Magdalena Kohout-Diaz
Martin Strouhal (eds.)

Cultures of Inclusive Education and Democratic Citizenship: Comparative Perspectives

Cultures of Inclusive Education and Democratic Citizenship
Comparative Perspectives

Magdalena Kohout-Diaz
Martin Strouhal (eds.)

––––––––

Painting on cover by Zdeněk Strouhal, acad. painter

Contents

Introduction
Cultures of Inclusive Education and Democratic Citizenship: Comparative Perspectives

Magdalena Kohout-Diaz, Université de Bordeaux
Martin Strouhal, Charles University

The Contemporary Problem of Education for Democratic Citizenship

If we reflect on the state of democracy in countries belonging to what is known as the Western civilizational circle, the current situation seems paradoxical. On the one hand, we see a relatively stabilised life grounded on the institutionalized principles of humanism, liberalism and democracy. We have functioning governments and parliaments that respect constitutions and the basic principles of the division of powers in a state. We have public educational systems that more or less effectively provide education and saturation of the needs of the labour market. We have declaratory systems of human rights and freedoms, to which we can appeal if we feel ourselves to be the victims of injustice. On the other hand, we cannot ignore a disturbing trend that can for various reasons be regarded as extreme in the negative sense of that word. The signs include populism in political proclamations and decisions, xenophobic and ethnocentric attitudes, a pathological relationship to the shared contents of social networks that generate a phenomenon of our time – fake news, and also a no less serious weakening of the ability to establish healthy social relationships conducive to the natural strengthening of the social bond.

We are told ever more frequently that education is the road to individual and collective prosperity. Education, we read in the papers and journals, is that famous "ticket" to jobs that are attractive because they are well paid. The single sufficient condition of a democratic school seems then to be a liberalism catering to the freedom of the market, production and exchange of commodities, with education itself de fac-

to becoming a commodity. Many experts on education stress the links between education and economic growth (in the Czech Republic for instance D. Münich, in France J. J. Paul or M. Gurgand[1]), and so the economic point of view tends to dominate in the evaluation of educational techniques and goals (Kohout-Diaz, 2018b). Martha Nussbaum recently pointed out the danger hidden in this purely "profit" orientated concept of education, and explicitly connected the importance of non-profit education with the survival of democracy (Nussbaum, 2010). When people encounter a value system based only on profit, they lose their feeling for the basic principles of human existence as human: a feeling for solidarity, gift and sacrifice. The profit conception of education based on the logic of exchange directly interferes with the human capacity to discern the meaning and necessity of giving in human life. Like many psychologists, Nussbaum persuasively shows that economic growth is not the only, let alone a sufficient, condition for what is known as quality of life, and that the feeling of happiness or fulfillment in life is not causally linked to such growth at all. On the contrary, the experience of vulnerability, fragility and compassion, which have very little in common with the economization of life, is crucial for the ability to empathize and recognize the other as absolute values that cannot be made conditional on personal gain or service for services rendered. Based on this insight, Nussbaum argues for the educational importance of the humanities that are today so under-valued, and also the arts, which help develop imagination and a sense of the unique. (Nussbaum, 2010, pp. 6–7).

The economic perspective in the theory and practice of educational policies and real education "in the field" is also connected with increasing attempts to assert absolute control over human activity. Unfortunately, it is all too evident that the myth of the advantages of total control is still with us, even if it has shifted from the original Orwellian, explicitly totalitarian form to a far more sophisticated version. Whether the attempt is masked by rhetoric on the need for social-economic consolidation, the improvement of the efficiency of various activities, the needs of security or the health of the population, at its heart we always find the idea that social control is something essential for the rational functioning of any system, including the educational one. Yes, even in formally democratic orders, in schools of all levels and types we have been seeing a disturbing growth of control and evaluation regulations and activities that

---

[1] Paul, J. J. (2007). "Économie de l'éducation." Paris, Colin, A.; Gurgand, M. (2005). *Économie de l'éducation*. Paris, La Découverte.

ultimately inhibit the creativity of teachers and pupils and even prevent them from taking pleasure in their work on both sides of the classroom (Kohout-Diaz, 2016).

