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ABSTRACT

The arrival of newcomers in our societies 'impinges upon us' (Peter Jarvis). Adult and continuing education are invited to take a stance. In response to this, I explore how relevant citizenship education for and with newcomers can be conceived of. In the first place, I explore how the arrival of newcomers triggers ambivalent reactions between fear and hope. Next, I present different concepts of responsible citizenship as a response to these ambivalences. I connect these insights with Biesta's three approaches to public pedagogy: a pedagogy for the public, a pedagogy of the public, and a pedagogy of publicness. In line with 'a pedagogy of publicness', I argue that 'dissensus', rather than 'consensus' and 'interruption', rather than 'dialogue' could be fruitful notions to conceive citizenship education for newcomers as a democratic practice, whereby both participants and facilitators open spaces of conversation about the world they come from, and the world they want to live in.

Once the Other impinges on us, the potentiality of the relationship demands an ethical response. Peter Jarvis, 2006, p. 208.

'Ein Mensch ist ein Mensch ist ein Mensch ist ein Mensch' (a human being is a human being is a human being …).[1] Thus began the editorial with the title 'Das neue Gesicht der Globalisierung' (the new face of globalisation) of the German weekly magazine Die Zeit on the 22 September 2014. In this article, Bernd Ulrich described what was at stake in Germany and in Europe in 2014 as a consequence of the increased migration pressure. Many African, Arab and Persian countries 'find themselves in a radical change that may last several decades'. The author suggested that this could trigger massive flows of refugees and wondered what this could mean when many of them would try to find their way Europe. 'We can of course try to keep them out of our territories with increasing methods of determent and intimidation. (…) Another possibility would be to turn Europe into a continent of asylum, a place of refuge'. If Europe would politically follow the latter direction – which is for the moment more than questionable – a paradigm shift would be needed. A transformation of Europe into a place of refuge could, according to Ulrich, be the only 'rational, realistic and modern reaction to the challenges of a globalised world'. Yet, the success of such response would

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first of all depend on cultural learning processes, whereby Europeans begin to understand that immigration, in spite of its considerable challenges, is not a threat, but an opportunity for the continent. And, since Europe considers itself as one of the inventors of the human rights, immigration should also be one of its basic humanistic concerns, since 'a human being is a human being is a human being'.

Two years later in 2016, the European continent has experienced the arrival of high numbers of refugees, especially from the war-torn territories of Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, but also from unstable regions of Africa. The images of hundreds of people cramped in rickety boats by immoral traffickers, and reports about violence of and against newcomers in our societies, have continuously dominated the news media. In response to such events, the German chancellor Angela Merkel had promised in 2015 a paradigm shift with her famous words 'Wir schaffen das' (we shall manage). Initially she was supported by many German citizens who openly welcomed the asylum seekers. However, soon after that doubts and fears increased. Aggressive attacks on refugee centres were reported. And then, suddenly, there was the famous 'Sylvester Nacht' (New Year's Eve) in Cologne. The sexual aggression on that night has not only shocked the German public opinion. It triggered debates beyond the German borders. Serious doubts were raised about the so-called 'open borders' of the European Union, especially when major European cities experienced massive terrorist attacks. The successive incidents have strengthened tensions and fears for newcomers, particularly those of Muslim/Arab origin, in many Western societies. Meanwhile, the paradigm shift has turned into a dubious compromise with the Turkish state in order to reduce the number of asylum-seekers entering the European Union.

Migration from poor regions to the richer and 'safer' part of the globe is an inevitable phenomenon in a globalised world, where wealth and peace are very unevenly distributed. The famous Polish anthropologist Ryszard Kapuscinsky observed 'that the world has become multi-ethnic and multicultural not because there are more of these communities and cultures than before, but rather because they are speaking out more loudly, with increasing self-sufficiency and forcefulness, demanding acceptance, recognition and a place at the round table of nations' (2005, p. 12). In response, we are witnessing systematic attempts 'to keep them out' in Eastern European countries and even in Austria – which in 2015 was one of the 'welcoming' countries. Also the Brexit campaign in 2016 was strongly influenced by the migration issue. Many of the 'leave' voters were influenced by fear of being overwhelmed by migrants 'threatening to undermine British traditions and culture'. In the country that invented capitalism 'issues of identity have overruled issues of Interest', says the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas, commenting on the outcome of the Brexit referendum.[2] The optimism about the opportunities of multicultural society articulated in many western countries by liberals during the previous decades has been strongly challenged by conservative and sometimes racist voices. Parties at the right and extreme right of the political spectrum have gained momentum in many European countries. Meanwhile, borders are being closed and even a progressive country like Sweden, that hosts major numbers of refugees, has in 2016 drastically changed its policy.

