
Studier i Pædagogisk Filosofi

Årg. 4 Nr. 1 2015

Critical Thinking

Pædagogisk Filosofisk Forening

Studier i Pædagogisk Filosofi

Studier i pædagogisk filosofi er et elektronisk online, open access og peer-reviewed tidsskrift, der publicerer artikler inden for den pædagogisk filosofiske tradition i bred forstand. Artiklerne spænder fra klassiske filosofiske undersøgelser af fundamentale emner i relation til det pædagogiske felt til detaljerede og kritiske analyser af dannelse, uddannelse, læring, undervisning etc. i et filosofisk perspektiv. *Studier i pædagogisk filosofi* sigter efter at fremme en levende og kritisk dialog mellem forskere på universiteter og lærestudier fra hele Norden. Tidsskriftet repræsenterer ikke én filosofisk eller teoretisk skole eller tradition. Tværtimod er tidsskriftets mål at fremme udveksling og samarbejde mellem filosoffer, pædagogiske filosoffer og filosofisk orienterede forskere inden for uddannelse og pædagogik i Norden. Tidsskriftet stræber derfor efter en bred nordisk spredning af artikelforfattere, fagfællebedømmere og redaktion. Tidsskriftet udgiver desuden en serie pædagogisk filosofiske monografier.

Chefredaktør

Jørgen Huggler, Aarhus Universitet, Danmark

Assisterende chefredaktør

Merete Wiberg, Aarhus Universitet, Danmark

Redaktionssekretær

Mathias Christensen, Aarhus Universitet,
Danmark

Redaktion for fagfællebedømmelse

Nanna Duchêne, University College Sjælland,
Danmark

Torill Strand, Oslo Universitet, Norge

Anmeldelsesredaktion

Merete Wiberg, Aarhus Universitet, Danmark
Ingerid S. Straume, Oslo Universitet, Norge

Redaktionspanel

Jan Bengtsson, Göteborg Universitet, Sverige
Guðmundur Heiðar Frímansson, Akureyri
Universitet, Island

Hansjörg Hohr, Oslo Universitet, Norge
Ari Kivelä, Oulu Universitet, Finland
Søren Harnow Klausen, Syddansk Universitet,
Danmark

Alexander von Oettingen, University College
Syd, Danmark

Anne-Marie Eggert Olsen, Aarhus Universitet,
Danmark

Torill Strand, Oslo Universitet, Norge

Michael Uljens, Aabo Akademi, Finland

Adresse:

Studier i Pædagogisk Filosofi /v. Jørgen Huggler
Aarhus Universitet – DPU

Tuborgvej 164

2400 København NV, Danmark

<http://ojs.statsbiblioteket.dk/index.php/spf>.

Grafisk opsætning og sats:

WERKs Grafiske Hus a|s, www.werk.dk

Kopiering sker inden for rammerne af aftaler
med Copydan.

ISSN-nummer: 22449140

© Studier i Pædagogisk Filosofi og forfatterne.

Katariina Holma

Introduction

The history of critical thinking as an educational ideal is as long as the history of Western philosophy and democracy itself. Throughout the history of Western philosophy of education, critical thinking has been linked to values such as democracy, freedom, and autonomy. Today, the notion of critical thinking is used as a buzzword in almost every educational program and ideology. However, the concept of critical thinking is losing its philosophical depth, as it is used to legitimize educational programs that have little or nothing to do with critical thinking as it is understood in the field of philosophy. The idea of this special issue is to provide philosophical analysis and discussion on this fundamental educational ideal and to connect this discussion with contemporary philosophical and empirical literature.

Inspiration for this special issue comes from the NERA 2013 Conference in Reykjavik, for which the Nordic Society for Philosophy of Education organized a pre-conference on critical thinking. Harvey Siegel, whose philosophical work on the theme is indisputably one of the most eminent in our time, had promised to speak at the pre-conference. The worst storm of the decade in Iceland canceled the meeting, but the idea of the Nordic special issue on critical thinking with Siegel's commentary survived, and here it is: three independent essays on critical thinking followed by Siegel's comments, criticisms, and concluding remarks.

All three articles relate somehow to Siegel's work, by building on it, further elaborating it, or analyzing its various dimensions. In the first essay, Guðmundur Heiðar Frímansson considers the normative nature of critical thinking, defends the reasons conception of critical thinking, and explores the nature of the reasons, by drawing on both past and contemporary philosophers. In my own essay, I investigate the nature of the "critical spirit," by discussing the psychological and moral dimensions of critical thinking. I also consider some potential criticisms of my arguments. These criticisms relate to the alleged moral neutrality of the ideal of critical thinking and the danger of "psychologism" in my interpretation of the concept. In the last essay, Juho Ritola extends the discussion to political philosophy by analyzing how contemporary empirical research challenges an ideal picture of deliberative decision making. He connects this discussion to his defense of epistemological internalism. Along the lines of the other two authors, Ritola argues that education should foster not only the skills but also the disposition of critical thinking.

Katariina Holma, University of Helsinki, Finland
E-mail: katariina.holma@helsinki.fi

Studier i Pædagogisk Filosofi | www.ojs.statsbiblioteket.dk/index.php/spf | ISSN nr. 22449140

Årgang 4 | Nr. 1 | 2015 | side 1-2

All three articles emphasize, from different angles, the normative nature of critical thinking and the importance of the character and personality of a critical thinker. From the point of view of educational research and practice, the task of fostering personalities of this kind, is far from easy. The aim of creating genuine critical thinkers calls for further philosophical and empirical research, as well as cooperation between these two research fields. I hope these four essays have demonstrated, at a minimum, that a philosophically-justified definition of critical thinking inevitably involves deep moral and psychological concerns.

Guðmundur Heiðar Frímansson

Reasons and Normativity in Critical Thinking

Abstract

The reasons conception is the most prominent account of the nature of critical thinking. It consists in responding appropriately to reasons. Responding to reasons can be following a rule, it can be making an exception to a rule. It depends on the context each time what is the appropriate response. Critical thinking is the educational cognate of rationality. Reasons are generally normative. If this is true then it is to be expected that critical thinking is normative and also rationality. It depends on our character how reasons move us. This indicates that our character must be well formed to enable us to be appropriately moved.

Keywords

Reason, reasons, normativity, critical thinking, reasons conception

Introduction

I intend to explore the reasons conception of critical thinking formulated by Harvey Siegel, describe what it amounts to, and concentrate on what it means to “be appropriately moved by reasons” as he expresses it. First, I examine the notion of reason and its relation to critical thinking. This is necessary because it is basically reason that is moved by reasons. I look at two recent theories of reasons to see how this key notion might be interpreted. It is clear from both of them that reasons are closely related to normativity and rationality. It can be argued that reasons have a fundamental logical form but they are multifarious and reason must respond to them in endlessly varied ways. I inquire into being appropriately moved by reasons and come to the conclusion that being moved appropriately by reasons is to be warranted in what we believe, feel and do. But a well-developed character including reason is necessary for the spirit of critical thinking, meaning the process of critical thinking. This article is written in the analytic Anglo-Saxon tradition analysing thought into propositions, premises and conclusions considering informal logic to be an analysis of thinking.

The Notion of Criticism

Criticism as an essential element in rational thinking has a long history. It first appears in Plato’s works, in Socrates’ questioning of received ideas in his contemporary Athens. The

Guðmundur Heiðar Frímansson, University of Akureyri, Iceland
E-mail: ghf@unak.is

Studier i Pædagogisk Filosofi | www.ojs.statsbiblioteket.dk/index.php/spf | ISSN nr. 22449140

Árgang 4 | Nr. 1 | 2015 | side 3-16

clearest instance is perhaps his *Republic*¹ in which Plato subjects his own society to sharp criticism and argues for a different understanding of justice to the one accepted at the time. Theoretical investigations do not necessarily involve social criticism, or investigations of accepted social practices. But in Plato's case he made it perfectly clear that his conclusions had the implication that accepted practices and ideas did not stand up to scrutiny.

Plato is not the only influence on the importance of the notion of criticism in critical thinking. Closer to us in time, Immanuel Kant made criticism a fundamental feature of his whole philosophical enterprise. Three of his most important works are critiques, critique of pure reason, of practical reason and of judgement. He says in his *Critique of Pure Reason* "Our age is, in especial degree, the age of criticism, and to criticism everything must submit".² To understand this statement we must remember that Kant was the major author of the German Enlightenment in the eighteenth century. The Enlightenment was an intellectual movement challenging the authority of religion, of the state, of tradition, believing that everything must be examined by reason and if it did not stand up to such an examination it should be abandoned or changed in view of the results of the investigations of human reason. Human reason must even examine itself and it does not discover its principles in books and systems but in and through the activity of the faculty of reason.³ It can be reasonably said that the Enlightenment is still a powerful influence on our understanding of thinking, critical thinking and the status of philosophy.

In the twentieth century there has been a continuous discussion of the status of critical thinking in education and its fortunes have waxed and waned.⁴

Reason and Critical Thinking

Reason and rationality have been of fundamental importance for human beings both as a capability and a source of value. Reason has been endorsed by practically all historically important philosophers of education as an aim of education.⁵ Nowadays, reason is not thought of as a faculty but as an "ability to reason well",⁶ a domain where "diversity reigns",⁷ rationality "supervenes on the mind".⁸ It is clear from these quotations that these authors do not think of reason or rationality as a faculty enabling human beings to intuit truths

1 Plato, "Republic" in *Plato. Complete Works* ed. J.M. Hackett (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1997).

2 Kant, Immanuel. *Critique of Pure Reason* (London: Macmillan, 1933/1781), A xii, 9.

3 Howard Caygill, *A Kant Dictionary* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), 138.

4 William Hare, "Content and Criticism: the Aims of Schooling," *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 29(1) (1995): 47-60.

5 Harvey Siegel, "Cultivating Reason" in *A Companion to The Philosophy of Education*, ed. Harvey Siegel, (Malden MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 305-319, 305-306.

6 Siegel, "Cultivating Reason", 306.

7 John Skorupski, *The Domain of Reasons* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 22, doi: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199587636.001.0001.

8 John Broome, *Rationality through Reasoning* (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2013), 89, doi: 10.1002/9781118609088.

directly or indirectly. It is not my intention to inquire into what these three authors mean exactly by reason and rationality but it is necessary to have some idea what it is.

The obvious question is how reason and rationality are related to critical thinking. We should expect there to be a close relation between rationality and critical thinking. There are various ways of conceiving critical thinking but to cut a long story short I think we should consider critical thinking to be the educational cognate of reason and rationality.⁹ Critical thinking has been important in education but it is not limited to that area of inquiry. Critical thinking is of importance in theoretical pursuits in general and it is a part of becoming a scientist of any sort, a learned person, or a philosopher to master the ability or capacity to think critically.

Let us look a bit closer at what critical thinking might consist in. A panel of experts investigated critical thinking for two years. The result of that investigation was that they understood “critical thinking to be purposeful, self-regulatory judgment which results in interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inference, as well as explanation of the evidential, conceptual, methodological, criteriological, or contextual considerations upon which that judgment is based”.¹⁰ These experts analysed critical thinking in terms of skills and they believed that it consisted in six distinct skills: interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference, explanation and self-regulation.¹¹

This description needs some explaining. Critical thinking is said to be judgement having an aim depending on what the thinker is engaged in and that it can direct, control and evaluate itself. Critical thinking results in interpretation, analysis, evaluation and inference. All these terms deserve detailed analysis but I will not go into it. The definition then adds that the judgement also explains the evidence upon which it is based and the key concepts and methods used. Also, it explains the criteria used and the context in which the judgement is formed. It must be said that this definition of critical thinking is complex and it is not clear how the different parts are related. It raises a number of questions. Note here that it is assumed that judgement is a cognitive ability that enables us to reach a conclusion when there is some doubt about what the conclusion should be of an argument we are examining. But this is not the only meaning of judgement. A judgement can also be a result of the operation of our cognitive ability. It seems clear from the context that the panel of experts conceived of judgement as cognitive ability and it is this ability that should lead us to the results mentioned above and explain the conditions for the operation of that ability. The panel of experts believes that critical thinking consists in a number of skills named above.

It is a part of critical thinking to aim to correct one's mistakes as mentioned above. It comes more naturally to most people to correct other people's mistakes, and critical thinking certainly attempts to do that but, more importantly, it is open to its own mistakes.

9 Harvey Siegel, *Educating Reason: Rationality, Critical Thinking and Education* (New York: Routledge, 1988), 32.

10 Peter A. Facione, *Critical Thinking: A Statement of Expert Consensus for Purposes of Educational Assessment and Instruction* (Newark Del.: American Philosophical Association, 1990) 3.

11 Facione, *Critical Thinking*, 15.

These are mistakes in forming our opinions, evaluating evidence, interpreting key concepts or coming to a conclusion about a decision or an opinion. It is more difficult to discover our own mistakes because our relations to ourselves or our opinions can be strong and complex and these opinions can be parts of our own identity and the decisions in question can issue from desires or beliefs important to us. It is also the case that most of us are sensitive to our own mistakes and are often not willing to admit to them. We often experience admitting to mistakes as a loss of dignity or status. This closeness of ourselves to ourselves often prevents us from seeing ourselves as clearly as we can often see others. This fact, if it is a fact, makes it even more important to keep an open mind about one's own mistakes.

It should be mentioned that to keep an open mind about one's own mistakes does not amount to being a wimp or changing one's mind in the blink of an eye if someone objects to what we say. It means that we are ready to consider seriously any objections or arguments against our own opinions or decisions and take them into account if we think that they are good or reject them if we think they are weak or bad. Usually this takes place in discussions with others but it is not necessary.

It is a notable feature of modern discussions of critical thinking, (see though R. Paul's views on strong and weak critical thinking¹² and Siegel's discussion of it¹³), that often it is not considered how problematic it is to examine and reject one's own opinions if they turn out to be wrong. This is a major feature of the elenchus in Plato's Socratic dialogues. In those dialogues Socrates decides to examine a belief or beliefs of his interlocutor and his method is to examine a particular belief, often a definition, see what it amounts to and find out if it is inconsistent with some other belief of his interlocutor.¹⁴ It was not Socrates' intention to demonstrate the stupidity of his interlocutors but his intention might be construed as shaming them into acknowledging their own ignorance. Socrates himself avows ignorance in these dialogues and in most of them he does not seem to teach anything in the sense of transferring to his interlocutors knowledge that they were not in possession of before, unless we want to claim that recognising their own ignorance is knowledge. But Socrates is not fully consistent in this respect because in two of the Socratic dialogues, *Meno*¹⁵ and *Crito*,¹⁶ he actually claims to teach something and to know something. Our modern conceptions of critical thinking are not limited to acknowledging ignorance and claiming not to teach anything. But accepting one's limited understanding and knowledge might well be a first step towards mastering critical thinking that examines both the beliefs of others and one's own.

12 Richard Paul, "Teaching Critical Thinking in the "Strong" Sense: A Focus on Self-Deception, World Views, and a Dialectical Mode of Analysis," *Informal Logic* 4 (1981): 2-7.

13 Siegel, *Educating Reason*, 10-13, 15-18.

14 Terence Irwin, *Plato's Moral Theory. The Early and Middle Dialogues* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 68-71; Thomas C. Brickhouse, and Nicholas D. Smith "Socratic Teaching and Socratic Method" in *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Education* ed. Harvey Siegel (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 177-194, 181-186.

15 Plato, "Meno", in *Plato. Complete Works* ed. J.M. Hackett (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1997).

16 Plato, "Crito", in *Plato. Complete Works* ed. J.M. Hackett (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1997).

Matthew Lipman says, when discussing critical thinking, "...we want students who can do more than merely think, it is equally important that they exercise good judgement".¹⁷ Good judgement in this context is the ability to discern important features of any circumstance we happen to be in.

It should not be surprising that critical thinking, reason and rationality turn out to be polymorphous. One might be tempted to construe critical thinking as something radically different from reason and rationality. This would be a mistake. It may reasonably be said that critical thinking is either the educational cognate of reason and rationality, meaning they are coextensive, or that critical thinking is a constituent part of reason but does not coincide with it. Either way it indicates that reason and rationality are complex and we should expect descriptions of them and their justifications to be multifarious.

Now I want to turn to a conception of critical thinking that is more complex than the one I have discussed. It is the "reasons conception".

The Reasons Conception

The originator of the reasons conception is Harvey Siegel.¹⁸ We should keep in mind the distinction between reason and reasons. Reason consists in thinking rationally and reasons are claims on reason that it has to take into account in its reflections.

The basic idea is that "to be a critical thinker is to be appropriately moved by reasons."¹⁹ This is identical to being a rational person; she believes and acts on the basis of reasons. Critical thinking should be conceived of as the educational cognate of rationality. A critical thinker appreciates and understands the importance and force of reasons to support a conclusion and, hopefully, to convince. Reasons typically justify the belief in question or the decision but they can also justify rejecting the belief or decision. Reasons can be of various sorts, they can be appropriate for acting as a teacher, engineer or some other kind of professional and in that case they would be general. But reasons can also be particular, only applicable to the situation in question or the person the belief is about or desire aims at. If you are a parent or a lover then your reasons for the decisions you take are not or need not, some might argue must not, be based on general rules. It can be inappropriate to be moved by general reasons when you are in the position of a parent; you do something for your own child that you would not be prepared to do for any other child. It is part of the meaning of loving your child or your partner that their interests are naturally your reasons for believing or acting. A general rule seems to be misplaced in this context as a justification.

17 Lipman, Matthew. "Critical Thinking-What Can It Be?," *Educational Leadership* 46 (1988): 38-43, 43.

18 Siegel, *Educating Reason*.

19 Siegel, *Educating Reason*, 32.

Siegel argues that there are two components of critical thinking as he sees it. The first is a reason assessment component, the second a critical spirit.²⁰ The first is an ability to evaluate reasons and their tendency to warrant beliefs and actions. This implies that the critical thinker must possess, understand and be able to use principles governing the tendency of reasons. She must, in other words, be rational.

These principles are of two types. They are subject specific and subject neutral. The subject specific principles are those principles that only apply to a particular context. Typical such principles are those that only apply to works of art and not to, say, morality or natural objects. These might be principles about the interpretation of novels or historical documents or electrical engineering. Principles or sensitivities mentioned above enabling you to understand other people, especially those close to you, are subject specific in the sense of applying to a particular human being or beings. Subject neutral principles are principles that apply to all contexts or to a wide variety of contexts. These are the principles that are usually called logical in a wide sense including both formal and informal logical principles. These are for example principles about logical fallacies, about inductive and deductive inference.

We might want to inquire if either type of principles is more basic than the other in regard to critical thinking. Siegel argues that both are necessary for critical thinking and one is in no sense basic to the other nor is there any empirical evidence to suggest that one of them is basic to the other.²¹ The skills associated with either sort of principles are not more fundamental than the skills associated with the other type. The skills involved in caring for somebody are certainly important for your life to go well because your personal relations depend on them: If you do not have them it is very difficult if not downright impossible to form normal relations with other people, to have other people as friends or lovers. The same point applies to the logical skills. If you do not know how to detect a fallacy it is easy to fool you, to convince you of something that does not stand up to scrutiny. In the context of using your professional or theoretical judgement then these general, subject-neutral skills are important for your professional life to go well. If you do not have a well-developed sensitivity to fallacious reasoning and a sharp eye for valid deductions or inductions then your professional life does not become impossible but it can become very difficult.

It seems probable to say that both of these types of principles are necessary and that one type validates and reinforces the other. In the context of personal relations it is sometimes true that this particular principle applies and it does not apply to anybody else in the same context. But to be able to say that we have to understand the concepts included in the sentence and to be able to do that we must understand the general principles these concepts imply. These general principles enable us to give reasons for particular statements, explain what we are doing and why. If, on the other hand, we do not have the sensitivity or the judgement to assess the context, see what is relevant and what is not, we would not be

20 Siegel, *Educating Reason*, 34-42.

21 Siegel, *Educating Reason*, 35.

able to apply the general principles or concepts in the situation we are in. This is what I take it to mean to be “appropriately moved by reasons” that is the key notion in Siegel’s theory of critical thinking. It is impossible to be appropriately moved by reasons unless we are both in possession of general principles and particular sensitivities. “A critical thinker is a person who can act, assess claims, and make judgements on the basis of reasons, and who understands and conforms to principles governing the evaluation of the force of those reasons.”²²

But, as was mentioned before, there is another part of critical thinking that needs to be fleshed out to get the full picture of what it is for a critical thinker to be appropriately moved by reasons. It is what Siegel calls the critical spirit. The critical spirit is the attitudes necessary for the critical thinker to act in a manner suited to support and express critical thinking. The critical spirit is the tendency or disposition to engage in critical thinking, to assess reasons with a view to ask relevant questions about them, to clarify them and see what they come to after having analysed them and understood them. The critical spirit is a critical attitude expressed in the way a thinker conducts her inquiry of anything she is interested in or that is important to her.²³ It is not sufficient that an agent or a thinker sometimes approaches her subjects in a critical way but she must do it regularly and it should come to her naturally; critical thinking cannot be a special posture for a critical thinker but must be a natural way of acting. This implies that the critical thinker must have a certain character. Having a character is to behave regularly in a certain way, in this context to engage in critically examining a question occupying your attention, finding an answer that suffices critical standards. The critical thinker must in all circumstances where it is appropriate be willing to use critical thinking.

This account of the spirit of critical thinking implies that it is not just a cognitive matter but also an emotional one, directly involving our feelings and emotions. Forming a character is impossible unless emotions are directly taken into account if Aristotle’s claim that emotions are non-expendable is true and I see no reason to doubt it.²⁴ It is certainly logically possible to conceive of a person who is cognitively committed to critical thinking and regularly thinks critically but her emotions are either not involved or work directly against her engagement. Of such a person we would say that her heart was not in critical thinking and she would engage in constant struggle with her feelings when thinking critically. We would hesitate to call her a critical thinker if we had all the relevant knowledge about her state of mind. It is clear that she does not have the character necessary for expressing the critical spirit.

There is another aspect to Siegel’s argument that should not be forgotten. He is thinking about education and how critical thinking fits in with the aims and methods in education. He says that critical thinking is the educational cognate of rationality, as has been mentioned earlier. Rationality is such a fundamental feature of human existence that it

22 Siegel, *Educating Reason*, 38.

23 Siegel, *Educating Reason*, 39-42.

24 Kristján Kristjánsson, *Aristotle, Emotion, and Education* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2007), 53-54, 64-65.

cannot be limited to education. It seems to me that what Siegel says about critical thinking should not be taken to be limited to education and that critical thinking only has a special place there. Critical thinking is not only important in education; it is fundamental to any theoretical pursuit if it is to be successful and in our modern society, with its increasing emphasis on continuous learning and development, on thinking of institutions as learning institutions and even of the whole of society as a learning society, the importance of critical thinking both grows and it becomes relevant to more issues than before. In democracies critical thinking is a *sine qua non* for the citizens if they are to function as citizens are supposed to do, making up their own minds, evaluating the points of view presented by the political parties that offer them their general ideological leanings and organisational power to put their ideas into practice. Citizens may also want to take part in general discussions, argue for their convictions and influence, even persuade others. Some are ready to put themselves forward as candidates either on their own or as a part of a larger group making up a political party. Taking part in politics can certainly limit how you can use your critical thinking in public because you are committed to follow the party line. But thinking critically is important for the candidate in arguing her case with her fellow candidates and in putting her ideas for the public. I think it would be impossible in the present political climate to expect that political candidates engaged in self-examination of the sort mentioned earlier and that they admitted to mistakes and changed their opinions as a result of debates with their political opponents in a democratic dialogue. I take it that democratic political dialogues are not meant to change the attitudes or opinions of the participants but of the listeners, they should clarify the issues for the citizens so they can reasonably make up their own minds with the help of their own critical thinking.

So to be appropriately moved by reasons includes assessing the reasons both as general principles and as applied to the situation of the agent in question. It also includes the will or desire of the agent to engage in critical thinking, her regular inclination to apply critical thinking to any question she is dealing with at that moment in time. The question that needs to be asked now is what reasons are and how they really move us appropriately. In analysing reasons it is necessary to say something about normativity. But first I shall say something about reasons.

Reasons

Reasons are complex things and they come in various forms. I have mentioned two kinds of reasons from Siegel's text, subject-neutral reasons and subject specific. Both types of reasons are necessary for critical thinkers to be able to intend their actions, perform them and to reasonably form their beliefs and act on them. But there are also reasons that are agent-neutral and agent-relative.²⁵ Agent-neutral reasons apply to all agents; if somebody is

25 Derek Parfit, *Reasons and Persons* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 143.

in dire need her lot is a reason for everyone who could help her out. A relative reason is a reason for a particular agent but not for another one but it could be a reason for another agent if she were in a different situation. Subject-neutral reasons are reasons that apply to many types of objects, maybe all, like logical laws. But subject specific reasons apply to a specific area or to particular human beings. The distinction between agent-neutral and agent-relative reasons is not the same distinction as the one between subject specific and subject-neutral.

Until recently the status and nature of reasons in relation to reason, rationality and critical thinking had not been subjected to close theoretical scrutiny. Siegel's exploration of the reasons conception of critical thinking is ground-breaking even though it does not answer all possible questions.²⁶ His main concern in clarifying this conception is that the critical thinker should be able to assess "...reasons and their ability to warrant beliefs, claims and actions properly."²⁷ This is fine as far as it goes but it seems clear that reasons come in more guises than these and on the basis of the theory itself we should expect reasons to apply to more spheres of human life than indicated in the discussion above.

John Skorupski argues that there are three types of reason: epistemic, practical and evaluative.²⁸ Epistemic reasons are reasons to believe something, practical are reasons to do something and evaluative are reasons to feel something. He believes this trichotomy of reasons is irreducible and exhaustive. "In all three cases, the epistemic, practical, and evaluative, *being a reason* is a relation-between facts, persons, beliefs, actions or feelings."²⁹ This constitutes what he calls the R-predicate. So these three types of reasons constitute one basic R-predicate. There are two types of R-predicates that have to be taken into account: specific reasons and overall reasons. There is a third predicate that he calls S for sufficient reasons. Specific reasons are reasons of degree for a person at a particular time. When figuring out overall reasons we take into account all the specific reasons we have found and try to evaluate how strong our reason for believing or doing something is, everything considered. A sufficient reason for an action or a belief is a reason strong enough to guarantee the conclusion and it is not reasonable to seriously entertain doubts about it. If a reason is deemed sufficient to warrant a conclusion this does not mean that it could not be false or that it could not not logically follow from the premises but the agent in question assesses the reason strong enough to justify describing it as sufficient. It is not necessary for us here to go into the logical relations between these three R and S-predicates.³⁰

The idea in Skorupski's philosophical exploration is that reasons are basic both for rationality and for normativity. He says "...that the concept of a reason is the fundamental normative concept".³¹ He points out that the three R and S-predicates he identifies can be

26 Siegel, *Educating Reason*, 32-47.

27 Siegel, *Educating Reason*, 38.

28 Skorupski, *The Domain*, 35-37.

29 Skorupski, *The Domain*, 36.

30 Skorupski, *The Domain*, 37-41.

31 Skorupski, *The Domain*, 77.

considered as the fundamental normative concepts.³² He argues that normativity is not reducible to natural facts and that the reasons relation is a much clearer account of the relations between the natural and the normative than supervenience.

This is an ambitious theory about reasons and reasons relations. It argues that reasons relations are fundamental to our rationality and that the sphere or domain of reasons is the sphere of rationality. Reasons are essentially normative; they would not be reasons for us if they were not normative. This means that there is a close connection between normativity and rationality. This theory of reasons gives us an account of the basis of rationality, reasons being the constituent element of rationality. The scope of this theory coincides to a large extent with the reasons conception of critical thinking assuming that critical thinking is the educational cognate of rationality. To be appropriately moved by reasons is to be moved to believe, to act or to feel for the right reasons.

Normativity

Before going further we need to examine the concept of normativity which appeared in the last two paragraphs. The normative is distinguished from the descriptive in ordinary speech when we state that it is not the same to say “you ought to do x” and “you do/will do x”. In using “ought” we enter the sphere of the normative and it includes words like “good” and “bad” and “should.”³³ Skorupski believes that the three fundamental relations he identifies with the normative can be treated as “the fundamental normative concepts”³⁴ while at the same time accepting that the normative “vocabulary ...is diverse and wide”. He argues that the Reasons thesis, i.e. “that the concept of a reason is the fundamental normative concept” should be seen as a conjecture because it is impossible to investigate all normative concepts in detail.³⁵

John Broome approaches reasons differently from Skorupski.³⁶ He starts by analysing “ought” as a basic term for understanding reasons. Ought can be non-normative as in saying that the word mouse ought to be mouses in the plural. It is truly normative in sentences like “you ought to do your homework’ or ‘you ought to tell the truth”. It may appear that it is impossible to distinguish clearly normative and non-normative uses of ought in various different contexts but Broome³⁷ argues that “there is no continuity, and there is a sharp boundary.” He says that his examples that might appear to contradict this are ambiguous rather than borderline cases. But like Skorupski reasons are for him fundamental to understanding the normative realm.

32 Skorupski, *The Domain*, 77.

33 Skorupski, *The Domain*, 1.

34 Skorupski, *The Domain*, 77.

35 Skorupski, *The Domain*, 77.

36 Broome, *Rationality*.

37 Broome, *Rationality*, 10.

Broome does not give us an exhaustive categorisation of all possible reasons but distinguishes between two different kinds of them and leaves it open if there are other kinds.³⁸ One type is what he calls *pro toto* reasons, the other is *pro tanto* reasons. *Pro toto* reasons are explanations of deontic facts. A deontic fact is a fact that N ought to p. Examples of deontic facts are that Linda ought to keep her promises, John ought to tell the truth and Sarah ought to know how to behave at classical concerts. Deontic facts are normative but the reasons for or explanations of deontic facts need not be normative. *Pro tanto* reasons are some things that count in favour of F, acting or believing something, or against F. They are typically things which play a role in weighing different factors in an explanation of why an agent ought to F.³⁹

Rationality or critical thinking is essentially involved with reasons and their assessment. The domain of reasons is the domain of the normative. This follows from what has already been said about reasons. It seems to me to follow from this that rationality is essentially normative. It is not just involved with normativity but rationality also seems to be one source of normativity along with prudence and morality. Broome suggests that we should think of rationality as a source for normativity in a similar sense to morality and prudence. We can see it in examples of contradictory beliefs. If we discover contradictory beliefs in ourselves it is impossible for us to hold two contradictory beliefs at the same time and be rational. It is certainly possible to hold contradictory beliefs unconsciously or consciously. But it is not possible to claim that we are rational in consciously doing so. Why is that? It is because both cannot be true and if we state that we believe something to be true that we know is false then our rationality is at fault. In his questioning Socrates tried to discover contradictions in his interlocutors' beliefs in order to refute them. The premise was that contradictions cannot be taken seriously in a rational agent. Admitting that your beliefs were contradictory was supposed to open the way for more coherent and hence rational beliefs. The interlocutor may not have realised that her beliefs were contradictory and was hence unaware of it. There is nothing wrong with holding contradictory beliefs unconsciously but as soon as the contradiction is pointed out it is obvious that the interlocutor is irrational if she is not prepared to correct one of her contradictory beliefs. Rationality is a source of normativity in this sense that you ought to correct your beliefs if they are contradictory. This does not seem to be limited to contradictory beliefs but can be applied to any belief, desire, intention or decision that we can justifiably call rational. It would need spelling out in detail but there is no need to do that here.

Broome explores the connection between rationality and normativity.⁴⁰ We might want to ask why we believe that we should respond to reasons. The answer we might give could be that rationality consists in responding to reasons because reason is a source of normativity. I think Broome might accept this but he examines if rationality could consist

38 Broome, *Rationality*, 62.

39 Broome, *Rationality*, 53.

40 Broome, *Rationality*, ch. 11.

in responding correctly to reasons. He rejects this idea. I do not think we should worry about the details of his arguments but ask ourselves if that rejection has the logical consequence that we should reject the idea that rationality or critical thinking consists in being appropriately moved by reasons. The first thing to notice is that the reasons conception says that rationality or critical thinking consists in being appropriately moved by reasons. It does not say that it consists in being correctly moved by reasons. Being correctly moved seems to imply that there is one correct way to respond to reasons. Being appropriately moved has no such implication. These two ways of describing the relation between reason and reasons are not logically equivalent. So we can reject the idea that Broome's argument denying the idea that rationality consists in responding correctly to reason has the conclusion that we should reject the reasons conception.

Rationality and morality carry their own rewards in the sense that it seems to be impossible not to give a moral reason for being moral and not give a rational reason for being rational. You might want to say that here we hit the limits of rationality and we only had the option of being irrational in persuading our interlocutor and that it can sometimes be rational to be irrational as Siegel puts it.⁴¹ Or we might try to make our interlocutor care about our idea or explanation.⁴² Or we might use still other methods like diplomacy, mediation, disruption or interest group politics.⁴³ The problem with all these other methods to persuade our interlocutor is that they are not conducted along lines that are necessarily rational. Sometimes it might be rational to use them but their special characteristics are not parts of rationality. They are power based, terror based or love based or whatever. It seems part and parcel of being moral and being rational that the reasons we act on or base our beliefs on must be moral and rational. This seems to me one consideration for saying that rationality and morality are sources of normativity.

How Do Reasons Move Us Appropriately?

When moving in the realm of reasons we must ask how reasons actually move us appropriately. One answer might be that they connect up with our desires, either our actual desires or desires that we would have if we were fully rational. This answer is problematic because the former option implies that we should be able to capture normativity and hence rationality in terms of our actual desires. This is implausible both because the actual desires people have vary and because some people might have irrational desires or immoral ones. There is no way that this account could capture normativity and rationality and demonstrate how reasons move us appropriately. What about the second option? This says that the desires we would have if we were fully rational would move us appropriately. But this

41 Siegel, *Educating Reason*, 133.

42 Harvey Siegel, *Rationality Redeemed? Further Dialogues on an Educational Ideal* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 186.

43 Emily Robertson, "The Value of Reason: Why not a Sardine Can Opener?" in *Philosophy of Education 1999*, ed. Randall Curren (Urbana, IL: Philosophy of Education Society, 2000), 1-14.

way of demonstrating being moved appropriately by reasons assumes rationality as a condition for the desires we have. This has the logical consequence that we explain what it is to be moved appropriately by assuming rationality. But the idea is that being moved appropriately by reasons constitutes reason or rationality. We cannot explain reason by reason.

Another answer to how reasons might move us appropriately is to say that we are moved by the reasons we have. But what does that mean? It means that a reason for an agent to do, believe or feel something is a fact that rationally requires the agent to count that fact in favour of doing, believing or feeling something. It seems that we should say that being appropriately moved by reasons consists in rationality getting a grip on the agent and the agent treating this something as a reason.⁴⁴ The important part here is that rationality is assumed to be a feature of the agent, we might say that it “supervenes on the agent’s mind.”⁴⁵ Treating something as a reason is a necessary condition of being appropriately moved by reasons. But we need something more, something that elucidates this idea. One suggestion might be that when we are warranted in seeing something as a reason for or against believing, feeling or acting, we are appropriately moved. Skorupski⁴⁶ defines warrant as sufficient reason for acting, believing or feeling something. But warrant can come in two ways; it can be a reason that we can in principle know by careful reflection or it can be a reason that we have but do not know and cannot know by reflection alone. Even though Skorupski argues that reasons have three basic logical forms he accepts that reasons can vary enormously and we respond to them in multifarious ways. If we are warranted in responding to reasons we act, believe and feel rationally. This account explains being appropriately moved by reasons as being rationally moved by reasons. This coheres well with what Siegel says about being appropriately moved by reasons.

