Incompatible Ideals of the Citizen: Deliberative and Radical Pluralist Approaches in Philosophy of Education

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1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores the implications of two dominant approaches in democratic theory in twenty-first-century philosophy of education: deliberative democracy and radical pluralist (agonistic or antagonistic) democracy. While neither is homogeneous, due to both internal and external critique,[1] two strands of argumentation within educational theory are guided by them: one utilizing deliberative theory, especially that found in the works of Jürgen Habermas (Englund, 2010; Fleming, 2010, 2012; Gutmann & Thompson, 1996), Nancy Fraser (Huttunen & Suoranta, 2005), and John Dryzek (Wahl, 2018a), and the other utilizing, radical pluralist theory strongly influenced by Chantal

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[1] E.g., Fraser (1989) has criticized Habermas's one-sided take on consensus and plurality, while Mouffe (1993, 2005, 2018) has criticized the deliberative approach, especially Habermas's work, for de-politicizing politics. Dryzek (2005) and has, on the other hand, criticized Mouffe's take on deliberative theory as simplistic (see also Ercan & Dryzek, 2015).

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Mouffe (Ruitenberg, 2009; Tryggvason, 2018; Zembylas, 2018) and Jaques Rancière (Biesta, 2011, 2012; Ruitenberg, 2009).

I argue that these two approaches imply two essentially different conceptions of citizenship in terms of its ideals and imaginaries and, thereby, the goals and emphasizes of learning it. I suggest, therefore, that following either of the theories makes the subsequent philosophy of education political, hence, a *political* philosophy of education. I develop my argument based on a reflective point of view with no aim to defend either approach but, rather, to analyze their different implications for citizenship from the 'outsider' point of view.[2]

The main concept explored in this chapter, learning citizenship, can be defined as ongoing acts of gradual change aimed at developing the skills to participate in the organization of society (see Biesta, 2014; Holma et al., 2018). Following Michael Merry (2012), such learning includes elements such as coming to perceive oneself as a citizen—that is, as having a valid position in political space—and participating in the mutual rights and responsibilities (broadly understood) of members of society.[3] This might mean, for example, learning how to form political opinions, how to contribute to the well-being of one's community, how to make one's statements heard in society and how to vote in elections (see Biesta, 2011, 2012; Gutmann & Thompson, 1996).

In the upcoming section, I sketch how the two approaches conceive of plurality, democracy and politics, and the ways in which their prescriptive-normative arguments differ from one another. Although it has been suggested that these approaches, especially Habermas's or Rawls's and Mouffe's arguments, have drifted closer together during the twenty-first century (see Karppinen et al., 2008; Leiviskä, 2020b; Robertson, 2008), I argue that essential differences in their conceptions of plurality, democracy and politics remain. I then turn to the central differences in accounts within philosophy of education that follow each of the two approaches.

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[2] This approach is not unique, e.g., Plot (2012) has investigated the possibility of a 'third way' to approach these theories from the perspective of political phenomenology.

[3] As Katariina Holma et al. (2018) argue, such learning is 'a process of reorganizing habits' (p. 223), where the person habituates herself to particular kinds of action. Similarly, Käte Meyer-Drawe (2008) has characterized learning as a processual situation wherein relations to the surrounding world change to some extent, and Michelle Maiese (2017) as a cognitive-affective alteration in relation to one's surroundings. These are all critical of the transformative learning views presented by Jack Mezirow (1991; 2000): i.e., learning as a relatively rapid and complete transformation.

2   Two Theories of Democracy

The works of theorists belonging either to the deliberative or to the radical pluralist approach are widely used in twenty-first-century educational theorizing on citizenship.[4] The biggest name in this field from the deliberative approach is Habermas, a follower of the Frankfurt school and critical theory, and from radical pluralist theory, Mouffe, a left-aligned post-Marxist and one of the founders of the contemporary agonistic approach. The latter has largely developed out of critiques of the deliberative approach, which often consist of Mouffe criticizing Habermas's work. Therefore, both within and outside philosophy of education, comparisons between these two approaches to democracy often take the form of comparing the works of Habermas and Mouffe (see Dybel, 2015; Karppinen et al., 2008; Leiviskä, 2020a; Zembylas, 2018), despite the fact that no single thought, including those comprising the deliberative and the radical pluralist approaches, belongs to any single thinker. Both approaches include multiple different lines of argumentation and internal critiques, opening up to further arguments and theoreticians not clearly falling into either category. In my investigation, I bring Habermas and Mouffe together with other relevant authors whose arguments help to clarify my own, such as Dryzek and Rancière.

