**Cultivating Humanity or Educating the Human?**

**Two Options for Education in the Knowledge Age**

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"To be human means to live as if one were not a being among beings."

(Levinas 1985, p., 100)

**abstract**

Ever since the idea of the 'knowledge society' came into circulation, there have been discussions about what the term empirically *might* mean and normatively *should* mean. In the literature we can find a rather wide spectrum, ranging from an *utilitarian* interpretation of the knowledge society as a knowledge economy, via a more *humanistic* conception of the knowledge society as a *knowledge sharing society,* up to an explicitly *political* interpretation of the knowledge society as a knowledge democracy. Although *in theory* there is a wide range of interpretations and manifestations, *in practice* there has been a strong convergence towards the idea of the knowledge society as a knowledge *economy.* On this interpretation the particular task for education is seen as that of the production of flexible lifelong learners who are able to adjust and adapt to the ever-changing conditions of global capitalism. In this paper I raise the question how we might conceive of the educational task in light of the particular expectations that come from such an interpretation of the knowledge society. Against the idea that an adequate response requires that educators focus on the cultivation of the human being’s humanity, I challenge the humanistic underpinnings of the idea of education as cultivation. Instead, I suggest a different direction that moves the educational task away from the cultivation of the self towards the exposure towards the world.

**keywords**

knowledge society; knowledge economy; cultivation; humanism; humanism of the other; Nussbaum; Levinas

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**Introduction: The knowledge society as a learning society**

Ever since the idea of the 'knowledge society' came into circulation – Peter Drucker used the term for the first time in his 1969 book *The Age of Discontinuity* (Drucker 1969); more detailed studies followed in the 1990s (see, for example Stehr 1994; Mansell & When 1998) – there have been discussions about what the term empirically *might* mean and what the term normatively *should* mean. In the policy and research literature we can find a rather wide spectrum, ranging from an *utilitarian* interpretation of the knowledge society as a knowledge economy or knowledge-based economy in which knowledge is either a product of or a tool for economic production (see, for example, OECD 1996), via a more *humanistic* conception of the knowledge society as a *knowledge sharing society* based on the twin principles of access to information for all and freedom of expression for all (see UNESCO 2005), up to an explicitly *political* interpretation of the knowledge society as a knowledge democracy aimed at the democratisation of knowledge production itself (see Biesta 2007; 2012a).

The authors of the UNESCO World Report *Towards Knowledge Societies* (UNESCO 2005) point to the fact that the idea of the *knowledge* society emerged at the same time when authors such as Robert Hutchins and Torsten Husén started to put forward the idea of the *learning* society (see Hutchins 1968; Husén 1974) – something that was also picked up by UNESCO itself through the 'Faure report' *Learning to be* (Faure 1972 et al.). This indicates that the idea of the knowledge society not only refers to transformations in the social and economic dynamics of modern societies themselves – moving from an agricultural, via an industrial and a post-industrial service economy to a knowledge economy – but also comes with a particular educational 'agenda' that calls for the cultivation of certain qualities that make individuals 'fit' for participation in the knowledge society. Although *in theory* the range of desirable qualities for education to focus on is as broad as the range of possible interpretations and manifestations of the knowledge society – including a utilitarian, a humanistic and a democratic interpretation – *in practice* there has been a strong convergence towards the idea of the knowledge society as a knowledge *economy* (see Biesta 2006a). This focuses on the idea that education should focus on the production of flexible lifelong learners who are able to adjust and adapt to the ever-changing conditions of global capitalism.

If we look at the education system from a sociological perspective – that is where the education system is seen as a function of society – there appears to be little wrong with the foregoing line of thought. On that logic we could say that if this is where society is going or wishes to go, then education should follow and serve by contributing to the creation of what, in line with the idea of the *homo economicus*, we might refer to as the *homo epistemicus*: the flexible 'knowledge worker' (Drucker 1969) who has made learning into a lifelong task. But to think of education only as a function of society, misses another important justification for our educational endeavours, the one stemming from an interest in the formation of the human being *as human being*. And this question is becoming increasingly important in an age in which very particular claims about what the human being should be and become are made so forcefully, not only through explicit policies and practices but also through the more amorphous ways in which the global knowledge economy pulls all of us in a very particular direction and calls all of us to be a very particular kind of human being.