Many problems in society threaten what has been achieved over the long journey in search of a just and sustainable model of democratic coexistence, and make it impossible for us to view our present situation through rose-coloured glasses. Nonetheless, the team of authors of this book combine faith in the power of education with the conviction that any kind of individual and social improvement is possible only through rightly understood and responsible education. If what we understand by education is a consciously directed method of creating certain rational, emotional and moral states in the human soul, and if we want the democratic idea and democratic institutions to endure as a social and political environment in which Western humanism is cultivated, we must concentrate above all on education for democratic thinking and the means whereby such thinking can be strengthened. (Dewey, 1916; Arendt, 1961; Nussbaum, 2010). In recent years the process of inclusive education has been turning out to be one such means. From the outset, however, it has been wrapped up in a great many deformed interpretations and policies, and so it is essential to make inclusion the subject of continual critical reflection and to explain its deeper, original meaning. Above all in the countries of the former Soviet Bloc, where inclusive approaches were taken up later than elsewhere (in the Czech Republic for example around 2010), it is as if the idea of inclusion has been reduced just to the topic of the presence of children with various disabilities in regular school classes. The broad philosophico-cultural and humanist context is hardly discussed at all. It is this absence that is behind the paradox of an official rhetoric (not only from some politicians but from educationalists) that loudly identifies with the idea of democracy and the democratic school, but at the same time challenges or directly rejects inclusive pedagogies on the grounds of technical problems arising from the integration of disabled individuals or socially unadaptable groups into school classes. We may therefore justifiably ask whether the inclusive ideal (see e.g. UNESCO, 2015) has been correctly understood. For this reason, it is our duty to bring to light and explain the connections between pro-inclusive approaches in education and the faith in the need for the survival of democracy (not only) in the Western world.

On the Basis of the Democratic Ideal and School Institutions[2]

In many countries of the European Union and North America the theory and practice of "education for democracy" seem to be well established and fulfilling their tasks. We have a curriculum in which education for democratic citizenship has been accorded its place as a "cross-section" theme, and we have a whole range of materials, as to method and content, that are recommended to primary and secondary schools. We have projects of every kind intended to encourage critical thinking, dialogic skills, human-rights "literacy" and democratic attitudes. All the same, education for democracy needs to be developed with an eye to the preparation of the ground – if we can put it like that, the soil that enables the seeds to germinate – and this means that the schools in which we are teaching the cross-section theme of democratic citizenship should themselves be democratic in their overall ethos and functioning. This in turn implies that the democratic principle can only be meaningfully applied there where teachers are trained for it, i.e. educated and brought up to it. The problem of education for democracy is therefore connected with the profile analysis of the institution of the school and the question of the training of future teachers. Their informed outlook, educational level and grasp of what is essential for the establishment and maintenance of democracy is what ultimately determines the educational success of the theme "education for democracy".

It is precisely the work of John Dewey that challenges us to an awareness of the connection between the way of thinking that needs to be formed by education, and the democratic ideal. To this day it is hard to find anyone who so comprehensively grasps the ethos of modernity, distinguished by hope in the success of a life philosophy based on a combination of critical spirit, respect for freedom and the human being and the will to action. For Dewey, democracy is the search for the common shared meaning (Dewey 1932, p. 110–111) of community and an ideal that could genuinely affect individuals, giving them awareness of the meaning of invested effort.

---

2   A few paragraphs in the following text were published in the essays Strouhal, M. (2020). "On the Current Problems of Education for Democracy". *Journal of Pedagogy* 11(2), pp. 73–87 and Strouhal, M. (2020). "The Foundations of Multiculturalism and Its Moral and Axiological Implications" In Kwiatkowski, M.; Mielczarek-Żejmo, A.; Strouhal, M. (eds.). *Multiculturalism. From Crisis to Renewal?* Prague: Karolinum, pp. 57–77.