There is more to rationality and critical thinking than responding to reasons. We also need “the critical spirit”, meaning general attitudes and dispositions making us sensitive to evaluative aspects of critical thinking. It has been argued that the critical spirit is a necessary feature of critical thinking and the character traits specified. But it is not critical thinking as described in terms of its propositional product that necessarily involves traits of character but the process of reaching those conclusions in question.⁴⁷ The process in question is reasoning and it is something we do, not something that happens to us. In reasoning the motivating force are reasons and their normative power. Reasons motivate us through captivating our attention, through rational curiosity, our rational passions. If we are not prepared to accept this power of reasons it does not seem to be possible for us to reason well. Rationality and normativity call for judgement and sensitivity, not for pure skills.

It is important to realise that becoming a rational agent is not something that happens naturally to human beings. It takes considerable effort by children, parents, teachers and

44 T.M. Scanlon, *Being Realistic about Reasons* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2014), 7.

45 Broome, *Rationality*, 89.

46 Skorupski, *The Domain*, 107-109.

47 Siegel, *Educating Reason*, 39-42; Siegel *Rationality Redeemed*, 55-71.

society in general to help make children rational agents. To become a rational agent is an achievement by any young person. I do not intend to discuss that process because it is complicated and takes a long time. But I want to mention one part of it that is of major importance for all human beings in becoming rational agents. It is the formation of their character. This is part of the spirit of critical thinking that Siegel has discussed.⁴⁸ I do not intend to deal with some of the objections raised to the possibility of making sense of talking about character or of thinking that character can have actual influence on agents' actions and beliefs. But character is a stable mixture of traits that govern the behaviour of persons. These traits gradually develop into virtues. The virtues are the most important moral features of each person. Rationality or reason is one of the virtues and mastering it is difficult and takes a long time. Children and adolescents need guidance, encouragement and reprimands when appropriate. If this part of their education is successful the good reasons we have for acting, believing and feeling have a better hold on the rational agent. Her judgement is more discerning of what constitutes a good reason. Achieving this development is important for the rational agent herself, for her closest relatives and for society in general.

Conclusion

I have inquired into the reasons conception of critical thinking as put forward by Harvey Siegel. First, I looked at reason and critical thinking and argued that reason is not a faculty but a way of responding to reasons, discerning what good reasons are. Then, I asked what reasons are, how they move us and how they are related to rationality and normativity. I argued that reasons are closely related to normativity and rationality, and that they are polymorphous and affect us in various ways. Even though it can be argued that they have fundamental logical forms this does not reduce their variety. The key notion of being appropriately moved by reasons seems to be best elucidated in terms of being warranted in what we believe, feel or do. But we do not get a hold on responding appropriately to reasons unless we develop a character including rationality leading to a critical spirit.

If reasons, *pro toto*, *pro tanto*, epistemic, practical or evaluative, general or subject specific, govern our beliefs, feelings and actions we must learn to assess and judge reasons well and wisely. They are our best way to truth and reality. Critical thinking seems to be the best way to learn to formulate our judgements, take into account the evidence we have and aim for truth.⁴⁹

The reasons conception of critical thinking captures well the constituent parts of critical thinking.

48 Siegel, *Educating Reason*, 39-42; Siegel, *Rationality Redeemed*, 35-36, 105.

49 Harvey Siegel, "Truth, Thinking, Testimony and Trust: Alvin Goldman on Epistemology and Education," *Philosophy and Phenomenology* 71 (2005): 345-366, 353, doi: 10.1111/j.1933-1592.2005.tb00452.x.

Katariina Holma

The Critical Spirit: Emotional and Moral Dimensions of Critical Thinking¹

Abstract

In this article, I will introduce and explore the critical spirit component of critical thinking and defend it as significant for the adequate conceptualization of critical thinking as an educational aim. The idea of critical spirit has been defended among others by such eminent supporters of critical thinking as John Dewey, Israel Scheffler, and Harvey Siegel but has not thus far been explored and analyzed sufficiently. I will argue that the critical spirit has, in addition to cognitive, also moral and emotional dimensions. Finally, I will touch upon some critiques which see that critical thinking either does not or ought not to involve moral or emotional dimensions.

Keywords

Critical thinking, critical spirit, emotional, moral, political

Introduction

This article explores the critical spirit component of critical thinking. Its starting point is the conception of critical thinking which involves *both* critical thinking skills *and* the critical spirit, opposed to the view that holds that critical thinking should be understood as only skills. My discussion is motivated by the observation that the skill view of critical thinking is gaining ground as a learning aim in higher education. For example, OECD's Assessment of Higher Education Outcomes (AHELO) understands critical thinking merely as skills.² In the philosophical literature, the critical spirit is usually taken as an inalienable part of critical thinking. However, the nature of the critical spirit is not fully explored from the perspective of the philosophy of education.

1 I am grateful to Nicholas C. Burbules and Harvey Siegel for their worthwhile comments and criticism of the earlier drafts of this paper. I thank the Kone Foundation for financial support.

2 Karine Tremblay, Diane Lalancette, and Deborah Roseveare, *Assessment of higher education learning outcomes. Feasibility study report. Volume 1 – Design and Implementation* (OECD, 2012), accessed August 11, 2013, <http://www.oecd.org/edu/skills-beyond-school/AHELOFSReportVolume1.pdf>. The narrow conception of critical thinking in the research field of higher education has been mentioned also by Hyytinen et al., see Heidi Hyytinen, Katariina Holma, Richard Shavelson, and Sari Lindblom-Ylänne, "The complex relationships between critical thinking and epistemological beliefs in the context of problem solving," *Frontline Learning Research* 6 (2014): 1-25.

Katariina Holma, University of Helsinki, Finland
E-mail: katariina.holma@helsinki.fi

Studier i Pædagogisk Filosofi | www.ojs.statsbiblioteket.dk/index.php/spf | ISSN nr. 22449140

Årgang 4 | Nr. 1 | 2015 | side 17-28

The aim of critical thinking can be found today in almost every educational program and ideology. However, the meaning of the term varies from context to context: critical thinking may refer to the ability of a workforce in leading nations toward economic growth and welfare, or it may refer to the ability of individuals in understanding and changing the oppressive structures of society. These two ideas both endorse criticality, but the political ideals that serve as their background stand in opposition to one another. For example, most European universities explicitly promote critical thinking as a learning aim, but they often appear to see critical thinking as related to “vocationalism”, that is, they seem to assume that people with critical thinking skills are better contributors to the economic growth than those who lack these skills. In contrast, when for example the literature of critical pedagogy endorses critical thinking, critical thinking is seen in terms of understanding and thus being able to change the oppressive structures of society. Thus these two approaches, although both promoting critical thinking, interpret the notion very differently. What they do share, however, is the idea that criticality is beneficial and thus worth pursuing as an educational aim. The history of this idea is at least as old as the history of Western philosophy itself; for example, Socratic dialogues exemplify the pedagogical idea of critical thinking. Throughout the history of Western philosophy of education, critical thinking has been seen as fundamental for maintaining and fostering such values as democracy, freedom, and autonomy.

One can, of course, challenge the very ideals of democracy and autonomy, or the assumption that promoting critical thinking through education is an adequate means for fostering these values. However, the possibility to concentrate particularly on the philosophical analysis of the critical spirit requires that I take certain values and presuppositions as a starting point for the discussion. The following essay subscribes to the value of the democratic way of life, and it assumes, firstly, that maintaining and developing a democratic society requires a certain kind of education, and, secondly, that critical thinking is a crucial dimension of democratic education. It also presumes, thirdly, along the lines of such philosophers as John Dewey, Israel Scheffler, and Harvey Siegel, that the educational concept of critical thinking is closely connected to the epistemological concepts of rationality and reason. Fourthly, it assumes that an adequate formulation of critical thinking as an educational ideal cannot be formulated merely by referring to the skills of critical thinking, but needs a reference to the dispositions of a critical thinker.

In the following, I will explore the nature of the critical spirit and argue that the critical spirit has, in addition to cognitive, also moral and emotional dimensions. I will then touch upon some critiques which see that critical thinking either does not or ought not to involve moral or emotional dimensions.

The Moral Nature of the Critical Spirit

The critical spirit refers to the inclination, force, and motivation to think critically; that is, it refers to the personal dimensions necessary for a critical thinker to use her skills properly. I have borrowed the term from Siegel, one of the proponents of the view of critical thinking

that involves both critical thinking skills and the dispositions. Siegel describes the critical spirit as follows: “In order to be a critical thinker, a person must have ... certain attitudes, dispositions, habits of mind, and character traits which together may be labeled the “critical attitude” or the “critical spirit.”³ The concept of the critical spirit is thus related to the idea of a critical thinker as a certain sort of person,⁴ who is not only able to think critically but really thinks critically in her everyday life. In the educational context, it is quite important that students not only have critical thinking skills, but that they adequately use these skills as well.

Bringing to bear the critical spirit on the definition of critical thinking, however, generates complexities, because this spirit is related to the moral and emotional dimensions of critical thinking. This is perhaps one reason for the aforementioned fact that there is a tendency in today’s empirical research to understand critical thinking merely in terms of skills and to bypass the role of dispositions. If I am correct in this, the problem is the same to which Scheffler refers in his language of education, when he writes that “we talk of giving pupils the ‘ability to think critically’ when what we really want is for them to acquire the habits and norms of critical thought.”⁵ According to Scheffler, the reason for the overemphasis on skills at the cost of dispositions is indeed that skills are taken to be morally neutral, whereas dispositions are always related to value-laden issues.⁶

As an example, one argument in Connie Missimer’s defense on excluding dispositions from the definition of critical thinking is that the Skill View (which defines critical thinking as involving solely skills), contrary to the Character View (which incorporates both skills and dispositions in critical thinking),⁷ “does not smuggle in moral prescriptions.”⁸ Missimer argues that the Skill View “allows for free ethical theorizing”⁹ whereas the Character View accepts certain moral values uncritically.¹⁰ However, we cannot discuss education without “smuggling in” moral concerns, and the moral neutrality of the Skill View actually makes it untenable as an educational ideal.

Educational aims cannot be morally neutral. In Scheffler’s words, “the inculcation of habits, norms, and propensities pervades all known educational practice, and such practice is not therefore merely a matter of skills.”¹¹ Education is always intentional activity, aiming to foster some abilities, dispositions, and virtues, those which are seen as valuable for moral agency and a good life. Thus educators must take the moral reasons into account in deciding the aims, contents, and methods used in educational practice. As, for example, Dewey

3 Harvey Siegel, *Educating Reason: Rationality, Critical Thinking, and Education* (New York: Routledge, 1988), 39.

4 Siegel, *Educating Reason*, 42.

5 Israel Scheffler, *The Language of Education* (Springfield, Illinois: Thomas, 1960), 98-99.

6 Scheffler *The Language of Education*, 66.

7 Connie Missimer, “Perhaps by Skill Alone,” *Informal Logic* XII.3 (1990), http://ojs.uwindsor.ca/ojs/leddy/index.php/informal_logic/article/view/2610/2051.

8 Missimer, “Perhaps by Skill Alone,” 145.

9 *Ibid.*, 145.

10 *Ibid.*, 151.

11 Scheffler, *The Language of Education*, 99.

and Scheffler have both pointed out, the importance of fostering a student's critical ability derives from the aim of giving that student the capacity needed for a good life, both on the personal and societal levels.¹² Along the same lines Siegel argues that teaching critical thinking is morally obligatory because it follows the Kantian principle of respect for persons.¹³ Furthermore, the ideal of critical thinking itself has moral roots, since it aims at such values as freedom of mind and a democratic way of life. Therefore, an educational ideal which is fully independent of moral concerns is patently impossible.

This does not, however, "entail an uncritical acceptance of those morals," to address Missimer's criticism of the Character View of critical thinking. In contrast, as I will next argue, an adequate definition of critical thinking indeed "smuggles in" at least the epistemic value of truth and the ethical value of the respect for persons. The main reason for this is that, otherwise, any kind of criticism towards anything, if skillfully put and formulated by following adequate rules, can be taken as an example of critical thinking.

The ideal of critical thinking presupposes the epistemic value of truth. This claim does not imply any naïve version of realism necessitating that we are able to confirm our beliefs by comparing them directly with the facts existing independently of humans. It implies only the commitment to the semantic account of truth, stating, to put it simply, that the word "truth" means that the true sentence, description, or theory, holds up. There is no necessity of being able to compare any particular statement, description, or theory to "reality" or other alleged source of verification to say that the word "truth" refers to correctness, accuracy, and tenability in our language. Critical thinking pursues truth in the sense that it does not pursue fallacies, lies, or illusions. This does not imply that some final truths can be reached, but it does imply that the concept of critical thinking is fundamentally linked to the concept of truth.¹⁴

The commitment to the ideal of truth also has a moral dimension. It is easy to imagine the situation where it would be much more comfortable not to think critically or try to find out the truth, although thinking critically would be the morally right action. There are many situations in our everyday life where it would be easier to believe in authorities, salesmen, or other sources of unreliable information, but where moral reasons require us to aim for the truth instead. The decision to investigate ecocides, or violations of human rights, which take place in the production of one's everyday consumer products, and change one's consumer habits on the basis of this information, exemplifies the moral nature of the pursuit of truth.

12 See also Siegel, "Educating Reason: Critical Thinking, Informal logic, and the Philosophy of Education. Part Two: Philosophical Questions Underlying Education for Critical Thinking," *Informal Logic* V11.2&3 (1985): 71, http://ojs.uwindsor.ca/ojs/leddy/index.php/informal_logic/article/view/2706

13 Siegel, "Educating Reason," 71.

14 On the interconnections of the notions of rationality, objectivity, and truth, see Israel Scheffler, *Science and Subjectivity* (Indianapolis, Indiana: Hackett Publishing Company, 1982, 2nd ed.), and on the relationship of these with the possibility of justifying moral education, see Katariina Holma, "The Epistemological Conditions of Moral Education: The Notions of Rationality and Objectivity Revisited," *Educational Theory* 61:5 (2011): 543-547, doi: 10.1111/j.1741-5446.2011.00419.x.

The respect for persons as an ideal inherent in critical thinking differs from the ideal of truth in the sense that the respect for persons is not a conceptual necessity for an adequate definition of critical thinking. Furthermore, as Siegel states, the respect for persons as a moral requirement is “independent of any specific educational aim.”¹⁵ There are, however, many ways in which this ideal is connected to critical thinking. Siegel has argued that respecting and encouraging students’ independent judgment and the moral requirement of being honest with students both exemplify how the educational ideal of critical thinking is compatible with the moral requirement of respect for persons.¹⁶

In my view, critical thinking as an educational ideal necessitates the commitment to respect for persons also in the sense that this moral ideal should be presented to students as a criterion of thinking critically on moral and political issues. Is my claim, now, guilty of the “uncritical acceptance” of moral principles that Missimer accuses the Character View of committing? In what follows, I will argue that it is not. I base my argument on two crucial insights of philosophical pragmatism; Charles Sanders Peirce’s epistemological fallibilism and Nelson Goodman’s notion of “initial credibility.”

As I have previously described this basic idea of Peirce:

Fallibilist epistemology originates from Charles Sanders Peirce’s philosophy, in particular two articles (Peirce, 1934a, 1934b): ‘Some consequences of four incapacities’ and ‘Questions concerning certain faculties claimed for man.’¹⁷ Peirce formulated the concept of fallibilism to counter the two prevailing epistemological traditions of his day: rationalism and empiricism. He stated that both of these traditions fail in their assumptions regarding the possibility of certainty: rationalism in basing the possibility of certainty on reason and empiricism in connecting certainty to perception. Peirce, who was impressed by Darwin’s groundbreaking theory, argued that due to the evolutionary origin of human knowledge, there can be no certainty. Consequently, there are no fixed starting points from which we could derive infallible knowledge.

This line of thought did not, however, lead Peirce to scepticism regarding human knowledge. Instead, he argued that while certainty is not possible, there are good reasons for taking our current conceptions as a starting point for action and further inquiry. In Peirce’s view, the Cartesian concept of systematic doubt is self-deception, not something real human beings can achieve. We have to begin our thinking, doubting and criticizing from where we are. This position, like the belief that all human knowledge is uncertain, coheres with the evolutionary understanding of knowledge: the bodies of knowledge we now have may be mistaken and are thus possibly subject to revision, but they have, nevertheless, survived the

15 Siegel, “Educating Reason,” 71.

16 Siegel, “Educating Reason,” 71.

17 Charles Sanders Peirce, “Questions Concerning Certain Faculties Claimed for Man,” 135-155, and “Some Consequences of Four Incapacities,” 156-189, both in *Pragmatism and Pragmaticism*, volume 5 of *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, ed. Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1934).

process of evolution to this point; as such, they provide the best available starting point for how to proceed at the present moment with respect to further inquiry.¹⁸

The notion of “initial credibility”¹⁹ is from Nelson Goodman’s philosophy and it shares this Peircean rejection of knowledge based on certainty or fixed starting points. To put it roughly, we have to begin our thinking, doubting, and criticizing from where we are and thus start the refinement of our thinking from our current conceptions. Our current conceptions have some initial credibility, because they have been formulated during the generations in interaction with a surrounding world as well as other people. This is, of course, not to say that they are infallible, but, on the contrary, everything can be submitted to critical thinking, even those beliefs which have the highest initial credibility. The replacement of these beliefs must, however, be supported by required evidence and reasons. The difference from all-embracing Cartesian doubt is clear: in cases where we have no serious alternatives to our current beliefs, we do not have reasons, or justification, to reject them merely because they are uncertain.

One might now say that the fallibilist epistemology necessitates the conception of objectivity which is applicable only in the realm of science but not in the realm of ethics and morality. In my previous work, I have argued that there are not sufficient reasons for abandoning the objectivity of ethics.²⁰ This argument on the whole cannot be discussed within the limits of this article. To summarize: both fields (science and ethics) are liable to error, and neither of them necessitates a conceptual link between objectivity and certainty or objectivity and ontological realism.²¹

When the principles fallibilist epistemology and the idea of initial credibility is applied to the moral principle of the respect for persons it appears to have very high initial credibility. Firstly, some version of it has been accepted in almost every culture; secondly, no compelling arguments for its rejection has thus far been presented; and, thirdly, no serious alternatives have been presented either. Its level of initial credibility – accepted by almost everyone, and neither serious rejecting arguments nor serious alternatives existing – is actually almost as high as any belief, conception, or theory can reach. The burden of proof is, thus, on the side of the one who wants to reject this principle. Moreover, I am quite sure that when Missimer criticizes the Character View as preventing “free ethical theorizing,” she is not suggesting the abandonment of the respect for persons as a moral criterion for critical thinking.

18 Katariina Holma and Heidi Hyytinen, “The Philosophy of Personal Epistemology,” *Theory and Research in Education* 2015 (forthcoming), doi: 10.1177/1477878515606608, see also Katariina Holma, “Fallibilist Pluralism and Education for Shared Citizenship,” *Educational Theory* 62:4 (2012): 397-400.

19 Nelson Goodman “Sense and Certainty,” *Philosophical Review* 61 (1952): 160-167, doi: 10.2307/2182906.

20 Holma, “The Epistemological Conditions of Moral Education,” see also Thomas Nagel, “Ethics,” in *Moral Relativism: A Reader*, ed. Paul K. Moser and Thomas L. Carson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 241-243 and Robert Nozick, *Invariances: The Structure of the Objective World* (Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2001), 286, 291.

21 Holma, “The Epistemological Conditions of Moral Education,” and Scheffler, *Science and Subjectivity*.

If my argument is correct, the critical spirit is committed, at the minimum, to the epistemic value of truth and to the moral value of respect for persons. In education, fostering the critical spirit thus implies that education aims to contribute to students' maturation into persons who are committed to these basic values. Moreover, it is not sufficient that they take truth and respect (and the related values of honesty, justice, and so on) as valuable in principle, but they should be disposed to live out these values by actively searching, by means of critical thinking, the obstacles of their realization. Furthermore, they should have force and motivation to act according to their judgments based on critical thinking. They should thus be disposed to think critically and to act accordingly, instead of believing or acting, say, on the basis of fear, self-indulgency, self-interest, or then on the basis of moral or intellectual laziness. This turns our attention to the source of the force and motivation for critical thinking, which is, at least partly, related to the role of emotions in the functioning of reason and morality.

The Emotional Nature of the Critical Spirit

The emotional dimension is connected to critical thinking in many respects. Firstly, emotions have a direct epistemic function, which is to say that they work in cooperation with cognition in the processes of interpreting the world. Secondly, emotions can work as either encouraging or weakening one's moral agency, a fact which naturally has enormous educational significance. In critical thinking, emotions thus have a role in both critical thinking per se, and in the motivational function of fulfilling the moral command of thinking critically.

The idea that critical thinking is so strongly connected to emotions may be surprising to those who are used to dichotomizing reason and emotion and think that critical thinking appeals to reason and ignores emotions. Recent finding from neuropsychological studies, however, support the idea of philosophical pragmatism, namely, that both reason and emotion serve a vital function in formulating adequate knowledge of the world.²² Although they are both fallible, each plays its own specific role in knowledge construction. The dichotomy of reason and emotion derives from the worldview of Antiquity, and although it is untenable, it still exerts a palpable influence on our thinking.

It is also important to realize that assuming the significant role of emotions in the functioning of reason and morality does not imply the philosophical stance of moral emotivism, i.e. the position that reduces moral assertions to the emotional states. Neither does this imply that emotions can, or should, determine what we take to be good reasons. At the minimum, it implies that the motivation to think critically or act morally derives, among other things, from emotions.

22 Holma, "Fallibilist Pluralism and Education for Shared Citizenship," 397-409.

At their best, emotions work in directing our attention toward what is worth noticing, they motivate our action, and they give us pleasure when we succeed. The role of emotions in the service of cognition is considered by Scheffler in his *In Praise of the Cognitive Emotions*. Scheffler demonstrates, for example, how the emotional stance of surprise indicates that we have found something that we have not known before,²³ and how the emotional stance of joy is connected to the scientist's success in verifying her hypothesis.²⁴ These emotions keep us motivated in cognitively demanding activities, such as scientific or philosophical work, or critical thinking.

Emotions also serve a role in morality, which is, as argued in the previous section, fundamental for genuine critical thinking. Although their exact role is the subject of huge philosophical dispute, there is quite wide agreement that they play some role both in moral motivation and in moral epistemology.²⁵ To put the motivational role in Jesse J. Prinz words: "We want to be good, and we find good behavior rewarding. Bad behavior is, in contrast, emotionally costly. And we are motivated to help others, in part, because we feel affection for them, affinity, or compassion."²⁶ The epistemological role, for its part, is related to our tendency to see things as good or bad.²⁷ According to Prinz, "[s]omething strikes us as good or bad in virtue of the emotional response it elicits."²⁸ Prinz argues that emotions, for example, point to what is morally praiseworthy or blameworthy.²⁹

This is not to imply that emotions would have some kind of direct or infallible access to moral "truths." On the contrary, emotions may work also in the service of self-deception or morally wrong action. The emotional manipulation that dictators use to get people on their side serves as one example of this possibility. The tendency to avoid emotional discomfort can lead to "rationalization," that is, to the process in which one gives reasons for one's action which are not real reasons but are based on self-deception.³⁰ This leads us to

23 Israel Scheffler, *In Praise of the Cognitive Emotions and Other Essays in the Philosophy of Education* (Routledge: New York, 1991), 9-11.

24 Scheffler, *In Praise of the Cognitive Emotions*, 7-8.

25 Jesse J. Prinz, "The Moral Emotions," in *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Emotion*, ed. Peter Goldie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), accessed November 2012, <http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com.libproxy.helsinki.fi/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199235018.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199235018-e-24>, 2-3, doi: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199235018.001.0001.

26 As Prinz continues, this is true independently of whether the nature of this behavior is rooted in self-interest or altruism, Prinz, "The Moral Emotions," 2.

27 Prinz, "The Moral Emotions," 3.

28 Prinz, "The Moral Emotions," 3.

29 Prinz, "The Moral Emotions," 5-19.

30 Robert Audi makes the distinction between rationalization (giving reasons that are not real reasons) and explanation (giving the real reasons) in *Moral Knowledge and Ethical Character* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 131-156. In the field of educational research, Kaisu Mälkki has argued that an unconscious aim to avoid uncomfortable emotions in learning is an obstacle for critical reflection; see Kaisu Mälkki, "Building on Mezirow's Theory of Transformative Learning: Theorizing the Challenges to Reflection," *Journal of Transformative Education* 8: 1 (2010): 42-62, doi: 10.1177/1541344611403315, and Kaisu Mälkki, *Theorizing the Nature of Reflection* (Helsinki, Finland: University of Helsinki Press, 2011).

one fundamental problem of the Skill View, that is, the difficulty in distinguishing between highly skilled pseudo-justification (rationalization) and accurate justification (explanation).

It is quite clear that education, if anything, has a crucial role to play in the formation of the personalities, whose emotions work in the service of adequate cognitive and moral action. Thomas Green has argued that the educational processes of “normation” give “specific content to the emotions of guilt, shame, pride, [and] regret . . . and thus [make] it possible for self-deception to have its risks.”³¹ Patricia Greenspan, who draws upon her philosophy of emotion from contemporary neuropsychology, argues that “an innate emotional basis of ethics might be modified in essential ways by adult interaction with pre-linguistic children” and that “an emotional basis may be further altered and expanded through language-encoded cognitive elements of emotion at more advanced states.”³²

Martha Nussbaum, for her part, combines the defense of critical thinking with the discussion of the role of emotions in mature personalities and genuine critical thinkers.³³ Nussbaum links critical thinking skills, personal dispositions related to moral emotions, and education for democratic citizenship by arguing that “cultivated and developed sympathy is a particularly dangerous enemy of obtuseness, and moral obtuseness is necessary to carry out programs of economic development that ignore inequality.”³⁴ In this sense, the emotional disposition of sympathy seems, for Nussbaum, to precede critical thinking skills.

Nussbaum also seeks “psychological balance and political balance” in citizenship education and examines, in this connection, the emotional life of early childhood, deriving mainly from the theories of the pediatrician and psychoanalyst Donald D. Winnicott. Nussbaum illustrates how children solve the problem of intolerable emotions by projecting them onto different others and thus demonstrates how emotions can be employed both in the service of the critical spirit or work against its proper functioning.

The role of emotions is of crucial importance especially when critical thinking is considered in the educational context. Emotions can work both in the service of critical thinking and in the service of self-deceptive rationalization. Critical thinking skills, disconnected from their emotional associations can lead to the deception of both self and others. In this respect, today’s neuroscience points in the same direction as both psychoanalytical theories and philosophical pragmatism.

31 Thomas F. Green, *Voices: The Educational Formation of Conscience* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999), 26.

32 Patricia Greenspan, “Learning Emotions and Ethics,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Emotion*, ed. Peter Goldie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), accessed November 2012, <http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com.lib-proxy.helsinki.fi/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199235018.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199235018-e-25>, 3, doi: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199235018.003.0025.

33 Martha C. Nussbaum, *Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2010).

34 Nussbaum, *Not for Profit*, 23.

Discussion on Some Critiques

I will next consider two crucial criticisms of the view of critical thinking defended in this essay. The first one comes from the direction of critical theory, and is related to the alleged moral neutrality of the educational ideal of critical thinking. I will argue that this criticism is accurate in terms of the Skill View but not in terms of the Character View. The second one challenges the justification of psychological explanation in educational theorizing, which my reference to the role of emotions represents. I will argue that the educational ideal of critical thinking necessitates both psychological and political dimensions.

In my view, many of the critiques of critical thinking as an educational ideal result from understanding critical thinking as composed mostly or merely of skills and, consequently, understanding critical thinking as morally and emotionally neutral and, thus, insufficient as an educational aim. For example, when Nicholas C. Burbules and Rupert Berk compare Critical Thinking³⁵ and Critical Pedagogy, they describe Critical Pedagogy as being “in the service of demonstrating how certain power effects occur, not in the service of pursuing Truth in some dispassioned sense.”³⁶ However, as I hope the previous discussion has demonstrated, the pursuit of truth, and the related dispositions of being honest, fair, and diligent in the search for evidence, are far from dispassioned. However, the Skill View of critical thinking can perhaps be interpreted as a calculating use of rationality without any moral concerns and related emotional dispositions, and if Burbules and Berk have something like this in mind, their criticism may be justified. I fully agree with Burbules and Berk if they are saying that the Skill View is problematic as an educational ideal, due to its moral neutrality. One can use critical-thinking skills for purposes which fail to respect others as persons, or aim to hide the truth in order to advance one’s own interests. Critical thinking of this sort can be very skilled, but it is not worth fostering through education, because it violates the important values of truth and respect for persons.

Therefore, when Burbules and Berk say that for the critical-thinking tradition “to be ‘critical’ basically means to be more discerning in recognizing faulty arguments, hasty generalizations, assertions lacking evidence, truth claims based on unreliable authority, ambiguous or obscure concepts, and so forth,” whereas “[t]he primary preoccupation of Critical Pedagogy is with social injustice and how to transform inequitable, undemocratic, or oppressive institutions and social relations,” Burbules and Berk seem to be referring to the Skill View of critical thinking and to the related moral neutrality of the concept. Namely, although recognizing faulty arguments, hasty generalizations, and so on are clearly important for the pursuit of truth, to be careless about social injustice or about undemocratic or oppressive institutions is not compatible with the conception of critical thinking defended in this article. Thus interpreted, the difference seems to be only in the emphasis or perspective, not at the conceptual level. However, as I hope that my previous argumentation has

35 Burbules considers critical thinking as a movement, and thus uses capital letters.

36 Nicholas C. Burbules and Rupert Berk, “Critical Thinking and Critical Pedagogy: Relations, Differences, and Limits,” in *Critical Theories in Education*, ed. Thomas S. Popkewitz and Lynn Fendler (New York: Routledge, 1999).

demonstrated, I hold that the moral dimension of the ideal of critical thinking has not been sufficiently analyzed in the previous literature related to the ideal.

However, there may be a real difference with some advocates of Critical Pedagogy and the conception of critical thinking as I understand it. Namely, the ideal of critical thinking cannot be subordinated to any particular political program, and if this is the requirement of criticality by Critical Pedagogy, I see this as something a genuine critical thinker cannot accept. A critical thinker can, of course, have political commitments, but she cannot subscribe to the notion that the ideals of rationality and critical thinking would be subordinated to these commitments in the first place. It is in the very nature of the ideal of critical thinking that we must be free to think critically about political programs, ideologies, and religious authorities, both those which are dear to us and those which are not.

There is also another contemporary line of thinking, which tends to prevent conceptualizing the critical spirit adequately. This viewpoint is suspicious of explanations that originate in the individual. Indeed, this line of thinking looks, rather, to the structures of society as the ultimate source for educational challenges. From this perspective, all references to the education of individuals – to which concepts such as character traits, attitudes, personalities, and emotions refer – serve as examples of unacceptably concealing the social origin of a person's psychological make-up. Nancy Fraser, for example, describes the dangers of "psychologization" in relation to Axel Honneth's conception of misrecognition as follows:

When misrecognition is identified with internal distortions in the structure of the self-consciousness of the oppressed, it is but a short step to blaming the victim, as imputing psychic damage to those subject to racism, for example, seems to add insult to injury.

Conversely, when misrecognition is identified with internal distortions in the minds of the oppressors, overcoming it seems to require polishing their beliefs, an approach that is illiberal and authoritarian.³⁷

However, the morally untenable misuse of psychological knowledge, of which I sense Fraser is worried about, need not follow in the manner she fears. The misuse of psychological knowledge need not follow from taking adequate psychological understanding into account in educational theories. This is important particularly because the same exaggerated fear of psychologization can, in my view, prevent discussion of fostering the critical spirit through education. The critical spirit surely cannot be created merely by challenging the structures of society, because the educational challenge is rather, how to educate persons who have skills, motivation, and force to challenge the distorted structures. Moreover, education always has something to do with individual persons, since social structures cannot be educated. Persons, for their part, are complicated mixtures of cognitive, emotio-

37 Nancy Fraser, "Integrating Redistribution and Recognition: Problems in Moral Philosophy," in *Redistribution or Recognition? A Political-Philosophical Exchange*, Nancy Fraser and Axel Honneth, trans. Joel Colb, James Ingram, and Christiane Wilke (London: Verso, 2003), 31.

nal, moral, and other dimensions. This implies that contributing to the growth of persons, or education, must take both psychological and political, or individual and social dimensions into account.

Conclusion

Understanding the critical spirit as involving cognitive, emotional, and moral dimensions implies that, in advancing critical thinking as an educational ideal, we must think, in addition to the skills of critical thinking, about educating certain sorts of persons. Naturally, it is difficult to define such a person, and it is even more difficult to figure out how education can contribute to the growth of these kinds of persons. However, it is something both philosophers and empirical researchers should pursue, since critical spirits are vital for preserving and developing democracy and the related values of our culture and society. I hope that my discussion has pointed to the fact that if we want to construct an adequate conception of the educational ideal of critical thinking, we have to seek understanding of the complex relationships of emotional, cognitive, and moral dispositions in the development of persons who really care and go to the trouble of thinking critically.

Juho Ritola

Deliberative Democracy, the Deliberating Agent, and Critical Thinking: An ideal picture and some empirical challenges¹

Abstract

According to some prominent theorists, the conditions of deliberative democracy call for reasoned decisions from mutually justifiable premises. The deliberative ideal places demands on the epistemic quality of the deliberating process and on the epistemic habits and beliefs of the relevant agents. In this essay, I discuss this ideal in light of empirical literature. I examine some empirical literature on human reasoning that paints a bleak picture of human rationality: we fall victim to heuristics and biases, persevere in our beliefs in the face of contrary evidence, and justify our current moral judgments by post hoc-reasoning. In addition, the deliberating groups have specific problems. The groups may, for example, amplify errors or fall victim to information cascades. I argue that, given that we are interested in securing that deliberative process is epistemically valuable, the literature gives further support to the idea that education must foster not only skills but also dispositions for critical thinking. I conclude with a brief defense of epistemic internalism against the argumentation by M. Solomon.²

Keywords

Deliberative democracy, critical thinking, reasoning

1. Introduction

One important trend in current political philosophy is the theory of Deliberative Democracy. The guiding thought of this line of thinking is that legitimate lawmaking issues from the public deliberation of citizens.³ An important division in this literature is the way the value of deliberation is conceived. In his influential article, Jon Elster notes that “[a]ccording to the theorists of participatory democracy from John Stuart Mill to Carole Pateman, the goal of politics is the transformation and education of the participants.”⁴ Elster argues that

1 This paper was written while working in a project titled “The Sociality of Knowledge”, project number 1251076, funded by the Academy of Finland.

2 Miriam Solomon, “Groupthink versus The Wisdom of Crowds: The Social Epistemology of Deliberation and Dissent,” *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 44 (2006), doi: 10.1111/j.2041-6962.2006.tb00028.x.

3 James Bohman and William Rehg, introduction to *Deliberative Democracy: Essays on Reason and Politics*, ed. James Bohman and William Rehg, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999), ix.

4 Jon Elster, “The Market and the Forum,” in *Deliberative Democracy*, 3.

Juho Ritola, University of Helsinki, Finland
E-mail: juho.ritola@utu.fi

Studier i Pædagogisk Filosofi | www.ojs.statsbiblioteket.dk/index.php/spf | ISSN nr. 22449140

Årgang 4 | Nr. 1 | 2015 | side 29-54

this view is incoherent. While the transformation and education of the participants are good things, ultimately they ought to be viewed as by-products of the democratic process. We should only choose methods of political decision-making that are good for that particular purpose.

It indeed seems counterintuitive to accept that any imaginable deliberation that had no epistemically valuable properties should *fully* legitimate a decision. Suppose citizens convene to deliberate which of the existing computer programs on the market the community should choose for use. The participants discuss and agree that they should pick program A. The only premise for A is that it is the most famous of the programs. If, however, the participants do not know whether program A is within their means, serves the needs of the community, runs on their computers, or even what it is famous for, they have made a bad decision. Examples of bad but democratic decisions are not uncommon.

