching methods are described in detail. A teaching method is to be chosen on one hand according to the developmental laws of the soul, on the other hand according to the nature of the school subject. Ideas of the time are developed concerning object lessons, organisation of time and space, the model lesson, and how to design the teachers' 'manuscript' or lesson draft. The text took shape in a context where the elementary school needed to be accepted as a legitimate social institution.

Evidently, rules guiding a craft are fundamental in the text. The laws of psychology and the nature of the school subject create the

necessary conditions for teaching. Perhaps it is in textbooks like this that we might find the origin of talking about educational research mainly as an application of something else?⁵

Here, the world as given impregnates the text; here, the goal is determined once and for all and the laws are immovable. Little is noticed of Johann Friedrich Herbart's (1776–1841) endeavour to build a pedagogic science already in 1806 (*Allgemeine Pädagogik aus dem Zweck der Erziehung abgeleitet*) – a science altogether on its own, clearly exceeding both applied ethics and applied psychology. Studies of human existence and of cultural reproduction – although never exactly like it was, never as an exact copy, and studies of man's potentials to become someone different from before (cf. Uljens 2002).

By virtue of being representatives of the state, men like Ludwig Anjou and Karl Kastman outlined the contours of a pedagogic public space in the later decades of the 19th century. Their ideas dominated one part of the social and pedagogic field that took shape around the elementary school and its teacher training. Another part of the field was dominated by the young, ambitious teachers of the elementary school, who made teacher education part of their struggle for recognition as a professional group and as citizens. The leaders of the teachers' organisation questioned the dominating idea that the typical civil servant necessarily would take precedence over any other citizen just because of his role as a civil servant, a public officer. Contrary to the public official, representing the state, the right of the citizen was invoked – the competent individual who by virtue of his abilities, experience and formal education should be granted a similar prerogative to that of the civil servant to offer his opinion and to be taken seriously as an equal partner in a dialogue. Through alliances with increasingly powerful liberal circles, the challenging teachers and their organisation created a platform from which to act, and a distinct, particular space on the public scene (Linné 1999a).

Not until considerably later, female teachers became entitled to the same space and the same citizenship – although some unique, excellent voices could be heard (cf. Florin & Kvarnström 2001). Step by step, however, a number of women entered the pedagogic public field, contributing to widen the space and shape modernity (cf. Österberg & Carlsson Wetterberg 2002). Teacher education and becoming a teacher in the elementary school, in a girls' school, or in a teacher seminary, were some of the few, available roads for women to reach a position in the public field. Anna Sandström, Hedwig Sidner, Ellen Fries, Anna Sörensen were active on the pedagogic arena around 1900. Agda

Meyerson, Gerda Meyerson, Klara Johanson were active in other social fields.⁶ Which were their voices in the public discourse concerning education and teaching? How did they go about to capture a room in the public space? Which citizenship did they stage? I will come back to this shortly.

The static teaching model, in which the world appeared as given, was deeply challenged by early 20th century ideas of knowledge and learning. Until then, for instance, lesson plans were usually prepared like a full text ‘manuscript’, in which the teacher’s talk – and sometimes even the pupils’ answers – was written down in advance. Now, a more open model was recommended. The student should take part in an education that promoted personal development. The message of the gospels should be allowed to speak directly to the student’s mind, rather than the rules of the catechism. Teaching should be practical, which meant more independent study and inquiry methods. Health and hygiene were placed on the agenda, and a greater space for biology, nature study and practical and aesthetical subjects was advocated. The child made its way into the public scene. The symbolic child, the child ‘per se’, invariably given by nature, became visible in the pedagogic discourse, and was assigned the role of reflecting man’s longing for a better world and a prosperous future. The child and its soul became important issues of the agenda. The idea of progress linked a redemption project to a quest for rational change.⁷

Ellen Key expressed the radically new, utopian way of conceiving past, present and future in her immensely influential work *The Century of the Child*. The symbolic child was turned into both goal and means. Only those who could by nature and personal culture play with children, live with children, long for children should be employed in a school and there be able to develop their personal teaching methods. Hope for a utopian development, meaning that man physically and psychically were ever in the process of becoming, characterises some of her reasoning: “Instead of a fallen man, we see an incompleated man, out of whom, by infinite modifications in an infinite space of time, a new being can come into existence”, she says in *The Century of the Child* (1909, pp. 3–4).

Twenty-three years later, Anna Sörensen spoke on behalf of a child in need of a school adapted to its development and nature. When discussing a future comprehensive school, common to all, she argued forcefully that what was at stake was not schools or courses but children. The crucial question was not how to make the elementary school fit the grammar school, but how to make the school adapt to the

children's various developmental stages. Unless, of course, you want to take up a position against the child, she rhetorically put it (Sörensen 1923, Linné 2001b).

The female teacher educators were important agents in this development. Their public actions on behalf of the modern child and modern morality, governed from within, may be considered critical examples of women's strategies in making use of and reforming the public arena. Their actions, however, have also contributed to form an immanent practice of teacher education. Their ideas concerning children and childhood, morality and development, are living parts of our history of the present. They are also parts of the national story telling of teacher training – parts of the story of how we shape our lives as teachers and students.

* * *

Now back to the present. The first Swedish university chair in curriculum studies (*Didaktik*) was created about 85 years after the chair in education: in 1996, at the Stockholm Institute of Education. In his inaugural lecture, Selander (1997) points out a tripod on which didactic research rests, namely studies of institutions, texts, and communication. Focus is upon the school as an institution, its culture, frame factors, and action patterns – in short, the socially fabricated perceptions and practices that make a phenomenon appear self-evident, beyond question, almost given by nature. Focus is upon the text – the textbook, the subject content, the lesson as a pedagogic text. Focus is upon communication: the interaction, the talk in the classroom, the pedagogical actions, the play on stage, or how we choose to conceptualise the process in question, and upon the relations between these categories.

With didactic research, links were re-established to continental research traditions, to German idealistic philosophy, to philosophers like Schleiermacher and Herbart, Dilthey, Nohl, Klafki, Weniger, Blankertz. With curriculum research as an emerging scientific [sub]field, questions arise concerning the legitimacy of school content, its problem of selection, and its problem of mediation. But also critical questions like for whom, when, and in what context? How and why have school contents and teaching methods taken shape, and how may these processes be interpreted as part of a socio-historical process? Curriculum theory with its classical – and critical – questions then becomes highly relevant, at the same time as links are established to hermeneutics and interpretation theory, and to cultural science and history.⁸

The main part of my research has taken shape in a curriculum theory tradition, in which analysis and conceptual development, but also interpretation, is essential. I take an interest in analysing the didactical questions in a cultural studies perspective, based on theories that exceed the separations between structure and agency, between content and form, between text and context, between past, present and future – and where the narrative is important as an interpretative tool. From this follows that a historical perspective becomes significant.

TIME AND HISTORY

The question of time and history, not least the question of a tension between something invariable and something on the move, can be analysed in the light of two different perspectives of educational history. I shall now try to hypothetically and provisionally isolate two ideal-typical approaches. Educational history is the story of symbolic violence, of power and subordination, of cultural reproduction and discipline – and the role of the researcher is to expose these processes in their various shapes, one implicit strand of thought is read. The intrinsic character of teaching never really changes; it only varies regarding form and appearance. Educational history is a story about persistence and invariability. Or instead: educational history is the story of continuous reform, of enlightenment and progress. Through history, good teachers and educational philosophers have constantly struggled to improve schools and teaching and to create greater and greater opportunities for more and more groups to obtain a good education. Educational history is a story of constant development (Linné 2001b).

Tentatively, these contrasting perspectives may be seen as integrated in the narrative of teacher education – or as poles around which arguments are phrased and understanding shaped. As an illustrative example, I present some themes from a study of lesson plans in teacher training in the latter half of 19th and the beginning of 20th centuries (Linné 2001c).⁹ The lesson was transformed into a pedagogic text, carefully written down by the student teacher. A discursive pattern could be identified, reflecting a cognitive theory enhancing how to evoke the ‘right’ idea or perception by the ‘right’ phrasing of a question. The lesson plans were deeply impregnated by the pattern of recitation. The catechism was the ideal model. This model allowed no disputes; the text was in focus and there was always only one correct answer.

However, the pedagogic text was on its way to change character. Simple replication of sentences as phrased in the exact wording of the text gave way to a vivid narrative, picturing a new world to the children – a world, however, that was constructed out of recognisable elements of nature, religious faith, the nation and fatherland, and the biblical stories. When school subjects and curriculum contents that go beyond religion and learning the basics became important, the form of the interrogation changed shape and the structure of the lesson was allowed to follow the logic of this content. When the teacher was expected to mediate the mentality of biblical history, she developed a narrative technique that intimately and in an everyday way symbolised the other out of the well known. When unknown areas of the fatherland, or new industries became part of school subjects, imaginative journeys were staged in the classroom.

The framing of teachers' and students' communication, and the boundary marks of various content categories were changed. A didactical approach to knowledge replaced an earlier, mainly technical attitude. An earlier emphasis on simple replication had developed into an interest in curriculum content, organised as school subjects. This process of altered classification and framing (Bernstein 1977, 1980, 1990) took place parallel to, and as a consequence of, societal and cultural demands which allowed a greater variation in classroom technology, and prepared the teacher for a new, self-governing role in the new school of modernity (Linné 2001c).

The formation of a more elaborate classification and framing was staged parallel to an increasing complexity of curriculum content. What was to be learned, and how this was best done, had begun to be a pedagogical problem that derived from a new concern to educate citizens, not only an elite (Lundgren 1983, 1991). When answers to those questions were no longer inherent in the situation, or the context for production, when the curriculum problems of selection and organisation of knowledge and its transmission had to be subject to choice and decision, the curriculum had to be abstracted from its immediate context and transmitted through the medium of the pedagogic text (Linné 2001c).

This inquiry into the territory of lesson drafts also demonstrates that a school technology once advocated in order to enhance the teacher's control of all the pupils in the classroom, and at the same time influence the minds, thoughts and morals of the children, appears to have become an excellent instrument in the creation of a school for social integration and social cohesion, a school for symbolic representation, and a school for meaning making in a rapidly changing world (Linné 2001c). The

narrative made possible a journey perceived only in thought. By the teacher's telling, a world of representations was created in the classroom. This was particularly evident as new school subjects made their entry into the curriculum. The school took part in making the text authentic, in re-establishing the genuine in an invisible world. Through the symbolic meanings of the text, a mentality of modernity was mediated.

A redefinition of manuscript and meaning was being staged in the period of the inquiry. From simply reproducing and memorising sentences or passages word by word, mediated by a closed interrogation technique, a narrative was articulated in the form of an intimate, intrusive and personal voice: a voice interpreting the moral wisdom of biblical stories, or representing invisible sceneries of industrial work, the rules of nature, or the glory of the nation, in a personal address to the children of modern society and modern schooling (Linné 2001c).

When focusing upon the *form* of the classroom technology, simultaneous teaching appeared to imply a never-changing and similar persistence of recitation. On the other hand, when focusing upon the *content* and the *context for learning*, there was certainly a difference – a difference of address and meaning making, a difference of voice and approach. The pedagogic text was on its way to change character – and influential teacher educators took an important part in this development. Through close text reading, nuances and shifts of meanings have been revealed. In other words, the many-faceted tensions of cultural reproduction have been reconstructed, and the two different approaches to educational history as a story of persistent invariability, or as a story of constant change, have been outreached.

The origins of those two approaches may be traced back to a time when teacher training consisted of educational history, psychology and teaching methods. Textbooks of the time described how great men had envisaged pedagogic ideas, how children's physical and psychological development took shape, and how lessons best should be planned – the links, however, between these knowledge areas were weak. Man appears to be a peculiarly passive creature when examining conceptions of the soul, its form and representations, in early 20th century textbooks of psychology and education (Linné 1996, pp. 234–235). To an extremely small extent, an image of interaction between the self and its surrounding world is reflected. Since action as a category came second, and the concept of interaction was non-existent, the idea of man appears mechanical. Nowhere do we catch sight of the acting, thinking and feeling person, nowhere are seen her meetings with the world and the other. Ideas of educational history as pure cultural reproduc-

tion of the same, or as pure progressive change and development, make themselves understood towards this idealistic background.

What, then, would happen if we gave educational history the significance of being necessary in order to understand who we are and how we have been formed, what our encounters might be, and what might take place in the future? What would happen if we used educational history to catch sight of magic notions, myths, and culturally grounded practices and ideas that are part of our bodies, and that we reproduce more or less without consideration? What if we would question our place in history, considering how our present actions, ideas and mentalities are situated in a socially and historically constructed context – simultaneously being part of ourselves, of our present world and future?

If we worked with history not only as structure, but as living material, as something we always stage, that lives and changes in our human relations, that is fabricated in the moment we meet a group of students and discuss what children, schools, or learning is or can be, that exists when we construct our images of how the school is governed or children develop. What would that history look like? How can we catch sight of it, consider its characteristics, what shapes it, and how it will be in the future?

This may be said in a more dynamic and interrelated way. Pierre Bourdieu talks about how we unconsciously play a game, a game we carry in our bodies, and a game in which the feeling for the play means to genuinely control the game in a practical situation, to have a feeling for the history of the game (Bourdieu 1994). It is as if we would anticipate in our actions – in the play – something not immediately apprehended or present but already there, that we act at present relating to a future next to present. Past and future are, so to speak, inscribed in the present. I believe the concept ‘strategy’ in the Bourdieu tradition may be understood in this respect. In fact, an intriguing homology may be traced to George Herbert Mead (1934) and his thinking on taking the role of the other, on anticipating courses of events in social interaction.¹⁰

In his work on the Swedish history of mentality and education, *Kontrasternas spel* [Interplay of contrasts], Per-Johan Ödman (1995) compares the historical memory to something permanent that constantly changes disguise, but all the same is being reproduced, unconsciously, almost automatically. His reasoning bears a strong resemblance to Émile Durkheim’s idea of collective representations. Ödman has developed the concept “immanent pedagogy”, meaning a peda-

gogy inherent in the situation, staged unintentionally and unconsciously – maybe part of a game using Bourdieu's metaphor. How can we catch sight of that?

Basil Bernstein (1980, p. 11) describes how power speaks through boundary-maintenance and framing:

... insulation is the means whereby the cultural is transformed into the natural, the contingent into the necessary, the past into the present, the present into the future.

Strong classification and boundary-maintenance between different phenomena in the world is the road whereby the cultural becomes naturally given, the contingent becomes necessary, and the past is transformed into what is valid today.

In his work *La Domination Masculine* (1998), Pierre Bourdieu emphasises the scientist's important task to give back to *doxa* its paradoxical character, and to take apart those processes that transform history into nature and turn the cultural and contingent into something given. He recommends the use of an anthropological approach, or of ethnographic studies, in order to give back to the basis for difference between men and women as we [mis]recognise it, its arbitrariness and contingency. He also emphasises the importance of historical analysis, and the necessity to confront the paradoxes then appearing.

In other words, historical studies of the illustrated kind can be used not only to demonstrate how a phenomenon (e.g., classroom discourse) has grown out of a social and historical context, under certain conditions and having certain significance – and so demonstrate that cultural reproduction constantly assumes new formation and shapes new meaning. Just in showing this, the historical text makes an open invitation to conversation and deliberation, to critical reflection and possible questioning the cultural practice of the present – and might then become a way to catch sight of democratic dimensions in education.

THE PEDAGOGIC SPACE

How the *pedagogic space* is regulated is another important theme of research that has a strong didactic relevance. The room for learning, how time is organised, and how content is selected, are not given by God or nature, neither innate to a knowledge structure or an essence

given once and for all. These basic didactical units are social facts, again using Émile Durkheim's (1895) words. They are created by human beings under certain conditions, situated in certain contexts as far as time and space are concerned – and stored in human souls.¹¹

The study of lesson plans from 1860–1920 showed what happened in a pedagogic space when the monitorial method of organising a school was abandoned in favour of simultaneous instruction. Men like Torsten Rudenschöld had strongly questioned the efficiency of the monitorial model, referring to its lack of capacity to handle the pupils' moral education and the social control of the classroom.¹² The school was expected to prepare the pupils for a society and a citizenship in which a different value than before was attributed to the individual. The teacher's personality was expected to touch the soul of each single pupil, and was emphasized as the very core 'instrument' for fulfilling the essential goals of the elementary school. In such a context, lecture halls for 200 pupils soon appeared unsuitable.¹³ The pedagogical space began to be ordered and framed in different ways. Standard models of school buildings with classrooms for 50 or 60 pupils were developed as prototypes by the government office in charge. Curriculum plans were issued and curriculum content framed according to grades. The very material site for teaching – the school buildings – came to represent these redefinitions. Step by step, new school houses were constructed – buildings that were shaped in accordance with the meaning assigned to the school as a symbolic space at the time of modernity.