Peter Jarvis, following Levinas, reminded us of the fact that the arrival of the stranger creates a moral imperative. 'When my spontaneity is inhibited by the presence of the Other, that is the beginning of ethics' (Jarvis, 1997, *passim*). Next to this moral imperative, there is also a very practical imperative. Hundred thousands of refugees now populate schools and adult education centres in Europe. This is one of the major challenges of education

today. In primary and secondary education, refugee children have to be integrated in the normal school system. Talents should be developed, while avoiding discrimination and demotivation both on behalf of the students and the teachers. And in adult education centres, refugees should be accommodated to the language and culture of the host countries with respect for the cultures of the countries of origin. This challenge obliges practitioners and scholars of adult education to reflect on and discuss intensively the role of citizenship education in the context of integration programmes. In my contribution, I will explore how relevant citizenship education for and with newcomers can be conceived. I will, in the first place investigate the ambivalences vis-à-vis the arrival of newcomers in our societies. I will look into the limitations and opportunities of mutual understanding, when diverse cultures of host societies and of newcomers interact with each other. The arrival of newcomers triggers, on the one hand, insecurity and fears about the effects of their presence, yet, on the other hand, also opens new perspectives on how these events may enrich our economy and our culture. Next, I will present different understandings of what good or responsible citizenship is about: citizenship as status, citizenship as identity and citizenship as activity. I will connect these insights with three approaches to public pedagogy developed by Biesta (2012): a pedagogy *for* the public, a pedagogy of the public, and a pedagogy of *publicness*. I will furthermore demonstrate with concrete examples and the story of a personal experience how 'dissensus', rather than 'consensus', and 'interruption', rather than 'dialogue', can be fruitful for conceiving of citizenship education for newcomers as a democratic practice, whereby participants and facilitators open spaces of conversation about the world they come from, and the world they want to live in. Such spaces of conversation are based on the principles of equity and respect for each other's uniqueness. Yet, it is also a practice that sometimes confronts us with the limits of our mutual understanding. And what these limits are must inevitably also be clarified.

Ambivalences of living with cultural diversity

Many observers of the responses of citizens to the arrival of refugees in western countries suggest that these responses are more often inspired by emotions than by rational arguments. This is also a major observation of Van Leeuwen (2008) in his critical analysis of responses to the increased cultural diversity in our societies. In his view, dealing with cultural diversity is strongly marked by ambivalent affections. 'Living with cultural diversity is characterised by a fundamental affective ambivalence. On the one hand, there is existential unease in the face of cultural strangeness, which is linked to our human dependence on 'common sense' (…). On the other hand, contact with unfamiliar practices and forms of expression can equally give rise to positive feelings of wonder and fascination' (2008, p. 147). A central notion in his analysis of the way we engage with cultural diversity is 'common sense'. This is the horizon of self-evident background assumptions which create ontological security for people about themselves and about the world around them. It refers to 'the unproblematic patterns of interpretation that incorporate a deep familiarity with a certain social and natural world' (ibid., p. 149). In our day-to-day routines and our conversational encounters with others, these taken-for-granted assumptions on how the world makes sense, on how what is true and what is real, what is good and acceptable and what is meaningful and what is not, are confirmed and strengthened (Wildemeersch & Leirman, 1988). However, this self-evident lifeworld can be challenged when we are confronted with unfamiliar forms

of behaviour, beliefs and practices expressed by cultural others who do not belong to our taken-for-granted comfort zone. The interruption of our common sense by cultural others may trigger various responses. On the one hand it can produce reactions of irritation and defence, with responses varying between indifference and offensive, even racist behaviour. On the other hand the experience of cultural strangeness can stimulate our desire to explore the manifestations of difference, thereby transcending the borders of our taken-for-granted lifeworld and routines. 'It is precisely in the realization of that our own horizon of understanding cannot encompass all of our reality that a positive moment, an awareness of depth and significance, may lurk' (ibid., p. 158). And this positive moment may create understanding for a world, for practices, customs and beliefs that at first sight are strange to our own world.

The confrontation with strangeness or cultural others may threaten our ontological security, or our subjective feelings of integrity, at three different levels: the personal/psychological, the vital and the national. At the personal level, the pluralization of the world in which one lives may produce acute feelings of threat. People who live in relative isolation, with weak social bonds are particularly susceptible to such feelings. These feelings will additionally be strengthened when the presence of newcomers also implies a vital threat, e.g. as a consequence of increased competition in the labour market or in the housing market or, as we have witnessed recently, of terrorist assaults. The manifestation of these three types of threat, sometimes in combination with extremist political manipulation, may result into systematic forms of exclusion and even discrimination and racism. In response to these three types of threat, policy measures should be considered at three different levels, possibly in combination with each other. As to the psychological threat, conditions of anomie should be avoided by creating opportunities for groups with weak social bonds to be integrated in society. At the level of the vital threats, the influx of newcomers into host societies should be carefully balanced, in combination with a cautious communication strategy by policy-makers. And, as far as the threat at the national level is concerned, a recognition of the importance of a national language and identity will be relevant, yet, the celebration of excessive national pride should be avoided. Van Leeuwen concludes this interesting and nuanced analysis with the observation that in conditions of superdiversity, which is the inevitable condition of our societies today, the common sense will always be called into question and will therefore create feelings of discomfort. Such feelings will 'only constitute a real threat to multicultural society if they are accompanied by social anomie, by fear of foreigners on a more vital plane and by the notion that newcomers destroy the 'integrity' of the nation state' (ibid., p. 169). These challenges of course transcend the realm of citizenship education. Yet, also within the context of educational practices, the calling into question of the common sense should be dealt with, though in a particular way.

