Values, Identity, The Democratic Citizen: Between Agonism and Antagonism

A critical discourse analysis of the renewed Norwegian National curriculum

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Abstract

This master's thesis is a critical discourse analysis of the renewal of the national curriculum from 2020. Intending to look more closely at how the focus on values in the formation of the democratic citizen and identity in the curriculum is presented and enables the construction of antagonisms, the thesis borrows a set of different concepts and conceptual frameworks from various research fields of education, psychology, and politics. An additional goal of the thesis is to point out which antagonisms can be produced and how the school can prevent this through an agonistic dialogical approach. From a theoretical discourse point of view, the thesis is based mainly on Chantal Mouffe and Ernesto Laclau's theories to examine how conceptual understanding and discourses related to what can be called we/they discriminating discourse. The thesis concludes that the revised curriculum produces the idea that "the others" represent the opposite of the normative Norwegian "we", which might lead to negative radicalization and violent extremism.

Acknowledgements

I want to thank my other half for lovingly believing in my capability to finish this master's thesis and for pushing me when I was in doubt. Your life motto keeps us going even when there seems to be no light in the tunnel. "Never give up. You never know what tomorrow will bring". Muito obrigada meu amor.

A big thanks to my mom for telling me to go for it. Thank you for letting me endlessly tell you about my topic and its contents, even though you did not understand half of what I was talking about. Thanks to my dad, who always has been there, cheering me on through university.

Finally, I would like to give my thanks to my supervisor who supported, help, and got me through the many obstacles of the thesis progress. Thank you for listening and all the advice you have given me.

Preface

I began my career as a substitute teacher at the age of nineteen. It was a profession that felt intriguing and came quite naturally to me. I didn't know what I wanted to become at this point in my life, only that I liked to study religion and philosophy. Being able to teach and explore what was my passion at the same time felt like a blessing. After a year of teaching, it became clear that it was a teacher I should become. Little did I know that I would face one of my most significant obstacles some seven years later when I got into the master's program RESA at the University of Oslo.

The topic for my master's thesis changed a lot since I started on it, and it's this story affected and changed my view on life drastically. You see, I got a question some time back, asking why I would like to research this new chosen topic and, in that extension, my reflection on me as a researcher came up, in other words, my positioning as a researcher. Reflecting upon yourself as a researcher, you will at some point look at your intentions of why and how you are doing this or that. For me, that was my turning stone. What I saw gave me a new way of looking at the world and a look within myself. Having acknowledged the anger in my former topic towards the injustice in my society and the world, I had to reanalysis and restructure, reminding myself of the intention and personal feelings involved when working with the new topic. A researcher will never be able not to color their work, and the goal is not to make it completely free of ourselves as this is what makes us examine it in the first place.

I have finished my master thesis, and I can say with great pride that this has been an informing and somehow life-changing journey.

Aurora

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Table of Contents

PART I   INTRODUCTION

1. Background and topic

The political community is the social foundation of modern democracies; the cohesion and strength of a society's community of citizens are required for the democratic government's political institutions to function effectively. Norway takes the form of representative liberal democracy in contrast to a direct democracy like Switzerland. However, on some occasions, Norway has elements of direct democracy, like in their decision-making procedures in the form of referendums. Citizens must legitimize the government's authority and decisions for democracy to function. One apparent condition for legitimacy is that citizens feel a part of the nation's political community and recognize the State's authority as legitimate. Citizens who feel a sense of belonging to a political community recognize that their future as individuals is inextricably linked to the fate of the society to which they belong. Individuals' attachment to the political community can be interpreted as a sense of belonging to the national community (Hurd, no date).

The intensity of this feeling of affiliation among citizens determines the strength of the national political community. However, a solid political community is difficult to achieve when different social divisions divide society into relatively stable and mutually exclusive groups. Divisions occur due to the activation of specific criteria that form social groups and differentiate individuals based on socially constructed stable patterns, in other words, a social order. Since political communities consist of people in different positions in society and who see society in different ways, according to Chantal Mouffe (2005), the stability of a political community like a liberal democracy becomes challenging. Sociologist and philosopher Zygmunt Bauman said that globalization leads to identity pluralization in the age of 'crisis of belonging,' where national identity competes with other global alternative identities (Bauman, 2014, p. 20). Meanings are being multiplied and called into question more than ever before as a consequence of the

pressures of modern globalization. This has led to individuals and groups being more unsure of who they are and where they belong, according to Fred Dervin (Dervin, 2012, p. 181).

Globalization and plurality have an impact on culture and educational systems, not without concerns. Education is perceived by researcher Gert Biesta (2015) as a process of insertion of adaptation or the production of a particular social order. Today's educational responsibility has to do with the "creation" of a worldly space, a space of plurality and differences, a space where freedom can appear and where singular individuals can come into the world. In the history of humankind, there has always been plurality. What has changed is the way in which this plurality is understood and approached. The question of how to respond to the fact of plurality is one of importance for politics and political theory. There is a tendency in liberal political philosophy to see plurality as something that poses a threat to social life. Democratic education has been given a central role in how the inhabitants of a political and national community understand and act in accordance with a plurality. The school has been given the educational mandate and a social mission to educate and form children into becoming (politically active) democratic citizens. In a way, the school is responsible for how students should react and treat, for example, the challenges that pluralism brings to society. In an era of increasing plurality, a liberal emphasis on citizenship is critical for the school, which serves as a forum for all divergences in principle to be expressed through participation. As a result, many argue that democratic citizenship education should emphasize openness and dialogue about moral, ethical, and political issues that students care about (Solhaug, 2012, p.20). Of course, such questions can be contentious at times, but they should be the subject of open discussion in school. One may ask how one should realize such a form of citizenship education and whether such a form of education where there is an underlying focus on the formation of a democratic citizen instead creates a paradox. Thus, in this thesis, I will explore and discuss how children's education to become (politically active) democratic citizens are presented and focused on in the Norwegian school system.

1.1 Issue

In the spring of 2016, Meld. St. 28 *Fag – Fordypning – Forståelse,* A renewal of the Knowledge Promise 2020 ((Kunnskapsløftet)or "the lifting of Knowledge," as the word løfte has two meanings) and the General part (now named Core curriculum) of the formal national curriculum was presented. This document is fundamental to the Norwegian school system and a basis for its values and goals. Meld. St. 28 (2015-2016) expressly refers to the Objectives clause as the school's values. The values expressed in the Objectives clause and the curriculum should be formulated so that the majority of the people could agree with them and feel included in the school community. The curriculum's new general section expresses "basic common values, regardless of religious or philosophical affiliation" (Udir, 2020, pp. 3-4), which means that they are seen as objective and fundamental for all. Among these values, it states that in a democratic community, there should be acceptance as well as room for disagreement and difference. If this is achieved through the renewed curriculum can be questioned.

The Objectives clause expresses the binding value basis, which must be reflected in the training and education. This makes it necessary to look more closely at the usage of concepts and discourses in this document. Discourse is used here as linguistic structures that reflect specific mindsets and understandings of the world (see chapter 5). Primarily, the school's General part of the renewed national curriculum will be examined. As already mentioned in this thesis, this is referred to as the Core curriculum. The Core curriculum elaborates on the core values in the Objectives clause in the Educational Act and the overriding principles for primary and secondary education in Norway. In other words, the Core curriculum describes the fundamental view that should characterize pedagogical practice in the entire primary and secondary education and training. In the context of this thesis, several questions are relevant to have in mind, such as how are "Values," "Identity," and "The democratic citizen" defined and given meaning in the Core curriculum? Moreover, how can these be interpreted?

There is a clear line from the Objectives clause to the Core curriculum. Therefore, I will critically examine, among other things, the plurality and political discourse that is expressed in the Core curriculum. I do this by looking at how different terms used in the Core curriculum are connected to variants of signal words such as "we," "they," and "our," in addition to more indirect use of value-laden terms. Thus, there is a focus on the possible antagonisms implied in the Core curriculum. Antagonisms in the Core curriculum can be interpreted using Chantal Mouffe's definition, and understanding of the concept where antagonism is the discourse theory's concept of conflict, which is what arises in the way discourses are in opposition to each other, put another way, antagonism arises when different identities hinder each other (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p. 55). I argue that an antagonistic perspective creates tensions in how to understand the concepts of "values," "Identity," and "the democratic citizen" in contrast to an agonistic perspective in which the potential conflict has a positive aspect, not looking at something that needs to be eradicated or conquered. An agonistic perspective is often referred to as agonistic pluralism and often concerns how debates about democracy are done.

The thesis intends to investigate democratic education in Norway from "above" and how it may affect those "below." With this as a starting point, the thesis issue is formulated as follows:

How can potentially Norway's focus on values in the formation of the democratic citizen and identity process through the school's mandate enable the construction of antagonisms?

The identity process is a concept mentioned in the thesis issue that needs a more thorough introduction. Since identity is procedural, it means that the individual's identity formation can be shaped via a focus on values, attitudes, and dispositions. The mandate for training and education lies with the school; here, the individual must acquire these values, attitudes, and dispositions that intend to shape responsible, politically active democratic citizens, also called a democratic citizenship education. The concept of citizenship is formed by the political and social culture in which the individual exists, and it will thus form part of the individual's identity construction.

A part of the primary context for the issue and research questions is the focus on combating radicalization and violent extremism. The role of the school was highlighted in the *Action Plan against Radicalization and Violent Extremism* (*Handlingsplan mot radikalisering og voldelig ekstremisme*) by the Ministry of Justice and Public Security in 2014[1] and 2020[2]. Developing teaching resources about countering radicalization and extremism was one measure mentioned in the document. Another was resources to be used in the schools to prevent hate speech. Thus, the school was given a prominent role in the Action Plan. Therefore, resources for countering radicalization and violent extremism could be understood as an important context for developing a Core curriculum that addresses values, identity, and the importance of educating democratic citizens. As a continuation of this, I refer to an agonistic dialogical method as a tool in school for counteracting and preventing radicalization and violent extremism.

The thesis consists of two objectives, the first is showing how potentially there exists a paradox in the schools' mandate that might produce antagonisms. The second objective discusses how specific antagonisms could be constructed and how an agonistic dialogical approach could be a preventive measure for usage in the school. Based on the thesis issue and the two objectives and in the light of what emerges from my theoretical framework, I have developed research questions that will help me illuminate and answer the thesis issue and objectives. Firstly, I ask how are Values, Identity, and The Democratic Citizen presented in the Core curriculum? Secondly, how do these concepts create tensions between agonism and antagonisms? Third, how could an agonistic dialogical approach contribute to the school in preventing radicalization and violent extremism?

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[1] Regjeringen, 2014: https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/6d84d5d6c6df47b38f5e2b989347fc49/handlingsplan-mot-radikalisering-og-voldelig-ekstremisme_2014.pdf
[2] Regjeringen, 2020: https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumenter/handlingsplan-mot-radikalisering-og-voldelig-ekstremisme/id2711314/

1.2 Previous research

For this thesis, Geir Skeie, Janicke Stray, and Emil Sætra as most relevant to this thesis from previous research.

Geir Skeie's article "Young people and the European Dimension in Norwegian Context. Migration and National Critical Events as Challenges to Citizenship Education" deals with how the distinction between immigrants and non-immigrants is produced through the majority population's imaginary equality mentality and how democratic attitudes are more fragile than what is assumed, which creates depoliticization. Questions can be asked about Skeie's article written before the new national curriculum was designed and published, sufficiently considering that the values can have a polarizing effect, not just attitudes related to democratic citizenship. In line with the thesis issue, I will investigate in more detail how the reference to values and identity can work polarizing in school assignments.

From Stray and Sætra's article "School for democracy? A discussion of conditions for the school's democracy-forming function", the question can be asked whether the focus on the development of democratic citizenship in the school may be divisive, i.e., work against its purpose. This is something that I will come to investigate in this thesis. Stray and Sætra's work was produced with the proviso that a new curriculum was being designed.

1.3 Methodological approach and material

In this master's thesis, I have chosen to work with political, educational policy, and curriculum documents to examine the general issue, namely, the school as a political instrument in constructing democratic citizens. The document analysis is based on political, educational policy

documents NOU 2015:8[3], Meld. St 28. 2015-2016[4] and parts of the renewed national curriculum[5] (The Knowledge Promise 2020). These are normative and fundamental policy texts for the Norwegian school. Some of the sources play a particularly formative role in the analyzes, such as the Core curriculum of 2020, which replaced the former General part of the formal national curriculum. For the remainder of the master thesis, I will refer to The Knowledge Promise 2020 (national curriculum) as LK20 and will not differentiate between using LK20 or the Core curriculum.

I have chosen to use a purely theoretical approach instead of an empirical approach. The decision is suitable for the thesis aim, namely, to study the role given by the school in educating democratic citizens.

The theoretical perspectives I use are eclectic as they serve a specific purpose. I use aspects from Chantal Mouffe and Ernesto Laclau's discourse theory both as theory and method (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999; Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). In their discourse theory it is difficult to distinguish between theory and method, and therefore they have found a place in both the theory chapter and the method chapter. In addition, I use several analytical tools from Fairclough's critical discourse analysis (Skrede, 2017). A theoretical approach is hypothetical. This type of research does not use empirical data, such as interviews, to develop its theory but instead uses hypothetical examples. It analyzes and connects empirical studies to define or advance a theoretical position. A theoretical approach is not characterized by being influenced by the researcher's opinions and attitudes because the researcher does not generate their material, for example, through interviews, to build its theory. The methodological approach presented here is essential to give contextual transparency to the later analysis and discussion.

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[3] NOU 2015:8 The School of the Future – Renewal of subjects and competences https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/nou-2015-8/id2417001/
[4] Meld. St. 28 (2015-2016) Fag – Fordypning – Forståelse – En fornyelse av kunnskapsløftet https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumenter/meld.-st.-28-20152016/id2483955/?ch=1
[5] Knowledge Promise 2020 https://www.udir.no/laring-og-trivsel/lareplanverket/

1.3.1 A discursive approach

For this thesis, I have chosen to apply a multi-perspective discursive approach as the analytical method because, following Hjelm (Hjelm 2011), theoretically, it investigates processes of social constructions (Phillips & Hardy, 2002, in Hjelm 2011, p. 134). Furthermore, it is imperative to point out that the thesis framework uses elements from discourse theory both as theory and as a method for analysis. Discourse-analytical research is better adorned to answer *how* questions than the *why* questions. However, examining discourse alone is not enough to conclusively claim why someone did what they did. Nonetheless, we can say that the cultural and social framework constrained action choices and that the discursive framework enabled the options among the line of action. Discourse as a term can be used to analyze which dominant ways of speaking and understanding are present or represented in a specific text. The method is well suited to obtain the normative and power expressed through the language used. I have chosen official documents which discusses the fundamental texts in Norwegian school because they are not allowed to be detailed, nuanced analysis of individual attitudes and values. In these documents, attitudes emerge as somewhat homogenous (Davie & Wyatt, 2011. p. 156). Davie and Wyatt (2011, p. 156) state that such sources as official documents *"[…] are more useful in uncovering general social trends rather than subjective or nuanced opinions."* The fundamental texts in school discussed in this thesis are governing political documents that the school and the teachers are obliged to follow.

1.4 Delimitations

One of the thesis' limitations lies in the scope of material used in the analysis. In this study, I consider the Norwegian public school one of many actors in the prevention work against radicalization and violent extremism. Therefore, I chose to limit the study to deal with the primary and secondary school curriculum, specifically the Core curriculum. I have decided to

make this delimitation because primary and secondary school has a particular position. They reach practically all children and young people through the life phases where they are most vulnerable and susceptible. Furthermore, as the material is extensive, I have decided that the thesis will present excerpts, citations, and paraphrases from the used material.

Another limitation lies in the analytical toolkit, where I have decided to be selective in which tools I chose to use, making sure they benefit the purpose of the thesis. As a result, there are probably analytical tools that would have given insight to the analysis and have been opted-out, or their possible contribution has been unknowingly overlooked.

1.5 Procedure and structure of the thesis

The thesis consists of seven parts. In addition to the introduction (part I) and the conclusion (part VII), there are five following parts. Each part subsists of either one or two chapters (not including subchapters). In total, the thesis has nine chapters.

Part I – Introduction: The chapter explains the background for the choice of theme, the thesis' issue and objectives, methodology, approach, delimitation, and structure of the thesis.

Part II – Context: Consists of chapters 2 and 3. This part reviews the historical background of the nation's construction, the national community, national identity, and their connection to democracy and the Norwegian school (chapter 2). The review of the historical background and the understanding of nationality is essential to understanding the school's formal curriculum documents analyzed in chapter 6. Finally, chapter 3 clarifies the concepts necessary for the discussion in chapters 7 and 8 to answer the second and third research questions.

Part III - Theories and perspectives: Part three deals with theories and perspectives on which the analysis leans. It is common for theory and method in discourse analysis to mirror each other, but there are a few exceptions. The intention of the exceptions is based on the purpose of the thesis, where the issue is based on a hypothesis and has the partial intent of discussing possible

methods for preventing radicalization and violent extremism. The chosen theories and perspectives that do not mirror the methods are transformed to fit the discursive approach. I have therefore chosen to present the theory and method as two separate parts. In order to discuss and answer the thesis issue, several theoretical concepts are thoroughly elaborated since the discursive analytical approach is used later to analyze the material looking at how to interpret these concepts. Thus, it is essential to clarify the usage of different definitions and perspectives within the same theoretical field and other fields. Parts two to four lead to later discussions in the text and thus contain several key clarifications, theories, and concepts to be able to carry out the analysis and discussion.

Part IV – Methodology and method: This part of the thesis presents the reasoning and practicalities of my research. Chapter 5 is based on a combination of several discourse theorists drawing particular attention to Fairclough's critical discourse analysis and Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's discourse theory.

Part V- Analysis: Chapter 6 is the analysis itself, where I review and illuminate the findings from the material.

Part VI – Discussion: This part consists of chapters 7 and 8. In these chapters, my findings from chapter 6 are linked to the theories and perspectives from chapter 4 and discussed, considering the thesis issue, objectives, and research questions.

Part VII – Conclusion: Chapter 9 summarizes my most important finding and a conclusion on the thesis issue, and suggestions for further research.

PART II   CONTEXT

In this part (Part II - Context), I will first place the thesis issue and the objectives in a historical context. Since part of the thesis aim to study the democratic education in Norway from "above" and how this might affect the "below." In other words, how a democratic education affects the overall society of the nation (the above) and at the individual level (the below) painting a picture of the historical background of the nation-state, national identity, and national discourse gives a clearer view of how the democratic education is rooted to the nation's history. The political context of the National Curriculum is intertwined with the political history of modern Norway. Therefore, it is necessary for those unfamiliar with Norwegian history to outline important features. This presentation is based mainly on the useful overviews from Thorkildsen (1995), Solhaug (2012), Jørgensen and Phillips (1999), Slagstad (1998), and Calhoun (2007). This background presentation intends to give a context to the analysis and the discussion chapters that follow (see chapters 6, 7, and 8) since using discourse analysis; it is beneficial to see discourse in their historical and cultural context.

Secondly, a clarification of relevant concepts will follow. These concepts are relevant for this thesis since they are a part of the action plan from 2014 and 2020, where the school and education are attributed to a specific role in combating and preventing radicalization and violent extremism. Moreover, the presented concept – radicalization, (violent) extremism, and dialogue - plays an essential role in the analytical chapters and the political context (see chapter 6). Therefore, what does it mean, what is meant by, and how to use the terms radicalism and violent extremism is particularly important for understanding the analysis's political context and discussions in chapters 7 and 8. Furthermore, there is a need to establish a definition of the term dialogue, as this term, also like the others (as we will see further down), contains several definitional variants and ways of using dialogue as a pedagogical dialectical tool in the teaching.

2. The nation-state and the national community

The national idea in its abstract form consists of a definite nation of how the world is and should be set up. According to Jørgensen and Phillips (1999, p. 155), the nation-state is perceived as a demarcated territory inhabited by people who are largely a cultural and linguistic unit with the right to decide over themselves. The national idea thus implies in its most basic form a principle that the nation-state is at the same time a political and a cultural unit (cf. Gellner, 1997, chapter 1 in Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p. 155).

As it is known today, the nation-state arose as a result of a series of concrete historical events that occurred in Europe and North America between the end of the 18th century and the middle of the 19th century. These events manifested themselves in radical and, at times, violent regime changes in which autocratic monarchies fell and were eventually replaced by various forms of democracy due to partly lengthy processes. The concept of the nation in this situation assisted in describing and delimiting who the "people" were so that the people constituted through the nation replaced references to God or inherited authority as a basis for state power legitimacy (Calhoun, 2007, p. 48). By perceiving the nation-states as social constructions rather than as natural units, one gets the opportunity to examine how they were constructed historically and how they are continuously reproduced, transformed, or questioned in concrete practice. Such a view is essential for how one can also understand how democracy and democratic values are connected to Norway as a national state and its national discourse, where education through schooling emphasizes the formation of democratic citizens. Through the school, which also is a social construction, democracy is reproduced, transformed, and can be questioned in concrete practices.

According to the sociologist Max Weber's classical definition, the state is a formal form of organization - a political institution with a monopoly on the exercise of violence and power. Weber describes the nation as an idea of and a willingness to cohesion based on a cultural

community (Østerud, 1996, p. 198). By Weber's definition, however, it is not given what characterizes the experience of the community. Consequently, a frequently used typology for analyzing nation-building has distinguished between an ethnic-cultural and a political-democratic basis for belonging to the community at the state level. Political nationalism is often rooted in the French Revolution and popular sovereignty, while German romanticism is often attributed an essential role in the origins of cultural nationalism. Over time, elements of the nation as a culture became part of the nation as politics and vice versa. Although these elements slide over each other, it can be good to keep track of the differences between cultural and political elements in nationalism. The difference here then lies in the intention. Cultural nationalism emphasizes the creation or finding of the common national identity and views the nation as a cultural community, while political nationalism is a movement that aims for the branches of the nation and the state to coincide, in other words, the nation-state. Today, it is common for nationality to be used synonymously with citizenship - often unconsciously (Thorkildsen, 1995, p.13). This happened even though the core of nationality is often defined culturally or ethnically (Thorkildsen, 1995, p. 13).

Another understanding of the nation has clear elements of subjective will to belong to a community. Citizenship and the responsibilities and rights of belonging to the Norwegian community have a defined framework set by political democracy. The political understanding of the nation does not emphasize cohesion about cultural, historical roots, or cultural symbols to the same extent as in the cultural understanding of the nation. The political understanding is based on the individual's "will" to belong to a political democratic community.