While the theorists adhering to one or the other theory are far from homogeneous and consensual in their argumentation, the content and the theoretical frameworks of the arguments within the deliberative and the radical pluralist arguments clearly differ: the deliberative approach utilizing Arendt and critical theorists like Adorno and Horkheimer, with pragmatists such as Dewey and Mead (e.g., Fraser, 1989; Habermas, 1981); the radical pluralist approach relying on Heidegger, Lacan, Marx (e.g., Laclau & Mouffe, 1985), Derrida, Schmitt and Hobbes (e.g., Mouffe, 1993, 2005).

[4] Within the political theory of education, other political theories and theorists are used—such as critical pedagogy utilizing the works of Paulo Freire (e.g., Giroux 2020)—but, within the theory of citizenship, however, these two are dominant or mainstream (Leiviskä, 2020a; Robertson, 2008; Zembylas, 2018), despite, for instance, Deweyan contributions to the debate (e.g., Holma et al., 2018).

Plurality, Politics and Democracy

The two approaches can be viewed as two strategies of argumentation for democracy and also as two different conceptualizations or intersections of politics and plurality. Both the deliberative and the radical pluralist approaches share the idea of plurality as foundational to theories of democracy. Both Mouffe (e.g., 1993) and Habermas (e.g., 1996) argue that a democratic society is by definition plural: different positions must be assumed for there to be debate, different views, opinions, values and so on. Without such plurality—that is, if there were only a single political ideology and identity—society would be totalitarian, with no space for difference and debate. The two approaches, however, conceive of plurality in different ways, leading to different conceptions of democracy.

Broadly stated, for Mouffe and many other radical pluralists, such as Laclau (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985) and Rancière (2010), the radicality of plurality in democracy means that there might be no commonly shared ideology, value basis, beliefs or interests among members of society. In the words of Laclau and Mouffe (1985: 151), 'the subject positions cannot be led back to a positive and unitary founding principle'. This also holds for any identities that emerge in society; more importantly, neither is a common founding ideology or identity necessary for a functioning democratic society (see Laclau and Mouffe, 1985; Mouffe, 2005; Rancière, 2010). Rather, a democratic society should tolerate differences and dissensus, not eradicate them, to remain democratic (see Mouffe, 2005).[5]

For the deliberatists, in turn, a plurality of opinions, identities and even ideologies enables democracy as long as deliberation among the different positions can be maintained (e.g., Dryzek, 2005; Habermas, 1981; Wahl, 2018a, 2018b). In contrast to radical pluralists, for deliberative democracy, common ground among the discussants should be attainable in order to proceed with the organization of democratic society. Here, deliberation means careful conversations over how to proceed, with participants offering reasons for their views and listening to the views

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[5] One might question Mouffe's argumentation based on her and Laclau's *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985) and her *For the Left Populism* (2018), where they argue for breaking the existing hegemony to create a new one. However, even though she might hold such a position, i.e., according to her own argumentation, would not hold democracy to be an absolute value, she nevertheless provides an analysis of the democratic society as radically plural.

of others (Wahl, 2018a). According to Ercan and Dryzek (2015), while the early treatments of Habermas and Rawls emphasized rational argumentation oriented toward consensus on the common good, with time, the utility of other modes—telling stories, rhetoric, humor and even silence—has been acknowledged within the arguments about deliberative democracy. While Habermas (1981) viewed deliberation as a rational undertaking, over time scholars have come to include non-argumentative or even irrational speech acts. The main idea is nevertheless the openness to change in viewpoint with the aim of understanding the other. The endpoint of deliberation might be consensus on a political question, as it ideally is for Habermas (1981, 1996), or a better understanding of another party's positions (Ercan & Dryzek, 2015; Wahl, 2018a).

