Human Rights Education and Cosmopolitan Citizenship: Theoretical Considerations and Their Application in Differing Socio-cultural Contexts[1]

Audrey Osler
Professor, Buskerud and Vestfold University College, Norway and University of Leeds, UK

Abstract

This paper explores some of the challenges of implementing human rights education, characterised as a cosmopolitan project, within the national framework of public schools, which rarely conceive of the nation as cosmopolitan. It focuses on two human rights concepts, universality and recognition, concepts which need to be revisited if we are to develop a theory and practice of human rights education (HRE) which meets the needs of contemporary societies which are increasingly recognised as diverse, which continue to be characterized by asymmetrical power relations and by anti-democratic and extremist political movements. The paper argues that human rights education is one in which teachers and learners need to understand that human rights and democracy may be fragile and need to be constantly renewed and refreshed if they are to be guaranteed. Accordingly, an evolving theory and practice of human rights education needs to embrace the concept of recognition, extending it beyond that expounded in key human rights

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instruments. Human rights education needs to build on the experiences of leaners, drawing on their narratives. In particular, it needs to confront the traumatic past if it is to contribute to greater social justice in the present. The paper concludes with some principles which might inform debate and practice in human rights education in different socio-cultural contexts.

Keywords

cosmopolitanism, universality, recognition, narrative, traumatic past, diversity

Human rights education (HRE) takes place in many different educational settings, both formal and informal. This paper sets out to theorise HRE and consider the application of this theory to formal education in different socio-cultural contexts. Grassroots activists are sometimes suspicious of efforts to educate for human rights in schools, particularly public schools, which are institutions of the state. This suspicion arises out of a fundamental tension within the international human rights framework. The state is responsible for upholding human rights, and has a duty not only to uphold the individual's rights but also to ensure awareness of rights within its territories. At the same time it is the state which may frequently stand accused of violating the rights of those living within its territories or of failing to ensure that state authorities such as the police adequately protect the rights of vulnerable individuals.

This tension is further complicated by the nature of public schools, which, as will be argued, form part of a nationalist project, in which leaners are encouraged to develop a primary affinity with the nation-state. The human rights project, by contrast, is a cosmopolitan one, in which the emphasis is on our common humanity. Human rights invite us to develop a sense of solidarity with our fellow human beings, regardless of nationality, residence, ethnicity or other social characteristics. When the state seeks to fulfil its duties by introducing HRE into the school curriculum, teachers and learners are likely to experience tensions in the curriculum between cosmopolitan and nationalist goals.

This paper focuses on two human rights concepts, universality and recognition, and argues that they need to be revisited if we are to develop a theory and practice of human rights education (HRE) which meets the needs of today's multicultural societies which are at the same time both multi-faith and secular. In order to address these concepts I will explore 'the right to narrate.' (Bhabha, 2003) My intention is to identify some pointers for those wishing to denationalize school curricula so as allow learners to explore and extend their identities within an inclusive collective history. Such processes of denationalization are, I argue, central to education for human rights. In developing new collective histories, which build on learners' identities it is necessary to explore current injustices in their everyday lives and to examine the traumatic past. The paper will consider what this might mean in different socio-cultural contexts.

The first part of this paper is theoretical. I begin by the exploring the concepts of universality and recognition. I then discuss some challenges faced by educators seeking to implement and practice HRE in national school systems. Finally, I discuss the implications of these ideas for schools in Europe, before considering, somewhat tentatively, whether there are any general principles which might be applied to schools in other regions. Such principles might then be the subject of debate and critique among those working to implement human rights education in Taiwan.