The creation and reproducing of the national community are not formed at once but are instead a seemingly eternal process of formation. It is a formation where a new generation must constantly be incorporated and made a part of "us." However, national identity is not often mentioned as a part of national policy-making, and nation-building is essentially a hidden process. Therefore, notions of what will ensure the maintenance of the national community and what constitutes its core will be interpreted through community-building projects and

institutions, such as the Norwegian primary and secondary school, which also holds a particular position when it comes to its overriding educational mission or societal mandate, where the formation of the democratic citizen is central.

The ambiguity of the concept of a nation can easily lead to vagueness and slippage in debates because the concept of nation is a problematic quantity to determine what it contains. Moreover, the term nation can be put together in different ways. For example, it can build notions of shared history, common language, common culture, shared tradition, common religion, common descent, ethnicity, common character traits, common race, or shared values, among several other notions, where several of these elements are reflected in the Norwegian school national curriculum.

2.1 National identity and the school

The relationship between nation and (a sense of) belonging leads us to national identity and ethos, as identity is linked to one's nationality. Therefore, we can speak about a common multiple for the different forms of national notions and the subsequent ideology of nationalism as an experience or awareness of belonging to a national community distinguished from other similar communities. Although in some cases, however, there is more that unites than which separates. Individual and collective experiences and consciousness can be expressed through identification with the national community. Thus, the identification between individual and nation can be understood as existential. As a result, we can perceive that the ideology of nationalism is an emotional quantity rather than a rational one.

The national identity is of relational content. The relational identity mechanism entails the construction of another "other" from which one differs. This also applies to the national identity. We gain our national identity by contrasting it with other national identities, and the national

identity acquires content through these implicit and explicit comparisons with others. The relational images could represent various relationships between "them" and "us."

Complex globalization tendencies and pluralism has contributed to a change in the world's image as delimited between nations, which has led to new perspectives on perceptions of identity and belonging within the individual countries and across countries. How the Norwegian school should relate to understanding the concept of the nation creates uncertainty. Because the school is an institution in the Norwegian democracy, it is part of a larger national image and national discourse. Therefore, it is essential to account for the development of and the relationship between democracy, the democratic citizen, the school, and Norwegian nation-building. The Norwegian school has been central in disseminating historical symbols, knowledge, and culture that have been much of the basis for how Norway perceives itself as a nation and its social and political community.

Central to the school has been and still is the focus on patriotic support for participation in the Norwegian democracy. However, in recent decades, several changes have taken place that requires discussing how the Norwegian people understand themselves, their community, and their roles as participants in society. These changes include in particular immigration and globalization, which notably affects all the Nordic countries, and which particularly challenges the school's and individual's understanding of the concepts of nation, citizenship, identity formation, and values, which has consequences for the teaching, but which also can create consequences at the macro-level (the above). Furthermore, cultural globalization can be perceived as global communication and inspiration where combinations of culture are formed and give rise to new global identities (Solhaug, 2012, p. 9). Therefore, Norway's national cultures are changing (as always) as new impulses change their ways of behaving and their view of themselves. At the same time, they also change their pattern of participation and how they play citizens' roles.

Furthermore, an increase in immigration is a feature of globalization. Hence, pluralism has left its definite imprint on Norway. One result of increased immigration is that the schools have had

more bilingual students. Thus, immigration takes part in challenging Norwegian values and the fact that it has participated in and still contributes to increasing the religious, linguistic, and cultural variation in Norway (Brochmann & Kjeldstadli, 2008, p. 249 in Solhaug, 2012, p. 10). Solhaug writes that a scientific view from the outside of Norwegian society sees Norway and Norwegians as "hesitant pluralists" (2012, p. 10). *"Some [countries] reject cultural diversity as a way of living together, preferring to achieve a culturally homogenous society [...] such as Norway"* (Berry et al. 2006, p. 18-19).

Rune Slagstad points out that Norwegian nationalism has had a unified cultural and political tradition since 1814. This created an idea of the nation as a community between people based on language, culture, settlement, and the constitution (from 1814), also created patriotism and support for the new democracy. With its origins in political and national liberation, national patriotism united the national, the community, and the political (Slagstad, 1998, p. 455 in Solhaug, 2012, p. 11). During the nation-building project, the national romanticism with language conflicts and the development of political institutions brought dividing lines into the national view. Several groups' relationship to the national questions and national symbols was complicated by the Nazi use of Norse symbols (from the early 1930s), which caused the symbols into disrepute and proletarian internationalism. This results in perceptions of Norway as a nation and national identity being complicated and politically controversial historically writes Solhaug (2012, p. 119).

When identities are constantly changing, and society is pluralized, a pure conception of a culturally-rooted nation can be problematic. Nevertheless, there are still debates about whether society can have a core of cultural symbols, also called the canon, that characterizes and constitutes the nation's distinctive features. A cultural nation concept creates consequences for the school by giving the school a more substantial assimilating role. In such an understanding of the concept of nation, the school will emphasize ethnic Norwegian history and cultural tradition, says Solhaug (2012, pp. 13-14). Furthermore, Solhaug says that a *"strong pressure of assimilation can challenge the cohesion of the pluralistic community and be perceived as suppressing cultural distinctiveness"* (Solhaug, 2012, p. 14). Although this is a perception in opposing directions, some

believe that a degree of assimilation is a prerequisite for success as a society because it is linked to the success of individual life projects. In the present, it is not only the processes of globalization and immigration that challenge Norway's (the Norwegian population's) understanding of itself/themselves as a nation, as a community, it/their national identity and their role as citizens, but also the increasing radicalization and violent acts. This can be viewed in light of globalization and immigration processes, but this is too complex and too large to be discussed in this thesis. The history of formal curricula is an excellent example of the connection between citizenship and national identity in Norway and an important constitutive part of those connections.

3. Clarification of key concepts

There are three central concepts in the thesis that needs clarification. As previously mentioned, these concepts are linked to the school's role in the government's action plan against radicalization and violent extremism from 2014 and 2020 and are thus essential concepts to keep track of considering the thesis issue, objectives, and research questions. The clarification is done because to create meaning, a shared understanding of what the various concepts entails used in the thesis is required, but also because the understanding of these concepts is essential for the school and teachers to keep track of when it comes to preventing radicalization and violent extremism. I will explain different definitions of *radicalization*, *violent extremism*, and *dialogue*. The two concepts, radicalization and violent extremism require clarification in that the process, risk, and factors of radicalization to violent extremism gives us an insight into the connection it must:

> *"an individual's social network, identity processes, violent extremist belief systems, and narratives, group dynamics, connection with violent extremists and violent extremist material via the internet and social media, and grievance" (National Institute of Justice, 2015, p. iv).*

The radicalization process to violent extremism generally involves numerous facilitators and varies by group, individual, type of belief system, and context (National institute of justice, 2015). The thesis focuses mainly on the connection between an individual's social network, which the school represents as a social arena, and identity processes, which are intertwined to the formation of the democratic citizen and values emphasized in the school's national curricula. Thus, radicalization, violent extremism, and dialogue play a central and essential role in the values of the national curriculum. For this reason, I have chosen an extensive presentation of the concept of *radicalization*.

3.1 Radicalization

> *"radicalization, like terrorism, is in the eye of the beholder: one man's radical (or terrorist)*
> *is another man's freedom fighter."* (Neumann, 2013, p. 878).

Peter R. Neumann talks about the political and normative aspects of the concept of radicalization. Likewise, the concept is seen by Sedgwick as relative, and that there is a difficulty in drawing a line for when *attitudes* can be defined as radical or not (Sedgwick, 2010). Sedgwick (2010) recognizes the term describing what is happening before the "bomb goes off." Radicalization is a problematic term for several reasons. Firstly, historically the terms radicalization, radical, and radicalism were used about the political left, like Marxism and socialism, and used concerning the settlements against the existing bourgeois society, both in a democratic way and through revolution – the Reformation of 1483-1546 can be viewed as radical.

In the Norwegian context, the term (in a negative direction) Sødal points out is mainly connected to the terror attack on Utøya and in Oslo in 2011, with Norwegians who became foreign fighters in Syria under the civil war that started in 2012, and with the shooting in the mosque in Bærum in 2019, where the terrorist murdered his stepsister (Sødal, 2020). According to Sødal, radicalization is currently associated with either individual who associates with right-wing

extremism or neo-Nazism. In Norway, the most striking example here is with Anders Behring Breivik or with Islamists who associate with, for example, al-Qaida or ISIS (Sødal, 2020).

The term radicalization has also been used for left-wing extremism/radicalization, but it is now rarely seen. In the media, in everyday speech, and the authorities' usage of the term radicalization ascribes it to violent extremism and terrorism. In the Government's Action Plan against radicalization and violent extremism, this is stated: *"Terrorism is the ultimate consequence of radicalization and violent extremism"* (Jurist- og beredskapsdepartementet, 2014, p. 7). The Police Security Service and the Norwegian authorities define it: *"Radicalization is a process in which a person increasingly accepts the use of violence to achieve political, ideological, or religious goals"* (Sødal, 2020, p. 326). The definition refers to individuals who go into processes that lead to actions. The word action does not exist in the definition, but it assumes that an attitude implies acceptance of violence, which quickly leads to acts of violence (Sødal, 2020). Secondly, the word radical is not necessarily negatively charged today, and some use it as a positive self-designation (Sødal, 2020).

The word radicalized has taken on a negative meaning in the direction of violence and crime. Sødal (2020) warns against confusing this in the school system since being radicalized does not apply to all radicals. Sødal's warning is significant for how teachers and others should relate to assessing and suspicion of an ongoing radicalization of students. Sødal understands the concept of radicalization as radical people that want to get to the bottom of problems, find the root or cause, and change what has gone wrong (Sødal, 2020).

The core of the definition of radicalization is increasingly about accepting violence as a tool. An explicit critique of these definitions is that if an individual enters this process, they will end up with extreme attitudes ready to commit terrorist acts. In this way, definitions of radicalization, radicalism, and radical can contribute to creating a false image.

For this thesis, it is fruitful to include various definitions of radicalization, as the thesis's second objective focuses on preventing a (negative) radicalization process from starting or detecting an

ongoing (negative) radicalization process at all. Moreover, the thesis will differentiate between what I have chosen to call negative radicalization and radicalization. The decision is based on the fact that radicalization does not necessarily lead to violence, as we have seen through the different definitions of the concept. On the contrary, like the Reformation, we need people who have radical opinions to have alternatives that lead to our societies' development. Therefore, further in the thesis, negative radicalization will be perceived as a process in which the individual is led towards accepting violence to achieve change. There will be no distinction between right-wing and left-wing extremism, as negative radicalization can occur on both sides. Furthermore, it is crucial to be aware, especially in school, that not all radicalization is negative radicalization.

3.2 (Violent) extremism

Bjørgo and Gjelsvik (2015) believe that the terms used in public discourse and research on *violent extremism*, *radicalization*, and *terrorism* are problematic and controversial. They argue that the concepts are partly problematic because they are heavily politicized and carry normative appraisals. At the same time, the terms are frequently used in ways that include far too many different phenomena and processes. (Bjørgo & Gjelsvik, 2015). For example, extremism is often associated with the willingness to use violence as a tool to achieve religious, political, or ideological goals. However, different types of extremism exist, which not all of them are necessarily violent, according to Bjørgo and Gjelsvik (2015). Therefore, a delimitation related to the field is required. In this thesis, this field is about preventing antagonisms such as radicalization and violent extremism.

Moreover, in Rambøll's rapport, *Litteraturstudie om forebyggelse af radikalisering i skoleregi* (2016), the term extremism is applied for environments that the following points can characterize as:

- Intolerance and disrespect for other people's views, freedoms, and rights.

- Simplified worldviews and enemy images, where particular groups or social conditions are seen as threatening.
- Use of illegal and possibly violent methods to achieve political or/and religious ideological goals.
- Rejection of fundamental democratic values and norms or lack of acceptance of democratic decision-making processes. (My translation) (Rambøll, 2016)

The points presented in Rambøll's rapport matches some of Bjørgo and Gjelsvik's (2015) understanding of the concept of violent extremism, where they write that the term is often liked to political ideologies, which stands in contrast to democracy or universal human rights, which are considered to be the society's core values and principles. The Norwegian governments' online page defines and associates violent extremism with individuals willing to use violence to achieve their political goals (Regjeringen.no, 2019).

In the thesis, violent extremism will be understood and used in a more extended form than that presented by the Norwegian government. Extremism and violent extremism are seen in combination and accordance with Bjørgo and Gjelsvik's definition and the points from Rambøll's rapport. Moreover, the thesis will use the concept of violent extremism as a collective term where no distinction is made between different types of violent extremism such as right-wing or left-wing extremism.

3.3 Dialogue

In Anne Hege Grung and Oddbjørn Leirvik's (2012) words, the term dialogue is somewhat worn, and its meaning changes with time and context. Dialogue has, for many people, become a name for a conversation that avoids controversial topics and smooths opposites in an artificially harmonizing way, writes Grung and Leirvik (2012, p. 77-78). Moreover, dialogue has become tantamount to negotiating away values in a kind of zero-sum game, where there is room for a

more extensive diversity of value positions, which means that "Western" values get little space. This contrasts with the former description of dialogue as a conversation where something matters.

Another definition of dialogue could be found in philosopher Helge Svare's understanding. He defines dialogue in contrast to debate as a conversation between two or more persons characterized by mutual goodwill, openness, and cooperation (Svare 2006, p. 7 in Grung & Leirivik, 2012, p. 78).

Many definitions of dialogue emphasize equality, openness, a physical face-to-face meeting, and mutual ownership of the conversation. The center for dialogue Emmaus has formulated another purpose of dialogue where we can find traces of Martin Buber and Emmanuel Levinas (Grung & Leirvik, 2012). Here, *dialogue* is defined as a face-to-face meeting between equal parties without hidden intentions. The subject I enter into a dialogue, not to change the other, but to participate in the mutual change that can occur through a meeting of this sort (Grung, 2005, p. 88 in Grung & Leirvik, 2012, p. 78). The parties' perspectives, opinions, experiences, and feelings are highlighted. Implicit, the goal of dialogue is not necessarily to agree.

In Christian Dunker and Cláudio Thebas's understanding of the word dialogue traces back to its Greek origin (linguistics), where he explains that the prefix day, presented in "*dia*(logue)," refers to "cross." "Cross" as in diameter, the line or measure that goes through the circle. Moreover, logos as in "(dia)*logue,*" from the Greek, "knowledge" or "meaning," but also "discourse" and "reason" will then define the word *dia-logo* meaning the "meaning that goes through." Therefore, dialogue strives for the meaning of what the other says and what the other feels come to you. Dunker and Thebas identify dialogue with listening, saying it is our common understanding in doing so (Dunker & Thebas, 2019, p. 74). Furthermore, a good dialogue happens when people do not understand each other perfectly. Therefore, it is essential for dialogue to keep an open mind and be available to change by listening and attempting to understand each other (Owe, 2018).

For this thesis, it is imperative that the goal of the dialogue is not to reach an agreement, but that dialogue takes place when and where misunderstandings arise, that we need to listen and have an open mind. Furthermore, a more individual-oriented perspective on the concept of dialogue is relevant in how dialogue illuminates' individuals' different perspectives, opinions, experiences, and feelings. Here, the problematization that the concept of dialogue is linked to values will also be of interest for how one understands the concept and uses dialogue actively.

PART III   PERSPECTIVES

4. Theoretical framework and perspectives

4.1 Introduction

There are several approaches to consider when studying democratic citizen formation and education in the Norwegian school curriculum and how this affects at and between the macro and micro levels of the society. The topic can be studied with a common European focus on the formation of democratic citizens or with Norwegian democratic processes in mind. Furthermore, different perspectives can be held, such as gender equality, economic, or human rights perspectives. However, this master's thesis looks at how the focus in the Norwegian school on values, identity processes, and the formation of the democratic citizen enables the production of forms of antagonisms and, to that extent, hinders the possibility of alternatives, which somewhat weakens democracy. Therefore, we can then speak about the school's educational mandate and social mission containing a paradox.

Several theories have been chosen to answer the thesis issue and objectives, such as citizenship, educational, discourse, and political theories. Therefore, the relevant perspectives found in this part (part III) consist of educational citizenship and democratic perspective, political perspective on community, education, citizens and democracy, and perspectives on the concept of Identity. As mentioned before, parts of the discourse theoretical framework will be presented in part III and some in chapter 5.

"Foucault argued that the way people talk about and think about, for example, sexuality and mental illness, and the way they are widely represented in society, brings implications for the way we treat people" (Burr, 2015, p.20). Take the example of how the Norwegian people (by people here, I mean everybody that either reside in Norway or identifies themselves as belonging to the Norwegian society, including politicians and other government people) talk and think about values, the individuals' identity process, and the formation of the democratic citizen, and how

these are represented in the society. In the spirit of Foucault's argument, we can also argue that this has the same following implications as he points out. This form of representation entails specific types of power relations. In our society, we see children as in need of education. I mean that they are perceived as missing the knowledge the rest of the society finds necessary for them to possess to be a part of the political and national community and for their future living and work, so we send them to school. In an extended degree of the political and social sphere, teachers and the school are viewed as having power over many aspects of the children's (students') lives. Nevertheless, we need to be reminded that teachers and the school are obliged to follow political policy and educational documents.

First, this chapter presents different perspectives on the relation between democracy and citizenship. This is done by focusing on various understandings of the concepts of citizen and citizenship from an educational, citizenship, and a theoretical political view (see subchapter 4.2 and 4.2.1). Furthermore, an elaboration on the democratic citizen's connection to the (democratic and rational) community and whom the communities consist of follows (see subchapter 4.2.2 and 4.2.3). Secondly, the thesis looks at different approaches towards democratic citizenship education and presents a specific model of democracy from a political theoretical perspective (see subchapter 4.3 and 4.3.1). Thirdly, the democratic citizen and its connection to education are explained using e educational and political theoretical view from Gert Biesta's discussion on democratic citizenship education, where he presents other theorists' definitions on the democratic citizen (see subchapter 4.4). Fourth, the concept of Identity is presented, mainly building on Chantal Mouffe and Laclau's discourse theory and Mouffe's political theory, inspired by Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan (see subchapter 4.5). Finally, a summary of the most relevant perspectives for the following analysis and discussion of thesis issue and objectives follows (see subchapter 4.6).

4.2 Citizenship theory: democracy and citizenship issues

In answering the objectives and issue of the thesis, we need to look at citizenship theories. The Core curriculum in Norway's renewed national curriculum addresses citizenship in connection to the understanding of democracy in the school's Objective clause. The Objectives clause contributes to a particular understanding of democracy that a unitary school ideology has left behind. This ideology, which has long enjoyed cross-party support, is based on the welfare state as its very foundation (Stray, 2019). Therefore, a part of the purpose of looking at *citizenship* is because the term has played a central role in theoretical approaches on politics, social development, and education. For example, Robert Jackson states that *"Citizenship is a distinctively democratic ideal"* (Jackson, 2003, p. 2).

Furthermore, to be a democracy, the society must have a citizen. Kivisto and Faist state that "*[...] although all contemporary states define their legal inhabitants as citizens [...], citizenship cannot be conceived without its twin sibling: democracy [...] democracies alone have citizens*" (Kivisto & Faist, 2007, p. 13). Today the context where discussions about citizenship take place are in forms of plurality and diversity (Jackson, 2003). In the democracy of Norway, what kind of citizen the nation wants the school to form is collectively expressed in the Objectives clause.

Depending on who defines the terms, the two concepts of democracy and citizenship could mean different things. Connolly argues that: "*Both concepts must be seen in the context of other concepts and are part of a chain of concepts that create meaning about the world and political life*" (Connolly, 1993, p. 1). He refers to both concepts as controversial and a part of the dominant, normative, socially constructed comprehension of what a democracy is (Connolly, 1991). Furthermore, he writes that both terms belong to political discourse. However, "*[...] that does not represent ideas that are shaped regardless of the context. The concepts are developed within an institutionalized meaning structure that channels political thinking and action in a specific direction.*" (Connolly, 1993, p. 1). Citizenship has shifted the focus from justice to citizenship issues, says Kymlicka and Norman (2000, p. 5). The focus is not on the justice or injustice of specific policies but rather on how the general trend toward minority rights threatens

to erode the kinds of civic virtues and citizenship practices that sustain a healthy democracy (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000, p. 5).

Political theorists in the 1970s and 1980s concentrated primarily on what Rawls referred to as society's "basic structure": constitutional rights, political decision-making procedures, and social institutions[6]. Today, however, it is widely acknowledged that political theorists must pay attention to the characteristics and dispositions of citizens who operate within these institutions and procedures. As a result, political theorists in the 1990s focused on individual citizens' identities and behavior, including their responsibilities, loyalties, and roles. In addition, several theoretical contributions emerged that advocated for the development of communitarian ideals within the framework of liberal institutions (Mouffe, 2002a).

From Robert Putnam's study (1993) of the performance of regional governments in Italy, he coined the term' social capital', which he saw as a difference in the citizens' civic virtues. Pointed out differently, 'social capital' is the citizens' ability to trust, willingness to participate, and sense of justice. Putnam's study has been disputed, but Kymlicka and Norman (2000) point out that the virtues and identities of citizens are important and independent factors in democratic governance, from his study, is now widely accepted. The acceptance of this has resulted in a veritable deluge of writing on civic virtues and practices, civic identities, and citizenship education (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000, pp. 6-7). Citizenship theorists were now tasked with elaborating on the types of civic virtues required for a thriving democracy. Following that, questions about what governments can or should do to promote these virtues arose. Questions like, *"how should governments ensure that citizens are active rather than passive; critical rather than deferential or apathetic in the face of injustice; responsible rather than greedy or shortsighted; tolerant rather than prejudiced or xenophobic?"*

Moreover:

"How should governments ensure that citizens feel a sense of membership in and belonging to their political community, rather than alienation and disaffection? How should governments

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[6] According to Rawls, the 'basic structure' of society is the primary subject of a theory of justice (Rawls, 1971, pp. 7-11).

ensure that citizens identity and feel solidarity with co-citizens, rather than indifference or hatred towards others?" (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000, p. 7).

Kymlicka and Norman's questions are particularly relevant in the Norwegian context. To best promote responsible citizenship, it is necessary to adapt citizenship theories to the realities of modern pluralistic societies. Through the school's social and educational mandate, the first question of what the government can and should do to promote desirable virtues can be given through education, specifically democratic education.