This was particularly evident in Stockholm, the capital of Sweden. The economic, demographic and cultural expansion and transition induced the city to erect a number of magnificent buildings for the students at the public grammar school, as well as for the pupils at the elementary school. The private girls' schools also got their new constructions – designed, however, to represent the ethos of a private home, rather than a public space.

A small study of three school buildings in Stockholm at the turn of 1900 shows, at least tentatively, that the buildings took part in fabricating the habitus of the pupils. Depending on your social origin and your future task in modern society, you attended school buildings that reflected and symbolised a curriculum carrying messages of who you were and who you were supposed to become.¹⁴ A social and physical space took shape, framed the years at school, and contributed to and strengthened the spoken curriculum (Linné & Skog-Östlin 2002).

The spatial plays an important role in the tradition of the frame factor theory. It is reflected in the emphasis on the relation between

text and context that Ulf P. Lundgren recurrently returns to in several of his works. It then becomes logical that the school as a social and material institution enters into studies in education and didactics. Consequently, it becomes important to study the concrete, physical context in which a phenomenon is embedded.

From another perspective, Zygmunt Bauman (1998) discusses how territoriality is being disconnected in our new, globalised world, and a new asymmetry is emerging between the exterritorial nature of power and the continuing territoriality of the whole life. He talks about public meeting places as necessary sites where norms are created and the participants integrated into a community, and discusses that a territory in a globalised world, stripped of such concrete public space, provides little chance for norms being debated, values to be confronted, to clash and to be negotiated. Matters of territoriality and the spatial are clearly part of a perspective concerning research on democratic dimensions in education (cf. Linné 2003).

Physical and symbolic space bears important meaning in Pierre Bourdieu's theoretical perspective. The geographical space of the city in terms of habitations, building constructions, and roads conveys symbolic meaning and can be compared to positions in a social space (cf. Bourdieu 1992, Bourdieu 1994). This leads to some basic thoughts and ideas in the research we pursue concerning female pioneers at the turn of 19th century, and how their careers and strategies may be understood.

BIOGRAPHY AND COLLECTIVE BIOGRAPHY – POSSIBLE TOOLS IN STUDIES OF DEMOCRATIC DIMENSIONS IN EDUCATION?

Biographical traditions in historical and social science research have experienced a renaissance in recent years. Biography as a methodological tool has been described as an excellent device to shed light upon general historical tendencies and conditions through analysing authentic life histories (cf. Chamberlaine et al. 2000). The person who is an object for a biography is looked upon as a focal point in time.

In the research project *Shaping the Public Sphere – a Collective Biography of Stockholm Women 1880–1920*, we try to capture the field of tension between on one hand the collective, structurally determined conditions and routes in time and space that made it possible for a number of women to take the step from the private to the public around the turn of 1900, and on the other hand single individuals' ways of shaping this field of possibilities. We focus on the positions carried

by the members of various entwined networks, as well as on the personal lives of single individuals. It then becomes important to find ways of outlining the life histories of these women, not primarily in their capacity of being unique, isolated persons, but rather as representatives and creators of a mentality that goes beyond the private, as members of various networks – maybe social fields-to-be – or as agents in the formation of important social and cultural patterns of the time.

The overall purpose is to analyse the women's routes from the private to the public, particularly regarding Stockholm as a meeting place and the social networks of the Swedish capital, and to analyse the women's strategies in shaping the public and their contributions to the development of modern public life.

A number of these women were active as teachers at a teacher seminary, and took an active part in shaping the ideas of a modern child and a modern school. Can we find indications of mentalities and cultural patterns on the threshold of modernity through studying their lives and world – indications that may have contributed to shape the self-comprehension of teacher education of today?

Getting a position at a state seminary was among the most prominent public appointments a Swedish woman was formally entitled to hold before the 1920s, and the teaching staff contained some women of high distinction, making remarkable contributions to the pedagogic field in the period of educational transformation that was in progress. Our context is also characterised by the very substantial historical fact that these women did not enter the public arena on the same conditions as men did in an earlier period; their strategies also seem to be characterised to some extent by ambivalence. They were part of entwined processes of alliance, subordination, exclusion, fight and resistance that characterise the period.

The lives and work of the female educators need to be understood in this context. Many of them struggled against the pedagogy of the time, trying to formulate something new. Others defended an established tradition. We are interested in how the female teachers in such a public dialogue contributed to fabricate a modern child and a modern pedagogy. One starting point is the idea that what is not yet clearly defined, what is only partly stated or on its way, carries the embryo of something new – and that focusing on such areas might mean catching sight of critical processes, or events rich in interpretive strength.

As a point of departure, we use the theoretical perspective of Pierre Bourdieu; the concepts capital and social field are employed as scientific tools in the analysis. However, an important purpose of the

project is to critically explore the limits and scientific prolificacy of these concepts in our particular context.

A social field in Bourdieu's sense is considered a system of relations between positions, carried by agents or institutions struggling over joint objects, ideas, and phenomena, to which a great value is ascribed (Bourdieu 1992, 1994). A life history resembles a series of positions successively being carried by an agent in a changing social space. Biographical events may be described as positionings and movements between positions in this social space. To outline the social space and its pattern of possibilities then becomes necessary in order to interpret an individual life (Bourdieu 1994, particularly the article "The Biographical Illusion").

The relation between the concepts network, public sphere and social field is believed to be of critical importance to our interpretation.¹⁵ Jürgen Habermas' (1962, 1992) ideal-typical concept of a liberal, reasoning public of citizens was developed mainly as an analytic tool in accounting for an expanding, liberal, bourgeois public, insulated from both state and market, and engaged in a joint, disinterested discourse aiming at the common good. For example, Mary Ryan (1990) has pointed out that several, competing public arenas existed side by side and demonstrated the diversified routes and steps that women took when becoming engaged in public life. Nancy Fraser (1992) has particularly emphasised this diversified character of women's informal networks acting on the public scene, and the controversies and discrepancies taking place when non-bourgeois classes obtained access to public life, when struggle and compromise – not at all disinterested citizens – superseded the enlightened reasoning among equals. An interesting point is that the public space, into which many women struggled to gain entrance, was in fact part of the state.¹⁶ This has appeared significant, not least with regard to the female teachers.

Women's networks and strategies are focused upon in the analysis. We have been able to demonstrate how their use of possible cultural, social and symbolic assets simultaneously has contributed to a refiguring of the existing field of possibilities.

Could biographical studies then contribute to catch sight of and analyse democratic dimensions in education? Maybe in the sense of shedding light on the unnoticed in the darkness of history, and making visible the conditions of their lives, and how they have used education as a strategy. Maybe in the sense of analysing how various texts have come to represent different meanings in relation to a democratic society.

NARRATIVE IDENTITY, NARRATIVE IMAGINATION AND TRACES OF THE PAST

In an earlier part of this paper, I discussed the changing character of teaching around 1900. Replication of strict models became less frequent in favour of a more open narrative. The narrative appeared to be an excellent tool for teaching in a context where life and world needed to be represented by a text. Using narratives, the teacher could stage a journey possible only by thought and imagination. This leads to a wider discussion of narrativity in a broader sense – not least regarding research on democratic dimensions of education.

To see as (*voir comme ...*) is the common spirit (*l'âme commune*) of the metaphor and the narrative, Paul Ricoeur writes (1985). To be able to see something *as* something – maybe this is linked to the puzzling art of becoming a human being, to the fact that cultural reproduction never takes place as exact copying, and that becoming a human being means being someone you have not yet been.¹⁷

Phrased in terms of narrative imagination, life history as a research strategy, or teachers' life stories as ways of building professional identities and research grounded in praxis, narrative traditions are highly topical in research and higher education. Martha C. Nussbaum (1997) links the concept narrative imagination to the need for universities to educate world citizens – citizens of a world common to all. Her clear ambition is to strengthen the democratic dimensions of higher education.

In one sense this tradition may be traced back to the Chicago school of the early 20th century and the pioneering work of William I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki (1918/1927), using life stories as a basis for sociological analysis. The classical Thomas' words, rooted in George Herbert Mead's (1934) pragmatic and interactionist philosophy, stand out as emblematic: "If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences".¹⁸

With G. H. Mead we might also catch sight of the paradoxical and elusive in this intersubjectivity, its appeal to cross boundaries into something indefinite, its upheaval of the definite and given – and, hence, its challenge towards the future.

In an essay with the provocative title "Life in quest of narrative" (1991), Paul Ricoeur critically comments upon human subjectivity as a narrative identity, and upon the possible role of fiction in man's shaping his life. Through the narrative the self is created as a whole – however, not as a substantial but as a narrative character:

Our life, when then embraced in a single glance, appears to us as the field of a constructive activity, borrowed from narrative understanding, by which we attempt to discover and not simply to impose from outside the *narrative identity which constitutes us*. [...] we learn to become the *narrator* and the hero of our own story, without actually becoming the *author of our own life* (Ricoeur 1991, p. 32).

In the light of the great stories of our culture, we reinvent and reconstruct our identities; we become authors and heroes of our own story. At the same time, there is a clear-cut separation between life and text:

We can apply to ourselves the concept of narrative voices which constitute the symphony of great works such as epics, tragedies, dramas and novels. The difference is that, in all these works, it is the author who is disguised as the narrator and who wears the mask of the various characters and, among all of these, the mask of the dominant narrative voice that tells the story we read. We can become our own narrator, in imitation of these narrative voices, without being able to become the author. This is the great difference between life and fiction. In this sense, it is true that life is lived and that stories are told. An unbridgeable difference does remain, but this difference is partially abolished by our power of applying to ourselves the plots that we have received from our culture and of trying on the different roles assumed by the favourite characters of the stories most dear to us. It is therefore by means of the imaginative variations of our own ego that we attempt to obtain a narrative understanding of ourselves, the only kind that escapes the apparent choice between sheer change and absolute identity. Between the two lies narrative identity (Ricoeur 1991, pp. 32–33).

Narrative imagination can open the apparently given towards the not yet told, the not yet thought, I think the quotation implies. What would the consequences be for conceptions of time and history?

Traces of the past exist *now*. The trace is something present that represents a non-existing past – in this you may find its enigma, Ricoeur tells us (1985). What does this imply? What are the meanings of the symbolic traces that schools and teaching have left us? What is the meaning of the trace *replacing* something, being something that must be *interpreted*?

What traces of the past made the writer Harry Martinson give us the classical picture of the feeling that occurs when discovering new insights, when the world opens up a little? What was inscribed inside the poet Harriet Löwenhjelm when she urged all well-meaning didactical experts of the world to leave her and move off – and how can this be understood?¹⁹

Ricoeur talks about being indebted to the past and about the responsibility to interpret the remnants and signs of history. Through documents and criticism of the sources, the historian is subjected to what once was. He is indebted to those who lived before him, a debt that he can never escape. He represents mankind in relation to memory (Ricoeur 1985). This implies a responsibility to outline the many-faceted web that a phenomenon is part of – the nuances, the game, the relation between text and context, my interpretation goes. In doing this, new images and relations appear, and what seems given becomes diffused.

According to my interpretation, this also includes a responsibility to make the unnoticed visible – the early female teachers, for instance, and their contributions to modernity and modern education. Perhaps it may even include a responsibility to make visible the future. Referring to Hans-Georg Gadamer, Stephen Toulmin (1990, p. 3) uses the concept horizons of expectations, and asks what eye we might develop out of history for meaning-bearing aspects of the future – and thereby contributing to its formation. Grounded in the remaining and the interpreted, in traces that come instead of an absent past, I would add.

What were the ideas of ‘good’ learning and ‘good’ teacher training in various periods of modern history, and what remains of this do we stage today? What was – and is – the role of teacher training in shaping the image of a ‘good’ lesson? What conceptions do we have of the ‘good teacher’? And what images can we outline? Is this our responsibility – yes, of course it is. On the basis of what has been said, a narrative approach certainly could make important contributions to research on democratic dimensions of education.

CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

Research on democracy is an important profile of Örebro University. Part of such a profile might be to continue studying female teachers, and meanwhile continue the analysis of modernity that was indicated above. I regard this as my responsibility as a woman and a new academic chair holder.

The value basis of the school links indispensable values and personal virtues to democracy. In a period of 150 years, we have seen how God and the nation were superseded by democracy as metaphors giving legitimacy to the moral education of the school (Linné 2001a). Evangelic faith as an obvious, unexpressed basis, with Martin Luther’s catechism as a fundamental text, was succeeded by ideas that focused on the nation, the local community, and the good work.

Every curriculum of the post-war period contains a more or less extensive *text* in which indispensable values are stated and developed. The fundamental values expressed in the national curriculum make a request for every individual's deliberative decision in favour of indispensable moral values – a request for cognitive and emotive deliberations that will make the young citizens better prepared to realise a good life shared with others in a democratic community.

The inalienable values have developed as indispensable and been attributed meaning at certain points in time and space (Durkheim 1957). If democracy is referred to as life shared with the other, a kind of joint, common experience (cf. Dewey 1916), and the democratic society achieved in dialogue and deliberation, not least at school, then the moral value basis cannot be determined once and for all as far as its result is concerned. The basic principles of every human's equal rights, or solidarity towards the weak and exposed, get meaning and are captured by every human being in her encounter with the other. Only in shared social relations, and in open, communicative fellowship that attempts to cross social and cultural borders, democratic man may take shape. There we find one of the great challenges of the future.

How school and teacher education meet this challenge – not least with respect to time and space – may be another important starting point for a research programme concerning education and democracy.

* * *

So, what have I now said about educational research and teacher education? I have pointed out the importance of situating teaching and learning in a historical context, using social science theory in the analysis. Didactical questions concerning selection of content for school and learning, or concerning interpretation of the content of text, and the character of communication, need to be linked to an analysis of the institutional conditions that frame pedagogic actions. I have emphasised a number of ways of relating to time and history, and raised questions regarding biography and a narrative approach as possible tools in research on democratic dimensions of education.

The critical question will be how we connect life and text to analysis and interpretation of the field of possibilities, with its frames and institutional conditions. To situate the text – the content, talk, communication – inside the material and symbolic space of the context in a way that will give teachers good tools to understand past and future,

understand their world and themselves in this world. Do we as researchers have a responsibility for this? Yes, definitely.

In a way, then, we are back at Bertil Hammer and his critical problems for educational research – interpreted in the traces of our time.

Notes

1. Pierre Bourdieu's inaugural lecture, translated into Swedish, was presented by Donald Broady and Mikael Palme in *Dagens Nyheter* on July 30, 1982.
2. In 1982, Sigbrit Franke took up her appointment as the first woman who achieved an advertised chair as full professor in education in Sweden (at Umeå University; Lindberg & Berge 1988); in 1969, Stina Sandels was promoted professor at the Institute of Developmental Psychology, Stockholm Institute of Education (Hatje 2002).
3. Inspired by Håkan Törnebohm, Ulf P. Lundgren (cf. 1998) has recurrently used the image of the map and the ground in analysing education as a scientific discipline.
4. See Bourdieu (1992, 1994). In my PhD-dissertation, I used Bourdieu's concept "social field" as an analytic tool in a study of Swedish teacher education and the pedagogic arena in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Linné 1996, 1999a).
5. Cf. Kallós & Lundgren (1975), Lundgren (1997). Textbooks like these mentioned are also early examples of the fact that texts for knowledge production almost as a rule were transformed into texts for knowledge reproduction when used in teacher training, and examples of the characteristics these texts then represented.
6. These are some of the prominent women we study in the research project *Shaping the Public Sphere: a Collective Biography of Stockholm Women 1880–1920*, supported by the Swedish Bank Tercentenary Foundation (cf. Broady, B. Englund, Heyman, Linné, Skog-Östlin, Trotzig & Ullman 1999, Linné 2002).
7. Popkewitz 1997, cf. Dahlberg & Hultqvist 2001.
8. Some Swedish examples of this research tradition are B. Englund (1997), Ajagan Lester (2000), and G. B. Arfwedson (2000).
9. The original study was presented in the *Journal of Curriculum Studies*.
10. Although Bourdieu refers to Heidegger and his concept "Fürsorge".
11. A frame factor perspective was important in making me see this.
12. See e.g. Rudenschöld (1856). The debates in the Swedish Parliament in 1856–58 state the need for a different classification and framing of time and space (Linné 1996, 1999a). Regarding the monitorial teaching tradition in Europe at the time, see Hopmann (1990); regarding the changing character of the pedagogic space, see Hamilton (1989).
13. Boli (1989) has interpreted the origin of compulsory schooling, with teachers certified by the state, as part of an almost ritual creation of new citizens for a new society. Extending this analysis, compulsory schooling may be seen as one of several coinciding steps on the way to a symbolic construction of the individual (Linné 1999a).
14. For example, above the boys' entrance at a brand new elementary school (consecrated in 1902) was the maxim "Knowledge is power", and above the girls' entrance you could read "Exercise makes the master".
15. Networks are supposed to be based on non-hierarchical logic – or logic of confidence, typical of the sheltered markets where friends keep company (Bourdieu 1994, Broady 2002).