Universality

One key concept within human rights is that of universality. Rights belong to all human beings and are derived both from our shared humanity and from human struggle. Although the concept of cosmopolitanism and understandings of the universal have been influential in early twenty-first century scholarly discourses relating to multicultural, international and human rights education, it has been argued that, in practice, the Enlightenment principles which inform the modern human rights project have sometimes functioned to standardize culture though education at the expense of cultural difference. (Foucault, 1995; Popkewitz, 2007)

The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) proclaims human rights as "a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations" and calls for "their universal and effective recognition and observance." (UN, 1948, preamble) Article 18 confirms that "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief" thereby acknowledging that religion, an aspect of culture, should not be seen from the standpoint of an individual's conscience, as something immutable or fixed. Article 27 states that "Everyone has the right *freely to participate* in the cultural life of the community" (my emphasis) again implying individual choice, but other than this there is nothing specifically about how rights are applied in different culture settings.

Article 26, which addresses education, does not specifically mention culture, although it does acknowledge parents' right to "choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children", subject to the general restriction that any right should not be interpreted as implying any activity "aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms" in the UDHR (Article 30). So schooling, a key means of reinforcing (or potentially negating) culture is something over which parents are entitled a direct say. Nevertheless, parents are not free to choose a form of education which would deny children their other rights or violate the general principles of justice, and equality. So the UDHR does not itself suggest or imply standardization of culture.

Rights need to be applied within a cultural context, but the broad human rights principles of justice and equality should prevail. Mainstream and powerful interests generally have few concerns about the homogenising or standardising impact of education on culture, but minorities do. Culture by its very nature is not fixed but fluid and subject to change, as Appiah (2007) reminds us. Although cultural goods may require special protection and preservation, living, evolving culture practices generally do not. Nevertheless, minorities, and indigenous people in particular, remain vulnerable today to the denial, expropriation and reduction of their cultures, just as in the past they were vulnerable to the very denial of their humanity. In recognition of this vulnerability and in response to the struggles of minorities for recognition, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights accords special cultural protection for minorities. (UN, 1966, Article 27)

Some feminist and post-colonialist scholars have also challenged the notion of the universal, by seeking to illustrate how discourses promoted by the powerful often serve to regulate the knowledge and values of the colonized. (Mohanty, 1984; Spivak, 1999) These critiques remind us of asymmetrical power relations which need to be considered in any analysis and in curricula addressing human rights, cultural diversity, justice and injustice. There is the risk that human rights, designed to be liberating, can become part of a hegemonic discourse, used to control, if rights and principles are applied without dialogue and without consideration of people's specific social contexts.

Asymmetrical power relations need to be explored as part of the curriculum not just in contexts where learners may be encountering real difficulties in securing their rights and where through experience they may be quick to identify a considerable gap between human rights rhetoric and everyday realities. They also need to be examined in contexts where legal mechanisms for the protection of rights are generally strong, and where mainstream populations may have few concerns about their rights. When educating the more privileged, a hegemonic discourse of rights may serve to mask genuine human rights violations among the least powerful members of the same communities, neighbourhoods and nation.

Recognition

The preamble of the UDHR opens with the concept of recognition: 'recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family'. The concept of recognition of equal and inherent dignity and equal and inalienable rights is fundamental to the human rights project. Article 6 states that 'Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law' and Article 7 affirms this equal recognition extends to equality before the law and protection under the law against discrimination. Yet this legal recognition is, I would suggest, insufficient in human rights advocacy and human rights education.

When children enter classrooms they do so in specific global locations and with specific positionings in histories which privilege or repress their voices. Their identities, including ascribed identities, are related to their lived experiences. An ascribed identity is one not chosen by the individual, but designated, often by powerful others. In the context of schooling, students may be ascribed an identity by teachers or education policy-makers. For example, they may be labelled "Taiwanese" or "indigenous" when they would prefer to be acknowledged as dual-heritage, or vice versa. In some countries, education and (so-called) integration policies may designate certain students as "immigrants" in the country in which they are born and hold citizenship, simply because their parents were born outside of the country.

The modern human rights project and legal framework grew out of a period of war and atrocities characterized by processes of dehumanization. Recognition of equal human dignity is essential to the human rights project. Butler's (2006) analysis of violence is in keeping with this: her starting point is that violence stems from processes of dehumanization and lack of recognition. It is important, if education itself is to be a humanising, rather than a dehumanising, experience that asymmetrical power relations in the school and wider society are acknowledged and addressed.