4.2.1 Citizen and Citizenship: definitions and perspectives

In the Norwegian context and at a conceptual level, the words' citizen' and 'civic' in English do not have any suitable synonyms in the Norwegian language. Citizenship is an English term and translates to *medborgerskap in Norwegian*. There is a distinction between the citizens in the English language, which translates to *borger* in Norwegian, and citizenship, which translates as being a citizen among other citizens. Translated to Norwegian citizenship can mean *medborger*, *borger*, or in some cases *innbygger* (inhabitant). The word *borger*, according to Geir Skeie, "[...] denotes meanings like 'city dweller,' *bourgeois* (as opposed to 'peasant' or 'worker') and 'politically conservative.'" (Jackson, 2003, p. 55). Moreover, he writes that *medborger* colors the understanding of the concept (citizenship) and gives attention to the rational or collective elements (Jackson, 2003, p. 55).

Trond Solhaug offers another distinction, where he divides the *citizenship* term into two "Medborgerskap" and "Statsborgerskap." Drawing from Van Deth (2008), Solhaug writes that in the term *citizenship,* a relationship between the state and the individual is included, where the individual "*[...] contributes with loyalty to the state and is entitled to protection and rights to participate*" (Van Deth, 2008, p. 401 in Solhaug, 2012, p. 17). Professor Grethe Brochmann, which Solberg uses in his definition of what *citizenship* means and is understood, has introduced the term "Samfunnsborgerskapet" as a translation of *citizenship*, this is a collective term for

"medborgerskap" and "statsborgerskap" (Brochmann, 2002, p. 56 in Solhaug, 2012, p. 17). "Medborgerskap" includes aspects of people's lives, such as trust, belonging, political and social life participation, and identity. In contrast, "statsborgerskap" is connected to legal status and includes protection requirements, formal inclusion, and gathering full participation rights in a state (Bochmann, 2002, p. 57 in Solhaug, 2012. P. 17). This is "summed up" in citizenship (Solhaug, 2012, p. 17). Kymlicka and Normann (1995) view citizenship as having meanings in the English language and is made between citizenship as status and citizenship as role. Stray writes, "*The role is predominantly influenced and governed by society's political, social and cultural conditions*" (Stray, 2009, p. 65).

Furthermore, the difference between status and role in the Norwegian language is clarified by connecting different meanings and understandings to the individual concept (Stray, 2009, p. 66). For example, there are different connotations and meanings to *statsborger* (citizen) - which is a status with associated rights symbolized by the fact that the citizen ('borger') can be granted a Norwegian passport, a public document that verifies that the individual is a Norwegian citizen ('statsborger') – and *medborger* (citizen) – which is connected to the role and has a normative content. The normative content is negotiated and legitimized through society's political, cultural, and social forms of behavior and interactions. This constitutes society's collective frame of reference, according to Stray (Stray, 2009, p. 65).

On the first hand, Stray says that the term 'Statsborgerskap,' similarly to Solhaug's understanding, is linked to the nation and the legal and provides membership in a society. While on the other hand, "medborgerskap" as a role is connected to a society's norms and expectations and membership in a democratic society (Pocock, 1995, in Stray, 2009, p. 66). Different societies emphasize the importance of the role aspect and the action dimension to varying degrees. Stray (2009, p. 66) writes that the hegemonic political ideology determines the reason for emphasizing the role as active or passive in the society in question and the extent to which the rights dimension takes precedence over the obligation dimension: *"the ideas of individual entitlement on the one hand and of attachment to a particular community on the other"* (Kymlicka & Norman, 1995, p. 283 in Stray, 2009, p. 66). The concept of citizenship

('Medborgerskap') is constructed through the political and social culture in which the individual exists and will thus be part of the individual's identity construction (Stray, 2009. 66). According to Kymlicka and Norman, this is *"an expression of one's membership in a political community"* (Stray, 2009. P. 66).

The intention of going into linguistic details is reasoned with the belief that concepts (not) in use additionally reveal something about cultural values and historical developments, which are emphasized by Skeie (Jackson, 2003, p. 55). In understanding fundamental values in Norwegian society and culture, it has been argued that the combination of sameness and equality are important keys (Gullestad, 1992 in Jackson, 2003, p. 55). Drawing from this, Skeie writes that one needs to consider how 'nationality' and 'the welfare state' are understood when critically reflecting on citizenship in Norway. He mentions that *"[…] earlier issues of conflicts ('difference') have been transformed into a hegemonic and harmonizing ideology in the post-war era."* From earlier, the thesis content and aim have already been inserted into the context of how the Norwegian nation and nationality are understood (see chapter 2).

4.2.2 The Democratic Citizen and The Community

Institutional and political relations that make the political communities arise and maintain are perceived as the core of citizenship theories. Central in citizenship theory is the question of how humans can co-exist with each other within the framework of a democratic community. How we should and can live together in a democratic community is a political, theoretical, and pedagogical question (Stray, 2009, p. 68). Stray writes that "*the approach to these questions is determined by how democracy is sought to be realized*." How democracy Norway envisages these questions is expressed through the national curriculum.

Kivisto and Faist (2007) emphasize the rational role dimension in the concept of Citizenship. Although the relational aspect is predominantly regulated by society's norms, as part of

Strømsnes's[7] (2003) definition of the concept of Citizenship from a political science perspective, he writes that the concept of Citizenship is also a rational concept – it is about how individual citizen ('borgere') relates to other citizens ('borgere'), to his fellow citizens ('medborgere') (Strømsnes, 2003, p. 15). This can be compared to Biesta's writing about 'The Community of Those Who have Nothing in Common' in his book *Beyond Learning* (Biesta, 2006). Here, he argues that we relate to each other in a community-without-community only through responsibility, and through relationships of responsibility, we are constituted as unique, singular beings (Biesta, 2006, p. 10).

In Kivisto and Faist's *(2007, p. 13)* definition of Citizenship ('Medborgerskap'), they see Citizenship as defining the political community's boundaries. It distinguishes between what is public and what is private. It also reveals who is inside and who is outside the political community. The boundaries of Citizenship are set by the interactive combination of three critical dimensions of Citizenship in a specific time and space:

1. Democratic self-governance (including access to public life)

2. The specific constellation of citizens' rights and responsibilities

3. The issue of identity that comes with a sense of belonging to or being affiliated with a political community (Kivisto & Faist, 2007. p. 13)

Kivisto and Faist's definition distinguishes between the private and the public, where the public is attached to the political sphere. Furthermore, their definition states that Citizenship is about who/what is on the inside and who/what is outside – inclusion and exclusion (Stray, 209, p. 69). Based on Kivisto and Faist definition Stray operates with three dimensions that characterize different political ideologies' emphasis on democratic Citizenship: (1) the democratic self-government and participation dimension; (2) the dimension that deals with the relationship between obligations and rights; and the (3) the identity dimension (Stray, 2009, p. 69), which is the dimension of focus in the following. Identity is linked to the feeling of belonging to a particular society, and this sense of belonging is paramount for the maintenance of a democracy.

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[7] Strømsnes understands the concept of Citizenship as one set of ideals for citizens' status as members of society. Increasingly the term is also used empirically to characterize the citizens' actual status as members of society. The term includes rights, participation, and political culture (Strømsnes, 2003, p. 15).

This leads us to how we understand the community and, later in this chapter, to the understandings of the concept of identity.

4.2.3 Community of who?

According to Bauman's depiction of modern society, modern society can be understood as a (rational) community (Bauman, 1995). Bauman shows how this community, the rational community of modern society, has a particular approach to that which is outside and other than itself, that is, the *Stranger*. Strangers, according to Bauman, are those *"who do not fit the cognitive, moral, or aesthetic map of the world"* (Bauman 1995, p. 200). Thus, Bauman claims that all societies produce their Strangers.

These so-called strangers may end up as the antagonist in their community because of what Bauman claims; they do not fit in with the rest. Becoming an antagonist of society depends on many factors and how much you deviate from the rest of the community, which means the extent to which others see you as "they" in a we-they-discrimination - as an enemy of the "we" represents and values. This is in line with the fact that citizens have different *social capital* and identities, which some are desirable for the good of the thriving of democracy and others not (see chapter 4.2). Where do the citizens who do not fall inside society have a place, and how should they be handled?

Bauman emphasizes that because modern society is based on only one post-traditional vision, it cannot accommodate the Strangers it produces. Bauman sees the *"progressive universalization of the human condition"* as a defining characteristic of modern society and modernity (Bauman, 1995, p. 202). Therefore, there are two different but related ways of dealing with the strangers it produced.

Biesta writes that the first strategy that Bauman mentions here is assimilation, which he characterizes as *anthropophagic*, i.e., literally human eating (Biesta, 2015, p. 57): *"to annihilate*

the strangers by devouring them and then metabolically transforming them into a tissue which cannot be separated from one's own" (Bauman, 1995, p. 201).

The second strategy mentioned is what Bauman calls *anthropoemic "throwing up the strangers, banishing them from the borders of the orderly world and preventing them from all communication with those within"* (Bauman, 1995, p. 201 in Biesta, 2015, p. 57).

Although the latter strategy is one of exclusion, this strategy will eventually result in the physical destruction of strangers. Therefore, there is only one alternative that has not been considered, and that is the idea of a permanent coexistence with the Stranger, according to Biesta (2015). In the theories of citizenship, coexistence is connected as an issue for which governments must find solutions in order to ensure democracy. This could be done through assurances of the citizens' identity and sense of solidarity with their fellow citizens. The question is just how this is to be realized? The Norwegian school has a goal to include all individuals but is this possible to accomplish. The question of inclusion and is relevant for the thesis issue and objectives.

Problems with coexistence in a political community from a political approach beg the political theorist Chantal Mouffe's questions about some of the core principles of contemporary liberalism. *"There are many reasons for the weakening of the democratic political public sphere."* (Mouffe, 2002b, p. 55). Chantal Mouffe argues that the increasing moralization and legalization of politics threaten the future development of democracy (Mouffe, 2002b, p. 55). The dominant discourse has negative consequences for democratic politics. In her view, one of the main reasons for the "growing irrelevance of the democratic political public" is the blurring of the boundaries between right and left, as seen in Western countries. Moreover, to a certain extent, they are also celebrated constituted by many.

Furthermore, she claims that the origin of the flourishing success that right-wing populist parties face is due to the celebration of the center and the absence of effective democratic alternatives to the current order (Mouffe, 2002b, pp. 55-56). She states that when democratic parties privilege a "consensus at the center," they cannot mobilize the passions. These passions then find other outlets, such as fundamentalist movements (Mouffe, 2002b, p. 56).

"When a society lacks a dynamic democratic life with a real confrontation among a diversity of democratic political identities, the terrain is laid for other forms of identification to take their place, identifications of an ethnic, religious, or nationalist nature which lead to the emergence of antagonisms that cannot be managed by the democratic process" (Mouffe, 2002b, p. 56).

Thus, an affective dimension is vital for individuals' political identities. Biesta writes that the version of liberal political philosophy is an example of a particular conception of what constitutes a political community. That is a conception that perceives difference and plurality as a hindrance, as *"[...] something that needs to be overcome."* (Biesta, 2015, p. 78). Biesta agrees with Mouffe that denying that every political order, including a liberal one, generates its remainders does not make these remainders disappear, but instead risks leading to *"bewilderment in the face of its manifestations and impotence in dealing with them.",* even though he questions the viability if such a conception of politics (Biesta, 2015, p. 78). Central to the thesis topic, we can ask if we want to produce citizens who do not have a sense of belonging to the political and national community? Moreover, how should the government ensure the formation of democratic citizens? I will not answer the questions here as they will answer themselves through the research questions asked.

4.3 Approaches toward democratic (citizenship) education

In the field of citizenship education, many scholars take deliberative liberal theory, particularly that of John Rawls, as their basic principle. They then investigate how students' political and moral reasoning capacity can be trained. Although several of these scholars have misgivings about specific assertions made by Rawls or certain components of Rawls' framework, they still, in general, adhere to what can be described as a deliberative Rawlsian approach to citizenship education. One way for the government to ensure students' political and moral reasoning capacity and the formation of responsible democratic citizenship is through democratic citizenship education.

Amy Gutmann writes that when citizens rule in a democracy, they decide how future citizens will be educated, among other things. As a result, democratic education is both a political and an educational ideal (Gutmann, 1999, p. 3). *"You cannot be a ruler unless you have first been ruled[8]"* because being educated as a child entails being ruled. Because being a democratic citizen necessitates ruling, the ideal of democratic education is to be ruled, then to rule. Thus, education lays the groundwork for democratic politics and plays a critical role in it, according to Gutmann (1999). This is an approach to maintaining a democracy that Norway also follows through the national curriculum, which functions as a governing political document. We will now look at different approaches to the education of democratic citizenship.

Drawn from Jürgen Habermas and John Rawls's claim that democratic education should be rooted in deliberative competence, consensus practice, and reasonability, we find philosophers of education such as Dennis Thompson and Amy Guttman. Critiques of this deliberative tradition, such as those made by Chantal Mouffe and Claudia Ruitenberg, argue for the democratic education of adversaries, a pluralistic agonism in education. According to Mouffe, a democratic education rooted in deliberative reasonability represses the confrontational forces constitutive of democracy. The educational agonism that Mouffe and Ruitenberg advocate prioritizes passion, affect, and imagination which orients towards disagreement rather than consensus. An orientation towards disagreement rather than consensus is something that is also found in the thinking of Lars Laird Iversen's theory on the community of disagreement.

As a community of disagreements, Iversen explains not the shared values that bind us together but the shared challenges that we must solve together (Iversen, 2014, p. 127). This differs from Mouffe in that she emphasizes the importance of shared values to create collective belonging (Mouffe, 2005). The re-actualization of the concept of citizenship has led to liberal theories being criticized for underestimating the importance of community (Laclau & Mouffe, 2002; Habermas

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[8] Aristotle, *The Politics of Aristotle,* trans. Ernest Barker (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 105 (1277b)

& Dews, 1992). To look at society as a community of disagreements comprises a competing explanation of how society is connected. In solving the shared challenges together, we do not have to agree prior to the discussion, and we do not have to come to an agreement on everything either. What is essential in Iversen's view is that we must be able to interact. Moreover, for this to be possible, it requires a willingness for temporary agreements, compromises, mutual learning, and persuasion and courage from us. Iversen states that the possible agreements that arise are political – not pre-political (Iversen, 2014, p. 127). Due to Norway's increasing cultural diversity, Iversen argues that the idea of nations as a community of values is a model of thought, and its rhetoric is what stands in the way of how we should be dealing with it. The rhetoric stemming from this idea is regularly practiced unidirectional and exclusive. Furthermore, the rhetoric also hinders the possibility of a deeper and more well-functioning democratic democracy (Iversen, 2014, p 127). This is especially true when these "common values" are linked to specific religious traditions or cultural communities that cannot reasonably choose to join.

Also, Gert Biesta has developed this agonist position further, says David I. Backer (Backer, 2017, p. 127). Biesta starts with how to understand or approach education in itself. One way of understanding and approaching education is thinking of education as *"[…] the production of particular identities or subjectivities or the insertion of newcomers into an existing social order." (*Biesta, 2015, pp. 116-117). This approach Biesta reject, and instead, he argues for an approach that focuses *"[…] on the multifarious ways in which human beings as unique singular individuals come into the world."* (Biesta, 2015, pp. 116-117) There is a strong tendency to see the role of education in discussions about democratic education as that of the preparations of the individuals for their future participation in democratic life. Biesta warns that this viewpoint has significant flaws because it is based on the idea that the guarantee for democracy is the presence of a properly educated citizenry and that once all citizens have received their education, democracy will simply follow (Biesta, 2010, p. 556).

We are now looking at two different approaches towards democratic education; on one side, we have the deliberators, like Habermas, Rawls, Guttman, and Thompson, and on the other side, we have the agonists, like Mouffe and Ruitenberg, Backer writes (2017, p. 127).

In deliberative democracy, Backer (2017) writes that the law and procedural communication – in the form of reason-giving talk – are paramount. Moreover, the procedure focus is carried over into deliberative democratic education (Backer, 2017, p. 128). Samuelsson summarizes citing Tomas Englund:

> "A deliberative educative situation [...] is one in which (a)
>   different views are confronted with one another and
>   arguments for them are articulated; (b) there is tolerance
>   and respect for the concrete other, and participants listen
>   to each other's arguments; and (c) there are elements of
>   collective-will formation, a desire to reach consensus or
>   a temporary agreement." (Samuelsson, 2016, p. 3 in Backer, 2017, p. 128).

From the theory of deliberative democracy, we find that a democratic education emphasizes argumentation, a kind of civil-civic listening, and consensus. According to Samuelsson in deliberative democratic education emphasizes rests on *"[...] the communicative formation of will and opinion that precedes voting."* (Samuelsson, 2016, p. in Backer, 2017, p. 129). The paradigm activity for such a democratic education is the preparation to vote.

Contrasting the deliberative democratic education, we have the agonistic democratic education. For Mouffe, voting has an important affective dimension, and what is peril here is a question of identification (Mouffe, 2005, p. 25). Mouffe emphasizes that to act politically; people must be able to identify with a collective identity that provides them with an idea of themselves that they can valorize (Mouffe, 2005, p. 25). Ruitenberg, in her article *Educating Political Adversaries: Chantal Mouffe and radical democratic citizenship education* (Ruitenberg, 2009), analyzes and investigates how we should approach the necessary changes in political education if we accept Mouffe's critiques of deliberative approaches to democracy and the proposal for an agonistic

public sphere. In her, article Ruitenberg proposes that this kind of radical democratic citizenship education would be an education of political adversaries. As Ruitenberg (2009, p. 5) puts it, Mouffe's demands for agonistic public sphere surpasses the extent of education:

> "The creation and maintenance of political channels for the expression of agonistic conflict, [...] fall largely outside the purview of education. Nevertheless, education does have an important role to play in the preparation of citizens for the role of a political adversary." (Ruitenberg, 2009, p. 5).

Mouffe's agonistic model for democracy is relevant for the use and understanding of how the concept in the discussion part of the master's thesis. The importance of this model means that we must take a closer look at Mouffe's agonistic model of democracy. Although only certain parts of relevance will be presented as the model is quite extensive.

4.3.1 Mouffe's agonistic model of democracy

Mouffe's agonistic model of democracy revolves around a conception of the political as a "*dimension of antagonism that is inherent in human relations*" (Mouffe, 2000b, p. 15 in Ruitenberg, 2009, p. 2) and "constitutive of humans societies" (Mouffe, 2000b, p. 15) Politics encompasses all aspects of society that are influenced by this political dimension, or, more specifically, *"the ensemble of practices, discourse, and institutions which seek to establish a certain order and organize human coexistence in conditions that are always potentially conflictual because they are affected by the dimension of 'the political'"* (Mouffe, 2000b, p. 15). For Mouffe "the political" is the realm of activity that lawful and reasonable procedure seeks to limit: *"instead of claiming that deliberative models are not working well enough to contain such conflict,"* writes Ruitenberg, *"Mouffe would argue that deliberative models have worked too well, eliminating important possibilities for agonistic, political conflict."* (Ruitenberg, 2009, p. 3) In terms of Mouffe's conception of pluralist politics, conflict is a central part. Conflict in and on itself should not be seen as something that we must overcome, instead, it should be used as a force channeled into political and democratic commitments (Ruitenberg, 2009, p. 3)

"An important difference with the model of 'deliberative democracy' is that for 'agonistic pluralism,' the prime task of democratic politics is not to eliminate passions from the sphere of the public, but to mobilize these passions towards democratic designs" (Mouffe, 2000a, p. 103).

The danger lies in suppressing and negating private convictions and loyalties. Mouffe makes use of social psychoanalysis (Freud and Canetti) and argues that the deliberative liberal approach, which desires to eliminate conflict, will, in reality, lead to more destructive antagonistic conflicts. In Ruitenberg's words, *"[...] psychoanalysts realized long ago, the suppression of fundamental desires and emotions will not make those desires and emotions disappear, but only defer their manifestation."* (2009, p. 3). According to Ruitenberg and Mouffe, Deliberative liberals are mistaken if they believe that eliminating political channels for collective identification and conflict will eliminate the need for we/they distinctions and conflict. (Ruitenberg, 2009, p. 3). Mouffe writes that there is a lesson to be learned from the work of Freud and Canetti, that the deliberative liberalists have missed or neglected, that *"[...] the need for collective identifications will never disappear since it is constitutive for the mode of existence of human beings."* (2005, p. 28). Collective identification as such requires *"[...] the definition of a "we" that, by definition, presupposes a "they"* (Ruitenberg, 2009, p. 3). Deliberative theorists, according to Mouffe, have not realized that when politics do not offer any outlets for such collective identifications, people will seek outlets elsewhere (Mouffe, 2002b, p. 56).

Ruitenberg draws on three areas of critique in Mouffe's work to clarify the difference between deliberative models and those that are of particular importance for democratic citizenship education. The first is the underestimation of the importance of belonging to collectivities, in that liberalism emphasizes the individual.

The second, which is closely related to the first, underestimates emotions' importance. Again, liberalism emphasizes reason. Liberal rationalism has made the mistake of ignoring *"[...] the affective dimension mobilized by collective identifications and to imagine that those supposedly archaic 'passions' are bound to disappear with the advance of individualism and the progress of rationality"* (Mouffe, 2005, p. 6). Emotions play a role in people's commitments to their

worldviews. The educational implications of Mouffe's first two critiques of deliberative liberalism that Ruitenberg presents are that education cannot consist in skills of reasoning and civic virtues alone, but also has to take into account the desire for belonging to collectivities and attendant political emotions (where "political" is taken in the sense that Mouffe proposes) (Ruitenberg, 2009, p. 4).

The third area that Mouffe critiques are that political adversaries are usually confused with moral enemies. The conflict between political adversaries is an essential component of a well-functioning political realm; however, in many conflicts today, the opponent is viewed as a moral enemy rather than a political adversary (Ruitenberg, 2009, p. 4). According to Mouffe, what is happening now is that the political is being played out in the moral register. In a we/they discrimination, but the we/they are now established in moral terms rather than political categories. Instead of a battle between 'right and left,' we now face a battle between 'right and wrong.' (Mouffe, 2005, p. 5). The moral register is concerned with the "good," as an individual virtue and universal value, whereas the political register is concerned with social order, with how to organize a society in a specific place and time (Mouffe, 2005, p. 5). When it comes to the "political," Mouffe believes that *"recognizing the hegemonic nature of every kind of social order and the fact that every society is the product of a series of practices attempting to establish order in a context of contingency"* is essential (Mouffe, 2005, p. 17). Because of the loss of the ability to frame conflicts in political terms, disagreements between political collectivities erupt antagonistically, as disagreements between moral collectivities. This has significant implications for how we educate the students to disagree and get them to see their political opponents as adversaries rather than moral enemies (Ruitenberg, 2009, p. 5).