We could frame the educationally challenge at stake here in terms of the tension between an instrumental and a liberal outlook on education, that is, between education that aims to produce and domesticate and education that aims to open up and liberate. We could also frame it as a tension or even a clash between two cultures: the culture of technology and economy on the one hand, and the culture of humanity and the humanities on the other. When we look at the educational challenge in this way, we could therefore ask how we might be able to cultivate the humanity of the human being in reaction to developments that seem to pull us in a different direction, one where the human being is configured as a 'function' within a wider socio-economic 'order.'[[1]](#footnote-1) While I agree with the observation that many manifestations of the idea of the knowledge society call for the production of a rather problematic kind of subjectivity, and while I also agree with the contention that this raises fundamental ethical, political and educational questions about the humanity of the human being, I have doubts about the idea that the educational task with regard to the humanity of the human being can be understood adequately in terms of *cultivation*.

The idea of cultivation – which at least goes back to Seneca (see Nussbaum 1997) but which is also connected to the Greek idea of *paideia* (see Biesta 2012b; Miller 2007) – approaches the question of the humanity of the human being in terms of a horticultural metaphor, that is, in terms of the fostering and pruning of human qualities that are potentially already 'there,' somewhere 'inside' the one whose humanity is being cultivated and whose humanity requires cultivation. Against the 'humanism of the self' which seems to underlie the idea of cultivation, I will, in what follows, approach the question of what it means to be human in terms of a 'humanism of the other' (Levinas 2003), where engagement with the question of what it means to be human starts from the very 'thing' that is *never* already inside of us, namely, the encounter with what and who is *other*. I will show how a humanism of the other leads to a very different understanding of the educational task.[[2]](#footnote-2) I will discuss what kind of educational future might emerge if we follow that path.

**Education as cultivation**

Although according to the etymology dictionary the figurative sense of the word 'cultivation' as "[to] improve by training or education" dates from the 1680s,[[3]](#footnote-3) the idea of education as a process of cultivation is of a much older date. Part of its history goes back to the Greek idea of *paideia* which, in classical Athens, stood for a broad process of cultivation of the person towards virtue (ἀρετή) and, more specifically, towards *civic* virtue. Among the subjects that were supposed to lead to such cultivation we find rhetoric, grammar, mathematics, music, philosophy, geography, natural history, and gymnastics – a set of subjects which in medieval times re-emerged in the *trivium* (grammar, rhetoric, logic) and *quadrivium* (arithmetic, geometry, music, astronomy) which, together, constituted the seven liberal arts that were seen as the core of 'higher learning'. *Paideia* was conceived as the kind of education that would bring human beings to their true form, that is, towards achieving 'excellence' in what was considered to be distinctively human which, for philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle, was the ability for reason (man as a 'rational animal,' in Aristotle's formulation). *Paideia* was, however, confined to free men in order to further their freedom as citizens and stood therefore in opposition to the education that was meant for manual labourers and artisans, the 'banausoi' (βάναυσοι). *Paideia* thus required free time or schole (σχολή), rather than that it was connected to the domain of work and production (see Jaeger 1945).

In the idea of *paideia* we can already see some of the key aspects of the idea of education as cultivation that interest me in this paper. We can see that *paideia* is seen as the cultivation of something that is not only potentially already 'there,' but that is also seen as the 'true form' or essence of the human being. We can see that this essence is defined in terms of reason, and we can see that the idea of freedom plays a role in the argument, both in terms of the free arts that are supposed to contribute to or bring about the cultivation of the human being – they are, so we might say, the intellectual manure – and with regard to the fact that the cultivation of the human capacity for reason is reserved for those who are (already) free. It was only during the Enlightenment that the latter point shifted and education became conceived as a process that could *bring about* freedom rather than that it was confined to those who were (already) free.[[4]](#footnote-4)

That the main components of the idea of education as a process of the cultivation of the human being's humanity have not changed that much over time, can be seen in a more recent defence of the idea of educational cultivation, which is Martha Nussbaum's 1997 book *Cultivating Humanity*, presented as 'a classical defence of reform in liberal education.'[[5]](#footnote-5) In her book Nussbaum presents a view of liberal education as the education that "makes its pupils free, able to take charge of their own thought and to conduct a critical examination of their society’s norms and traditions" (Nussbaum 1997, p.30) – which suggests that with regard to the relationship between education and freedom Nussbaum's view is clearly informed by the idea(l)s of the Enlightenment. For Nussbaum the Stoic idea of education went further than the promotion of critical autonomy, however, as it involved the production of "people who can function with sensitivity and alertness as citizens of the whole world," which is what, according to Nussbaum, "Seneca means by the cultivation of humanity’ (ibid., p.8). For Nussbaum the cultivation of humanity therefore requires the promotion of three capacities. The first is 'narrative imagination, ' which concerns "the ability to think what it might be like to be in the shoes of a person different from oneself" (ibid., pp.10-11) or, more fully, "a capacity for sympathetic imagination that will enable us to comprehend the motives and choices of people different from ourselves, seeing them not as forbiddingly alien and other, but as sharing many problems and possibilities with us" (ibid., p.85). The second is "the capacity for critical examination of oneself and one’s traditions" (ibid., p.9). The third is "an ability to see [one selves] not simply as citizens of some local region or group, but above all, as human beings bound to all other human beings by ties of recognition and concern" (ibid., p.10).