Unsurprisingly, a common demand in deliberative theorizing is that the process should be reason-based.⁵ For example, Robert A. Dahl notes that "...citizens must have adequate and equal opportunities [...] for expressing reasons for endorsing one outcome rather than another."^{6, 7} Joshua Cohen holds that a decision is legitimate if and only if it could be the object of free and reasoned agreement among individuals.⁸ Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson state that "[d]eliberative democracy asks citizens and officials to justify public policy by giving reasons that can be accepted by those who are bound by it."⁹ David Estlund avers that "[the legitimacy of a decision] derives, partly, from the epistemic value, even though it is imperfect, of the procedure that produced it."¹⁰

These conditions of legitimate deliberation emphasize justification: the decision must be based on good reasons, and good reasoning must lead from these premises to the conclusion. Otherwise, arguably, the decision could not be the object of free and reasoned agreement. From an epistemic point of view, this is to be applauded. It also seems reasonable to specify that there are at least two factors that are required for reasonable deliberation from an epistemic point of view. First, the procedure itself should be rational. For example, it should give each participant sufficient time to justify their view.¹¹ If the citizen is

5 It is not the case, however, that the aforementioned deliberation was not reason-based. It was based on a bad reason. But I will ignore this in what follows. I assume that we are interested in bringing about decisions based on good reasons.

6 Robert A. Dahl, "Procedural Democracy," in *Contemporary Political Philosophy: An Anthology*, ed. Robert E. Goodin and Philip Pettit (MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2nd edition, 2006), 109-110.

7 Dahl's discussion is directed at choosing a method of political decision-making: only a method that fulfills this requirement (and some others) should be chosen. Dahl also notes that the words he uses are ambiguous, but it seems that his discussion clearly has epistemic overtones.

8 Joshua Cohen, "Deliberation and Democratic Legitimacy," in *Deliberative Democracy*, 73.

9 Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson, *Democracy and Disagreement* (MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1996), 52.

10 David Estlund, "Beyond Fairness and Deliberation: The Epistemic Dimension of Democratic Authority," in *Deliberative Democracy*, 174.

11 Dahl further sets up the criterion of enlightened understanding: "In order to express his or her preferences accurately, each citizen ought to have adequate and equal opportunities for discovering and validating, in the time permitted

not allowed to justify the crucial premises and the cogency of his or her reasoning against relevant challenges, other parties to the deliberation cannot make an informed judgment about that position and, consequently, about the case at hand. Second, the citizen that participates in a democratic deliberation should behave in an epistemically respectable way. For example, the discussants should only make claims that they can justify, and only propound reasoning they think is good. The reasonability of the decision is dependent on these epistemic conditions, but the conditions do not guarantee good results: we are fallible. There also seems to be little hope of designing a procedure of deliberation that could not be short-circuited by resolute individuals, who give no regard to evidential considerations or other reasonable demands of proper dialogue. Knowingly giving misleading information or persuasive but fallacious reasoning can harm the reasonability of the process or, in the very least, give the process an unacceptably arbitrary character.¹²

The ideal of deliberative theorizing thus calls for a certain kind of process and a certain kind of citizen. The citizen naturally should have certain inferential and dialectical skills that allow him or her to approximate truth and moral value in deliberation, or reach justified beliefs. However, there is a large body of empirical literature that casts serious doubt on our ability as cognitive agents to live up to these requirements.¹³ This literature seems to show that poor quality judgment does not result only from a lack of knowledge about the subject matter, lack of proper standards of reasoning, motivational issues, or from succumbing to various fallacies¹⁴ identified in the literature. The typical individual is further argued to fall victim to poor quality heuristics and allow various biases influence judgments,¹⁵ persevere in our beliefs in the face of contradicting evidence,¹⁶ and use moral reasoning to justify existing moral judgments post-hoc¹⁷. And as if these problems were not enough, the deliberating bodies seem vulnerable to problems of their own: the groups may amplify

by the need for a decision, what his or her preferences are on the matter to decided." ("Procedural Democracy," 111).

- 12 For example, a case where two mistakes by the participants cancel each other out by chance seems arbitrary, even if the participants came to a reasonable conclusion.
- 13 The classic source for this literature is Daniel Kahneman, Paul Slovic, and Amos Tversky, eds., *Judgment Under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982). It contains the seminal article by Tversky and Kahneman from 1974, bearing the same name as the article collection. The seminal article concentrates on probability reasoning, but the flourishing research program soon identified various other problems of similar magnitude in other reasoning tasks. See below for further references to the ongoing discussion.
- 14 By this I refer to something like the "traditional gang of eighteen," an expression coined by John Woods (see John Woods, "Who Cares about Fallacies?," in *Argumentation Illuminated*, ed. Frans van Eemeren et. al. (Amsterdam: SicSat, 1988)) to refer to the fallacies that the fallacy literature typically talks about. These include fallacies like ad hominem and other 'ad' -fallacies, begging the question, and the like.
- 15 Kahneman, Slovic, and Tversky, *Judgment Under Uncertainty*, 1982.
- 16 C. Lord, Lee Ross, and M. R. Lepper "Biased Assimilation and Attitude Polarization: The Effects of Prior Theories on Subsequently Considered Evidence," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 37 (1979).
- 17 Jonathan Haidt, "Emotional Dog and Rational Tail: A social intuitionist approach to moral judgment," in *Reasoning: Studies of Human Inference and Its Foundations*, ed. Jonathan E. Adler and Lance J. Rips (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

error rather than correct it, fall victim to informational cascades, and give disproportionate evidential value to agreement.¹⁸

In this essay, I will first discuss theories of deliberative democracy, noting some features that have been deemed essential for proper deliberation. I will then turn to empirical literature and examine some of the challenges it poses to the ideal picture of a rational deliberator. Though part of the literature paints a gloomy picture of human rationality, and hence raises doubts on the prospects of epistemically commendable citizen deliberation, we need not draw the conclusion that we are determined to produce epistemically suboptimal results. The literature does seem to indicate, however, that education needs to pay special attention to fostering both the appropriate skills of and dispositions for critical thinking, a position championed by Harvey Siegel.¹⁹

At the end of the essay, I will discuss the nature of justification in the deliberative context. From an epistemological perspective, the ideal picture of a citizen and the conditions of a proper deliberation seem to call for two further theses that are disputed by many. The first of these is epistemological internalism.²⁰ I think the empirical literature in fact gives some support to an internalistic picture of justification. This is diametrically opposed to Solomon, who argues that empirical evidence about group reasoning in fact supports externalism.²¹ I support my case with the fact that a crucial factor in attaining objectively justified beliefs is the ability to monitor one's belief-formation and apply critical methods both to its results and to the specific processes that formed them. This applies both to beliefs formed in solo reasoning and group reasoning.

The second thesis is dialectical justification. It states that a necessary condition of being justified in one's belief is that one is able to defend one's belief against (relevant) challenges. This thesis is not popular among epistemologists, but the deliberative context requires this dialectical sense of justification. I think Solomon's criticism is not effective against internalism but is rather directed against this dialectical requirement. However, the dialectical requirement is important for deliberation regardless of the problems of group reasoning.

2. Conditions of deliberative democracy

As was noted, the guiding thought of deliberative democracy is that legitimate lawmaking issues from the public deliberation of citizens. Bohman and Rehg relate that the central

18 Solomon "Groupthink;" Cass Sunstein, "Deliberating Groups versus Prediction Markets (or Hayek's Challenge to Habermas)," *Episteme* 3, (2006).

19 See for example Harvey Siegel, *Educating Reason: Rationality, Critical Thinking, and Education* (New York: Routledge, 1987).

20 While I accept this thesis, most of the discussion in this paper does not hinge on it. If one sees the ideal picture of the deliberating citizen as appealing, empirical evidence about our reasoning performance and its failings is important whether one is an externalist or an internalist. Both can also accept that a critical thinking class should aim to objectively improve the reasoning performance of the student that is or will later be a citizen involved in deliberation.

21 Solomon, "Groupthink."

ideas of deliberative democracy started to take shape in 70's, and the term 'deliberative democracy' was coined only 1980 by Joseph M. Bessette.^{22, 23} By now, it has become an important part of the discussion in political philosophy. I will briefly discuss how the condition of basing decisions on reasons is motivated and formulated in deliberative democracy. I do not claim comprehensiveness; the purpose is only to highlight some theorists that emphasize the concept of reason. This will motivate the ideal picture of a citizen as an epistemic agent that we will then contrast with the empirical findings.

The deliberative movement juxtaposes itself with the purely "aggregative" view of democracy based on theories of rational choice, which postulate that individuals have fixed sets of preferences, ordered according to their desirability. The individual is seen rational in the sense that he/she, under the constraints and opportunities of his/her situation, will make choices that best serve those interests.²⁴ Under the aggregative view, the individual, a political actor, may also be characterized as taking part in a bargaining process: knowing what he/she wants, the individual maneuvers to arrive at an outcome that is as close to his/her preferences as possible.²⁵ The main form of political participation is voting, and the institutions of government are designed to allow free pursuit of interests.

Bohman and Rehg see as a central tenet of deliberative democracy that political processes cannot be reduced to individual choices in the "market," but instead, the citizens should assume a civic standpoint and orient themselves to the *common good*²⁶ and discuss issues in the "forum."²⁷ The individual actors, in this view, do not come to the decision situation with fixed preferences: they are willing and able to change their minds, based on the information and argumentation encountered in the process deliberation. Shawn Rosenberg notes that even though deliberative theorists explicitly reject Rawls²⁸ concept of the veil of ignorance, they do draw on his conception of the individual citizen as having much greater cognitive capacities and moral potential than in rational choice theories.²⁹

We should now look more specifically at some of the conditions that have been set on a good deliberative process. Joshua Cohen argues that "outcomes can only be legitimate if

22 Joseph M. Bessette, "Deliberative Democracy: The Majority Principle in Republican Government," in *How Democratic is the Constitution?*, ed. Robert Goldwin and William Schambra (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1980).

23 Bohman and Rehg, introduction, xii.

24 Shawn W. Rosenberg, introduction to *Deliberation, Participation, and Democracy*, ed. Shawn W. Rosenberg (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 5.

25 Jürg Steiner, *The Foundations of Deliberative Democracy: Empirical Research and Normative Implications* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 4, doi: 10.1017/CBO9781139057486.

26 Unfortunately, I have to leave this crucial term undefined. I simply assume it is something that can legitimately be considered as an answer to the question "what would be good for all of us?" which is different from, but not necessarily opposed to, "what would be good for me?"

27 Bohman and Rehg, introduction, xiii; the use of the terms "the market" and the "forum" derive from Elster "The Market and the Forum," which was originally published in *The Foundations of Social Choice Theory*, ed. J. Elster and A. Hylland (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

28 In, for example, John Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

29 Rosenberg, introduction, 6.

and only if they could be the object of free and reasoned agreement among equals".³⁰ This is spelled out by further conditions, of which we can concentrate on the idea that it must be reasoned. The reasoned condition means:

that the parties to it are required to state their reasons for advancing proposals, supporting them, or criticizing them. They give reasons with the expectation that those reasons [...] will settle the fate of their proposal. [...] Proposals may be rejected because they are not so defended with acceptable reasons, even if they could be so defended.³¹

So, even though the process is premised on equal participation, the process itself is governed by reason-giving. We should note that the condition of justification is distinctly dialectical: one must be able to defend one's claim publicly. Private musings, no matter how justified, are not sufficient, and the place for giving the reasons is during the process, not afterwards, or in other forums.

Amy Guttmann and Dennis Thompson set three essential conditions to the reasonability of a deliberation. First, the deliberating process must fulfill the principle of reciprocity: you must seek reasons that you and your opponent can accept. Even if they are not to be found, you must keep on searching. This reciprocity is given the role of regulator of reason.³² The second important principle is publicity, which means that the reasons the officials and the citizens give to justify political actions, and the information to assess those reasons, should be public.³³ The third important principle is that justificational demands apply between everyone: in a deliberative forum, each is accountable to all.³⁴

What epistemic characteristics might we require from a decision so that it could be the object of free and reasoned agreement? For the purposes of this discussion, we can draw a rough, intuitive, picture. We want a decision that is premised on justified, preferably true premises, and on cogent reasoning from those premises. The decision should also be based on appropriate reflection of moral and practical concerns. In all its complexity, this would entail, among other things, that the relevant evidence was gathered well, conclusions from the evidence were drawn with reliable methods, all relevant evidence was considered, etc., but we can do with this sketch of ideal rational justification here.

An important issue here is that of finding common premises.³⁵ This problem is premised on the fact that the political life, and democratic deliberation, must start from reasonable

30 Cohen, "Deliberative Democracy," 73.

31 Cohen, "Deliberative Democracy," 74.

32 Gutmann and Thompson, *Democracy and Disagreement*, ch. 2.

33 Gutmann and Thompson, *Democracy and Disagreement*, ch. 3.

34 Gutmann and Thompson, *Democracy and Disagreement*, ch. 4.

35 I address some of the related issues in my "Reasonable pluralism and the dialectical conditions of knowledge," forthcoming.

pluralism³⁶: citizens possess different, yet reasonable, comprehensive doctrines (religious, philosophical, and moral) on which they cannot hope to agree fully. Because of this, there is no guarantee that the deliberators share enough common premises to reach a decision. But in order to argue together, the citizens must reflect on what premises they can use and find common premises that could be accepted by all parties.

The nature of appropriate premises is a question that has occupied theorists of political philosophy. The intuitive starting point is the shared premises requirement.³⁷ Rawls develops the idea of an overlapping consensus.³⁸ Another suggestion is that the decision could be based on an incompletely theorized agreement.³⁹ This debate reflects the fact that the rules of deliberation are not solely epistemic but also political and moral. It is true that the requirement of common premises (or the obligation to keep on searching for common premises) is justifiable from the viewpoint of argument as *rational persuasion*: to bring about rational persuasion, it is necessary to start from premises that the opponent can rationally accept. But we can easily imagine situations, where the speaker has no way of rationally persuading the hearer, even though the claim in question is epistemically justified to the arguer herself. Yet the obligation to keep on searching for common premises to justify the decision obtains, because the context is that of a *political* decision. This is the import of the central idea of modern political philosophy that political order, realized through political decisions, can only be justified if it is justified to those who are bound by the order in question.⁴⁰ One may have to, for example, keep on searching for new corroborating evidence that can be used in public deliberation, though one knows full well that the standards of reasonable evidence gathering have been met.

The picture of ideal deliberation places considerable requirements on the citizen: making epistemically and morally sound decisions under reasonable pluralism is no easy task. If one holds that the deliberative decisions must be epistemically and morally commendable, one should ask how we as citizens fare in this task. We have belief-forming habits that make many of the beliefs we hold epistemically suspect. It is now time to turn to some empirical evidence about human reasoning performance.

3. Challenges to the deliberative ideal

In this section, I will discuss some of the epistemically problematic habits, methods, and procedures people resort to in forming beliefs. I will first discuss issues that pertain mainly to empirical (contingent) beliefs and assess their meaning based on the literature. Second,

36 Term coined by Rawls; see for example *Political Liberalism*, 100.

37 Discussed by, for example, Bruce Ackerman, "Why Dialogue?," *Journal of Philosophy* 86 (1989), doi: 10.2307/2027173.

38 Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, ch. 2.3.

39 Cass R. Sunstein, "Incompletely Theorized Agreements," *Harvard Law Review* 108 (1995).

40 A good introduction to this idea is Kevin Vallier and Fred D'Agostino, "Public Justification," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2014 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta. Accessed May 30, 2015. URL = <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2014/entries/justification-public/>>.

I will discuss issues in the justification of moral beliefs. Third, I will discuss problems that relate to beliefs formed in a group.

3.1. The reasoning agent

A group of citizens deliberating on what to do is typically faced with complex problems that require rational intake, analysis, and evaluation of information. The decisions, it has been argued, ought to be reasonable in light of the available information. But the evidence on human performance in reasoning tasks is not reassuring. One research tradition that has significantly influenced our picture of human reasoning is *Heuristics and Biases* (HB).⁴¹ It has produced results that cast a serious shadow on the reasonability of the individual citizen's performance on a variety of reasoning tasks. Although the reasonability of the group decision is not a direct function of the reasonability of the individuals in the group, the reasonability of the individuals is hardly irrelevant either. If all the individuals are very unreliable in processing information, it seems unlikely that the group as a whole is very reliable.

The crucial finding of HB, documented in a wide array of studies, is that the human agent seriously underuses the normatively appropriate reasoning strategies and overuses more primitive intuitive strategies. Arguably, the poor performance is based on the same implements that are the basis of successful reasoning. Our reasoning performance is based on two interrelated systems that are deeply embedded in our cognitive system. First, there are *knowledge structures* that allow the individual to define and interpret the data of physical and social life. These structures are something we need to deal with the abundance of information with which we are faced. Without them, life would be a "buzzing confusion." Second, there are *judgmental heuristics* that reduce complex inferential tasks to simple judgmental operations. Though these strategies work well for the individual in many instances, there is a price to be paid for the mental economy.⁴²

The main judgmental heuristics identified by HB are *availability* heuristic and *representativeness* heuristic. Let us start with the availability. When we judge the relative frequency of particular objects or the likelihood of particular events, we are often influenced by their relevant availability, that is, their accessibility in the processes of perception, memory, or construction from imagination. When this availability is paired with objective frequency, it can be a useful heuristic. However, there are many factors uncorrelated with frequency that can influence an event's perceptual salience, vividness or completeness with which it is recalled, or the ease with which it is imagined. These factors can make the availability misleading. For example, people consistently err in judging the relative frequency of two kinds of English words. When asked to estimate the number of words beginning with a specific letter (for example, 'r' or 'k') in relation to words where the same letter appears third,

41 Cf. note 13. My description of this research program here is mainly based on another important book of this tradition by Richard E. Nisbett and Lee Ross, *Human Inference: Strategies and Shortcomings* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1980).

42 Nisbett and Ross, *Human Inference*, 3-7.

they falsely think there are more words beginning with those letters. Apparently, the ease at which one can generate words beginning with a certain letter in relation to generating words where the same letter is third, leads one to think that the first are more numerous. However, the ease of generation does not correlate with the objective frequency. People commit similar mistakes in causal reasoning. For example, having had to explain a certain event (which makes a specific causal scenario very available to the person) increases the subject's belief in the likelihood of that event.⁴³

The representativeness heuristic involves the application of relatively simple resemblance criteria to categorization. When we make a categorization judgment, we assess the degree to which the salient features of the object are representative of the features presumed to be characteristic of that category. For example, subjects are asked to evaluate the relative likelihood of three sequences of births of girls (G) and boys (B): 1) BBBB, ii) GGGB, iii) GBBG. If they go by representativeness heuristic, they tend to answer iii), based on what they know about the population of babies and about the randomness of the process, meaning that each birth is a "random" event in which the probability of "boy" and "girl" are nearly equal. However, the likelihood of each of these series is nearly equal. The explanation is that under representativeness heuristics, ii) does not seem representative of the randomness, and i) seems representative neither of randomness nor the population from which the sample was taken. The representativeness heuristic is a very strong heuristic and many studies⁴⁴ have documented its force in various settings.

It bears repeating to note that these heuristics are vital to many inferential tasks; induction and generalization are not possible without the subjects being able to decide what class or category one is observing, and such judgments essentially hinge upon judgments of representativeness. So "...the problem is clearly one of overapplication [...] the generating process is generally valid. It leads people to recognize that an all-male or an all-white jury is more likely to reflect a biased selection procedure than will a jury with a more proportionate representation of the population."⁴⁵

Another important part of our making sense of the world is the use of various knowledge structures or *schemas*. These structures pertain to for example events (termed *scripts*) or persons (termed *personae*). They are fairly loose structures, but once an object fulfills enough conditions to be placed under a schema (say, 'a dog'), the user of that concept readily assigns various other characteristics to that object (for example 'capable of loyalty,' 'likely to chase cats' etc.). For the management of mental life, schemas are even more impor-

43 Nisbett and Ross, *Human Inference*, 18-22.

44 The most famous of them probably being Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman, "Extensional versus intuitive reasoning: The conjunction fallacy in probability judgment," *Psychological Review* 90 (1983), doi: 10.1037/0033-295x.90.4.293. In the study, subjects overwhelmingly violated the conjunction rule of probability, which states that any conjunction of two properties is less probable than the conjuncts separately. When subjects were given a description they thought representative of a certain type of person, they selected a conjunction containing that property rather than singular options not containing the conjunct deemed representative.

45 Nisbett and Ross, *Human Inference*, 29.

tant than heuristics, but they are also often overused and are liable to mislead, especially when combined with the availability and representativeness heuristics. I will not delve into the literature on this phenomenon but note only one representative case mentioned by Nisbett and Ross⁴⁶, from E.R. May's book "*Lessons of the Past*"⁴⁷. The example highlights the kind of problems to which the combination of poor knowledge structure and availability can lead. It has been noted that President Harry Truman developed a strong trust to his wartime ally Joseph Stalin. According to May, Truman's correspondence reveals that he developed this trust, because Stalin evoked the persona of Tom Pendergast, Truman's long time benefactor. Though Pendergast was known to be a ruthless and corrupt kingmaker, he was always completely trustworthy in his relations to Truman. The thought runs that as Stalin evoked certain characteristics of Pendergast, Truman assumed that other characteristics could also be assumed. Nisbett and Ross note that typically the case is that a given schema is overused, but sometimes the conceptual category is so lacking in foundation and predictive value that it almost invariably serves its user badly. Many racial and ethnic stereotypes fit this description.⁴⁸

Another phenomenon that seems problematic for rational deliberation is *belief perseverance*. Originating in the work of Lord, Ross, and Lepper⁴⁹ this term refers to the problems people exhibit in dealing with new knowledge. This shows mainly three ways. First, when a subject has a theory about a given topic, exposure to new evidence (whether it supports, opposes, or is mixed), will tend to result in more belief in the correctness of the original theory than the normative dictates allow. Second, when a belief is formed based on the evidence, subsequent evidence will tend to be disregarded, counter to obvious dictates about the totality of evidence. Third, once a theory is formed, it survives the total discrediting of the original evidence.⁵⁰ To caricature, whatever gets in first, regardless of how it got there, will stay there, and becomes more entrenched, come what may.

To complete this quick overview of HB, I will mention one final case, the significance of which has been debated in the literature intensely. In the famous *selection task*, designed by P.C. Wason (1960),⁵¹ people were shown four cards that either had a number or a letter on it. One card had a vowel pictured on it, second card a consonant, third an even number, and the fourth an odd number. Subjects were then asked to test the following rule: "If a card has vowel on one side, then it has an even number on the other side." The normatively correct way to test the rule is to turn two cards: i) the card featuring a vowel,

46 Nisbett and Ross, *Human Inference*, 39.

47 E.R. May, "*Lessons of the Past*" (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973).

48 Nisbett and Ross, *Human Inference*, 40.

49 C. Lord, Lee Ross, and M.R. Lepper, "Biased Assimilation and Attitude Polarization: The Effects of Prior Theories on Subsequently Considered Evidence," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 37 (1979), doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.37.11.2098.

50 Nisbett and Ross, *Human Inference*, 169.

51 P.C. Wason "On the failure to Eliminate Hypotheses in a Conceptual Task." *Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology* 12 (1960), doi: 10.1080/17470216008416717. Reprinted in *New Horizons in Psychology*, ed. B.M. Foss (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966).

and ii) the card featuring an odd number. The explanation runs through the semantics of the conditional in the rule. The rule is an implication by its logical form, and implication is false only if the antecedent (the sentence followed by 'if') is true and the consequent (the sentence followed by 'then') false. In testing a rule, you try to find counterexamples to it. By the semantics of the conditional, this could only be the case where either, the antecedent is true, so by turning the card that has vowel on it and finding the consequent false (an odd number), you would have refuted the rule (i.e. case i)) or, the consequent is false with respect to the rule (an odd number), turning the card and finding a true antecedent, you would have refuted the rule (i.e. case ii)).

The surprising result of the test was that in its basic form, only 4 percent of the respondents provided the normatively correct response (Wason and Shapiro 1971). Though the result has been shown to differ somewhat depending on various factors,⁵² for example the semantic content of the rule (Johnson-Laird, Legrenzi, and Sonino Legrenzi 1972), this startling result paved the way for a host of new research programs trying to explain why humans, clearly capable of great intellectual achievements, can also fail so miserably.

The evidence on poor human performance is plentiful, and it is not limited to the kind of examples discussed here. Even the basic forms of deductive reasoning do not seem to be clear to people. Jonathan Evans, Stephen Newstead, and Ruth Byrne collected evidence from different studies on human performance in simple reasoning tasks involving modus ponens (If p, then q. p. Therefore, q.), modus tollens (If p, then q. Not q. Therefore, not p), and the corresponding fallacies of affirming the consequent (If p, then q. q. Therefore, p.) and denying the antecedent (If p then q. Not p. Therefore, not q).⁵³ The results are surprising. While modus ponens was widely recognized as valid (from 91% to 100%), modus tollens was not. It was accepted as a reasonable inference from 41% to 81%.⁵⁴ The two fallacies, affirming the consequent and denying the antecedent, received acceptance rates from 23% to 75% and 17% to 73%, respectively!⁵⁵

3.2 Assessing the evidence

The HB-tradition thus paints a bleak picture of the average human reasoning capabilities. Given that one accepts that a deliberative decision ought to be epistemically valuable, one might take this literature to show that deliberative democracy is not a good idea. However, this conclusion can be resisted with good reason. I will now highlight some important

⁵² But see below.

⁵³ Jonathan St. B. T. Evans and Stephen E. Newstead, *Human Reasoning: The Psychology of Deduction* (Hove, UK: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates 1972): 26-36, doi: 10.1111/j.2044-8295.1972.tb01287.x.

⁵⁴ If negation was used to make a valid inference more complex (e.g. If not p, then q. Not q. Therefore, p), the acceptance rates dropped radically, ranging from 12% to 34%.

⁵⁵ Two quite good popular books discussing these issues are Thomas Gilovich, *How We Know What Isn't So* (New York: Free Press, 1991) and Stuart Sutherland, *Irrationality: The Enemy within* (London: Constable, 1992). For an in-depth discussion of human reasoning, I recommend *Reasoning*, ed. Adler and Rips.

arguments and results from the literature that give us a better understanding of the HB-literature. These insights also bear on how critical thinking should be taught.

First, L. Jonathan Cohen has argued that there is no straightforward inference from these results to the overall individual irrationality.⁵⁶ Though Cohen did not aim to deny the significance of these results, he argued that those who tend to overestimate human reasoning powers tend to concentrate on the human competence, while the underestimation usually derives from exaggerated concentration on performance. We are clearly capable of normatively good reasoning. If there is evidence of systematic failure of our reasoning performance, we need to explain how that comes about and find ways to combat it. Furthermore, it is inherently problematic for a human being to say that there are normatively appropriate reasoning systems, but human beings are not able to use them. Our intuition serves as a crucial tool in identifying the normatively correct inference systems. But if intuitions serve at the ultimate basis of any normative theory of reasoning, one must assume that humans, though fallible, are basically rational. If not, we have no promise of us being able to formulate rational theories about inference.⁵⁷

At this stage, a different type of objection might come to mind. If humans indeed are basically rational but fail miserably in tests of performance, maybe we have applied the wrong standards. Maybe it is the standards of deductive, inductive, and abductive reasoning that ought to yield. According to some researchers, there is indeed a grain of truth in this: we do not always and automatically apply these standards of reasoning, yet can manage our life quite well. But this is not a reason for abandoning the standards, although it is probably part of the explanation why the performance in these tests is so poor. Keith Stenning and Michael Lambalgen⁵⁸ argue that the study of reasoning in laboratory settings that produced the gloomy results assumed that all the subjects were trying to do the same thing.⁵⁹ But if we take seriously the role of *interpretation*, we will come to see that the subjects were trying to reason to an interpretation of what they were asked to do. Since the laboratory experiments happen in a “vacuum,” it is natural to expect that the answers of subjects varied greatly. Without having the normal background for reasoning, they reason about the parameters of the situation and come to different solutions. Basically, subjects apply their knowledge of everyday language, which does not function according to canons

56 L. Jonathan Cohen, “Can Human Irrationality Be Experimentally Demonstrated?,” *Behavioral and Brain Studies* 4 (1981), doi: 10.1017/S0140525X00009092.

57 Cohen, “Human Irrationality,” 318-323. Cohen’s argumentation has been challenged. See for example David Shier, “Can Human Rationality Be Defended A Priori?,” *Behavior and Philosophy* 28 (2000).

58 Keith Stenning and Michiel van Lambalgen, “Interpretation, Representation, and Deductive Reasoning,” in *Reasoning*, ed. Adler and Rips.

59 The discussion by Stenning and Lambalgen is situated in the debate that assesses rule-based theories of reasoning (see for example Lance J. Rips, “Logical Approaches to Human Deductive Reasoning,” in *Reasoning*, ed. Adler and Rips, 187-205) and model-based theories of reasoning (see for example Philip N. Johnson-Laird, “Mental Models and Deductive Reasoning,” in *Reasoning*, ed. Adler and Rips). These theories tried to unearth the real reasoning processes that individuals use. This would naturally make us better positioned to say exactly why the subjects do so miserably in these tests.

of classical logic. Since the subjects are trying to do different things in the tests, it does not make sense to take their responses to indicate a position on some other dimension, such as intelligence.⁶⁰

Stenning and Lambalgen draw on dual processing theory by Jonathan Evans⁶¹ (2003) that separates between System 1, an automatic nonconscious reasoning processes and System 2, explicit controlled reasoning. The System 1 mechanism, shared between humans and animals, is logical but non-monotonic. The System 2 is conceived as a repair mechanism when problems are found in level 1, and requires a change of machinery to a monotonic logic. This machinery is some version of classical logic, (but only when reasoning *from* an interpretation, not *to* an interpretation.) The System 2 processing, (so-called skeptical stance) is essential for several contexts, or better, basically for any context where disagreement is widespread, such as political deliberation. But both systems are important in view of deliberation. In order to reach enough common ground for arguing, that is, to understand what other deliberators are trying to say, the subjects need to employ some machinery of the defeasible logics, i.e. System 1 processing. However, in order to do the kind of examination of claims and arguments that is essential to reasonable deliberation, the subjects must be taught the methods of classical logic, which also form the basis of conceptual learning. Stenning and Lambalgen note that:

[...] classical reasoning is important not because an implementation of it is the “universal deductive reasoning mechanism,” but, rather, because classical reasoning is important for aligning and repairing mutual interpretation across some gulf of understanding or agreement, and that learning more explicit control over System 2 process, and their relation to System 1 processes, can have a large impact on many student’s interpretation, learning and reasoning process. The skills of skeptical reasoning are then one extremely important set of concepts for learning to learn.⁶²

The startling results of HB do not show, then, that people are, in general, logically inept, or that the principles of deductive, inductive, and abductive reasoning are not important to reasoning in the wild, that is, outside the classroom. We need both systems. Yet, it is neither the case that the gloomy results are not important nor that they can be fully explained away. Many aspects of relevant norms, the set-up of the studies, interpretation, and pragmatics complicate the picture, but it remains the case that we are prone to commit many kinds of inferential errors, and without taking a pessimistic or a condescending⁶³ tone, we can probably agree that this shows in many ways in all walks of life. The teaching of good

60 Stenning and Lambalgen, “Interpretation,” 223-227.

61 Jonathan St. B. T. Evans, “In Two Minds: Dual-Process Accounts of Reasoning,” *Trends in Cognitive Science* 7 (2003), doi: 10.1016/j.tics.2003.08.012.

62 Stenning and Lambalgen, “Interpretation,” 245.

63 Nisbett and Ross (*Human Inference*, 14) write that “[...]this book was written in a spirit of genuine humility. We have found that our richest source of data demonstrating human inferential failings comes not from the

reasoning is therefore crucial: we need to be able to elicit System 2 processing, which also leads to normatively better responses. Let us elaborate on this and the role intelligence by looking into another empirical study.

Keith Stanovich notes that the ability to provide normatively correct responses in reasoning tasks has been shown to correlate with high scores in IQ-tests.⁶⁴ But Stanovich argues that important differences pertaining to rational thought are ignored if we only concentrate on the intelligence-related variance. Such a focus could be particularly harmful in the context of assessing the reasonability of democratic deliberation. To understand this, we need to introduce some terminology.

Cognitive theorizing recognizes different levels in the object to be studied. At the base is the biological level that physically realizes the operations. It is inaccessible to cognitive theorizing. The second level is the algorithmic level that is concerned with the computational processes. The cognitive scientist typically operates on this level, positing certain information-processing mechanisms that would explain how a given task gets executed. Third level is the intentional level, which involves the system's goals, beliefs, and choices of action. The constructs of this level consist of control states that regulate behavior, epistemic dispositions that can indirectly alter information pickup tendencies, and regulatory systems that may bring about for example consistency checks. Whereas cognitive psychologists have largely focused on the algorithmic level, personality psychologists have focused on thinking dispositions. These dispositions are intentional-level constructs that pertain to, for example, attitudes toward forming and changing beliefs.⁶⁵

The execution of rationality encompasses two things: the thinking dispositions and the algorithmic level. Intelligence tests concentrate on differences at the algorithmic level and measure performance under optimal situation, which are construed to be situations where the task interpretation is determined externally, the participant is told to maximize performance, and is told how to do so. These situations are called constrained: an attempt is made to specify the task demand so explicitly that variation in intentional level thinking dispositions are minimally influential. In contrast, critical thinking tests are not constrained at the intentional level, and they allow high-level personal goals and their regulation to be implicated in performance. The tendency to change beliefs in the face of contrary evidence or the tendency to not think through different possibilities a problem might involve are examples of behavior that can be affected by these goals. A typical test of intelligence strips away features that might bring about belief biases (by for example, using letters in place of sentences or using unfamiliar content). This allows the test to concentrate on the algorithmic

undergraduates in our experiments or classrooms but from ourselves and our friends, most of whom are trained social scientists.

64 Keith E. Stanovich, "Individual Differences in Reasoning and the Algorithmic/Intentional Level in Cognitive Science," in *Reasoning* ed. Adler and Rips, 414. See the text for references to these tests. Stanovich's text also contains many references to other texts that use the terms introduced here somewhat differently. These matters are subject to fundamental debates in cognitive science. I will follow Stanovich's classifications and descriptions.

65 Stanovich, "Individual Differences," 414-416.

mic level processing.⁶⁶ It is worth pointing out that the reasoning challenges endemic to democratic deliberation are not constrained.

According to Stanovich, the current research on intelligence is starting to converge on the idea that a common feature behind good performance on algorithmic level processing is the concept of decoupling of mental representations. Decoupling supports hypothetical reasoning, which is one of our most important mental functions. Hypothetical reasoning involves representing possible states of the world rather than actual states and is involved in great many reasoning tasks from deductive reasoning to decision making. The ability to decouple makes humans able to distance themselves from the issue, form metarepresentations about oneself and assess learning, and, above all, form and test hypotheses. It appears that a key to intelligence is the ability to maintain decoupling while carrying out mental simulation. Together with a high capacity working memory⁶⁷, decoupling is a prime indicator of intelligence as the ability to process information.⁶⁸

Given this picture, it is no surprise that intelligence correlates with the ability to perform well in constrained reasoning tasks. But a more interesting problem, especially from the viewpoint of critical thinking and deliberation, is the fact that intelligence does not always correlate with good performance in unconstrained reasoning tasks. Stanovich's explanation of this "on/off" -nature of correlations runs through dual-processing theory. Typical reasoning tasks in HB-literature pit System 1 processes against System 2 responses. To reach a normatively correct response, the System 2 processing needs to override System 1 response. This override determines whether performance in unconstrained reasoning tasks correlates with intelligence. Stanovich argues that it just such situations that create correlations between intelligence and task performance. He argues that some subjects are more likely to operate entirely on System 1 processing, and these subjects are more likely to be low IQ subjects. Subjects with high IQ are more likely to resolve the conflict in favor of a System 2 response. Yet, successful override of the System 1 happens only through coordinated action of the intentional-level operations recognizing the need to override the System 1 response, and the algorithmic level carrying out the cognitive decoupling operations necessary to cancel the System 1 response. Because intelligence tests are fixed on the individual differences on the algorithmic level, there is room for differences in the intentional-level thinking dispositions to predict difference in unconstrained reasoning tasks.⁶⁹

The empirical evidence seems to corroborate this idea. One essential factor in critical thinking tests is the ability to evaluate the force of arguments independently of prior belief. The evidence has it that a good performance on this score is predicted by thinking dispositions even after general cognitive ability has been partialled out. Other studies⁷⁰ have

66 Stanovich, "Individual Differences," 416-418.

67 Working memory is not mainly about memory as such, but about the ability to maintain or suppress (irrelevant or distracting) information.