Related to the question of plurality, conceptions of democracy in these two approaches also differ crucially. Speech acts are at the core of political action in deliberative democracy; a democratic society is one where everyone is included in the discussion (see Habermas, 1996; Dryzek, 2005). Putting communication at the heart of politics means recognizing the need for effective justification of positions, stressing the pursuit of reciprocal understanding between those who have different frameworks or ideologies, and valuing inclusion and reflection (Ercan & Dryzek, 2015). Within this framework, it is often argued that political or other societal decisions in general should be the product of fair and reasonable discussion and debate among citizens (Eagan, 2016).

By contrast, for radical pluralists the core of politics is the decision ultimately made (whatever it concerns), which is by definition an exclusionary act: when choosing x, y is excluded, be it an ideology, particular action or group of people. Therefore, a democratic society is one where decisions are made based on no other hierarchy than the will of the people (not, for instance, on a hierarchy based on knowledge or age) (Rancière, 2010). As everyone is allowed to participate in the public sphere, democratic society produces debate between adversaries aiming to make decisions that benefit their interests while tolerating the existence of others (see Marchart, 2018; Mouffe, 2005). The term 'adversaries' might sound strong, and it certainly does not emphasize the 'nice' nature of democracy, but that is precisely the point. The language of 'adversaries' emphasizes the ever-present potential of (and the underlying) antagonism in democratic society, with its plurality of ideologies, beliefs and identities, and with the possibility of displacing distinct subject positions (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). This is what politics is for radical pluralists,

at least in Laclauian and Mouffean arguments: keeping society agonistic, while not letting it fall into antagonism (a conflictual relation) wherein the mutual 'adversaries' would become 'enemies'—versus one's own group as 'friends'—without communicative contact (see Marchart, 2018; Mouffe, 2005). Noteworthy is that the decision also relates to how education is organized in society: those responsible must decide what to include and what to exclude from curricula.

Simply put, the conception of democracy in the deliberative approach reflects the post-war liberal democracy that values individual liberty and the democratic institutions (see Dryzek, 2005; Fraser, 1989; Habermas, 1996). In the radical pluralist approach, the conception of democracy is rather paradoxical in multiple senses: for Rancière, 'democracy as a form of government is threatened by democracy as a form of social and political life and so the former must repress the latter' (Rancière, 2010: 47); for Mouffe, to maintain the democratic order, there must be what she calls a 'conflictual consensus', a consensus that there will be no consensus (Mouffe, 2005). In addition, the democratic paradox lies in in the 'democratic' being simultaneously a form of rule and a symbolic framework of democratic values and practices (Mouffe, 2000). Such paradoxes are not a concern for deliberative—especially Habermasian—arguments.

Prescriptive Arguments

The two approaches to democracy include multiple normative and prescriptive arguments concerning democratic society (Mansbridge et al., 2010), which, as I argue in the next section, relate to the crucial differences in educational theorizing on learning citizenship. Neither approach, however, provides a clear blueprint for ideal society; rather, the argumentation addresses the possible ideals of democratic society. The prescriptive nature of the arguments starts with the valuing of democracy and the democratic values of equality and popular sovereignty. Further, as outlined above, the deliberative approach calls for unity and tolerance in order to be able to deliberate, while the radical pluralist one argues for explicating differences in the positions and identities of members of society and a tolerance of dissensus (Karppinen et al., 2008). In deliberative democracy, the differences among members of the society *should* not hinder some kind of a fruitful discussion and at least a vague consensus on something (see Ercan & Dryzek, 2015; Habermas, 1981; Wahl, 2018a),

while in radical pluralist democracy, these differences *should not* be overcome but recognized (see Marchart, 2018; Laclau & Mouffe, 1985; Mouffe, 2005, 2018; Rancière, 2010).

Deliberative prescriptive argumentation is based firmly on the Habermasian idea of the normativity of rationality (Dryzek, 2005), which distinguishes between what Habermas (1981) calls 'instrumental rationality' and 'communicative rationality'. The first refers to rationality used to act successfully in the environment of a debate, while the second refers to rationality in argumentative speech through which participants in a discussion can overcome their mere subjective positions to gain consensus (Habermas, 1981). Specific kinds of understanding and practice are related to these rationalities: instrumental and communicative understanding, and instrumental and communicative practice. According to Habermas, communicative rationality enables functioning and enduring community; instrumental rationality, in turn, does not function to achieve shared understanding and the success of community, because it is not geared to understanding others without an overriding instrumental goal. In the arguments attendant on the deliberative approach, we can often see the implicit prescription for communicative rationality (whether it is called 'rationality' or something else). The arguments often stress inclusive speech, mutual listening in order to understand the other and the eradication of oppressive power structures that might hinder deliberation (see Dryzek, 2005; Fraser, 1989; Wahl, 2018a, 2018b).