We believe that it is an error of our time to turn "education for democracy", like ethical education, into a kind of special subject requiring its own special didactic methods as well as a curricular definition of goals and contents. Like ethics, democracy ought not to be a separate educational area, but should be the form of all educational activity. It is this that Dewey has in mind when, in contrast to political scientific characterisations of democracy, he defined it as a particular form of communal life, the political expressions of which may change. "It is a generally known thing that democracy is passionately devoted to education. The superficial explanation is that a government based on universal franchise cannot be successful if those who vote for, and who obey their governors, are not educated. Because democratic society rejects the principle of external power, it must find a substitute in readiness to volunteer and interest, and only education can instill these things. But there is an even deeper explanation. *'A democracy is more than a form of government: it is primarily a mode of associated living, a conjoint communicated experience.'"* (Dewey 1932, p. 117, emphasis by M. S. & M. K. D.)

We should note that Dewey mentions qualities of personality like "readiness to volunteer" and "interest" – i.e. attitudes without which no thinking, even the most self-critical, can be *effective.* If the barriers of class and culture that divide people are to be overcome, there needs to be a conjoint, communicated experience, and this is best provided by the school. But not the school of the past, which to a considerable extent built or strengthened those barriers. It must be a school where what has hitherto been separated will be presented in the most comprehensive wholeness and in mutual connections. This is a principle that can be applied both to social relations, where the goal is to lead the child to the ideal of human equality, and also to the problem of the curriculum, where subjects hitherto standing in isolation, each with its own material, will be transformed into a comprehensive initiation into reality, which is ultimately *one* even if it manifests itself and can be perceived in many different ways. Dewey provides the basis for an excellent formulation of the relationship between inclusion and democratic citizenship. On the other hand, his work also reveals an inadequacy in the functioning of the contemporary school institutions and suggests the paradoxes that the inclusive approach may give rise to if the concepts of difference and equality, and their mutual relationship and value, are poorly understood. In fact, the democratic ideal itself cannot be understood except against the background of the contradictions that it involves. The danger of our time lies in our tendency to understand the ideal of democracy technical-

ly and purely politically, i.e. in a distorted way, which perverts its core. There are many possible dangers and disputed areas in the present conception of democracy, but for our purposes here the most fundamental is that we have given up on the attempt to address the important issue of the ratio between equality and difference, and can see the results of this abandonment in the field of culture as well as in education. What is called a democratic school is a school dominated by "otherness" without further specification, so that this "otherness" can easily become an ideological dictate requiring the surrender of any kind of singular identity into this "otherness"– with no belief allowed to claim a specific position.

Paradoxically it is this ideology that most threatens the process of inclusion. If governments adopt the abstract principle of otherness, then there is no longer any persuasive reason for establishing a certain hierarchy of principles on the basis of which to orientate education and innovation. Respect for the human being and his or her uniqueness is one of those principles that is in constant danger of being denied for a great range of reasons.

Another problem arising from the supremacy of the "norms of otherness" is that we confuse otherness with desirability – and with this we simply level the social, cultural and ethical landscape, because we abandon the main goals of education: improvement, cultivation and development. Diversity is not in itself a value, but the condition that makes it possible to develop and cultivate certain values and to avoid a simplifying mode of life in which the way we already are is always enough for us. The social situation in various parts of the globalized world is literally crying out for solutions, but these cannot happen where the right to otherness and diversity is proclaimed without further definition or qualification. It is clear then, that discourse on the education of democratic citizens requires deeper critical reflection on the concept of democracy including the dangers that are directly implicit in the structure of the democratic attitude (Kohout-Diaz, Tremblay, 2017). We need to be able to discern the philosophical dimension of democracy.

Inclusive Education as a Paradigm of Democratic Education: Between Globalization and Internationalization

Why publish a book on democracy and inclusive education? The move towards the transformation of education systems by means of the inclusive ethic is in line with the most recent political goals adopted in many countries in and outside Europe. The inclusive process in these countries includes both the harmonization of domestic laws and regulations with the directives of international organs (UNESCO, the OECD and so on), and the demands of civil society. The inclusive ambitions of the school lead on the one hand to the rejection of the logic of discrimination, and on the other they encourage the efforts of education systems to consolidate democratic goals in education.