68 Stanovich, "Individual Differences," 418-420.

69 Stanovich, "Individual Differences," 420-423.

70 See Stanovich, "Individual Differences," 423, for references.

found that the degree to which subjects criticized belief-inconsistent evidence was unrelated to cognitive ability. If the individual is able to, based on intentional-level constructs such as epistemic dispositions, to decouple prior belief from argument evaluation, their performance will be higher on critical thinking scores, regardless of the underlying cognitive capacity. The fact that correlations between high IQ and performance in reasoning tasks in HB-literature are inconsistent seems to be explainable from these intentional-level constructs.⁷¹

So, although the results that HB has produced are important, there is no need for pessimism. We are prone to err in certain ways, but we are able to learn the proper standards of reasoning. However, in order to perform according to these standards, we must also develop and foster appropriate attitudes for overcoming these errors. The development of such attitudes, and the consequent improvement in reasoning tasks is not tied to sheer cognitive computing ability.

The kinds of skills and dispositions required for epistemically appropriate reasoning bear resemblance to the virtues emphasized in the literature on deliberative democracy. As deliberators we must be able to decouple prior belief from argument evaluation. Though this is not exactly the same as 'assuming a civic standpoint,' proper evaluation does seem to call for the ability to detach ourselves from our own perspective and to evaluate the reasoning of others through proper standards. A decision of a deliberation can be 'the object of free and reasoned agreement among equals,' only if it fulfills the standards of proper reasoning. We can bring about rational persuasion, and be rationally persuaded by others, only if all the parties to the deliberation are able to take in new evidence and evaluate it on its own merits, and further evaluate its implications for our prior beliefs. Rational persuasion is also not possible, if we are not willing to change our mind based on the argumentation presented in the deliberation.

This section has so far concentrated on theoretical reasoning on the individual level: on judgments and reasoning about what is the case. But public deliberation, though based on what is the case, is also about what ought to be the case. Let us now turn to examine a view that challenges some of our rationalistic preconceptions about moral judgment.

3.3 The reasoning agent and the irrelevance of moral reasoning

Deliberative democracy holds that the citizens that come together to deliberate ought to assume a civic standpoint; that they put their own interests aside and orient themselves towards the common good. This picture has been complicated recently, as prominent theorists of deliberative democracy have argued forcefully that self-interest, if suitably constrained, does have a place in deliberation.⁷² Though qualified, the moral perspective still forms an essential part of democratic deliberation. But this moral perspective is not static:

71 Stanovich, "Individual Differences," 423-425.

72 See Jane Mansbridge et. al., "The Place of Self-Interest and the Role of Power in Deliberative Democracy," *Journal of Political Philosophy* 18 (2010).

the process of giving reasons that others can comprehend and accept is central to deliberative democracy. This picture seems to entail that in order for deliberation to really be worth our while, the subjects ought to be able to reach the relevant decisions based on moral reasoning given in a deliberation, i.e. based on that specific reason-giving process.

Yet, there are strong challenges to the rationalistic idea that people's moral judgments are the end-product of moral reasoning. It is not possible to fully enter this debate here. Instead, I take a different tack. Suppose that you accept the idea that moral judgment is based on quick moral intuition, and is then followed by slow *ex post facto* moral reasoning. A model based on this view, proposed Jonathan Haidt, is called the social intuitionist approach to moral judgment (SIAM).⁷³ This model is based on findings in many fields, and these findings cast strong doubt on the idea that moral reasoning is causally effective⁷⁴ in moral judgment. But accepting something along these lines does not imply that moral reasoning could not be effective in moral judgment. Haidt notes that his model is antirationalist in a very limited sense.⁷⁵ The claim is, specifically, "that moral reasoning is *rarely the direct cause* of moral judgment."⁷⁶ It should be noted, as is stressed by Haidt himself, that his model is a descriptive model.⁷⁷ It is not a normative model of how moral judgment ought to be made. One could hold that moral reasoning ought to be the sole ruler of moral judgment. I take no issue with that position. But since we are interested in epistemically valuable democratic deliberation that normal human beings can do, we should be aware of the empirical reality.

Let us now view some of the theses that orient SIAM and some features of the model itself. We can be brief.⁷⁸ First, moral reasoning is often motivated. Haidt likens it to a lawyer building a case, premised on the idea of defending the client. It is less like a scientist or judge seeking truth.⁷⁹ Second, people construct justifications for their moral positions quite easily

73 Haidt, "Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail: A social intuitionist approach to moral judgment," *Psychological Review* 108 (1995/2008), doi: 10.1037/0033-295X.108.4.814.

74 It is not commonly accepted in epistemology that reasons-relation can be construed as a causal relation. An originally influential example of a case where reasons, though causally ineffective, justify an epistemic judgment, has been put forth by Keith Lehrer, "How Reasons Give us Knowledge, or the Case of a Gypsy Lawyer," *Journal of Philosophy* 68 (1971). It may be added that not everyone now finds that example convincing. A causal-doxastic theory of epistemic basing has been put forth by Keith A. Korcz, "The Causal-Doxastic Theory of the Basing Relation," *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 30 (2000), and criticized by Daniel M. Mittag, "On the Causal-Doxastic Theory of the Basing Relation," *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 32 (2002). Though that debate is ongoing, the idea that moral reasoning does not causally bring about moral judgment seems troublesome from the viewpoint of deliberative democracy. See Keith A. Korcz, "The Epistemic Basing Relation," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2010 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, URL = <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2010/entries/basing-epistemic/>> for discussion and further references.

75 Haidt, "Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail," 1025.

76 Emphasis added.

77 Ibid.

78 See Haidt, "Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail" for references to the empirical literature.

79 Haidt, "Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail," 1033-1035. Deanna Kuhn, *The Skills of Argument*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), doi: 10.1017/CBO9780511571350, has found that very few groups, philosophers among them, have been found to reason well. What specific implications this has in another matter. For example, Anthony S. Laden "The Justice of Justification," in *Habermas and Rawls: Disputing the Political*, ed. James G.

and are able to achieve a sense of objectivity, feeling that the position is the outcome of the reasoning.⁸⁰ Third, moral action correlates more strongly with moral emotion than with moral reasoning.⁸¹ We now turn to the features of the model.

According to SIAM, a given situation elicits an intuition, based on automatic processing. This intuition then turns into judgment, followed by reasoning. Sometimes this reasoning works back to affect the judgment and intuition. The model is a social one in that one individual's judgment and reasoning both in turn affect the fellow human's intuition about the eliciting case (this link is called social persuasion), which further affect judgment and reasoning, which both in turn influence the individual with whom the process started (another link of social persuasion).⁸²

What specific implications can we draw from this in respect to deliberation? Haidt (2008: 1045) draws on other researchers, who through arduous processes, have managed to tune up intuitions about justice, rights, and fairness, leading to good moral talk. Haidt argues that if the main obstacle to good moral reasoning is the biased search for evidence, people should take advantage of the social persuasion link. By seeking out discourse partners who are respected for their wisdom and open-mindedness, and by talking about evidence and justification, people can reach judgments that are likely to be more nuanced and reasonable.⁸³ So it is not the case that we cannot improve our moral judgment, but we do have to make a specific effort for it.

What emerges from this is the importance of certain attitudes and dispositions to the quality of one's moral judgment. One needs to be able to decouple one's prior moral judgment from moral arguments, and assess the relevant arguments for their worth, and be willing to change one's mind based on them. Haidt surmises that by creating a surrounding that promotes good moral talk, i.e. the use of social persuasion link, the researchers might have also improved the quality of personal reflection.⁸⁴ But the literature also reminds us of the difficulty: creating stable dispositions for this activity is much more difficult than teaching the relevant skills.⁸⁵ In addition, the use of the social persuasion link is not without its problems, and we must now turn to issues in group reasoning.

Finlayson and Fabian Freyenhagen (New York: Routledge, 2011) has argued, basing his view on the work of Rawls and Habermas, that the political sphere is not to be defined by philosophical experts.

80 Haidt, "Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail," 1035-1036.

81 Haidt, "Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail," 1036-1038.

82 Haidt, "Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail," figure 2.

83 Haidt, "Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail," 1045.

84 Haidt, "Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail," *ibid.*

85 Cf. Raymond S. Nickerson, "The Teaching of Thinking and Problem Solving," in *Thinking and Problem Solving*, ed. Robert J. Sternberg (San Diego, CA: Academic Press, 1994), that discusses the problem of transfer from classroom to outside of it.

3.4 The reasoning group

According to Miriam Solomon, the traditional picture⁸⁶ of group reasoning has it that a group of individuals deliberating is more likely to reach objectively better results than the individuals of the group deliberating alone. The thought is that the interaction of the group provides for a critical testing of arguments, their explicit premises, and implicit assumptions. But a quick review of the literature shows that we should not take this idea for granted. Cass Sunstein has noted that there are pressures in public deliberation that may lead the group to converge on falsehood rather than truth, and individual errors, instead of being corrected, can be amplified⁸⁷. In the same vein, Miriam Solomon has argued that group deliberation may lead to suppression of relevant data.⁸⁸ Yet, neither writer views these problems as unavoidable, but rather as instructive for the design of group deliberation. We should examine these problems briefly.

Both writers partially base their worry on an epistemologically troublesome phenomenon called *groupthink*, identified by I. Janis.⁸⁹ Sunstein, drawing on Janis, observes that at times deliberation leads to irrational results, because of two pressures. The first is that group members fail to disclose information out of deference to the information publicly announced by others. The second is that social pressures lead people to silence themselves in order not to face reputational sanctions, such as disapproval by others. These mechanisms can lead to poor results through amplification of individual error. Sunstein further shows that the information that is shared by the participants may affect the decisions disproportionately, and the information may cascade when shared sequentially: the opinions already voiced tend to lead to withholding of private knowledge to the detriment of the quality of the overall decision. Further, the phenomenon of group polarization may affect the reasonability of the group choice: members of the deliberating body may end up adopting a more extreme version of the position they had before deliberation began.⁹⁰

It seems inevitable that the social persuasion link can be used in good and bad ways. As Sunstein notes, the process of group polarization is not entirely unreasonable. If several individual reasoners, based on different premises, arrive at the same conclusion, this does affect the rational believability of the given claim.⁹¹ The process is troublesome only if the

86 Solomon, "Groupthink," 28, identifies the traditional picture with the views of Plato, Mill, Popper, and Longino.

87 Sunstein, "Deliberating Groups." Part of Sunstein's argumentation is based on the heuristics and biases –literature and summarized as "garbage in – garbage out," or worse, in cases of amplification as "some garbage in – more garbage out."

88 Solomon, "Groupthink".

89 Irving Janis, *Groupthink*. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1982). The force of this effect has also been questioned; see Won-Woo Park, "A Review of Research on Groupthink," *Journal of Behavioral Decision Making* 3 (2011). Nevertheless, groupthink seems like a real worry. Sunstein (2006) provides references to many relevant studies.

90 Sunstein, "Deliberating Groups," 197-205.

91 Sunstein, "Deliberating Groups," 204-205. Also, one of the major positions in the epistemology of disagreement is the *conciliatory position*, which holds that when one disagrees with an epistemic peer, one ought to scale down one's belief accordingly. See for example Richard Feldman and Ted A. Warfield, eds. *Disagreement*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), for discussion.

agreement affects the judgment disproportionately. If the original basis for the individual judgments is poor, essentially the same, or involves biases, the result may be irrational.

What, then, can be done to combat these effects? Sunstein argues that we might take lessons from the so-called *prediction markets*.⁹² This is a fairly new innovation. The central idea of a prediction market is to take advantage of the information-aggregating features of a market. Various such markets have been created and they have done well in predicting future events, and in many domains they have outdone deliberating groups. They impose incentives on diverse people to disclose information without facing reputational sanctions. Because of their structure, they have been able to eliminate, rather than amplify individual errors. They have, in fact, been very accurate, failing only in cases where there has not been much information to disperse. Sunstein also notes that they have not been vulnerable to manipulation. It is not the case that such markets could be used in everything; they do not seem very adequate for dealing with normative matters and the idea of sharing all the relevant information is not always feasible.

Solomon emphasizes that she does not advocate dissent as thought in the traditional picture, which sees dissent as valuable because it leads to criticism, which supposedly leads to the sharpening of views, and ultimately to consensus. The group deliberation may after all lead to amplification of errors too. What is crucial in her view is that dissent is valuable even if there is no discussion, because it keeps the information available.⁹³

What we should learn from this, however, is that there should be strong incentives for sharing information: epistemic diversity in the deliberating body ought to be promoted, and dissent valued. Sunstein argues that deliberating bodies should be made aware of the epistemic problems of deliberation. The answer to combating the effect boils down to educating deliberating citizens about the ways that we tend to go wrong on the group level and how information sharing can combat that. Again, we are not determined to do badly in groups, but we need to have appropriate dispositions for reasoning well in groups, and the group reasoning may have to be structured so that irrational effects are marginalized.⁹⁴

4. Discussion

We should now take stock of the empirical material, and its relation to the deliberative ideal described in section 2. After that, I will close by discussing the nature of justification in deliberation.

The literature review above gave reason to believe that although human beings are capable of reasoning well, there are many specifics to our belief-forming methods and strategies that considerably affect its relative reliability. It also emerged that the disposition to apply normatively appropriate methods is a good predictor of normatively appropriate

92 See Sunstein "Deliberating Groups," 205-209. See the text for further references on this fairly new innovation.

93 Solomon "Groupthink," 38-39.

94 Sunstein, "Deliberating Groups," 209.

responses to test questions of different types, after general cognitive ability has been partialled out. The relevant kind of proper examination of claims that ideally results from these dispositions applies both to moral and empirical claims.

In some measure, this picture also lends support to Harvey Siegel's position that a *critical thinker* is the appropriate educational ideal.⁹⁵ This ideal contains essentially two elements. First, "[t]o be a critical thinker is to be appropriately moved by reasons."⁹⁶ Siegel argues that there is a deep conceptual connection between rationality and critical thinker: "[t]o be a rational person is to believe and act on the basis of reasons."⁹⁷ Further, "a critical thinker is one who appreciates and accepts the importance, and convicting force, of reasons."⁹⁸ In order to do this, one must understand both the general principles of reasoning and the field-specific criteria of good reasoning, and understand how the field-specific reasons justify through their relation to general principles of good reasoning.⁹⁹

The second, and no less important, part of critical thinking consists of the critical spirit. The critical spirit is realized through certain attitudes and dispositions, habits of mind, and character traits that are required to actually apply the methods of critical thinking. Mere ability to assess the quality of reasoning is not sufficient; one must have the motivation to apply these skills. The ideal critical thinker wants to evaluate the evidential force of reasons, because she values intellectual honesty, justice to evidence, sympathetic and impartial consideration of interests and objectivity.¹⁰⁰

The notion of critical thinker should be appealing to those deliberative theorists that worry about the epistemic quality of deliberation.¹⁰¹ If the citizens that enter the deliberative arena are able to approximate this ideal, we would seem to have a better chance of an epistemically justifying deliberative process, and thereby a better chance of reaching a decision that could be the object of free and reasoned agreement among individuals.¹⁰² Such citizens would also seem more likely to fare well in publically justifying public policies to those who are bound by it, and in seeking reasons that you and your opponent can accept.¹⁰³ Having such citizens in deliberation would also seem to increase the likelihood that the decision reached is legitimate, because part of the legitimacy of a decision derives from the epistemic value of the procedure.¹⁰⁴ Further, an epistemically commendable process also requires that we give the relevant preferences and reasons of each participant

95 Siegel, "Educating Reason."

96 Siegel, "Educating Reason," 32.

97 Siegel, "Educating Reason," *ibid.*

98 Siegel, "Educating Reason," 33.

99 Siegel, "Educating Reason," 37

100 Siegel, "Educating Reason," 39.

101 Though even if one did not accept any epistemic commitments in one's justification of deliberation as a political method, one could still be moved by the educational ideal.

102 Cohen, "Deliberation and Democratic Legitimacy," 73.

103 Gutmann and Thompson, *Democracy and Disagreement*, ch. 2.

104 Estlund, "Beyond Fairness and Deliberation."

sufficient time to influence the deliberation.¹⁰⁵ Without proper time, the participants are not able to form adequate conception of the overall justification of dissenters' position and take advantage of the epistemic value of dissent or the social persuasion link. A critical thinker would know this.

There are then empirical, epistemological, moral, and political reasons for teaching not only the skills and norms of proper reasoning but also the appropriate dispositions and attitudes that support the use of those skills and norms. This seems to have strong educational implications on teaching critical thinking. However, I will not discuss that issue further here. Instead, I will close by examining Solomon's argumentation that the problems of group rationality show that epistemological internalism is not acceptable.¹⁰⁶

Solomon argues that the facts of group deliberation support epistemological externalism. The traditional picture of deliberation is internalist, she argues, because it is premised on the idea that rational dialogue between two individuals improves the reasoning of those individuals: it corrects errors in reasoning, exposes presuppositions, and transmits new evidence. Each individual is able to improve, because the evidence is weighed and errors are pointed out to each in the dialogue. Such a dialogue makes all the individuals reflect on all the relevant evidence in the manner that internalism seems to entail. But as has been observed, the process does not always correct: it may preserve or even amplify errors. Therefore, deliberation, meaning (here) the internalist common reflection of reasons, does not necessarily produce epistemically good results. Therefore, internalism is false. Externalism is the denial of internalism. Therefore, it is true.

The idea that dialogue and mutual testing of claims is epistemically beneficial is indeed traditional, but it also includes many further theses that internalism in itself does not entail.¹⁰⁷ Solomon¹⁰⁸ cites the definition given by a representative internalist, Roderick Chisholm¹⁰⁹: "If a person is internally justified in believing a certain thing, then this is something he can know by reflecting upon his own state of mind." It is indeed the case that this is the central premise of internalism and denying it makes one an externalist. However, as James Pryor has pointed out, the *simple internalist position* is that justification supervenes on facts that one is in a position to know by reflection alone.¹¹⁰ But only a separate and stronger claim, known as *access internalism*, demands that one always has special access to one's justificatory states, and deliberation without access to one's reasons seems difficult. Access internalism is stronger, because it is possible for the justification to supervene on

105 Dahl, "Procedural Democracy," 109-110.

106 Solomon, "Groupthink."

107 Admittedly, if one finds the ideal of a critical thinker, or some essential parts of the critical thinking, appealing, one might also find some form of epistemological internalism appealing. The kind of analysis and evaluation of evidence and different arguments emphasized by the ideal seems very congenial to internalism. But we must clearly separate the deliberative ideal and the critical thinking ideal from the epistemological thesis of internalism.

108 Solomon, "Groupthink," 28-29.

109 Roderick Chisholm, *Theory of Knowledge* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1989), 7.

110 James Pryor, "Highlights of Recent Work in Epistemology: A Survey Article," *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* 52 (2001): 104-106, doi: 10.1093/bjps/52.1.95.

internal things, which one is in a *position* to know, without actually being able to access those reasons. This could be, for example, because one is epistemically untrained, or, as the case might often be, one has wrong beliefs about what it takes to be justified. So, one could accept simple internalism without requiring that one is able to justify one's beliefs in a debate.

But even accepting access internalism does not imply any commitments on the traditional picture of deliberation or its epistemic qualities. Nor should we claim that a typical epistemological internalist holds the so-called dialectical condition of justification: that a necessary condition of justification is that one is able to defend one's position in a public debate.¹¹¹ A dialectical condition is not popular among epistemologists.¹¹² The standard counterexample is the case of a diffident schoolboy asked about the year on which the Battle of Hastings was fought. Being shy, he is unable to produce the correct answer, though he believes that it was 1066, and remembers well the justifying source on which he formed this belief. Dialectical success is not sufficient for justification either, because one might succeed in defending one's claim with biased evidence, fallacious arguments, or because of informational cascading.

So the proper target of Solomon's criticism is not internalism, it is rather the assumption that any deliberation improves reasoning, or that joint deliberation always produces epistemically the best results. One might read this as another reason for not supporting the dialectical requirement of justification, given that we are justified in identifying the dialectical condition as the appropriate target of her criticism. The fact that a matter is debated does not always improve the quality of the relevant beliefs. For the deliberative theorist the dialectical criterion is essential, but he or she need not take a stand on the internalism/externalism –debate. Yet, the deliberative ideal introduced in section two certainly seems congenial to internalist aspirations. The empirical results suggested that the ability to distance oneself from one's own beliefs, to assess the evidence for them, and to monitor one's belief-forming practices is a key factor in improving the objective quality of one's beliefs. This seems to support an internalist approach to justified beliefs.

Solomon's point that a group deliberation is not necessarily epistemically more efficient than a process where the same individuals reflect and give their answer independently seems undeniable. But internalism does not force one to choose one method over another. Instead, it holds that the participants are only justified in their beliefs, and their consequent answers, if they can know this by reflection alone. They would know it by reflection

111 For the view that justification requires that one is, under normal conditions, able to do so, see Adam Leite, "On Justifying and Being Justified," *Philosophical Issues* 14 (2004), doi: 10.1111/j.1533-6077.2004.00029.x. Regardless, we must differentiate two different ideas. It is one thing to hold that a normal human in normal circumstances ought to be able to justify a claim publicly, because one's justification is typically such that one can transfer it into a feasible public case. It is another thing altogether to hold that justification is constituted by this ability.

112 But see for example Edmund Craig, *Knowledge and the State of Nature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990). See for example Markus Lammenranta, "Disagreement, Skepticism, and the Dialectical Conception of Justification," *International Journal for the Study of Skepticism* 1 (2011), for further discussion.

alone if they were, for example, able to access all their reasons for their answer. We are justified in believing the aggregate result of the prediction market only if we can know by reflection alone whether the result is justified. We check the result, compare it with reality, repeat the test often enough times, and finally reach a state of mind based on which we can say that we are justified in believing that a prediction market produces results worth believing.¹¹³ Internalists and externalists place different demands on the chosen method of belief-formation, whatever the method is. Personally, I would be quite surprised if the individuals responsible for the aggregate result typically had no reasons for their responses. But if they typically did not and yet produced the correct result, this would cast a doubt on the importance of internalist requirement. However, what is important here is that internalist need not require that there is always a deliberation. If some questions are best treated first separately and then aggregated, so be it. But there would still be a condition on being justified in believing the individual result and the aggregate result.

In any case, the internalist criterion of justification is not sufficient for proper deliberation. It is not enough to be justified in believing or know that one's proposal is good; one must be able to defend it sufficiently clearly in relevant arena from mutually acceptable premises.¹¹⁴ But as a deliberative requirement, the dialectical condition is just what is needed and the deliberative theorist should be aware of the problems that groupthink can produce. There are many suggestions on how to improve group reasoning. Solomon notes that some structure must be followed to avoid the effect, but more research on the topic is needed.¹¹⁵ But to put the result into perspective, we might observe that it has not been shown that a deliberation could not justify the conclusion, or that it goes wrong more often than not, or that in general the truth-approximating qualities of deliberation do not meet some intuitively acceptable threshold. Deliberation has only been shown to be vulnerable to problems, especially under certain conditions. But perception, memory, intuition, and testimony are also known to be subject to problems of their own, and that has not led us to conclude that they cannot justify. We have discussed various reasons why deliberation might produce unjustified results. But we have also seen reason to believe that given that one's case for a given belief is examined by one's epistemic peers, who have been properly informed¹¹⁶ about the issue at hand, care about the common good, and who are

113 The mere fact that sensory perception, external evidence, must be used to reach a justified belief about the reliability of prediction markets does not support externalism.

114 Supporting the traditional picture does not in any case entail that dialogue is the only, or the most important, test of justification. One might just assume that over an extended period, open dialogue is likely to zero in on the truth, which is again a different claim.

115 Solomon, "Groupthink," 32.

116 Deliberations may be organized so that the deliberators are provided with expert information about the issue both in written and oral form. This was the case, for example, in the study by Maija Setälä, Kimmo Grönlund, and Kaisa Herne, "Citizen Deliberation on Nuclear Power: A comparison between two decision methods," *Political Studies* 58 (2010). This study did not find systematic evidence of social pressure between groups that ended their deliberation with a secret ballot and groups that had to formulate a common statement, thus countering the evidence discussed by Sunstein. However, in addition to this availability of expert knowledge (which Cass Sunstein ("Group Judgements: Statistical Means, Deliberation, and Information Markets," *N.Y.U. Law Review* 80 (2005): 1011)

able to override system 1 judgments with system 2 processing, because they possess the relevant epistemic dispositions, some justification is incurred.

5. Conclusion

This essay started out by formulating an ideal picture of democratic deliberation and the deliberative agent. The ideal of deliberative democracy requires that one is rational in deliberating about a given policy. To participate in a deliberation, one must accept that the process, in which the reasons are given and publicly scrutinized, aims to produce a rational consensus, and thus a decision on the issue, based on which a given policy is implemented. The rationality of this process is dependent on the epistemic behavior, acts, and dispositions of the agents participating in it. This means, among other things, that one ought listen to each participant, to analyze the strength and evidence presented in the discussion carefully, and the reasoning from that evidence to beliefs, and further to policy decisions. It was also noted that the ability to take a skeptical stance and evaluate matters critically was more important than individual computing abilities.

This ideal was then compared with some empirical results about the reasoning capabilities of the typical citizen and groups of citizens. It was argued that although there are serious problems in the quality of our reasoning, there is no evidence that human beings could not deliberate rationally. However, the empirical literature tells us that in many cases a critical thinker would be justified in thinking that the mere fact that one's fellow citizen believes something is not sufficient for the critical thinker to believe that the belief's content is true. But it must be borne in mind that the debate on the significance of the empirical evidence is complex. Adler (2008) argues that it has not been shown that the empirical results of Heuristics and Biases cast no shadow on the typical justificational methods of the average citizen and I agree.¹¹⁷ Though the implications of these results need to be put in perspective, the justificational problems do not disappear altogether.

So, in objective epistemic terms, it seems that one ought to carefully examine the evidence one is given by one's fellow citizens, and its implications to the deliberative decision at hand. We all fall victim to epistemically inferior practices occasionally. The testing function of public deliberation can be useful to differentiate the beliefs based on bad practices from beliefs based on good practices, but also to prevent the use of new bad epistemic practices and support the use of good practices. Yet, we also saw that unless the procedure of deliberation is controlled, it is liable to produce problems of its own.

has acknowledged as a possible factor reducing error amplification), these groups were composed of people from different segments of society (also noted by Sunstein ("The Law of Group Polarization," *The Journal of Political Philosophy* 10 (2002): 186, doi: 10.1111/1467-9760.00148) as a reasonability enhancing factor, because it counters group polarizing), was guided by rules of procedure, and had an impartial moderator present.

117 Jonathan E. Adler, "Presupposition, Attention, and Why-Questions," in *Reasoning*, ed. Adler and Rips.

Both the ideal of deliberation and the ideal of critical thinking could make one hospitable to the epistemological thesis of internalism, but this conceptual matter was not treated extensively here. It was only argued that the traditional picture of epistemically beneficial dialogue contains more commitments than internalism, and that at least parts of the empirical evidence can be interpreted so as to support internalism. Noting both the fallibility of individual and group reasoning and the importance of the political decisions, the kind of reflection required by internalism (and the critical thinking –ideal) seems essential for justification. To reach normatively appropriate results reflection of one's beliefs requires that one justifiably believes the relevant premises and principles and methods of reasoning. To actually reach justified beliefs with a meaningful frequency requires further that one possess certain dispositions, attitudes, and habits of mind. This means that we also reflect on the ways we form beliefs: every once in a while, we must be able to ask "why do I believe *that*?" A democratic deliberation, a natural habitat for disagreement, is just one context where this should happen. We must be willing and able to ask ourselves why we believe as we do.

Regardless, part of the motivation of a rational code of conduct for the deliberation is not solely epistemic: the basis is partially moral and political. Because a deliberation must end with a decision, a common ground must be found, even when the prospects for establishing it are not good. Whether one is an externalist or internalist, one has a right to demand that decisions are justified with reasons one can accept. One has that right as an epistemic agent but also as a citizen bound by the decision. The epistemologist can use the inability of the diffident schoolboy to establish that showing and knowing are different things. The political philosopher must instead show how we can manage to decide together despite this difference. The empirical evidence that we have examined here does not rule out the possibility of reasonable democratic deliberation, given appropriate education of the deliberating agents.

Harvey Siegel

New Work on Critical Thinking: Comments on Frímannsson, Holma and Ritola

I am grateful to Guðmundur Frímannsson, Katariina Holma and Juho Ritola for their close attention to my work and for developing it in valuable new directions. It is gratifying that, to varying degrees, all three embrace and build on the 'reasons conception' of critical thinking developed in *Educating Reason*¹ and subsequent publications. I am fortunate not to have to defend myself from their criticisms, for there are few if any in these papers.² Instead I focus here on the new ground they cultivate. Each makes important contributions, detailed next.

Frímannsson's 'Reasons and Normativity in Critical thinking' rightly notes the fundamental *normative* character of critical thinking, and offers a rich philosophical account of that normativity and its manifestation in the central role that reasons play in both the theory and practice of critical thinking. He connects his analysis both to key figures (Plato, Aristotle, Kant) in the history of Western philosophy and to important authors in contemporary discussions (Parfit, Broome, Skorupski, Scanlon, etc.). As Frímannsson's discussion makes clear, for these latter writers the notion of *reasons* is central to their philosophical efforts; their theories of reasons/rationality/ normativity are complex and wide-ranging, crossing conventional boundaries between epistemology, ethics, action theory and other sub-areas of philosophy. Like Holma, Frímannsson emphasizes the *character* of the critical thinker and the psychological barriers that must be overcome in order to cultivate that character in students. He quite correctly notes the somewhat limited reach of my own account of reasons and instructively enlarges that account by utilizing Skorupski's analysis of *reasons relations*. While I cannot commit myself to all the details of Skorupski's account, I wholeheartedly embrace his views that reasons are normatively basic and cannot be reduced either to natural facts or to supervenience relations, and that there is a tight conceptual connection between reasons, rationality and normativity. My own view, that reasons are

1 H. Siegel, *Educating Reason: Rationality, Critical Thinking, and Education* (New York: Routledge, 1988).

2 This is of course compatible with their being excellent manifestations of critical thinking, since critical thinking needn't be critical in the sense of being negative. Cf. H. Siegel, 'Must Thinking Be Critical to Be Critical Thinking?', *Philosophy of the Social Sciences* 20.4: 453-461 (1991).

Harvey Siegel, University of Miami, USA
E-mail: hsiegel@miami.edu

Studier i Pædagogisk Filosofi | www.ojs.statsbiblioteket.dk/index.php/spf | ISSN nr. 22449140

Årgang 4 | Nr. 1 | 2015 | side 55-62

considerations that *purport to support* the items (beliefs, claims, propositions, judgments, actions, etc.) for which they are reasons – and that good reasons are those that actually do so support those items – seems to me, as it seems to Frímannsson, to be quite in the spirit of Skorupski's account.³ This notion of reasons corresponds to Broome's *pro tanto* reasons: "things that count in favour of...or against" believing something or acting in some particular way, as Frímannsson puts it.

Frímannsson is right, I think, both to accept Broome's claim that rationality is not a matter of "responding *correctly* to reasons" (among other reasons, because sometimes we can reasonably disagree, with neither of us responding *incorrectly* to reasons⁴) and to deny that this claim, concerning what rationality is not, requires the rejection of the view, defended by both Frímannsson and me, that rationality is a matter of being *appropriately* moved by reasons. This 'appropriate movement', on my view, has two parts that correspond to the two components of critical thinking, the *reason assessment* component and the *critical spirit* component. These in turn correspond to two features of reasons: their *probative force* – the degree to which they in fact support the things for which they are reasons – and their *normative impact* – the degree to which they actually move us to believe, judge and/or act in ways that reflect that probative force. One is *appropriately* moved by reasons when one believes, judges and acts in accordance with the probative or evidential force of those reasons – that is, one assesses the probative force of those reasons well. One is *appropriately moved* by reasons when one believes, judges or acts on the basis of one's appreciation of that normative force – that is, one believes, judges and acts as one does because one recognizes that the reasons in play support that belief, judgment or action to the degree that they in fact do; the assessment of the probative strength of the reasons guides the belief, judgment or action in question.⁵ Frímannsson's discussion faithfully reflects these features of my view, and builds on them insightfully. His rejection of an analysis of 'being appropriately moved by reasons' in terms of desires is insightful, as is his positive account of it in terms of both rational assessment and the character traits constitutive of the critical spirit. His insistence on the central role of education in developing both the skills and the character of the critical thinker is welcome. I am grateful for his philosophically rich and sympathetic discussion.

Holma's 'The Critical Spirit: Emotional and Moral Dimensions of Critical Thinking' offers an important refinement and deepening of the notion of the *critical spirit*, the notion most underdeveloped in my account. I welcome her insistence that that spirit includes both emotional and moral dimensions. She quite rightly notes the popularity in educational

3 H. Siegel, 'The Role of Reasons in Moral Education', in D.J. deRuyter and S. Meidema, eds., *Moral Education and Development: A Lifetime Commitment* (Festschrift for Jan Steutel), Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, 2011, pp. 59-69.

4 H. Siegel, 'Argumentation and the Epistemology of Disagreement', *Cogency* (2013) 5.1: 135-170.

5 H. Siegel, *Rationality Redeemed?: Further Dialogues on an Educational Ideal* (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 49-51.

policy circles of a 'skills only' view of critical thinking, and effectively argues that this view, which ignores the critical spirit component, will not do.

Consider, first, the place of emotions in critical thinking. Holma rightly rejects a sharp emotion/reason dichotomy, noting, as has Scheffler,⁶ that emotions play important roles in cognition: as she puts it, they “work in cooperation with cognition in the processes of interpreting the world.” They also play an important role in the strengthening of moral agency, a fact that “has enormous educational significance.” Most importantly, they play a crucial role in motivating critical thinking, a central dimension of the critical spirit.

Consider next the moral dimensions of critical thinking. Holma rightly insists that education centrally involves the formation of persons and so is inevitably morally charged, and so that educational aims cannot be morally neutral. The reasons conception of critical thinking involves the moral principle of respect for persons – on my account, that principle *justifies* the ideal, since any other sort of education which did not aim to foster students' critical thinking would fail to treat them with respect⁷ -- and is in that respect at least a moral component of the ideal.

Holma urges that the ideal of critical thinking “presupposes the epistemic value of truth”, and that the commitment to the ideal of truth “also has a moral dimension.” She is right that the *commitment* has a moral dimension, but this should be distinguished from the claim that truth itself has such a dimension. Holma is certainly right that sometimes we are morally obliged to seek the truth, even though it would be easier for us not to do so. And she is right to insist that “[t]he *commitment* to the ideal of truth...has a moral dimension”, and that “[t]he *decision* to investigate...exemplifies the moral nature of the pursuit of truth.” (my emphases) But this doesn't establish that the value of truth is itself moral rather than epistemic. And it doesn't rule out the possibility of pursuing the truth for immoral ends. Rather, it is these *commitments* and *decisions* that are the proper locus of morality. I am not sure whether this is a substantive difference between us; I hope not. We are agreed about the moral character of the commitments and decisions.⁸

6 I. Scheffler, *In Praise of the Cognitive Emotions and Other Essays in the Philosophy of Education* (New York: Routledge, 1991); cf. Siegel, *Educating Reason*, ch. 2.