16. From the 1860s, the Swedish state has step by step become more and more engaged in governing the various institutions on the educational arena (cf. T. Englund 1986, Florin 1987, Linné 1996).
17. Cf. Uljens (2002), where the question of becoming a human, and the concept "Bildsamkeit" are discussed.
18. Thomas & Thomas (1928), the citation reprinted in Thomas (1966, p. XL).
19. Harry Martinson (1904–1978), Swedish writer, poet and Nobel laureate (1957), Harriet Löwenhjelm (1887–1918), Swedish poet; my text refers to a poem in her volume "Dikter" [Lyrics], quoted in the inaugural lecture.

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“BILDUNG” AND DEMOCRACY

MEDIATING THE PARTICULAR
AND THE UNIVERSAL

Bernt Gustavsson

“Bildung” is a central term in the field of pedagogics and education. But the significance of “bildung” and the scope it is allowed in research and pedagogical development has varied over the years. “Bildung” is interpreted, applied and treated in many different ways. A comparison of the Nordic countries shows that Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Norway have all paid a lot of attention to the “bildung” concept in recent times. In 1980 Norway was the first country in which “bildung” began to be discussed in new ways. During the years following the Second World War, there was a decline in the classical understanding of “bildung” with its neo-humanistic characteristics to the extent that it almost disappeared from pedagogical discussions and school curricula. The attempts to re-establish it were made either by direct references to classical sources, or by applying the interpretative, hermeneutic tradition. This led to a number of comparatively large scale research projects, many of which dealt with the history of “bildung”. The research results showed how complex our perception of “bildung” is, and that it can be applied in many different situations. Normally “bildung” is a concern of the elite classes in society; however in the tradition of the Nordic countries this extends to a much larger section of the population, where it also has a democratising function. In the 1970s, pedagogical progressivism advocated these democratic ambitions; interpretations of representatives such as Paulo Freire and John Dewey were used, especially for left wing political purposes. This form of progressivism has been in conflict with transmissional pedagogics in both pedagogical debates and research. The concept of “bildung” proved to be applicable in the attempt to transcend the classical opposition which existed within the field of pedagogics (Gustavsson 1996, p. 248f).

Present in the classical concept of “bildung” are the subjective and objective dimensions. The subjective is personal. It is the idea that knowledge is always part of the self and is connected with how we develop and how we view the world. The objective is the actual knowledge about the world and is the content of what is to be learnt. The emphasis on either the subjective or the objective is of great importance to how different pedagogical traditions regard knowledge and learning.

The relationship between these two dimensions touches on some of the most difficult questions within pedagogics, where it is thought that by applying the concept of “bildung” a subtle balance can be attained between the two. This method can be reinterpreted and reformulated in accordance with social, scientific and philosophical development. The main question in focus here is; what kind of interpretation is “bildung” to have in the 21st century and how will this interpretation relate to democracy?

PURPOSE

Throughout history the majority of pedagogical thinkers have sought the keys to the gates of knowledge. The fact that that these keys are difficult to find, and, according to some people, lost, only brings to the foreground the importance of pedagogical philosophy in our time. The most fundamental pedagogical questions need to be reformulated in such a way that they expose the essentiality of knowledge and the problems encountered in learning. This will not be achieved by taking visions out of thin air, or by using trends which are characteristic of the market economy.

“Bildung”, just as our understanding of the nature of knowledge, is deeply rooted in history. Those traditions in which “bildung” exists are not constant, they are being continually reinterpreted as history develops. This means that traditions which were earlier repressed or hidden can, when brought to light in a different period, prove to possess qualities which can be used productively. These associations can even lead to the renewal of traditions, which in turn allows for the reinterpretation of democracy and education from the stand point of newly discovered conditions and possibilities.

The question I put forward here is; how can the concept of “bildung” and democracy be incorporated into contemporary scientific development and intellectual currents? A divide in the discussion exists between those who represent the universal and those who represent the particular. The universal has its roots in the enlightenment with the acceptance of reason, progress and science, whereas those who follow the particular, the unique and various characteristics of each culture, have their European roots in the romantic tradition.

The concept of “bildung” as it appeared in the development of modern society arose from the connections between enlightenment and the romantic. However it has even deeper roots in a theory of excursion and return, which appear in the hermeneutic tradition. Here, too, there is a development in the viewpoints of democracy within this tense relationship between the universal: in the form of irrevocable rights and values; and the local: in the form of active and direct participation in society (the local approach requiring some form of educational orientation).

The problem which presents itself very clearly here is: of what importance can “bildung” and democracy have in relation to the universal and the particular? The theory I would like to present is one where “bildung” and democracy serve as a type of mediator between

the universal and the particular. I shall make a quick illustration of the content of the universal as it is expressed in terms of rights and values; and the particular, in terms of the communitarian and post-modern standpoints. This will be followed by a short description of three possible ways of relating to this mediatory difference. Firstly, it is in the form of a hermeneutic concept of “bildung”, with an emphasis on the Aristotelian term *Phronesis*. Secondly, it is a communicative form of democracy, which can be seen as an extension of the dialogue. Thirdly, the postcolonial attempt to find a path between the limitations of liberalism and the pitfalls of fundamentalism. The purpose here is to point out a possible direction for research, in which “bildung” and democracy can be effective influences in the task of humanizing and democratising society. The research must also unite the empirical and theoretical spheres, the small perspective with the large.

CHOICE OF PERSPECTIVE

In my dissertation on the concept of “bildung’s” assimilation into classical popular movements, I touched upon the hermeneutic tradition as it attempts to unite an understanding of the subject whilst still maintaining a distance from it. Since then the general outline for my work has been influenced by the French philosopher Paul Ricoeur in the sense that I have tried to understand the context of the human being from within its own sphere of conditions as well as maintaining a critical distance. The hermeneutic tradition allows the possibilities of being able to relate to perspectives other than what one is usually accustomed to. One radical opinion on interpretation informs us that: an abundance of varied perspectives allows for increased possibilities when interpreting and understanding complex phenomena (Alvesson & Sköldberg 1994, Gustavsson 2000). This standpoint is in conflict with a more current academic tradition which states that we should only prioritise a perspective which excludes another. This is an understandable position when e.g. development work concerning new standpoints in education is in process. In the long run, however, the position is not only doubtful from the viewpoint of “bildung”, but it is restrictive even in the main function of research, which is the advancement of knowledge through being open to new perspectives. Just because there is something called “frame factor theory” it doesn’t have to be in conflict with phenomenographically studying peoples’ understanding, or from a sociocultural or a sociological perspective, study the conditions of education.

Neither is it reasonable to suppose that theoretical perspectives succeed each other on a timeline, in the same way as we change our clothing styles according to the fashion industry. The traditional Swedish pedagogical limitations lie, to a large extent, in the restricted way of relating to theoretical perspectives. A pluralistic standpoint sees thinkers such as Michel Foucault, or discourse theorists as possible choices of perspective in relation to the character and purpose of the subject.

But a new perspective is always created from something old, the old is seen as the historical background of the new. The choice of theoretical perspectives should instead be decided by how fruitful the results will be in relation to the subject. This is the purpose of research and the actual subject which determines what will give the optimum possibilities for interpretation. I have named this general standpoint a richness of perspectives. It originates from a hermeneutic tradition which has been renewed with attention to Hans-Georg Gadamer's *Truth and Method* (1975). With its point of departure in classical humanism he attributes interpretation and understanding to the basic principles of the human sciences. One of the central themes he applies is "bildung", which he calls "the greatest idea of the nineteenth century". "Bildung", in its broadest sense, is our interpreting and understanding of the unknown and the unfamiliar from reference points in an environment which is known and familiar to us. Stories, beginning with the central characters at home in familiar circumstances and later develop into journeys full of new experiences, with which the travellers return home, appear in almost all cultures around the world. It is this basic idea of "bildung" which is the basic element in the renewal of hermeneutics. We always interpret something from a reference point which is already given – our perception which represents our limits. Our understanding of new phenomena is, therefore, always dependent on our original understanding. This insight has created the difficulty within hermeneutics, which is to gain recognition in those sciences where the need to change from our preconceived notions and take a both wider and deeper attitude is necessary. This also explains the subordinate position of hermeneutics as a resource for pedagogical knowledge, which is now showing weaknesses in its links with its traditional sources.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HEGELIAN TRADITION

A central point of departure, not only for the renewal of hermeneutics, but also for a number of contemporary influential thinkers, is Friedrich Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807). Here we have the

idea which produces the concept of "bildung", as well as others, in many versions, such as contemporary intellectual development and central and founding terminology. Hegel's point of departure is that in our development we begin in our immediate environment e.g. the personal, the home and family. From there we expand our development to the social aspects of society. Humans develop by means of detaching and alienating themselves from the world. This happens in two ways, partly through reflection and partly through physical work. Through the process of interaction with the world humans come to an understanding of themselves, or, we get to know ourselves by getting to know the world.

Our interpretation of ourselves and our interpretation of the world are combined. The development of a human being begins in the immediate and unreflective characteristics of childhood. This leads to a period of alienation and disunion, but can lead to a state of harmony synthesis and reason. This concerns both the development of the individual and culture, which move in constant opposition between the force and the law, differentials and unity.¹

Most contemporary interpreters distance themselves from the idea of an absolute reconciliation, regardless of whether it is portrayed as an absolute power (state) or in any other way. This implies that the consequences of the critique of the totalitarian characteristics in this perspective are already apparent.

Gadamer makes the consistent claim that the process of interpretation and reinterpretation never ceases. Ricoeur clearly indicates the boundaries for the Hegelian claims as it would be difficult to achieve much without these basic founding concepts² The interpretation of the world takes place, as already stated in the above, through our own thoughts and actions interacting with, what is for us, a strange and contrasting world.

The established practice which has gained a large influence within pedagogics is pragmatism, mainly through John Dewey's huge influence on the way we see knowledge, teaching and education. Initially Dewey stated, and always reiterated, that he had gained definitive guidance from Hegel's work.³ It is mainly, then, that we express ourselves not by means of interpretation, but rather through our interaction with the world. The pragmatistical approach to knowledge which originally came from Charles S. Peirce implies that we act according to our habits, we do what we usually do until we encounter unusual situations or problems, only then do we consider doing things in a different way. In order to do things in a different way, we must first reflect on our previous experiences before we can take a new course

of action. Consequently new habits are established. We can see the Hegelian similarities between hermeneutics and pragmatism by comparing habit with our intellectual scope and reflection with our ability to be open to strange or different situations.

Part of Hegel's main work – the master and slave dialectic, opens the discussion on mutual recognition and has become a central theme in the discussions of more recent times. The basic thought is that humans create their self awareness by gaining recognition from another being. In this relationship there is an inbuilt lower and higher order, which Karl Marx refers to in his class analyses, as does Simone de Beauvoir in *The Second Sex*. She became inspired by taking part in discussions of Hegel's work in 1930's Paris⁴, and went on to develop the theory of women being the subordinate sex throughout history (which was a milestone in the history of feminism). The basic unifying concept is that humans create their identities by forming relations with other humans. The same theme returns in the late 20th century discussion on *the other* which considers people from non European countries. "The other" and the mutual recognition of differences is to be a theme in Charles Taylor's work, and in a critical theory using the analyses of Axel Honneth.⁵ The relationship to "the other" can be seen as one of dialogue or power. The other can be seen as being ethically and actually linked with other humans, or in a state of complete independence. Many post-modern opinions are based on the opposition between Power and Law.

The Hegelian source, rather than running dry, is still open to countless reinterpretations, and still proves to hold many possibilities for the analysis of the development of "bildung" and democracy, and how they relate to the universal and the particular. The very idea of conceiving a third way from two already existing ways is itself originally rooted in the Hegelian tradition. It is a dialectical not a dichotomous way of thinking, which implies that two existing opposites can produce something new. It is, in its self, a research task to clarify the interpretations and the relations between the Hegelian way of thinking and the dominating trends in contemporary life.

THE PURPOSE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH

Pedagogics can be included within the sphere of social science, and in the development which is taking place the idea of diverse sciences is a central theme. The social development we know as "globalisation" creates the need for new perspectives in order to make it possible to

identify the complexities within it. The question of the universal and the particular becomes an ever increasing problem area for research.

During the post war years the liberation from colonialism as well as large movements of populations has resulted in the relationship between Western and non European cultures taking a central role in social and cultural debates. The consequences of this do not only affect the relations between the various parts of the world, but also have an important influence on the majority of the European countries. The advantages and disadvantages which manifest themselves in this, so called, multicultural development also give rise to new areas of research. New intellectual currents appear, as well as older methods being reinterpreted for the purpose of studying the basic problematics which are presented in this process. There are strongly conflicting opinions within the various understandings of existence e.g. religious issues and even more general aspects of values and norms. This often results in these issues not progressing any further than being hot topics for debate. The remaining task is to prepare these subjects for research, whilst remaining conscious of the fact that the different perspectives, individual and group identities and their traditions, are at variance with each other.

A fundamental question which appeared in an international report on the transformation of the social sciences is:

How are the social sciences to take a diversity of world views seriously without losing the possibility of attaining the knowledge and the realization of the values which can be, or become, common to the whole of mankind? (Gulbenkian Commission 1996, p. 80).

A question of this kind implies a number of changes in relation to the traditional scientific understanding. It is impossible to have one group as a subject for analysis, whilst the research group regard themselves as an independent subject with absolute rights. The researchers must see themselves as a part of the existing diversity with their own sense of identity and belonging.

Similarly, it becomes increasingly difficult to determine clearly between theoretical and ideological questions, or the objective and the normative. The process of self understanding is deeply involved in those values and norms which are found within an identity or group, which in turn contributes to the creation of “the other”.

The world views of subordinate groups must be taken seriously and be also the subject of further research. Until now the emphasis within social research has, to a large extent, been critical of forms of

universalism which are thinly disguised displays of Western superiority over other cultures. Within the social sciences there has been a strong emphasis of the particular as well as demands on historical and cultural contextualization. The white middleclass male as a universal norm has been criticized from the points of view of gender, class and ethnicity. The whole of mankind should be allowed to recognize the fact that diversity is a general truth. But does this then mean that all discussions of the universal e.g. human rights should cease? The knowledge that all forms of universalism have an historical basis does not imply that any possible forms of universalism could be formulated as having insight into the necessity of the pluralistic.

The dialogue which would be necessary to achieve this would have to be based on fundamental and mutual respect. This would also demand a great deal of innovative thought on an organizational level as well as tolerance within the area of intellectual experimentation in the social sciences. A substantial increase in research and education in other cultures is required in the task of finding what this committee calls "a renewed and meaningful pluralistic universalism" (Gulbenkian Commission 1996, p. 82).

This attempt to be receptive to new ideas encounters resistance mainly from a new version of social Darwinism, where each sign of progress is seen as the result of social struggle in which the party with the highest competence will ultimately prevail. This form of Darwinism has received a lot of support from research within gene technology, which has led to the rise of a new form of genetic determinism. These arguments are used against those groups which do not hold a strong position in society, and also against the opinions of those who do not support the belief that the spread of Western culture to all corners of the planet will lead to the salvation of mankind.

The form of scientific study on which these views are based obviates everything which is not in tune with the rationalistic goals, methods or models which have spread through large areas of Western modernization. Not least within education it implies that every institution which does not have a direct utilitarian function is regarded with suspicion. Bringing to bear critical attention on such claims and attitudes must be central to all aspects of contemporary life.