Issues of citizenship in conditions of superdiversity

The affective ambivalence vis-à-vis newcomers in our societies is also reflected in public debate nowadays. The above-mentioned 'Sylvester Night' incidents in Cologne have had a massive influence on the way Germans began to raise doubts about the welcoming policy of their chancellor. They became more aware of the dangers of the uncontrolled entrance of thousands of asylum-seekers. Extremist political parties took advantage of the increased feelings of insecurity. Stereotypes rather than critical reflectivity were reinforced. In Belgium,

the state secretary for asylum and migration, a few days after the Cologne incident, declared that all asylum seekers now should be obliged to participate in sexual re-education programmes, thereby emphasising that immigrants from Arab/Muslim countries often have a negative, oppressive attitude towards women. This attitude was then associated with the argument that these communities lacked the kind of enlightenment that liberal-democratic nations had acquired during previous centuries. Hence, if they wanted recognition as asylum-seekers and eventually full-citizenship, intensive accommodation to our 'modernised' society would be needed.

An interesting example of such argumentation was demonstrated some years ago in a television programme called 'Important Questions: Can We Live with Each Other?', in which Flemish (Belgian) intellectuals were asked to give their opinion about some of the main challenges of our times.[3] One of the interviewees was Professor [first name] Vermeersch, a philosopher of the Ghent University, who is a recognised authority in the public debate on various ethical issues. One of the topics in the conversation with him was the relationship between various cultural, ethnic and religious groups in our present, multicultural society. At a certain point in the interview, the professor reflected on Islam as a source of inspiration for many young migrant women in our Western society. He expressed serious doubts about the relevance of their traditional beliefs in the context of our present-day modernised society. It made him muse about different dress codes and the values and norms they represent.

> What many Muslims don't know is that what they now call "Western" is a recent concept. When I was young, women sat on one side in church and men on the other side. Women had to wear hats in church, etc. Much of what we now consider normal has only been established after the second World War. Before that time, there were no bikinis, let alone monokinis or zerokinis. These are all recent developments, and one has to give these people the opportunity to develop themselves in that direction. Yet, simultaneously one has to oppose developments that go in the opposite direction. When young Muslim girls prefer to go to the swimming-pool in a one-piece bathing suit and not in a bikini, one should respect that, but not of course a burqa. That young women want to dress decently is no problem. I would strongly respect that. Yet, when they want to wear the headscarf, thereby going back to tradition, it goes in the wrong direction. (De Ceulaer, 2005, translation DW)

What is suggested here is that newcomers in our society should accommodate to some basic principles of our Western society. If they want to be considered full citizens, they should behave more like us, at least in public spaces. What they do in their private lives is up to them. Wearing a one-piece bathing suit is, according to Vermeersch, in line with these principles. However, wearing a headscarf or a burqa could be considered a sign of disagreement with, or lack of respect for, some of the basic values of our society. In addition professor Vermeersch claims that the headscarf is often an expression of religious funda-mentalism and should therefore be forbidden in public institutions like schools and public administrations. In response to this, critics of such positions argue that simply '*because* there is a radical fundamentalist minority within Islam' it does not follow 'that all religious symbols *automatically* have the significance ascribed to them by that particular minority' (Van Rompaey, 2013). Such reflections and responses put the issue of citizenship on the public agenda. In ethnically homogenous societies, an overall consensus about the central values and norms can be achieved more easily than in ethnically heterogeneous societies. And since we have moved increasingly towards heterogeneous or superdiverse societies during the last decades, the issue of the perceived lack of 'values and norms' is frequently articulated by opinion makers of all kinds and in all directions. In line with this, the question

of what it means to be 'a good or a responsible citizen' has prominently come to the fore as a central public issue. And it is also a matter of public concern when it comes to defining 'the good citizen' in the context of integration courses for newcomers in our societies.