7 Holma thus understates the case when she says that “the educational ideal of critical thinking is compatible with the moral requirement of respect for persons.” On my view, the ideal is not just compatible with the moral principle; it is *required* by it, since no other educational agenda honors that principle. The principle of respect for persons is not the only justification offered for the ideal, but it is the most fundamental. Cf. Siegel, *Educating Reason*, chapter 3.

8 Holma's very brief remarks on the “semantic account of truth” might be clearer. What is it for a true sentence, description or theory to “hold up”? She endeavors to avoid a correspondence theory (without so naming it), in my view unnecessarily. She is right that “the concept of critical thinking is fundamentally linked to the concept of truth”; this linkage is I think rather straightforward: critical thinking involves competently assessing the probative force of reasons, such reasons constitute or supply reasons for belief, and believing that *p* just is believing that *p* is true. On the correspondence theory I recommend Alvin Goldman's admirably clear discussion and defense in chapter two of his *Knowledge in a Social World* (Oxford, 1999); for discussion see my essay review of Goldman's book, *Argumentation* (2002) 16.3: 369-382, and my ‘Knowledge, Truth and Education’, in D. Carr, ed., *Education, Knowledge, and Truth: Beyond the Postmodern Impasse*, London: Routledge, 1998, pp. 19-36.

Holma urges that “this moral ideal [of respect for persons] should be presented to students as a criterion of thinking critically on moral and political issues.” This may be right, but it needs to be handled carefully. It is not a criterion in the sense that epistemic criteria – those that determine the quality of candidate reasons – are criteria of critical thinking.⁹ However, the principle of respect for persons can function as a criterion determining the quality of thinking and arguments concerning moral and political matters, insofar as it is itself established as strongly justified on the basis of the epistemic criteria just mentioned. I agree with Holma that it is so justified, and so may rightly be considered a criterion in this sense in the moral/political domain.

However, while we agree that the principle enjoys that justificatory status, we apparently do not agree on what affords it that status. Holma rests her case for the principle on “two crucial insights of philosophical pragmatism”: Peirce’s fallibilism and Goodman’s ‘initial credibility.’ We are agreed concerning fallibilism, although Holma understands that doctrine – that human knowledge¹⁰ is essentially uncertain and always open to revision – to involve also the claim that although uncertain and revisable, “the bodies of knowledge we now have...have...survived the process of evolution to this point; as such, they provide the best available starting point for how to proceed at the present moment with respect to further inquiry.” This claim about current beliefs (“bodies of knowledge we now have”) being “the *best* available starting point” (my emphasis) is not well understood as a part or implication of fallibilism; it is a further, independent pragmatist thesis. In fact it is very like (if not identical to) Goodman’s thesis concerning initial credibility: as Holma puts it, speaking for both Peirce and Goodman, “we have to begin our thinking, doubting and criticizing from where we are and thus start the refinement of our thinking from our current conceptions. Our current conceptions have some initial credibility, because they have been formulated during the generations in interaction with a surrounding world as well as other people.”

I agree with Holma that the difference between this view and an “all-embracing Cartesian doubt is clear: in cases where we have no serious alternatives to our current beliefs,

9 For example, a candidate reason that begs the question is not a good reason, while one that enhances the rational believability of its object is a good reason. Epistemic criteria like these determine what counts as a good reason. The principle of respect for persons is not a criterion of this sort. I have discussed such criteria in many places, from *Educating Reason* on. There is a close connection between something’s being a good reason and its role in a good argument, as John Biro and I have argued in articulating our *epistemic theory* of argument/argumentation. Cf., for example, J. Biro and H. Siegel, ‘Epistemic Normativity, Argumentation, and Fallacies’, *Argumentation* (1997) 11.3: 277-292; J. Biro and H. Siegel, ‘Pragma-Dialectic versus Epistemic Theories of Arguing and Arguments: Rivals or Partners?’, in P. Houtlosser and A. van Rees, eds., *Considering Pragma-Dialectics: A Festschrift for Frans H. van Eemeren on the Occasion of his 60th Birthday*, Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum, 2006, pp. 1-10; H. Siegel and J. Biro, ‘Rationality, Reasonableness, and Critical Rationalism: Problems with the Pragma-Dialectical View’,

Argumentation (2008) 22.2: 191-203; or H. Siegel, ‘Argument Norms: How Contextual Can They Be?’, in F. H. van Eemeren and B. Garssen, eds., *Reflections on Theoretical Issues in Argumentation Theory*, Dordrecht: Springer (in press).

10 Setting aside here difficult cases involving knowledge of necessary truths and the like.

we do not have reasons, or justification, to reject them merely because they are uncertain.” The mere possibility that a belief is false is not a reason to think that it is; neither uncertainty nor possible falsity are themselves justification-defeaters or falsity-indicators. But what is the epistemic status of beliefs enjoying initial credibility: is that status itself a justifier or an indicator of justificatory stature, such that initially credible beliefs enjoy, in virtue of that initial credibility, positive epistemic status? Holma doesn’t quite say this, but this is one common and common sense way of understanding Goodman’s doctrine. And she seems to understand it this way when she appeals to the initial credibility of the principle of respect for persons as a justifying reason for thinking that “the critical spirit is committed... to the moral value of respect for persons.”

The point I’m belaboring is perhaps minor in the scheme of things; I applaud Holma’s account of the critical spirit, and we are agreed that the principle of respect for persons enjoys positive epistemic status. My worry here concerns just the justificatory force of initial credibility: I deny that such credibility confers or constitutes positive epistemic status.¹¹ Rather than embracing Holma’s pragmatic justification of the principle of respect for persons, I favor a Kantian justification in terms of what persons deserve *qua* persons. But we are agreed both that the principle does enjoy that status, and that, insofar as it does, critical thinkers will embrace it on that basis.

Despite the points of disagreement just rehearsed, Holma and I are very much in agreement on most of her major claims, as already noted. I close this section of the paper by endorsing Holma’s defense of critical thinking from the criticisms she attributes to Burbules and Berk and to Fraser. On the first: she is surely right both that while the skills-only view of critical thinking is fairly criticizable for its alleged moral neutrality, the reasons conception and the version of it she defends is not; and that the subordination of critical thinking to the political program of critical pedagogy is untenable. As she well puts it, “It is in the very nature of the ideal of critical thinking that we must be free to think critically about political programs, ideologies, and religious authorities, both those which are dear to us and those which are not.”¹² On the second, anti-individualist challenge: Holma is surely right that “education always has something to do with individual persons”,¹³ and that while the dangers Fraser points to are real, their avoidance cannot come at the cost of removing individuals from educational theorizing, any more than individual students can be removed from educational practice. Her paper is a welcome contribution to the theory of critical thinking. Especially welcome is her important deepening of our understanding of the critical spirit.

11 This is in fact the biggest philosophical disagreement I had with my mentor Israel Scheffler. Cf. H. Siegel, ‘Justification By Balance’, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* (1992) 52.1: 27-46.

12 I have argued for this point repeatedly. Among other places, cf. *Rationality Redeemed?*, Part Two.

13 Cf. E. Robertson, ‘The Epistemic Aims of Education’, in H. Siegel, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Education* (Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 11-34.

Ritola's 'Deliberative Democracy, the Deliberating Agent, and Critical Thinking: An Ideal Picture and Some Empirical Challenges' effectively addresses several epistemological matters that have long been at or near the center of my own concerns, and insightfully connects those epistemological concerns with issues in political philosophy generally and deliberative democracy in particular. It is an ambitious paper, treating a large literature and bringing empirical research to bear on fundamental philosophical matters. The paper insightfully brings work in epistemology into fruitful conversation with both empirical research and recent work in political philosophy. Its main thesis is that the importance of the deliberative democratic process, coupled with our (empirically established) difficulty in deliberating effectively, highlights the need for education to foster "not only skills but also dispositions for critical thinking." This jibes well with both Frimannsson's and Holma's discussions; all three authors embrace the reasons conception's understanding of critical thinking as involving both the reason assessment and the critical spirit components of the ideal, and emphasize the educational centrality of the fostering of the dispositions, habits of mind and character traits constitutive of that spirit. I am heartened by this agreement on this fundamental point, and delighted that all three authors contribute importantly to the deepening of my earlier sketchy articulation of it.

Ritola's discussion of deliberative democracy and the importance of the epistemic quality of deliberations – for the democratic decisions reached through such deliberations to be good ones, the reasons on which they are based must genuinely support them, and the reasoning employed must itself be good – is instructive. It highlights the complex interaction among the moral, political and epistemic constraints on deliberation and the difficulties involved in simultaneously honoring them all. It highlights as well the need for citizen deliberators to "have certain inferential or dialectical skills that allow him or her to approximate truth and moral value in deliberation, or reach justified beliefs." Here the deliberative ideal confronts ugly empirical facts: we are, the research shows, lousy reasoners and deliberators; that research "casts serious doubt on our ability as cognitive agents to live up to these requirements." The difficulties are well known: among other problems, our individual reasoning is inferentially flawed, biased in various ways, insufficiently responsive to contrary evidence, and often post-hoc. Our collective reasoning suffers from similar flaws. Ritola reviews the research systematically; I won't repeat the details here. The worry is that these difficulties undermine "the ideal picture of a citizen as an epistemic agent" that deliberative democracy requires.

Ritola's lengthy review of the literature results in a nuanced picture according to which our abilities as reasoners and deliberators are far from perfect, but that educational intervention can help: "We are prone to err in certain ways, but we are able to learn the proper standards of reasoning. However, in order to perform according to these standards, we must also develop and foster attitudes for overcoming these errors. The development of such attitudes, and the consequent improvement in reasoning tasks is not tied to sheer cognitive computing ability." Perhaps surprisingly, it is the development of attitudes and dispositions, rather than improved reasoning skills and abilities, that is crucial to the over-

coming of our untutored, 'natural' weaknesses as reasoners. Here is a new and welcome reason for emphasizing the fostering of the critical spirit in our educational efforts: not only does it enhance student character, it also improves student reasoning. Ritola notes three further welcome results of doing so. First, "The kinds of skills and dispositions required for epistemically appropriate reasoning bear resemblance to the virtues emphasized in the literature on deliberative democracy." That is, citizens with robust critical spirits (who are competent reason assessors as well) will better approach the ideal of participants in democratic deliberation. Fans of democracy are thus well advised to favor educational efforts to foster both components – especially the critical spirit component – of critical thinking.¹⁴ Second, these dimensions of the critical spirit also enhance "the quality of one's moral judgment." Third, they can also enhance group reasoning, and help protect such reasoning from predictable defects: as Ritola puts it, "we are not determined to do badly in groups, but we need to have appropriate dispositions for reasoning well in groups." In sum: our reasoning, our moral judgment, our ability to participate in and contribute to high quality democratic deliberation, and our ability to reason well in groups all depend not only on our ability to competently assess reasons, but on our dispositions and characters as well.

Ritola briefly defends two further theses: *epistemological internalism* and *dialectical justification*. His discussion of internalism, though brief, is compelling; the connection between this epistemological doctrine and the educational ideal of critical thinking is, as he argues, not necessary, but the two doctrines are nevertheless plausibly linked. As Robertson argues, whatever the case might be concerning the epistemological debate, *in education* we should be internalists.¹⁵ Ritola does not defend dialectical justification – the idea, roughly, that a necessary condition of being justified in believing that *p* is being able to defend *p* – as a general epistemological doctrine. Rather, he argues that *in deliberative contexts*, those of interest to proponents of deliberative democracy, "the dialectical condition is just what is needed." He argues that the empirical research he discusses supports both internalism and dialectical justification, though not unequivocally, and that Solomon's arguments to the contrary do not succeed. His arguments here could well be expanded, but they seem to me persuasive. Particularly important is Ritola's discussion of the ways in which epistemological, moral and political constraints on democratic deliberation intersect and interact. As he says, "The epistemologist can...establish that showing and knowing are different things. The political philosopher must instead show how we can manage to decide together despite this difference." His concluding sentence, that "The empirical evidence that we have examined here does not rule out the possibility of reasonable democratic deliberation, given appropriate education of the deliberating agents", should warm the hearts of friends of both rationality and democracy. And his earlier insistence that that 'appropriate education' should emphasize both the reason assessment and especially the

14 As I urged, but with considerably less specificity than Ritola, in *Educating Reason*, chapter 3.

15 Robertson, 'The Epistemic Aims of Education'.

critical spirit components of critical thinking should likewise warm the hearts of all those who favor that educational ideal.

The three papers together underline several important features of critical thinking: that the notion of critical thinking is importantly normative, in that episodes of thinking that meet its criteria are episodes of *good* thinking; that reasons come in many varieties, and the critical thinker must be able to evaluate them in all their many forms and strengths; that the critical thinker's beliefs, judgments and actions are, when appropriately moved by reasons, epistemically justified or warranted; that the critical spirit is an essential component of critical thinking, and that it is fundamentally a matter of character, so that helping students to develop the appropriate character and associated dispositions is an essential part of educating students to be critical; and that education that fosters critical thinking can contribute importantly to democratic deliberation. The papers also importantly deepen our understanding of the ideal, in particular its critical spirit component and its frequently overlooked moral dimensions, and strengthen its justification. I close as I began, by thanking our three authors for their important contributions to the articulation, defense, and further development of this fundamental educational ideal.

Knut Ove Æsøy

Refleksjon ein uttynna medisin?

Abstract

The main object of this article is to contribute to a more precise use of the concept reflection. The question is whether reflection has become an overused and diluted medicine in educational thinking. To answer this question I will examine the theoretical foundation of the concept, how it is understood and used. This article is a Habermas inspired interpretation of basic textbooks for teacher education. In these textbooks, reflection is presented as a good medicine for the professional teacher and that continuous reflection is a mean to improve the professional practice by developing consciousness in action. In conclusion, I will present a few recommendations on how to improve the understanding and use of reflection. My main goal is to provide reflection with a theoretical content and a clearer direction. Reflection is a search for knowledge, not based on experience and facts, but closely tied to philosophical thinking, critical theory and the ability to develop an overview.

Nøkkelord

Refleksjon, Jürgen Habermas, kunnskapsinteresser, orienteringskunnskap, meistringskunnskap, radikal kritikk, overblikk, medvitsregime, kritisk tenking

Innleiing

Ideen om uttynna medisin er henta frå homeopati. Dette er medisin som er hevda å vere meir aktiv, dess meir uttynna den er. Essensen, eller virkestoffet, er berre eit svakt minne som medisinen framleis har i seg. Spørsmålet er om refleksjonsomgrepet har blitt uttynna i pedagogisk tenking. Dette vil bli undersøkt ved hjelp av interpretasjon av nyare grunnleggande lærebøker for grunnskulelærerutdanninga. For å svare på kva som er virkestoffet i reflekteringa, vil eg gjere ei filosofisk undersøking etter tydinga av omgrepet. Artikkelen vil byrje med ei drøfting av omgrepet refleksjon ut frå eit filosofisk perspektiv. Eg vil særskilt legge vekt på Jürgen Habermas si forståing og bruk av refleksjon saman med hans analyse av ulike kunnskapsinteresser. Den neste delen er ein analyse av utvalde grunnleggande lærebøker for grunnskulelærerutdanninga. Eg vil tolke sitat frå desse grunnbøkene basert på dette filosofiske perspektivet. I avslutninga vil eg komme med anbefalingar for å auke virkestoffet i bruken av refleksjon i pedagogisk tenking.

Ein kvar bruk av eit omgrep over tid, vil føre til endring i omgrepet. Ei slik endring i innhaldet bør bli supplert av ei drøfting om essensen av omgrepet. Vi må ta eit skritt tilbake og få eit overblikk over både den pragmatiske bruken og den avgjerande forståinga

Knut Ove Æsøy, Østfold University College, Norge
E-mail: koa@hiof.no

Studier i Pædagogisk Filosofi | www.ojs.statsbiblioteket.dk/index.php/spf | ISSN nr. 22449140

Årgang 4 | Nr. 1 | 2015 | side 63-74

av omgrepet refleksjon. Wikipedia kan bli oppfatta som eit uttrykk for ei generell overordna oppfatning av omgrepet slik det er i bruk. Det norske nettsida retta definisjonane inn mot fagfelte fysikk, filosofi og psykologi.¹ Etymologisk betyr omgrepet å bøye tilbake, eller å kaste tilbake. I fysikken er det snakk om refleksjon av fysiske fenomen. I psykologien handlar det i stor grad om sjølvinnsikt. I filosofisk samanheng er omgrepet forstått som ein metode for gjennomtenking. Det vil seie som rasjonelle logiske drøfting av filosofiske spørsmål. Dette er spørsmål som i utgangspunktet ikkje kan empirisk etterprøvast. Denne typen refleksjon gir støtte for orientering i livet. I profesjonstenking er refleksjon retta mot handlinga og det er snakk om både refleksjon i og over handling. Det er i dette landskapet at refleksjon har blitt innført som ein medisin i pedagogisk tenking. Spørsmålet er korleis nyare grunnleggande lærebøker for grunnskulelæraren oppfattar og brukar omgrepet. Eg vil antyda at medisinen til ei viss grad synes uttynna og at ein del av oppfatninga bør bli kritisert for å ha negative konsekvensar for profesjonsutøvinga. Intensjonen bak artikkelen er å rette refleksjonen mot spørsmål som handlar om søken etter meining, hensikta og retninga i livet, røyndomssyn, menneskesyn, kunnskapssyn og erkjenning. Dette er spørsmål og tema som er av interesse for ein kvar lærar i møtet med skulen, elevane og seg sjølv.

Tydinga av refleksjon – ei orientering

Jürgen Habermas har tatt opp temaet om refleksjon og kunnskap. Boka *Knowledge and Human Interests* har som mål å “[...] help to recover the forgotten experience of reflection.”² Habermas oppfattar refleksjonen som ei erfaring mennesket kan gjere seg ved å stille spørsmål som søker å gje meining i røyndomen. I boka viser Habermas at ein del av årsaka til at refleksjon har vorte ein gløymt erfaring er menneske sine kunnskapsinteresser. Kravet til at kunnskap skal vere vitskapleg erkjent, går på bekostning av høve for å erkjenne kunnskap ved hjelp av refleksjon.³ Å identifisere kunnskap som vitskapleg erkjenning kallar han for «scientism». Vitskapen si tru på seg sjølv, handlar om å validere påstandar på grunnlag av fakta og ikkje basert på ein epistemisk refleksjon om kva kunnskap og vitskap er.⁴ Refleksjon er ikkje lenger sett på som ein av fleire vitskaplege metodar for å erkjenne eller utvikle kunnskap. Faktakunnskap har hatt stor suksess og gjer at forståinga av vitskap i dag handlar om å validere fakta basert på empirisk vitskap. Dette er ein type vitskap som i all hovudsak har som interesse å utvikle meistringskunnskap (Verfügungswissen). Refleksjonen er underlagt den vitskaplege interessa for å utvikle kunnskap som gjer at menneske kan meistre arbeidet og livet. Utviklinga har transformert reflekterande kunnskap (Reflexionwissen) til produksjonskunnskap (Produktionwissen).⁵ Habermas antyder med dette at

1 <https://no.wikipedia.org/wiki/Refleksjon> Lesedato: 07.11.15.

2 Jürgen Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interests* (London: Heinemann 1972), vii.

3 Ibid., 80.

4 Ibid., 4-5.

5 Ibid., 47.

moderne tenking har mista av synet refleksjon som ein metode for erkjenning og i staden oppfattar refleksjon som ein metode for å støtte opp under empirisk forskning. Habermas viser at den moderne omfamninga av empirisk forskning gjer at vitskapen i seg sjølv får smalare arbeidsforhold. August Comte og positivismen si ekskludering av spekulasjon og anamnetisk tenking frå vitskapeleg aktivitet, kan oppfattast som ei byrjande uttynning av refleksjonsarbeidet. Spørsmål som det ikkje er mogleg å svare på ved hjelp av empirisk forskning får ikkje lenger posisjon som kunnskap, eller er oppfatta som ein lågare form for kunnskap utan vitskapeleg evidens.

Meistringskunnskap er kunnskap med interesse for kontroll. Trua på mennesket sin omforming eller erobring av naturen fører til ytre tryggleik og kontroll. Det er moderne naturvitskap som er modellen for denne typen kunnskap. Interesse for effektivitet, teknisk utnytting, prediksjon og manipulasjon blir kjerneverksemda. Dette gjelder vitskapelege spørsmål om naturen og menneske. Habermas omtaler Wilhelm Diltheys utvikling av historiefaget som ein positivistiske hermeneutikk. Diltheys forsøk på å skildre menneskelige handlingar slik dei verkeleg har skjedd, har meistringskunnskap som interesse. Hensikta med denne typen empirisk skildring av mennesket er å forstå for å auke den praktiske effektiviteten for mennesket.⁶ Skildringar og kartlegging av det empiriske mennesket har til hensikt å skape ytre tryggleik og kontroll. Medan naturvitskap har som mål å teknisk utnytte naturen, søker empirisk menneskevitskap ei praktisk effektivisering for og av mennesket. Formålet synes å vere å tilfredsstillte og lette livet for det arbeidande menneske.

Alternativet til meistringskunnskap kan bli omtalt som orienteringskunnskap.⁷ Habermas rettar denne kunnskapsinteresse mot mennesket sin søken etter fridom, forstått som emansipasjon. Dette kan bli kopla til det meiningssøkjande menneske. Dette er kunnskapsinteresser som handlar om spørsmål som drøftar meininga eller retninga på livet. Habermas gjer seg her til talsmenn for ein type kunnskap som er basert på refleksjon. Det handlar om å studere teori for teorien sin eigen del. Dette er ein type teoretisk kunnskap som er avgjerande for god praksis.

The fear of speculation, the ostensible rush from the theoretical to the practical, brings about the same shallowness in action that it does in knowledge. It is by studying a strictly theoretical philosophy that we become most immediately acquainted with Ideas, and only Ideas provide action with energy and ethical significance.⁸

Habermas hevdar at den einaste kunnskapen som verkeleg kan orientere handling er kunnskap som frigjør seg frå menneskelige interesser, og er basert på idear aleine. Det vil seie

6 Ibid., 195.

7 Ein som gjer dette er Jürgen Mittelstrass som skil mellom Verfügungswissen og Orientierungswissen. Den engelske omsettinga av desse omgrepa er "instrumental knowledge" og "orientation knowledge". Sjå Jürgen Mittelstrass "Education between ethical universality and cultural particularity", *Globalization and Education*. Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences Extra Series 7, Vatican City, (2006), 250.

8 Jürgen Habermas, *Knowledge*, 301.

kunnskap som er streng teoretisk.⁹ Ein streng teoretisk tilnærming til praksis vil utvikle orienteringskunnskap ved hjelp av refleksjon. Sjølv om denne typen kunnskap ikkje har interesse for produksjon og meistring, er den vesentleg for menneske. Etisk tenking og energiskapande teoriutvikling er med på å gje mennesket indre tryggleik og fridom. Habermas snakkar om refleksjonen si emansipatoriske kraft.¹⁰ I søken etter frigjerung blir kunnskap ei interesse i seg sjølv og ikkje eit instrument for å meistre røyndomen. Vi kan skilje mellom teori for praksis som utviklar meistringskunnskap, og teori som praksis som utviklar orienteringskunnskap.

Bengt Molander oppfattar meistringskunnskap først og fremst som handlingskunnskap i det å meistre ei avgrensa oppgåve, der verbal fakta er oppfatta som eit hjelpemiddel for å gjennomføre oppgåva.¹¹ Ved å oppfatte at den avgrensa oppgåva har mål, vil meistringskunnskap vere rasjonelle handlingar og tankar som skal føre til at målet kan bli realisert. Dette gjer meistringskunnskap målrasjonell. I motsetning ser orienteringskunnskap samanhengar og held på oversikta.¹² «Vi orienterar oss i världen, vi förfogar [meistrar] över bitar av den.»¹³ Skilnaden på meistrande og orienterande kunnskap kan samanliknast med det hermeneutiske skiljet mellom del og heilskap. Meistringskunnskap gjer oss i stand til å handtere avgrensa situasjonar, medan orienteringa set delane inn i ein større heilskap. Orienteringskunnskap gjev oss overblikk og retning. Overblikk tek føre seg spørsmålet om kva som er vesentleg, essensielt eller viktig i situasjonen. Dette kan til dømes vere livshaldninga som ligg til grunne for våre handlingar. «Det är alltså kunskap om hur man ordnar sitt liv och samhället för att leva så gott som möjligt.» Søken etter eit godt liv står i motsetning til ideen om at livet er noko vi skal meistre eller løyse. Molander oppfattar, refleksjon og radikal kritikk som metodar for å utvikle orienteringskunnskap. Den radikale kritikken er kjenneteikna av at den avslører sprekker og manglar i vår tenking, utan å kunne tette desse hulla.¹⁴ Ein slik radikal kritikk står i motsetning til kritisk tenking som er retta mot meistringskunnskap. Dette er ein type kritisk tenking som granskar avgrensa områder, søker problemløysing, utprøving og det å stille spørsmål omkring fakta om mennesket og menneske sine handlingar.

For Habermas er kritisk teori den vitskapsforma som opnar for orienteringskunnskap. Det vil seie at orienteringa handlar mellom anna om å avkrefte teoretiske sanningar og misoppfatningar. Denne typen kritisk tenking kan og bli retta mot individet og sjølvrefleksjonen. Ein kritisk eller skeptisk refleksjon kan avsløre illusjonar og fri oss frå misoppfatningar. Hellesnes hevdar at våre illusjonar er kopla til livshaldningar som håp, frykt, elsk, sjølvdyrking, partiske interesser og liknande.¹⁵ For å forstå våre illusjonar må vi lære å kjenne

9 Ibid., 301.

10 Ibid., 197.

11 Bengt Molander, *Kunnskap i handling* (Göteborg: Daidalos 1996), 168-170.

12 Ibid., 170.

13 Ibid., 173.

14 Ibid., 176.

15 Jon Hellesnes *illusjon?* (Oslo: Samlaget 2004), 42.

oss sjølv gjennom slike haldningar. Ein klar refleksjon fortel at berre vakne og rettferdige tankar kan frigjøre oss frå illusjonar. Dette er ein type kritisk refleksjon som krev stor grad av teoretisk medvit for å halde det skeptiske blikk retta mot våre misoppfatningar og samstundes gjere oss i stand til å avsløre desse misoppfatningane. Det vil seie at denne forma for refleksjon krev meir enn berre ein konstruktiv dialog i eit fellesskap. Refleksjon krev retning og teorigrunnlag.

Orienterande kunnskap er viktig i pedagogikk og grunnskulelærerutdanning, fordi skulen handlar om menneske si evne til å få eit godt liv. Skolen er ein eksistensiell institusjon som legg beslag på ein stor del av menneske sitt liv, frå tidlege barneår til vi blir kastet ut i vaksenverda. I grunnskulelærerutdanninga vil orienteringskunnskap mellom anna vere spørsmål som; Kva er meininga med utdanning? Kva er det eksistensielle formålet med aktiviteten? Kva er eit menneske? Kva for menneskelege interesser skal skulen støtte? Kva er kunnskap, og kva kunnskap er av interesse for mennesket? Kva er samanhengen mellom kunnskap og læraridentitet? Kva for ideologi og verdiar er styrande for skuleinstitusjonen sin måte å tenke på i dag? Kva for illusjonar er dominerande i skulen? Kva for røyndomssyn er dominerande i skulen? Kva er eit godt liv? Slike viktige spørsmål søker overblikket og retninga for verksemda. Nokre av svara på desse spørsmåla er formulerte, andre er tatt for gitte. Det finnes allereie lange teoretiske tradisjonar som reflekterer over slike spørsmål.

Å reflektere over slike spørsmål er å søke ei teoretisk haldning. I pedagogisk tenking vil refleksjon som er retta mot orienteringskunnskap vere retta mot meininga med det å ha skule og vere lærar og elev. Det handlar ikkje om å vere kritisk til undervisninga i klasserommet, spørsmål om korleis vi kan auke effekten av læring eller det å kartlegge elevane for å kunne kontrollere elevane si læring. Grunnleggjande spørsmål inneheld ei kritisk haldning mot det gitte. Refleksjonen skal undersøke bakken vi står på og kva som styrer retninga på arbeidet. Kritisk tenking er ikkje berre kritiske merknader til det kjente. Kritisk tenking er den filosofiske uroa som sår tvil, slik at det vi oppfattar som lett får den rette tyngda i seg.¹⁶ Slik at det kjente ikkje lenger er like kjent. Ei slik kritisk tenking er med og endrar vår livshaldning og gjev retning for praksis. Dette gjer denne typen kunnskap til eit mål i seg sjølv og ikkje eit middel for å oppnå kontroll eller praktisk effektivitet. Denne evna til å verke inn på vår livshaldning gjer denne typen teoretisk kunnskap til styrande for vår handlingar.

Grunnleggjande lærebøker representerer den gitte tenkinga innan eit fagfelt og kan fungere som ein analysegrunnlag for å få innsikt i ein profesjon sin måte å tenke og handle på.¹⁷ *“Textbooks, in fact, play an important role in professional practice, standing as representations of disciplinary orthodoxy while providing a medium for writers to disseminate a vision of their discipline to both experts and novices.”*¹⁸ Ved å undersøke nyare grunnleggjande lærebøker for grunnskulelærerutdanninga kan eg finne døme på korleis omgrepet er opp-

16 Gunnar Skirbekk *Den filosofiske uroa - i spenninga mellom tvil og tru* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget 2005).

17 Thomas Kuhn, *The structure of scientific revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1996), 136, doi: 10.7208/chicago/9780226458106.001.0001

18 Ken Hyland *Disciplinary discourses: social interactions in academic writing*, (Harlow: Longman 2000), 104.

fatta og brukt. Lærebøkene blir satt ut i livet gjennom kollegial forhandling med sikte på å rettleie nye studentar inn i profesjonsfeltet. Eg er ikkje interessert i forfattarane, men oppfatningar og bruk som bøkene representerer. Min hermeneutiske metoden er eit forsøk på å skildre, tolke og vurdere bruken av omgrepet refleksjon. Det er mange sitat i lærebøkene som inneheld omgrepet. Eg vil presentere nokre. Formålet med sitata er å klargjere mine kritiske merknader til oppfatningar og bruken av omgrepet.

Refleksjon som produksjonsmiddel for meistringskunnskap

Det synes å vere ei oppfatning i grunnskulelærerutdanninga om at refleksjon er mykje nytta og at det ikkje synes å vere klart kva som meinast med omgrepet.

“I løpet av grunnopplæringen til å bli grunnskulelærer, vil du ha reflektert mye. I utdanningen er det snakk om refleksjonsnotater, å reflektere over praksis, refleksjonsoppgaver, med mer. Problemet med refleksjonsbegrepet er at det ikke synes å være enighet om en definisjon (Denton, 2011; Grossman, 2009). Mens noen vektlegger at refleksjon krever adekvat med tid til å utforske et tema godt, er andre opptatt av metakognisjon som refleksjon, altså hvordan vi tenker om vår egen tenkning og gjør rede for våre mentale prosesser (Denton, 2011).¹⁹

Sitatet skil mellom to ulike oppfatningar av refleksjon. Den første definisjonen oppfattar refleksjon som det å utforske eit tema som krev tid. Den andre oppfatninga rettar refleksjonsomgrepet mot sjølvoppfatninga og det å gjere greie for våre mentale prosessar. Kapitlet, kor sitatet er presentert, endar med å presentere ein trinnvis modell for korleis lærarar skal opptre i praksis. Modellen er kalla «Lesson study syklus» eller lærings sirkel, og har som mål å forbetre praksis.²⁰ Spørsmåla handlar om å sette konkrete mål for elevane sin læring, planlegge undervisningstiltak, reflektere over tiltaka sin effekt og evaluere og vurdere og planlegge nye tiltak. Eit kvart tiltak skal vere gjenstand for ein kontinuerleg refleksjon.²¹ Dette er ein målrasjonell modell for effektivitet og økt produktivitet for elevane si læring. Dømet på slike undervisningsopplegg viser oppfatninga av refleksjon som eit produksjonsmiddel for å meistre klasserommet. «Refleksjon vil dermed innebære at vi studerer både våre antakelser som fører til våre valg og *konsekvensene av valgene våre* (Hva skjer når vi starter timen med denne filmen? Hva forstår elevene av innholdet? Hvordan bidrar filmen til å fremme læring for alle elever? Er det noen elever den ikke har noen effekt for? osv.).»²² Refleksjon er forstått som å analysere og vurdere konsekvensen av enkelttiltak og valg som blir gjort i klasserommet og kva som kan bli lært ved å følgje ein slik læringsprosess. Inter-

19 Elaine Munthe og May Britt Postholm "Læreres profesjonelle læring i skolen" i *Lærere i skolen som organisasjon*, red. May Britt Postholm, Elaine Munthe, Peder Haug & Rune Johan Krumsvik, (Kristiansand: Cappelen Damm høyskoleforlaget 2012), 146.

20 Ibid., 150.

21 Ibid., 153.

22 Ibid., 147

essa for elevane si læring og utviklinga av praksisnære teoriar er med på å utvikle denne oppfatninga av refleksjonsomgrepet.

Denne typen refleksjon er kopla til forskning og vitskap. Den same trinnvis modell blir presentert med mål å gjere læraren til forskar i eiga verksemd. Refleksjonen skal hjelpe læraren til å utvikle eit forskarblikk i klasserommet.

«En lærer som har forskningsblikk på egen virksomhet, vil basere sine refleksjoner på en systematisk innsamling av informasjon om hvordan situasjonen er og hvordan ulike tiltak ser ut til å virke. Kunnskap basert på slik informasjon kan og bør omsettes til konkret handling, som så igjen bør vurderes kritisk og systematisk. Slik starter en systematisk refleksjon over virksomheten, og det startes en lærings sirkel.»²³

Sitatet rettar refleksjonen mot innsamling av fakta som den vitskaplege aktiviteten. Den kritiske vurderinga er oppfatta som ein metode for å forbetre praksis. Særskilt spørsmålet om korleis eit tiltak verkar vil krevje ein refleksjonsmetode som er retta mot vitskapleg forskning som kan påvise effekt. Denne typen vitskap har som mål å utvikle teori for praksis og eit ønskje om å vere nyttig. Om teoriane er basert på forskning som skal påvise effekten for læring, vil dette vere kunnskap som er nært knytt til meistringskunnskap og produksjon. Eit slikt teoriomgrep vil sakne interessa for orienteringskunnskap.

Refleksjon som tolking av menneskelege handlingar

I Habermas si forståing av vitskapleg aktivitet vil moderne hermeneutikk og samfunnsvitskapleg forskning ha som interesse å utvikle meistringskunnskap. Dette blir først og fremst gjort ved å skildre og kartlegge menneskeleg praksis. Slike skilringar er uttrykt som informasjon som kan støtte utøvarane si evne til å meistre praksis. Kvalitativ empirisk forskning vil kunne ende med å presentere denne forma for kunnskap. Boka *Skoletid* skildrar ei gruppe elevar frå første klasse til fem år etter at dei har avslutta grunnskulen.²⁴ Målet er å utvikle «elevkunnskap» som kan vere nyttig og inspirerende for lærarutdanninga.²⁵ Denne typen kartlegging vil indirekte kunne bli oppfatta som ei hjelp for å utvikle betre føresetnader for at læraren skal meistre å effektivisere læringa i klasserommet. Ei slik kunnskapsinteressa for fakta er med på å rette refleksjonen mot tolking av menneskelege handlingar. Eit døme på dette er henta frå boka *Lærerearbeid for elevenes læring*. Her blir tolking av forskingsresultat presenterer som refleksjonar. «Av dette [elever vert overlatt til seg selv] følger noen refleksjoner. Oppfølgingen, kontrollen og vurderingen av elevenes aktiviteter og arbeid er ikke

23 May Britt Postholm og Dag Ingvar Jacobsen *Læreren med forskerblikk* (Kristiansand: Høyskoleforlaget 2011), 47.

24 Harriet B. Nielsen *Skoletid* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget 2009).

25 Ibid., 11.

omfattende nok i alle klasserom.»²⁶ Bakgrunnen for refleksjonen er at empirisk forskning har påvist at elevar blir overlata til seg sjølv av læraren. Tolkninga er at dette ikkje er bra for produksjon av læring og tiltaka som skal hjelpe er erkjent ved hjelp av refleksjon. Refleksjonen oppmodar læraren til å utvikle tiltak for kontroll og kartlegging av elevane. Dette er eit døme på tolking av menneskelege handlingar som gjer refleksjonen til ein vurderingsteknikk for å auke produksjonen og effekten av læring i klasserommet.