Radical pluralist democracy, on the other hand, is what Laclau and Mouffe (1985: 136) call 'radically libertarian', and its supporting arguments often prescribe or assume left-wing values and motivations (Mouffe, 1993); simplified, left-wing ideology is evident in its advocacy for the well-being of the people and the reduction of oppression (Derrida, 1994; Laclau & Mouffe, 1985; Mouffe, 1993, 2005, 2018; Rancière, 2010). Concerning the prescriptive take on doing theory, radical pluralists, at least Laclau, Mouffe, Rancière and Derrida, do not intend merely to describe the political (Mouffe, 1993: 1; see also Derrida, 1994; Laclau & Mouffe, 1985; Rancière, 2010). Rather, at least for Laclau, Mouffe and Marchart, a theory of democracy should investigate underlying ontological antagonisms (not merely ontic, i.e., the empirical worldly state of affairs) in order to enable us to retain democratic society (see Mouffe, 1993). The complex ontology of antagonism falls outside the scope of this chapter, but there are several good elaborations on that topic (see, e.g., Laclau & Mouffe, 1985; Marchart, 2007, 2018).

In more practical terms, the two approaches frame contemporary societies in different ways to illustrate their points. Deliberative theorists often argue that peaceful discussion and reaching consensus among citizens is not only the way it *should* be but also a *possible* way to do politics, even in divided societies (Dryzek, 2005) or communities with oppressive power asymmetries, such as those between mostly white police and black habitants in the United States, as Rachel Wahl (2018a) argues. Radical pluralists, however, often take as their examples situations where there are clear patterns of oppression (or subordination, since 'oppression' for Laclau and Mouffe (1985) means a site where antagonisms become evident) between different groups (e.g., Marchart, 2018; Mouffe, 2005, 2018). Here, there might simply be no common ground for meaningful deliberation. For example, Mouffe (2018) argues for leftist populism as a counter-force to twenty-first-century right-wing populism rather than deliberation with them, as the latter would mean recognizing their position. Marchart (2018), in turn, speaks of political action, such as demonstrations, as an explication of struggle. Thus, the two approaches to democracy emphasize different aspects of contemporary societies and different political action in democratic societies: the deliberative theorists often promoting discussion and debate, the radical pluralists decisive political action.

3   Civic Action and Learning Citizenship in Two Strands of Philosophy of Education

Above, I have argued that even though there are common traits in the deliberative and radical pluralist approaches to democracy, such as the fundamental value of democracy, the theorists have very different understandings of plurality, democracy and politics; therefore, the prescriptive arguments they present differ considerably. Based on this, in this section I argue that following either of the approaches when investigating citizenship in terms of the philosophy of education determines much of the theoretical content of learning citizenship. Thus, I suggest that following either one of the two approaches is a political choice, making the philosophy of education investigating citizenship *political* philosophy of education.

It is worth noting that, in practical terms, neither view of learning citizenship necessarily excludes the other: a citizen might deliberate one day and join an angry demonstration another. Rather, the theory that

follows either approach to democracy argues what *ought* (primarily) to be included in learning citizenship, and presents citizenship ideals. Here, at least, the prescriptive nature of the deliberative and radical pluralist arguments becomes evident.

Formal or Informal Citizenship Learning

The places in which, it is suggested, citizenship is learned vary between the two strands of educational arguments, with the followers of deliberative democracy often locating such learning in schools, and those of radical pluralist democracy favoring outside in the public sphere. While I do not focus more on one than the other here, the distinction between formal/informal learning is inherent to the presentation of educational arguments concerning learning citizenship.