The question of 'what a good citizen is' has no easy answers. In the literature citizenship is presented as a complex phenomenon with many different definitions, referring to diverse ideological traditions. According to Pierik (2012) there are three main, often contradictory, orientations that influence the current debate on citizenship: the liberal-democratic tradition, the republican tradition and the communitarian tradition. The first approach, the liberal one, considers citizenship first and foremost as a legal matter: *citizenship as status*. Humans who are born in a particular country automatically acquire the status of citizen of that country. For citizens who have come to live in a foreign country, the status of citizenship of that country has to be acquired while going through legal procedures that often take several years. The citizenship status entitles citizens to make use of a variety of civic, social and political rights. The use of these rights enables them on principle to realise their self-chosen objectives, or to foster their individual social mobility. Liberals attach much importance to individual autonomy and the principles of freedom and equality that form the basis of it. This liberal tradition of citizenship is widely recognised as an important historical achievement of Western societies that has inspired the constitution of many newly established states in the course of the nineteenth and twentieth century. However, it is also acknowledged that it has its limitations. It is often described as a passive model because it claims that citizens are entitled to these particular rights, without having to make use of these rights and without reference to the corresponding duties and responsibilities towards others. The republican tradition represents a more active interpretation of citizenship: *citizenship as activity*. In this tradition, 'responsible' citizens are expected to engage actively in the public debate on 'the good society'. It requires the capacity to communicate, to be aware of issues that transcend personal interests and to be sensitive to the interdependence of citizens and the way they connect to the world around them. It involves taking responsibility, not only for one's individual social mobility, but also for the common good in economic, social and ecological terms. The third orientation, the communitarian tradition, focuses on issues of identity. It advances *citizenship as identity*. A responsible citizen is someone who identifies with the community in which s/he lives. It is inspired by the idea that the individual person can only live his/her individuality in connection with others with whom s/he shares the language, the common values and norms, the traditions of the community or the nation s/he's part of. This joint culture is the result of a long historical process. The nation state is considered the incarnation and the custodian of this common identity. These three conceptions of citizenship emphasise different aspects. Therefore they are to some extent complementary, but also contradictory, creating tensions in society when it comes to deciding what responsible citizenship is about.

Three approaches to public pedagogy

Responsible citizenship is also an important educational issue. It has played a prominent role in the practices and the theories of adult education, particularly for these authors that have associated adult education with social movements (e.g. Finger & Asun, 2001; Jarvis, 2000). In response to the employability tendencies that have begun to dominate educational practices and policies, they have re-emphasised the connection of adult education practices

with issues at stake in civil society (e.g. Jarvis, 2002; Welton, 2000). While doing so, they have raised several questions regarding citizenship education. To what extent can educational practices be value neutral? What model of citizenship could/should inspire educational practices? Such questions definitely also apply to the new phenomenon of integration courses for newcomers. An inspiring framework to respond to these questions has recently been developed by Biesta (2012) with the help of the notion of public pedagogy. He thereby refers to the rich tradition of above-mentioned adult/citizen education practices that relate educational activities to political issues. Such practices have been organised with different intentions (informing, enlightening, emancipatory), in various institutional contexts (formal, non-formal, informal) and in varying relationships with policy-makers (as subcontractors supporting policy objectives or as critical observers of political decision-making). Public pedagogy in his view is concerned with an active and deliberate intervention in the public domain. He thereby distinguishes between three different interpretations on how educational interventions can relate to questions of citizenship, democracy and the public sphere.

The first way to consider public pedagogy is a pedagogy *for* the public. It is characterised by a deficit approach. The public, or the target groups of educational intervention, are considered to lack information, insight, capacities to function adequately as responsible citizens that fully participate in society. The main pedagogical mode of this approach to public pedagogy is *instruction*, whereby 'the world is seen as a giant school and the main role of educational agent is to *instruct* citizenry' (Biesta, 2012, p. 691). Often this form of public pedagogy has assimilationist tendencies, while reducing or even erasing plurality and difference. 'We can see such a form of public pedagogy enacted whenever the state instructs citizens to be, e.g. law-abiding, tolerant, respectful of active' (ibid.). In such cases the instruction may have a moralistic undertone, whereby citizens need to be 'taught a lesson'. Biesta is to an important degree sceptical about this interpretation of public pedagogy when he reminds us that 'the world is not a school and should not become a school' (ibid., p. 692).

The second interpretation of public pedagogy is a pedagogy *of* the public. Here, the educational activity is not organised in formal or non-formal educational contexts such as schooling or adult education classes, but in close connection with democratic practices. It is often aimed at raising critical consciousness about various issues of public concern and at overcoming alienation from the world. In such practices the educators do not function as instructors, but rather as facilitators of learning processes, whereby the outcomes of these processes are not predetermined but open-ended. In this sense, this approach connects better with the idea of plurality. However, in Biesta's view, the problem with this interpretation is that it brings democracy under the regime of learning, whereby citizens will only be considered responsible political actors when they are prepared to engage in lifelong learning about public issues. Hence, this interpretation of public pedagogy tends to turn social and political problems into learning problems which become the responsibility of individuals rather than matters of public concern.

Rather than considering public pedagogy as a pedagogy *for* the public or *of* the public, Biesta suggests a third interpretation which he calls a '*pedagogy for publicness*'. He understands this pedagogy as a set of activities that enable people to become public actors. 'Becoming public is not about a physical relocation from the home to the street or from the *oikos* to the *polis*, but about the achievement of a form of human togetherness in which (…) action is possible and freedom can appear' (ibid., p. 693). In this approach, the educator is someone who *interrupts* the taken-for-granted assumptions of the audience or the public. In

doing so, s/he introduces an element of dissensus, meaning that a heterogeneous element is brought into the common sense of the participants. Such an element of dissensus is a sign of plurality, and such a sign in its turn refers to the fact that in our human condition, life choices are not predetermined but are open to the freedom of subjects to choose among the plurality of possibilities that the world offers. Following Arendt, Biesta argues that plurality is 'the space where freedom can appear'. 'Whereas the first two interpretations of public pedagogy run the risk of *replacing* politics with education (…) the third interpretation hints at both a different educational dynamic and a different political dynamic. (…) *Educationally* such interventions are important because they enact a form of pedagogy that is neither based on superior knowledge of an educator – so that the educator would be in a position to tell the others how to act and how to be – nor about putting the educator in the role of facilitator of learning – thus putting the whole process under a learning 'regime'' (ibid., pp. 693–694).