The inclusive ethic creates a new horizon of educational policies from the involvement of students with health disabilities in regular compulsory schooling (UNESCO Salamanca, 1994) to the recognition of every student in his or her specificity emphasized by the International Forum on Inclusion (UNESCO Columbia, 2019). All the same, today it is clear that the political resolutions adopted on education relate to complex social realities that are connected but not identical. Because of their complexity the dominant trends in society can be understood within two linked but different analytical frames. On the one hand we can speak of globalization, and on the other of internationalization. Globalization is to be understood as a multifactorial and multi-dimensional process involving developments, projects, individual trajectories and activities based on supranational trends and characterized by the pursuit of supranational goals in various aspects of social life (education, employment, culture, the economy, politics). Internationalization is usually more narrowly a matter of new modes of consumption that make it easier to "erase" borders. Particularly rooted in the commercial economics of modern society, internationalization is characterized primarily by the ability to rewrite their rules. The impact of all this on educational systems is something that many authors are trying to grasp.

In education, we might say that internationalization is taking on the role of the active element in the logic of globalization, and this is enabling many individuals not just to free themselves from borders, but to obtain the means to apply the new dynamics and changes to new areas. Or to rephrase: generally internationalization is seen as the pro-active component of globalization, as a strategy that allows actors

to emancipate themselves from local conditions and take advantage of globalization.

Operational regimes of internationalization, however, in a sense run counter to the dynamics of global organization by expanding at the state and local level where principles and initiatives are applied and energies channelled. The result is a reconfiguration of institutional roles often accompanied by a disintegrating responsibility and the rise of prejudices against nation states, which are discredited and weakened in these processes. This is clear when we consider the intenzification of change at international level related to the reconfiguration of actors, goals and roles attributed to school and education (Kohout-Diaz, 2018). At this level the main principles of the international market, such as efficiency, practical skills (competence) and productivity, have entered the world of the school. Comparative analysis at the level of educational policy and at the level of ordinary school practice shows that in every case we see the advance of a supranational logic of unity (especially in the field of evaluation) behind the current convergence of the referential frameworks of educational systems. Under these circumstances, the process of minimization of the significance of borders in internal state policies in the field of education is continuing apace, just as the intervention of agencies in international areas of decision (UNESCO, OECD) is becoming more frequent and widespread.

All this allows us to consider education with reference to the general principles of the functioning of services, markets, and institutions today. Now that experience of school life is no longer the privilege of a few, its universality reminds us of our common goals of justice and freedom. School is a place of access to many forms of social justice. But it is also the fundamental locus of national differences in education, which must be taken into account. Nations need to draw up specific strategies for the implementation of inclusion, each in its specific context.

The introduction of inclusive education is not be taken for granted. Each national context brings its own specific construction material to the overall building project. This is why the UNESCO recommendations for the national and international harmonization of common criteria (UNESCO, 2020) appears as a challenge: how can inclusive processes be broadened and connected with a wider range of goals? We need to ask ourselves what we understand by democracy today, and in what sense inclusion can underpin or complicate our conception of democracy. Without pretending to be able to provide a definitive or comprehensive

answer, this book offers comparative analyses of the concrete ways in which different countries are carrying out the inclusive project. In order to understand what is at stake in this comparative exercise, we need to link up two analytical grids. On the one hand we need to investigate the influence of the processes of the globalization of educational reform, and on the other the impact of international bodies on the educational policy of individual countries. The increasing extent of the power that these organizations have been gaining in the process of the development of national educational policies is raising many questions.

Supranational transformations have influenced the organization of whole national educational sectors, so these sectors have been challenged to self-doubt. The intersection of the singularity of national contexts with the hegemony of judicial orders issued by international bodies, means that national states have been set on a chessboard of complicated and often contradictory and antagonistic interests. As far as inclusive education as a specific ethics of educational policy is concerned, international bodies play a major role in the whole conception of the inclusive project and its implementation. What are the consequences of the inclusive ambitions of international bodies in internal state contexts?

From a practical point of view, policies of inclusive education are in line with a number of key principles: a) a just approach to the human being, based on his or her individual characteristics rather than various classificatory stereotypes; b) the appreciation of unique characteristics associated with diversity (difference may still remain a factor of exclusion); c) the acceptance of mistakes; d) the acceptance of different opinions and constructive criticism; e) focus on the person; f) interest in common tasks rather than exclusive personal interests; g) the acceptance of personal engagement and the sharing of responsibility with trust and care… These principles, however, are more just consensual positions than concrete orientations for sustainable professional activities. Sometimes inclusive rhetoric seems to be overused in education, particularly where there is talk of the fight against segregation and inequality, and also against injustice and the homogenization of individual educational paths. Yet it is precisely this fight that is more important than ever before. The challenge of inclusive education is fundamental today: it means grasping the inclusion movement as a strategy for a humanist and democratic approach to education.