Nussbaum (2006) draws on the concept of narrative to illustrate how her human capabilities model might be applied in education. Arguing that a neglect of the humanities and arts in education is dangerous for democracy's future, she focuses on the capabilities of critical thinking, "world citizenship" [what Osler and Starkey (2005), refer to as "education for cosmopolitan citizenship"], and imaginative understanding. Nussbaum (2006: 387) observes that, through schooling:

> Young citizens ... learn to ask questions or not to ask them; to take what they hear at face value or to probe more deeply; to imagine the situation of a person different from themselves or to see a new person as a mere threat to their own projects; to think of themselves as members of an homogenous group or as members of a nation, and a world, made up of many people and groups, all of whom deserve respect and understanding.

Effectively, processes of schooling narrow or extend young people's visions. Processes of learning in which young people are empowered to ask questions and probe texts; to develop the imagination to identify with and express solidarity across boundaries; and to recognize themselves as fellow citizens in a cosmopolitan nation and in a wider global community are key ones within HRE. Nussbaum draws on Rabindranath Tagore to illustrate how the "narrative imagination" is central to realizing positive learning outcomes. Similarly, the post-colonial theorist Homi Bhabha (2003), signposts ways in which school curricula and policy can enable learners to discover their own places within a collective history:

> To protect the 'right to narrate' is to protect a range of democratic imperatives: it assumes there is an equitable access to those institutions – schools, universities, museums, libraries, theatres – that give you a sense of a collective history and and the means to turn those materials into a narrative of your own. (Bhabha, 2003: 180-181).

Building on Bhabha's insights, the curriculum needs to include opportunities to explore and reflect on various identities and cultural attributes, creating personal narratives and processes of self-learning. Effectively, learners need opportunities to investigate and challenge official narratives or one-sided text book accounts (Osler and Zhu, 2011) and other exclusive (and excluding) narratives. It is though new collective narratives that learners are empowered to make sense of the world. (Delanty, 2003; Osler, 2011)

HRE within National Education Systems

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, despite processes of globalization, the nation-state remains a potent concept and a political reality. I suggested above that conceptualising HRE as a cosmopolitan project poses particular challenges for teaching and learning in public schools. There are many reasons for this. First, schools do not generally stress our common humanity; schools tend, as I argue below, to emphasise a national perspective. School systems are pivotal in creating and maintaining the nation-state. Yet there is nothing 'natural' about the concept of the nation-state, seen as the possession of a dominant national group, which privileges a specific national identity, language, history, culture, literature, myths, religion and so on. (Kymlicka, 2003) The nation-state is maintained through a set of public policies and strengthened through processes of public education. Such processes may be particularly effective in the Nordic countries, which have relatively small populations and where it may consequently be easier to promote and sustain a national myth of homogeneity of political thought and even homogeneity of culture.

Education across the globe, and in particular school history and civics or citizenship education, remains profoundly national in focus. (Reid et al., 2009) Since the founding of the United Nations in 1945 with the goal of realizing world peace and strengthening human rights and human dignity, it might be argued that school systems have been encouraged to introduce cosmopolitan perspectives. Through the work of UNESCO, efforts have been made to reform school curricula so as to address national and sub-national ethnic and cultural conflicts. Indeed, the Charter of the United Nations proclaims that one goal is to enable 'We the peoples of the United Nations… to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours.' (UN, 1945) An international comparative study of high school civics textbooks from 1970 to 2008 suggests there is indeed an overall trend towards greater cosmopolitanism over this period. (Bromley, 2009)[2]

Systems of mass education today, across the globe, are broadly based upon a model developed in late nineteenth century Europe. Dewey ([1916] 2002) reminds us that European mass education systems were developed at a time when nationalism was at its height. Before this period, education providers focused on a broader cosmopolitan ideal, emphasizing a shared human heritage. Dewey highlights how 'cosmopolitanism gave way to nationalism', stressing loyalty to the state rather than to humanity. The new focus was on the education of the citizen of the state rather than the cultured individual.