Principles and practices of integration courses

These three approaches to public pedagogy need some further clarification and concretisation. This can best be done by connecting them with the above-mentioned forms of citizenship and with concrete examples of policies and practices of citizenship education. A relevant case for this exercise is the integration courses for migrants in the Flemish part of Belgium, which are part of the comprehensive integration trajectories (*inburgeringstrajecten*). The issue of 'inburgering' (integration) has begun to play a prominent role on the political agenda in Flanders since the shock produced by the sudden spectacular growth of the extremist political party Vlaams Blok (later Vlaams Belang) in the beginning of the 1990s. This party introduced the issue of migration prominently into the public forum. The growing popularity of the extreme right made the Flemish authorities consider how the integration of newcomers, particularly those from the Middle-East, Sub-Saharan Africa and the Maghreb countries could be organised in a more systematic way. In 2003, the Flemish Parliament ratified the 'Vlaamse Inburgeringsdecreet' (Decreet van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap, 2004), which was adapted three times afterwards in 2007, 2008 and 2013. This Flemish policy on 'inburgering' has also been strongly influenced by policies implemented some years before in the Netherlands. In principle, the Flemish decree applies to the entire Flemish population, yet, for pragmatic reasons it is said to be operational only for the specified target groups. In this decree, the notions of self-reliance and active citizenship take a central place and the integration trajectories are expected to improve social cohesion and shared citizenship (Grijp, Loobuyck, & Verschelden, 2013). The decree establishes two consecutive trajectories. The first trajectory, which is limited in time, supports the newcomer in acquiring Dutch language skills, and orients him/her into society and employment. The second continued trajectory, which is not limited in time, aims at directing the newcomer to the regular institutions of society and at the inclusion in society. The 'reception bureaus' have been given the task of organising the integration trajectories.

Part of the first trajectory is the societal orientation course for newcomers (cursus maatschappelijke oriëntatie). A special commission (Bossuyt, 2006) was installed by the Flemish authorities to suggest directions for the facilitators of this course in the 'reception bureaus'. These are the places where these groups of newcomers are obliged to participate if they eventually want to obtain recognition as official refugees. In its final report, the commission emphasised the importance of newcomers becoming acquainted with the

main values and norms that inspire Flemish society today. The general aim of the course is to increase the capacity of the newcomer to function autonomously in the new society s/he wants to become a member of. In order to achieve this general aim, two kinds of so-called competence objectives for the integration course have been formulated (Decreet van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap, 2004). First there are knowledge objectives. These relate to the information that each participant must acquire about the basic values of the Flemish society. This relates to the existing systems of values and norms, the rights and the duties related to them and the diverse institutions that guarantee compliance with these values and norms. The skills objectives are directly connected to the knowledge objectives. They concern mainly information processing competencies and recognition of diversity. The latter set of skills also implies the recognition of differences regarding values and norms. In order to achieve these objectives, the course is organised around 10 different learning environments: city and country, mobility, public services, residency situation, employment, family situation, adult education, health care, how to live, consumption and leisure. The values and norms are dealt with in an 'inclusive' and 'transversal' way. By 'inclusive' is meant that values and norms are interwoven. 'Transversal' means that they are situated within the different learning environments.

The commission pays extensive attention to these values and norms which it considers central to the culture of Flemish society. The five core values are: (1) the value of *freedom*, including freedom of opinion, freedom of religion and freedom of expression; (2) the value of *equality* and *non-discrimination*; (3) the value of *solidarity*, based on the awareness of connectedness and identification with fellow citizens; (4) the value of *respect* which relates to the basic feature of human dignity; and finally (5) the value of *citizenship* that relates to the wider legal contexts in which individuals are embedded and which offer basic rights and duties with regard to the enactment of the core values that inspire Flemish society. The five core values are the cornerstones of the democratic, pluralist constitutional state. Obviously, all are inspired by the liberal-democratic tradition of citizenship described above. They refer to *citizenship-as-status* guaranteeing the right of individuals to act as free citizens in accordance with their own beliefs, philosophy and ideology. They offer the basic framework of the liberal-democratic society and are considered to be beyond doubt. The normative character of this framework is said not to be in conflict with the supposed neutrality of the educational institutions (Grijp et al., 2013). From this it follows that, in the context of education in general and in integration courses in particular, these values should give direction to the way the curriculum is organised and how the relationship between the educational agents, participants and content is shaped. Therefore, newcomers in society, be they young children or adults, need to be *instructed* in these core principles. They need to be immersed in a pedagogy *for* the public. Participants inevitably have to accommodate to these basic principles and they have to *know* the laws that are concrete operationalizations of these principles. From these observations it follows that, in this view, a *pedagogy of the public* is inevitable and necessary, since the principles of the liberal-democratic state are, in their abstract formulation, beyond discussion.