In general, we can see that those following the deliberative approach often discuss learning citizenship in the form of organized civic education to instill tolerance and the practice of deliberation, and decrease polarization (e.g., Fleming, 2012; Giroux, 2001; Leiviskä, 2020a; Wahl, 2018a, 2018b). The suggested forms of learning often include classroom tuition in how to formulate one's position in a discussion (Giroux, 2001; Gutmann & Thompson, 1996), or adult education on acquiring skills in public deliberation and critical thinking (e.g., Deakin Crick & Joldersma, 2007; Fleming, 2010). The method here is often learning-by-discussion whereby the participants learn to deliberate, in the course of which they also learn about each other and the topic under deliberation (e.g., Fleming, 2010). There are exceptions, though, such as Wahl's (2018a) investigations of deliberations in divided communities, where deliberation skills are learned informally through public discussion. Such investigations, however, are a minority in this field.

By contrast, those following the radical pluralist approach often concentrate on action in the public sphere, with the frequent implicit assumption that citizenship as agency in this locus mostly concerns action in democratic societies (e.g., Biesta, 2011). Rancière (2004, 2010) has even argued that learning citizenship, in the sense of learning democracy, *cannot* take place in formal education, as the logic of the school is essentially different from the logic of democracy. According to him, while in formal education there are power hierarchies based on a person's knowledge and level of education, in a democracy there are no hierarchies based on any external factor that could be objectively measured,

such as strength, wisdom, age, wealth or particular skills (2004). In other words, a situation is not democratic if hierarchies are based on something other than the will of the citizens, whether epistemic skills or age, or the transcendent, such as God.[6] The political will cannot be taught—otherwise it would not be genuine political will—although it can, perhaps, be inspired by education. This is because, for Rancière, the goal of the democratic political will is to eradicate oppression, which cannot be genuinely taught, although one can gain the means to become aware of oppressive patterns. The point is not so much to promote citizenship outside the schools, as to explain the principles of these hierarchies and contribute to their demolition in democratic societies and their educational systems.

There are, however, also educational theorists employing the radical pluralist framework who do see potential in formal education and in bringing the radical pluralist approach closer to the deliberative one. For instance, Ásgeir Tryggvason (2018) and Michalinos Zembylas (2018) have discussed radical pluralist civic education in the classroom in the form of encouraging discussion of controversial issues and explicating the students' political feelings and identities. Still, as both Tryggvason and Zembylas note, in order to apply radical pluralist theory in the classroom setting the theory has to be 'tamed'. That is, it has to be brought closer to deliberative theory, which, according to Zembylas, is enabled by what is called 'affective citizenship', a form of citizenship where political emotions are cultivated and explicated by discussion and reflection (Zembylas, 2018). Affective citizenship, he observes, constitutes an example that fuses deliberation and agonism, because it pays attention to both political emotions and the procedural framework through which diverse opinions are enabled within a deliberative space.

One could argue here that, to some extent, applying any theory in educational praxis is never fully straightforward and being completely 'loyal' to a theory might not be the main point. One also might query the possibilities for transformation if the incipient citizen is not provided knowledge on the functions of the society. That is, one can learn about power asymmetries, subjectivation, the history of oppression and so on

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[6] Claude Lefort (1988) has named these different hierarchies aesthetic-political, epistemic-political and theological-political: the first is the political order of democracy, with no fundamental basis for political hierarchies; the second is the political order based on epistemic skills; and the last is based on the transcendent, such as religion.

via formal education, which might lead the citizen to independent realization of the presence of such conditions and to the recognition of possible means of addressing them, including action. Moreover, an emphasis on praxis does not exclude school from loci where praxis takes place. On the contrary, according to Rancière (2010), educational practices reflect societal practices and people appropriate principles of action in the institutions. If schools are not able to provide or motivate principles of citizenship at all, it is less likely that students will learn citizenship in the public sphere. In order to learn how to utilize one's possibilities of participating in the organization of society, one must first be aware of them (see Martikainen, 2021).

The Content of Citizenship Learning

For those following the deliberative approach, public debate as the central element of politics lies at the core of learning citizenship; therefore, learning to discuss deliberatively is a primary aim in this strand of thought (see Englund, 2010; Fleming, 2010; Wahl, 2018a, 2018b). In this, it is not only enough to be able to, respectively, share one's views, it is also crucial to learn from others; in order to deliberate, one must reach an understanding of where another person or group is coming from, and what their underlying values or beliefs are; one might have to acquire new knowledge from others. Indeed, according to some deliberative democrats, such as Wahl (2018a), to deliberate successfully in a plural society, one must learn from those who are different from oneself as well as from one's sharpest critics. In deliberation, it is necessary to question one's own points of view and reflect on various possibilities and perspectives, even those one could not imagine agreeing with.