4.4 The democratic citizen and education

The previous chapter presented different approaches to democratic citizenship education, such as the deliberative and agonistic approaches. The deliberators emphasized argumentation, consensus, and civil-civic listening to prepare to vote. On the other side, we have the agonists

who emphasized the dimension of affection and identification in preparation, for example, for voting. In line with the thesis issue, what are the democratic citizen and its connection to a democratic citizenship educational system needs elaboration.

The democratic citizen or "person," which Gert Biesta (2015) uses, is highly associated with how we understand the relationship between democracy and education. How to understand this relationship is questioned and answered by Biesta. For the sake of following Biesta's theory here, I will continue using the term 'the democratic person' instead of 'the democratic citizen' in this subchapter; both are understood to contain the same set of meanings. One way of thinking has its origin two centuries ago from the Enlightenment philosophers, where the belief that democracy needed rational individuals who were capable of having their own free and independent judgments. This is an idea that still has influence, and according to Biesta, has contributed to the assumption that it is the schools' task to "create" or "produce" individuals as such (2015, p. 119). Schools are tasked with making children "ready for democracy" to use Biesta's own words (2015, p. 119). Through education, the schools are engendering the necessary and desirable knowledge, skills, and dispositions considered good for a democratic society and cultivating the children into democratic persons. A way of understanding and approaching education is thinking of education as the production of particular identities or subjectivities or the insertion of newcomers into an existing social order (Biesta, 2015, p. 117).

Biesta has a threefold division of the diverse understanding of the democratic person, in other words, what it means to be a democratic person: an *individualistic conception of democratic subjectivity*; a *social conception of democratic subjectivity*; and a *political conception of democratic subjectivity* (2015, p. 125).
Immanuel Kant developed an answer to the first conception of democratic subjectivity, the *individualistic conception of democratic subjectivity*, under the European Enlightenment's emerging democracies. For Kant, subjectivity is located in the human capacity for independent rational thought.

Dewey answers the second conception, the *social conception of democratic subjectivity*. Dewey's understanding of the democratic person is centered on the subject as a shaper of the conditions that shape one's subjectivity (Biesta, 2015, p. 130). Here, the democratic person is defined by possession of *social* intelligence, which has been acquired through participation in social interaction and joint problem-solving. He believes that democracy and education are inextricably linked (Biesta, 2015, p. 130). Education is a social function; it secures direction and development in the immature through participation in the life of the group to which they belong (Biesta, 2015, p. 129).

The third view on democratic subjectivity we get from Hannah Arendt is the *political conception of democratic subjectivity*. Subjectivity, in her view, should be understood as a quality of human interaction and not as an attribute of individuals. Subjectivity can only be possible in a world of plurality and difference, according to Arendt. In other words, we are subjects when others take up our initiatives so that others' opportunities to bring their initiatives into the world are not hampered (Biesta, 2015, pp. 133-137). Arendt's thinking supposes that the creation of democratic education can happen if the schools become a place where individuals can act and bring new beginnings to the community in interaction (Biesta, 2015, pp. 133-137). Biesta argues that Arendt's way of articulating what it *"[...] means to be a democratic subject does not focus on the production of democratic individuals and no longer thinks of itself as having to prepare individuals for future democratic action"* (Biesta, 2007, p. 740). What it does is that it instead focuses on opportunities for democratic action and democratic "learning-in-action" (Biesta, 2007).

Furthermore, Biesta recommends that the schools try to make democratic action at least possible. The production of democratic individuals and the preparation of individuals for future democratic action in the democratic education found in the Norwegian curriculum can be viewed as a part of the individuals' development, in other words, the individual's identity process, where sets of particular values, dispositions, and attitudes create political active democratic citizens.

4.5 The concept of Identity

The concept of Identity is becoming increasingly important in modern politics. According to Waldron, it impacts how people carry out their civic duty, and their perception of it means to carry out that duty responsibly (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000, p. 156). The inhabitants of any country have a duty to deliberate responsibly among themselves about law and public policy. Each individual has a responsibility to do their part to ensure that those with whom they live, the "unavoidably side by side" (Kant, 1991, p. 43, 121 in Kymlicka & Norman, 2000, p. 157) – "*come to terms with one another, and set up, maintain, and operate the legal frameworks that are necessary to secure peace, resolve conflicts, do justice, avoid great harms, and provide some basis improving the conditions of life*" (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000, p.155). This is referred to as the duty of civic participation by Jeremy Waldron (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000, p. 157). By calling it "civic participation" Waldron says, the connection of duty to the idea of citizenship is constructed (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000, p. 155).

Identity is a broad concept. It includes many different definitions, approaches, and understandings, depending on who uses it and its context. The Identity concept has long been the subject of debates and discussions about what it contains and how to define this concept. Discussions between two theoretical poles have been prominent, the social constructivist and the essentialist understanding of identity and identity processes. Researchers from different professional traditions have presented their opinions and views between these theoretical outer wings and used various terms to describe and define Identity. When it comes to expressing one's identity, there is always a question of power (Duncan, 2003, p. 150 in Dervin, 2012, p. 184). According to recent research and practice, identity cannot be reduced to a single element; in other words, there is no such thing as a singular identity (Dervin, 2012, p 184). This is held by all postmodern theorists, including Z. Bauman, M. Maffesoli, and Charles Taylor (Dervin, 2012, p. 184).

This subchapter will focus on selected aspects of Identity relevant to my problem and objectives. I will also present a selection of distinctions and aspects of the concept of Identity. This forms the basis for my understanding and use of Identity and identity-related concepts used in the analysis and discussion parts of the master's thesis.

4.5.1 Laclau and Mouffe's theory of identity

Laclau and Mouffe's theory of identity is built on Althusser's work (1971) and Jacques Lacan (1977). They borrow the post-Marxist concept of *interpellation* from Althusser. According to Althusser, individuals are interpellated (placed) into certain subject positions by ideology through superstructural institutions, such as the education system and the media, rather than being fully autonomous and self-conscious. While dismissing the role of economic determinism in Althusser's ideas, Laclau and Mouffe take the concept of interpellation and incorporate Lacan's psychoanalytic theory, which describes subjects as fundamentally fragmented or 'split' constantly striving to become whole (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999). There is not only one specific way the subject is interpellated but also ascribed different positions by many different discourses, which can be contingent, temporary, contradictory, or competing. Taking on many different subject positions throughout a day happens imperceptibly. In other words, the individual has no idea that this is happening. However, when competing discourse attempts to organize the same social space at the same time. As a result, one is interpellated in multiple positions simultaneously. The subject is, in this case, overdetermined. It is positioned by a number of competing or conflicting discourses between which a conflict arises. Because discourses are always contingent, the subject is always overdetermined in Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory. Hegemonic processes produce subject positions that do not appear to be in conflict with other positions because alternative possibilities have been excluded and a particular discourse appears to be objectively true (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999; Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). Identity arises from identification with specific subject positions, which Lacan refers to as *master signifiers* and Laclau and Mouffe refer to as nodal points of identity (Jørgensen &

Phillips, 1999). Laclau employs Lacan to create an unconscious "inner" in the individual that helps understand why subjects allow themselves to be interpellated by discourses. These nodal points are empty signifiers given meaning by equivalence chains connecting signifiers and establishing relational identity. Identities are assumed, assigned, and negotiated in discursive processes, and thus identity is perceived as purely social (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999).

4.5.2 Collective identity and group formation: "We" and "the others"

So far, we have seen that individuals have multiple identities and the ability to identify themselves in various ways in different situations (overdetermination). However, how should we then perceive groups or collective identities?

In discourse theory, collective identity (or group formation) is perceived using the same principles as individual identity. According to Mouffe (2005), when it comes to collective identities, it is always about a "we" that can only exist as a distinction from a "they.". Of course, this does not imply that the relationship between these is based on conflict, but it does indicate that it has the potential to become so. This occurs, according to Mouffe, when "we" perceive that "we" are threatened by "their" existence (2005). When this occurs, the construction of such an "Other" involves not only linguistic separation but can also impact attitudes, actions, and daily life practices. These "others" are described not only as different but also as strange. As we saw earlier, Bauman uses the term strangers to define "the others" (Mouffe, 2005; Bauman, 1995). Their difference is a type of flaw. Precisely for this reason, the ability to draw such a distinction between "us" and "the others" implies power (Said 1995). The dominant group can help form perceptions and knowledge taken for granted by constructing a distinction between themselves, or "us," and "the others." For example, what is considered right and wrong, good and bad. Like any other discourse, group formations only work by excluding alternative interpretations and permanently closing in an indefinable terrain. Thus, in discursive group formations, one excludes "the other," the one with whom one identifies, and ignores the difference within the group itself.

Also, they ignore all the other ways in which groups could have formed. Therefore, group formation is political in that sense, according to Mouffe and Laclau (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999). These notions influence society by influencing how political policy documents for the school are designed and form the basis for political action in a negative and positive sense.

4.6 Summary

In Part III, I have first presented different perspectives on educational citizenship and democratic issues within citizenship, educational and political theory. In this context, it has been necessary to refer to various definitions and understandings of the concepts of citizen and citizenship. Thus, the associated subchapters have taken up much space in Part III. For example, we saw a distinct difference between the Norwegian and the English definition of citizen and citizenship and what they contain. Moreover, we saw a difference between citizenship as a status or role; this affects how one understands and what one puts in the concepts of citizen and citizenship. Linguistic details, such as this, can tell us something about Norway's cultural value and historical development, which is essential to the analysis and discussion chapters in answering the thesis issue and objectives.

Moreover, it is essential to understand how the school as a democratic (political) institution interprets and applies these terms in the children's education in becoming democratic (politically active) citizens since they are involved in this formation. This formation and what it potentially can lead to in the forms of antagonisms is questioned in this thesis. Furthermore, it has also become clear that the role of the democratic citizen and the community is highly linked together. The role dimension of the citizenship concept is a construction involving those who belong to the political community and those who are outside the community. The importance of a sense of belonging becomes apparent. It shows that the distinction we/they in the society is made by what Bauman calls the rational community of modern society, which has produced the concept of the *Stranger*, the *Other*, the "them." The distinction as mentioned might create an

antagonistic perspective. Such a perspective can then create negative consequences for democracy. Part of the schools' educational mandate and social mission is to secure the individuals in becoming democratic citizens, which will ensure the thrive and maintaining of the Norwegian democracy, the status quo.

Secondly, we have seen several approaches to democratic citizenship education, such as deliberative democratic education and agonistic democratic education. This thesis does not hold to a specific approach, even though it presents a specific model of agonistic democracy. From these subchapters (4.3 and 4.3.1), the agonistic aspect, in general, is particularly relevant for the discussion part of the thesis and the affective dimension.

Thirdly, what defines a democratic citizen and its connection to education was presented. Here, several views on what a democratic citizen is followed. In the analysis chapter, which kind of democratic citizen could be found in the Norwegian schools Core curriculum is asked and discussed. This again is intertwined with the individual's identity process, focusing on values and the formation of the democratic citizen.

Finally, subchapter five has looked more closely at concepts of identity and how an individual's identity is intertwined. A person holds multiple identities, which are partially constructed by the different discourses and can become conflicted. As we have seen, the concepts of identity are essential to the individual's sense of belonging to the political and national community. Nevertheless, also, it emphasizes the distinction between we/they relation.

Before looking more closely at the analysis material that forms the basis for answering the research questions mentioned earlier and the master's thesis main issue, it is necessary to explain the method used to approach the analysis material.

PART IV   METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

5. Methods

5.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the practicalities of selecting and gathering my data. I have used two forms of data: political policy documents and educational documents (see chapter 1.2).

The thesis aims to study the democratic education in Norway from "above" and how this might affect the "below." Studying the democratic education from above will, in this instance, mean looking at policies and formal curricula that legally and pedagogically define what democratic education is assumed to be. Studying democratic educations' assumed effect below would mean looking at how different individuals can understand text, meaning that how we give meaning to and understand terms and context affects how we understand and define, for example, a written text. Therefore, I have chosen to use multiple methods inside of discourse for this research. This chapter firstly introduces the choice of texts. Secondly, the reasoning for using discourse analysis as an analytical strategy for document analysis is made. Thirdly, the chapter presents parts of Mouffe and Laclau's discourse theory and parts of their conceptual apparatus. In addition, analytical tools from Fairclough's conceptual apparatus are also presented as they are relevant tools to make use of in the analysis of the documents. Finally, a short presentation of the validity.

5.2 Choice of texts

I analyze particularly one document in-depth and some others as supplementary secondary documents that help shed light on relevant areas in the thesis. The main text is the renewed edition of the formal national curriculum for a compulsory school in Norway, published in 2020,

called the 'Knowledge Promise 2020'. My focus is on the Core curriculum, which outlines the principles that underlie all schooling. From the Core curriculum, a selection of specific chapters and subchapters are chosen due to the relevance of the thesis objectives. These chapters and subchapters are as follows: *The purpose of the education*, *1. Core values of the education and training*, *1.2 Identity and cultural diversity*, *1.6 Democracy and participation*, and *2.5.2 Democracy and citizenship*. This has guided me to investigate how the curricula speak about *Values*, *Identity*, and *The Democratic citizen*.

The process of textual analysis includes two political policy documents, the White Papers (NOU 2015:8) and the Report to the Storting (Meld. St. 28 2015-2016) prefigured the renewed curriculum.

In making this choice, some sacrifices are involved. First, there is a concern that the introductory part of the curricula does not inform the teachers' and the students' everyday routines in the same way as the subjects' syllabuses do. In addition to that, I have chosen only to highlight some sections using excerpts, quotations, and paraphrasing from the formal national curriculum in my research.

Secondly, I bypass the various and essential changes made to the subjects and other parts of the Core curriculum by making these choices. These choices also represent some benefits, and they are as follows: First, formally speaking, the introductions to the curricula are just as legally relevant as the subject-specific syllabuses. The renewed formal national curriculum of 2020 is still a constitutive document for education in Norway. Also, it is the only place where the legitimations for teaching about for, and through democratic education, along with values and identity, are emphasized to a more significant degree. Secondly, I argue that the formal national curriculum better indicates more significant political concerns and trends. There is a cluster of ideas surrounding the word democratic citizen in terms of values and national identity. It is used to connect both individual and collective identities towards it.

Third, there is no specific subject for democratic (citizenship) education in Norway. Still, it is an overall aim of education, and it is embedded in the interdisciplinary theme, which involves social science subjects, religion, and, to a certain degree, history subjects. Since democratic education

is not a subject but an overall aim of Norwegian education, it allows me to be more selective of the material used in the analysis.

5.3 Discourse analysis of document – Analytical strategy

I have chosen to apply discourse analysis as the method because theoretically, following Hjelm (2011), it investigates processes of social constructions (Phillips & Hardy, 2002, in Hjelm, 2011, p. 134). Hjelm writes that discourse analysis *"[…] examines how actions are given meaning and how identities are produced in language use."* (Hjelm, 2011, p. 134). As a method that can and should be designed individually for each study, there are almost unlimited analytical tools to choose from. Having the ability to change and modify my analytical 'toolkit' to suit the requirements of the questions and material I use opens the outcome possibilities and limits the possible limitations that may occur. This approach seems sufficient for answering the thesis objectives, as it deals on and between macro and micro-levels, which requires different approaches and analytical tools (perspectives of discourse analysis) to analyze and interpret.

There are few strict rules on choosing a particular approach within discourse analysis. However, according to Hjelm's recommendation and instruction in choosing approaches, there are two ones that we should be attentive towards, and that is the pay minute attention to linguistic form and those that focus on the level of meaning in text and talk (Hjelm, 2011, p. 143). Therefore, even though I do not come from a linguistical discipline, I will make use of both approaches, because as Fairclough says, the two approaches are interconnected in the way that:
 "[…] analysis on the level of meaning can gain powerful insight from more formal analysis of language, and linguistic analysis that ignores the social level has little to contribute to social and cultural research." (Hjelm, 2011, p. 143).
Another distinction that can be made between approaches is suggested by Phillips and Hardy (Phillips & Hardy, 2002, p. 20, in Hjelm, 2011, p. 143). The distinction is between approaches that focus on variation within and between discourses and critical approaches, focusing on how some

discourses become hegemonic. In practice, distinctions are often blurred, as Gee said, that *"[…] discourse (conceptualized as language-in-use) is always political in the sense that we always choose to describe reality in some terms but not others."* (Hjelm, 2011, p. 143). According to Hjelm, choice of perspective is a political choice from the viewpoint of discourse-analytics, but not always a conscious one (Hjelm, 2011, p. 143).

Considering Norman Fairclough, critical discourse analysis is not just a descriptive exercise. It is also a normative project that seeks to illuminate and criticize unfortunate social conditions (Skrede, 2017, p. 23). Fairclough argued that critical discourse analysis should criticize political strategies to a greater extent than social constructions. Strategies are implemented in response to specific structural conditions, but it is first and foremost strategies that attempt to change structural conditions that are implemented. Critical discourse analysis helps demonstrate how discursive elements are incorporated into political strategies (Fairclough, 2010, p. 18). According to Skrede (2017, p. 46), strategies include future visions of how things could be and narrative elements that interpret, explain, and justify certain action choices – in the past, present and future. Political rhetoric helps to construct various social contexts in which neoliberal principles can operate and which are reproduced through genres, discourses, and styles in their semiotic element. The primary goal is to map how the outside world (or parts of it) is presented and its social consequences.

5.4 Mouffe and Laclau's discourse theory

Mouffe and Laclau understand the discourses themselves as material and decisive for a social change instead of discourse and action as determined by material conditions (Jørgensen & Philips, 1999). Even though everything cannot be reduced to language alone, outside discourse, the external world still exists. The materiality of the discourse is found in the way the world is organized and structured according to linguistic principles. (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, pp. 41-43). The two of them got inspired by Antonio Gramsci and added a political element to the

discourse theory. The most important aspect of the theory is the political processes. They think of politics in a broad sense. The political articulation determines how we think and shape society (Jørgensen & Philips, 1999, p. 41). Politics shapes society in a specific way by excluding alternative paths that society could have taken. The social organization is a political matter formed by corresponding political processes. (Jørgensen & Philips, 1999, p. 43). Therefore, to understand how their discourse theory is relevant to politics, we must look more closely at what Mouffe refers to as agonism:

> "[…] antagonism is a we/they relation in which the two sides are enemies who do not share any common ground, agonism is a we/they relation where the conflicting parties, although acknowledging that there is no rational solution to their conflict, nevertheless recognize the legitimacy of their opponents. They are 'adversaries,' not enemies." (Mouffe, 2005, p. 20).

There is a similarity between Mouffe's political theory and discourse theory; the similarity lies in the antagonistic perspective on how the discourses are a part of a hegemonic struggle. The purpose of discourse analysis is to map the processes by which we struggle over how to determine the meaning of signs and by which certain meaning-fixations become so conventionalizing that we perceive them as natural (Jørgensen & Philips, 1999, p. 32).

5.5 Conceptual apparatus

The material will be analyzed using a group of analytical tools from discourse analysis, which I have here called the conceptual apparatus instead of the analytical toolkit. The apparatus stems from Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory and Fairclough's critical discourse analysis. In the following, first, I present some of the conceptual apparatus I have adapted for Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory and their discourse-analytical conceptual apparatus. I have also decided to present the part of their conceptual apparatus that I use in a single section. Secondly, I present the chosen conceptual apparatus from Fairclough's critical discourse analysis.

5.5.1 Nodal point, moment and element, and chain of equivalence

There are four central terms Laclau and Mouffe define in their theoretical, analytical apparatus, which is of interest and relevance for this thesis. These four are "nodal point", "moment", "element" and "chain of equivalence".

A discourse is viewed as a fixation on significance within a specific domain Jørgensen and Phillips write (1999, p. 33). All signs in the discourse are a *moment* (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p. 33). Moments are like "knots in the fishing net," where the meaning of each knot is fixed in relation to the other knots (differential positions) (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p. 33). *"The discourse is established by crystallizing meaning around some nodal points"* (Laclua & Mouffe, 1985, p. 112 in Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p. 33). The common denominator of the signs is that they are all moments. The *nodal point* is a privileged sign from which all other signs circulate and derive their meaning (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p. 33). The nodal point can also take the form of a floating signifier but are pretty empty in itself. A floating signifier is a concept in discourse theory that refers to elements that are particularly open to attributing different meanings. Floating signifiers are signs that various discourses attempt to give content in their unique way. In nodal points as floating signifiers, the term nodal point refers to a crystallization point in the individual discourse. The term floating signifier refers to the struggle for important signs waged between different discussions (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p. 35). Laclau refers to the nodal point as a myth, whereas the floating signifiers refer to a community that ensures that the action makes sense. Because the discourse never manages to perfect itself on its terms, the myth refers to an abstract community that can never establish itself in any more tangible form than an imagined totality (Jørgensen & Phlillips, 1999, p. 47).

Moreover, the *element* refers to a sign where its meaning is ambiguous (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, p. 34). Thus, in this regard, elements signal that it is possible to distinguish between a majority of discourses. In other words, we can say that the discourse stands out through the elements. As a result, it can be stated that the elements allow discourse to be identified as distinct. Elements are very similar to a floating signifier in this case. What distinguishes them is

that the element is not a privileged sign on par with the nodal point. Furthermore, Laclau imports Jacques Lacan's subject theory, where the subject is given an "engine," as it constantly tries to "find itself" in the discourses. The idea of "I" is thought to be an illusion, necessitating the subject's constant construction of identity by drawing a chain between nodal points. This is referred to as an equivalence chain (Jørgensen & Phillips, 1999, pp. 49-50). By connecting the signs with an equivalence chain, discourse and identity are constructed as two different aspects of the same situation.

5.5.2 Modality

The term 'modality' means 'method' or 'way' and represents how a statement or a text conveys a message. Modality as an analytical tool distinguishes between four typologies of speech functions: Claims and questions, which Skrede places in the category he calls 'exchange of knowledge' and orders and offers placed in the 'exchange of activities' (Skrede, 2017, p. 49). Skrede writes that text modalities can be identified by searching for cases where someone claims something, asks questions, offers something, or demands something (2017, p. 49). Thus, modality can be viewed as ways/methods in which attitudes and facts are expressed, in addition to different degrees of doubt or certainty, necessities, possibilities, obligations, and permissions. Moreover, archetypal modality markers are often easy to search for, and effective grips are called modal verbs such as: must, should, will, can, have to, and shall, and so on. Furthermore, Skrede states that an analysis of example political rhetoric modality can contribute to insight into which knowledge is presented as true, which worldview is underlying, called *epistemic modality*, and not at least how people should act based on the circumstances described, called *deontic modality* (Skrede, 2017, p. 49-51). An essential aspect of this analytical tool is that depending on power relations, social positioning, and the like, different modalities will make people perform or refrain from actions (Skrede, 2017, p. 50).