Nussbaum's call for the educational promotion of empathy, critical rationality and cosmopolitanism in order to cultivate the humanity of the human being is not without reason, although it is also not without problems. With regard to Nussbaum's three capacities one could ask, for example, (1) whether understanding of the other is either a necessary or a sufficient condition for ethical relationships with the other – and one could argue that such relationships are precisely not based on knowledge of the other (see Biesta 2010a); one could ask (2) whether we should follow the Socratic idea that the unexamined life is not worth living, or should rather emphasise that the unlived life is not worth examining; and one could ask (3) whether cosmopolitanism makes it possible to establish connections 'across difference' or, to the extent that it is motivated by the idea of an underlying common humanity, it actually runs the risk of eradicating such differences.

My main concern, however, is not with the details of Nussbaum's proposal, but with the more general idea of education as a practice of *cultivation* and, more specifically, the cultivation of the human being's *humanity*. The main problem I see with the idea of education as the cultivation of the human being's humanity – both in the classical idea of *paideia* and in the contemporary idea of liberal education as for example articulated by Nussbaum – is that it operates on an idea of what it means to be human and, more precisely on a *positive* idea of what it means to be human, that is, on an idea of what the human being essentially *is* and thus on an idea of what the human being should become with the help of education. (Here it is interesting that both in the classical and contemporary defence of education as the cultivation of the human being's humanity the idea of critical rationality plays a central role.)

**Humanism and its problems**

Looking at the idea of cultivation in this way reveals the humanist character of this way of thinking, where humanism – and perhaps we should say *philosophical* humanism in order to distinguish it from humanism as an ideology – is understood as the idea that it is possible to know and articulate the nature or essence of the human being, often accompanied by the assumption that such knowledge can provide the basis for subsequent action in such domains as politics and education. Emmanuel Levinas characterises philosophical humanism as entailing “the recognition of an invariable essence named ‘Man,’ the affirmation of his central place in the economy of the Real and of his value which [engenders] all values” (Levinas 1990, p. 277). What the idea of cultivation adds to this is that the essence of the human being is seen as something that is potentially already located 'inside' the human being, so that it is something that literally needs to be *brought out* by means of education. This is why I would like to characterise the form of humanism that underlies the idea of education as cultivation of the human being's humanity as a 'humanism of the self' – as it is focused on bringing out something that is already potentially 'there.'

While some would argue that humanism is a worthy philosophical, political and educational 'project,' and while some might also argue that the only possible humanism is a humanism of the self – perhaps for the practical reason that education always has to work with something that is already 'there' – I take my inspiration from authors who have challenged the humanist foundations of modern education and politics, not because they want to do away with the humanity of the human being but because in their opinion philosophical humanism "is not *sufficiently* human” (Levinas 1981, p. 128; emph. added). So what is the problem with humanism?

In 20th century philosophy humanism has basically been challenged for two reasons. On the one hand questions have been raised about the *possibility* of humanism, that is, about the possibility for human beings to define their own essence and origin. Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida have both shown the impossibility of the ambition to try to capture one's own essence and origin – an impossibility that has become known as the ‘end of man’ or the ‘death of the subject’ (see Foucault 1970; Derrida 1982). On the other hand questions have been raised about the *desirability* of humanism. This line has particularly been developed by Martin Heidegger and Emmanuel Levinas (see Biesta 2006b for more detail; see also Derrida 1982, pp. 109-136). For Levinas, whose argument I will follow here, the “crisis of humanism in our society” began with the “inhuman events of recent history” (Levinas 1990, p. 279). Yet for Levinas the crisis of humanism is not simply located in these inhumanities as such, but in humanism’s inability to effectively counter such inhumanities and also, and more importantly, in the fact that many of the inhumanities of the 20th century were actually based upon and motivated by particular definitions of what it means to be human – here Levinas mentions “the 1914 War, the Russian Revolution refuting itself in Stalinism, fascism, Hitlerism, the 1939-45 War, atomic bombings, genocide and uninterrupted war” (ibid.). This is why Levinas comes to the conclusion that “humanism has to be denounced (...) because it is not *sufficiently* human” (Levinas, 1981, p. 128; emph. added).