THE UNIVERSAL AND THE PARTICULAR

The universal can be expressed in numerous ways. John Rawls' epoch-making *A Theory of Justice* (1972) has been regarded as a point of

departure and a central source for debate since the 1970s. Rawls’ attempts to formulate a universal criterion for equity – what is considered necessary for all of mankind and how this is to be fairly divided. He begins with the concept of the law of nature and formulates a treaty of how people, from “behind a veil of ignorance” of each others position in society would choose to divide the world’s resources among each other. Others have continued this line of thought by using reference points in the injustices of the world in the attempt to formulate criteria for universal values. Amartya Sen’s receiving the Nobel Prize for economics was largely due to his establishing the ties between economic development and human rights. His point of departure, “capabilities”, is to allow all citizens the right to develop in their own capacities as a basic condition for economic development. A related work by Martha Nussbaum has undertaken to formulate universal values, mainly with a view to women’s’ rights in the third world (Nussbaum 2002).

Within the critical tradition Jürgen Habermas has attempted to formulate the criteria which could be considered when legitimising those norms which are to apply in society, and at the same time ensuring that they are capable of being expressed with universal claims (see Habermas 1997). The common denominator for all those who undertake to formulate criteria for universal equity and universal values is that they all advocate the tradition of enlightenment.

In opposition to this mode of contemporary discussion, there are others whose efforts are in formulating the particular – the right to local differences and distinctive characteristics. This view is formulated from a critique of the universal claims of Western culture and its abuse of power over other cultures. Modern society also receives criticism from other quarters based on its individualism and lack of tradition and ethics. This criticism stems from two sources which have differing philosophical motives. One has its beginnings in specific communities and emphasises the importance of the values and traditions which are threatened, and have been partially lost by the modernization process taking place in society. The other stems from identities, and emphasises the power which is exercised by the male white middleclass in the form of the marginalization and subjugation of identities in terms of class, race, sex, ethnicity and sexuality (Gustavsson 1996).

The former idea originate in Aristotelian ethics; here human habits and character are strongly influenced by the social situation in which we grow up. The customs, norms, values and traditions which are an integral part of the social situation are seen as founding elements for our orientation and how we are shaped as people. There is a tendency towards, not only, traditional values, but also hierarchical and authori-

tative values, which implies that the conservative label, which has been attributed to a number of these representatives, is not entirely incorrect. Although here we see quite an unexpected mix of both left and right wing views. That the Aristotelian tradition can be interpreted and developed in different ways is a matter I will return to.

The second source of criticism, identity politics, stems from post-modern concepts. Michel Foucault with his analyses of power has formed the basis of these studies. They are mainly represented by those minority groups which are seen to part of a multicultural society, but are still repressed by the majority; or by an accepted norm which marginalizes anything which proves to be different from the mainstream. Here it is the differing characteristics which are in focus, and the actual right of being different which carries the most weight. If tradition is central in the former, then it is power which carries the main emphasis in this school of thought. A strong criticism of Western culture's claims of having power over what is considered reason and progress.

MEDIATING THE UNIVERSAL AND THE PARTICULAR

The question of the relationship between the universal and the particular has a long history. The discussion which has taken place during the last thirty years has enabled research into new conditions and circumstances which encompass both theoretical development and empirical investigations. Representatives of all the modes of study share the same task in seeking the answers to the central problems encountered in the development of modern society, however these answers will not be found without first relating to the normative. One can not discuss democratic, or any other, values unless there are normative points of departure present in the research. This does not imply, however, that it is impossible to carry out empirical investigations concerning how different norms and values are formulated, and how democratic acts manifest themselves or how people describe their own identities.

If we give critical consideration to both sides of this dividing line, the first and most tangible problem with the claims of universalism is that they often have a very Western European focus. This is a matter which researchers and writers with third world origins have brought to our attention. It is not just that the universal assertions are determined in history, but they are formulated as if they were conceived exclu-

sively in Europe. This criticism, however, does not imply that we could just as easily manage without these rights and values. One advocate of the post-colonial school of thought, Gayatri Spivak, holds that there should be a continuous criticism of pro European interpretations and selective applications of human rights. She urges to: “never stop criticizing that which one can not not want to have” (Eriksson 1999, p. 47).

The central problem for the particular is that its representatives often limit themselves to their own communities, identities or to local characteristics without following up their research by looking for connections in more general spheres that affect mankind as a whole. The communitarian perspective is limited to its own similarities within the community, while the identity perspective remains stationary in the identity. In selective periods, when a process of liberation is taking place, this is motivated, but every identity is created by and remains in a relationship with others and to all things in general. An expression which is used within multi cultural societies to indicate that a group needs to strengthen its position therein is “positive segregation”, this is the stage before any form of beneficial integration can take place. A reoccurring problem is one where those groups who are searching for an identity can appear in the same group as one which is under criticism. This happens when essential details of the group’s culture or origin are required (Spivak 1999).

With these weaknesses in focus the attempts to mediate between the universal and the particular take on a notable interest. It is in the tense relationship between these two perspectives that the idea of “bildung” and democracy can be developed in new ways.

“BILDUNG” AS MEDIATION

A central reference point for the understanding of the relationship between the individual and the universal is the hermeneutic tradition. Here, there are two central terms – dialogue and phronesis. *The Dialogic*, formulated by Gadamer as an exchange of viewpoints, constitutes a central part of his approach to the term “bildung”. To be receptive towards foreign or different ideas, to question one’s own interpretations, are different expressions for the encounter with other interpretations. Charles Taylor is the one responsible for converting hermeneutics into the idea of the recognition of diversity. His analyses inform us that identities are created dialogically, by focusing on the recognition of minority groups. From the view point of Western

liberalism it is even considered as a “contender among faiths” This opinion has gained recognition and received a lot of attention in the shaping of integration policies in countries such as Canada and Sweden. It is surprising, however, to note that the term “integration” has come to be understood as being synonymous with the word assimilation, and that “the others” are to be integrated into an already existing structure and become part of the majority. The dialogic presents the demand that everybody, including the majority, should undergo a process of transformation in the encounter with others, which in turn will result in the emergence of a new society.

Phronesis is an unexploited term within research, it is used to imply knowledge and ethics, and is more frequently translated as practical wisdom. Its point of origin is found in the sixth chapter of Aristotle’s *Nicomachean ethics*. Here Aristotle differentiates between *episteme*, *techne* and *phronesis* as three forms of knowledge: scientific, practical productive and practical wisdom. We can differentiate between the pure Aristotelian tradition which makes a direct conversion of *phronesis* into modern knowledge and all its ethical content, and a hermeneutic conversion and a development of the concept. Martha C Nussbaum is a representative of the former. With a direct reference to Aristotle, she gives a description of *phronesis* as being the ability to apply one’s good sense of judgement so one can act correctly in concrete situations: the correct action at the correct moment with complete awareness of all the complexities present in any given real situation. This puts into focus any ethical or political action and supplies an alternative to utilitarianism in ethical debates.

Within this concept there is more than just the faint possibility of being able to develop “*bildung*” and democracy by means of developing the relationship between the particular and the universal. In his chapter on application Gadamer discusses *phronesis* as being the moment of application in the interpretation process. This reformulation provides a text book example of how the reinterpretation of a tradition or a text can be made to derive new frames of reference within a new historical situation. The importance of this concept in research has been clarified by Richard Bernstein.

Phronesis is a form of reasoning and knowledge that involves a distinctive mediation between the universal and the particular.

The subject matter, the form, the *telos*, and the way in which *episteme* is learned and taught differ from *phronesis*, the form of reasoning appropriate to *praxis*, which deals with what is variable and

always involves a mediation between the universal and the particular that requires deliberation and choice.

The analogy that Gadamer draws is that just as application is not a subsequent or occasional part of *phronesis* in which we relate some pre-given determinate universal to a particular, this, Gadamer claims, is characteristic of all authentic understanding and interpretation (Bernstein 1983, pp. 146–148).

The understanding is that we always make interpretations based on our real and particular situation, however, one who interprets a text or a human event will always attempt to include their own perspective – “the interpreter wants nothing more than to understand the general meaning within the text” (p. 207).

The hermeneutic situation in which Gadamer has made his reinterpretation of the concept of *phronesis* is characterized by a technocratic and “unnecessary worship of the expert” (p. 149). Inherent in our current situation is a dangerous inner desire to seek a replacement for the orientation which has been lost. Here his point is that the term *praxis*, the kind of action linked with *phronesis*, has been distorted and deformed in modern society.

In a scientific culture such as ours the fields of *techne* and art are much more expanded. Thus the fields of mastering means to pre-given ends have been rendered even more monological and controllable. The crucial change is that practical wisdom can no longer be promoted by personal contact and the mutual exchange of views among citizens. Not only has craftsmanship been replaced by industrial work; many forms of our daily life are technologically organized so that they no longer require personal decision. In modern technological society public opinion itself has in a new and really decisive way become the object of very complicated techniques – and this, I think, is the main problem facing our civilization (Gadamer in Bernstein 1983, p. 149).

How, then, are Gadamer’s theories to be interpreted and applied in our hermeneutic situation at a democratic university? When applied to the concept of “*bildung*” it involves everything being initiated within our own capabilities and the present situation in which we find ourselves. However, the interpretation of current phenomena suggests that we must be equally receptive to all things by means of not prioritising our own interpretations. In doing so we broaden our own horizons and become more open to things in general. The knowledge that the interpretation is not just limited in its locality, but is also a link

which leads to something new, allows us to reach beyond our limitations and in doing so avoid that which every group is exposed to, which is being captive in one's own fabrication. The democratic understanding in such a view point is that every citizen should have the possibility to form his own well founded opinions. Identifying the means which would make this possible is one of the primary research tasks within pedagogics: a method in which an opinion forming praxis is central.

A defining aspect of "bildung" is, then, to make advancements in that which is foreign and different, by means of having a point of departure in one's own capabilities and conditions. Again, we see "Bildung" as a medium between the universal and the particular, in one way as being part of the theory of phronesis, and, in another, as representing the theory of the excursion and return in the founding ideas of "bildung".

DEMOCRACY AS A MEDIUM

Gadamer's dialogue suggests that we start in our own accepted traditions and it is from these that we make our interpretations. These traditions are also evident in the way we perceive the world, and this is also the case for the norms and values which are inherent within a community. An important and diverging question is: is the inclusion of the norms and values which are present in our accepted traditions sufficient in order to gain democratic legitimacy? This is a problem that has been an object for discussion within political philosophy in recent times.

A suitable point of departure for this discussion is Martha Nussbaum's Socratic proposition that, the non-reflective life is of less value than life which reflects the traditions in which we were born. By applying the Socratic method, we will subject these traditions which we take for granted to a more critical inspection. According to Nussbaum, we are granted much greater scope when studying other cultures by beginning with a critical study of our own traditions. Here the practice of the "narrative fantasy", the art of telling histories and stories and, in turn, listening to others takes on a central role.⁶ In this way fiction becomes an important tool in gaining knowledge. The Palestinian literary historian Edward Said who is recognized as a central figure within the post-colonial movement, places equal emphasis on the importance of the narrative and fiction (Said 1995, 2000). By illustrating the importance of this idea in connection with the critical perspective

unites the Aristotelian and the post-colonial movements. Having access to a multitude of alternative opinions of world views, is becoming of increasing importance for more and more forms of education. "The manufacture of consent" (Said 1995) by the corporate media in favour of the global powers must receive counter criticism. Here we have the given opportunity to study the relationship between the powers of "The Orient" and "The West".

The shortcomings of American thinkers e.g. the Aristotelian Nussbaum and the post-modern orientations of the pragmatist Richard Rorty is that they do not allow the development of a rewarding relationship towards "the other". Knowledge as episteme, universally valid knowledge, allows place for *phronesis*, local, practical knowledge within ethical action. The central issue at hand is making the world a better place, and this is made possible through the recognition that knowledge and values are expressions of how we see ourselves in the world. The purpose of *phronesis* is to make our existence manageable based on the self-understanding that communication with one another is essential in achieving this. Dialogue and communication become, in this way, the primary means in both increasing our possibilities of interacting with the world, and being able to make interpretations in the most advantageous way.

Nussbaum is lacking in the fact that she refuses to concern herself with both the hermeneutic and post-modern movements. In adhering only to classical sources and applying them to the present, leaves the problem of the relationship between differentiations open and unexplained. Her strength, on the other hand, is that she defends aspects of the enlightenment, mainly in the form of demands of rationality towards communitarian "tribalism".⁷ In accordance with the Aristotelian tradition, she formulates a wider concept of rationality, than that which she describes as enlightenments "cold beam", which enjoins both thought and feeling (Nussbaum 1995).

The school which has received the label communicative or "deliberative democracy" makes further demands on rationality. It is mainly Jürgen Habermas who has made these demands on democratic legitimacy, not infrequently in polemics aimed at hermeneutics and communitarians. Habermas bases his theory on the idea of "ideal speaking situations", a genuine conversation in which one says what one really means and expects nothing less in return. The communicative result of this process, becomes the democratic potential in that sphere of society which has the possibility of developing independently of the system. Democratic decision making and deliberation are primary tasks for schools

and education. From this perspective, democratic advancement requires that we not only practice communication and argumentation, but even broaden the spectrum in which these skills are used. The universal demand which Habermas places on the validity and legitimacy of norms and values is that those who are to be under their influences are also to be involved in approving them. They must be discussed and negotiated democratically if they are to be considered legitimate among citizens.

This perspective illustrates another possibility of relating the universal and the particular to each other. Contrary to the hermeneutic and post-colonial perspectives which are linked to Aristotelian and Hegelian traditions, this view point has its roots in Kantian philosophy. Kant's ethic is universal in nature, this is most clearly seen in his categorical imperative: by means of your will act so that the maxim for all action, can become a law of nature. Seyla Benhabib, who is an example of how a way of thought can be developed through dual properties, suggests the following reformulation of Kant's idea: "act so that the maxim encompasses the perspectives of everybody, to the point that you are in the position to appeal to their consent" (Benhabib 1994, p. 154). Benhabib, like Spivak, mainly uses the treatment of women as examples. Female circumcision is one of many of the descriptions of the treatment of women which we can encounter, and is enough evidence in itself to demonstrate that all aspects of life should not be dictated by the specific customs and traditions of local communities. This does not allow us for one moment to turn a blind eye to human rights abuses which take place within Western cultures. Benhabib is an advocate of a position which has been earlier known as "perspective wealth". This means that the more perspectives we have and the more we can relate to others' the clearer we can see our own possibilities and opportunities. She has chosen to call this "extended thought". The universal demand lies in the understanding that everybody is prepared to defend their own position by means of argumentation. The weakness inherent in defending a position with traditional reference points is seen in the inability to distance oneself from the sense of belonging, which appears in the refusal to accept the reference points held by the opposition.

THE POST-COLONIAL MEDIATION

The intellectual current which is usually named the post-colonial has a number of leading representatives at Western universities. There are also numerous fiction writers who have received the title "post-

colonial". They share the common characteristic of having moved from a country in the southern hemisphere to one in the North. It is the result of their meeting between the cultures of the old and new which constitutes the main focus in their work.

This can result in a critical standpoint towards both western powers and their country of origin. The goals of the majority of these representatives are the discovery of a ways of navigating between "the prejudices of fundamentalism and the limitations of western liberalism" (Eriksson 1999). This dual association, experiences gained in both cultures, is a valuable resource, and in many cases dynamically enriching to those whose work involves it.

Hybridisation, the capture of that which emerges in the encounter of two identities, is a central theme here. Homi Bhabha has formulated this idea so that its main importance lies not in the properties of identifying two points of origin from which a third is developed: "hybridisation, is, rather, 'the third point of origin' from which completely new stand points can develop" (Bhabha 1999, p. 286).

Here we can see the post-colonial movement in terms of being a contemporary attempt to understand the relationship between different identities and groups as well as what takes place during those encounters. It contains criticisms of western intellectuals, who have contributed to creating the image of "The Orient". This perspective also directs some attention towards pedagogics as a practice in other countries.

There is a certain naivety in the belief that it is possible to transfer pedagogical or organizational methods of education to countries and cultures where the social and cultural climates are vastly different. However there are plenty of examples of educational systems being implemented in countries by governing powers, which lack any kind of reference points in the groups they are intended to benefit. These errors of judgement, which affect "the other", such as the above are continuously happening in the name of humanitarian aid or globalisation (Gustavsson 1996, p. 228f).

The actual catalyst for these ideas which have developed is the dual association, and it is mainly women who come from third world countries and have studied at a western university who have the means to influence new ways of thinking, even at universities.

Gayatri Spivak comes from India and works as a social worker for part of the year. When taking part in an exchange with people from other parts of the world she is aware of new forms of humanism in the encounters. In the analyses of the Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Žižek, he presents a more all encompassing form of humanity by app-

lying other prerequisite conditions which do not exist in today's modern concepts of humanism. Examples of these analyses, inspired by Jacques Lacan, are mainly derived from the conflicts which took place in the Balkan States and deal with the relationships between differences (see Zizek 1999).