5.5.3 Assumptions

Assumptions are recognized in our everyday speech, and people rely on shared assumptions to make linguistic communication easier. Assumptions can make differences less visible or even out of differences by assuming a common set of values. In contrast, intertextual relations can make differences visible by referring to other texts in one's text. Although assumptions are helpful because people are dependent on shared perceptions and opinions, in other words, common basic understandings, there are at the same time those who are capable of influencing the content of the shared common basic understanding, and thus in positions to exercise power and build up hegemonic perceptions. According to Skrede, Fairclough distinguishes between several different assumptions, but Skrede, in his book *Kritisk diskursanalyse* has chosen only to concentrate on two of these. The first is existential assumptions, which entails assumptions about what exists, and the second is value assumptions, which deal with what is desirable or good (Skrede, 2017, p. 55-56).

5.5.4 Nominalization and passivation

Fairclough's textual analysis apparatus, which he bases on Hallidays SFL, expands the meaning of metaphor to deal with grammatical relations, in contrast to the everyday meaning of metaphors about words (Fairclough, 2003, p. 143 in Skrede, 2017, p. 48). One can distinguish between congruent representations - in meaning corresponding to the event being described - and metaphorical representations. Nominalizations are grammatical metaphors that present processes in society as things or entities - rather than processes (Skrede, 2017, p. 48). Actors can also be hidden to a greater or lesser degree through passive construction. The passive construction can help tone down responsibility. One can hide responsibilities and actors further by using nominalization. In critical discourse analysis, passivation and nominalization are

interpreted as ideologies that may be involved. The use of nouns can justify, for example, "globalization" even if globalization is a process. In this way, emphasis is placed on globalization as a fact, regardless of the political decisions that have led us there (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 138 in Skrede, 2017, p. 49).

5.6 Validity

We are told that 'the world' is never out there for the researcher to find; it is always interpreted. Those familiar with the concepts of *interpretation* know that even the (implicit and explicit) theoretical lenses we use to research 'the world' result from interpretation (Stausberg, 2014). The discourse analysis can be criticized for being based on an internalist fallacy. This is due to the method's starting point as an inductive method. The lack of strictly casual power is a problem with a discourse analytical approach (Hjelm, 2011, p. 145). As mentioned in the introduction chapter, discourse research is better equipped to answer how questions than why questions, claiming otherwise is to succumb to the 'fallacy of internalism' (Thompson, 1990, p. 24-25 in Hjelm 2011. p. 145). Put in another way, it asserts that texts, in and of themselves, determine how they are interpreted. Even hegemonic discourse cannot fully explain the practical consequences of the action. Even when the variety of alternative interpretations is suppressed within discourse, the discourse itself cannot fully explain how it is discussed, reinterpreted, and resisted in practice, according to Hjelm (2011, p. 145). This demonstrates that, as a scientific tool, discourse analysis is not without flaws. To at all implement discourse analysis, constructions in the form of terms and concepts must be accepted, and as a result, the discourse analysis is vulnerable to criticism.

5.7 Summary

Part IV, *Methodology and Methods*, has presented the selected material used in the analysis. Moreover, discourse analysis as an analytical tool in analyzing the documents has been explained. Furthermore, a general presentation of discussion of discourse analysis as methods followed, where a justification for choosing this method is found. For this thesis, two discourse analytical methods have been chosen, Fairclough's critical discourse analysis and Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's discourse theory. Fairclough's critical discourse analysis is chosen since it is a descriptive exercise and a normative project. Therefore, it helps demonstrate how discursive elements are incorporated into political strategies and their social consequences. This is fitting since the political policy and educational documents made for the schools' usage are a part of a political strategy to ensure the desirable training and education for the formation of the politically active democratic citizen, amongst others. Moreover, since the method also emphasizes the social consequences, this supports an analysis of the thesis issue: *How can potentially Norway's focus on values in the formation of the democratic citizen and identity process through the school's mandate enable the construction of antagonisms?*

Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory has been chosen since they say the political articulation determines how we thin and shape society; it shapes society by excluding alternative paths. For example, how constructions of relation such as a we/they distinction affect how individuals comprehend their position in the community. As mentioned, discourse analysis aims to map the processes by which we struggle to determine the meaning of signs and by which certain meaning-fixations become so commonplace that we accept them as natural—questioning what we conceive as natural becomes relevant and essential to have in mind when analyzing part of the Core curriculum.

Mainly used from these two discursive methods is a range of analytical tools. The tools from the discourse theory are emphasized the most, while those from the critical discourse analysis are supplementary to highlight the pointed findings in the analysis and establish a discussion in Chapters 7 and 8.

PART V   ANALYSIS

6. Values, Identity and The Democratic Citizen in the renewed Core curriculum

6.1 Introduction

This chapter will focus on three concepts from the renewed curriculum LK20. These three concepts' *Values*, *The Democratic Citizen*, and *Identity* are fundamental in Norway's democratic education. I shall use the terms as organizational tools to acquire some not immediately apparent findings. First, I will focus on how *Values*, *Identity*, and *The democratic citizen* are presented and conceptualized in the Core curriculum of LK20. Secondly, I will analyze how these concepts can be interpreted and understood when applying theoretical perspectives mainly from Laclau and Mouffe and implementing selected analytical tools from Fairclough. As shown in Chapter 5, a fundamental theoretical assumption is that a politically contested linguistic term derives meaning from its relationship to surrounding terms via equivalence and difference chains (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). This means that the core values of LK20 must be analyzed from a conceptual point of view and placed into a linguistic context. A part of the renewed curriculum's purpose deals with individual development. How the school should take care of and develop the individual's characteristics and how they want the society of the future to look like are being answered through what equipment the students need. Therefore, we can ask, are these concepts and values carriers of inherent tensions? If so, what are these tensions? Is there an ambiguity in LK20 regarding core values?

6.2 Values in the Core curriculum

The word "Values" seems to hold a significant role in the revised curricula, but what meaning has it been given in the text? Moreover, how should it be understood? These are underlying

questions to ask how Values are presented in the Core curriculum. According to Laclau and Mouffe (1985), an interpretation is only one among several. Some of the potential meanings of a word are included, and others are excluded each time it is used. This process of continuously shaping the available meanings for future language users is a political one. Following this understanding of word meanings, we can ask, when LK20 refers to values, what can be included and what is excluded?

Furthermore, philosopher Michel Foucault writes that there is a close relationship between knowledge, language, and power. He says that the social dividing line is "produced" by language itself. The use of language confers power; language is not neutral but rather an expression of specific interpretations of reality (Foucault, 1972, p. 49). We can then ask which linguistic guidelines are built into LK20's when they use the word "values"?

Before answering the questions asked, it is first necessary to look at the internal relationship between values and traditions. The Norwegian constitutions value clause, § 1-1, emphasizes "Our Christian and humanistic heritage" and "the democracy, the rule of law and human rights"[9] (Opplæringsloven, 1998, § 1-1). LK20 repeats this in the Objectives clause in the Education Act section 1-1 when stating that the "*education and training shall be based on fundamental values in Cristian and humanist heritage and traditions […]*" (Utdanningsdirektoratet (hereinafter referred to as Udir), 2020, p. 3). From the Constitution, the emphasis shows that Norway wants to appear as a tradition-conscious and, as we will see, as a pluralistic society where everybody should be included.

The School's social mission is promoting values spring from the Constitution as expressed in the Objectives clause. The Objectives clause is referred to in Meld. St. 28 as the School's values. There are two possible interpretations concerning the values listed in the Objectives clause. According to one interpretation (particular values), the values are unique and rooted in Christian and humanistic heritage and tradition. The second interpretation is universal (universal values), based on human rights, and recognized across cultures (Breidlid, 2017, p. 31). Before the

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[9] Lovdata §2 "Our values will remain our Christian and humanist heritage. This Constitution shall ensure democracy, a state based on the rule of law and human rights".

Objectives clause mentions explicit values, it states that the training must be based on basic values, the *"Christian and humanistic heritage and traditions,"* which then is followed by exemplifies *"such as respect for human dignity and nature, and on intellectual freedom, charity, forgiveness, equality and solidarity, values that also appear in different religions and belief and are rooted in human rights"* (Udir, 2020, p. 3). These values can be categorized into several types of values, while most of them belong to more than one category. I identify three categories of values in the Objectives clause: *relational*, *individual, and collective values*. Relational values reflect the qualities of human-nature relationships, such as respect for human dignity and nature. Individual values reflect how you present yourself in life and your specific needs, such as the principles you live by and what you consider important for your self-interest. The collective values provide actionable guidance that stretches well beyond the recognition of aggregates of individual values, such as solidarity and equality. They change the deontic status of a particular action for group members (Huebner & Hedahl, 2011). All the mentioned values in the Objectives clause can be seen as individual values since there is a desire for each individual to acquire and make these values a part of themselves. These categories can be split into two main sets of values. The common values promoted in LK20 can be said to represent both "process values" and "substantial values." (for more, see Parekh 2006). Process values are rules for how people with different substantial values should relate to each other. In contrast, substantial values are the primary values a person acts on and identifies with (Eriksen, 2008, p.130). Thus, it emerges from LK20 that the values they present and promote should impact individuals' actions, identity development and formation, and a sense of belonging to the national and political community.

Moreover, the quotation from the *Core values of education and training* in the Core curriculum, *"The core values are based on Christian, and humanist heritage and traditions"* (Udir, 2020, p. 4), connects and presents Christianity and humanism as a whole. It can be seen as in contrast to the values of other traditions, even though the values are also *"expressed in different religions and worldviews and are rooted in human rights"* (Udir, 2020, p. 4). Furthermore, the Objectives clause refers to education and training as a *"help to increase the knowledge and understanding of the national cultural heritage"* (Udir, 2020, p. 3). Such heritage is the values in

Christian and Humanist, as this is mentioned being the nation's heritage and traditions in the Education Act.

We shall now take a closer look at the concept of cultural heritage since this concept is mentioned in the Objectives clause and might shed some light on determining which kind of interpretation the particular or the universal is promoted in the Objectives clause. According to Olav Christensen, cultural heritage appears to be a neutral concept, a descriptive term that refers to phenomena outside the realm of ideologies (Christensen, no date). Moreover, the suffix inheritance points in a completely different direction, according to Christensen. Firstly, inheritance is a method of passing on value from previous generations to future generations. It demonstrates that values were received, and those previous generations had something to pass on to future generations. By valuing their legacy, ancestors are given status and past value. Secondly, the prefix culture denotes that the heritage of the past is linked to a collective, a community (Christensen, no date). LK20 operates with cultural heritage in plurality when they in the continuation of the quoted sentence above saying *"[…] and our common international cultural traditions"* (Udir, 2020, p.3). The concept of cultural heritage is used to position identity. So, it seems like from the Objectives clause and chapter 1. *Core values of the education and training* try to harmonize and combine value systems that are very different. The values on which the School is required to base its activities are then particularly complex.

Furthermore, the combination of Christian and humanist heritage and culture accompanied by values that also are *"expressed in different religions and worldviews and are rooted in human rights"* bears the wording of "Othering." Othering can be best explained as a phenomenon in which some individuals or groups are defined and labeled as not fitting within a social group's norms; in other words, it is a form of social representation related to stereotypes (Dervin, 2012, p. 187). It is a psychological effect that influences how people perceive and treat those perceived as in-group members versus those perceived to be out-group members. Othering also includes ascribing negative characteristics to individuals or groups in order to differentiate them from the perceived normative social group (Dervin, 2012). In addition, Othering refers to how language

representations are used to distinctions and inequalities between the self and the other. As Said demonstrates in his work (1978), these differences are produced through the use of binary oppositions in which one side of the opposition is valued more positively and therefore comes to dominate, while the other is regarded less favorably, and this becomes subordinate (Jack & Phipps, 2012, p. 544).

The fundamental values (the Christian and humanist values) which the education and training shall be based on, and is anchored in the Constitution, says that the exemplified values are values that also *"appear in different religions and beliefs and are rooted in human right*s." (Udir, 2020, p. 3) However, placing Christian values first in the Objective clause highlights Christianity as the favored view of life in society. This involves differential treatment and seems alienating and exclusive to those who do not share the same view. Even though these values also are claimed to be in line with different religions, beliefs, and human rights (Udir, 2020, pp. 3-6). Which different religions and beliefs it refers to are not mentioned. From this interpretation, other philosophical traditions and cultures stand for entirely different values than "ours," the Norwegian ones. Maintaining the dividing lines of similarities between "the ethnic Norwegian Christian-humanist national we" and "the others" is problematic because individuals transcend value-based dividing lines established on imagined equality and imagined community. Culture or cultural heritage seems to contribute to the identity process (formation) in LK20.

6.2.1 Ethics-as-morals

In the renewed curriculum, the purpose is that the values should be formulated in such a way that the people can support them and feel included in the school community. In other words, the values that apply to the school are values "everyone should agree on" or that are common to the various traditions, a kind of value-based "least common multiple." However, are the values formulated so the people can uphold them and at the same time feel included in the school community? Moreover, who are the people? From a national discourse, the people are

constituted via the nation, as the nation helps to describe and delimit who the "people" are. The revised Core curriculum expresses fundamental common values, regardless of religious or philosophical affiliation. Values are used as a reference to what should unite Norwegian society. These values expressed in LK20 are those that officially and objectively should be recognized as common for the community. They are understood as the fundament for Norwegian democracy. This puts a focus on the importance of inclusion of the "people" and who the people are, especially when a particular set of values are perceived as what unites. The fact that there is still a particular emphasis placed on the Christian and humanistic cultural and value tradition in school, while at the same time appreciating and understanding the multicultural and multi-religious society, creates the possibility for tensions when different values are to coexist in and outside of the school. In addition to being communicated and promoted by the school. This problematizes the desirable common values upheld by everybody and the feeling of inclusion. Such a tension enables an alternative reading of all the people as instead representing the majority of the people.

Furthermore, the values are "*the foundation of the school's activities*" and "*must be used actively and have importance for each pupil*." The values are thus fundamental to social cohesion and the individual's identity (see chapter 7.2). This guides the school's mission. The schools' value promise is linked to the school's educational mission. LK20 gives the school the mandate to teach the values in order to enable students to understand who they are and their place of belonging in the community. These normative values mentioned in LK20 impact both the society and individuals, which are foundational to social cohesion as well as the formation of identity, i.e., their identity process. The responsibility of transmitting these pieces of knowledge, values, and dispositions of what we can characterize a good citizenship lies heavily on the school as an educational institution because they hold a social mandate. The values are not only something that needs to be transmitted from one point to another; the "*values must have an impact on the way the school and teachers interact with the pupils and the home*," connecting the importance of value to both the public and the private sphere.

Note that the word *society* is linked to the values that unite Norway; society is thus defined as the nation-state, just as the world is understood as a system of nation-states. This is an underlying ideology reproduced and reinforced by some aspects of the social sciences. The word society in LK20 requires analyzing and commenting on such underlying ideologies. Based on the Objectives clause, more emphasis is placed on society through an ethnos perspective, i.e., emphasis is placed on the nation's common history, ancestors, and cultural traditions, then a demos perspective where the nation is seen as a political community. However, the separation here is not entirely black and white, as society is drawn in as a democracy, in other words, a political society, where demos include the entire population, ethnos excludes groups outside the ethnic majority. This goes against how Norway is typically perceived. According to Fajersson and Thun, Norway formally follows a demo-based policy, where members of society have access to the same rights (2016, p. 215). According to Breidlid (2017, p.19), Norway belongs to a sense of acceptance and belonging to the ethnos tradition. An overemphasis on one affiliation, on one set of common values, traditions, cultures, and so on, such as in an ethnos perspective, can lead to ethnocentrism or a distinction between in-groups and out-groups in the society.

So far, my analysis shows that values are presented at the intersection of ethics and identity. On the one hand, values are understood ethically as something that justifies actions and opinions but gets a moral emphasis, giving LK20 an aspect of ethics-as-morals. While morals usually tend to be driven by personal beliefs and values, we find an emphasis on ethics that takes the form of moral-values in LK20. Moral-values are values that express ideas about the good life, which in LK20 means presenting specific common morals that the people are supposed to agree on and uphold. At the same time, it is clear that values are understood as identity-building, closely woven together with traditions, cultural heritage, and the community. We can see that Christian and humanist values contain some formulations that demonstrate the significances of these values in the construction of national identity and the face of plurality. There is a nation-building ambition. The value rhetoric in LK20 can be understood as central to the legitimation of such nation-building. LK20 thus sees values as something as a basis for community and identity, or in other words, a collective identity.

Moreover, the use of the word *Values* that we find in LK20 presupposes a specific picture of what a social community is, more specifically, a popular-sociological picture of society as a delimited unit gathered around a core of common values. As shown here, a presentation and understanding of values are essential to problematize, as there is disagreement about the value understanding in LK20. This understanding also contributes to a distinction between "us" and "them," as we will see in the following. This dynamic is essential for my further argumentation. Later in the thesis, I will show how interpretations of the value rhetoric found in LK20 can lead to tension between individuals and groups of individuals, leading to unwanted antagonisms.

6.3 Identity, community, and pluralism

The term Identity is another core element found in the revised curricula. A part of the schools' goal in forming democratic citizens is developing students' identities. The word identity is not mentioned in the Objectives clause in the Education Act 1-1 – though it is mentioned several times in Chapter 1. in the Core curriculum – but can be understood as an incorporated element of "Values."

As already pointed out (see chapter 4.), a person holds a multitude of identities. If we generalize, Identity is the beliefs, personality, qualities, looks, and expressions that make a person, which is called self-identity, or makes a group, which is a collective identity. This raises questions of how we are supposed to understand the meaning and usage of the Identity concept presented in LK20. What significance is the word Identity given in the revised curricula? What kind of Identity is being promoted? Moreover, how should we understand the relationship between Identity and context?

In subchapter 1.2, *Identity and diversity*, Identity is described as something that is developed and must be preserved. The responsibility of such development and preservation is visible given to the school in that the:

"school shall give pupils historical and cultural insight that will give them a good foundation in their lives and help each pupil to preserve and develop her or his identity in an inclusive and diverse environment." (Udir, 2020, p. 5). Hence, Identity is something that can be shaped through different sets of means. Such sets of means mentioned are the importance of the student acquiring insight into Norway's historical and cultural background, its historical context. Such an interpretation forms a bridge between the Identity, identity process as part of values and thus connects Identity to the Objectives clause. This connection tells us that the relationship between Identity and context is the Norwegian nation's history and cultural framework.

The individuals' Identity is formed in the meeting with "cultural heritage." LK20 attaches cultural heritage as a prerequisite for enabling an inclusive and diverse environment. Although the text further conveys that the historical and cultural insight will help the students preserve and develop their Identity, it is unclear how this insight will contribute to this happening in an inclusive and diverse environment. How LK20 believes we should understand the connection between an inclusive and diverse environment and the good foundation the historical and cultural insight gives the student in their identity formation could be questioned because a relationship like this is problematic in a school "for everyone." We can argue that this kind of relationship is only possible inside a traditional cultural perspective, where it is first and foremost is the traditions and cultural heritage to be continued and protected.
We are talking about cultural Identity here. Geographical, physical, linguistic, and religious boundaries are created by organizing activities within closed communities and emphasizing sameness and difference (Dervin, 2012).

6.3.1 A common reference framework

Values in the header *Identity and Cultural diversity* are formulated in introductory normative sentences related to the school contributing to the student's development, the individual perspective. The preceding sentence can be argued to take the structure of an obligation or as a

probability, meaning it could be read as either deontically or epistemically. For example, a deontic interpretation the *"school shall give pupils,"* using "shall," which is a median-value modal (Cruse, 2004, p. 299-300) representing a weak obligation, the school is under obligation to give students historical and cultural insight that will have predetermined result. Alternatively, as an epistemic reading where "shall" is still a median-value modal but represent here a probability (and to some degree because of context a prediction), the school is likely to give the pupils insight that should give the predicted outcome. A shall-sentence like this creates a vague impression since the value base at the heading level involves themes and concepts that explicitly concern the student's development and not only formulates society's common values. Based on the overall context, it seems more presumably that the sentence in subchapter 1.2, like all the other introductory headings in the Core curriculum, be read as deontic, as a weak obligation. Moreover, these 'common values,' 'our history and culture,' play a paramount role in developing student identity. According to LK20, common reference frameworks *"create belonging to society"* and connect the identity of students to the *"greater community and to a historical context"* (Udir, 2020, p. 5). We can also talk about a national identity connecting and giving the individuals a sense of belonging to the political and national community.

Furthermore, *a common reference framework and individuals' sense of belonging in society "creates solidarity"* and *"gives and shall give room for diversity,"* and *"the pupil must be given insight into how we live together with different perspectives, attitudes and views of life"* (Udir, 2020, p. 5). These sentences act as assertive affirmative types of sentences. It states that this gives room for diversification and constructs solidarity and asserts an opinion that insights into different perspectives, attitudes, and views of life are necessary for living together, which is a positive declaration. There are three interesting elements from these sentences:

1. That LK20 implies an already established correct knowledge of how to live together, which the students must be given insight into, and which is to be found in having a common framework. This can create a very problematic and tense issue since claiming to have already the answers to how to co-exist is a far more complex and challenging topic that cannot require a prior stance.

2. In relation to the first finding, LK20 says *"insight in how we live together,"* referring to "we," as in "we the Norwegian nation." This possibly makes the problematic and tense issues even more significant, since the usage of a possessive pronoun like "we" established the opposition, which is the "they," in other words, it creates and upholds the inevitable dichotomy of "we" and "they," putting someone outside and someone inside of the political and national community.

3. The term solidarity may be understood as unity.

Unity is understood as a group that or is based on a community of interests, objectives, and common values. Therefore, interpreting solidarity as meaning unity is a reasonable deduction since values *"unite the Norwegian society"* (Udir, 2020, p. 4).