Osler and Starkey (2005; 2010) argue for 'education for cosmopolitan citizenship', underpinned by human rights. Human rights emphasize our common humanity and are essentially cosmopolitan, promoting solidarity with our fellow human beings, regardless of such factors as race, nationality or religion. In classrooms where there are students who are not nationals and where there may be many who do not aspire to national citizenship, it seems particularly inappropriate to focus solely on the rights and duties of the (mainstream) national citizen. Certain students who have the status of citizen may find it difficult to access citizenship rights, for example as a result of extreme poverty or if they are from a minoritised community and not recognized as citizens by neighbours. Osler and Starkey's model is not without its own challenges but it does invite learners to re-imagine the nation as cosmopolitan, aiming to subvert dominant models of national citizenship education.

Confronting the Traumatic Past

An additional challenge facing human rights educators in many different contexts relates to the relationship between HRE and history education and how this is addressed within national curricula. This is a particular concern when addressing a traumatic past, particularly if that traumatic past is within living memory. This appears to be true across the globe and in very different socio-cultural contexts. It appears to be easier for authorities (and indeed for teachers) if past traumas are addressed through public commemorations, for example, Holocaust Memorial Day, or funding research centres and commemorative sites. While such initiatives are important, what is also needed is a critical examination of historical events in the school curriculum.

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[2] The study examined over 465 books from 69 countries. It concludes there is a trend towards addressing universalism and diversity in all areas except the Middle East and North Africa, with a significant increase in discussions of human rights in all regions except Asia.

Past traumas, whether they relate to the plight of indigenous people (in countries as diverse as Norway, the United States, and Taiwan) or to political persecution, gross social injustice or even civil war, are sometimes glossed over in the re-telling of history, with learners presented, at best, with broad human rights principles, but few opportunities, if any to analyse their recent past or today's society by applying these principles.

Within school curricula, struggles for justice and human rights with the nation are often assumed to be complete, even when the struggle is ongoing. So, for example, students in the U.S. will celebrate Martin Luther King Day as a holiday and learn about the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s. Through learning about past achievements, and the realisation of equality today before the law, students may read the curriculum and texts as implying the struggle for justice is complete, rather than on-going. For teachers to facilitate a conversation about race and racial inequalities in contemporary U.S. society is to enter territory that remains sensitive. Some teachers are ill-prepared, since such conversations require engagement with contemporary politics and with socio-economic rights which are less well recognised in U.S. society.

In Norway, in the second decade of the twenty-first century, students are familiar with the stories of national heroes who resisted the Nazi occupation in World War Two, but the more complex story or collaboration and resistance (and what is understood by collaboration) is generally avoided in school. This is not, of course, unique to Norway and similar issues remain in other European countries which experienced occupation, even though these events occurred some 70 years ago.

International normative standards can make a difference to the shaping of school curricula. The 2007 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples has been used as a tool in the struggle for rights in and through education. The Declaration has supported recognition of indigenous people's stories into the national story within the school curriculum.[3]

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[3] For example, the Norwegian authorities now give greater emphasis to indigenous peoples' rights within human rights education.

Recognition of human rights and HRE models today

Scholars and human rights education practitioners have observed that different models of human rights education prevail, according to the specific social, economic and political climate. (Tarrow, 1993; Yeban, 1995; Flowers, 2004; Tibbitts, 2008; Bajaj, 2011) Educators in different regions face specific social dynamics, which may support or undermine teaching for human rights.

In the West, both in the United States and in many European nations, the human rights framework is often seen as one that is more readily applicable to distant places, since present day human rights abuses at home, when they are recognised, are generally seen as something relatively mild and insignificant. Thus human rights education is more likely to focus human rights violations in distant places.