These post-colonial analyses can be regarded as mediators between the universal and the particular. They transcend the tendency inherent in other post-colonial thought, which is limiting ones self to an identity, a local environment or community. They demonstrate that present in those relationships are paradoxes and contradictions can prove to be effective. When the universal is used in the same context as globalisation or cosmopolitan it is infrequently synonymous with westernisation, or, the benchmark of western culture is used in the assessment of the rest of the world. This results in the non-acknowledgement of distinctive characteristics and local preconditions. The contrasting error is the limitation to the personal sphere where one remains ignorant of the both necessary and potential relations to "the other" and the universal. Therefore, the mediatory attempts are the most productive when determining how relationships manifest themselves between differences and between the specific and the general. These relationships are complex and require that a number of different perspectives are applied in order to be able to understand them. They can be studied empirically and the resulting theories can be used in the development of new perspectives based on different forms of understanding, positions and identities.

Concepts such as "bildung" and democracy can, in this way, be placed in new contexts in order to create new perspectives based on new conditions. "Bildung", and the way in which we recognize it as a tradition, is western, although there are concepts and view points of knowledge which are comparable with it in other cultures. The tradition of democracy as it has developed as a classical concept, has been challenged by new perspectives. These attempts at mediation can be compared with opportunities of placing something in a specific time frame, or in a certain place with a reference to a certain origin (to culture or to localize).

"Bildung" and democracy are transformed in their encounter with phenomenon as well as in the basic social transitions which take place. It is equally a scientific, philosophical and a general intellectual concern to reinterpret those traditions we regard as being valuable in order that they can be applied resourcefully as tools in the task of advancing human rights and democracy.

Notes

1. Many post modern thinkers have their point of departure in this difference. Here Hegel's point is crucial for differing points of view in contemporary knowledge and research.
2. See *Time and Narrative* (1998), part 3, p. 193, or *From Text to Action – Essays in Hermeneutics* in which Ricoeur warns of the *Hegelian temptation*.
3. This Hegelian connection has been demonstrated in many articles by Gert Biesta.
4. See the new comprehensive edition of *The Second Sex* (2002), especially Eva Gothlin's foreword.
5. They have both developed studies on recognition, see Charles Taylor, *The Multicultural Society and The Politics of Recognition* (1999) and Axel Honneth, *The Struggle for Recognition* (1995).
6. For a further discussion of this, see *Utbildning & Demokrati* [Education & democracy] nr 1/2000, a theme Nussbaum develops in *Cultivating Humanity* (1998).
7. Tribalism is Zygmunt Bauman's term for the communitarian perspective. See Bauman (2000).

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DEMOCRACY – A PROBLEM FOR EDUCATION
OR AN EDUCATIONAL PROBLEM?

Gert Biesta

INTRODUCTION

Democracy has always raised questions about education. Ever since its inception in the *polis* of Athens, political and educational thinkers alike have asked what kind of education would be best to prepare the people (*demos*) for participation in the ruling (*kratos*) of their society. In many Western democracies the history of public education can be read as an attempt to ‘create’ democratic citizens through education (see e.g. Carr & Hartnett 1996, Torres 1998). What is crucial in these attempts is that education is seen as a public good and hence as something that belongs to the civil sphere, rather than as something that is purely a private matter.

Although our complex ‘glocal’ (Zygmunt Bauman) world bears little or no resemblance to the *polis* of Athens, the question of the relationship between education and democracy is as important and urgent today as it was then. In new and emerging democracies, education is seen as a crucial factor in the development of a democratic culture. In old and established democracies education is nowadays often called upon to counter political apathy, particularly amongst the young. (This is, for example, the rationale for the introduction of compulsory citizenship education in secondary schools in England; see McLaughlin 2001.) The increasing privatisation of education and the subsequent loss of democratic control over schools is another reason why in many countries questions about the relationship between education and democracy have become prominent again (see e.g. Apple 1993, 2002, for the USA; Englund 1994, for Sweden).

In this paper I want to take a closer look at the relationship between democracy and education. I believe that it is important to do so, because it appears that many current discussions about education and democracy rely upon the rather simple assumption that democracy poses a problem for education (and educators) – which, in turn, implies that education should provide a solution or at least address the problem. In this paper I want to argue that there is another way to understand the relationship between education and democracy, one in which democracy is itself understood as an educational problem. I will argue that to see democracy as an educational problem can help us to get away from a purely instrumental understanding of the role of education, that is, an understanding in which education is merely seen as an instrument for bringing about democracy (and hence as the institution that conveniently can be blamed if it fails to do so). To understand democracy as an educational problem can also help us to think more realistically about what education can do for democracy, and what it

cannot. Moreover, it can facilitate a more educative understanding of democracy itself, one in which the most important political *and* educational question becomes the question of the *quality* of democratic life and democratic culture, both inside and outside schools.

DEFINING DEMOCRACY

Any discussion about democracy raises questions about its definition. One of the problems with the idea of democracy is that it has become a concept that not many people do *not* want to be associated with. As Held has rightly observed, “(n)early everyone today says they are democrats, no matter whether their views are on the left, centre or right” (Held 1987, p. 1). There exists, therefore, a real danger that democracy has so many meanings that it has ceased to have any meaning at all. Some have argued that we should understand democracy as an ‘essentially contested concept’ (Gallie 1955), i.e., a concept which meaning is constantly challenged and disputed, *not* because people cannot agree about its meaning, but because the concept itself calls for a continuous discussion about what it actually means and entails. This, I believe, is what John Dewey had in mind when he wrote that the very of idea of democracy “has to be constantly discovered, and rediscovered, remade and reorganized” (Dewey 1987a [1937], p. 182).

For the purpose of this paper a working-definition of democracy will, for the moment, suffice. We could use Abraham Lincoln’s broad definition of democracy as “the government of the people, by the people, and for the people” (Lincoln, quoted in Torres 1998, p. 159). Beetham and Boyle, in their introduction to democracy commissioned by UNESCO, suggest a slightly more precise definition of democracy as entailing “the twin principles of *popular control* over collective decision-making and *equality of rights* in the exercise of that control” (Beetham & Boyle 1995, p. 1). Their definition embodies the ideal that decisions which affect an association as a whole should be taken by all its members, and that each should have an equal right in taking part in such decision making. In doing so, their definition hints at Dewey’s insight that democracy is “more than a form of government,” but that it is “primarily a mode of associated living” (Dewey 1966, p. 87).

If this expresses the gist of democracy, then the question can be asked what this implies for education. I will refer to the two most prevalent answers to this question as “education *for* democracy” and “education *through* democracy”. Both positions, as I will argue, are instance of an approach in which democracy is seen as a problem *for* education.

DEMOCRACY AS A PROBLEM FOR EDUCATION

EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY

The most common way to understand the relationship between democracy and education is one in which the role of education is seen as that of *preparing* children – and ‘newcomers’ more generally – for their future participation in democratic life. In this approach the role of education is to teach about democracy and democratic processes (the knowledge component), to facilitate the acquisition of democratic skills such as deliberation, collective decision making and dealing with difference (the skills component), and to support the acquisition of a positive attitude towards democracy (the disposition or values component). Many educationalists and politicians indeed believe that schools and other educational institutions have a crucial task in educating the next generation for their participation in democracy. This is expressed in such book titles as *Schooling for Democracy* (Giroux 1998) and *Educating the Democratic Mind* (Parker 1995).

There can be no doubt that the preparation of children and other newcomers for their role in democracy is an important task for education. A central question for educators and researchers in this respect is how this can be done most adequately. One of the issues in recent debates is whether schools should actively *promote* democracy, or whether they should only focus on the teaching of knowledge about democracy and the acquisition of democratic skills. Carr and Hartnett argue, for example, that the primary aim of education should be “to ensure that all future citizens are equipped with the knowledge, values and skills of deliberative reasoning minimally necessary for their participation in the democratic life of their society” (Carr & Hartnett 1996, p. 192). Gutmann, in her book *Democratic Education* (1987), takes the similar view that “a society that supports conscious social reproduction must educate all educable children to be *capable* of participating in collectively shaping their society” (Gutmann 1987, p. 39; *emph. added*).

EDUCATION THROUGH DEMOCRACY

Although there are good reasons for supporting the thrust of education *for* democracy, there is a limit to what can be achieved by means of deliberate attempts to *teach* democracy. As research on political socialisation has shown, students not only learn from what they are being taught; they also learn – and often learn more forcefully – from the situations in

which they take part. Schools may have exemplary curricula for the teaching of democracy and citizenship, but if the internal organisation of a school is undemocratic, this will without doubt have a negative impact on students' attitudes and dispositions towards democracy.

It is for this reason that many educators have argued that the best way to educate *for* democracy is *through* democracy, that is, by means of democratic forms of education. In their *Democratic Schools* (1995), Apple and Beane explain that democratic schooling entails both the creation of "democratic structures and processes by which life in the school is carried out," and the creation of "a curriculum that will give young people democratic experiences" (Apple & Beane 1995, p. 9). The examples they provide reveal that democratic schooling is possible although it definitely isn't easy. It requires a continuous attention for the democratic quality of the school and the learning environment more generally. Apple and Beane emphasise that it is "in the details of everyday life," and *not* "in the glossy political rhetoric" that "the most powerful meaning of democracy is formed" (Apple & Beane 1995, p. 103).

Schooling *through* democracy should thus be seen as a specific way of schooling *for* democracy, one in which it is maintained that the best way to prepare for democracy is through participation in democratic life itself. This argument extends, of course, to the life outside the walls of the school. Although the school occupies an important place in the lives of young people, they also live – and learn – in families, on the street, as consumers, when surfing the internet, when playing sports, and so on (see Lawy & Biesta 2002). From an educational point of view it is, therefore, also important to raise the question about the democratic quality of these environments. It is with this in mind that proponents of participatory forms of democracy have argued that "the major function of participation in the theory of participatory democracy is ... an educative one" (Pateman 1970, p. 42). The assumption here is that the experience of participation indeed "will develop and foster the democratic personality" (p. 64).

This immediately shows why governments that think that schools are the only places where democracy is learned, make a crucial mistake. They forget that the ways in which their own policies shape the environments in which young people grow up have as much educational impact as the neatly designed curricula for democracy and citizenship. We should never forget that it is not just parents and schools who have an educational responsibility, but that this responsibility extends to society as a whole (see Biesta 1997).

IS DEMOCRACY ONLY A PROBLEM FOR EDUCATION?

In one sense democracy is indeed a problem *for* education, and there is a lot that educators and educational institutions can do for democracy. But if we would only think of democracy as a problem *for* education, as something that education has to solve or address, we would keep education in an *instrumental* position in relation to democracy. We would keep education in a position in which it is only an executor of a task that has been defined elsewhere. The only possible contribution from education would then be to provide answers to technical questions, that is, questions about how best to ‘produce’ democratic citizens. In what follows I want to make clear that education has something more to offer than only technical expertise. In order to do so, we need to see that democracy is not only a problem *for* education, but that it can also be understood as itself *an educational problem*.

DEMOCRACY AS AN EDUCATIONAL PROBLEM

WHAT IS AN EDUCATIONAL PROBLEM?

Many people would argue that educational problems are technical problems, that is, problems that have to do with finding out the best or most effective way to achieve pre-established aims or ends. How to teach mathematics? How to support students with learning difficulties? How to run a school? How to develop a curriculum? While such questions form an important part of educational research and scholarship, there is another tradition in which it is maintained that the primary concern of education is with questions about human *subjectivity*. According to this tradition, the ultimate purpose of education is to support, promote, develop or elicit subjectivity (see, for example, Gössling 1993).

The concern for subjectivity as an educational problem has its roots in the Enlightenment. Enlightenment thinkers responded to the changing political situation in those European countries which saw a move away from absolutist rule towards more democratic forms of government. This raised the question what kind of subjects were needed – or what kind of qualities subjects would need – in order to be citizens of a civil society. Basically, their answer was that such a society needs citizens who can think for themselves. Immanuel Kant captured this very well in the definition of Enlightenment he gave in his 1784-essay “An answer to the question: What is Enlightenment?”

Enlightenment is man's [sic] release from his self-incurred tutelage. Tutelage is man's inability to make use of his understanding without direction from another. It is self-incurred when its cause lies not in lack of understanding but in lack of resolution and courage to use it without direction from another. *Sapere aude!* 'Have courage to exercise your own understanding!' – that is the motto of enlightenment (Kant 1992, p. 90).

Kant not only provided a clear definition of Enlightenment. What is even more important is that he explicitly made the connection between Enlightenment and education. In his treatise on education (*Ueber Pädagogik*) Kant wrote that man's "propensity and vocation for free thinking" – which he saw as man's "ultimate destination" and the "aim of his existence" (Kant 1982, p. 710) – could *only* be brought about through education. He argued, therefore, that human beings could only become human through education. "Der Mensch kann nur Mensch werden durch Erziehung" (Kant 1982, p. 699).

Kant's work is a good example of a new, modern way of thinking about education, one which foregrounds subjectivity as the central educational concern. This way of thinking has tainted modern educational thought and practice (and can even be said to be a central theme in postmodern educational thinking; see, for example, Usher & Edwards 1994, Biesta & Egéa-Kuehne 2001).

AN EDUCATIONAL DEFINITION OF DEMOCRACY

If it is granted that subjectivity is indeed a characteristic concern for education, we can use this to redefine democracy in more educational terms. The educational definition of democracy that I want to propose, reads as follows: *Democracy is the situation in which all human beings can be subjects.*

I have three reasons for proposing this definition. First of all, I believe that this definition captures the intention of democracy, not only in the narrow sense of democracy as a form of government and collective decision making, but even more in the wider sense of democracy as a "mode of associated living" (Dewey). After all, to think of democracy as a situation in which all human beings can be subjects, suggests a situation in which everyone has an equal right to be heard and an equal right to participate in matters that are of a common concern. The second reason for proposing this definition is that it does not take subjectivity as a fact, as something that simple 'is.' In many discussions about democracy it is assumed that people are subjects *before*

they engage in democratic practices. Liberal democracy, for example, assumes that people, as individual subjects, come together to negotiate their individual preferences in a democratic way. Yet, such a view not only makes it difficult to acknowledge that we often develop our preferences through interaction with others and that, in this respect, preferences are social rather than merely individual. Such a view is also unable to acknowledge that participation in democratic practices could have an impact upon and may perhaps even constitute our subjectivity (or to be more precise: may constitute us as subjects). I will return to this issue below. For the moment I just want to mention that in most cases education *for* democracy also seems to rely on the idea that we have to be subjects before we can engage in democratic practice, and that it is precisely that task of education to ‘produce’ democratic citizens. The third reason for suggesting this definition of democracy, is that it puts an educational concern at the very centre of our understanding of democracy. But whether this definition is meaningful depends, of course, on our answer to the question what it actually means to be a subject. To this question I will turn now.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A SUBJECT?

There can be no doubt that this is one of the most complex questions of modern – and postmodern – philosophy. I do not want to claim that I will be able to provide a definitive answer to this question. The only thing I want to do, is to present three different approaches to this question, in order to explore the possible spectrum of ideas about subjectivity. I will do this with reference to the work of three philosophers: Immanuel Kant, John Dewey and Hannah Arendt. I will argue that Kant gives us an *individualistic* definition of subjectivity, Dewey a *social* conception, while Arendt provides us with a *political* understanding of subjectivity.

IMMANUEL KANT:

AN INDIVIDUALISTIC CONCEPTION OF SUBJECTIVITY

I have already alluded to Kant’s understanding of subjectivity as having to do with the ability to make use of one’s own reason *without direction from another*. This already suggests the individualistic character of Kant’s understanding of subjectivity. For Kant, to be a subject ultimately means to be able to think for oneself, that is, to make one’s

own judgements and act upon them – and *not* to be led by others. Kant's subject can therefore be said to be a *rational* subject, not so much because its subjectivity *depends* upon the ability to think, but more precisely because its subjectivity is precisely located in, or simply *is* the ability to think. Thinking – judgement – comes first, and action follows. Thus Kant's conception of subjectivity is about *rational autonomy*.