I *Elevenes læringsmiljø – Lærerenes muligheter* blir refleksjon brukt når det ikkje er noko referanse eller forskning som kan stadfeste påstanden.

«Den første refleksjonen er at det ser ut til at læreren, gjennom sine valg og handlinger, kan være med på å påvirke en rekke av de forholdene som relateres til elevenes læringsmiljø. [...] Den andre refleksjonen er at elevenes opplevelse av læringsmiljøet er viktig for å kunne si noe om hvordan lærerens valg og handlinger har påvirket kvaliteten på læringsmiljøet. [...] Den tredje refleksjonen er at ulike elever kan oppleve læringsmiljøet i klassen forskjellig.»²⁷

Eg vil hevde at dette ikkje er ein refleksjon, men ein tanke eller ei tru. Å kalle det for ein refleksjon er med på å uttynne oppfatninga av omgrepet. Påstandane er eit forsøk på å seie noko om relasjonar, individuelle behov og undervisning i klasserommet. Påstandane ville ikkje endre innhald om refleksjonsomgrepet er bytta ut med at forfattere trur eller tenker dette. Ved å bruke refleksjon synes utsegna å få meir tyngde. Eg tolkar denne bruken av refleksjon som eit teikn på at omgrepet er anerkjent som positivt. På liknande vis summerer overskrifta «Avsluttende refleksjon» kva som kjenneteiknar grunnskulelærarutdanninga, og informerer om at læraren manglar eigne etiske retningslinjer, men at Utdanningsforbundet arbeidar med å utvikle ein slik standard.²⁸ Dette er døme på bruken av omgrepet refleksjon som tyder på liten forståing av kva kunnskapsinteresser refleksjon er retta mot. I staden for synes omgrepet å vere synonymt med å tolke, tru, tenke eller summere opp fakta.

Boka *La Stå!* avsluttar kvart kapittel med krav om at studenten skal reflektere over eller diskutere nøkkelord.²⁹ Nokre kapittel brukar omgrepet reflektere, medan andre skriv at studentane skal diskutere nøkkelorda. Dette er ingen klar distinksjon mellom orda. Den redaksjonelle innleiinga i boka nyttar omgrepet refleksjon.

26 Peder Haug "Rammer for lærerarbeidet" i *Lærerarbeid for elevenes læring 5-10*, red. May Britt Postholm, Elaine Munthe, Peder Haug & Rune Johan Krumsvik (Kristiansand: Høyskoleforlaget 2011), 246.

27 Inger Bergkaster, Lasse Dahl og Kjetil Andreas Hansen *Elevenes læringsmiljø – lærerens muligheter – en praktisk håndbok i relasjonsorientert klasseledelse* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget 2009), 15.

28 Frøydis Oma Ohnstad "Lærerenes profesjonen og profesjonsetikk" i *Lærere i skolen som organisasjon*, red. May Britt Postholm, Elaine Munthe, Peder Haug & Rune Johan Krumsvik, (Kristiansand: Cappelen Damm høyskoleforlaget 2012), 216.

29 Ray Svanberg og Hans Petter Wille (red.) *La stå! læring - på veien mot den profesjonelle lærer* (Oslo: Gyldendal akademisk 2009).

«En ting er å lese en fagtekst. En viktig fortsettelse er å la det faglige innholdet synke inn og bli en del av din faglige portefølje, som er en faglig kompetanse du tilegner deg i løpet av studiet. Denne kompetansen er vanskelig å få uten refleksjon. Men refleksjon skjer ikke uten at du setter av tid til det.»³⁰

Målet for refleksjonen er at studentane skal gjere omgrepa til ein del av sin kommunikative åtferd. Nokre nøkkelorda handlar om tema som er retta mot orienteringskunnskap. Andre nøkkelord handlar om strategiar og undervisning for læring. Kvar student må ta seg tid til å reflektere over nøkkelorda. Ein anna intensjon med denne typen refleksjon er å opne for at studentane skal få tenke over og komme fram til eigne oppfatningar omkring desse søkeorda. Dette gjer at refleksjonen opnar for at individet eller fellesskapet skal kunne konstruere sine eigne oppfatningar. Den normative trua på toleranse og mangfald fører til at refleksjonsomgrepet blir evna til å komme med personlege oppfatningar. Slike oppfatningar kan vere med å konstruere og utvikle nye teoriar og visjonar i skulen.³¹ Retninga på refleksjonen er i slike samanhengar retta mot orienteringskunnskap, men den er i liten grad fylgt opp av ein streng teoretisk utgreiing av nøkkelorda. Refleksjon blir på denne måten eit middel til å lære noe nytt og det å tenke sjølv. Dette kan vere å tenke over nøkkelord eller det å vurdere eigne handlingar. Tanken er at vi kan lære noko nytt når vi reflekterer over våre handlingar.³² Påstanden er ei tolking av John Deweys teori og er nært knytt til ideen om å reflektere over handling som ein reflekterande praktikal. Det blir ikkje drøfta kva for spørsmål eller retning denne refleksjonen skal ta. Hensikta med denne forma for refleksjon er først og fremst å kunne uttrykke den handlingskunnskapen som læraren utviklar i praksis. På denne måten kan læraren verbalisere og dokumentere den kunnskapen som viser seg i praksis.

Refleksjon som sjølvrefleksjon

Sjølvrefleksjon er presentert som spørsmålet om å forstå vår egen handling. Dette er først og fremst eit læringsspørsmål. Kva er det som gjer at vi lærer det vi lærer? I enkelte høver handlar sjølvrefleksjon om å forstå eigne fordommar. Refleksjon er å bli klar over vår egen fordommar i møte med andre menneske. Dette kan tolkast som eit uttrykk for at refleksjonen handlar om å avsløre våre illusjonar. I boka *Elevmangfold i skolen* er sjølvrefleksjon oppfatta som eit middel for toleranse. «Selvrefleksjon dreier seg om å bli bevisst egne holdninger og mulige fordommer mot mennesker som er forskjellig fra deg selv uansett hvem du er.»³³ Det normative kravet om toleranse handlar i boka, først og fremst om etnisitet og kjønn. Eit døme på slike fordommar er vår forståing av omgrepet kjønn. «Noe av det

30 Ibid., 23.

31 Ibid., 6.

32 May Britt Postholm "Organisering og ledelse av læringsaktiviteten", *Lærerarbeid for elevenes læring 5-10*, red. May Britt Postholm, Elaine Munthe, Peder Haug & Rune Johan Krumsvik (Kristiansand: Høyskoleforlaget 2011), 159.

33 Elaine Munthe "Mangfold i skolen", i *Elevmangfold i skolen 5-10* red. May Britt Postholm, Elaine Munthe, Peder Haug & Rune Johan Krumsvik, (Kristiansand: Høyskoleforlaget 2011), 25.

viktigste en lærer kan gjøre, er å reflektere over sine *egne* kjønnsbriller, for de er ikke alltid så lette å få øye på.»³⁴ Når Hellesnes skriv om illusjonar, er ikkje kjønn, etnisitet eller toleranse tema som refleksjonen skal vere retta mot. Forståinga frå læreboka av kjønn og etnisitet er ein del av eit etisk krav om toleranse. På denne måten blir etiske haldningar presentert som krav eller standardar for kva som er rett måte å tenke og handle på. Dette fører til imperativ om kva som er rett oppførsel av ein lærar i møtet med ulike elevar. Påstandar om toleranse og mangfald kan ende med å kontrollere læraren sine haldningar og handlingar, i staden for å opne for høve for frigjøring gjennom refleksjon. Dette kan igjen føre til at læraren sin etiske refleksjon ikkje lenger handlar om å tileigne seg orienteringskunnskap om kva eit menneske er, kva rettvisе kan vere eller kva er å vere ein god person. Habermas oppfattar sjølvrefleksjon med interesse for autonomi, forstått som ein ibuande evne til å ta etiske val. Ei evne som gjer at menneske er fri til å ha ansvar for eigne handlingar. "In self-reflection, knowledge for the sake of knowledge comes to coincide with the interest in autonomy and responsibility (Mündigkeit)."³⁵ Emansipasjon som kunnskapsinteresse er ikkje kulturelt tinga, men er ei grunnleggande interesse som kan bli rasjonelt erkjent både ut frå naturen og ut frå menneske sitt kulturelle brot med naturen.³⁶ Det vil seie at vår etiske rasjonalitet er utvikla nettopp gjennom utviklinga av det kulturelle mennesket sin emansipasjon frå naturen. Ein slik type argumentasjon er i seg sjølv eit døme på eit logisk resonnement som kan oppfattast som ei reflekterande erkjenning.

Refleksjon som eit medvitsregime

Ei siste uttynning er knytt til den normative trua på refleksjon som berre god. Eg vågar å påstå at trua på den kontinuerlege refleksjonen kan ha negative konsekvensar for mennesket og i dette tilfellet læraren. Bruken og oppfatninga av refleksjon fører til ein nær samanheng mellom refleksjon og det å vere medviten. Medvitet og refleksjonen over handling er det som skal forbetre læraren. «[...] det er mulig å utvikle seg som lærer gjennom bevissthet og refleksjon om egen undervisning, gjerne i dialog med andre lærere.»³⁷ Kravet om å reflektere over handling kan føre til eit krav om at inga planlegging, ingen fordommar, ingen avgjersler eller handlingar bør bli gjort i klasserommet utan eit kontinuerleg reflekterande medvit. Det ender som eit medvitsregime som brukar refleksjonsomgrepet som ei vedvarande forventning om at læraren tenker gjennom, vurderer, analyserer, summerer og konsekvensutgreiar ei kvar avgjersle og handling. «Medisinen er høy pedagogisk bevissthet

34 Harriet B. Nielsen "Kjønn på ungdomsskolen", i *Elevmangfold i skolen 5-10* red. May Britt Postholm, Elaine Munthe, Peder Haug & Rune Johan Krumsvik, (Kristiansand: Høyskoleforlaget 2011), 208.

35 Jürgen Habermas, *Knowledge*, 197.

36 *Ibid.*, 312.

37 Thomas Nordahl og Terje Manger "Kapittel 3: Samhandling, kommunikasjon og engasjement" i *Livet i skolen 2 grunnbok i pedagogikk og elevkunnskap, Lærerprofesjonalitet*, red. Sølvi Lillejord, Terje Manger og Thomas Nordahl, (Fagbokforlaget Bergen 2011), 96.

og tett oppfølging (Markussen, Brandt, & Hatlevik, 2003).»³⁸ For mykje bruk av same medisin kan vere negativ for skulen. Læraren kan oppleve eit slik krav til medvit og refleksjon som utmattande. Når refleksjon er oppfatta slik eg har vist døme på over, er det mykje som tydar på at bruken av refleksjon ikkje vil kurere alle utfordringar i skolen, men kunne skape nye som vi i dag berre kan spekulere om.

Ei slik tru på medvit og refleksjon som produksjonskraft vil gå på bekostning av bruken av praktisk klokskap, dømmekraft, sensitivitet, skjønn, intuisjon og kroppskunnskap i klasserommet. Dette er kunnskapsformer som har nærleik til orienteringskunnskap. Det er slike former for kunnskap-i-handling som viser seg i overblikket til den profesjonelle utøveren i praksis. Til dømes er etiske rasjonelle handlingar basert på ein slik type kunnskap.³⁹ Medvitsregime saman med scientismen vil redusere høve for andre former for kunnskap. Dette gjelder både orienteringskunnskap og handlingskunnskap.

Kravet til medvit og refleksjon for produksjon er òg tilstade i menneskesynet. «Et dannet menneske handler på bakgrunn av gjennomtenkte, begrunnede valg og står til ansvar for sine egne handlinger.»⁴⁰ Ei slik oppfatning av danning passar inn i det bilete som eg har teikna av refleksjonsomgrepet. Å skulle handle på bakgrunn av gjennomtenkte grunngevingar er det eg tolkar som målet med refleksjonsomgrepet. Ansvar er retta mot kravet om å handle ut frå medvitne og rasjonelle val om å meistre ei kvar avgrensa oppgåve som læraren står ovanfor. Eit slikt lærarideal er ikkje berre urealistisk, men kan i lengda vere negativ for menneskesynet og forståinga av kva det vil seie å vere lærar. I staden for å snakke om den reflekterande praktikaren, foreslår Molander at vi snakkar om den lærande praktikaren.⁴¹ Ei slik læring-i-handling inneheld både handlingskunnskap, meistringskunnskap og orienteringskunnskap.

Refleksjon – frå meistring til orientering

Oppfatninga og bruken av refleksjon tydar på at omgrepet er gjort om til eit middel for å auke effektiviteten og produksjonskrafta i klasserommet. Vi trenger meistringskunnskap om kva som skal gjerast i klasserommet, men dette har lite med refleksjon å gjere. Sitata tydar på at bruken famnar om mange ulike måtar å tenke på og synes å mangle interesse for kva spørsmål og kunnskap refleksjonen er retta mot. I enkelte tilfelle er refleksjonen retta mot orienteringskunnskap. Målet synes då å vere å opne for at individet eller lærarfellesskapet skal komme fram til eigne forståingar av nøkkelord. Det tydar på at refleksjonen handlar om at kvar enkelt skal konstruere eigne oppfatningar, i staden for å tolke eit teorigrunnlag som er strengt teoretisk. Interesse for refleksjon som sjølvrefleksjon handlar om å

38 Peder Haug "Å være lærer" i *Lærerarbeid for elevenes læring 5-10*, red. May Britt Postholm, Elaine Munthe, Peder Haug & Rune Johan Krumsvik, (Kristiansand: Høyskoleforlaget 2011), 27.

39 Bengt Molander, *Kunnskap*.

40 Sølvi Lillejord "Kapittel 2: Å vokse inn i samfunnet" i *Livet i skolen 1: grunnbok i pedagogikk og elevkunnskap*, red. Sølvi Lillejord, Terje Manger, Thomas Nordahl og Trude Helland, (Bergen: Fagbokforlaget 2010), 55.

41 Bengt Molander, *Kunnskap*, 152.

avsløre våre fordommar. Her er eg usikker på om retninga på refleksjonen handlar om orienteringskunnskap. Drøfting av kjønn eller etnisitet er døme på refleksjonar som er basert på faktakunnskap og med tydelege normative forventingar til læraren om å vere tolerant. Oppfatninga og bruken vil kunne ende som eit medvitsregime som kanskje best er uttrykt i ideen om ein kontinuerlig refleksjon over alle tiltak.

Så, kva skal vi gjere for å unngå dette? Dette spørsmålet kan synes ironisk i ein artikkel som er kritisk til refleksjon som eit spørsmål om kva som bør bli gjort. Mine anbefalingar er ikkje basert på refleksjon, men vurderingar eg gjer på bakgrunn av teoretiske orienteringar omkring kunnskap, refleksjon og tolking av lærebøker. Den første anbefalinga er å redusere bruken av omgrepet. Molander skriver at vi trenger eit refleksjonsomgrep som «[...] *inte* åker snålskjuts på «tänkande på vad man gör» i største allmänhet.»⁴² Å reflektere er ikkje det same som å tenke. Bruken bør bli erstatta med ord som tolke, planlegge, vurdere, evaluere, diskutere, tenke, summere, utvikle, eller berre vere klar over. På denne måten kan litt av frikøyninga stoppe opp. Den andre anbefalinga er å gje refleksjonen retninga mot orienteringskunnskap. Vi trenger å kritisere vår oppfatning av omgrepet og søke teori som kan peike ut retninga for refleksjonen. Den tredje anbefalinga er gje eit teorigrunnlag som er basert på refleksjon over orienteringsspørsmål. Denne artikkelen inneheld kjelder som til ein viss grad kan fungere som eit slikt teorigrunnlag.

Refleksjon er ikkje ein kur for alt. Det finnes ingen kur for alt og medvitet og meistlingskunnskap er ikkje alltid den beste medisinen for eit godt liv. Refleksjon er først og fremst ein erkjenningsskjema for søken etter meining og overblikk i livet. Det handlar om å stille grunnleggjande spørsmål, mellom ann om mennesket, røyndomen, kunnskap og erkjenning. Slike spørsmål har ein viktig posisjon i utdanningssystemet. Skulegangen er ein eksistensiell aktivitet. Ved å rette refleksjon mot slike spørsmål kan kanskje den eksistensiell dimensjon få ein større plass i pedagogisk tenking. Ei slik styrking og konsentrering av refleksjonsomgrepet kan kanskje gjere det til ein god medisin. Med rette virkestoff kan den vere eit viktig bidrag til god pedagogisk praksis. Ein slik refleksjonen vil ikkje gjere at vi meistrar alle situasjonar, men kan skape ein indre tryggleik og livshaldning som er viktig for å bli ein god og profesjonell lærar.

For å avslutte med ei erfaring Molander delar i si bok *Kunnskap i handling* som er medverkande til at denne artikkelen er skriven. «Min egen erfarenhet säger mig emellertid att möjligheten till reflektion under det att jag underviser og skriver filosofi är nästan lika noll. Andra får vittna om sina erfarenheter.»⁴³ Av og til må det sterk medisin til for å vekke mennesket til uro.

42 Bengt Molander, *Kunnskap*, 142.

43 Bengt Molander, *Kunnskap*, 144.

Anne-Marie Eggert Olsen

Rousseau læser Platon.

Et debatindlæg om virkningshistorie

Abstract

The first part of this article (A) presents some of the materiel relating to education in Plato's *Republic* and *Laws* that Rousseau read and found inspiring. It is argued that Rousseau adopts and transposes principles as well as specific considerations in spite of different historical context and consequently of different elaborations and aims of education. The second part (B) discusses Rousseau's 'Platonism' in a more general philosophical setting. The aim is to offer an alternative interpretation of the main connection between Rousseau and Plato, i.e. an emphatically pedagogical philosophy. It is maintained that Rousseau's unconventional pedagogical reading of Plato is productive of understanding Plato in general in drawing attention to less acknowledged, central themes in Plato's philosophy and emphasizing their persistent actuality.

Nøgleord

Platon, Rousseau, opdragelse

"Vil De have et indtryk af offentlig opdragelse, så læs Platons *Staten*. Det er ikke et politisk værk, som de tror, der kun bedømmer bøger efter deres titler; det er den skønneste afhandling om opdragelse som nogensinde er skrevet."¹

Rousseaus *homage* til *Staten* fra 1. bog af *Émile* citeres gerne såvel i fremstillinger af Platon som af Rousseau og både i pædagogisk og politisk filosofisk sammenhæng. Således også her som indledning til en kort behandling af spørgsmålet om Platons betydning for Rousseau. Når det kan have en vis interesse, hvordan Rousseau – og ikke alle mulige andre tænkere op gennem historien – læser Platon, skyldes det, at Rousseau som den første læser *Staten* primært som en afhandling om opdragelse. Få har som Rousseau haft blik for sammenhængen mellem pædagogik og politik. Det er derfor også overraskende, at forskningslitteraturen om forholdet mellem Platon og Rousseau er ganske smal med kun en enkelt nyere

1

Da. udg. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Émile eller om opdragelsen I-III*. Borgens Forlag, København 1962, bd. I 1. bog s. 18. "Voulez-vous prendre une idée de l'éducation publique ? Lisez la République de Platon. Ce n'est point un ouvrage de politique, comme le pensent ceux qui ne jugent des livres que par leurs titres. C'est le plus beau traité d'éducation qu'on ait jamais fait." Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Émile ou de l'éducation*. I *Oeuvres complètes IV*, Gallimard, Paris 1969, s. 250.

Anne-Marie Eggert Olsen, Aarhus Universitet, Danmark
E-mail: ameo@edu.au.dk

Studier i Pædagogisk Filosofi | www.ojs.statsbiblioteket.dk/index.php/spf | ISSN nr. 22449140

Årgang 4 | Nr. 1 | 2015 | side 75-93

monografi² og et mindre antal artikler. Mere overraskende er imidlertid, at citatet ikke har provokeret nogen til at fundere nærmere over hvorfor? Hvorfor kalder Rousseau *Staten* den skønneste afhandling om opdragelse, der nogen sinde er skrevet? Der er i hvert fald fire grunde til at spørge om det:

1. Rousseau ser den private, ikke den offentlige, opdragelse som den eneste rigtige – også ud fra et politisk perspektiv
2. Han er klart modstander af nogle centrale politiske ideer i *Staten* (ligestilling mellem kønnene, ophævelse af familien og filosofisk informeret styre)
3. Han går ikke ind for den tidlige musisk-æstetiske opdragelse, der er alfa og omega for Platon
4. Hans konkrete pædagogiske anbefalinger er mere i tråd med 7. bog af *Lovene* end med 2. og 3. bog af *Staten*

Så hvorfor overhovedet *Staten* – eller hvorfor ikke snarere *Lovene*? Og hvorfor læse *Staten*, når vi nu står med *Émile* i hånden, hvis Platons offentlige opdragelse, som Rousseau hævder, ikke længere er aktuel?³

A. *Staten* og *Lovene* i *Émile*

Platon indtager 3. pladsen blandt Rousseaus referencer, kun overgået af Bibelen og Plutarch, og Rousseaus læsning af Platons værker er veldokumenteret.⁴ Holder vi os imidlertid til forholdet mellem *Émile* og *Staten*, er der dog ikke så meget at komme efter. Platon og Sokrates nævnes henholdsvis 8 og 4 gange i teksten, i flere tilfælde blot som eksempler på filosoffer eller filosofisk, 'sokratisk' livsindstilling. Ud over den første anbefaling giver Rousseau kun en enkelt direkte og indholdsmæssig omtale af *Staten* i *Émile*:

"I sit værk *Staten* henviser Platon kvinderne til de samme legemsøvelser som mændene. Ja, det tror jeg! Efter at Platon i sin stat havde ophævet familielivet og derefter ikke vidste, hvad han skulle gøre af kvinderne, så han sig nødsaget til at gøre dem til mænd. Dette fremragende geni havde beregnet og forudset alt. Han imødegik indvendinger, som måske ingen havde tænkt på at komme frem med; men den indvending, man virkelig er kommet frem med, har han kun givet et ufuldkomment svar på. Jeg taler ikke om hint formentlige fællesskab om kvinderne; indvendingerne herimod er gentaget så tit og har bevist, at de, som fremfører indvendingerne, ikke har læst bogen; nej, jeg taler om den sammenblanding på det borgerlige plan, hvor man sætter de to køn ind i de samme hverv, de samme arbej-

2 David Lay Williams, *Rousseau's Platonic Enlightenment*. Pennsylvania State University Press 2007. Emnet behandles dog også ganske udførligt i Roger D. Masters *The Political Philosophy of Rousseau*. Princeton University Press 1968 samt selvfølgelig i Charles Hendels *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Moraliste*. Indianapolis 1934.

3 "Den offentlige opdragelse eksisterer ikke mere og kan ikke eksistere, thi hvor der ikke er noget fædreland, kan der heller ikke være borgere." *Émile* (da. udg.) bd. I 1. bog s. 18. "L'institution publique n'existe plus, et ne peut plus exister; parce qu'ou il n'y a plus de patrie il ne peut plus y avoir de citoyens." *Émile* s. 250.

4 J.M. Silverthorne, 'Rousseau's Plato' i *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century* 116, 1973 s. 235-249.

der, hvilket vil føre til de mest utålelige misbrug. Jeg taler om denne kuldkastelse af naturens ømmeste følelser, som bliver ofret til fordel for en kunstig følelse, som dog ikke kan bestå uden støtte fra de første; som om man for at gøre båndene i en formel overenskomst faste ikke også måtte regne med de naturlige bånd; som om kærligheden til næsten ikke er grundlaget for den kærlighed man skylder staten; som om det ikke var gennem det lille fædreland, det vil sige familien, at hjertet knytter sig til det store; som om det ikke netop var den gode søn, den gode ægtemand, den gode fader, der skaber den gode borger.”⁵

Platon, *le beau génie*, tager ifølge Rousseau fejl på et afgørende punkt. Af naturen er mænd og kvinder så forskellige, at det ikke blot må indebære forskellig opdragelse, men også medfører fundamentalt forskellige roller samfundsmæssigt og politisk.⁶ For Platon forholder det sig stik modsat. I *Statens* principielle tankegang er mænd og kvinder ikke forskellige i en henseende, der er relevant for deres samfundsmæssige opdragelse og rolle. Dette er på Platons tid en ideel betragtning, og der gøres da også forskel i opdragelsen, når Platon kommer til den praktiske implementering i *Lovene*. Mænd og kvinder er ikke ligestillede i den realisering af staten, han anbefaler dér, og som er bygget op på 5040 husstande,⁷ men lighedsprincippet fungerer dog som orienterende og korrigerende i forhold til traditionelt opdragelsesmønster.⁸ Rousseau har ret i, at det hos Platon (meget eksplicit i *Lovene*) først og fremmest handler om, at kvinderne skal kunne de samme ting som mændene, idet et væsentligt sigte er statens sikkerhed. Hvordan større samfundsmæssig og politisk lighed for mænd og kvinder ville kunne forenes med arbejdsdelingen inden for husstanden, der i *Lovene* tænkes at følge et relativt traditionelt mønster, og med opdelingen i mande- og

5 *Emile* (da. udg.) bd. III, 5. bog s. 13. "Platon dans sa République donne aux femmes les mêmes exercices qu'aux hommes; je le crois bien. Ayant ôté de son gouvernement les familles particulières et ne sachant plus que faire des femmes, il se vit forcé de les faire hommes. Ce beau génie avoit tout combiné, tout prévu: il alloit au-devant d'une objection que personne peut-être n'eut songé à lui faire; mais il a mal résolu celle qu'on lui fait. Je ne parle point de cette prétendue communauté de femmes dont le reproche tant répété prouve que ceux qui le lui font ne l'ont jamais lû; je parle de cette promiscuité civile qui confond partout les deux sexes dans les mêmes emplois, dans les mêmes travaux, et ne peut manquer d'engendrer les plus intolérables abus; je parle de cette subversion des plus doux sentiments de la nature, immolés à un sentiment artificiel qui ne peut subsister que par eux; comme s'il ne falloit pas une prise naturelle pour former des liens de convention; comme si l'amour qu'on a pour ses proches n'étoit pas le principe de celui qu'on doit à l'État; comme si ce n'étoit pas par la petite patrie, qui est la famille, que le coeur s'attache à la grande; comme si ce n'étoient pas le bon fils, le bon mari, le bon père, qui font le bon citoyen!" *Émile* s. 699-700.

6 For en nærmere sammenlignende analyse af synet på kvinders natur, se Melissa A. Butler, 'Rousseau and Plato on Women: An Analysis of Book V of *Émile* and Book V of the *Republic*' i *Rousseau and the Ancients (Pensée Libre: no. 8)*, North American Association for the Study of Jean-Jacques Rousseau 2001.

7 Som altid er der ide i tallene hos Platon: 5040 = 1x2x3x4x5x6x7.

8 Jf. hertil *Lovene*, 7. bog 794 c-795 c (om børns lege 7- til 10-årsalderen); 804 c-805 d (skolegang 10.-13. år). En præcis vurdering af rækkevidden af den opdragelsesmæssige ligestilling i *Lovene* kan være vanskelig foretage. Platon taler almindeligvis om 'barn/børn' og 'unge'. Om han her uden videre underforstår 'dreng' og 'unge mænd', er selvfølgelig et fortolkningsspørgsmål. Det er dog ikke rimeligt at lade denne fortolkning slå igennem i oversættelsen (*pais* = dreng), så meget mindre som sprogbogen først og fremmest går på alderen, livsafnittet.

kvindearbejde i de offentlige institutioner, navnlig i de 'pædagogiske fag',⁹ kommer Platon ikke nærmere ind på.

I sin prisværdige bestræbelse på at give nogle af de træk, beskæftigelser og funktioner, som kvinder traditionelt har stået for, omsorg, nærhed og følsomhed, fuld valør, ender Rousseau som bekendt i den anden grøft. For ham er forskellen mellem mande- og kvindedønnet af natur med konsekvenser helt ud i de mindste detaljer. Man kan med rette sige, at han initierer 'først køn, siden menneske'-opfattelsen – i hvert fald for kvindernes vedkommende.¹⁰ Hvem der på dette punkt er mest ideologisk, dvs. naturaliserer herskende samfundsskabte normer, skal her ikke være usagt: Det gør Rousseau, men om der historisk var anden effektiv vej for det svage køn, får her stå hen.¹¹ For det skal ikke her handle primært om kønnene, skønt det i sig selv er interessant, at netop de to tænkere, der især har beskæftiget sig med både pædagogik og politik, har stærke synspunkter på sagen, ligesom det er påfaldende, at den politisk-filosofiske tradition i øvrigt er svag i det spørgsmål, når det nu har været rejst siden antikken. Det skal som sagt handle om, hvorfor Rousseau er så glad for Platon, når han er så grundlæggende uenig med ham. Som citatet ovenfor viser, hænger synet på kønnene tilsyneladende sammen med en basal uenighed i, hvad samfundet bygger på, hvad en politisk *ethos* er, og hvordan den frembringes gennem opdragelse. For Platon bygger samfundet og siden staten på arbejdsdelingsprincippet, ikke på familien. Selv om staten i *Lovene* består af husstande, der er organiseret ud fra slægtsrelationer, er livet i husstandene gennemsyret af samfundsmæssige og politiske forordninger. De er ikke 'små fædrelande', men dele af en større, determinerende helhed. Ligesom i *Staten* tilhører børnene staten mere end forældrene (*Leg.* 805 d). Derfor er al opdragelse og uddannelse reguleret gennem offentlige institutioner og embeder, vejledning, pædagogik og skolepligt, skreven og uskreven lov. Familien er ikke et afgrænset og lukket område; der kan for Platon

9 Det tages f.eks. i *Lovene* for givet, at omsorg og opdragelse af børn – som offentligt embede – varetages af kvinder, gymnastisk træning og egentlig lærergerning af mænd. Lærerne er fremmede, der får løn – medens det pædagogiske arbejde i øvrigt er offentligt ombud, der varetages af statens egne borgere. Det skal dog retfærdigvis siges, hvilket så til gengæld forværrer sagen i et andet perspektiv, at Platon ikke tænker sig, at de udearbejdende kvinder har dobbeltarbejde, da det meste husarbejde forudsættes varetaget af slaver eller fremmed arbejdskraft. 'Husmoderen' har mest en styrende funktion i forhold til den økonomiske og praktiske del af husholdningen.

10 Se Butler, op. cit. s. 143-44.

11 Schleiermacher kommenterer ligestillingen i *Staten* helt i samme ånd som Rousseau: "Wie nun ferner von der größeren Gleichheit der Geschlechter aus die christliche Sitte den reinsten Begriff der Ehe und die vollkommene Gestaltung des Hauswesens ins Leben gerufen hat: so hat den Platon seine Ansicht von dieser Gleichheit zu einer völligen Zerstörung von beiden verleitet, und dies ist es was unserer Zeitgenossen von gesundem Sinn gern bis auf die letzte Spur aus diesem Werke verlöschen möchte. Allein diesen Spuren führen sehr weit; ja, ich möchte sagen hier konzentriert sich alles Verfehlete der hellenischen Geistesentwicklung, und es zeigt sich deutlich das Unvermögen dieser Natur zu einer befriedigenden Gestaltung ethischer Verhältnisse. Auch Platon, dem man aus Mißverständnis häufig in dieser Beziehung ganz falsche Ehre angetan hat, ist in der bloß sinnlichen Ansicht des Geschlechtsverhältnisses so befangen, daß er für die Bestimmung des Geschlechtstriebes zu einer persönlichen Neigung kein anderes Motiv anerkennt als den Reiz, den die Betrachtung schöner sich mannigfaltig und lebhaft bewegender Gestalten hervorbringt, so daß ein geistiges Element in der Geschlechtsliebe ihm völlig fremd geblieben ist." Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher, *Über die Philosophie Platons*, Felix Meiner Verlag, Hamburg 1996 s. 359-60.

i princippet ikke trives noget – godt eller skidt – i familien, der ikke kommer fra det omgivende fællesskab. Staten opdrager, dens *ethos* trænger – på godt eller ondt – ind i familien. Her er ikke noget reservat for selvsåede vækster, kærlighed til viden eller politisk dyd.

Platon kan af historiske grunde ikke forestille sig familien som positivt værn mod skadelig samfundsmæssig indflydelse, så for ham er eneste udvej den fornuftige indretning af menneskets vækstbetingelser i det store fællesskab, staten. På Rousseaus tid er familien imidlertid blevet noget andet, og han kan tænke den som god og naturlig i betydningen en organisering af noget naturligt menneskeligt, kønnene og kærligheden; den er blevet til 'kernefamilie'. Den romantiske kærlighed, der for Platon intet havde med slægt og husstand endsige kønsforskel at gøre, og som netop derfor kunne fungere som katalysator for individuel, åndelige stræben og dannelse,¹² bliver hos Rousseau koblet til kønsforholdet og forplantningen: Far og mor og børn. I dette lille fædreland ligger ikke bare grobunden for menneskelig tilblivelse og opvækst, men også noget, der dels kan tjene som værn imod de destruktive civilisatoriske tendenser, dels kan frembringe den politiske *ethos*, der er nødvendig for fællesskabet. Den gode søn, mand og far er også den gode borger. Rousseau synes hermed at have angrebet Platons begyndelsesproblem.¹³ Den private, individuelle opdragelse i familien kan frembringe det naturlige og gode menneske, der med tiden og det rette køn også vil blive den gode borger.

At den historiske ændring, der sker med familien på Rousseaus tid, ikke betyder, at familien bliver et samfundsprodukt i mindre grad end hos Platon, siger sig selv. Rousseaus private opdragelse løser næppe noget begyndelsesproblem, og modstillingen af privat og offentlig opdragelse, opdragelse til menneske og opdragelse til borger, rejser nye spørgsmål og skaber problemer for Rousseau-fortolkerne. Men måske er netop denne modstilling sigende for, hvad det er, Rousseau priser Platon for. *Staten* er den skønneste afhandling om opdragelse, der nogen sinde er skrevet, *på trods* af at den handler om offentlig opdragelse, ikke privat, og *på trods af*, at dens politiske ideer og sigte er uacceptable for Rousseau. Adskiller vi de pædagogiske ideer fra de politiske og fokuserer alene på, *hvordan* man skal opdrage, giver det hele mere mening. For her er der ganske omfattende forlæg hos Platon, der som den første tager en række pædagogiske emner under principiell og systematisk overvejelse, dels overordnet i *Staten*, dels i forhold til en praktisk udformning i *Lovene*. For det pædagogiske blik, som Rousseau anlægger og disciplinerer, må Platon være *the founding father*, og vi må tage ham på ordet: *Staten* er det skønneste værk om opdragelse af den simple grund, at den handler om opdragelse som sådan, og der ikke er skrevet noget bedre om den sag siden.

I et andet citat fra *Émile* skinner noget igennem, som det er værd at hæfte sig ved:

12 I *Symposion* og *Faidros* er det homoseksuelle forhold mellem den ældre og yngre mand nok en samfundsskabt konvention med et opdragende/dannende sigte, men kan også være rammen om et kærlighedsforhold af mere 'romantisk' art.