6.3.2 Inclusiveness and diversity

To get closer to the understanding and use of the concept of Identity in LK20, how do we understand inclusiveness and diversity in relation to identity is asked? To answer this question, we need to look at the sentences analyzed above as a whole. For this reason, I shall implement the excerpt below as it helps us paint a more comprehensive and more precise picture of how we can understand the meaning of inclusiveness and diversity. The paragraph reads:

> "Insight into **our** history and culture is essential for developing students' identity and creates belonging to society. The students will get to know the values and traditions that contribute to uniting the people in the country. Christian and humanistic heritage and tradition are a vital part of the country's overall cultural heritage and have played a central role in developing **our** democracy. The Sami cultural heritage is part of the cultural heritage in Norway. **Our** common cultural heritage has developed throughout history and will be managed by the present and future generations." (the highlights are my own) (Udir, 2020, p. 5)

Here we can talk about a dominant structure, similar to those mentioned earlier in this chapter, and in addition, the authors use a plural voice. As noticed above, the possessive pronoun "our" is

part of a "we-they" dichotomy. As Said (1995) mentioned, this is constructed by the Occident as a negation to themselves as something that we are not, in opposition to "they," the "other," or the term "Stranger," the latter two terminologies are used in Baumann and Lingis apparatus (Biesta, 2015). The distinction creates a division between "us" and "them," whereas "we" have a common assumption about "us" and what "we" assume of the "other."

There is one word that we should take further notice of the usage of the word diversity. How is diversity presented? In the heading title of subchapter 1.2, Identity and cultural diversity, the word diversity is combined with the word cultural. Other places in the texts refer to diversity in various forms, such as "diverse environment," "room for diversity," "inclusiveness and diversity," and "linguistic diversity." How is the multiple uses of forms of diversity and the link between the student's identity and diversity, as mentioned above, to be understood?

A closer look at the text, the concept of cultural diversity as a whole presents itself. First of all, it is a floating signifier that seems to encompass many different things. The combination of the adjectives "cultural" and "diversity" makes the concept a contended one, as the two words are polysemic, slippery, and illusory as analytical categories (Bayart, 2005 in Dervin, 2012 p. 181). Cultural diversity is the notion of "cultural expressions."

Furthermore, the *"school shall support the development of each person's identity, make the pupils confident in who they are."* The sentence reads that the school is responsible for supporting the development of students' identities and the assurance of their confidence in who they are. Moreover, it says that the school *"also present common values that are needed to participate in this diverse society and to open doors to the world and the future. "*(p. 6). Thus, the existential question of who I am, which here is related to the development of the individual's identity, is put in the context of the school's responsibility to convey necessary common values. These shared values are essential for the individual to participate in a diverse society and prerequisite for future opportunities.

6.4 The formation of the (politically active) democratic citizen

From subchapters 6.2 and 6.3 concerning 'Values' and 'Identity' found in LK20, we have identified what I have called ethics-as-morals, a prerequisite for developing students' identity. Another core concept in LK20 is the formation of the "democratic citizen." The formation of a politically active democratic citizen is an overall goal of the school. This is expressed in several ways and linked to morals and various forms of action. The democratic citizen has been given a place as a subchapter (1.6 Democracy and participation) in chapter 1. *Core values of the education and training* and as an interdisciplinary topic subchapter 2.5.2 in chapter 2. *Principles for education and all-round development*. The allocated space the democratic citizen is given suggests emphasizing the formation of democratic citizens. Fundamentally a citizen is an individual who is a participatory member of a political or/and national community.

The idea of citizenship and citizenship theories are multiple. Still, for the benefit of this analysis, I will stick to two types of citizenship, citizenship as status and role as elaborated in the theory chapter (see chapter 4). Several questions become relevant when looking at the democratic citizen in LK20. Firstly, what is meant by the democratic citizen, and how is it presented and described in LK20? Secondly, democracy is constitutional in Norway, and as shown, connected to 'common values.' Connolly (1993) refers to the two concepts of democracy and citizenship being required to be viewed with other concepts linked by a chain of ideas that generate meaning about the world and political life, both belonging to political discourse. This generates the question of what norms are part of being a democratic citizen? The question is asked since values can be operationalized by establishing norms, which refers to and justify underlying values. Norms again function as action-guiding rules.

Moreover, the third question, which kind of citizenship can be defined from the revised curricula? I asked the question of what can be included and what is excluded in LK20 reference to values and identity. The same question will be asked here as well, focusing on LK20's reference to the democratic citizen.

6.4.1 Democracy, the democratic citizen and values

Democracy and citizenship are controversial concepts and need to be seen in context with other concepts. In the Core curriculum, other concepts that could be used to define democracy and citizenship meaning are values and identity, combined with the notion of national and political community. The democratic citizen as a type of citizenship comes with issues of how the government can secure the individual identity process and the formation of the democratic citizen, which is required to maintain the thrive of democracy. Questions of how governments should or about what the government should do to promote the type of citizens it needs are questioned by citizenship theorists as mentioned in the theory chapter (see chapter 4). These issues are a part of the overriding goal or mandate the school holds through democratic citizenship education. How the meaning and definition of (the democratic) citizen is interpreted will impact and affect its understanding in the Core curriculum. Therefore, it is important to consider the different distinctions between different understandings of the word's citizen and citizenship.

In chapter 1.6, democracy is described as something one takes part in and learns in practice. Democracy is a theoretical concept and a practice, something you learn when performing it. In this way, the education for, about, and through democracy consists of a pedagogical approach to create experiences (practice) for the student that will act as pegs on which the theory can be hung. In other words, a bridge construction from the practical to the theoretical. The democratic citizen is an educated, competent practitioner and engaged citizen who responds productively to the world's complex dynamics by drawing on a diversity of disciplines and perspectives. A democratic citizen, according to LK20, is an individual who believes in *"democratic values"* and *"in democracy as a form of government"* (Udir, 2020, p. 9). It is an individual who understands *"the basic rules of democracy"* and *"the importance of protecting"* these rules (Udir, 2020, p.9). These rules are not conveyed in LK20 and will not be discussed further. It becomes apparent that 'the democratic citizen' is a part of perceiving citizenship as a distinctively democratic ideal, as stated by Jackson (see chapter 4) (Jackson, 2003). LK20 separates what is

described as being a democratic citizen and how to act as a democratic citizen, namely, how individuals should participate as democratic citizens in the Norwegian democracy. Participating in society requires the individual to follow and uphold specific rules. Fundamental democratic values must be endorsed and respected for the individuals to participate in society. It points out that there are underlying factors for participating in the community, i.e., some will not be able to participate in society. The basis for participating in society is whether one respects and follows fundamental democratic values and their basic rules or not. The democratic values are exemplified as *"mutual respect, tolerance, individual freedom of faith and speech, and free elections."* (Udir, 2020, p.9). Democratic values are linked to morals and action and connected to the student's individual development. The values are narrated as 'common morals' considering that these democratic values can be perceived as morals that motivate and are vital to leading a good life, as shown in *Core values of the education and training* (Udir, 2020, pp. 3-4) say that *"these values, the foundation of our democracy, shall help us live, learn and work together […]"* (Udir, 2020, p. 4).

6.4.2 The democratic values as good vs. bad

In the continuation of subchapter 1.6, LK20 states that the:

>"school shall promote democratic values and attitudes that can counteract prejudice and discrimination. Pupils shall learn in school to respect the fact that people are different and learn to solve conflicts peacefully." (Udir, 2020, p. 9)

There are different perceptions about which values, knowledge, attitudes, and dispositions are desirable in a specific society and what provides the best conditions for learning them. Democratic values and attitudes are in LK20 recognized as counter-active measures against what is considered bad or wrong, such as discrimination and prejudice being set up against democratic values, assuming democratic values as the good values and the holders of good attitudes. Note that what is perceived as discrimination and prejudice is not specified. Nevertheless, democratic values, as shown earlier, have been exemplified to some degree in LK20. Further, by looking at

the two sentences cited above, values can be interpreted as being linked to morals and action through the recommended concepts of right and the unspoken wrong behavior insinuated here. In other words, it prescribes what the individual ought to do, or at least wishes would take place in the future as a formal obligation. The democratic values then present a potential conflict between what is perceived as good/right and bad/wrong, namely, an evaluative term for questions of democratic values. We can anticipate that there is an underlying tension among the sets of values and the attitudes presented in LK20. It is of a normal understanding that there are specific good and wrong values and attitudes in the Norwegian context. The application of different values-sets, such as the Christian and humanist, and the democratic, and so on as floating denominators in an equivalence chain could be said to present in this context as obviously good, something that everybody should identify themselves with. This claim is made possible when going back to the Education Act 1-1 and the Objectives clause found in the Core curriculum, whereas mentioned before, in subsection 6.2, the values are something that everybody should agree on and should open for inclusion of everybody.

The continuation of the citation above emphasizes that students need to learn how to resolve conflicts peacefully, which directs attention to potential conflicts (and future conflicts) in society, as mentioned before. Put differently, and the statement can be read as a possibility of potential problems and conflicts and the attempted solutions to the issues. For example, an individual who possesses specific undesirable values and dispositions is recognized as wrong and might cause conflicts in society. However, suppose the school instills students with an apparatus of good values, such as respect of differences, and teaches them how to use these to resolve the conflicts without violence. In that case, these conflicts are eradicated or defeated, taking the form of antagonism.

Nevertheless, by closer observation, the sentences *"Pupils shall learn […] to respect the fact that people are different and learn to solve conflicts peacefully"* in the context with the preceding sentence seems a little vague. Firstly, it separates bad/wrong undesirable values and dispositions and good/right desirable values and personalities, suggesting a solid dividing line of acceptable behavior. Secondly, the division in light of the second sentence strengthens that even if people

are different, meaning having different sets of values and attitudes, if conflicts appear, they will be met with peaceful conflict resolution, indicating a more agonist direction. However, even though the Core curriculum mentions peaceful conflict resolutions, we need to be aware of not eradicating all conflict and only seeking and accepting the consensus. Whether consensus must be met or open for a solution ending up as 'consensus of disagreement' is not mentioned. Still, it is essential to ask, as it shifts the understanding of the "other" those on the wrong side of the desired values and dispositions from either taking forms as antagonists or agonists. Chantal Mouffe warns against creating a political landscape where conflicts are almost entirely gone because it does not produce a more successful democratic sphere, but the opposite is a deflated one. This is a sphere that citizens will turn their back on since it does not offer them a compelling political vision and identity with which they identify (Ruitenberg, 2010, p. 43). A consensual approach entails the possibility of leading to an emergence of antagonisms, and Mouffe recommends having an agonistic perspective, as it will provide the conflicts with legitimate forms of expression (Mouffe, 2005, p. 4). From the democratic values presented in the Core curriculum, it can be said that it is a particular type of democratic citizen formation the school and the Norwegian society are aiming for, where there is a strong distinction between good/right and bad/wrong values. This emphasizes the moral register, the ethics-as-morals in the Core curriculum. In other words, the Core curriculum still consists of we/they discrimination but is established in moral terms.

6.4.3 An exclusive "we"?

From these quotations shown above, the beginning of an image that there are existing groups and individuals outside of the normative Norwegian, which might threaten the Norwegian traditions, becomes apparent. Hypothetical, it is possible to ask how the Core curriculum – a part of the political discourse – deals with a plurality. Such an interpretation fits Biesta's mention of liberal political philosophy's tendency to see plurality as a threat, pointing to another question of which solution they have chosen here to resolve the issues plurality creates. Moreover, who these groups are is explicitly unclear as LK20 does not shed any light on this but instead keeps it

open for speculation and individual interpretation. However, following Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory, we can assume that this uncertainty, silence, and lack of concepts of difference are omitted to make the discourse more square, strengthening the nodal points.

It is possible to interpret that the text's authors – since the LK20 is a political management document – have considered the societal changes caused by the reactions on dealing with the increasing pluralization and globalization. In addition, the increase of radicalization and violent acts (violent extremism) might also have been taken into account as it is a concern that initiated the need for eight new institutive actions in the government's action plan against radicalization and violent extremism[10] (Solheim, 2020).

There are several types of we/they dichotomies found in the text, both belonging to six discourses – political, national, pluralization, educational, citizenship, and moral discourses - that all are intertwined with each other and has to do with identity processes and the formation of the (politically active) democratic citizen, as I have earlier in the thesis discussed. One of the types of dichotomy represented in the text above refers to the "samfunnet," society, where it is saying that participating in society entails respecting and endorsing fundamental democratic values, understood as the fundamental Norwegian democratic values. The conditions of what it means to participate in the society are linked to fundamental democratic values, where the term democracy, "demokrati" in various formulations, is the second type of dichotomy found in the text. Furthermore, these democratic values must be promoted through active participation. In addition, the term democracy is mentioned in different variations and combinations, such as, for example, *democratic*, *democratic society*, and *democratic state* fourteen times in the text, not including the main title. We can talk about the we/they dichotomy here because of the context the text belongs to, as a central tool for Norway's national management of the educational contents of the curriculum. This can be done even though no pronouns are dictating the contextualization. Here, the referring to society or democracy is seen as to the specific society and the specific democracy being Norway and not to "Other" societies or democracies. Norway

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[10]Regjeringen, 2014:
https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/6d84d5d6c6df47b38f5e2b989347fc49/handlingsplan-mot-radikalisering-og-voldelig-ekstremisme_2014.pdf Downloaded, 18.12.20

is then the "we," and the other is "they" in the we/they dichotomy. The interpretation can be viewed following Mouffe's political theory's take on the relation of we/they as antagonism and agonism, which also can be perceived as a part of the hegemonic struggle (Mouffe, 2005). There are two ways of understanding and approaching the "they" in the dichotomy of *we*, and *they* are presented here. From a post-structuralist approach discourse Chantal Mouffe perceives antagonisms as *"[…] a we/they relation in which the two sides are enemies who do not share any common ground […]"* (Mouffe, 2005, pp. 20-21). It can also be perceived as agonism. Mouffe perceives agonism as *"[…] a we/they relation where the conflicting parties although acknowledging that there is no rational solution to their conflict, nevertheless, recognize the legitimacy of their opponents"* (Mouffe, 2005, pp. 20-21). It means that they are 'adversaries' and not enemies, such as using the term antagonism. The dichotomy of good and evil can take a form of antagonism or agonism (Mouffe 2005), and it creates an inevitable separation between "us" and "them," those who are on the wrong side and those who are on the right side of the demarcation. Mouffe (2005) argues that politics is by nature a conflict-filled field and that political issues exist at all times means that choices must be made between opposing alternatives. Thus, an essential effect of politics is that it helps maintain, strengthen, and construct boundaries. The renewed national curriculum is among the political fields where conflict is possible. I will come back to the distinction between "us" and "them" and how it could be connected to Norway's nation-building project later in chapter 7.

6.4.4 Experiences as value: Listening dialogue

I have earlier in this subsection mentioned how the democratic citizen is perceived in LK20 and a more general definition of what a citizen is. So far, we can establish that values are important elements in students' democratic education, as it guides and teaches them to become democratic citizens. LK20 states that experiences such as "*experiencing democracy in practice*," being heard "*in the day-to-day affairs in school*," experience of having "*genuine influence*," "*having an impact on matters that concerns them*," and are met with mutual respect in the

dialogue between "*teacher and pupils, and between school and home*" might lead to the pupils' voices being heard in school, this again will give them the experience of "*how they can make their own considered decisions*" and as a result of these valued experiences prepares the "*pupils becoming a responsible citizen in society*" (my translations)(Udir, 2020, p. 9). There are several interesting elements found in these statements.

First, these experiences are supposed to enable students' voices to be heard; the formulation in its whole says, *"when the voices of the pupils heard in school"* (Udir, 2020, p. 9). The usage of "when" assumes and represents doubt, an uncertainty in the probability of it being fulfilled. This is an epistemic modal, but it can be used here to imply a deontic interpretation.

The second interesting element is the last sentence in subchapter 1.6: *"Such experiences have a value in the here and now, and prepare the pupils to become responsible citizens in society."* The sentence functions as a conclusion of an argument as a value assumption and a claim. It concludes and claims the importance of experiences here and now. Such experiences are also a prerequisite for the preparation of the pupils for a predeterminate outcome beneficial for society. In other words, the value assumption and claim here deals with something that LK20 says desirable and good. This is in accord with Skrede's definition of value assumptions from chapter 6.

 The third interesting finding concerns the student experiencing mutual respect in dialogue as a democratic practice the students should know. Experiencing mutual respect in dialogue enables the students' voices to be heard potentially. Thus, dialogue is associated with individuals' voices, being heard, and being a part of a valuable democratic experience that leads to responsible citizens. Which kind of dialogue is presented in LK20? However, to get a further grasp on what LK20 means with mutual respect in dialogue and its significance for the students' identity development and becoming democratic citizens, we need to turn to another subchapter in LK20, namely subchapter 2.1, *Social learning and development (Udir, 2020, pp. 10-11)*. Here dialogue holds a much more significant role than presented in subchapter 1.6. Dialogue is "*crucial in social learning*" and is connected to listening.

Furthermore, the school is responsible for teaching the students the value and importance of "*a listening dialogue to deal with opposition*" (Udir, 2020, p. 11). LK20, as we can see, treats listening dialogue as a tool in encountering the opposition. From our earlier findings, we can draw a line between a "we" and a "they" here. The opposition can easily be said to be the "they," the "other" in this citation. The opposition is perceived as something that needs to be dealt with. If they mean that the opposition is a threat or not is hard to say for sure, but it is a possible interpretation as we know that liberal democracies tend to perceive plurality as a threat to the status quo of the society (see chapter 1).

Moreover, listening dialogue acts as a communicative model that the teachers must promote as it "*will give the pupils the confidence and courage to express their own opinions and point out issues on behalf of others*" (my translation) (Udir, 2020, p. 11). In addition, dialogue is connected to individual development, participation, responsibility, and social cohesion: "*to learn to listen to others and also argue for one's own views will give the pupils the platform for dealing with disagreements and conflicts, and for seeking solutions together*" (Udir, 2020. p. 11). Social learning is important for the individual to be able to participate in society. It contributes to students' identity formation. When LK20 connects dialogue, listening with students' "*courage to express their own opinions and point out issues on behalf of others*," we can ask if they are dealing with recognition. Nevertheless, pointing out issues on behalf of other demands being able to see the world according to the perspective they take on, coloring in the other's place can be confused with appropriating the speech and claims, the culture or the mode of expression, even despoiling them of its resources of endurance and claim. In other words, it can create exclusion of other people's claims of identity.

6.4.5 Experiences as value: The responsible citizen

If we look at the text in its original language, Norwegian, the term for the word citizen being used translates to "samfunnsborger." As we saw in Chapter 4, there are several variants of the

meaning of the word *citizen* in Norwegian, whether that is "samfunnsborger," "statsborger" or "medborger." The term citizen or citizenship used in the Core curriculum can be understood and used as the one found in Brochmann's understanding of "samfunnsborger" citizen and "samfunnsborgerskap" citizenship. The usage of "samfunnsborger" (citizen), which we have seen according to Brochmann, is a collective term for both "statsborger" and "medborger" is interesting because, as a collective name, it includes the citizenship concept as a status and role or, in other words, as political and social. As mentioned earlier, a discussion of what this kind of citizen or citizenship contains holds substantial meaning for understanding the use and significance in LK20. Nevertheless, the text tells us more about the values, attitudes, knowledge, dispositions, and responsibility the students should acquire and support than which kind of citizen they are promoting, citizenship as status or role.

However, LK20 talks about citizen or citizenship as status in one of the paragraphs in subchapter 1.6, referring to the democratic society established on the *"idea that all citizens have equal rights and opportunities to participate in the decision-making processes"* (Udir, 2002, p. 9). Such an interpretation is possible since it mentions rights and the possibility for participating in decision-making processes, which can be understood as the right to free election and free vote. Citizenship as status is an individual who has been granted a Norwegian passport and has full participation rights in the Norwegian state. Moreover, it specifies that "all citizens have equal rights," but does that mean all the citizen who has citizenship as status, or do they indicate "all citizen" being both those who carry citizenship as status and role? Brochmann's definition of "samfunnsborger" and LK20's choice of the word "samfunnsborger" in conjunction with LK20 stating that "a democracy is based on the idea that all citizens" suggests an interpretation that the citizen ("samfunnsborgeren") and citizenship in LK20 is to be understood as both those who possess citizenship as status ("statsborger") and those who have citizenship as role ("medborger"). This is consistent with the title of subchapter 2.5.2 (demokrati og medborgerskap, translation democracy and citizenship). They use the word "medborgerskap" to represent citizenship, eliminating the understanding of citizenship as just status.

Moreover, LK20 distinguishes between what they consider acceptable behaviors a citizen can have, as they mention "the pupils becoming responsible citizens in society," connecting citizen to responsibility. Responsibility is something that Biesta discusses in his book *Beyond learning* and relates to the democratic person and education and will be discussed in chapter 9. The text may seem somewhat contradictory when operating with such a form of civic practice. They try not to exclude, but still, they set strict limits for who is included by referring to desirable and acceptable citizen behaviors, values, and dispositions, a specific citizen identity. Nevertheless, to be a (democratic) citizen is not limited to having a specific citizen identity. According to Mouffe, citizen identity is only one of many identities the citizen possesses. For example, when an individual acts as a democratic citizen, the person does so following democratic principles and a political identity common to all citizens (Mouffe, 1992, p. 29).

It cannot be overlooked that when the translators have translated the core curriculum of LK20, they have chosen to use the modal verb shall, where several places in its original language Norwegian use variants of shall and must among several. Unfortunately, this creates minor nuances in the English version, resulting in an unused linguistic interpretive framework and losing some of the points and findings made in the original language. Why they have chosen this one can speculate, and I have decided to clarify this because I believe they have more or less consciously chosen the modal verb shall because it is of a median-value modal while must is a high-value modal. This means that *must* as a high-value modal is the most powerful obligation used formally, while should (should) be the weakest. This strengthens the interpretation that epistemic modality is used to imply a deontic interpretation.

6.5 Summary

The analyses demonstrate tensions within the educational, political discourse, moral, pluralistic, and national discourse. In addition, the study shows how the intentions behind LK20 involve tensions and ambiguities that must be dealt with when implementing the curriculum.

First, the text speaks from a starting point about a "we," this "we" forms as a pronounced community, namely the Norwegian democracy.

Second, from the findings, there is an apparent unspoken antagonism, a "them," who is outside and in opposition to the Norwegian political and national community. However, who is the unspoken antagonism, the "them" which is implicitly mentioned in the revised curricula? The exclusivity and inclusivity that emerge through discursive formations in the Core Curriculum have both a cause and an impact on the hegemonic popular perception of the democratic citizen and who is included or excluded from the Norwegian national and political community.