It is important to keep in mind, however, that for Kant 'autonomy' does not simply mean something like 'independence.' Kant uses autonomy in its most literal sense, in that to be a subject – to be a free subject, to be a moral subject – means to be one's own moral lawgiver (*autos*: self; *nomos*: law). This is not to say that rational beings can simply invent their own moral universe. Moral action, according to Kant, is bound by the categorical imperative, by the moral duty for all rational beings. Yet the categorical imperative is not an external cause that simply forces us to act morally. Kant assumes that rational beings qua rational beings will choose the categorical imperative, they will choose the universal moral law. In this respect they are both subjected to and the source of the moral law. This is expressed in the idea of "the will of any rational beings as a universally legislative will" (Kant quoted in Körner 1983, p. 149). The idea of rational autonomy is not only central to Kant's moral philosophy, but extends to his understanding of human action more generally (see, for example, Alison 1983).

Kant's ideas of subjectivity as rational autonomy has had a huge influence on modern educational theory and practice. There are, for example, direct lines from Kant to the ideas of Piaget and Kohlberg, whose theories of cognitive and moral development build directly upon Kant's epistemology and moral philosophy respectively. The idea of rational autonomy also is a guiding principle for liberal education, and plays a central role in discussions about critical thinking as an educational ideal. Some even argue that rational autonomy is not simply *an* educational aim, but that it should be understood as *the* aim of education (for a critical discussion and 'deconstruction' see Biesta & Stams 2001).

Although the Kantian understanding of subjectivity has been influential in modern education and modern thought more generally, it has also been fiercely criticised, both for its individualism and its rationalism. Thinkers such as Nietzsche, Freud and Foucault have all in their own right argued that the origin of subjectivity is not to be found in the subject's own rational thinking, but that subjectivity is constituted by forces and processes that are 'beyond' rational control. Habermas has also criticised the individualistic rationalism of Kant, ar-

guing that rationality is not the offspring of individual consciousness but emerges from the life of communication. In a similar vein, pragmatists like George Herbert Mead and John Dewey have questioned the Kantian framework, both for its individualism and its rationalism. For my discussion, Dewey is the most significant thinker, since his critique of and alternative for Kant's conception of subjectivity is not merely philosophical, but closely connected to questions about education and democracy.

JOHN DEWEY:

A SOCIAL CONCEPTION OF SUBJECTIVITY

Dewey's conception of subjectivity is, in a sense, as far away from the Kantian approach as possible. While for Kant everything begins with the thinking activity of the rational being – he literally writes that the “I think” (*Ich denke*) is the “highest point to which we must ascribe all employment of the understanding” (Kant 1929, B134) – Dewey claims that mind is *not* “an original datum” but that it represents “something acquired” (Dewey 1980, p. 60). It is “an offspring of the life of association, intercourse, transmission, and accumulation rather than a ready-made antecedent cause of these things” (1980, pp. 60–61). This is Dewey's self-confessed Copernican Revolution in which “(t)he old center was mind” and the “new center is indefinite interactions” (Dewey 1984b, p. 232). Against the “false psychology of original individual consciousness” (Dewey 1983, p. 62), Dewey posits human beings as “*acculturated* organisms” (Dewey 1988, p. 15), that is living organisms who, through their interaction with a social medium form their habits, including the habits of thought and reflection.

The interaction with a social medium is not a one-way process in which newcomers simply take in the existing meanings and patterns of action of the group or culture they are part of. Interaction is participation, and participation is central to Dewey's understanding of communication. For Dewey communication is not the transfer of meaning from a sender to a receiver. It is a process of *making* something in common “in at least two different centers of behavior” (Dewey 1958, p. 178); it is “the establishment of cooperation in an activity in which there are partners, and in which the activity of each is modified and regulated by partnership” (p. 179). Communication, therefore, is a thoroughly practical process (Biesta 1994) in which patterns of action are formed and transformed, in which meanings are shared,

recreated and reconstructed and through which individuals grow, change and transform.

Dewey, of course, does not want to deny that human beings have the capacity for thought and reflection and that, in this respect they are rational beings. What he does want to challenge is the whole philosophical tradition in which it is assumed that this capacity is an innate endowment. "Intelligence and meaning," as he writes in *Experience and Nature* "are natural consequences of the peculiar form which interaction sometimes assumes in the case of human beings" (Dewey 1958, p. 180). The "actuality of mind," as he writes elsewhere, "is dependent upon the education which social conditions set" (Dewey 1954, p. 209). The ability to think and reflect – which Dewey refers to as 'intelligence' – could therefore be said to have a social origin, which is one way in which it can be argued that Dewey holds a social conception of subjectivity.

In a more general sense we can say that for Dewey we only become who we are through our participation in a social medium. This is what Dewey has in mind when he writes that education is a "social function, securing direction and development in the immature through their participation in the life of the group to which they belong" (Dewey 1966, p. 81). If this is so, then there are important educational questions to be asked about the 'quality' of the life in which the immature (Dewey's term) or newcomers (my term) participate and learn. This is precisely the point Dewey makes in *Democracy and Education* when he argues that a social group in which there are many different interests and in which there is full and free interplay with 'other forms of association' is to be preferred over a social group which is isolated from other groups and which is only held together by a limited number of interests. In the former kind of association there are many opportunities for individuals to develop and grow, while in the latter these opportunities are limited and restricted. The education such a society gives, Dewey writes, is "partial and distorted" (Dewey 1966, p. 83). A group or society, on the other hand, in which many interests are shared and in which there is "free and full interplay with other forms of association" (p. 83) secures a "liberation of powers" (p. 87). The "widening of the area of shared concerns," and the "liberation of a greater diversity of personal capacities" are precisely what characterise a "democratically constituted society" (p. 87).

It is important to see, that Dewey is not simply saying that a more plural society provides more opportunities for individuals to choose from in developing their powers and capacities. Although this

line of thinking is part of Dewey's social conception of subjectivity, Dewey does not conceive of the relationship between society and individuals as a one-way process in which individuals are shaped by society. For Dewey, the point is *not* the mere existence of different interests. What is crucial is the extent to which different interests are *consciously shared*, that is, the extent to which individuals are aware of the fact that their actions are part of the wider 'social fabric' so that, each individual "has to refer his own action to that of others, and to consider the action of others to give point and direction to his own" (Dewey 1966, p. 87). This, then, adds a further dimension to Dewey's social conception of subjectivity, in that he argues that to be a subject or, as he sometimes calls it, an "individualized self" (Dewey 1954, p. 150), also means to take part in shaping the contexts which in turn shape individuality (see Festenstein 1997, p. 70). The kind of intelligence that is at stake in this process is *social* intelligence. Social intelligence is both a requirement for and the outcome of participation in intelligent co-operation. As Carr and Hartnett put it:

By participating in this process, individuals develop those intellectual dispositions which allow them to reconstruct themselves and their social institutions in ways which are conducive to the realization of their freedom and to the reshaping of their society (Carr & Hartnett 1996, p. 59).

For Dewey this is what democracy is about, because in a democracy

all those who are affected by social institutions ... have a share in producing and managing them. The two facts that each one is influenced in what he does and enjoys and in what he becomes by the institutions under which he lives, and that therefore he shall have, in a democracy, a voice in shaping them, are the passive and active side of the same fact (Dewey 1987b, p. 218).

The foregoing reveals the threefold way in which Dewey holds a social conception of subjectivity. First of all, he emphasises that subjects do not precede society but are constituted by it. Yet, secondly, society itself is not a 'thing' that simply exerts an influence on individuals; it rather is through (social) participation that individuals and society constantly change. Thirdly, to be a subject in this constellation ultimately means to participate in shaping the social conditions of one's own individuality. This, in turn, is central to Dewey's understanding of what democracy is and why democracy is needed. In all respects Dewey's understanding of subjectivity differs radically from

Kant's. Dewey does not take his point of departure in individual consciousness, but in living organisms engaged in purposeful social action. Rationality is not an innate dimension of consciousness, but is the offspring of the life of association. Moreover, rationality is not about a calculating mind, but about intelligent social action.

All this does lead to a recognition of the fact that democracy is educationally relevant (and hence can be seen as an educational problem), since democracy is that form of social interaction which best facilitates and supports "the liberation of human capacities for their full development" (Festenstein 1997, p. 72). For Dewey, in other words, a democratic society is a society that aspires to contribute to the growth of all its members. The latter point does raise the question, however, whether Dewey is committed to democracy as such, or whether it is ultimately the case that for Dewey democracy is good because it is good *for us*, i.e., because it provides the best opportunity for the growth of each individual. It is here that we can find an individualistic tendency in Dewey's conception of subjectivity, which is most prominently visible in the idea that democracy aspires to contribute to the growth of all its members. Notwithstanding the fact that individuals grow and transform in and through a social medium, in and through participation, co-operation and communication, Dewey ultimately wants all individuals to grow, all individuals to develop their full potential. In this respect we could say that for Dewey subjectivity is an 'attribute' of individuals, that it is something individuals can attain. This conclusion may seem either rather obvious or rather odd, yet if we contrast Dewey's view with Hannah Arendt's *political* view of subjectivity, the difference should become more clear.

HANNAH ARENDT:

A POLITICAL CONCEPTION OF SUBJECTIVITY

Hannah Arendt's conception of subjectivity is rooted in her understanding of the active life, the *vita activa*. Arendt distinguishes three dimensions of the active life: labour, work and action. Labour is the activity that corresponds to the biological process of the human body. Labour stems from the necessity to maintain life and is exclusively focused on the maintenance of life. It does so in endless repetition: "one must eat in order to labor and must labor in order to eat" (Arendt 1958, p. 143). The human condition of labour is therefore life itself. Work, on the other hand, is the activity that corresponds to the "unna-

turalness” of human existence. Work brings an artificial world of things into existence, distinctly different from all natural surroundings. It is concerned with making and therefore “entirely determined by the categories of means and end” (p. 143). While labor and work are concerned with the interaction of human beings with the natural world, action is the activity “that goes directly between men[sic],” without “the intermediary of things or matter” (Arendt 1958, p. 7). To act first of all means to take initiative, that is to begin. Arendt argues that man is an “*initium*,” a “beginning and a beginner” (Arendt 1977, p. 170). Action is most closely related to one of the most general conditions of human existence, the condition of *natality*. Action as beginning corresponds to the fact of birth, since with each birth something “uniquely new” comes into the world. Action can therefore be seen as the “actualization of the human condition of natalty” (Arendt 1958, p. 178).

It is for this reason that we can say that to be a subject means to act. Arendt claims that it is only in action – and *not* in labour and work – that our unique distinctness is revealed. “With word and deed,” she writes, “we insert ourselves into the human world, and this insertion is like a second birth” (Arendt 1958, pp. 176–177). It is important to see that acting is not the disclosure of a preexisting identity. Arendt stresses “that nobody knows whom he reveals when he discloses himself in deed or word” (p. 180). All depends on how others, who are not like us, will respond to our initiatives, to our beginnings. The agent who acts is therefore not an author or a producer, but a subject in the twofold sense of the word, namely as one who began an action and as the one who suffers from, who is subjected to its consequences (see p. 184).

The point Arendt is making here, is that in order to act, in order to be a subject, we need others who respond to our beginnings. If we would begin something, but no one would notice it or respond to it, nothing would follow from our beginning and we therefore would not come into the world, we would not be a subject. When we begin something and others do respond, we come into the world and hence are a subject. The problem is, however, that others respond in ways that are not predictable or controllable by us. After all, we act upon beings “who are capable of their own actions” (Arendt 1958, p. 190). Although this always frustrates our beginnings, Arendt emphasises again and again that this frustration is the very condition that makes our disclosure, our action and hence our subjectivity possible. We could of course try to control the ways in which others respond to our beginnings – and Arendt acknowledges that it is always tempting to do so. But if we would do that, we would leave the sphere of action

and would enter the sphere of work. We would then make others into an instrument for achieving our own purposes. We would deprive them from their beginnings, from their opportunities for action, and hence from their opportunities of being a subject.

The central insight of Arendt's position lies in the claim that human beings are beginnings and beginners. In the sphere of human action we therefore always act upon beings who are capable of their own actions. We always begin our beginnings, to put it differently, in a world populated by other beginners. This means, however, that in order for our own beginnings to come into the world, we have to rely on the actions of other beginners. While, in a sense, this frustrates the 'purity' of our beginnings, the "impossibility to remain unique masters of what [we] do" is at the very same time the condition – and the *only* condition – under which our beginnings can come into the world (Arendt 1958, p. 220). Action, as distinguished from fabrication, is therefore never possible in isolation. Arendt even argues that "to be isolated is to be deprived of the capacity to act" (p. 188). Action also is never possible without plurality. As soon as we erase plurality, as soon as we erase the otherness of others in an attempt to control their response, we deprive both ourselves and others of the possibility for action and hence for subjectivity. This is why Arendt writes that "plurality is the condition of human action" (p. 8).

Arendt thus provides us with an understanding of human subjectivity in which subjectivity is no longer conceived as an attribute or possession of individuals, but is radically located in the sphere of human action. Even more, subjectivity only exists in action – "neither before nor after" (Arendt 1977, p. 153). While we could refer to this as a social conception of subjectivity – Arendt argues, after all, that we cannot be a subject in isolation – I prefer to call it a political conception. The main reason for this is, that according to Arendt our subjectivity is only possible in the situation in which others can be subjects as well. Not any social situation will therefore do. In those situations in which we try to control the response of others or deprive others of the opportunity to begin we cannot come into the world, subjectivity is not a possibility. Arendt relates subjectivity, in other words, to the life of the *polis*, the public sphere where we live – and have to live – with others who are not like us. The condition for being a subject is, therefore, not to be found in the community of those who are in many respects similar to us; the condition for our own subjectivity and the subjectivity of others is only to be found in those situations where we live with others who are *different* (see Säfström & Biesta 2001), the community, so we could say, of those who have nothing in common (see Biesta in press).

CONCLUSIONS

In this paper I have argued that we should not only understand democracy as a problem for education, but that we should also, and maybe primarily, understand it as an educational problem. I have defined an educational problem as a concern for subjectivity, and have, subsequently, redefined democracy as the situation in which all human beings can be subjects. This led me to a discussion of different conceptions of subjectivity: Kant's individualistic conception, Dewey's social conception and Arendt's political conception of subjectivity. These three positions provide an interesting range of ideas about what it means to be a subject.

Kant's approach is clearly individualistic. He locates subjectivity in an individual's capacity for rational thinking. This is, of course, not unimportant since to be a subject definitely involves the ability for judgement independent from what others think, say or may want one to believe. Although education plays an important role in Kant's approach, it is only to bring about rational powers that are already assumed to be there. Education is supposed to support a process of individual rational development. Moreover, Kant assumes that the rational powers of all individuals are basically the same. Rationality is not historically contingent but ultimately universal. All individuals can, in principle, reach the state of enlightenment, the situation in which they can think for themselves. As long as they have not reached this stage, their development is not yet complete. Kant's conception of subjectivity is also individualistic in its educational implications, because the task he sets for education is one which is directed at the individual. Kant provides, in other words, a rationale for a form of democratic education which focuses on the development of the individual's knowledge, skills and dispositions. The question Kant doesn't raise, is one about the – social, material and political – conditions for subjectivity. It is all about what individuals can or cannot achieve.

Dewey's social conception clearly brings the contextual dimensions into view. He acknowledges that we only become who we are through participation in a social medium and that to be a subject or an 'individualised self' means that we participate in the conditions that shape our individuality. Moreover, Dewey acknowledges that the intelligence we need for participation in social life, is not a natural endowment, but is the outcome of our very participation in social interaction. We acquire social intelligence through our participation in democratic forms of co-operation. This already places education

in a different relationship to democracy, for with Dewey we can argue that education needs to provide opportunities for the formation of social intelligence, which means that education itself must be democratically organised. Although Dewey fully recognises the social character of subjectivity and intelligence, there is, as I have argued, still an individualistic tendency in Dewey's understanding of subjectivity in its relation to democracy. This partly comes to the fore in the fact that Dewey favours democracy over other modes of associated living because it provides individuals with the best opportunity for the full development of their capacities. It also becomes visible in the fact that for Dewey subjectivity is still an attribute of individuals, something which is 'located' in their intelligence, in their abilities to participate intelligently in the shaping of the social conditions of their own individuality.

This is where Arendt provides us with a completely different approach, one in which subjectivity is radically located in the domain of action itself – neither before, nor after. For Arendt plurality is not good because it is good for us, i.e. because it gives us more opportunities to develop our own capacities. For Arendt plurality simply is the condition of human action, it is the difficult situation which makes subjectivity possible. As soon as we try to eradicate plurality – e.g., by trying to control how others should respond to us or should take up our beginnings – the opportunity for subjectivity disappears, both for our subjectivity and the subjectivity of all others. In this respect Arendt comes closest to my educational definition of democracy, since she makes it possible to understand what it means to have a situation in which all human beings can be subjects. Arendt clearly reveals that this is not an easy situation. It is an extremely difficult one yet it is the only way in which subjectivity is possible.