In the Nordic region, human rights teaching takes place within societies where political and rhetorical commitments to human rights principles are strong. Intuitively, we might assume that such societies present ideal contexts for human rights teaching and learning. Yet we encounter two phenomena which may undermine effective HRE in in some Nordic countries. First, there is a tendency for democracy and human rights to be proudly presented as a central feature of a relatively homogenous national culture. National values and human rights values are proclaimed as one and the same thing. A commitment to democracy and human rights is part of what makes us Norwegian, or Danish, and so on. So, for example, at a 2012 seminar I attended at Buskerud University College, an expert in citizenship education stated that: 'Norway is probably the most democratic country in the world.' This comment went unchallenged.

In the re-telling of history, past international solidarities can sometimes be forgotten as text books proudly present national achievements. Commemorating the centenary of women's suffrage the Government of Norway (2013) observes:

> Norway was the first independent country in the world to introduce universal suffrage for both men and women. It is true that there were three states that introduced universal right to vote even earlier – New Zealand in 1893, Australia in 1902 and Finland in 1906 – but these countries were not independent and the women could not be elected to political positions.

In such a context learning about human rights at home can appear irrelevant. The message given is of an exemplar democratic nation which is well ahead of the game and ahead of other nations (despite what these other nations may claim). There is no concept of women's local (and global) struggle for recognition nor is there acknowledgement that the women's suffrage movement relied on international solidarity and cooperation. The official view is that the state 'introduced' universal suffrage and women took advantage of this gift. The human rights project appears to have been realized. The struggles of the Sami people (an indigenous and minority group) to have their very humanity recognized are also overlooked in this upbeat account of universal suffrage.

The mainstream story of the founding and commemoration of the Norwegian constitution, which marks its 200th anniversary in 2014, is likewise silent on subsequent struggles or amendments to incorporate minority and indigenous people's rights. The very same Constitution included a general ban on Jews and Jesuits from entering the country which was not lifted until 1851, as a result of a campaign in which Norwegian poet Henrik Wergeland and others were prominent. At this point Jews were accorded the same religious freedoms as Christians.

The story of democracy in Norway today, as told on the official commemorative webpages known as 'Eidsvoll 1814', is an institutional one presented from the perspective of parliament, in which the only highlighted contemporary democratic 'problems' relate to low voter turnout and low levels of support for political organizations. In fact, it was not until the late 1980s that Norway responded to Sami demands that it meet its international obligations for special cultural protection for minorities under Article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (UN, 1966), which the country ratified in 1972. The governmental response was the 1987 Sami Act and a Constitutional Amendment the following year. (Smith, 1995)

If sanitized versions of history are taught at school then the story of past struggles can be erased from the public memory, at least among mainstream students. It is left to minoritised communities to tell an alternative story. The possibility of human rights education as a site of struggle, within the nation as well as internationally, is reduced. Of course, struggles for rights continue, and a number from the mainstream are self-critical, but such criticality is not necessarily encouraged through the re-telling of the national story, or by ongoing official silences.

HRE may encourage solidarity with oppressed people elsewhere when students learn about violations of rights (and possibly struggles for rights) in other nations. Yet HRE of this type is equally likely to be the story of less fortunate people in distant places, resembling a missionary story from the colonial era. At best this type of HRE may encourage commitment to others' struggles for justice. At worst it may lead to feelings of moral superiority as Vesterdal (2013) has observed, with learners failing to reflect critically on their own society's human rights record. A key question remains: what is the value in expressing concern for strangers in distant places if an individual is blind to others' experiences of injustice and their lack of rights within the same neighbourhood, community or nation?

A further complexity in Norway is that policy-makers and political decision-makers do not stress the need to strengthen human rights education within the school curriculum, since students appear to score well on international tests measuring democratic values. There is no named subject of human rights education or education for democratic citizenship.