Misunderstanding in Democratic Education: The Humanist Versus the Managerial Meaning of the Inclusive Process

Because the development of the inclusive process in education is not ahistorical, in contemporary discussions of inclusion we should also be aware of the historical origin of the inclusive reforms of international education policies. The idea of inclusive education is deeply rooted in European cultural humanism, in the democratic ideal and in social justice arising from the irenic perspective. If we want to identify the key historical moment of the emergence of the conditions for inclusive educational theory and methods as a concrete area of knowledge associated with a certain ethics for their adoption and propagation, we need to look for it in the context of the tension between a worldview based on faith and humanist ideas (Comenius, the Late Renaissance) and the arrival of the science of the Cartesian revolution (*cogito*) with its emphasis on the importance of exact principles. [3] We consider that even today the situation in inclusive education shows signs of a certain rivalry between scientific (or neoliberal and managerial), and humanist purposes.

The development of the inclusive process has been characterized by the succession of logics of activity that have progressively evolved towards the recognition of diversity. The original separatist logic (orientated towards elimination, exclusion and restriction), was succeeded by a "paternalist" logic, emphasizing charitable help, reparation, protection and rehabilitation. Then came a social logic, where the principles of compensation, prevention, participation and integration were at the fore, characterized by a humanist approach. The logics that control and orientate the inclusive process of the present day are pluralist: the main goal is *to support the ethic of diversity*. If we want to be inclusive, it is necessary to "believe in the potential of every individual for success". (Prud'homme et al., 2011, p. 10). Every difference is regarded as a basis for wealth and formulated in such a way as to contribute to the global project of emancipation.

International bodies (UNESCO) have been emphasising the connections between the inclusive perspective and a revived humanism for the 21st century. These connections need to be articulated through dialogue and collaboration between researchers in the humanities and social sci-

---

3   As a metaphysical and Universalist reformer Comenius stands on the threshold of the rationalist and technical modernity opened up by Cartesianism. The basic tone of his work, however, is given by mystical and religious belief. (Kohout-Diaz, 2008)

ences, artists, thinkers and innovators from a wide range of backgrounds and movements. As early as 2011 the inclusive process was formulated in the spirit of humanism, diversity and as a counterweight to the dominance of the technical sciences. Contemporary inclusive humanism can be understood as the (post)modern offspring of the mystical position that we find in Comenius: a striving for the limitation of consumption, and critique of the rule (lordship) of objects – things (consumerism) by contrasting it with the immeasurability of the speaking subject and his or her faces. (Lévinas, 1984, 1990, 2014).

Formulated in connection with all forms of diversity, the inclusive perspective carries within itself the germ of democracy and is therefore in a sense the opposite of global politics. The social and political experience of totalitarianism in a number of European countries that are today part of the democratic space of Europe has led to emphasis on a key feature of democracy: the acknowledgement of diversity. Democracy presupposes and encourages a diversity of interests and a diversity of ideas. Respect for diversity means that democracy cannot be identified with the dictatorship of the norm and the majority over minorities; it must include the right of minorities to existence and expression, and must make possible the expression of all thought. Inclusion as integration into education is linked with inclusion in the social and political sense, and so definitely with a democratic orientation to diversity. Diversity is not, however, a value in itself but the prerequisite for a comprehensive understanding of life in its various forms. Each individual can contribute to the common work – the project of democracy, but the condition for the realization of the abilities of the individual is his or her "full" or fulfilled citizenship. The road to democracy must therefore be the road to pluralism.[4]

This is why in many international texts inclusive education is defined as a resolute battle against discrimination because in the process of discrimination, the principle of diversity is conceived as the basis for civil, socio-economic and/or educational exclusion. UNESCO in particular systematically formulates measures for inclusion in terms of the fight