Third, a specific assigned identity is found in LK20, which can be problematized since often there is a certain distance between identities that individuals want for themselves and the assigned identities. This particular identity is highly linked to the 'common values' as they are a prerequisite for forming and developing the student's identities and predetermined becoming democratic citizens. Thus, the formation of the democratic citizen becomes paramount for maintaining democracy. Because the democracy needs its citizens to exist, according to Jackson (2003) and Kivisto and Faist (2007), and these citizens must uphold specific 'common values' in order to be good democratic citizens. Instead of 're-establishing, 'protecting,' and 'strengthening' these so-called 'common values,' the particular identity and the democratic citizen, I argue in chapter 9 for criticizing, renegotiating, and discussing the playing rules, the moral consensus on which the Norwegian society is built.

Fourth, LK20 can be perceived as highly normative, and the deontic modality in the analyzed text is excessive. There is nothing to choose from; here, it is just a matter of actions. The circumstances are given, while the actors who must react are human. Thus, it attaches something deterministic. Several characteristics of the text help construct a relationship between the national, the political, the students, and the school. First, the rhetorical structure of the text follows a problem-solving format. The problem is the indisputable and inevitable reality we face – the maintenance of democracy and political participation – and the solution is what we must do to maintain and develop democracy, the status quo, and that is to produce democratic political active, responsible citizens. A relationship is structured between what "is"

and what we "must" – a connection between realities and necessities that excludes the choice of other political possibilities. Undeniable external circumstances trigger processes that are to be implemented nationally.

In his essay "A basic problem in pedagogical philosophy, " Hans Skjervheim (1968) states that having fixed norms and values is one thing but saying that we must have them to educate others is another. Even if we walk around telling each other that we need values and norms, it is not guaranteed that we will have norms and values. The importance of transferring common values, securing a particular identity in the individual identity process, and the formation of democratic citizens in the Core curriculum to the students also does not come with a guarantee; it might even end up creating a paradox in the schools educational and societal mandate, which we will see later can lead to antagonisms. Skjervheim believes that talking about what we must have, such as norms and values, is ideological rather than philosophical. Because the context is political, speaking ideologically in work with the Objectives clause may appear simple. However, it is critical to attempt to speak philosophically rather than simply referring to what is valuable and functional (Bostad, 2008, p. 152).

PART VI   DISCUSSION

This part of the thesis (part VI – Discussion) is twofold, consisting of chapter *7, Enabling the production of antagonisms: From tensions to negative radicalization and violent extremism* and chapter *8 A dialogical approach as a preventive measure: The school as a platform for agonistic dialogue*. The chapters are split into two parts as chapter 7 answers part of the thesis main issue and the objectives and answers the second research question. Furthermore, chapter 7 is connected to chapter 8 since chapter 7 shows how and which kind of antagonisms could be produced as a cause to the focus on values in the formation of the democratic citizen and the identity process, and chapter 8 discusses how these antagonisms could potentially be prevented by applying an agonistic dialogical approach as a pedagogical tool for use in school, answering the third research question.

7. Enabling the production of antagonisms: From tensions to negative radicalization and violent extremism

7.1 Introduction

This chapter follows a discussion on how the focus on common values act as a prerequisite for the development of individuals' identity process in their formation into becoming (politically active) democratic citizens – or as Biesta formulates and argues against, the *"idea of democratic education as a process of the production of the democratic person […]"* (Biesta, 2020, p. 10) – potentially forms a paradox, becoming paradoxical. A paradox where the schools' educational mandate and the society's intention and goal of forming politically active democratic citizens instead create exclusion of individuals and groups of individuals. Exclusion as such can potentially lead to types of antagonisms such as negative radicalization and violent extremism. How it can lead to specific forms of antagonisms, as mentioned above, will be elaborated on in-depth. This brings us back to the thesis issue: *How can potentially Norway's focus on values in the formation of the democratic citizen and its identity process through the school's mandate enable the*

construction of antagonisms? In trying to answer this question, I will firstly discuss how the focus on the formation of the democratic citizen and the lack of sense of belonging can produce negative radicalization and violent extremism, which is tied to the first objective of this thesis. Secondly, how common values and an individual's identity can crate tensions and play a vital role in producing antagonisms, answering the second research question.

7.2 A production of politically active democratic citizens and belonging

There is a conscious discussion in today's societies concerning identities, such as social, national, citizenship, and political identities, among others. This led to the question of which identity(-s) LK20 promotes. The tension between the assigned identities identified in chapter 6 requires further questioning about what such tensions can lead to. As the overall goals of the school works as a critical tools for promoting social equality and increased integration in the Norwegian society, and thus for preserving, developing, and sustaining its democratic form of government, the future form of democracy is dependent on rising generations having value visions in which they have faith in the democratic values upon which society is founded, as well as a socio-political commitment. The Norwegian democracy's stability depends on the school successfully instilling, creating, and producing individuals that uphold and share the same belief in democratic values, in other words, the formation of democratic citizens. Such an understanding of the relationship between the Norwegian democracy and the democratic educational responsibility of the school coincides with Biesta's argument of the influence from the Enlightenment philosopher's belief in democracy's necessity of rational individuals. The school's overall goals: its social and educational mandate and its relationship with democracy are further strengthened if we consider and integrate Kymlicka and Norman's (2000) perception of modern democracy's dependencies on its citizens for stability. Kymlicka and Norman write that:

> "The stability of a modern democracy depends not only on the justice of the institutions
> of which it is composed but also on the characteristics and attitudes of its citizens. In

other words, democracy depends on the citizens' understanding of identity and how they view competing forms of national, regional, ethnic, or religious identities; of their ability to tolerate and work with people who are different from themselves; as well as their desire to participate on the political process to promote the common good and to hold the authorities accountable." (Kymlicka & Norman in Gullestad, 2002, p. 282)

In LK20, democratic education can be thought of as promoting the production of particular identities or subjectivities, inserting students into an already existing social order. It may seem like the Norwegian construction of nationality is an expression of sameness and communality. We can call it the community of values.

One of the discourses mentioned in the introduction chapter and found in chapter 6 is a pluralistic discourse. We have also seen that Norway wants to appear as a pluralistic society (see 6.2). A pluralistic society is one in which individuals can select the life they want to live, citizens can attain the goals they set for themselves, and citizens have the freedom to make decisions that affect them. Individual freedom ideas are an essential contribution of liberals to society, and they are a cause that everyone should work toward. However, we must abandon the pursuit of consensus, agreement, and a harmonious common will. In the present, we must accept and value disagreements and what Mouffe refers to as agonisms, which refer to political conflict between opponents (Mouffe, 2005). Therefore, we can ask if there might be a need for a new conception of the democratic citizen that is different from the already existing alternatives? Alternatively, maybe rethink the focus on the formation of the democratic citizen overall and shift the focus to the individual's self-identity processes and the affective dimension of their development. Our identity as citizens and democratic citizens should be one of (if chosen) identities. However, how can we conceptualize our identities as individuals and democratic citizens without sacrificing one for the other? Mouffe claims that the issue at hand is reconciling our shared membership or belonging in different communities of values, language, culture, and our common membership in a political community whose rules we must accept (Mouffe, 1992, pp. 29-30). One issue could be attributed to the way we conceptualize the political and national community and how we belong to the political and national community, in other words, citizenship.

7.3 Common values and individuals Identity

The previous chapter (see chapter 6) analyzed the meaning and interpretations of three selected concepts, *Values*, *Identity*, and *The democratic citizen*, in light of the renewed curriculum LK20. We could see how the school's social mandate and especially how common values are linked to the development of nation-building, democracy, and democratic citizenship. Even though Biesta (2010, p. 557) contends that the only way to democratic citizenship is through participation in democratic processes and practices, the assumption is that such participation should produce the democratic citizen – that is to say, the individual who possesses democratic skills, knowledge, values, and dispositions. Biesta refers to this as a psychological view of democratic education because the educational task is to conceive of producing a specific type of individual by working on the individual's mind and body (Biesta, 2010, p. 557). If we follow this perspective, democratic education becomes a form of moral education. I showed how LK20 could be said to promote ethics-as-morals, which we can take to mean that there is a moral education aspect in the democratic education of LK20. A form of moral education in democratic education has its task to create a person with a particular set of moral qualities and dispositions (Biesta, 2010, p. 557). Such an assumption does not come without problems. As I have said earlier, a hidden paradox might exist in the schools' educational mandate, a tension that potentially produces antagonisms. Since LK20 is a political management document, there is an underlying political intention behind the formulations found in the text, and its significance for the student's formation and development, which we have seen, is greatly connected to students becoming (a politically active) democratic citizen. This predetermined result is achieved by shaping the student's identity through insight and knowledge of the nation's history and culture. Also, different sets of values, attitudes, and dispositions act as prerequisites for democratic citizenship. In a broader sense, it decides who ends up outside society and who belongs to the inside, a "we" and "they" discrimination. Tensions between an individual's sets of identities and the desirable identity promoted in LK20 could cause conflicts that paradoxically produce types of

antagonisms instead of democratic citizens, such as negative radicalization and violent extremism.

I will now focus on how potentially this paradox in the formation of the democratic citizen enables the construction of antagonisms such as individuals and groups of individuals succumbing to negative radicalization and violent extremism.

7.3.1 A focus on Collective identities: identification and instinctive dispositions

The affective dimension of politics is crucial for democratic theory and, therefore, for democratic education, the development of the democratic citizen. Drawing from Freud's analysis of the process of 'identification,' Mouffe says that it brings out the libidinal investment that is at work in the creation of collective identities and that it gives us essential pointers regarding the emergence of antagonisms (Mouffe, 2005, p. 25). According to Mouffe, the requirement of people to identify with a collective identity gives them an idea of themselves that they can valorize, which needs to be in order to act politically. The idea of themselves and identifying with a collective identity is also essential in other areas of people's lives than just in political discourse (Mouffe, 2005). Mouffe states that "*it offers not only policies but also identities which can help people make sense of what they are experiencing as well as giving them hope for the future*" (Mouffe, 2005, p. 25). Freud presents a view of society where there is always a threat of dissolution due to the instinctive disposition to aggression in humans. Freud says that "*men are not gentle creatures who want to be loved, and at the most can defend themselves if they are attacked; they are, on the contrary, creatures among whose instinctual endowments is to be reckoned a powerful share of aggressiveness*." (Freud in Mouffe, 2005, p. 25). To keep those aggressive instincts in check, civilization must employ a variety of methods.

One of these is the promotion of communal bonds through the activation of love's libidinal instincts, which he calls the principle of transfer. As he claims in Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego (2001a), "*a group is clearly held together by some kind of power: and to what*

power could this feat be better ascribed than to Eros, which holds everything in the world?". The goal is to forge strong identifications among community members, tying them together in a shared identity. A collective identity, a "we," is the result of the libidinal investment, but this entails the determination of a "they." Is it this effect the Core curriculum is hoping to impose on the students? From what was found in the analysis, a common framework, such as common values and a particular set of identity, like the collective and the democratic citizen, are elements to emphasize and create a unity of the people living in Norway. However, as Freud mentions, we also need the principle of transfer, an activation of love's libidinal instincts. We can then ask where the love is? Where do the affection dimension, the people's passions come in? From what the analysis shows, no aspects touch upon the affection dimension of the individual's development in the Core curriculum. There is no focus on the principle of transfer. To be sure, Freud did not see all oppositions as enmity, but he was well aware that they could. Freud indicated that *"it is always possible to bind together a considerable amount of people in love, so long as there are other people left over to receive the manifestation of their aggressiveness"* (Freud in Mouffe 2005, pp. 25-26). In such a case, the "we-they"-relation becomes one of enmity; in other words, it becomes antagonistic.

A too strong emphasis on a particular set of identities such as the collective identity and a "we-they" relation might instead create the feeling of alienation, estrangement, and exclusion for both the political and national community. Democratic theory frequently ignores the issues of collective identity formation. They are, however, endemic to modern political life. Nationalism, as the most powerful collective identity discourse, appears in both projects of unity and division. Boundary definitions and collective identity formation are critical components of the modern world system of states' construction of a political community (Calhoun,2007, p. 80). In the Norwegian curriculum, the cultural heritage is particularly linked to the collective national identity; Christian and humanistic values are said to unite the people of Norway as a society (see chapter 6). Halldis Breidlid says that the use of *"culture's narratives in the search for the" roots" for many is a way of curbing the late modern interest's apparent dissolution of identity*." (Breidlid, 2017, p. 16) Amin Maalouf warns against placing one-sided emphasis on the culture one comes

from. Although roots can be an important part of our identity, the picture is more complex because life and identity are also affected by events and experiences we encounter on the "routes" we follow (Breidlid, 2017). According to Maalouf, what characterizes everyone's Identity is complex, unique, and irreplaceable, and cannot be confused with anyone else (Maalouf, 1999, p. 21). The complexity enriches the Identity, compared to the focus on only one affiliation. The focus on one affiliation can potentially lead to individuals' self-identity or Identity, as in multiple different identities disappearing or not developing, in other words killing the Identity. The same is the case where the individual does not feel any belonging, but the individual will search for other places to belong in such a case. Mouffe warns against this as a lack of alternatives (2005). Thus, the focus on one affiliation can lead to individuals becoming negatively radicalized and ending up in violent extremist movements.

Furthermore, according to Freud, the evolution of civilization is marked by a conflict between two basic types of libidinal instinct, Eros, the instinct of life, and Death, the instinct of aggression and destruction. However, Freud also emphasized that "*the two kinds of instinct seldom – perhaps – appears in isolation from each other but are alloyed with each other in varying and very different proportions and so become unrecognizable to our judgment*." (Freud, 2001b, p. 119) The aggressive instinct can never be eliminated. However, Freud discusses several methods to disarm it and weaken its destructive potential in his book. Mouffe suggests that democratic institutions understood in an agonistic way can contribute to disarming of the libidinal forces leading towards hostility. Which she claims are always present in human societies (Mouffe, 2005). I draw a line of equalness between the aggressive libidinal instincts/forces which can lead to hostility and the causes for an individual becoming (negatively) radicalized and ending as a violent extremist.

However, there is no simple explanation for why individuals are (negatively)radicalized and become violent extremists since the cause of radicalization varies. Although it is difficult to give concrete answers as to why individuals are radicalized, specific driving forces or motivational factors may be causing the radicalization. We have already established individuals' sense of belonging to society as imperative for maintaining and legitimizing the government and the

democratic state. The search for belonging and security is one of several causes of individuals' negative radicalization. In addition, we find cases where the individual or group of individuals is driven by political and ideological goals and gets involved due to the suffering of others, according to the National Digital Learning Arena (NDLA) (FN-sambandet, 08.05.2020). The NDLA lists four categories of possible causes of radicalization:

> 1) The search for belonging and security - extremists, driven by a desire for belonging, friendship and protection.

> 2) Idealism and injustice - extremists who are driven by political and ideological goals and get involved because of the suffering of others.

> 3) Social frustration - extremists driven by a settlement with a bad past or life situation and who may have experienced violence, discrimination, and substance abuse.

> 4) The search for excitement or meaning in life - extremists, driven by fantasies of being a hero who fights violently for the "good" against the "evil." (FN-sambandet, 2020)

It is primarily the search for belonging and security and Idealism and injustice that are relevant to us in this thesis. Anja Dalgaard-Nielsen (2008, part II) writes that there are three promising paths of the investigation into individual psychology that could aid in determining the factor that leads to (negative) radicalization. One approach is based on psychodynamic theory, one on cognitive theory, and the last one on Identity theory. Erik Erikson's Identity Theory focuses on the formative stages of a person's life and contends that ideologies may aid in identity formation for young individuals in search of identity and that *"[...] joining terrorist groups can act as a string' identity stabilizer', providing the young adult with a sense of belonging, worth and purpose."* (Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2008, p.7).

From a Freudian psychology perspective, the basic assumption shared by psychodynamic approaches to the study of terrorism is that early childhood developments shape mental life, and much of mental life is unconscious. According to this viewpoint, psychological development occurs in stages based on infantile sexual fantasies. Unresolved intra-psychic tension associated with these fantasies is thought to cause psychological distress. Repression or projection of unpleasant or unacceptable thoughts and emotions onto an external object is the psychological

mechanism for dealing with such distress (unpleasant or socially unacceptable thoughts) (Dalgaard-Nielsen, 2008, part II). The lack of political opportunities, social exclusion, disaffection, and other factors are frequently included reasons why some individuals become negatively radicalized and might end up as violent extremists.

Therefore, it is fundamental and crucial to establishing we/them (us/them) discrimination, which is compatible with pluralist democracy like Norway. Nevertheless, also compatible with the fact that we need alternatives to keep developing the democracy, rendering the focus on common values, a particular set of identities, and the formation of the politically active democratic citizen as obstacles, hindrances in the way to creating alternatives to the status quo.

Furthermore, I agree with Mouffe in her suggestion that agonistic democratic institutions could prevent aggressive libidinal forces. For that reason, I argue for an agonistic dialogical approach as a preventive measure in the following chapter (see chapter 8), where the school as the democratic institution becomes an agonistic platform of dialogue.

7.4 Summary

In chapter 7, we saw how the we/they relation found in the analysis chapter (see chapter 6) creates a distinction and tension between those excluded and those included in the political and national community. This tension can construct antagonisms in the form of negative radicalization and violent extremism. The focus on values in the formation of the politically active democratic citizen and its identity process does not necessarily produce democratic citizens. LK20's promotion of particular sets of identity - like a collective, a national, or a democratic citizenship identity -, values (democratic, Christian and humanistic values), attitudes and dispositions may not fit in with a pluralistic society making a paradox.

Furthermore, when the focus is too heavy on having common values and a collective identity to belong to the political and national community, this would either push the libidinal instinct in a negative or positive direction. Nevertheless, there is no general rule for why individuals get

negatively radicalized or become violent extremists. However, many researchers use Identity theory to help to explain and emphasize that a sense of belonging and security is paramount for the individual's identification and self-identity.

I suggest, like Mouffe, we can prevent individuals from becoming negatively radicalized or violent extremists, focusing on agonistic pluralism. The Norwegian school is perceived to be a democratic institution for which an agonistic dialogical approach as a pedagogical tool for preventing and counteracting against negative radicalization and violent extremism could be applied.

8. A dialogical approach as preventive measure: School as an agonistic platform for dialogue

8.1 Introduction

17th of June 2020, VG, a Norwegian newspaper, released news that the Norwegian government introduced a revised version of the earlier preventive measures against violent extremism (-and radicalism) from 2014[11], which included eight new institutive actions[12] (Solheim, 2020). A part of the further institutive steps mentions developing support resources for schools and kindergartens. Behind some of the reasoning for this new addition Erna Solberg, the Prime Minister of Norway exclaimed to VG, is the increase of attacks originating from radical and extremist individuals or groups (from PST's latest threat assessment). She said that after the attack in New Zealand, they could see a flourishing of radicalized thinking and actions worldwide. With the new measures in the preventive action plan, there would be a national guidance function. This guidance aims to make it easier for employees in the public or the private sector and private individuals who may have such con to help deal with the concerns that someone is becoming radicalized. The Minister of justice Monica Mæland stated after the publication of the new plan that "*This is about winning new tools and new ways of working in step with the societal changes we are seeing.*" (Solheim, 2020).

The statements in the news article focus on ongoing societal changes worldwide, and Norway is not an exception to these tendencies. Tension from the actuality of a plurality of social identities and the singular identity implied by citizenship. In this chapter, I will present and discuss a hypothetical idea of how agonistic dialogical tools can be used as preventing measures against negative radicalization and violent extremism. This contributes to the support resources for schools in (en)-countering negative radicalization and violent extremism. I see the school as a

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[11] https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/6d84d5d6c6df47b38f5e2b989347fc49/handlingsplan-mot-radikalisering-og-voldelig-ekstremisme_2014.pdf Downloaded, 18.12.20

[12] https://www.vg.no/nyheter/i/JojzdR/med-disse-tiltakene-vil-regjeringen-bekjempe-radikalisering Downloaded, 10.09.20

central (primary) actor for prevention in line with Bjørgo's holistic prevention strategy (Bjørgo, 2013). However, I do not claim that an agonistic dialogical approach will eradicate or actually will have a successful result in preventing negative radicalization and violent extremism.

So far, we have seen how a particular focus of specific concepts (common values, collective identity, and the democratic citizen) enables antagonisms, such as negative radicalization and violent extremism. Now, I shall turn to the second main objective of the thesis, which discusses how what I have chosen to call an agonistic dialogical approach might function as a preventive measure against the issue of an increase of negative radicalization and violent extremism in today's Norway. What is being argued here is not just applicable for schools but can be applied in various forms in the overall society.

Citizens achieving dialogue competence is of importance for the sake of democratic participation. This is education for and through democracy and has support from researchers like Janicke Heldal Stray and Emil Sætra (2016). However, I argue against Stray and Sætra's arguments emphasizing dialogue competence to secure students in becoming politically active democratic citizens. I believe that this focus creates tensions between individuals and groups of individuals, as shown earlier in the thesis, and can act as polarizing.
Dialogue as competence should instead be of priority to promote and support the individual's subjectivity, self-identity, understanding, tolerance, and willingness to listen to others, without focusing on the formation of the (politically active) democratic citizen.

First, I will discuss the meaning and definition of an agonistic dialogical approach and clarify using examples how such an approach might act as a beneficial tool in preventing negative radicalization and violent extremism.
Secondly, listening is an essential aspect of dialogue. Listening is mentioned in LK20 as listening dialogue. Therefore, I will present why listening as a part of an agonistic dialogical approach must be emphasized and seen as imperative to the agonistic dialogue and the school as an agonistic

platform. Other factors need to be established first, such as trusting relationships, safe space, and motivation to enable dialogue and listening.

8.2 Agonistic dialogue as a preventive measure against negative radicalization and violent extremism

> "*Dialogue belongs to the nature of human beings, as beings of communication. Dialogue seals the act of knowing, which is never individual, even though it has its individual dimension.*" (Freire & Shor, 1987, pp. 4-5).

Dialogue and listening are not new in the educational perspective, and they are both skills that students must acquire according to LK20. I suggest here to use the already existing skills students must acquire but put a stronger emphasis on them and see them as a means to prevent negative radicalization and violent extremism.

I argue for an agonistic dialogical approach taking inspiration from Chantal Mouffe's argument (2005) for an agonistic political discussion and a pluralistic agonism in (democratic) education. This is a discussion where disagreement is the constructive starting point rather than a threat. In an agonistic discussion, the participants are not looking for consensus, but neither are they interested in turning disagreement into a conflict. Agonism is not antagonism: that means that those who disagree are not necessarily enemies. The difference is constitutive of thought, action, and identity, and democratic units must be aware of this. A pluralistic agonism emphasizes passion, affect, and imagination in education, orienting toward disagreement rather than consensus.