Statements about democratic and human rights values underpin the national curriculum, but it is left to individual school principals and to teachers themselves to apply these values in their day-to-day teaching and within their subject specialisms. Students' learning about democracy and human rights is likely to depend on the focus of the school principal and on the strengths and interests of the individual teacher. It is then difficult to determine whether students are in a position to claim their entitlement. Although students may learn about democracy, they are not necessarily guaranteed opportunities to apply their knowledge. Consequently, they may believe in abstract ideas, like equality, but may not necessarily argue for equal rights, such as freedom of religion, for those who are different from themselves. For example, in a national study more than 56 per cent of high school students surveyed failed to appreciate a racist dimension to a ban on building mosques in Norwegian cities. (Mikkelsen, 2010:15)

The Fragility of Democracy

In the first two decades of the twenty-first century, the role of religion and the competing demands of secular and religious identities are playing a key role in debates about the future of multicultural societies in Western Europe.

At the level of the school and classroom one challenge is the reconciling of different worldviews and consideration of how pluralism should be addressed within the public sphere of the school.

In 2010 the Council of Europe's Secretary General, Thorbjørn Jagland, asked an independent 'Group of Eminent Persons' to prepare a report on the challenges arising from the resurgence of intolerance and discrimination in Europe. The report (Council of Europe's Group of Eminent Persons, 2011) assesses the seriousness of the risks, identifies their sources and makes a series of proposals for 'living together' in open European societies. It expresses grave concerns both about far-right activists who have expressed racist and Islamophobic views incompatible with democratic principles. Interestingly, the report criticizes senior mainstream politicians for their populist rhetoric, naming three: former French president Nicolas Sarkozy, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, and British Prime Minster David Cameron.

The report asserts that identities are a voluntary, personal matter; no one should be forced to choose one primary identity to the exclusion of others. This is in keeping with the perspectives of educational researchers who nevertheless note that, in practice, individuals can be denied full citizenship rights because of others' perceptions of their characteristics or identities, related to culture, ethnicity, gender, sexuality and so on. (Banks, 2004; Osler and Starkey, 2005, Murphy-Shigematsu, 2012) The report argues that European societies need to embrace diversity, and accept that one can be a "hyphenated European" – for instance a Congolese-German, a North African-Frenchwoman or a Kurdish-Norwegian. But this can work only if all long-term residents are accepted as citizens and if all, whatever their faith, culture or ethnicity, are treated equally by the law and their fellow citizens and have a say in making the law.

Expressions of extremism (hate-speech, physical violence) curb democratic participation, by undermining the psychological and physical security of those under attack. Freedom of expression is not an absolute right. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) has noted that in several member states 'extremist parties and movements are propagating and defending ideologies that are incompatible with democracy and human rights'. PACE (2000) has taken a position concerning 'the threat posed to democracy', particularly that posed by far-right groups which encourage intolerance, xenophobia and racism. According to the Parliamentary Assembly (2003), ‘*no member state is immune* to the intrinsic threats that extremism poses to democracy’ (my emphasis). It notes measures that governments can take against such movements and political parties, including withdrawal of funding and, “in the case of a threat to a country’s constitutional order”, dissolution. This is official recognition of democracy’s fragility, even in nations that consider themselves exemplars of democratic values.

In Norway, Anders Behring Breivik’s attack of 22 July 2011 in Oslo and at Utøya is recognised as an attack on democracy. Seventy seven people died and many more injured. Much has been said about the trauma of the Norwegian people following the atrocity. The trauma faced by Norway’s minorities as a result of this attack, and as a result of claims about the threat of a Muslim conspiracy in Europe, has received rather less attention.

One troubling aspect of the affair is expressed on the cover of the UK magazine, *New Statesman: ‘The most shocking thing about Anders Behring Breivik? How many people agree with his opinion.’* (23 April 2012) An article explores how certain right wing British newspapers frequently misrepresent, distort and even lie in stories about Islam and Muslims. The *New Statesman* cover proclaims: ‘It’s time to put mainstream Islamophobia on trial’. This is a timely reminder of the need to tackle mainstream Islamophobia, recognising it as a contemporary form of racism.