By locating subjectivity in action itself, and not as something that comes before action or follows from action, Arendt allows us to think differently about the role of education in relation to democracy. Her political conception of subjectivity, in other words, hints at a new set of educational questions. Let me, in conclusion, briefly describe what new kind of questions – and tasks – for education emerge if we follow Arendt's line.

While traditional educational strategies, for example informed by a Kantian way of thinking, have always focused on the question how to prepare children and newcomers for their future participation in democracy, Arendt urges us to get a way from understanding education as the domain of preparation for something that will come

later. Education, for Arendt, is not a space of preparation, but should itself be a space where action – in the Arendtian sense – should be possible. This definitely comes close to Dewey's understanding, which also raises the question of the democratic quality of education itself. The educational question, to put it differently, is not longer one of how to become a subject – of even worse: how to make children into subjects; the educational question is about how to be a subject, keeping in mind that we cannot continuously be a subject, because being a subject is not something we have in our possession – it only exists *in* action, in our being and acting *with others* (see Biesta 2000, 2001).

For schools and other educational settings this raises the following question: *What kind of schools do we need so that children and students can act?* Or, to put it in a way which we can use to examine current educational practices: *How much action is possible in schools?* In one respect we can read this as Dewey's question about the democratic character and the democratic quality of educational institutions. Yet we should not forget the importance of Arendt's insight that action is only possible if there is plurality, that is, if others can act at the very same time as well. It is, therefore, more than simply a question about democratic procedures within educational contexts. It is the deeper question about plurality and difference.

If subjectivity is not a psychological attribute, if it is not something that we can possess, but only something that can occur, but has to be 'done' – performed – again and again, without any certainty that success in the past will automatically lead to success in the future, we can no longer say that the task of education is that of 'producing' democratic subjects. If subjectivity is a quality of action, then we should not only ask about the opportunities for action in schools and other educational institutions. Just as important, from an educational and a democratic point of view, is the question how much action is possible in society. Or, to put it differently: *What kind of societal arrangements do we need so that people can act?* Both Dewey and Arendt can help us to see that there is no point in blaming individuals for anti-social or non-democratic behaviour, because individuals are always individuals in context. What especially Arendt can help us to see, is that we also should not expect that education can solve the problem (e.g., through compulsory citizenship lessons for all young people) for the very reason that their political subjectivity only exists in action, in the ever new situations they encounter.

It may seem, that this leads to the conclusion that there is no role for education left, since everything seems to depend on the moment. I

don't think that this conclusion is correct. What my exercise does suggest, however, is a different way in which we should understand the relationship between learning and subjectivity. Traditional approaches to democratic education ultimately ask the question how individuals can learn to become democratic subjects. If, on the other hand, we follow Arendt in her suggestion that subjectivity is not a psychological condition but a social and political one, the learning involved in this process is the learning that follows from having been a subject, having experienced what it means to act, to come into the world. Education can not only contribute by creating opportunities in which action – maybe we should say *real* action – is possible. Education can also help by inviting reflection about those situations in which action was possible and, perhaps as important, those situations in which action was not possible. This could be an important contribution to the formation of social intelligence, the intelligence needed in a world in which we recognise that difference and otherness are not a threat for our subjectivity, but are its very condition.

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IS THERE ANY BODY IN CYBERSPACE?

OR THE IDEA OF A *CYBERBILDUNG*

Lars Løvlie

It is remarkable how our language is replete with body imagery. Metaphors like being ‘beside oneself’, or ‘out to lunch’ or ‘down to earth’ or ‘up in the clouds’ implicitly describe the location of the body in its relation to the self and the world. The way we speak about our ‘normal’ world is repeated in the way we speak about cyberspace as well: we enter the ‘information superhighway’ in order to ‘meet’ other people in ‘electronic cafes’ or ‘chat rooms’ before we ‘exit’ to our normal world of work or leisure. It is all the more remarkable, then, to come across perspectives that decouple self and body in the cyberspace. We are told that even if traditional notions of the ‘true self’ will linger on, “... the new technology is opening up the possibility of radically new disembodied subjectivities” (Featherstone & Burrows 1995, p. 12). In cyberpunk literature this myth finds its way into descriptions of a fleshless life:

The dream of cyberculture is to leave the ‘meat’ behind and [for the subject] to become distilled in a clean, pure uncontaminated relationship with computer technology (Lupton 1995, p. 100).

This seems to be an unexpected computerised version of the Romantic quest for a spiritual unity!

A simulation culture that turns everything real into a virtual reality seems to spell the end of self-education in its classical sense. Classical *Bildungstheorie* will not easily survive the loss of the dialectics between self and world and between self and body. What, then, are the prospects for the hybrid idea of a *Cyberbildung* – is not any concept of *Bildung* a contradiction in terms when everything is, as it were, subjectified? And what about educating the *cybercitizen*, the critical and reflective subject of postmodern liberal democracy, when embodied political attitudes are left behind? – The prospects are not that bad for *Bildung*. I think Mark Poster is right when he ventures that:

The effect of the new media as the Internet and the virtual reality, then, is to multiply the kinds of ‘realities’ one encounters in society (Poster 1995, p. 86).

If I understand him right the Internet means more of the same old ‘reality’, but differently configured and differently lived. I think that one of the main reasons for this state of affairs is the simple and uncontroversial fact that you can hardly think of a theory of the self without having a body to go with it. In a certain sense there are ‘real’ bodies in cyberspace, and it is their presence that makes it natural for

us to configure the Internet the way we have done. The body contributes to a concept of *Cyberbildung* that does not break totally with traditional aspects of *Bildung* but may even contribute to them.

The professed aim of classical German *Bildung* was the education of an emerging self in its successive transformations towards an autonomous character. In that educative context cultural artefacts typically served to confirm the individual in her moral identity. The Renaissance morality play, the 18th century *Bildungsroman* and even the 20th century feature film are conduits of reflection and self-perfection. The scene, the printed page and the film used to authenticate the self as the centre of the world, and acted as prime interfaces of formal and informal education. The historical shift from the scene to the screen in the late 20th century introduced the new interfaces of the TV and the computer. The computer contributed to the simulation technologies that take us beyond pure screen-based representations and actively synchronise the virtual and physical world. When the virtual world blends with the physical, when simulation replaces the 'hard reality' as a mode of experience and action, we have created an interaction space that erases the traditional boundary between self and world. But that does not mean that the body is left behind. People feel frustrated or satisfied, respected or rejected, happy or unhappy on the Internet because their whole personality is involved. They tend to feel confident and at home on the Internet once they tackle the technical and emotional difficulties of getting online because the Internet is a space to relish and to suffer in. Even virtuality requires a body to go with it.

SO – ENTER THE BODY

The cyberpunk idea that we can leave the flesh behind belongs to fiction and radical thought experiments, like the famous one of the bodiless brain in the vat. In any case, it is beyond our conceptual and technological horizon today to conceive of disembodied subjectivities or identities roaming the virtual world, other than as interesting aspects of cyberpunk imagination. To reiterate, we are persons in the flesh. We naturally refer to ourselves in our bodily existence and take it for granted that our body is located in space, or rather, that it inhabits a geographical place. We get immersed in cyberspace in meaningful ways because we are already always immersed in 'normal' everyday space – only that in the virtual world we are differently immersed. The question is not if but how we are embodied on the Internet. I shall try and answer the question in two steps. First, by saying something

about how we are *situated* in space and how we are *oriented* in space; second, by describing space in terms of places that we inhabit. Place takes precedence over abstract space in this description.

In the *Cartesian Meditations* Edmund Husserl took an important step for a later phenomenology of the cyberspace. He pointed out that the body – the “one spatial ‘Nature’” as he called it – “is constituted throughout the change in [its] orientations”. That is to say, the bodily organism is an experiential *a priori*. He further specified “the fact that my bodily organism can be (and is) apprehended as a natural body existing and movable in space like any other is manifestly connected with the ... free modification of my kinesthesias, particularly those of locomotion”. Here, then, the body is not just a thing in the world, but exists actively in its movements and rhythms. Moving and acting belong to the specific repertoire of the body and to its existence in general. Husserl went on to add the important observation that:

I can change my position in such a manner that I convert any There into a Here – that is to say, I could occupy any spatial locus with my organism (Husserl 1988, p. 116, § 53).

He could not, of course, imagine the cyberspace of the last decade. But we may pursue the view that spatiality in general is dependent on the body. Whether I stand in this room or move on the information highway, those facts are constituted by my existence in embodied space. This is a topological perspective that refers experience and action back to the body as its locus. The body may now be seen as both a thing among other things in the world and the interface that mediates between them: it emerges as the prime interface of education. It may seem far-fetched to call the body an interface, because the term usually denotes aspects of the computer’s hardware and software, first and foremost the screen. It is, however, not lost on the reader that in philosophy the ‘I’ has been the interface between self and world over the past 200 years, even if the embodied self will be our concern in what follows.

The basic *situatedness* of my body gives rise to another central feature of embodied experience and action: that of its *orientedness*. The ‘cultural world’ Husserl argued, “is given orientedly on the underlying basis of the [bodily] Nature common to all and on the basis of the spatiotemporal form that ... must function also in making the multiplicity of cultural formations and cultures accessible.” And he went on to propose that “... in this fashion the cultural world, too, is given ‘orientedly’, in relation to a zero member and a <zero> ‘perso-

nality” (Husserl 1988, p. 134, §58). If we extend the cultural world to include the virtual – they are both created by us – and drop any egological suppositions, we come close to a description of bodily presence in the virtual reality. We do not leave the body behind when we enter the cyberspace. Rather, the body insinuates itself in the basic orientedness that makes the user able to move on the Internet.

It is worth noting here that to be located is not the same as to occupy a position in space – a description of body-space is different from that of objects in physical space. Natural objects – stars for example – may have positions in abstract space, but they are not bodily situated. The spatiality of the body is, as Maurice Merleau-Ponty once stressed in the *Phenomenology of Perception*, not “... a *spatiality of position*, but a *spatiality of situation*” (Merleau-Ponty 1962, p. 100). Spatiality of position characterises objects in designed space, for example the icons on a graphic user interface (GUI). Objects may appear as points in a grid, symbols on a map but also as icons on a screen. A first step towards a spatiality of situation takes place when the icons on the computer screen allow for the direct manipulation that gives the user confidence as an initiator of action, for example when you go from letter combinations to icons and image mediated action. We may ask: Why was the introduction of the Mac Operating System such a huge success? Why does the Windows design appear to be easier to use and remember than a manual of key combinations? Part of the answer is that the Windows design plays on the spatiality of situation. Moving the mouse, the effect on the icons, and the possibility of immediate corrections, are close to real-life bodily actions that make the user feel in control. To be in control means to be bodily involved, not only on having control over what takes place ‘objectively’ on the screen, but being in control of one’s own body-self before the computer. Ben Shneiderman speaks for designers when he says: “The trick [of the user-interface designer] in creating a direct-manipulation system is to come up with an appropriate representation or model of reality” (Shneiderman 1992, p. 200). The GUI works better both because direct manipulation is easier and faster than numeric manipulation; and because the former trades on the spatiality of the body.

I have suggested that the body is both object and interface, and described how the body as an interface constitutes space. But the body-subject is not only an individual self engaged in purposive action. This is an important qualification, because some recent descriptions of identity play on the Internet often operate with free-floating

selves spurred on by their own individual intentions. These descriptions are part of a constructivism that makes the virtual world a playground for fantasies and fictions. That may enhance self-education and contribute to social cohesion; but it may also cater to a kind of latter-day individualism in education. The Faustian twist to this constructivism is that the moment the self seems to savour the fruits of its identity play, self-creation runs idle. It may come as a release, then, to return to one's bodily situated self. As Wolfgang Welsh puts it:

... without the appearance of something as real none of the phenomena from the palette of doubt, phantasy, fiction, etc. could occur. They require a range of shared reality in order to allow some pieces of it to be questioned, attacked, or changed (Welsh 2000, p. 56).

A shared reality is partly dependent on bodies in their situatedness, or to be more concrete, on people in shared but not necessarily identical situations. Welsh opts for the 'intertwinement' between real and virtual. The body interface lays the ground for this intertwinement. The embodied mind configures virtual reality according to basic parameters of its actions in the real world. The Internet is both a vast expanse for explorations and a refuge – *refugium* – for the intimate activities of the homestead. We now have the minimal bearings that seem necessary for talking about a *Cyberbildung* that leads to the formation of a coherent self-world relationship. Which are more specifically those bearings?

A clue to an answer is found in the further elaboration of orientedness and, by implication, the notion of place. Making the body rather than the ego the subject of interaction marks the transition from Husserl's egological stance to Maurice Merleau-Ponty's bodily-grounded phenomenology. In the latter's theory intentionality becomes bodily in character. When I set out on a walk and lose my way, and then regain my geographical bearings, I am always located with an inclination towards getting from here to there. In a town I may, of course, orient myself according to the abstract coordinates of a town map. But again, I cannot make much use of the map if I cannot coordinate its information with my actual whereabouts, that is, where I am actually standing. According to Merleau-Ponty this is a basic condition:

The word 'here' applied to my body does not refer to a determinate position in relation to other positions or external coordinates [in abstract space], but by laying down of the first coordinates, the anchoring of the active body in an object, [which is] the situation of the body in face of its tasks (Merleau-Ponty 1962, p. 100).

The 'object' here is not the body in isolation but the interacting body in its surroundings. Or more specifically, the body coordinates the 'geo-graphical' bearings that accord the world its presence as a place-holder. The body orders the world by the basic directions: front-back, right-left, up-down, and over-under (cf. Merleau-Ponty 1962, p. 101f). This is the fourfold way the world is structured according to the basic orientedness of the body in practical everyday life.

THE BODY ON THE INTERNET

As I have already mentioned, in cases of simulation the real and virtual merge. That, however, comes with a caveat. In his book *The Language of New Media* Lev Manovich suggests that in cases of simulation the body still forms a centre of experience and action: the body grounds or coordinates space with itself as the tacit point of reference (cf. Manovich 2001, p. 109f). A point in case is the fighter pilot who plugs in his helmet and flips down his visor to activate his Super Cockpit system. The virtual world he sees exactly mimics the world outside, and so erases the difference between the real and the virtual altogether (cf. Manovich 2001, p. 11). The super cockpit pilot seems to turn into a hyper humanoid in a totally virtual world. We may imagine a future of simulation implants that finally end our imprisonment in the body. Computer technology may converge with brain chips to make the way we talk about body experiences a thing of the past. But, as Manovich reminds us, we should not forget that the fighter pilot is strapped into the seat of his aircraft just like the VR user's body is strapped in his or her harness. They operate with an imprisoned body as the boundary between physical and virtual existence. – There is, of course, the Cartesian idea of a totally free or virtual mind that figures as a non-spatial entity. The trouble is, if the body goes so do not only the mind, but imagination and emotions as well. For imagination is in the senses: in smelling, touching and seeing. And emotions belong to the body as visceral experiences of joy or gloom, empathy or antipathy (cf. Lakoff & Johnson 1999, p. 403f).

The original Mac OS interface was an instant success because it answered well to the body-centred experiences of 'real' life. The way the coordinates of body space integrate life on the screen can often be read off the way we visualise cyberspace. The user intuitively perceives it to be located in front of her, and not to the right and left, and definitely not behind her. This is partly due to the fact that the computer is, in the Heideggerian sense, something *Vorhanden* or ready-to-hand.

As a tool it refers back to the body and the hands as the locus and origin of its workings. The interface metaphors bear this out. We ‘enter’ a browser or a Web page, ‘travel’ on the information superhighway, visit a ‘site’ and partake in the activities of a chat room. When finished we click ‘home’ and thus end our travel by returning to the starting point when the glow of the screen fades. These peripatetic movements remind us of the structure of the venerable *Bildungsroman*: the home as a starting point for travelling and visiting new *topoi* both in the physical and literal sense of the word; then the integration of these experiences in a continuous self-creation. The metaphors used here and their narrative implications repeat the basic dimensions of body space: location, direction, and locomotion.