However, even when there is a consensus about abstract principles, in concrete practices – when it comes to more concrete social norms – opinions often diverge. There are the diverse interpretations, for instance, about the symbol of the headscarf, about the dress codes, about the relationships between men and women and the institution of marriage, about co-education in schools, about mixed gender swimming pools, about homosexual

relationships, and about the unanesthesised slaughtering of animals. It is often at the concrete level of social norms, rather than at the level of abstract values, that conflicts emerge. Therefore, the commission advises creating a climate of dialogue in the orientation courses. 'Dialogue among the participants and with the facilitators, sometimes also with external people, allows the exploration of the meaning of values and norms, the relativity and the (absolute) borders and also their internal contradictions. Given the complexity of these matters (…) it is a *conditio* sine qua non for the treatment of values and norms. Moreover, this method offers the opportunity of applying values such as openness and respect in practice' (Bossuyt, 2006, p. 16, translation DW). This reference to dialogue suggests that facilitators combine a pedagogy *for* the public with a pedagogy *of* the public. On the abstract level, the values and norms are said to be beyond doubt. On the concrete level they are, in the commission's view, subject to dialogical exploration of different sensitivities and meanings.

Although the dialogical approach is generally accepted as the right way to engage with each other in educational settings, in practice ideas about how to organise such conversation differ. Burbules (1993) makes a distinction between a teleological dialogue and a non-teleological dialogue. Teleological dialogue is dialogue 'with an agenda', meaning that the conversation between participants and facilitators must inevitably arrive at one particular correct outcome or answer. Non-teleological dialogue is a conversation that is open-ended, without prefigured answers. Very often, teleological dialogue is considered a best practice in educational settings, as demonstrated in the famous conversation, described by Plato, between Socrates and the slave about the solution of a mathematical problem. Socrates directs the slave to the one and only correct answer, by cleverly asking him skilful questions. In doing so, he frees the slave from 'false consciousness', and helps him to find the solution that was hidden inside his inner self. The above-mentioned imagined 'dialogue' between Professor Vermeersch[4] and the young Muslims is an example of such dialogue 'with an agenda'. In the continuation of the same conversation, the professor suggests how a dialogical approach will eventually result into the enlightenment of Muslims who, in his view, have been indoctrinated by their educators. He continues:

> However I think it is always painful to put the burden on these girls' shoulders. What these girls do is what they think they should do. When I went to mass every day and did the Stations of the Cross, I did so because I thought God asked me to do so. Also these girls do this for similar reasons. Yet, they don't realize that they have been indoctrinated. Therefore, it is the ones who indoctrinate who have to change their opinions. The enlightenment should come from the inside. We cannot impose it upon them. We can only invite them and say: "consider this; look at where we should go". So, it is basically a dialogue we need. (De Ceulaer, 2005, p. 86)

So, Professor Vermeersch suggests that the answer to the tensions resulting from differences between cultures and traditions is to be found in a dialogical approach. However, the dialogue he envisages has a particular direction. He apparently knows what the outcome of the conversation between cultures and religions should be. He suggests that the dialogue will help the young women to learn to identify with the principles of the Enlightenment, which they have already inside themselves, but which they are not aware of. He is convinced that, when this dialogical method is adequately practised, Muslims will follow the path from darkness to light, and thereby learn to act as *responsible citizens* who identify with the new community in which they now live. An important condition, in Vermeersch's view, is that they are prepared to open up to the conversation and reconsider their previous beliefs. On this logic, the teacher has no need to consider or reconsider his or her own values in the

conversation, because he has already followed the road to enlightenment. He need not feel any need to put him- or herself at risk in the dialogical encounter. The risk is entirely on the side of the ones who are supposed to be 'taught a lesson'. In times when conflicts between 'settled' citizens and newcomers are heated – as is the case today – feelings of existential unease often intensify. The dialogical approach then tends to be neglected and is replaced by what Biesta calls a pedagogy of instruction. Such was the case shortly after the 'Sylvester night' in Cologne, when the Belgian minister responsible for asylum and migration suggested that all newcomers in centres for asylum seekers now should be taught a lesson about our western values and norms, in particular about gender equality and sexual behaviour. Such a call shows how easily the pedagogy *of* the public can be substituted by a pedagogy *for* the public which, in Biesta's view, 'runs the risk of erasing the very plurality that is the condition of forms of togetherness in which freedom can appear' (2012, p. 692).