Although Habermas (1981) argued in his earlier works that people might learn constantly, nowadays the educational theorists following the deliberative approach see the situation differently.[7] As Wahl notes, it is rather challenging for people to learn from each other, especially in contexts of inequality and deep social cleavages (see Wahl, 2018a). Therefore, for those working in this framework, learning to learn from others is also among the main aims of learning citizenship, one requiring goal-oriented training in practices such as relating attentively to what

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[7] Educational psychologist Ference Marton (2014) makes a similar claim about people being able to learn in multiple, even all, circumstances.

another person is saying. This is part of the reason why the educational theory following the deliberative approach concentrates so much on formal education (see Deakin Crick & Joldersma, 2007; Fleming, 2010). Accordingly, tolerance, receptive listening, solidarity, caring and other discussion skills not aiming at 'winning' an argument should be taught and learned in formal civic education in order to be able to engage with others in deliberation (Robertson, 2008). Further required skills include making oneself heard and understood, as without this one cannot participate in the discussion (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996). Wahl even argues that education prior to political deliberation must not only aim to cultivate skills, but also to shape virtuous deliberators (see Wahl, 2018a); deliberation cannot function properly if participants do not internalize the skills but only utilize them mechanically. One should be able to concentrate on what others are saying and not on the nature of one's response. Here, consensus-seeking is not necessary, however, as simple consensus has been jettisoned as an ideal; instead, the importance of contestatory deliberation is recognized, and the conditional defensibility of self-interest has been incorporated (Ercan & Dryzek, 2015).

The followers of radical pluralist arguments, such as Claudia Ruitenberg (2009), also investigate the possibilities of learning citizenship through discussion, but here the idea of discussion is quite different from that outlined above. Educative discussion in this frame does not emphasize listening to others and learning from them, but focuses on explicating and recognizing the political nature of emotions and identities that have an important role in forming opinions and thereby formatting the discussion in general. As Zembylas (2018) argues, whether the ideal is deliberative or radical pluralist, political emotions are present in the classroom and thus have to be engaged pedagogically in discussion. Therefore, he adds, a critical conceptualization of the entanglement between political emotions and certain rules of pedagogical engagement in the classroom is also necessary, if educators wish to confront the consequences of choosing to cultivate specific political emotions (rather than others) without resorting to ideology or propaganda (see also Zembylas, 2014, 2015).

Biesta's theory of learning citizenship is crucial to understanding the content of learning citizenship supported by the followers of radical pluralist authors. In line with the agonistic approach, he separates what he calls 'subjectification' and 'socialization': 'socialization' means assimilating pre-existing norms and rules of communication, while 'subjectification'

involves becoming creative, envisaging new societal orders rather than conforming with what already exists (see Biesta, 2011). Following the radical pluralist argumentation of Mouffe and Rancière, he argues that the subjectification form of learning citizenship produces independent citizens of a democratic society. To become a political subject in the sense of subjectification includes explication of one's identity, criticality to the current order of society, claiming one's rights and contradicting the elite whatever its form: big corporations, powerful politicians and so on. Whereas the socialization concept is about learning for future citizenship, subjectification is about learning from current citizenship, from current experiences with and engagement in the ongoing experiment of democracy (Biesta, 2014). To summarize, for educational theorists following radical pluralist arguments, the central content of learning citizenship is learning to explicate one's identities and views, becoming aware of patterns of oppression and expressing any ensuing dissensual views in the public sphere.

Biesta views 'socialization' as the goal of educational theorists taking the deliberative approach, but Dryzek's (2005) and Wahl's (2018a, 2018b) investigations of deliberation in divided societies (see above), and explicating one's position in such contexts, might challenge Biesta's somewhat simplified view—something up for further discussion. Here, it suffices to say that both strands of educational theory investigating learning citizenship might actually be up for 'subjectification' in the bigger picture. As noted above, the difference between the two strands lies in the details of what learning citizenship should comprise, its goals, and what should be emphasized in such learning.