I will here try to use Sigmund Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* to explain that it is possible to bring about specific changes necessary to alleviate the individual's internal needs, as an escape valve, as a tendency towards stability, following the principle of constancy, work of the mental apparatus in order to keep the amount of anguish low. I do not intend to explain the whole theory but only substantiate an essential idea, which should be well accepted and used

mainly in schools, which is considered an environment part of the individual's training. *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* is one of Freud's inaugural psychoanalysis metapsychology texts (Freud, 1961). Here Freud talks about the power of repetitions in the individual's life. From repetitive thoughts, situations, and actions throughout life, for example, with individuals who change partners to improve abusive relationships and always enter other abusive relationships. Just ahead of Freud's work in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, he introduced the instinct or drive of death. As strange as it may seem, the death drive may appear at some point for the subject to be able to give an account of life, for example, an individual who practices self-mutilation with the discourse that they do to buffer anguish.

Another example is a student who entered a school with a gun in his hand[13]. It was an act of the individual, certainly involving repetitive, distressing thoughts. In this case, the individual used a deadly way to account for his suffering. The death instinct can exit through two biases, one that can be destructive or the other considered creative, that is, creative when the individual has magnificent exits for a distressing situation. Jacques Lacan reads Freud's drive theory and introduces the notion of jouissance[14]. It contains all those inherent exits of each individual.

So, how can a dialogical approach prevent radicalization and violent extremism? For Freud, the mental apparatus serves the biological purpose of meeting the subjects' necessary internal needs in a changing and largely indifferent external environment. These needs are expressed through "drives"; quantitative demands on the mental apparatus to perform work like to produce the specific changes necessary to relieve current internal conditions. The apparatus's general functioning is governed by a regulatory mechanism known as the "pleasure principle." With this principle, *value* is assigned to mental performances according to a formula whereby the successful meeting of inner needs in the external world (a quantitative reduction in drive pressure) is felt qualitatively as pleasure. Unsuccessful performances or deteriorating external circumstances (a quantitative increase in drive tension) is deemed qualitatively as unpleasure.

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[13] Carlisle: https://time.com/5705756/video-coach-shooter-hug-portland/ and The New York Times: https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/20/us/oregon-football-coach-student-shotgun.html

[14] Jouissance is left untranslated in the work of Lacan in order to help convey its specialized usage. In French, the notion means enjoyment, both of rights and property and sexual orgasm. Poststructuralism denotes a transgressive, excessive kind of pleasure linked to the division and splitting of the subject involved.

This is the origin and purpose, the "why" of affect. It assigns *value* to the state of the mental apparatus by registering its biological consequences in consciousness. Although the assigning of affect value is an elemental/instinctive mechanism crucial for reproductive survival, it is necessarily registered in the form of personal experiences like "what does this mean to me?". This feedback of affect, in turn, modifies and motivates the individual's subsequent behavior. Suppose we understand *value* as involving ethics, cultural and social values, and morals (ethics-as-morals), like our finding in LK20. In that case, the individual's ability to develop its autonomy can be influenced by its mental apparatus affect (the feedback of affect) to the "pleasure principle," by either feeling pleasure or unpleasure. As a result, it might behave accordingly, enabling the possibility of resulting in violence. What the individual identifies as unsuccessful performances or deteriorating external circumstances – felt as unpleasure - and which value it holds to them is subjective to each person because value happens on either an individual level or societal level. The pleasure, the enjoyment jouissance, can also drive it. We see that the affection dimension, the people's passions, and the principle of Transfer (love) are all vital elements to the individual's conceptualization of sense of belonging, to their formation and development of their subjectivity, and in all to their behavior. These cannot be forced on through the production of sameness, as it might become paradoxical, ending in creating antagonisms.

As this is a complex theory, I have substituted it with psychoanalytic listening at school. Because with listening comes speech, a factor in triggering the Transfer, also discussed by Freud in his texts, as a working tool in the office. As we saw, listening and students' voices are contributing factors in experiencing democracy in practice, which according to the Core curriculum, will contribute to the formation of politically active democratic (responsible)citizens (see chapter6.4 and 6.4.1-6.4.4). Jacques Lacan's work also widely talked about and discussed the Transfer. Freud explains the Transfer straightforwardly. He says that Transfer is love; it is repetition when facing our own love story with new lived experiences. We repeat in the Transfer of affections, identifications, and demands for love according to our experiences since birth, constantly repeated with new characters throughout life. According to Christian Dunker, Transfer is the

miniature of our neuroses; it concentrates on our neuroses (Dunker & Thebas, 2019). To trigger the Transfer, Lacan says, there are crucial factors such as spontaneous speech, full speech, and the individual's authentic speech who speaks to the other. That is because love is in all relationships. We are then back to the focus on the individual's feelings, experiences, opinions, and views in dialogue—a focus on the affections. In the example of the student who brought a gun to the school intending to kill his classmates, we can say that at that moment he was hugged by the teacher, dropped the gun, there was a good transfer there, to the teacher's luck. Because Transfer is a universal phenomenon, it explains pathologies.

Furthermore, because the Transfer accesses through full speech, it can happen outside the offices, and it can happen everywhere, including schools, which make the Transfer highly important for the individual to develop a sense of belonging to the political and national community, without focusing on (democratic) citizen identity, or the collective identity as what makes you included (belong) in the community. Julie Ræstad Owe pointed out that "without room for alternative perspectives" is the polar opposite of the preconditions of dialogue, which imply a willingness to test one's views in interactions with others (Owe, 2018). This statement is in accordance with Mouffe and her view on the lack of alternatives and the dangers that this leads toward. Dialogue can be said to be the direct opposite of radicalism. Moreover, Owe says that:

Through the use and training of dialogue, young people will be able to practice resilience and tolerance in views, attitudes, and understanding of reality, and this is precisely where the importance of dialogue in early prevention of radicalization becomes clear: it can counteract the views becoming so steep that it does not is room for alternative opinions (my translation) (Owe, 2018, p. 177).

The statement from Owe fits right into the school as an agonistic dialogical platform and for the student's learning and the acquisition of competence in dialogue.

The dialogue has enormous potential in terms of current issues, relationship building, and preventive work in general. It is critical that individuals feel heard and respected. According to Owe, "*the dialogue knowledge one builds in those who participate in dialogue leads to an increased level of reflection, critical thinking, and understanding of other people and views,*" and

"*there are important qualities and knowledge that will make a person less vulnerable to radicalization*." (2018, p. 184). This leads us further to look at school and the classroom as possible agonistic dialogical platforms.

8.2.1 The school and classroom as an agonistic dialogical platform

The school and classroom are an excellent analogy for the Norwegian national and political community. From Freud, we have seen how values affect the individual's feeling of pleasure or unpleasure, where negative feelings like unpleasure might lead to the aggressive instinct, which can further lead to violence. Therefore, communication should not be interpreted as "our common values" in classroom discussions and dialogues since individuals' values and cultural identity might differ from those expressed as "our common values" and create drives of unpleasure. The school's value communication on controversial or complex topics, for example, should instead be understood as countercultural, in the sense of teaching in such a way that challenges students' points of view and actions. There is an inconsistency between myths about what is generally accepted opinions, or in other words, what is politically correct, and everyday life, where topics like abortion and anti-Semitism are not just something "other people" do. Values should instead be emphasized as something that justifies actions and not something that creates democratic citizens and legitimizes the community.

Moreover, for the students to be able to experience democracy in practice, they needed to be met with mutual respect in dialogue, according to LK20. Furthermore, as we saw in chapter 6.4, mutual respect in dialogue enables the student's voices to be heard, potentially. Therefore, one task for the school and the teachers/educators will be to clarify the difference between dialogue and debate. Many might believe or experience that this is a conversational model that assumes that the other is an opponent who needs to be defeated. However, taking on an agonistic perspective in discussions instead of an antagonistic, the opponents are viewed as adversaries.

Mouffe sees adversaries as a part of a we-they relation where the conflicting parties recognize their opponents' legitimacy (Mouffe, 2005, p. 20).

A survey conducted by Dag Husebø, Geir Skeie, Ann Kristin Tokheim Allacio, and Torunn Helene Bjørnevik (2019) revealed that the terms discussion, debate, and dialogue elicited a range of emotional responses, which students confirmed during a feedback session. They perceived dialogue to be more soft, open, and friendly than discussion, which they perceived negatively. Several students associated the term discussion with their parents when they attempted to solve difficult situations with a passive-aggressive – "we are just discussing" – attitude. Students tended to interpret the debate as a rhetorical battle in which participants sought to defeat opponents without really listening to the arguments (Husebø et al., 2019). Therefore, dialogue, discussion, and debate should be emphasized with a minimal negative connotation.

I suggest that an affective dimension, affective models, is applied to the learning process, such as dialogue competence in school. These models emphasize students' emotions and the cognitive aspect. Empathy for others will here be cultivated and developed through teaching. Rowe argues that *empathy* is defined as the ability to recognize other emotions, share another's an emotional state, and take the stand of others. Empathy has cognitive and affective components (Rowe, 2000, p. 199). Empathy for others is a skill necessary in listening and agonistic dialogue. The student's interests, emotions, perceptions, tones, aspirations, and degree of acceptance or rejection of instructional content are in focus in the affective domain. Feelings, values, appreciation, enthusiasms, motivations, and attitudes are examples of affective objectives (Krathwohl, Bloom & Masia, 1964).

8.3 Listening

Listening was earlier identified with dialogue (see chapter 6.4.3). It is to our common understanding, according to Dunker and Thebas, to identify listening with dialogue (Dunker &

Thebas, 2019). In Skeie and Weisse's research, they claim that students can see the possibility to learn from each other and gain knowledge through dialogue (Skeie & Weisse, 2008, p. 336). For this to be possible, like Dunker and Thebas advocates, we need to see that dialogue and listening are intertwined. Dunker and Thebas state that *"When there is a dialogue, people listen to each other, put themselves in the other's shoes and make the word pass from time to time, what linguists call a shift change"* (Dunker & Thebas, 2019, p. 74). The ability to listen can be justified by the values of learning to respect other people, a value mentioned in LK20.

Listening has a vital function in dialogue, "*Listening is recognizing, and recognizing is a fundamental instrument of transformation, subjective and political*," writes Dunker and Thebas (2019, p. 216). For Dunker and Thebas, a usual beginner's mistake in the art of listening is that we think that we are listening at the same time as we are communicating perfectly, this is what they refer to as a kind of "connection" by which words become indispensable because the information flows through a sort of mental channel of direct circulation (Dunker & Thebas, 2019, p. 75). On the contrary, what very often happens in these situations is that everyone accepts, cares for, and exchanges shifts around a misunderstanding. Jacques Lacan is known for saying that misunderstandings are the essence of communication. According to Dunker and Thebas, there is no listening if there is no mistake (Dunker & Thebas, 2019, p. 75). Authentic listening is a political act because it suspends the established order to place all center and power in the words that are actually being said, regardless of who is speaking them (Dunker & Thebas, 2019, p. 96).

It takes time to listen, it takes work, and it involves risks. For some, they need to learn to listen, while for others, they need to grasp the words. Listening to those who resist or challenge their assigned identities is essential. It does not imply going around worrying about using 'wrong' words or hoping for a glossary that definitively establishes what is 'right' and what is 'wrong' to say. The words themselves are not the problem; it is the performance that follows, and we cannot get rid of them, according to Gullestad (2002, p. 308). For example, when listening to the other, we assume that they have reasons, a specific cause determines their motive, and we cannot stop ourselves from judging. Since this is a problem we cannot avoid, we need to do it

well. Mutually active listening is required, like being met by mutual respect in dialogue is. Gullestad says that listening with slowness and devotion must be acknowledged as prerequisites for both reflection and innovation (Gullestad, 2002, p. 308).

In his theory of conversational implicature, Herbert Paul Grice, a British philosopher of language, said that two principles should govern the exchange of words. The first is the principle of charity. Through the charity principle, we grant the other and ourselves that the meaning and significance of what is meant are challenging to obtain. Charity is one of the exemplified fundamental values found in LK20. (Dunker & Thebas, 2019, p. 98). In this context, charity refers to the willingness to forgive and tolerate that what was said is always more or less than what was meant to be said. Charity, forgiveness, and tolerance are all values that we find in LK20, which we call relational values. Charity is the attitude of constant repair of this structural problem. The second principle indicates the attitude of contributing or adding to what has been said. Adding information, saying something new, and contributing to the advancement of the series of uttered sayings leads us to improve the shared construction of meaning. Participating in listening dialogue might contribute to the individuals' sense of belonging and security in the society and potentially becoming responsible citizens in a community of disagreements.

With establishing a community of practice, the participants share an educationally-based understanding of agonistic dialogue, which is needed to hear different positions. The idea of mutual respect, the right to hold views different from others, and the willingness to engage personally in dialogue and share viewpoints, is essential, without demanding anyone that they should be open to changing positions, but rather emphasize listening in the act of dialogue.

There are three purposes behind listening. One is that the teacher or others in the school can be trained and possibly identify whether there are students at risk of being radicalized or already are by learning to listen. The second to learn to listen to others is something that must take place not only between teacher and student but also between students themselves. The third is that learning to listen can open up for students actually to listen to what is being said. It means that

everyone must reflect on what is being said. How students position themselves in dialogues and how they perceive each other. This might enable Transfer.

8.3.1 Trusting relationship, 'Safe space' and motivation

Several other factors need to be in place first for listening to be made possible.

First is the importance of a *trusting relationship* between the teacher and the students and between the students themselves. If such a trusting relationship is built, the student's discourse in an agonistic dialogue or discussion might be more open to each voice heard and spoken. As we can see from the research of Skeie and Weisse, discussions about religion or religion as a potentially conflict-raising issue are done among their peers and only with people they know well enough so they can be trusted (2008, p. 331). This can be extended to the teacher-student relationship. Teachers must form caring relationships with their students in order to gain a thorough understanding of their student's learning needs and abilities; according to Labarre, they also *"need to establish an emotional link to motivate the student to participate actively in the learning process"* (2000, p. 229). This again points to the importance of the principle of Transfer and the affection dimension.

The second factor is establishing a "safe space." Establishing a "safe space" in the classroom is necessary for a dialogical approach to be possible and productive (Husebø et al., 2019). Husebø et al. (2019) write that a key component is paying attention to creating a classroom climate that allows for multiple voices to be heard. "Safe space" can also be viewed as a type of public space with rules that anyone could accept regardless of status or power.

Thirdly, motivation and rigor or to be rigorous play a central part in an agonistic dialogical approach. Students need to be motivated and desire to listen and participate in a dialogue or discussion. Freire and Shor intertwine *motivation* and *rigor/to be rigorous*. Whereas Freire separates *rigor* and *rigorous*, saying that *rigor* is not universal or permanent, but "*what is universal is the need to be rigorous*," Shor defines *rigor* as a desire to know, a search for an answer, and a critical method of learning (Freire & Shor, 1987, p. 4). He suggests that rigor might

play a role in the failure of motivating students that undergoes a formal education. Because rigor includes as a "*[…] communication which challenges the other to take part or includes the other in an active search.",* and it is this lack of including students in the search and activity which prompt the failure (Freire & Shor, 1987, p. 4). How we understand the connection between motivation and rigor has implications on the process of motivation. Freire brilliantly mentions this by referring to the anti-dialectical way of understanding motivation: the need to be motivated and then get into action. This understanding of motivation goes against what Freire and Shor believe works. For them, motivation takes part *in* the action, "*It is a moment of the very action itself*" (Freire & Shor, 1987, pp. 4-5).

8.4 Summary

This chapter discussed the thesis's second objective of how an agonistic dialogical approach could function as a preventive measure against negative radicalization and violent extremism. Firstly, I argue against a focus on dialogue competence in school to promote and ensure democratic participation and a democratic citizen. I consider dialogical competence to be similar to democratic competence (democratic citizenship education) in that both produce tension between individuals and groups of individuals. Instead of focusing on the formation of the politically active democratic citizen, dialogue competence should focus on the formation of the individual's subjectivity, self-identity, understanding, tolerance, and willingness to listen to others.

Secondly, the chapter tried to explain using psychology, for example, how values are tightly intertwined with the individual's conception of their identity, in how they either get a pleasure drive or unpleasure, which again affects their behavior. Moreover, psychoanalytic listening in school is a triggering factor in the Transfer, making listening, the Transfer, and an agonistic dialogue suitable in preventing individuals from becoming negatively radicalized or violent extremists.

Thirdly, I discussed why the school and the classroom is a perfect analogy for the Norwegian national and political community, and why communication inside the classroom needs to be aware of not using "our common values," as not everyone shares the same perspective on these so-called common values which we found in chapter 6. Furthermore, which associations students have to the concepts of dialogue, discussion, and debate color the action of fruitful agonistic dialogue. Therefore, the school and the teachers should lay the groundwork for understanding these concepts without negative connotations to promote dialogue. In addition, an affective dimension is necessary to enable agonistic dialogue as a preventive pedagogical tool against negative radicalization and violent extremism.

Fourth, the chapter elaborates on listening as a skill intertwined with dialogue and listed three purposes behind listening for usage in school. First, to enable a good agonistic listening dialogue, we saw that other factors need to be in place first, such as a trusting relationship between the parties involved, a safe space, and motivation.

The agonistic dialogical approach as a pedagogical tool in preventing and countering negative radicalization and violent extremisms is only touched upon lightly and needs further extensive work. Therefore, here I have only outlined briefly what this approach contains.

PART VII   CONCLUSION

9. Conclusion

This master's thesis has addressed the following issue:

"How can potentially Norway's focus on values in the formation of the democratic citizen and identity process through the school's mandate enable the construction of antagonisms?"

To elucidate and answer the thesis issue and the two objectives, I developed the following three research questions:

1. How are Values, Identity, and The Democratic Citizen presented in the Core curriculum?
2. How do these concepts create tensions between agonism and antagonisms?
3. How do these concepts create tensions between agonism and antagonisms?

The two objectives for this thesis were first to show how potentially there existed a paradox in the schools' education mandate and social mission that could construct antagonisms. Secondly, to discuss how specific antagonisms could be constructed and how an agonistic dialogical approach could be a preventive measure for usage in the school.

In answering the thesis issue, it was placed in a historical context, where we looked at the construction of the nation-state, national identity, and national community and their connection to the Norwegian school and Norwegian democracy. This was important as this background provides the basis for the school's current curriculum. In addition, it was necessary to define the concepts of radicalization, violent extremism, and dialogue to discuss the objectives and research questions two and three.

Furthermore, various theoretical frameworks and perspectives were presented and linked to the thesis issue, providing the theoretical basis for the analysis and discussion in Chapters 6, 7, and 8. Finally, the methodology and method in the chapter refer to which method was chosen and used to analyze the selected documents.

Research questions one and partly the first objective was answered in the analysis chapter. From the findings in the analysis chapter and from chapter 7, where the thesis discussed how the focus on values in the formation of the democratic citizen and identity process can produce antagonisms and which antagonisms can be concluded that LK20 nourishes a separation between "we" and "they" in the political and national community. The way this is done helps to form a paradox in the school's mandate and social mission. A we/they relationship is something that will always exist in society, but how we treat this relationship provides the starting point for the possibility of antagonisms. When common values provide the moral basis for developing individuals' identities and the formation of politically active democratic citizens, it reduces the possibilities for other alternatives and promotes one affiliation. The use of a moral register contains a we/they discrimination. Collective identities will always include such discrimination against "we" and "they" since it has a central role in politics. An antagonistic perspective enables the emergence of antagonisms such as negative radicalization and violent extremism. As we saw in chapter 8, in contrast, an agonistic view such as the use of an agonistic dialogical approach in the education of individuals gives all voices legitimization and recognition.

Where Geir Skeie, in his article from 2014, argues that the Norwegian majority population has an 'imagined sameness' mentality that creates 'invisible fences' between 'us' and 'them,' I do not differentiate between immigrants and the non-immigrants, but rather see that the challenges are a shared one amongst all the individuals inside the Norwegian boarders. Moreover, that we/they discrimination contributes to individuals seeking belonging elsewhere, which could lead them to join negative radical or violent groups or organizations, or fundamental movements in Mouffe's words. Skeie mentioned that while it appears that these democratic citizenship attitudes are more fragile than sometimes assumed, and there are signs of depoliticization (Skeie, 2014), I argue that it is the focus on values in the formation of the democratic citizen and identity process that creates this fragileness, that might produce antagonisms. Unfortunately,

Skeie does not discuss how to prevent such fragileness, which is one of the objectives I elaborate on and argue in this thesis.

Furthermore, Janicke Stray and Emil Sætra focus on democratic citizenship education as a necessary competence and that there are some pedagogical preconditions for the role of the school as a democratic institution, where democratic citizenship is learned, asking 'how can and should school be an arena for the development of democracy and citizenship?' (2018, p. 100). I am more critical and view this focus on the formation of the democratic citizen, its democratic citizenship identity, and this competence as having tendencies towards polarization rather than unifying—creating tensions between citizens, instead of the desired democratic citizen.

As I have shown in this thesis, the focus on common values, a collective identity, and the formation of the democratic citizen could contribute towards polarization. However, as I have mentioned before, it does not have to end up like this. As I have suggested, working methodically with an agonistic dialogue as a pedagogical method could counteract and prevent negative radicalization resulting in violent extremism. As mentioned, I have suggested that a pedagogical model is addressed to achieve the school's goals in the action plans from 2014 and 2020 and which the curriculum places sufficient emphasis on. Dialogue in school is not new, but my focus on it as a pedagogical tool in preventing and countering negative radicalization and violent extremism has not been discussed. What has been discussed by Stray and Sætra (2016) is its use for strengthening and creating democratic values, attitudes, and dispositions, in other words, the importance of dialogue for democratic processes and democracy learning.

The agonistic dialogical approach as a pedagogical tool in preventing negative radicalization and violent extremism should be further developed for future studies and research. Also, the topic of how the school curriculum can affect the individuals, not necessarily in the desired ways, but ending in constructing antagonisms instead, is a relevant area that needs more research.

As a final note, we do not share the same values and norms, but the differences bind us together without emphasizing common values and having a collective identity. Focusing on differences as

binding the community creates alternatives that we need to develop our society and not get stuck in the status quo. Throw fear aside, and growth can come along. However, it is critical to recognize that to construct a "we," we must first distinguish from a "them." Because all forms of consensus are founded on acts of exclusion, the possibility of the politically active democratic citizen is also the condition of impossibility of its full realization (Mouffe, 1992).

> *"The demand is always for love and if any subject is given a listen, a look, a gesture and faith, certainly, a great transformation will occur"* (Maria Lúcia de Araújo Andrade)

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