From dialogue to the articulation of dissensus

These 'forms of togetherness where freedom can appear' reflect the third type of pedagogy, described by Biesta as 'a pedagogy of interruption'. In a pedagogy-of-interruption the educational agent is neither an instructor, nor a facilitator of learning, but someone who interrupts what is taken for granted. In doing so, s/he creates a moment of dissensus. In this perspective dissensus has a particular meaning. It is not the opposition of interests or opinions in the political sense, as interpreted by Mouffe (2005). Rather it refers to the notion of the 'distribution of the sensible', a concept introduced by Jacques Rancière and adopted by Biesta. In 'Politics of Aesthetics' Rancière defines the distribution of the sensible as 'a distribution of spaces, times and forms of activity that determines the very manner in which something in common lends itself to participation and in what way various individuals have a part in this distribution' (2004, p.12). In other words, the living conditions of human beings importantly structure their senses, and therefore, how they engage with the world. In line with this, changes in their living conditions and the emergence of new subjectivities will be the result of a 'reconfiguration of the distribution of the sensible'. Such reconfiguration is, in Rancière's view, the result of dissensus, which is 'a conflict between *sense* and *sense* (…), a conflict between a sensory presentation and a way of making sense of it, or between several sensory regimes and/or 'bodies" (Rancière, 2010, p. 139). For dissensus to be effective, a disconnection from habitual practices is needed. This can be the result of an event, an experience, or an object that disturbs taken-for-granted sensitivities, thereby opening new conversational spaces. Biesta refers to this notion of dissensus to develop his ideas on 'a pedagogy of interruption'. Such a pedagogy is very much in line with the republican perspective of *citizenship-as-activity* described above, where unique individuals engage with matters of public concern, thereby transcending personal interests and developing sensitivity of their own interdependencies and their connectedness to the world around them. The pedagogy of interruption is also inspired by the notion of '*action*' developed by Hannah Arendt. In her book *The Human Condition* (1958) she defines action, as opposed to labour and work, 'by its ability to disclose the identity of the agent, that is, to actualize the agent's capacity for freedom and to endow his or her existence with meaning' (Passerin d'Entrèves, 1998, p. 318). Activities of labour and work can be performed individually, even in isolation. Action however, is not an individual activity. It essentially takes place *between* human beings.

Todd (2011), also inspired by Arendt, helps to clarify what such citizenship-as-activity, including a pedagogy of interruption, could mean – at the same time questioning mainstream policy views on 'how to deal with cultural diversity' in multicultural societies. She notices that in these mainstream policy views educational dialogue, as I have noticed above, is often conceived as a way of smoothening the tensions brought about by cultural differences in order to achieve consensus. 'Dialogue is positioned as the necessary tool for remedying the competing worldviews, beliefs, knowledges, and positions to which cultural differences give rise' (p. 103). Following Arendt, Todd argues that what characterises democratic practices is the human condition of plurality and hence, that the articulation of plurality through dissensus – not consensus – is how 'dealing with diversity' could/should be conceived. 'Focusing on democratic plurality (…) involves creating spaces where the uniqueness and asymmetrical reciprocity of narrative are put into sharper relief. One way this can occur is to move away from the project of dialogue – both because it reduces the individual to social attributes and because it denies the presence of uniqueness' (ibid., p. 110). In this view, the uniqueness of subjects is the result of the possibility of articulating difference rather than accommodating to a pre-given or attributed identity. Dissensus, through moments of disturbance or disjunction, creates opportunities to develop a personal, unique stance vis-à-vis matters of public concern. Therefore, 'conflict is not simply about conflicting cultures, clashing civilizations or competing worldviews; it is, rather, about each one's own efforts to narrate oneself in relation to others beyond the cemented border of cultural identity' (ibid., p. 111).

At a recent event in the context of voluntary work with asylum-seekers in my own village in Flanders, I experienced personally how such 'efforts to narrate oneself' can open unexpected spaces of conversation. In that concrete case, the conventional relationship between teacher and participants was disturbed, and even reversed, on the initiative of one of the participants at a conversation table for asylum seekers. I started a series of these conversation tables as a member of a group of volunteers who support a communal 'Lokaal Opvang Initiatief' (Local Reception Initiative). In that context I organise weekly meetings with 5 to 6 asylum seekers in my village, thereby creating opportunities for them to learn the Dutch language and to get acquainted with our local culture. One particular night it appeared to be impossible to engage fully in the language exercises I (together with a co-volunteer) had prepared. My plans were interrupted by one of the participants who absolutely wanted to tell his story about the place where he used to live before he fled to Belgium. On the 12 November 2015, one day before the assaults on the Bataclan in Paris, two suicide bombers killed 37 people in the Palestinian refugee camp in Bourj el-Baranjeh near Beirut (Lebanon). Another 180 people were injured. One man, a father of three children, threw himself on the second terrorist, thereby avoiding more killings and injuries, at the cost of his own life. The western media hardly reported this event. Together with other participants, we looked for pictures of that camp on the internet. The images we found showed the terrible living conditions in the camp. Wikipedia informed us about the annual casualties that result from electrocution and collapsing buildings. The participant further explained how the camp is ruled by mafia gangs, and how, due to the war in neighbouring Syria, thousands of Syrian refugees were currently arriving in the already overcrowded community.