The Political Choice

As I reiterate in this section, the differences between the two strands of educational thought make following either one of the approaches a political act. This is because, as I have argued above, neither approach to democracy is clearly 'better' than the other in any straightforward way (one can, of course, present arguments for preferring one or the other); rather, they differ in their emphasis on aspects and goals of democracy. Therefore, since the utilization of one or the other cannot be justified merely with objective reasoning, and as each presents different content in terms of learning citizenship and its ideals, the choice of theory is a political, not a technical or practical act. This is, therefore, the point

where the philosophy of education becomes political in its investigation of citizenship. What I mean by 'political' here is to be distinguished from the technical; the theoretical differences in place and content of learning citizenship do not imply that one is in some way 'better' or 'worse' than the other for learning citizenship. Rather, due to the process of excluding/including particular theses, and creating and re-creating conceptions and imaginaries of good citizenship and, thereby, conceptions and imaginaries of (democratic) political society, educational theories of learning citizenship are political.

As Biesta (2014) argues, the meaning of good citizenship is not evident, with differences in conceptions of it relating to different views of what democracy is about. Citizenship might, for instance, subsume a social or a fundamentally political identity (see Merry, 2012)—one that can be positively identified and articulated—or a process of dis-identification, as a moment of political agency that is always necessarily 'out of order' (see Rancière, 2004). For instance, Rancière (2004) argues that the moment of democracy is not merely an interruption of the existing order, but an interruption that results in a reconfiguration of this order into one in which new ways of being and acting exist that bring new identities into play. How the more detailed conception of citizenship is formulated affects the imaginaries of (ideal) citizenship and action in public.

Following Habermasian arguments, James. S. Johnston (2012) claims that the politicality of education or its theory is sometimes construed as a state-enforced apparatus for the inculcation of specific codes, conventions, beliefs and norms about social and political practices. However, as my discussion of the two approaches to democracy suggests, it is not merely the practical decision of curricula in the state or in school that might be political. Rather, educational theory itself is political in its choices of underlying political-philosophical theory. As I have argued, the two approaches to democracy are based on different assumptions about society and, therefore, they function differently when applied in the philosophy of education. As the different content of the two approaches currently dominant in the field of educational theory also governs the content of theories of learning citizenship, the choice of which strand of thought to follow is a political act.

4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have argued that the two different approaches to democracy dominant in the field of philosophy of education provide two different conceptions of learning citizenship, plurality, democracy and politics, leading to different positions on what learning citizenship should involve. As I have noted, both approaches place great value on democracy, the requirement of tolerance for democratic society to function and the idea that a democratic society is plural by definition. What these ideas mean more precisely, however, differs. Therefore, as I have further argued, following either of the two approaches also means viewing the role of formal education differently. For the educational-philosophical theory endorsing deliberative democracy, learning citizenship does at least partly take place at school or university, while for that endorsing radical pluralist democracy, the role of formal education can be rather preparatory. Thus, on the one hand, if the central skill of a citizen is deliberative discussion, the place to learn to debate with others in a deliberative manner is the classroom or similar organized educative setting; on the other, if the assumed central skill relates to the transformation of existing power relations, learning citizenship occurs in the public sphere itself, and formal education can only provide a preparatory understanding of the current organization of society. Because the approaches comprise crucially different views of ideal citizenship and the content of citizenship learning, the choice to follow one instead of the other is a political act, making the theory of philosophy of education a political philosophy of education.

It could be argued that these two views on learning citizenship could serve different goals for citizenship in different situations and that, in the practice of civic education, both could be, in one way or another, integrated into the educative process (e.g., Tryggvason, 2018; Zembylas, 2018). However, this perspective does not consider the crucially different underlying assumptions of the two approaches to democracy. It is questionable whether the educator or the educational theorist would be able to utilize both theories of learning citizenship.

As noted, the dichotomy might look different in practice. As the educational theory of learning citizenship creates and re-creates our conceptions of what citizenship ought to be like—for educators, theorists and members of our societies—the question is not so much about what is done in particular educational situations, whether school and elsewhere;

rather, the crucial question here concerns the ideal nature of a good citizen and imaginaries of how that good citizenship is to be achieved.

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