We do not know what the future holds for us, but for now both the configuring of the screen – for example the side-by-side spatial montage of the GUI – and the metaphors that describe our Internet behaviour are intimately tied to the body as locus of experience and action. But this is not as obvious as it sounds. In the *Philosophy in the Flesh* George Lakoff and Mark Johnson observe that many metaphors name disembodied minds. Both religious and philosophical traditions do, as we know, conceptualise the soul or spirit as something apart from the body – as a non-substantial or transcendental entity. This illusion is supported by common cases of elation, ecstasy or near-death experiences that seem to show that soul and spirit are apart things. They argue that this is an illusion that disconnects what is basically connected and that “our very concept of a *disembodied* mind arises from *embodied* experiences that every one of us has throughout his life” (Lakoff & Johnson 1999, p. 562). They go on to list bodily experiences from which primary metaphors of subject and self arise. They proceed to show how the mind is metaphorically conceived as a person, an object or even a location, with a body, social roles and actions – a veritable topology of the mind.

My proposal that there are bodies on the Internet – and I am not here thinking primarily of bodily representations or avatars – makes sense only if bodily orientedness carries over from the real to the virtual world, so that both worlds become structured according to the same coordinates. Although different in their content, these worlds become similar in their basic topography, described in terms of places and directions we are familiar with, for example streets, stairways and corridors. The individual who sits in front of the computer screen, typically acts in the tacit presence of the room, the house and the locality he or she inhabits.

We may hesitate to use the expression ‘located in cyberspace’ about the body, because location usually connotes a place where you can physically dwell, and the body does not exist physically on the Internet. ‘Home’ therefore points ‘away from’ the Internet and back to the places you are most familiar with, the house and the room that you are working in. But the Internet is a dwelling place. Some Internet nomads actually find themselves better at home in virtual geography than in their physical surroundings, as expressed by one of Sherry Turkle’s oft cited respondent, that

RL [real life] is just one more window ... and it’s not usually my best one (Turkle 1995, p. 13).

The statement is significant not only for the variety of worlds the respondent moves in but for the window metaphor.

For us the window is indeed the perfect transparent boundary, as anyone who has bumped his or her head into a glass door is familiar with. Turkle’s respondent uses a visual metaphor that gives prominence to transparency. The window as a metaphor is related to the ocular metaphors of light that abound in the religious and philosophical literature and express the non-substantial mind’s unlimited access to knowledge. But the window also demarcates the inside from the outside of a room. There is a dark ambiguity in the shimmering half-transparent window façades of the brand new corporate buildings erected on the *Potsdamer Platz* in Berlin. They both invite the spectator’s gaze – and shut it out. They show both hospitality and a rejection bordering on hostility: the inside keeps its secrets from the prying public. The façade act as the transparent interface that juxtaposes the secure inside and the hostile outside. But it may also the other way round: for those inside a house the outside may spell freedom from incarceration. For the inside of a house may be as uncanny or sinister as in an Edgar Allan Poe story; or as threatening as the empty corridors and stairways that the heroine Lara Croft searches in PlayStation games. The window is an interface, similar both to the eye and to the body in its interplay with the world.

In *The Poetics of Space* Gaston Bachelard argued more than 40 years ago that there is a rivalry between ‘house and universe’, a dynamic that is expressed in what he called the ‘topoanalysis’ of ‘poetic images’. As one of the strongest poetic images we have, the house is not, he says, an ‘inert box’, with doors to shut behind you or windows to peer out of. Rather, the inhabited space ‘transcends geometrical

space' (Bachelard 1964, p. 47). The poetic image allows us to go beyond the geography of the material house and to analyse its topology. He cites Georges Spyridaki, who wrote:

My house is diaphanous, but it is not of glass. It is more of the nature of vapor. Its walls contract and expand as I desire. At times, I draw them close about me like protective armor ... But at others, I let the walls of my home blossom out in their own space, which is infinitely extensible (Georges Spyridaki cited in Bachelard 1964, p. 51).

Yet I would rather keep the glass as my preferred metaphor – or rather metonymy – for the transparency that connects. The title of Turkle's book, *Life on the Screen*, is a wonderfully apt metaphor for postmodern man's 'glassy' existence! Gaston Bachelard's house is more than a metaphor, for it "constitutes a body of images that give mankind proofs or illusions of stability" (p. 17). The window seems to give only illusions and no proofs – it is the pure transparent interface and as such the metaphor for the immaterial. Bachelard's poetic images, on the other hand, are 'thick' images that carry proofs of the body's concrete existence. The metaphor "He's too big for his pants" implicitly refers to the body and means what it says. Or take the following lines from John Donne's poem 'The Good-Morrow': "My face in thine eye, thine in my appears/ And true plain hearts do in the faces rest". His lines create an extended poetic image that relates the eye, the face and the heart to the wonder of love. These parts of the body occur in well-known metaphors: the eye as the window of the soul, the face as the mirror of the soul and the heart as the expression of truth – in other words, the body as the conduit of emotions and feelings. To call Donne's poetic lines an illusion may, after all, not be all that bad: for the word illusion is constructed on the Latin *ludere*, which means to play.

Self and identity are words coined by modernity; they belong to the context of classical *Bildung*. Virtual reality extends and enriches identity play, but it has not yet created new concepts of self and identity. The reason is, I think, that the concepts and metaphors of the virtual world trade on the traditional notions of self-formation. The idea that the Internet offers a free-play of identities is the result of the 'virtual world fallacy', the false idea that the virtual world is a bodiless space that frees the self for boundless self-creation. The fact seems to be that the coordinates of a centred body configure virtual life, so that the body exists online in its basic topology, that is, its situatedness and orientedness. It seems that Martin Heidegger's statement in *Building Dwelling Thinking* is still true:

To say that mortals *are* is to say that *in dwelling* they persist through spaces by virtue of their stay among things and locations (Heidegger 1978, p. 335).

Bachelard's poetic images surely go beyond and extend the range and geography of the body coordinates of front-back, left-right etc. Neither Heidegger nor Bachelard could, for obvious reasons, appreciate illusion as the play of computer interfaces. The body that is physically defined in its traditional settings is present in the configuration of cyberspace as well. That seems to give the body not less but more force and reality.

THE BODY AND RHYTHM

The view suggested here has some repercussions on the concept of *Cyberbildung*. The classical idea of *Bildung* put independence in forms of embodied and institutionalised self-creation. A concept of *Cyberbildung* takes into consideration that mind is spatial; that it is a body-mind. When we speak of personal identity, that identity is embedded in the coordinates of the body, and in the poetic images and metaphors that involve the body. The body is kinaesthetic, whether it is standing, leaning or crouching; looking, listening or smelling; talking, crying or smiling. Even the smileys that appear in SMS messages attest to the existence of embodied selves. We should, however, be weary of treating either the physical or virtual body as a centre or pivot of experience. The centred body is no doubt the source of corporeal orientation and direction. It is situated in time and space. But it is not an independent point of observation. The body is already embedded in the landscape it observes. The individual may, of course, identify himself or herself as the person standing on this very spot, as we do as tourists on sightseeing. But that is possible only on account of his or her situatedness in the world. The body is, as I have said before, an object in the world and also the interface between itself and its surroundings. But this is not the whole story. For the body is also fundamentally 'spaced' in its situatedness. As Edward Casey puts it in *The Fate of Place*,

all orientation involves a gearing into a 'spatial level' that is not embedded in one's body proper but in the surrounding world (Casey 1998, p. 234).

In a spatial sense to be at home is not only to sit down in one's armchair or by the computer but also to partake in the ambience of the supporting world.

The body is, on the face of it, bounded by its surroundings, which act as the resources of a person's actions. In *The Visible and the Invisible* Merleau-Ponty asked the further question: 'Where are we to put the limit between the body and the world, since the world is flesh?' His radical answer was that the limit is mutually set by the body and the world, as being of the same 'flesh':

The world seen is not 'in' my body, and my body is not 'in' the visible world ultimately: as flesh applied to a flesh, *the world neither surrounds nor is surrounded by it* (Merleau-Ponty 1968, p. 138, my italics).

Merleau-Ponty argued that the body and its surroundings mutually condition each other, and we might add: as both finite and infinite. Bodily presence is not delimited (the word *unlimited* should be avoided here) but also beyond itself in the eternal moment when past and future overlap in experience. Merleau-Ponty's described the body as embedded in a world in which the boundaries between body and world are not given ontologically. That is to say, it is up to the body and the world together to define their boundaries, which may be seen as a phenomenological version of the dialectical self-world relationship that underpinned classical *Bildung*. In the digital world these 'definitions' materialise as GUIs, of which the screen is the most obvious. Now the interface does not really define in the literal sense of drawing a boundary. As I have already shown, interfaces are double-edged and negotiable – they "neither surround nor are surrounded". Merleau-Ponty is primarily concerned with the kinaesthetic body – that is you and me in our daily life – that summons the world into situations of desires and satisfactions: the flesh as interface.

In *A Thousand Plateaus* Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari make another significant move. They describe the interface, not in terms of body, but rather of rhythm. They invoke rhythm as "the transcoded passage from one milieu to another, a communication of milieus, coordination between heterogeneous space-times". They go on to say that in music meter "is dogmatic, but rhythm is critical; it ties together in passing from one milieu to another". And they refer to an earlier book by Bachelard when they add the important qualification that

rhythm is never on the same plane as that which has rhythm. Action occurs in a milieu, whereas rhythm is located between two milieus, or

between intermilieus, on the fence, between night and day, at dusk, *twilight* or *Zwielicht*, Haccuity. To change milieus, taking them as you find them: Such is rhythm. Landing, splashdown, takeoff (Deleuze & Guattari 1988, p. 313f).

Rhythm is, of course, a basic feature of the kinaesthetic body. The film *Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon* is a point in case. The film is from beginning to end a movie of rhythm. Features of ballet, acrobatics and the martial arts combine action with the weightlessness of the body – the body as spirit. The actors run up walls and make somersaults back into courtyards, fly through the treetops in pursuit of each other – the body as transcendence. In the final scenes the hero dies from treacherous poisoning, reminiscent of Shakespeare's Hamlet. What to make of this? We may say that the 'soul' of the film plays itself out in rhythm – rhythm as a moving interface. Rhythm stretches and extends the boundaries of the body to include cultural artefacts that seem to have no connection with the body. Rhythm is the true illusion of bodily play in its diverse cultural expressions. But for Deleuze and Guattari rhythm goes beyond the choreography in dance, the meter in music and the cadence in poems. Their description catches the body, not as the locus of rhythm, but as partaking in the 'twilight', the in-between and transitional that cannot be pinned down to a particular interface like the screen. The two authors radicalise the idea of an interface by pointing to its rhythm, that is, to movement and transformation as a feature of the interface. The interface then includes the feel that the body has for the milieu and atmosphere that it partakes in. An analysis of rhythm may add significantly to the idea of a *Cyberbildung* that treats the body as an experiential interface.

Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon is splendid kitsch that shows how body and rhythm together constitute the body. And it leads to another observation. When, in more mundane cases, we take a walk without having a specific destination but rest in the 'flow' of just moving ahead, we leave the physical dimensions of space and time behind, and act according to directions given in the course of walking, choosing this path over the other, in what Deleuze and Guattari calls nomadic space.

There exists a nomadic absolute where 'the absolute' is local, precisely because place is not delimited (Deleuze and Guattari 1988, p. 494).

This is the case when, as other writers have pointed out, the experience of the eternal moment or instant makes time or *khronos* collapse into

topos, that is, into the sense of place or simply being there. Rhythm sets no limits but is intermediate and marks the crossover from one *modus* to another – the poetic image of the body as interface. Rhythm describes the inherent movement that informs the house image and the body image as well. These images are conduits of both contradictory and mutually supportive experiences that may be realised in the eternal instant when the past is confirmed in its transition.

The Internet introduces a notion of *Cyberbildung* that reconfigures the classical relation between self and the world. The graphic user interface helps us see that the house and the body are not settled substances but interfaces, that is, creative and changing self-world relations. The extended perspective of the body offered by philosophers like Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty makes the picture of the body as an independent object that may be formed, sculpted and manipulated to performance something of an aberration. Descriptions of the body as both emplaced and oriented towards, sedentary and nomadic, bounded and unbound, do indeed retain the difference between the individual and its surroundings. But the difference is not categorical. In a working note written in 1960, Merleau-Ponty said that “the body is not simply a *de facto* visible among visibles, it is visible-seeing, or look” (Merleau-Ponty 1968, p. 272). It is that which inaugurates “the *where* and the *when*” or the ‘facticity’ that “makes the fact be a fact” (p. 140). To agree with this is not to engage in metaphysics. We may take it as a memento for a *Cyberbildung* that retains the classical opposition between self and world, but remediates it within the context of the Internet.

LOST BODIES?

Let me work towards a conclusion. In the Prologue to the first volume of *The Rise of the Network Society*, Manuel Castells states that the global network of information and communication creates a “fundamental split between abstract, universal instrumentalism, and historically rooted, particularistic identities”. And he goes on the stress – in bold types – the fact that postmodern “societies are increasingly structured around a bipolar opposition between the Net and the Self” (Castells 1996, p. 3). I think that his first statement is generally right as a diagnosis of the current ideology, but not of the facts of the case. His last statement is possibly wrong. If what I have said in this paper is right, the Internet does not necessarily introduce a cleavage between abstract systems and the particular identities. Quite to the contrary,

the Internet makes new connections between persons and the systems possible, in a way that may be conducive to *Bildung*. But then our idea of the self is not confined to free-floating minds, but includes the phenomenology of the body-self. Electronic interfaces oppose – and connect. And they connect because the virtual world repeats the basic configuration of the body in the real world, that is, its situatedness, orientedness and transparency.

Some theorists leave the body behind. Niklas Luhmann is a case in point. In the last impressive, two-volume exposition of his theory, *Die Gesellschaft der Gesellschaft*, finished just before he died, there are no entries on the word body in its German denotations of *Körper* or *Leib*. It seems that he is not able to entertain the idea that the person is an interface that also includes an embodied person that partakes in a sensed world. He quite rightly says that

One cannot assign people to functional systems, as if each person belonged only to one system, that is, only to justice, but not to business, to politics but not to the educational system.

Then he draws the wrong conclusion that this

... leads ultimately to the consequence that one cannot any longer claim that society consists of persons; for persons obviously cannot be accommodated to any part system, that is, to a place in society (Luhmann 1999, p. 744).

If I understand him right he thinks that the idea of a person entails that it be assigned to a location in space. Since autopoietic systems operate as information networks across social arenas we cannot settle the person in location and place. That means a farewell to traditional ways of talking about the person. Luhmann's persons do not have bodies but function as individual points of reference in a larger grid – they are “reference points for self-referential, rational calculation”, but not situated in any particular part of society.

Luhmann's functionalism reiterates the abstract space of Newton's physics, even if that space is now occupied by autopoietic systems. Luhmann would, of course, reject Castells' diagnosis, if only because there is no opposition between the Net and the self when the self does not exist as embodied any longer. In his vocabulary the idea of a *Cyberbildung* turns out to be a contradiction in terms, because the idea of an educated person is lost when there are no persons to educate. In this perspective *Bildung* in the sense of a self-formation in the en-

counter between self and other is a Romantic story of self-creation that belongs to a dear but obsolete narrative. When persons are described in terms of autopoietic systems in relation to other 'alien' systems, we can, of course, still talk of the learning processes and change of these systems, but hardly of persons that grow and transform into self-conscious personalities in mutual recognition.

According to the phenomenological approach that I have sketched above, there are no hard and fast walls between belonging to different worlds and being situated. Neither is there an absolute distinction to be drawn between transparent and embodied selves. The idea of an interface as a transparent boundary can be used to describe, not only the screen, but also the house and the body. In Merleau-Ponty's view the self and the world are not things apart because the body partakes in the world. I have tried to show how the body acts by proxy, as it were, on the Internet, through its basic orientedness. The body's presence in cyberspace is corroborated by as diverse works as Lakoff's and Johnson's research on metaphors, Bachelard's topoanalysis of poetic images and Deleuze's and Guattari's descriptions of rhythm. On his own account Luhmann's theory is just one out of several scientific vocabularies for describing modern society – and not the best at that.

A possible account of *Cyberbildung* hinges on the idea of the interface in its various meanings. The interface fascinates by its transparent substantiality: it exists both as a boundary and a rhythm, an impossibility that entails its own possibility. The body moves freely in cyberspace, but it is also settled in a location. The interface negotiates between different worlds, but always within the body-self-world context. Just like the window reflects light, the body reflects its own existence in the world through the world itself. By introducing the body and its surroundings as the basic interface there is no split between the Internet and the self. There are, however, constraints in the relation, and I have suggested that a main constraint on the vagaries of self on the Internet is its bodily situatedness. The fact that we are body-subjects makes it all the more fascinating to think of virtuality and the Internet as an opportunity for working out the idea of a *Cyberbildung*.

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