---

4   In his book *La défaite de la pensée* (1987) Alain Finkelkraut offers a brilliant analysis of how it is possible for the ideology of diversity to be used in two entirely opposite meanings and in pursuit of opposed political interests. He documents this both in the context of the discussions on the character of the nation and culture in the 19th century and in debates on the process of decolonization or in current disputes about the nature of the post-modern. Acknowledgment of difference may be understood as a fundamental condition for fulfilment of the ideal of equality, and so as a principle of humanism, but diversity may just as easily become an argument for the implementation of social segregation and discrimination.

against all forms of discrimination. This linkage is not of recent origin: "*The UNESCO Convention on the Fight against Discrimination in Education (1960) and other international conventions on human rights prohibit any kind of exclusion or restriction of educational opportunities that is based on socially accepted or perceived differences such as sex, ethnic/social origin, language, religion, nationality, economic position, abilities.*" (UNESCO, 2019).

The next step following the rejection of discrimination and exclusion is the idea of education for all. Here arises the question of what exactly "education for all" means (UNESCO, 2020). Does it mean guaranteeing the same educational offer for everyone, or adjusting what is offered to individuals according to their personal needs, and regularly reassessing it in line with the principle of compensation? In a time of intensifying globalization the demands on society to recognize and integrate various groups are constantly being ratcheted up. The process of integration reveals numerous problems, and above all we can see different types of societies reacting to different types of "difference" in contexts that are often politically sensitive. The inclusive meaning of the words "education for all" is democracy, not totalitarianism: the question is how to cope with the differences without sharpening them. The universal dimension of inclusive education represents the ideal of the acceptance of all children into common education and the equality of their opportunities. Is it necessary to accept all children regardless of difference, or to accept them with respect for their differences and their freedom of expression, but with all the consequences?

In any case, inclusive education appears as a set of ideals of humanism, democracy and social justice. It is this perspective that should define the efforts we ought to make. To oppose the supremacy of the consumer logic of objects, the disrespect for the individual in the progress of the technical sciences, and the continuation or revival of totalitarian politics, inequality and discrimination. The texts of the international consensus stipulate goals and emphasize problematic points. The method adopted is most often the definition of tried and tested procedures, general demands, and recommendations of principles in the formulation of global, national and/or local public policy in every country.

Exhortation to a focus on diversity not only in schools but at every level in education (i.e. lifelong education) is also becoming a directive integral to the implementation of larger public policies of openness and justice. Yet this simply reveals the limits of the normative model of public policies of inclusion, because the directives mandating respect for otherness and diversity, which appeared in the neoliberal context of the

new management of work at the end of the 1980s, are in reality counter-productive and paradoxical. It is an inappropriate rhetoric with regard to the character of the subjects that it seeks to formulate and manage (respect for diversity, respect for individuality, respect for otherness). Many studies have shown that it is better to support existing concrete methods than to constantly impose something from on high. Indeed, inclusive education begins with it the possibility of a new epistemological and professional model based on the dialectical interaction between research, teacher education and practice.

Here we of course come up against the practices generated by the new methods of management. The implementation of inclusive policies in public education has hit certain fundamental and repeating paradoxes which are creating confusion in the professional community of teachers. These paradoxes are the result of the hybridization of inclusive ideals with managerial methods and the usual pedagogic practice of teachers in the field. Against the original humanist meaning of the inclusive process, neoliberal policy produces a new managerial-economic meaning which is (together with its real motives) hidden.[5] The managerial approach subordinates inclusive changes in education to the neoliberal scheme, and by doing so worsens existing inequalities and contradictions. Conceptional confusion becomes a catalyst for these contradictions.

While the inclusive ideal is set out in generally accepted declaratory texts, the concrete results have not in fact been fulfilling the ambitions and hopes invested in the inclusive regulations. We need to remember that in its evolution, the inclusive ideal already has several turning points behind it. Thus, the fight against discrimination and the growing support for human rights led to the definition of special educational needs and individual educational paths, but this way forward has come up against economic fears of excessive growth of essential compensations for children with special needs. The general inclusive transformation still has a long way to go to reach a satisfactory form and many countries continue to focus on the compensation of special needs (or targeted support for marginalized groups), rather than on the global non-discriminatory support of the individual, and a democratic approach to education.