The Dutch conversation which I planned was interrupted by one of the participants who told his story about the terrible conditions he had left behind. In doing so, he created some sort of dissensus. For him, a conversation about the language and culture of the host country

could only make sense, if we also understood something of the language, the culture and the horrible conditions of the place where he came from. Such experience is not uncommon in adult education classes, and particularly in classes with newcomers. Many 'facilitators' in reception centres, in centres for basic education, in integration courses, have similar experiences. The participants want to learn about the place where they have eventually arrived, about the language and the culture and about their chances of getting integrated. Yet they also want to tell about the places they come from, about their own languages and cultures, and about their hopes of starting a new life. Such educative moments for asylum seekers are not one-directional actions, whereby the 'master' teaches how the participants are expected to behave, what the values and norms of the host community are, and how they are supposed to accommodate themselves to these. It is a multi-directional experience creating opportunities for both participants and facilitators to articulate their own, unique voices, often at unexpected moments when the taken-for-granted rituals of how to relate to one other are somehow interrupted. Such interruption can come from both sides. In the example above, it was produced by a participant. This reminds me of what a student of mine once wrote about the relationship between adult educators and participants in integration programmes. In such programmes, it is important to stay awake and watch for the democratic moments created by participants. This would mean that 'rather than the adult educator controlling the attention of the newcomer, the reverse should happen: the newcomer ascertains that the attention of the adult educator doesn't faint, that s/he doesn't fall asleep, that s/he doesn't appropriate the truth, thereby disabling a counter-translation' (Van den Brande, 2004, p. 130, translation DW).

Conclusion

I am worried about the hurried pleas for an education for newcomers, which are inspired by a kind of pedagogy *for* the public, meaning that the sole aim of such pedagogy is to accommodate the newcomers to our principal values and norms. I am also worried about integration practices, presenting themselves as a pedagogy *of* the public, that instrumentalise dialogue with the aim of accommodating newcomers to what we consider universal values and norms. These are practices that, as a response to the affective ambivalence described above, try to re-establish ontological security in times of increased instability. However, newcomers inevitably also 'impinge upon us'. In these circumstances, we can either draw back into the security of our common sense, or meet the challenge by reconsidering our taken-for-granted assumptions of who we are, how we organise ourselves and how we relate to other ethnicities, communities, and nations. In his book on *Ethics and Education for Adults*, Peter Jarvis, inspired by Levinas, argues that the only value that is universally valid with regard to educational practices, is the value of 'caring for the Other'. The argument that runs through his book is

> that there is one universal value – being concerned for the Other – and that ethics begins when the Other impinges on my spontaneity. By contrast, there are a number of cultural values – some are non-moral goods whilst others are moral goods. We are beginning to see the dominance of cultural goods – both moral and non-moral – over he universal moral good. Indeed, there are now forms of education where the universal value has almost totally been eradicated from the learning process – the amorality of learning within an advanced capitalist system is becoming the order of the day. (Jarvis, 1997, p. 174)

In his conclusion, Jarvis is quite pessimistic about the possibilities for education maintaining an ethics inspired by 'caring for the Other'. And indeed, it cannot be denied that today our societies, having experienced relative prosperity and peace for several decades, are now under many pressures: economic, migration, cultural. Such pressures tend to call for educational practices that create order, that make people accommodate to the urgent demands of an unpredictable economic system, that help to achieve or restore social cohesion and consensus. However, if we take the moral duty of 'caring for the Other' seriously, such instrumentalising approaches to education in general – and citizenship education in particular – cannot be our aim. I have explored in this contribution what a non-instrumentalising approach to citizenship education for and with newcomers can mean. The initial question was: 'how can we conceive of relevant citizenship education practices for and with newcomers?' The answer I have developed is multi-layered. Inevitably aspects relating to citizenship-as-status should be part of the programme. And this requires, to a certain extent, what Biesta describes as a pedagogy *for* the public. Various authors suggest that citizenship-as-status in our context should be inspired by the liberal-democratic values of freedom, equality and solidarity. They even describe these values as universal. No doubt, these values are important, since they form the constitutional base of our western democracies. However, when it comes to more concrete social norms, diverse opinions are inevitable. They produce much disagreement and conflicts in our societies. Different scholars and policy-makers suggest how we can deal with such diversity through dialogue, in order to overcome such conflicts and disagreements and achieve consensus and agreement. However, such teleological forms of dialogue often implicitly aim at one-sided identification with the mainstream moral standards in our societies. In such cases, pedagogy *of* the public produces a form of citizenship-as-identity. In response to this, the notion of dissensus in educational practices was explored. Dissensus inspires a pedagogy-of-interruption which creates opportunities for unique individuals to articulate difference, rather than to accommodate to a pre-given identity. In line with this, I consider education for responsible citizenship as opening spaces for conversation, carefully navigating between a sense of urgency caused by the challenges of our superdiverse society, and the need for moments of interruption in this urgency, creating space and time for unique individuals to cautiously and attentively articulate their 'concerns for the Other'.

Notes

1. This reference has already been mentioned in: Kurantowicz, Olesen, and Wildemeersch (2014).
2. Interview with Jürgen Habermas in 'Die Zeit', 7 July 2016, pp. 37–38.
3. Grote Vragen: Kunnen wij leven met elkaar? Canvas, 12 December 2004.
4. Professor Vermeersch was a prominent member of the commission (mentioned above) installed by the Flemish government to inspire the societal orientation course.

Disclosure statement

Notes on contributor

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