13 Hermed sigtes til det sagligt og kompositionelt konstituerende spørgsmål i *Staten*: Hvis samfundets *ethos*/statens forfatning er et produkt af indbyggernes *ethos*/sjælelige forfatning, og denne igen er et produkt af socialisering og opdragelse ud fra de herskende normer, hvordan er en ændring af forholdene så overhovedet mulig?

”Respekter barndommen, bedøm den ikke overilet hverken til det gode eller til det onde. Lad undtagelserne gøre sig bemærket, lad dem stå deres prøve og befæste sig, før De griber til særlige metoder. Lad naturen råde længe, før De handler i dens sted, for at De ikke skal komme til at modvirke dens værk. Hertil indvender De, at tid er kostbar, og at De ikke vil spilde den. De indser ikke, at De i højere grad spilder tiden ved at bruge den dårligt end ved intet at gøre, og at et dårligt undervist barn er længere borte fra visdommen end det barn som slet ingen undervisning har fået. De er oprørt over at se, at det første år går med ingenting. Hvadbehager? Er det ingenting at være lykkelig? Er det ingenting at springe, lege og løbe hele dagen? Barnet vil aldrig i sit liv få så travlt. I *Staten*, som man anser for at være så streng, opdrager Platon børnene udelukkende ved fester, lege, sange og fornøjeligt tidsfordriv. Han mener tilsyneladende at han har gjort det udmærket, når han har lært børnene rigtig at fryde sig.”¹⁴

Referencen her står næppe i nogen tilfældig kontekst. Rousseau ser Platons stat som et sted, hvor man kan have en lys, lykkelig – og lang barndom! Han vurderer dermed – efter eget udsagn – Platons ånd ganske anderledes end traditionen, der ser en alvorlig og streng statsindretning (i eftertiden tillige af mange anset for at være af totalitært politisk tilsnit). Rousseau kan derimod have set respekt for barndommen og barnets egenart, fokus på selvvirksomhed og minimalt pres fra samfund og voksenverden i form af effektivitet og læringsmål og i det hele taget en pædagogik, der lægger vægt på menneskelig glæde og munterhed. Om man finder denne læsning overbevisende og deler Rousseaus vurdering af den platoniske ånd, afhænger selvfølgelig af en lang række faktorer. Men for Rousseau var det ikke alene et spørgsmål om ånden i værkerne. Blandt de pædagogiske temaer, som står centralt hos Platon, skal her nævnes følgende, der også er kernepunkter for Rousseau:

Anerkendelse af barndommen og dens forskellige faser

Det er en kendt sag, at barndommen først blev opfundet i 1700-tallet; alligevel finder man hos Platon opmærksomhed ikke bare på barndommen som den væsentligste formative periode, men på dens forskellige afsnit og nødvendigheden af en pædagogik, der er indrettet derefter. Opvæksten opdeles i *Lovene* i perioderne 0-3 år (788a ff.), 3-6 år (793 d ff.), 7-10 år (794 c ff.), 10-13 år (809 e ff.) og 13-16 år (812 b ff.).

¹⁴ *Emile* (da. udg.), bd. I 2. bog s. 110. ”Respectez l'enfance, et ne vous pressez point de la juger, soit en bien, soit en mal. Laissez les exceptions s'indiquer, se prouver, se confirmer longtemps avant d'adopter pour elles des méthodes particulières. Laissez longtemps agir la nature, avant de vous mêler d'agir à sa place, de peur de contrarier ses opérations. Vous connaissez, dites-vous, le prix du temps, et n'en voulez point perdre? Vous ne voyez pas que c'est bien plus le perdre d'en mal user que de n'en rien faire, et qu'un enfant mal instruit est plus loin de la sagesse que celui qu'on n'a point instruit du tout. Vous êtes alarmé de le voir consumer ses premières années à ne rien faire! Comment! n'est-ce rien que d'être heureux? N'est-ce rien que de sauter, jouer, courir toute la journée? Platon dans sa république, qu'on croit si austère, n'élève les enfants qu'en fêtes, jeux, chansons, passetems; on diroit qu'il a tout fait, quand il leur a bien appris à se réjouir;” *Emile*, s. 343-44.

Der citeres her efter Pléiade-udgaven. I andre udgaver som f.eks. Garnier-Flammarion, Paris 1966, s. 132, kan man finde varianten, der ligger til grund for den danske udgave: ”Platon, dans sa *République*...”, altså ikke i staten, men i værket *Staten*. Rousseau synes dog klart at referere til samme sted som Montaigne (se nedenfor), nemlig *Lovene* 793 e.

Betydning af spædbarnsalderen mhp. dannelse af temperamentet

Både Platon (791d f.) og Rousseau¹⁵ tematiserer barnets skrig og gråd som dets første udtryk. Det kan nok siges at ligge indenfor almindelig menneskelig erfaring og er ikke meget værd som filosofisk-pædagogisk indsigt; det interessante er, hvordan der tænkes over det, og hvordan sagen forstås. Hos Platon drejer det sig om (791 e): Hvordan bør staten som sådan opdrage dem, der endnu ikke har talens brug og dermed ikke er modtagelige for nogen som helst *paideia*? Hertil svares, at børn kan skrike og græde. Den pædagogiske overvejelse handler ikke om, hvordan man får dem til at holde op, men om at tage gråden som tegn på, hvad barnet vil. Man giver det dette eller hint, og når barnet holder op med at græde, har man ramt rigtigt, og barnet bliver glad og tilfreds. Den overordnede kontekst er nemlig, hvordan man former et harmonisk temperament, der hverken er for blødt og tudevornt eller for hårdt og slavisk, men muntært og robust, og så hedder det i en passage (792 a), der næppe har undgået Rousseaus opmærksomhed: "Gråd og skrig er for børnene udtryk for, hvad de elsker og hader, og på ingen måde et lykkeligt tegn. Den tid, hvor det går sådan for sig, er ikke mindre end 3 år, en ikke ubetydelig del af livet at tilbringe mere eller mindre dårligt."

Princippet er ikke kompromis eller ligevægt, men naturlig opfyldelse af barnets egne behov, som det kan give udtryk for. Det drejer sig om at fjerne smerte, frygt og ubehag, ikke positivt at skaffe barnet 'mange lyster' (*pollas hêdonas*), da overimødekommenehed i henseende til lyst skaber en karakter, der dårligt tåler det mindste afsavn. "I netop sådan en praksis ligger for os det største fordærv, for alt afhænger af opdragelsens begyndelse." (792 b-c)

Vigtigheden af fysisk bevægelse

Hvis ikke det var, fordi det kunne blive opfattet som en spøg, ville lovgiveren hos Platon sågar anbefale, at kvinder under svangerskabet tilstræbte at undgå de store følelsesmæssige udsving og fastholde en glad, afslappet og mild sindsstemning (792 e). Det holder ham dog ikke tilbage, når det gælder bevægelsen: Sundhedsstyrelsen anbefaler motion for gravide (789 e) og spædbarnsgymnastik (791c)! Passagen 788d-791 c er en af *Lovenes* mange forunderlige. Her bringes det grundlæggende princip i kosmos i relation til det menneskelige foster. Bevægelse er godt for sundheden og dermed for sjælen, men der er også en direkte forbindelse: Sjæl er liv, og liv er bevægelse. Jo mere bevægelse, desto mere liv og sjæl, kunne man sige. De gravide skal gå tur, barneplejerskerne skal bære børnene omkring og se meget, ud på landet, til templet, på besøg hos slægtninge (789 e), indtil børnene efter 3-årsalderen begynder at kunne beskæftige sig selv i leg. Ved 6-årsalderen kan man tage fat på en første egentlig træning i legemlig og musisk bevægelse i form af gymnastik, sport, dans og sang-lege. Overvejelserne over bevægelsens betydning bygger også på iagttagelser og erfaring. Vi lufter vores husdyr uden anden grund end bevægelsen i sig selv og anser ikke bare vores

15 *Emile* (da. udg.) bd. I 1. bog s. 29, 53 ff. & passim. *Émile* s. 261, 286 ff & passim.

egen motion, men enhver udefra påført bevægelse som at ride, køre og sejle for gavnlig (789 b-c); deraf tanken om bevægelsen som grundelementet (*stoicheion*, 790 c) for sjæl og legeme hos de mindste. Men bevægelsen har også en dybere funktion, idet den virker som lægedom for sjælelige forstyrrelser. Platon tænker her ikke på decideret sygdom, men nævner to eksempler på velkendt psykisk ubalance (790 d-e): Dels den bacchantiske rus, hvor den ordnede bevægelse i rituel kædedans og musik bringer sindene i ro; dels barnet, der ikke kan sove, men falder i søvn, når det bliver vugget og sunget for. Atheneren forklarer det med, at både søvnløshed og raseri kommer af frygt. Den udefrakommende bevægelse behersker den indre tilstand. Hvad frygten (*deima, fobos*) egentlig går på og bundet i, får vi ikke nærmere at vide om. Det synes dog, som om den ses som en oprindelig eller primitivt-naturlig tilstand, der skal overvindes; en sjæl, siges det afslutningsvis (791 b), der har vænnet sig til at leve i frygt, bliver frygtsom og fej. Vi kan således konstatere, at hos Platon begynder al oplysning med vuggesang!

Barnets/elevens 'selvvirksomhed'

Opdelingen i barndommens forskellige aldersfaser vidner om, at Platon anerkender 'naturen', dvs. barnets egen vækst, som en faktor i opdragelsen. Vi så, at selv spædbarnet tænkes aktivt stræbende, og at opdragelsesprincippet her ikke var at gøre alt muligt, der kunne fornøje barnet, men at imødekomme dets udtrykte behov. Det forholder sig på samme måde med barnet i perioden 3-6 år, og her gøres der endnu ikke forskel på drenge og piger hos Platon. Børn i den alder skal bare lege, og det kan de som regel selv finde ud af, når man blot bringer dem sammen (793 e - 794 a). Dette livsafsnit får kun 1 side i *Lovene*, og det meste af pladsen bruges på betragtninger over straf, da det også er i denne periode, en egentlig disciplinering begynder. Da 'børnehaven' tænkes at ligge i forbindelse med bydelens helligdom, kan der sikkert også let ske noget usømmeligt. Hertil ville Rousseau have et eller andet at sige om den dårlige opdrager, der ikke lægger tingene til rette, så forbud undgås og muligheden for det uønskede minimeres. Dog er Platons placering næppe tilfældig, men valgt netop for at bringe børnene i kontakt med en væsentlig politisk institution i det fælles liv.

Førskolepædagogikken er i *Lovene* altså lagt an på børnenes frie leg. Ved begyndelsen på en egentlig undervisning i 6-7-års alderen møder vi en klar forskel i fremstillingen i forhold til *Staten*, idet der i *Lovene* fokuseres på lærestoffet (*ta matemata*; 795 d) inden for gymnastik, kampsport og musik og ikke gøres nogen nærmere didaktiske overvejelser, endside anlægges et individuelt dannelsesperspektiv med henblik på en fremtidig højere teoretisk uddannelse; den tænkes overhovedet kun at finde sted i det natlige råds regi.¹⁶ Fra *Staten* og til dels eksemplificeret i Sokrates' berømte belæring af en slave i *Menon* kender vi imidlertid Platons sokratiske, 'dialektiske didaktik', der tager udgangspunkt i elevens forud-

16 Praktisk uddannelse kommer ikke på tale i *Lovene*; håndværk, landbrug og lønnet arbejde varetages af slaver eller fremmede. Militær uddannelse er pligt for alle borgere, også for kvinder (i det mindste som teoretisk undervisning!)

sætninger og ståsted og ikke mindst afpasses vedkommendes egen lærelyst. Den tvungne disciplinering, der på det fysiske og etiske område praktiseres intentionelt overfor alle først indirekte og siden direkte i *Lovene*, giver iflg. Platon ikke mening i forhold til videnskabelig og filosofisk erkendelse, der er fornuftens eget værk, ikke kan påfyldes andre som lærestof, og som aldrig vil kunne vækkes, hvis lyst og evner mangler. Uanset om Platons betragtning er dikteret af et aristokratisk ønske om, at kun de allerbedste får en lang videregående uddannelse i de videnskabelige og filosofiske discipliner, eller det handler om at sikre, at kun de bedste får ansvar for det fælles vel, er det didaktiske princip i sig selv klart og forsvarligt: Man kan ikke formidle viden fra den ene til den anden, som man hælder vand fra det ene kar til det andet gennem en tråd (*Symp.* 175d). Man skal lade børnene lære som i leg (*Rep.* 536e-537a), dvs. frit og utvungent, og i det hele taget forstå at gøre sjælens egen lærelyst og virksomhed til grundlag for indsigt og dannelse.

Udskydelse af skolestart og nedtoning af boglig lærdom

I *Lovene* fastsættes perioden for at erhverve de fundamentale færdigheder i at læse, skrive og regne til tre år mellem 10 og 13. På Platons tid var det almindeligt, at undervisning i læsning, skrivning og musik påbegyndtes i 7-årsalderen,¹⁷ og det fremgår faktisk ikke eksplicit, hvorfor han plæderer for det senere tidspunkt. Også i *Staten* finder vi – om end i anden kontekst – 10 år angivet som den alder, hvor en egentlig uddannelse kan tage sin begyndelse. Dette er en af de passager, Rousseau har markeret i sit eksemplar.¹⁸

Men Rousseau synes at have forstået hvorfor: "Rousseau has also marked passages on education, particularly on the need to train children morally before developing their intellect".¹⁹ Hos Platon ser vi, at værdsættelse af sandhed nok forudsætter medfødt nysgerighed og evne til at lære, men dog ikke vækkes af sig selv uafhængigt af den rette opdragelse, eller snarere: At den i reglen ødelægges, hvis det omgivende samfund ikke bekymrer sig derom. Vi skal *lære* at elske sandheden, om end det måske netop fordrer en negativ pædagogik i stil med den, Rousseau formulerer. Hos ham kan vi læse, at børns løgne er deres opdrageres værk.²⁰ Børn lærer at lyve – f.eks. ved at blive afkrævet regnskab for deres fejl eller oplysninger, der kan skade dem. Den intellektuelle belæring forudsætter en *holdning* til sandhed og fornuft og dermed et mål af etisk opdragelse, der iflg. Platon og Rousseau åbenbart ikke er nået i tilstrækkeligt omfang ved 7-års alderen. Men der er næppe kun tale om noget rent holdningsmæssigt. Citatet, der begynder med 'respektér barndommen' og indeholder omtalen af Platons stat som et fornøjeligt sted, afsluttes med et bonmot om, at 'barndommen er fornuftens søvn', og herefter fortsætter Rousseau:

"Børns tilsyneladende lærenemhed er årsag til, at de bliver ødelagt. Man indser ikke, at selve denne lærenemhed er bevis på at de intet lærer. Deres glatte og polerede hjerner

17 *Der kleine Pauly. Lexikon der Antike*, München 1975. 5. Bind, art. 'Schulen', sp. 38-39.

18 Silverthorne, op.cit. s. 242.

19 Ibid. s. 247.

20 *Emile* (da.udg.), bd. I 2. bog s. 103. *Émile* s. 336.

tilbagekaster som et spejl de genstande man holder op for dem. Men intet sidder fast, intet trænger ind. Barnet husker ordene, men tankerne genspejles kun. De som eksaminerer barnet, forstår disse tanker; barnet alene fatter dem ikke.”²¹

Rousseaus pædagogiske Platonforståelse falder her som i meget andet fuldstændig i tråd med Montaignes essay om børneopdragelse, hvor vi kan læse:

”Det er forbløffende at se, hvor stærkt Platon i sine *Love* går ind for at ungdommen i hans by skal have mulighed for at more sig og have det rart, og hvor meget han beskæftiger sig med deres kapløb, spil, sange, spring og danse, hvis ledelse og beskyttelse han siger at de gamle grækere lagde i hænderne på guderne selv, det vil sige Apollon, Muserne og Minerva.”²²

Og Montaigne har også gjort sig nogle tanker om undervisning, der preller af, om end han udtrykker sig mere bramfrit end Rousseau:

”Han [læreren] skal ikke blot kræve eleven til regnskab for ordlyden i lektien, men også for dens mening og indhold, og han skal bedømme hvilket udbytte eleven har af den ved at se på hvordan han generelt opfører sig i sin daglige tilværelse, ikke ved at prøve hans hukommelse. Han skal lade ham fremstille det han netop har lært fra hundrede forskellige synsvinkler, og bruge det på lige så mange forskellige emner for at se, om han nu også rigtig har forstået og tilegnet sig det. Og med hensyn til hans fremskridt skal han lade sig lede af Platons pædagogiske metoder. Det er tegn på manglende eller dårlig fordøjelse at gylpe maden op i samme tilstand som man har indtaget den. Maven har ikke gjort sit arbejde hvis den ikke har lavet om på formen og beskaffenheden af det man har givet den at fordøje.”²³

Platon, Montaigne og Rousseau ser ikke ingen mening i udenadslære, som er en reel fare ved for tidlige forsøg på intellektuel indlæring, før holdning, erindringsevne og dømmekraft er udviklet. Og disse evner kan udvikles på andre måder end ved skolegang og bogstav. Sansning og anskuelse, praktisk omgang med tingene, variation og først og fremmest egenaktivitet træner de intellektuelle evner og forståelsen for omverdenen. For tidlig belæring risikerer også at tildække barnets evner og muligheder, så det ikke lærer, hvad det kan, i det omfang det kan. Det afgørende er derfor, at tilrettelæggelsen af opdragelse og undervisning overordnet sker efter pædagogikkens egne rationaler og mål – ikke efter heteronome standarder: ”For ifølge Platons forskrifter skal man give sine børn en levevej der er i overensstemmelse med deres egne ressourcer, ikke med forældrenes.”²⁴ Selv om barndommen ikke er en livsfase af egenverdi sammenlignet med voksenalderen for Platon, sådan som den er for Rousseau, og selv om hans syn på opdragelse til dels er dikteret af statens retfærdige indretning, så er barndommen dog ikke en livsfase, der skal overstås

21 *Emile* (da.udg.), bd. I 2. bog s. 111. ”L'apparente facilité d'apprendre est cause de la perte des enfants. On ne voit pas que cette facilité- même est la preuve qu'ils n'apprennent rien. Leurs cerveau lisse et poli rend comme un miroir les objets qu'on lui présente; mais rien ne reste, rien ne pénètre. L'enfant retient les mots, les idées se réfléchissent; ceux qui l'écoutent les entendent, lui seul ne les entend point.”*Emile* s. 344.

22 Montaigne, *Essays I-III*, Første bog, Kapitel 26, s. 190.

23 *Ibid.* s. 173.

24 *Ibid.* s. 186.

hurtigst muligt, og det er langt fra ligegyldigt, hvordan man har henlevet den. Måske Montaigne bedst udtrykker forbindelsen mellem Platon og Rousseau:

"Det er udmærket at læreren lader ham trave foran sig, så han kan bedømme hans gangart og få en idé om hvor meget han skal sætte sit eget tempo ned for at tilpasse sig elevens. Hvis der er misforhold mellem de to ting ødelægger vi det hele, men at finde det rette forhold og ikke overskride grænsen er noget af det sværeste jeg ved, og det er tegn på en ædel og stærk sjæl at kunne bringe sig på niveau med et barns tempo og lede det. Jeg går selv sikrere og med fastere skridt når det går opad end når det går nedad."²⁵

Rousseau har læst Platon med samme indforståethed som Montaigne, og begge synes klart at mene, at man hos Platon finder en første autoritativ formulering af, at *pædagogik* er noget i sig selv. Uanset hvad målet for opdragelsen nærmere bestemt er moralsk og politisk, er der rigtige og forkerte *pædagogiske* overvejelser og fremgangsmåder med henblik på at forme et menneskes karakter og lære det noget.

Et yderligere træk, der vidner om *Statens* betydning for *Émile*, er den parallelle kompositoriske opbygning af de første 5 bøger, som bl.a. Roger D. Masters har gjort opmærksom på: "The first book of each work contains a critique of conventions and opinions without truly establishing human morality; Books II and III describe the basic patterns of education (dealing with such matters as the status of poets, who are in each case banished, and physical training). In Book IV of the *Republic* there is an analysis of the healthy tastes of the guardians as well as a discussion of the passions and virtues in the human soul, topics which are treated in Book IV of the *Émile* (although in reverse order); the establishment of religion occurs at the center of Book IV in each volume. Just as Book V of the *Émile* has three parts (dealing respectively with inequality of the sexes, the formation of the family, and Rousseau's political solution), so Socrates faces "three waves" of paradox in Book V of the *Republic* (the equality of the sexes, the abolition of the family, and the philosopher-kings as the best regime)."²⁶

Endelig er der hele anlægget, *Statens* og *Émiles* karakter af ideal, litterær konstruktion. I begge værker følger vi tilblivelse af hhv. et retfærdigt politisk samfund og et godt menneske i et perspektiv præget af privation eller negation af det faktiske: Hos Platon tænkes det retfærdige samfund i isolation fra den dårlige (samfundsskabte) menneskelige 2.-natur; hos Rousseau tænkes opdragelsen af det gode menneske i isolation fra den dårlige (menneskeskabte) civilisation. I det begge værker udvikler sagens – hhv. statens/retfærdighedens

25 Ibid. S. 173.

26 Masters, op. cit. n. 162, s. 99. For en uddybende tolkning af 5.bog-parallellerne, se (foruden Butler, op.cit.) Laurence D. Cooper, "Émile, or On Philosophy? Rousseaus Modified Platonism" i *Rousseau and the Ancients* (Pensée Libre: no. 8), North American Association for the Study of Jean-Jacques Rousseau 2001, s. 127-139. Cooper følger endnu en iagttagelse fra Masters (ibid. s. 100): "Book v of the *Republic* concludes with Socrates' discussion of the lover of wisdom (475b-480a), whereas Rousseau concludes the corresponding Book of the *Émile* by describing marital love (G, 607-14)." Iflg. Cooper kan 5. Bog læses eksklusivt 'psykologisk', således at f.eks. de tre søer ikke refererer primært til ydre politiske forhold i staten, men er billeder på en slags stadier på sjælens vej til filosofi.

og opdragelsens – begreb og ikke har til formål at afgive en praktisk guide til politik og opdragelse, får begge værker en utopisk tendens.

B. Querelle des anciens et des modernes?

Vi har i det foregående set, hvorledes Rousseau på forskellig vis viderefører centralt platonisk tankegods på det pædagogisk-filosofiske område, ikke mindst i form af en pædagogisk-filosofisk antropologi. Det er imidlertid ikke dette område, der normalt og primært forbindes med filosofisk 'platonisme', så vi vil i det følgende perspektivere til en klassisk diskussion, der tillige er vigtig for spørgsmålet om den fortsatte betydning af fortidens visdom.

Diskussionen om Rousseaus 'platonisme' er ikke mindst takket være Leo Strauss forbundet med genoplivningen og omdefineringen af den gamle debat mellem *les anciens et les modernes*.²⁷ I sin originale form fra slutningen af 1600-tallet drejede debatten sig som bekendt om, hvorvidt de antikke forfattere afgav forbindtlige forbilleder for eftertidens poesi, drama og prosa, eller om de moderne, der lod hånt om traditionens mønstre og formulerede sig på ny, var bedre. I Strauss' værker bliver *la querelle* betegnelsen for andet og mere end en kanon-debat, skønt Strauss selv er af den overbevisning, at de gamles forståelse af politisk filosofi faktisk er autoritativ. *La querelle* bliver i en vis forstand indbegrebet af en (ånds)historisk bevægelse, der for den konservative Strauss former sig som en strid om rigtigheden af en oprindelig forståelse og formulering.²⁸ *La querelle* kan retrospektivt spores i antikkens *nomos-fysis*-diskussion og i middelalderens universalistrid, men kommer overordnet og endegyldigt til udtryk i den politiske filosofi ved indgangen til nyere tid; sekularisering formuleres hos Strauss ofte som 'modernisering'. I *Three Waves of Modernity*²⁹ står Rousseau for den anden bølge i bruddet med den før-moderne politiske filosofi. Machiavelli og Hobbes har i den første bølge gjort op med den antikke opfattelse af staten og for Hobbes' vedkommende også menneskelig dyd som naturligt funderet og legitimeret: "The characteristics of the first wave of modernity were the reduction of the moral and political problem to a technical problem, and the concept of nature as in need of being overlaid by civilization as a mere artefact." Rousseau har iflg. Strauss i udgangspunktet et kritisk og restorativt projekt: "Rousseau protested in the name of virtue, of the genuine, nonutilitarian virtue of the classical republics against the degrading and enervating doctrines of his predecessors;....Yet he could not restore the classical concept of virtue as the natural end of man, as the perfection of man's nature; he was forced to reinterpret virtue because he took over the modern concept of the state of nature as the state in which man

27 Iflg. Wikipedia er spørgsmålet om Rousseaus placering afgjort; han står som sidste *ancient* på en liste, der begynder med Montaigne. Det skal retfærdigvis siges, at der anføres forbehold! http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Querelle_des_Anciens_et_des_Modernes, acc. 26.06.2015.

28 For Strauss (og en række 'straussianere'), der konsekvent gengiver *logos* med 'speech', falder det naturligt at forstå den historiske bevægelse som en *debat om sandheden*, snarere end en real historisk udvikling eller realisering.

29 'The Three Waves of Modernity' (1959) i *An Introduction to Political Philosophy*. Wayne State University Press 1989, s. 81-98 Titlen associerer til de tre søer, som Sokrates må forcere i 5. bog af *Staten*.

finds himself at the beginning.....Man in the state of nature is subhuman or prehuman; his humanity or rationality have been required in a long process. In post-Rousseauan language, man's humanity is due not to nature, but to history, to the historical process, a singular or unique process which is not teleological.....The concept of history, i.e. of the historical process in which man becomes human without intending it, is a consequence of Rousseau's radicalization of the Hobbesian concept of the state of nature."³⁰ Strauss placerer altså ikke Rousseau blandt de moderne uden tøven, da Rousseau selv er kritisk overfor følgerne af den første bølge, men finder alligevel ingen anden plads, da Rousseaus 'løsning', historien og menneskets frihed, for Strauss er indbegrebet af moderniteten.

Davis Lay Williams, der har skrevet den eneste monografi, som eksklusivt behandler og argumenterer for Rousseaus som 'platoniker', placerer spørgsmålet netop her – i *la querelle* og i et opgør med Strauss' tolkning (i særdeleshed af spørgsmålet om almenviljen som enten bundet af en naturlig retfærdighed eller som ren menneskelig konvention), som Williams også mener genfindes hos Masters og for en stor del præger nutidens Rousseau-opfattelse.³¹ Williams ser en klar parallel mellem Platons opgør med sofisterne og Rousseaus opgør med Hobbes' og den tidlige oplysnings materialisme: "Rousseau's place in modernity is indeed deeply analogous to Plato's in antiquity."³² Hvis man kan vise, at Rousseau er platoniker, må en række beskyldninger om materialisme, retspositivisme og moralrelativisme kunne imødegås, og man kan give mening til en principiel distinktion mellem den almene og den blot fælles vilje. Derfor bliver det i første omgang nødvendigt at foretage en definition af, hvad man må forstå ved 'platonisme'. Her opregner Williams følgende:³³

1. Metafysisk: Dualisme, dvs. eksistensen af immaterielle ideer: "The forms are metaphysically different from the material world in which we conduct our daily lives."³⁴
2. Ontologisk: Ideerne er evige og uforanderlige og transcendent. "A second important feature of Platonism is less orthodox. It is also, I would argue, more specifically Platonic. This is that the immaterial ideas are indeterminate. [...] That is, the content of any given Platonic idea is not spelled out in concrete detail like a legal code."³⁵
3. Epistemologisk: Ideerne er erkendbare gennem intellektet, men der er mange hindringer for deres erkendelse. "Plato does not give an extended account of just how one employs the mind to come to these truths. This is undoubtedly related to the fact that, on his account, it is virtually impossible to do so in a written book. Anything like a comprehensive knowledge of the ideas is the result of an extended journey accessible to the few."³⁶

30 Op. cit. s. 89-90.

31 Williams, op.cit. s. 98.

32 Ibid. s. xviii.

33 Ibid. s. xix-xxv.

34 Ibid. s. xix; Williams anvender ikke betegnelsen 'fænomen' i denne sammenhæng.

35 Ibid. s. xx.

36 Ibid. s. xxi. Herefter følger en kort redegørelse for filosofiens uddannelse som beskrevet i bog 6-7 af *Staten*.

4. Politisk: Rigtig politisk og moralsk handling forudsætter ideviden, først og fremmest om det retfærdige og det gode. "Implementing these ideas in the imperfect material world is the goal of the political dimensions of Platonism."³⁷

Af historiske grunde må vi iflg. Williams inkludere en række yderligere træk i en definition af platonisme, der kan række ud over Platon selv, herunder et institutionelt aspekt, tro på Gud, sjælens udødelighed, viljens frihed og immaterielle ideer.³⁸ Grunden til, at de immaterielle ideer anføres to gange, synes at være hensynet til, at også 'idealistiske' positioner med en anden fundering end Platons originale metafysik kan klassificeres som platoniske. I sidste ende bliver Williams' definition af platonisme dermed en bred definition af idealisme, der kan stå som modpol til materialisme under ét. Platon eller Hobbes – det er spørgsmålet, og Williams' undersøgelse former sig derefter som et forsøg på at identificere de idealistiske træk hos Rousseau. Her drejer det sig navnlig om at finde belæg for, at Rousseau antager transcendent ideer for det gode og for retfærdigheden. Det største sammenhængende belæg i Rousseaus oeuvre findes i den savoyardske præsts trosbekendelse i *Émile*.³⁹ Williams afviser, at Rousseau kunne være så meget platoniker, at han lod en litterær person fremføre synspunkter, der ikke var hans egne;⁴⁰ hans argumenter er dog ikke konklusive, hvad næppe nogen argumentation om den slags spørgsmål kan være.

Williams' strategi for at godtgøre Rousseaus platonisme går således ud på at finde Platon/platonisme i Rousseau. I det foregående afsnit har vi forsøgt den omvendte strategi ud fra devisen: "Dialektik ist der Versuch, das Neue des Alten zu sehen anstatt einzig das Alte des Neuen."⁴¹ Vi så her, hvorledes Rousseau kunne lægge sig ganske tæt op ad Platon uden hensyn til de metafysiske, ontologiske eller erkendelsesteoretiske forudsætninger, der et par årtusinder og en lang filosofihistorie senere har undergået store og væsentlige forandringer. Dette rejser spørgsmålet, om Rousseaus platoniske inspiration overhovedet er at finde med de filosofiske discipliner som søgekriterier, så meget mere som hverken Platon eller Rousseau arbejder filosofisk 'disciplineret', men snarere dialektisk, kritisk og ikke mindst litterært og for Rousseaus vedkommende tillige essayistisk-idiosynkratisk.⁴² I forlængelse heraf rejser der sig imidlertid det påtrængende spørgsmål om, hvor den sag, der om

37 Ibid. s. xxii.

38 Et problem med en indledende stipulativ definition er som bekendt, at den gør alt, hvad der efterfølgende baseres på den, hypotetisk. Et andet problem er, at en meget almen definition kan være helt ubrugelig, og et tredje problem er, at en for snæver definition, anvendt som søgekriterium, kan blokere for relevant indsigt. Et fjerde problem er, om definitionen selv er dækkende for sagen. Williams' fremstilling er præget af alle fire problemstillinger, der dog står ukommenteret.

39 Samme synspunkt findes i James Mitchell Lee, 'Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Bernard Lamy: the Platonic education of *amour-propre*' i *Rousseau and the Ancients* (Pensée Libre: no. 8). North American Association for the Study of Jean-Jacques Rousseau 2001, s. 260-74. Her antages præstens bekendelse uden videre at være udtryk for Rousseaus tanke og holdning.

40 Williams, op.cit. s. 62-64.

41 Theodor W. Adorno, *Zur Metakritik der Erkenntnistheorie*. Gesammelte Schriften 5, Frankfurt 1970, s. 46

42 Dette træk er heller ikke ganske fraværende i de platoniske dialoger i kraft af netop Sokratesfiguren, der at og til tillades at tale ud fra et ganske individuelt perspektiv.

nogen forliger Rousseau med Platon, nemlig *paideia* eller *éducation* og forholdet mellem pædagogik og politik, bliver af i diskussion om gammelt og nyt.

Lad os et øjeblik vende tilbage til Strauss' prægnante formulering fra *Three Waves of Modernity*, som vi citerede ovenfor: "Man in the state of nature is subhuman or prehuman; his humanity or rationality have been required in a long process. In post-Rousseauan language, man's humanity is due not to nature, but to history, to the historical process, a singular or unique process which is not teleological." Dette er en meget generel formulering, som det kan være svært at være uenig i – og alligevel. Prøver vi at se sagen fra pædagogikkens synsvinkel og erstatte 'history' med 'education', kommer man i tvivl: "Man in the state of nature is subhuman or prehuman; his humanity or rationality have been required in a long process man's humanity is due not to nature, but to *education*, to the *educational* process, a singular or unique process which is not teleological." Med denne omskrivning bliver den første sætning usand i hvert fald som karakteristisk af Rousseaus standpunkt: Barnet, der kommer til verden i naturtilstand, er på ingen måde under- eller førmenneskeligt. Også den næste sætning bliver problematisk. Hvis mennesket fødes som menneske, så må dets 'menneskelighed' være noget, der kan tænkes som medfødt, ikke fornuft, men den evne til at lære, fornuften begynder som hos Platon – i Rousseaus udgave: *Perfectibilité*. Igen er det afgørende ikke, om der er et metafysisk sikret mål for læreprocessen (teleologi eller ej, dannelsesprocessen som indlejret i og normativt styret af et ordnet kosmos eller principielt åben), men karakteren af de antropologiske antagelser, der gøres: Et eksisterende menneske – om så blot nyfødt – kan ikke betragtes alene som et dyr, kun som materiale for et potentielt menneske. Rousseau synes at lægge sig op ad Platon i et pædagogisk, ikke et erkendelsesorienteret perspektiv, der tillader en betragtning af mennesket som et væsen på vej, et væsen i proces.⁴³ Man kan formulere denne forskel således:

- 1) Det erkendelsesteoretiske perspektiv går ud fra, at mennesket er rationelt; vi har alle fornuft. Spørgsmålet er, som Descartes formulerer det, blot at lære at bruge den rigtigt i erkendeøjemed.⁴⁴ Vi har hermed en almen *antagelse*. Fokus er på metode og gyldighed.
- 2) Det pædagogisk-filosofiske perspektiv ser ikke rationalitet, men evnen til at lære som det menneskelige udgangspunkt. Vi har den alle, men ikke i samme omfang. Nogle lærer hurtigt, andre langsomt, enkelte – om end få – stort set ikke. I stedet for en almen antagelse står vi med en enorm – pædagogisk og politisk – teoretisk og praktisk *opgave*. Fokus er på den enkeltes opdragelse, dannelse, uddannelse og på udviklingen af fornuftighed overhovedet. Målet er ikke primært sand erkendelse, men at komme så langt som individuelt muligt i retning af indsigt og myndighed.

43 Med forståelsen af medlidenheden som en indbygget tendens i selvopholdelsesdriften eller egenkærligheden genoptager Rousseau i øvrigt den thomistisk-aristoteliske *synderesis*, dvs. en naturlig tendens til det gode snarere end det onde.

44 Descartes, *Om metoden*. Gyldendal 1996. 1. del s. 29-30. Han påpeger også, at vi alle har den i principielt lige omfang, uagtet de øvrige gemytskræfter kan være til stede i forskelligt omfang.