---

5   In practice the introduction of inclusive changes into the educational process may mean for example the reduction or abolition of the jobs for teachers of special education in schools.

What This Book Offers

The process of the inclusive transformation of education continues to be an open topic. In a time of the general relativization of established concepts, and in a situation in which we are endangered by false and politicized interpretations, it is important that we should do as much as we can to help clarify the basic concepts and above all the real goals of inclusion.

This book presents articles by authors from the Czech Republic, France, Norway, Poland, Canada (Quebec) and Switzerland. All are focused on the theme of democracy, democratic citizenship and education, and on questions of the inclusive philosophies and politics of the states concerned. The book is divided into three sections in order to cover the main thematic areas relating to different cultural contexts and professional and political ambitions in the implementation of inclusive education. We consider it important that the team of authors consists of researchers both from countries with an unbroken democratic tradition (France, Switzerland, Norway, Quebec) and from countries in which that tradition was interrupted for several decades in the recent past (Czech Republic, Poland). How states with recent experience of totalitarian rule approach the subject of democracy is certainly an important issue at a time when such states form a significant contingent in the European Union, especially as regards questions of education for democratic citizenship.

We believe that the experience of the post-communist states can be understood in two ways. It can be seen as a positive, bringing with it the fresh historical memory of repression and exclusion and so reminding readers that democracy cannot be taken for granted. Yet it can also be seen as an experience with potentially disquieting implications, because as the founders of democratic Czechoslovakia already knew, democracy is something that needs to be learned over the long term (Čapek, 2013).

As far as what we know as the "traditional democracies" are concerned, their situation is also ambiguous, because with regard to the growing populist and nationalist voices in the societies that form these democracies, we cannot escape the impression that we are witnessing a certain crisis of the system, hopefully a temporary one. It is indeed not always clear that the traditional democracies are showing enough awareness that democracy is more than just a system (and so something formal, and formally self-perpetuating), but above all a living idea, which must be systematically cultivated and developed so that the system does

not – entirely democratically – turn against the ideals from which it originally sprang.

The logic of the book reflects the national profile of the authorial collective, but also the structure of the inclusive process as a whole.

The first section of the book is focused on the more general intellectual and conceptual questions, looking at the epistemology of the inclusive process, and then at education for democracy and respect for human individuality, i.e. the two basic conditions of inclusion. In this section Stanislav Štech (CZ), Régis Malet (F) and Erik Bratland (N) discuss the characteristics of democracy, democratic citizenship and the questions of the contemporary possibilities of "citizenship of the world". They analyse the situation of the Western world through the lens of inclusive measures and systems where inclusion functions as a certain "magnifying glass of modern democracy". It emerges that what are known as neoliberal educational reforms are a major problem for the realization of a politics of inclusive education because the school educational practice is increasingly marginalizing theoretical and special knowledge, and this has the most serious effects on pupils from lower social classes.

The second section deals with the comparison of inclusive logics in an international perspective. It presents the conditions, tensions and tools that are currently discussed in relation to any truly humanistic implementation of inclusive education. Hence this section takes as its primary theme the question whether the modern conception and modes of introducing inclusion into the educational process are genuinely fulfilling the ideals of humanist education, or whether what we are seeing are mainly bureaucratically motivated and technically conducted "implementations of decisions", on which there happens to be a consensus for political or otherwise merely sectional reasons. Jaroslav Koťa (CZ), Serge Ramel (CH) and Philippe Tremblay (CAN) analyse the situation in the Czech Republic, Switzerland and Quebec respectively, and come to markedly different conclusions on the distance that still needs to be covered on the road to a humanist form of inclusion.

Finally, in the third section the reader will find an account of concrete problems that we are encountering in the different states with the realization of inclusive policies and also with specific aspects of national versions of inclusive ideology.

The chapters deal not only with the problems but also with the opportunities that exist in the frame of specific inclusive cases, laws or situations. Tereza Komárková (CZ) offers a detailed account of the legislative, organisational and psychological aspects of the process of

introducing inclusive education into Czech schools and social consciousness. Markéta Levínská (CZ) has focused on the situation of the group in the Czech Republic most affected by social exclusion – the Roma population. The book ends symbolically with a chapter by the two Polish authors Dorota Bazuń and Mariusz Kwiatkowski, presenting a particular project for the social integration of children with autism.