In Norway, Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg called for ‘more democracy, more openness, and more humanity’ in response to the massacre. Given the evidence of anti-democratic forces in society and popular expressions of racism, expressed in complaints about ‘too many foreigners’ or ‘too many Arabs’, it is important to consider what Stoltenberg’s call for ‘more democracy’ might mean for educators’ everyday practices. I would suggest that it does not necessarily mean more of the same, since efforts to promote democratic practices in schools which are not mindful of today’s multicultural realities risk creating learning contexts which purport to be democratic, but which may fail to guarantee the equal rights and entitlements of minority learners.

The call for ‘more democracy’ in education requires an extension of democratic practices to encompass diversity, recognising not just visible minorities, but other overlooked identities and histories. Turning a blind eye to intolerance and racism in society does not make it go away. Denying its significance is to misjudge its impact on learners who are subject to discriminatory language, undermining their well-being, sense of belonging and learning. If we under-play barriers to participation, we also mis-educate mainstream students. The message is that minority rights and identities are less important, and students do not need to work to strengthen democracy. Concern for human rights is reserved for those living in distant places. Learners may fail to recognize that human rights and democracy need to be renewed, refreshed and guaranteed for all at home.

Genuine democratic learning environments – and democratic decision-making at school – need to ensure that curricula, organizational issues, school structures and policies guarantee the rights and interests of minoritised students. Furthermore, education for democracy and human rights requires the development of skills and attitudes in all students, both mainstream and minoritised, which equip them to defend democratic principles and to struggle for justice with those who encounter discrimination or exclusion. Solidarity is a key concept in education for human rights and democracy. As argued above, solidarity with people in distant places means little, if we are not ready also to defend others' rights in our school, community and nation.

Teaching for Human Rights and Social Justice in Schools

In our age of globalisation, educators are increasingly aware of the need to meet the needs of diverse school populations and more aware that traditional civics classes, where children learn about their rights and duties as citizens, may be insufficient, since some in the classroom will not be citizens, some may not aspire to citizenship and yet others are encountering difficulties claiming their citizenship rights. Education for cosmopolitan citizenship (Osler and Starkey, 2003, 2005) based on universal human rights may offer a way forward. I conclude with some principles for human rights education, which I draw from the discussion above and which reflect my efforts to theorise human rights education. These principles also draw on my practical experiences as a human rights educator in schools and in higher education. Specifically, they are informed by dialogues with teachers from across the globe, as I have worked with them to explore how HRE might be effectively incorporated into their everyday practices, and applied in a wide range of socio-economic, cultural and political contexts.

The principles out forward here are not a panacea, but pointers which might inform debate and practice about HRE in different social-cultural contexts.

HRE, although envisioned as central to the human rights project by those who drafted the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, remains a relatively new project in formal education systems across the globe, and one which is, as yet under-theorised.

Principles to inform HRE in formal education

- Recognition of learners multiple identities should underpin HRE in schools, and this concept of recognition needs to be extended beyond the concept of legal recognition within the UDHR.
- HRE requires re-conceptualising the nation as not only multicultural but also cosmopolitan.
- Incorporation of learners' individual and collective narratives is key to effective learning in and for human rights, especially in school systems which continue to privilege an exclusive (and excluding) national narrative.
- Inclusion of leaners' narratives enables HRE to acknowledge and build upon the historically specific context in which learning is taking place, thereby increasing its relevance and effectiveness.
- HRE needs to address learners' experiences of asymmetrical power relations in and beyond the classroom.
- While human rights and HRE are universal entitlements, teachers, text book writers and curriculum developers need to be conscious of contrary standardising forces within schools which work to negate minority cultures.
- Teachers need to recognise the tensions between HRE as a cosmopolitan project and schooling as an essentially nationalist project.
- A central goal of human rights education is to enable solidarity across difference at all scales, including the school, the neighbourhood, the nation and the wider world.

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