Den humanitet eller rationalitet, vi i en fremskreden civilisation kan antage som alment menneskevæsen, skal til stadighed læres, hvad enten vi antager den som en medfødt evne, der udvikles, eller som en helt igennem tillært færdighed. Platon og Rousseau er begge opmærksomme på fornuftens genetiske aspekt. Som pædagogisk spørgsmål – dvs. som noget andet end et erkendelsesteoretisk – drejer det sig derfor ikke om den rette metode til anvendelse af en fornuft, der tages for givet, herunder (kriterier for) gyldigheden af erkendelsen, men om, hvordan man overhovedet kommer frem til den og kan gælde for et myndigt menneske. Den fornuft, som menneskeheden for Rousseau i Strauss' fortolkning har udviklet enten gennem en lang civilisatorisk proces eller ved guddommelig indgriben,⁴⁵ skal tilegnes i hver eneste barndom. Hvis barnet betragtes som født i den naturtilstand, Hobbes ser som menneskeheden oprindelige naturtilstand, forekommer det et umuligt projekt. Hobbes antager, at mennesket bag den civilisatoriske facade og uden den politiske magt er et dyr alene styret af selvopholdelsesdrift og en rudimentær, instrumentel fornuft, der tilsiger, at magtoverdragelsen gennem den sociale kontrakt er dets eneste mulighed for overlevelse. Det er for Hobbes politisk styre, ikke socialisation og opdragelse, der først og fremmest skal holde naturmennesket i live og ave.

Der er her tale om en form for antropologisk tomrum og kortslutning, som Rousseau reagerer på. Da vi intet kan vide om det oprindelige naturmenneske, må vi konstruere 'urmennesket', for – som Hobbes har indset – legitimation og indretning af stat og politisk styre afhænger heraf. Ingen politisk filosofi uden filosofisk antropologi. Rousseaus forgængere har imidlertid taget mennesket som givet i en eller anden form og spurgt, hvordan staten kan tilpasses mennesket, men de har også alle forudsat, at mennesket var socialt af naturen, eller at menneskene befandt sig i en sådan indbyrdes tilstand, at suverænitetsafgivelsen til staten var eneste mulighed for overlevelse. I 2. *Discours* anklager Rousseau med rette sine forgængere for ikke at nå frem til naturtilstanden, men at forveksle det vilde med det sociale – og rationelle – menneske.⁴⁶ Selv gør han noget andet, idet han dels rekonstruerer urmennesket ikke blot uden samfund, men uden nogen som helst form for *behov* for det, dels vender problemstillingen om og gennem sin opdragelsesteori søger en bestemmelse af, hvordan mennesker må være, og hvordan de må opdrages, for at de *kan* indgå en social kontrakt. Dermed bryder han på den ene side det cirkulære i slutningen fra socialt til politisk menneske og udfylder på den anden side det tomrum, som cirkelslutningen dækkede over, med faktorerne historie og opdragelse. Men han anlægger dermed også et perspektiv, der kommunikerer med Platons, uanset forskelle i opfattelsen af den gode forfatning. Hos begge får pædagogikken den funktion og opgave at forme mennesket, så det passer til ideen om en retfærdig stat, hvilket i sidste ende vil sige, at det kan anerkende det almene gode som sit eget. Også dette aspekt, *almenvellet*, har om noget har givet anledning til, at Platon og Rousseau er blevet stemplet som totalitære politiske tænkere.

45 Afhandling om ulighedens oprindelse og grundlæggelse blandt menneskene, Gyldendal 1995. S. 70 ff.

46 Ibid. s. 56.

I Williams' udlægning af forholdet mellem Platon og Rousseau spiller pædagogikken og forholdet mellem pædagogik og politik ikke nogen fremtrædende rolle. I et kapitel, 'Of Chains, Caves, and Slaves: Allegory and Illusion in Rousseau', der byder på interessant nærlæsning af passager, hvor Rousseau taler om 'lænker', vurderes en erkendelsesteoretisk-metafysisk, men først og fremmest en politisk udlægning af Hulebilledet som mere rigtig end en pædagogisk. Hulebilledet ses som et billede på tyranniet, som det senere beskrives i 8. og 9. bog af *Staten*, ikke mindst på grund af den gennemgående brug af et vokabular, der handler om tvang, kontrol, fanger og lænker.⁴⁷ "The educational dimension is crucial insofar as learning is the only means of escape", skriver Williams, men der er her først og fremmest tale om den højere, filosofiske uddannelse, der kun er opnåelig for de få. "Without true ideas of justice or the good, there are no meaningful ways the escapees can label their former dwelling "bad".⁴⁸ Williams' udlægning af Hulebilledet går således stik imod den gængse forståelse af, at opstigningen er en gradueret proces, hvor hvert trin udgør en bevidstgørelse af tilstanden før; det springende punkt er imidlertid ikke så meget fortolkningen af, hvad frigørelsen i hulen er en frigørelse fra eller oprør imod, men at den simpelthen er umulig i Williams' udgave og under ingen omstændigheder kan udgøre et eksempel på Platon-inspiration hos Rousseau. Hvis kun sand indsigt i ideerne kan give fangerne i bunden af hulen en meningsfuld vurdering af deres tilstand, er der ingen vej ud for nogen. Williams overser dels begyndelsesproblemet; dels underkender han betydningen af de erkendestadier, der er indbygget i Hulebilledet gennem Linjebilledet.⁴⁹ Williams opererer således med det samme tomrum som Hobbes. Socialisation og opdragelse tillægges måske nok en praktisk, men ingen principiel betydning i menneskets frigørelse. Teorien mener at kunne klare sig med ideer og fornuft uden at tage hensyn til, hvordan de realt tilegnes.

Det, der iflg. Williams mere end noget andet gør Rousseau til platoniker, er som bekendt antagelsen af transcendent ideer for det gode og for retfærdigheden. Nu er såvel det godes som retfærdighedens idestatus noget af det mere problematiske hos Platon; det gode er i hvert fald ikke en ide som andre, og i hvilken forstand der er en ide for retfærdighed, der jo består i en relation, og om den er noget andet end det gode, kan diskuteres og udlægges på mange legitime måder. Det samme gælder i øvrigt forståelsen af transcendens.⁵⁰ En intelligibel relation, dvs. noget, der ikke er tilgængeligt for sanserne, er ikke nødvendigvis vidnesbyrd om ontologisk transcendens. Når Williams især forbinder Rousseau med

47 Op. cit. s. 135-36. Et andet argument bygger på, at skyggerne i hulen først og fremmest skal forstås som skygger af retfærdigheden. "What are the shadows in this scheme? On the political interpretation, they are the positive norms of the community. Plato tells us that they are "shadows of justice" (*Republic*, 517d)." (S. 135.) Williams' læsning er ikke her helt præcis. Ikke alle skyggerne i hulen er skygger af retfærdigheden, og de er det under alle omstændigheder ikke umiddelbart; de er i væsentligt omfang skygger af 'ting', der igen er skygger af noget idealt.

48 Ibid. s. 136.

49 I Hulebilledet drejer det sig fra starten om betydningen af at kunne se 'tingene' som forskellige fra skyggerne og indsigten i det kausale forhold imellem dem. Williams overser med det pædagogiske også det erkendelses-genetiske aspekt.

50 Williams forbinder transcendens med dualisme; det er dog næppe forsvarligt at gøre Platon til dualist i samme forstand som Descartes, dvs. med en ontologisk tosubstanslære.

Platon gennem en anerkendelse af naturen og tingenes orden, har han imidlertid fat i noget væsentligt. Det gode er for Platon indbegrebet af orden eller struktur og viser sig såvel i naturen som i de menneskelige ting. For at vise sig i de menneskelige ting, i form af menneskelig godhed og retfærdighed, må det imidlertid for både Platon og Rousseau en tur over menneskets egen virksomhed; det kommer ikke af sig selv. Her må man dog igen understrege, at såfremt det gode eller tingenes orden alene var et transcendent princip, der kun kunne reproducere i menneskets sjæl gennem erkendelse, står vi med problemet fra før. Det er netop, fordi tingenes orden *ikke* er noget eksklusivt transcendent, og *ikke alene* er tilgængelig for sjælen i reflekteret form, dvs. gennem intellektet, som normative ideer om det gode og retfærdigheden, at den kan reproducere i de menneskelige ting.

Vi nævnte i forrige afsnit den forskel, der er mellem Rousseau og Platon angående det materiale element i opdragelsen, hvor Rousseau udelukker det musisk-æstetiske, som er det centrale hos Platon fra den tidligste barnealder. Denne materiale betragtning kan let skygge for den parallelitet, der findes i deres fælles syn på 'tingene' som opdrager og formidler af netop den orden, der skal reproducere som selvkontrol⁵¹ og autonomi ('velordnet frihed'). Hertil medvirker også en forskel i den etiske orientering af opdragelsen. Emile er god, men ikke dydig, medens dyderne nok må siges at spille en væsentlig rolle i Platons opdragelsesprojekt. Den underliggende lighed kommer imidlertid frem i et pædagogisk perspektiv, nemlig som en fælles afstandtagen fra en direkte etisk eller moralsk øvelse og belæring, der nok bedst kan begribes i kontrast til en aristotelisk forståelse. For Platon og Rousseau bliver vi ikke først og fremmest gode ved at gøre dydige handlinger, ved at opdrages med moralsk ros og dadel, belønning og straf, og ved at lære, hvordan samfundet sanktionerer det efterstræbelsesværdige i form af anerkendte, navngivne karakterdyder. Både Platon og Rousseau går ud fra, at hvad samfundet konkret sanktionerer som dyd, bestemt ikke er udtryk for det gode, snarere tværtimod. Der er ikke nogen social autoritet, der kan levere forbindtlige mønstre, der kan fungere som normative orienteringspunkter for formningen af individet. Dette rejser for dem derfor spørgsmålet om, hvordan vi kan opdrage, hvis vi ikke kan stole på det normale, altså hvis den aristoteliske socio-kulturelle cirkel, som opdragelsen foregår indenfor, skal brydes.

For Rousseau er løsningen den private opdragelse, hvor 'privat' netop betyder unddraget samfundet, og en opdragelse med 'tingene' som primære faktor. Opdrageren må naturligvis snyde og lægge tingene til rette, så de faktisk bevirker den ønskede erfaring af f.eks. retfærdighed, privat ejendomsret etc., eftersom privationen er en fiktion. Émile bliver dog ikke god gennem direkte moralsk belæring i moralske situationer, men indirekte gennem erfaring af tingenes objektive orden og konsekvenserne af sine handlinger. Émile bliver ikke god i betydningen moralsk reflekteret, men god i betydningen naturlig, saglig, ærlig, tilidsfuld, ligefrem og uden forstillelse. For Platon er løsningen ikke privat, men politisk, og en opdragelse, der rekurrerer til det skønne og tingenes æstetiske orden. Også her snyder

51 Williams om *sofrosyne* som betingelse for frihed, se op.cit. s. 145-46.

opdrageren, idet tingene lægges æstetisk til rette, så de bevirker den ønskede erfaring af skønhed, orden og harmoni, der producerer dispositionen for nogenlunde de samme karaktertræk som hos Émile. Men igen er den væsentligste opdragelsesfaktor den indirekte påvirkning, der udvikler sensitivitet og dømmekraft.

De lighedstræk, der forbinder Rousseau og Platon, har i det pædagogisk-filosofiske perspektiv ikke meget med de filosofiske discipliners grundbegreber at gøre. Det interessante er derfor ikke, om Rousseau kan rubriceres som *ancien*, fordi han falder i en idealistisk kategori, der kan betegnes 'platonisme', men egentlig snarere, hvor meget han kan bruge af Platon, til trods for, at han befinder sig et helt andet sted i historien og så afgjort er en hovedaktør i moderniseringsprocessen af den vestlige kultur. Hans indforståede læsning af Platon, herunder først og fremmest af pædagogikkens principielle betydning i filosofisk sammenhæng såvel som i menneskets praktiske frigørelsesprojekt, er et væsentligt element i den platoniske virkningshistorie. For Rousseau var Platons *Staten* ikke en afhandling om politik, men den skønneste afhandling om opdragelse, fordi den grundlagde pædagogikken som et autonomt perspektiv. Den var også – om end slet ikke i samme principielle grad som Émile – en afhandling om opdragelse til autonomi, men om den er mulig uden en autonom pædagogik, og om følgelig et bedre og mere retfærdigt samfund er muligt, er nok Rousseaus væsentligste platoniske spørgsmål til eftertiden.

Anmeldelser

Thomas Aastrup Rømer
Pædagogikkens to verdener
Aalborg: Aalborg Universitetsforlag, 2015

Denne store bog af Thomas Aastrup Rømer, lektor ved Institut for Uddannelse og Pædagogik, Aarhus Universitet (det tidligere DPU), falder i fem dele. Bogen er skrevet på baggrund af både diverse offentlige debatbidrag, ikke mindst på egen blog, og videnskabelige artikler publiceret i forskellige nationale og internationale tidsskrifter.

Efter en indledning om baggrund og indhold følger del A, som handler om aktuel dansk uddannelsespolitik (s. 19-129). Heri skitseres de to verdener, som bogens titel og indledningen tematiserer, dvs. en ny uddannelsespolitik, hvor store dele af sproget lyder bekendt, men hvor alt forandres kontrasteret med den ægte pædagogik. Del A omhandler som bogen generelt mest folkeskolen og læreruddannelsen, og nu forhenværende undervisningsminister Christine Antorinis gøren og laden beskrives og kritiseres. Vægtigt står en kortlægning af en ret central personkreds, der er med i stort set alle rådgivende og besluttede organer under ministerniveau i forhold til folkeskole og læreruddannelse, af Rømer benævnt DPO, Danmarks Pædagogiske Oligarki.

Del B (s. 133-211) gennemgår mere substantielt den for Rømer vel væsentligste baggrund for de herskende vinde i uddannelsesregi, nemlig Ove Kaj Pedersens konkurrencestatsbegreb (og -praksis).¹ I den forbindelse inddrager Rømer også det han forstår som forholdet til neostrukturalisme (inkl. samtidsdiagnostik) og systemteorien, dvs. igen toneangivende aktører fra DPO som Jens Rasmussen, Lars Qvortrup og – ikke overbevisende – Jens-Erik Kristensen; delen slutter også her med udførlige referater og kortlægning af diverse meninger og holdninger.

Den noget kortere del C (s. 215-70), kaldet 'Pædagogisk filosofi – markeringer', er ikke muligt at referere kort, men ifølge Rømer selv handler det om den retning som skal tages, hvis man skal bryde ud af den herskende pædagogik. Det angår bl.a. folkeskolen, videnskaben, videnskabelig metode, læreren og professionel dømmekraft.

Fjerde del, D, (s. 273-489 – en bog i sig selv) er ret væsentlig. Under overskriften 'Pædagogisk filosofi – analyser' dels fortsættes temaer, fx om læreren, dels vises nogle nye veje til dannelse i forlængelse af blandt andre Grundtvig, Dewey, Heidegger, Aristoteles og den franske filosof Jacques Rancière (f. 1940). Og endelig rundes det hele af i femte del, E (s. 493-547) med først en række referater fra møder om dannelse og sidst Rømers eget bud, der til dels skal samle hele bogen op. Dette bud er et foredrag holdt ved et møde om dannelse på Rønshoved Højskole. – Bogen slutter med et appendiks om musik-

professor Linda Maria Koldau (s. 548-552) og litteraturliste (s. 552-75).

Rømers bog er meget velskrevet – og ikke helt nem at karakterisere. Jeg skal alligevel kort vove forsøget, hvorefter jeg vil pege nogle mere problematiske aspekter ud, og til sidst vil jeg fremhæve nogle væsentlige styrker ved bogen.

Overordnet velskrevet, med drive og fynd, men den lider også under genrens almindelige dårligdomme, nemlig den nye genre, der består i bøger mestendels sammenskrevet af blogindlæg, dvs. der er mange gentagelser, og hel del polemik, som nok kan være vigtig og som fungerer fint dagsaktuelt, men som stritter når det blandes sammen med mere videnskabelig langtrækkende bidrag om fx forholdet teori-praksis. Korrekturlæsningen er elendig, men det kan jo så også være morsomt, fx som når Rømer skriver om "så sikkert som ammen i kirken", der næppe er ment som en hyldest til babysalmesang! Eller den er afslørende, som når Rømer insisterer på i forbindelse med Heidegger at skrive det græske ord for sandhed, *alétheia*, som *altheia* (som han ydermere uholdbart gengiver som 'lysning').

En generel, men udpræget svag ved bogen er en sær form for polemisk metodik. Hvis man karakteriserer Rømers position som 'nykonservativ-grundtvigiansk-livsfilosofisk-postmoderne', så vil jeg tro det dækker, men til gengæld er det ret intetsigende. Denne vanskelige position danner selvfølgelig baggrund for de polemiske sider, så når Rømer går i clinch med de herskende strømninger, består det ofte i en kort optegnelse af nogle aspekter, som derefter med en underlig uselvfølgelig selvfølgelighed udhænges som helt håbløse, og da det ofte ikke giver sig selv, så gøres det angiveligt selvindlysende ved en slags 'guilt-by-association' eller 'genetisk-minimalistisk-jamen-det-kan-man-da-ikke-mene'. Fx får vi aldrig en ordentlig gennemgang af tankerne om og problemerne ang. begrebet konkurrencestat, trods s. 134 ff., men når Rømer først har nævnt det dumme udtryk om at være "soldater i konkurrencestatens hær", så er det næsten nok næste gang at sige "konkurrencestat". Ligeledes kan Jens Rasmussens begreb om "metodisk antihumanisme" også løsrives fra enhver sammenhæng og bruges mere eller mindre i flæng mod alle, men en ordentlig præsentation og kritik af Luhmann selv, fx spillet ud mod Rasmussen, får vi ikke.² Det betyder ikke at Rømer ikke ganske ofte

2 'Metoden' ender i karikatur, når Rømer oplyser at han arbejder "pt. med den tese, at [Politikens chefredaktør Bo] Lidegaards relation til Krogerup Højskole, der jo blev stiftet af Hal Koch, som gik ind for samarbejdspolitikken under besættelsen, gør, at Lidegaard har svært ved at sige nej (...)" (s. 117, n. 44). Bortset fra at Koch blev forfulgt i nazistiske skrifter, at han blev udsat for bombeattentat og at han med stort mod

1 Anmeldt i *Studier i Pædagogisk Filosofi*, nr. 1, 2012.

har fat i den lange ende, men det implicerer ikke bare en tendens til enten-eller, men også og især en udpræget delegitimering af intentionen hos modstanderen.

Mærkeligt er det også at Rømer af og til, fx ang. kundskabsbegrebet, konstruerer sin egen forståelse, som bag-efter hermeneutisk ugenerøst spilles ud mod fx Thyge Winther-Jensen (s. 342) – medens Rømer i øvrigt lige har afsløret sine manglende kundskaber og eller dovenskab ved spekulationer over det engelske 'knowledge'.³

Og – jeg bliver nødt til at sige det – så har jeg stadig svært ved at forlige mig med humanistiske akademikere, endda på universitetsniveau, som ikke kan læse tysk, end-sige fransk (samtidig med at litteraturfortegnelsen anfører engelske titler og oprindelige udgivelsesårstal, se fx under Lyotard); det er ikke hverken lærd, kundskabsrigt eller 'dannet' at skrive om hvad Humboldt "fremfører i sin *Limits of State Action*" (s. 139).

Rømer vil ikke bare kritisere, men også videre med nyt. Det er ikke nemt at få hold på alternativet. Livsfilosofisk, endda i en næsten naiv udgave, er vel en fair karakteristisk (livet skal strømme og myldre – men ikke noget begreb om fornuft og myndighed). Det hele kunne med fordel have været helt anderledes systematisk gennemarbejdet. Rømer tager fx afsæt i Grundtvigs noget snakkende skrift *Det danske Fiir-Kløver* fra 1836 (s. 303-30). Grundtvigs firkløver er konge og folk, fædreland og modersmål. Rømer sætter nu "munden" i midten og ændrer de fire til "fødthed og de vilde vinde, fællesskab/folk og autoritet/herredømme". Men trods sigtet er det didaktisk tomt, for hos Grundtvig er det meningen at folk skal kvalificeres med højskolen til rådgivning, men ikke til demokrati, og hos Rømer gentages problemet, idet det ikke angives hvordan bevægelsen fra fællesskab/folk til autoritet/herredømme skal tænkes – for det er vel meningen?

Ligeledes vil Rømer revitalisere Dewey (s. 431-49) især med afsæt i hans naturfilosofi, som Rømer ikke uproblematisk mener går forud for hans erfaringsfilosofi. Men det undrer mig at Rømer ikke opdager omkostningerne ved denne forlovelse med en positivistisk og pragmatisk filosofi fra (social-)darwinismens storhedstid. Ikke mindst kan der i forlængelse af Dewey næppe tænkes nogen som helst form for dannelse, fordi Deweys erfaringsbegreb

ikke kan forenes med 'det indre liv', som allerede Richard Peters har gjort opmærksom på.

Pædagogikken såvel som læreren skal igen frisættes, så man kan på ny kan interessere sig for "genskabelsen af vores værdifulde vaner, vores kundskaber, vores institutioner, vores kunst og vores industri i disse momenter frie vekselvirkning og tilblivelse" (s. 545). "Vi skal ikke bygge efter skabeloner som ydre abstrakte rettigheder og individer, som snart hverken har et køn, et land eller en kultur at bade i, men efter mennesker, som opfordres til at bore sig opmærksomt *ind* i videnskaben, rettighe-dernes, filosofien, myterne, industrien og kunsten" (ibid.). Jeg er med på beskyttelsen af pædagogikkens selvstændighed såvel som lærerens, men Rømer suggererer med disse sætninger at før det nuværende misregimente kom, gik det egentlig meget godt. Virkelig?

Bogens styrke er for mig at se dens sproglige friskhed og dens insisterende modstand mod alskens projektma-geri – også og især der hvor hele skolen, og lærerne med, tages som gidsel for ét stort projekt. De mange minutøse beskrivelser af en næsten forbløffende fræk og selv sikker reformiver, de mange citater med forbavsende dumme udsagn, den utrolige følgagtighed, den stivnede og fæstningsberedte ikke-dialog og dens mange kritikimmune udmeldinger, den ideologiske selvretfærdighed – der altid anser enhver modstand som udtryk for det udlevedes sidste krampetrækninger – alt det samles, dokumenteres og udstilles. Også så man kan tage det frem når frontløberne om få år er på vej bort fra resultaterne af deres mirakelkure.

Men titlen er svær at få mening i, dels fordi vi næppe står med et klart enten-eller, trods den herskende og ideologiske 'konkurrencestat' og dens til dels medfølgende "Reformgewitter" (Gruschka), dels fordi det i forbliver uklart hvilken virkelighed/alternativ til de mange tiltag Rømer mener at have udarbejdet. Er de to verdener konkurrencestatspædagogik vs. ægte pædagogik, er jeg helt enig. Der findes dog klarere og bedre bud på den ægte pædagogik.

Johannes Adamsen, e-mail: joad@via.dk,
Via University College, Aarhus, Danmark

efter krigen anklagede Rigsdagen for medløberi, hvilket ikke rokker Rømers dom, så kan man kun ønske Rømer god arbejdslyst!

- 3 Rømer mener at det ofte på engelsk hedder "tree of the knowledge of good and evil", fordi de ikke har et kundskabsbegreb, men kun et vidensbegreb, hvorfor de må tilføje 'of good and evil' (s. 335). Havde han orket slå efter i 1. Mosebog, kap. 2, ville han have kunnet konstatere at også på dansk oversættes det hebræiske således – fordi det er det der står (bortset fra det næppe er en moralsk kategori)!

Brian Degn Mårtensson
Konkurrencestatens pædagogik.
En kritik og et alternativ
Aarhus: Aarhus Universitetsforlag, 2015

Den danske politolog Ove Kaj Pedersens annoncering af konkurrencestaten har sammen med skolereformen blandt andet vakt røre inden for dansk pædagogisk filosofi. På den baggrund har pædagogisk filosof og tidligere lærer Brian Degn Mårtensson sammenstrøket en interessant filosofisk kritik af konkurrencestatens pædagogik, der danner grundlag for et almenpædagogisk alternativ.

Pedersen tager i sin bog af samme navn fra 2011 stort set patent på opfindelsen af begrebet om konkurrencestaten – selv om den franske idéhistoriker Michel Foucault allerede indkredser fænomenet ud fra et mere kritisk perspektiv i sin forelæsningsrække *Biopolitikens fødsel* fra 1978-79. Denne lille nuance kan synes uvæsentlig, men den er ikke desto mindre vedkommende for en nuanceret læsning af Mårtenssons bog fra 2015. Det skyldes, at Foucault gør rede, hvordan der i efterkrigstiden i henholdsvis Tyskland-Østrig og USA opstår en ny neoliberal regeringsteknologi, der i modsætning til den klassiske liberalisme advokerer for nødvendigheden af en stærk, central stat. Neoliberalismens udgangspunkt er nemlig for det første, at det er statens opgave at sørge for, at markedets konkurrenceleg kan gælde for alle samfundets niveauer og institutioner – inklusive staten selv, der lige som alle andre instanser skal drives som en virksomhed efter forretningsprincipper. Her har vi baggrunden for hele New Public Management-tankens, der sætter evidens, kontrol og økonomisk effektivisering i forgrunden af den offentlige forvaltning. For det andet skal det enkelte menneske også forstås som en virksomhed, der fungerer som en selv-entreprenør på markedets vilkår og indgår i konkurrence med andre udbuds- og efterspørgselsaktører. Derfor er individet selv ansvarligt for at investere i sig selv som menneskekapital ved at optimere sig selv som kompetencemaskine. Her har vi så baggrunden for hele kompetenceparadigmet og kravet om livslang læring. Som Foucault også påpeger, er denne neoliberalisme ikke snævert bundet til et traditionelt borgerligt perspektiv men bliver allerede dybt forankret i det europæiske centrum-venstre, da de tyske socialdemokrater begynder at købe ideen fra slutningen 1950'erne.

Når jeg vælger at fremhæve Foucaults redegørelse, så skyldes det, at Mårtenssons udmærkede bog overser, at konkurrencestaten hverken er Pedersens eller den tidligere S-R-regerings opfindelse og derfor må forstås ud en bredere europæisk og amerikansk udvikling inden for den politiske filosofi og praksis. Dermed overser Mårtensson også, at konkurrencestatens pædagogik ikke blot kan forstås som en konsekvens af postmodernismen. Hvilket ellers er den del af bogens kritiske hovedpointe. Derfor ses det heller ikke, at konkurrencestatens pædagogik kan forstås som udbredelsen af en bestemt form for politisk teknologi, der har dybe rødder i hele det moderne pro-

jekt. Og som i fx Theodor Adornos, Max Horkheimers eller Martin Heideggers optik kunne skildres som en excessiv udbredelse af den instrumentelle fornuft.

Mårtensson har valgt at skildre udbredelsen af den nye konkurrencestatspædagogik som et overvejende dansk fænomen, der langt hen ad vejen kan forstås – og dermed også kritiseres – ud fra en dansk pædagogisk tradition. Her skal Mårtensson så roses for at han får skildret konkurrencestatens pædagogik som en afløser for velfærdsstatens idé om dannelse til tilværelsesoplysning. Den idé, der måske bliver klarest formuleret af K.E. Løgstrup i hans forelæsning på Danmarks Lærerhøjskole den 21. september 1981. Og som i sidste ende kan spores tilbage til N.F.S. Grundtvigs idé om livsoplysning. Her forstås individet som en uerstattelig person, der skal oplyses og frisættes til at kunne realisere lige muligheder som alle andre ved at deltage i det demokratiske samfund. I den sammenhæng er folkeskolens formål ikke blot at forbedre eleverne til arbejdslivet gennem uddannelse men derimod at drage omsorg for, at den enkelte danner sig som et livsdueligt menneske. Med konkurrencestaten bliver skolens formål derimod funktionelt og instrumentelt at kunne producere kompetencer til arbejdsmarkedet og dermed sikre samfundets konkurrenceevne. Denne udvikling er imidlertid ikke blot dansk men gælder for hele Vesten, og som den amerikanske filosof Martha Nussbaum påpeger i *Not for Profit* fra 2010, er konsekvensen af det nye paradigme, at humaniora og hele dannelsesaspektet ekskluderes fra skole- og universitetssystemet. Der netop bliver forankret i mantraet om uddannelse, uddannelse, uddannelse, som den engelske premierminister Tony Blair prædikede i 2001. Som Nussbaum påpeger, udgør det humanistiske dannelsesaspekt imidlertid et afgørende aspekt i det demokratiske medborgerskab, og resultatet af udvandingen er egoistiske og snævertsynede borgere, hvilket underminerer selve demokratiet.

Mårtensson får knyttet konkurrencestatens pædagogik til udbredelsen af sociologen Niklas Luhmanns systemteori, der i en dansk sammenhæng især føres frem af Jens Rasmussen og Lars Qvortrup. Nu bliver pædagogik blot et ord for den funktionelle tilpasning af mennesket til markedssystemet, og alle bånd kappes til den pædagogiske dannelses-tradition. Dermed erstatter managementtænkning også værdier og etik, hvilket blandt andet afspejler sig i den nye forestilling om læreren som klasseleder. Konkurrencestaten opererer netop gennem en indarbejdning af ledelsesprincipper på alle samfundsniveauer, og derfor skal eleverne i sidste ende også lære at være selvledende. En af Mårtenssons fine pointer er, at selv om det nye konkurrenceparadigme italesætter sig selv som neutralt og objektivt ved at knytte an til begreber om effektivisering og evidens, ja så er konkurrencestatens pædagogik dermed dybt forankret i en normativ position, der paradoksalt nok benægter selv samme normativitet. Som den engelske uddannelses-sociolog Stephen Ball anfører i bogen *Foucault, Power,*

and Education fra 2013, kan konkurrencestatens uddannelsespolitikker og pædagogik forstås som en ny form for racehygiejne. En racehygiejne, der netop sigter på at optimere målbare kompetencer og kontrollere uddannelsessvage elever gennem den pædagogiske psykologis og specialpædagogikkens anvendelse af psykiatriske diagnoser og mål om inklusion.

Ud fra den antagelse at pædagogikken nødvendigvis må være normativ, lancerer Mårtensson i slutningen af bogen et almenpædagogisk alternativ til konkurrencestatens pædagogik. Mårtenssons griber til den eksistentielle tradition, som desværre aldrig har haft et stort gennemslag inden for pædagogikken. Ganske vist arbejdede Otto Bollnow med en eksistensfilosofisk fundering af pædagogikken fra 1950'erne til 1980'erne, og i en bredere forstand har livsfilosofien haft en betydning for pædagogikken hos blandt andre N. F. S. Grundvig og K.E. Løgstrup. Mårtensson vil nu ikke bare lancere en generel eksistenspædagogik men en almen pædagogik, der tager specifikt tager afsæt i Søren Kierkegaards skrift *Kjerlighedens Gjerninger* fra 1847. Netop fordi han mener, at kærligheden kan fungerer som et absolut grundlag for en normativ verdensborgerlig pædagogik i en tid, hvor verden er kaotisk og postmodernismen har underminere

ret de store fortællinger. For Kierkegaard er kærligheden lige præcist i grunden af eksistensen, og den kan ikke planlægges eller programmeres men må lokkes frem. For Kierkegaard er det samtidig via den uselviske næstekærlighed, at vi kan række ud mod den anden og derigennem hjælpe den anden på vej til sandheden med livet. I sidste ende er kærligheden dog Gud og Gud er kærligheden, og denne tanke er ikke nødvendigvis kristen men udgør grundlaget for de senere årtier spirituelle revolution. Det er da også som om, at vi lever i en tid, der har særligt behov for kærligheden, for i disse år udkommer en stigende mængde filosofisk, psykologisk og sociologisk litteratur om emnet. Mårtensson har således fat i den lange ende, når han netop udpeger kærligheden som pædagogikkens redningsplanke, men for at kunne få ligningen til at gå op, må han knytte an til Peter Kemps idé om verdensborgerlig pædagogik.

Desværre forbigår Mårtensson lidt kærlighedens spirituelle aspekt men hans vedkommende og letlæselige bog får cementeret kærligheden som fundament for en tanke om dannelse for og til hele menneskeheden.

Anders Dræby Sørensen
e-mail: Andersdraeby@gmail.com,
Københavns Universitet, Danmark

Studier i Pædagogisk Filosofi

Studier i pædagogisk filosofi udkommer to gange årligt og udgives med støtte fra Nordisk Publiceringsnævn for Humanistiske og Samfundsvidenskabelige Tidsskrifters (NOP-HS). Lejlighedsvis udgives monografier inden for pædagogisk filosofi.

Studier i pædagogisk filosofi er i den elektroniske udgave gratis og tilgås via tidsskriftets hjemmeside <http://ojs.statsbiblioteket.dk/index.php/spf>. Her er det også muligt at købe tidsskriftet i papirudgave. *Studier i pædagogisk filosofi* publicerer artikler på de skandinaviske sprog svensk, norsk og dansk samt i særlige tilfælde på engelsk. Indsendelse af manuskript til bedømmelse sker via hjemmesiden og medfører ikke tab af copyright til teksten for forfatteren.

Retningslinjer for forfattere

Bidrag til *Studier i Pædagogisk Filosofi* og modtages reviews året rundt.

Krav til indsendte manuskripter:

1. I første omgang (altså for at kunne accepteres til fagfællebedømmelse (peer-review)): Det indsendte manuskript må ikke tidligere være blevet publiceret, og det må heller ikke være sendt parallelt til et andet tidsskrift med henblik på at komme i betragtning til at blive publiceret. Artikel manuskript uploades som Word fil eller RTF til tidsskriftet. Det kræver registrering som forfatter. Se <http://ojs.statsbiblioteket.dk/index.php/spf/user/register>
Manuskriptet bør indeholde et kort resumé (100 ord), der sammenfatter artiklens indhold og formål, ligesom forfatterne bedes angive max. 10 nøgleord.
Manuskriptet skal være anonymiseret, dvs. ingen autoreferencer ("min artikel..."), fjern forfatter identifikation fra filens dokumentegenskaber.
Omfang: 30.000-80.000 anslag inkl. alt (noter, mellemrum, litteratur etc.)
Sprog: Dansk, norsk, svensk og engelsk
2. I anden omgang (altså hvis bidraget antages til publikation), så skal følgende gælde: Manuskriptet skal opfylde normerne for "Notes and Bibliography" på http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html
Brug venligst fodnoter.
Alle fremmedsproglige citater skal oversættes; angiv eventuelt originalt citat i fodnote.
Forfatterne bedes ligeledes angive institutionel tilknytning og mailadresse.
Manuskriptet skal indeholde et kort abstract (max. 100 ord) på engelsk.

Krav til indsendte anmeldelser:

1. Forslag om bog til anmeldelse med angivelse af anmelders postadresse sendes i første omgang til anmeldelsesredaktionen (spf-anm@paedagogiskfilosofi.dk).
2. Hvis forslaget godtages (som note, anmeldelse eller essay), sørger redaktionen for at bogen (bøgerne) tilsendes anmelderen.
Bognoter 2.000 anslag, anmeldelser 8.000 anslag og essays 20.000 anslag inkl. alt.

Studier i Pædagogisk Filosofi

Årgang 4 Nummer 1 2015

Indhold

<i>Katariina Holma: Introduction</i>	1
<i>Guðmundur Heiðar Frímansson: Reasons and Normativity in Critical Thinking</i>	3
<i>Katariina Holma: The Critical Spirit: Emotional and Moral Dimensions of Critical Thinking</i>	17
<i>Juho Ritola: Deliberative Democracy, the Deliberating Agent, and Critical Thinking: An ideal picture and some empirical challenges</i>	29
<i>Harvey Siegel: New Work on Critical Thinking: Comments on Frímansson, Holma and Ritola</i>	55
<i>Knut Ove Æsøy: Refleksjon ein uttynna medisin?</i>	63
<i>Anne-Marie Eggert Olsen: Rousseau læser Platon. Et debatindlæg om virkningshistorie</i>	75
<i>Johannes Adamsen: Thomas Aastrup Rømer: Pædagogikkens to verdener</i>	95
<i>Anders Dræby Sørensen: Brian Degn Mårtensson: Konkurrencestatens pædagogik. En kritik og et alternativ</i>	97