We believe that the texts presented here contribute to the sharing of experience that will help develop inclusive policies and school practice, and also encourage a more three-dimensional way of thinking through the ideal of inclusion, which we regard as one of the great gains of the European humanist tradition.

References

Arendt, H. (1961). *Between Past and Future*. New York: The Viking Press.

Čapek, K. (2013). *Hovory s T. G. M.* Spisy T. G. Masaryka 37. Praha: Ústav T. G. Masaryka, Masarykův ústav a Archiv AV ČR.

Dewey, J. (1916). *Democracy and Education*. Macmillan.

Finkielkraut, A. (1987). *La défaite de la pensée.* Paris: Gallimard.

Gurgand, M. (2005). *Économie de l'éducation*. Paris: La Découverte.

Kohout-Diaz, M. (2018). *Éducation inclusive. Un processus en cours*. Toulouse: Érès, collection Connaissances de la diversité dirigée par C. Gardou.

Kohout-Diaz, M. (2016). Difficultés de l'éducation inclusive en République tchèque: les besoins éducatifs particuliers, entre défauts et troubles. *Carrefours de l'éducation* n°42, novembre 2016/2, « 2005–2015 – Quelles évolutions en matière d'inclusion? », dossier coordonné par L. Ibernon et C. Berzin, pp.199–212.

Kohout-Diaz, M. (2018b). "School Marketing and Segmentation: A Comparative Sstudy in Bulgaria and the Czech Republic." *International Journal of Education and Research*. Vol. 90, 2018, pp. 87–94.

Kohout-Diaz, M.; Tremblay, P. (Dir.) (2017). Approches internationales et comparées de l'éducation inclusive: l'éducation inclusive comme paradigme d'une éducation globale. Quels contextes, quelles pratiques et quels effets de formation? *Éducation Comparée*, n°18/2017-2.

Kohout-Diaz, M. (2008). J. A. Komenský (Comenius) pédagogue? Place de l'éducation dans le projet de réforme systématique: l'apport de la Consultation universelle sur l'amendement des affaires humaines. *Penser l'éducation. Philosophie de l'éducation et histoire des idées pédagogiques*. N° 24, octobre 2008, pp.79–97.

Lévinas, E. (1984). *Éthique et infini*. Paris: Le Livre de Poche.

Lévinas, E. (1990). *Totalité et infini: essai sur l'extériorité*. Paris: Le Livre de Poche.

Lévinas, E. (2014). *Le temps et l'autre*. Paris: PUF.

Nussbaum, M. (2010). *Not for Profit. Why Democracy Needs the Humanities*. Princeton University Press.

Paul, J. J. (2007). *Économie de l'éducation*. Paris: A. Colin

Prud'homme, L., Vienneau, R., Ramel., S. Rousseau, N. (2011). La légitimité de la diversité en éducation: réflexion sur l'inclusion. *Éducation et francophonie*, 39(2), pp. 6–22.

Strouhal, M. (2020). "On the Current Problems of Education for Democracy." *Journal of Pedagogy* 11(2), pp. 73–87.

https://content.sciendo.com/configurable/contentpage/journals$002fjped$002f11$002 f2$002farticle-p73.xml

Strouhal, M. (2020). "The Foundations of Multiculturalism and Its Moral and Axiological Implications". In Kwiatkowski, M.; Mielczarek-Żejmo, A.; Strouhal, M. (Eds.). *Multiculturalism. From Crisis to Renewal?* Prague: Karolinum, pp. 57–77.

En ligne: http://www.acelf.ca/c/revue/pdf/EF-39-2-001_PRUDHOMME.pdf.

UNESCO (2015). *Incheon Declaration: Education 2030: Towards Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education and Lifelong Learning for All*. Online: https://unesdoc.unesco.org /ark:/48223/pf0000233137

UNESCO (2020). *Global Education Monitoring Report, 2020: Inclusion and Education: All Means All*. Online: https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000373718

UNESCO (2019). *Inclusion in Education*. Online: https://en.unesco.org/themes/inclusion -in-education

UNESCO (1994). *The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education. Adopted by the World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality*. Salamanca: UNESCO.