We might say that the problem with humanism is that it posits a *norm* of what it means to be human and in doing so excludes all those who do not live up to this norm or who are unable to live up to it. This is not simply a general or philosophical point, but has important practical ramifications, as it introduces a distinction and a dividing line between those who fall with the sphere of (a certain definition of) humanity and those who fall outside of it and who can thus only appear as non-human, pre-human or sub-human. From an educational point of view the problem with humanism is that it specifies a norm of what it means to be human *before* the actual manifestation of ‘instances’ of humanity. It specifies what the child, student or newcomer must become before giving them an opportunity to show who they are and who they will be. It is therefore unable to be open to the possibility that newcomers might radically alter our conception of what it means to be human. To put education on humanist foundations thus makes it into a process of socialisation into an existing definition of what it means to be human – and when the 'essence' of the humanity of the human being is thought to be potentially already 'inside' the human being, it does indeed make education into a process of cultivation.

**Action, uniqueness and exposure**

The question this raises is whether we can think of and 'do' education outside the confines of a humanist determination of the human being. In my own work I have responded to this challenge through a combination the ideas of 'coming into the world,' 'uniqueness' and 'exposure.' Together they constitute what might be characterised as a post-humanist theory of education (see particularly Biesta 2006b; 2010b). My starting point lies in the suggestion that instead of understanding education as having to do with the production or cultivation of a particular kind of subjectivity, a particular kind of human being, we should focus on the ways in which new 'beginnings' and new 'beginners' can appear, that is, how new beginnings and beginners can come into the world. The idea of 'coming into the world' thus aims to articulate an educational interest in the human being – and we might even say that it articulates an interest into the humanity of the human being – but it does not do so on the basis of a template or essence, but rather approaches the question of the human being in terms of its existence.

The idea of ‘coming into the world’ draws inspiration from the writings of Hannah Arendt, particularly her ideas on *action*. For Arendt to act first of all means to take initiative, that is, to begin something new. Arendt compares action to the fact of birth, since with each birth something ‘uniquely new’ comes into the world (see Arendt 1958, p. 178). But it is not only at the moment of birth that this happens. Through our 'words and deeds' (Arendt) we continuously bring new beginnings into the world. 'Beginning’ is, however, only half of what action is about, because everything depends on how others will take up our beginnings. This is why Arendt writes that the agent is not an author or a producer, but a subject in the twofold sense of the word, namely one who began an action and the one who suffers from and is subjected to its consequences (see ibid., p. 184). The upshot of this is that our ‘capacity’ for action crucially depends on the ways in which others take up our beginnings. Yet the problem we encounter here is that others tend to respond to our beginnings in their own ways.

Although this frustrates our beginnings, Arendt emphasises again and again that the “impossibility to remain unique masters of what [we] do” is at the very condition and the *only* condition under which our beginnings can become real, that is, can come into the world (see ibid., p. 244). We can of course try to control the ways in which others respond to our beginnings. But if we do so, we deprive others of their opportunities to begin. This first of all means that action is therefore never possible in isolation – and Arendt even goes as far as to argue that “to be isolated is to be deprived of the capacity to act” (ibid., p. 188). It also means that action in the Arendtian sense of the word is never possible without plurality. As soon as we erase plurality, as soon as we erase the otherness of others by attempting to control how they should respond to our initiatives, we not only deprive others of their possibility to act but in one and the same manoeuvre we deprive *ourselves* of the possibility to act. All this is captured in Arendt’s simple but profound statement that “(p)lurality is the condition of human action” (ibid., p. 8). It is important to see that this should not be read as an empirical statement but rather as the normative ‘core’ of Arendt’s philosophy, a philosophy committed to a world in which everyone has the opportunity to act and come into the world.

The notion of ‘uniqueness’ plays an important role in the ideas I have taken from Arendt, particularly her claim that we disclose our ‘distinct uniqueness’ through action – which, as I have shown, implies that we can only disclose this uniqueness if we are willing to run the risk that our beginnings are taken up in ways that are different from what we intended. What is important about Arendt’s views is that they can help us to approach the question of uniqueness in relational, political and existential terms, as she links the idea of ‘uniqueness’ to the particular ways in which we exist *with* others (on the political significance of such a ‘existential’ view see Biesta, 2010a). But the idea of disclosing one’s distinct uniqueness through action runs the risk of conceiving of uniqueness in terms of characteristics or qualities of the subject – and would thus conceive of uniqueness in terms of what we *have* or *posses*. It would, to put it differently, turn the question of uniqueness into a question of identity.

There are several problems with this way of understanding uniqueness. One is that if we think of uniqueness in terms of the characteristics we have, we must assume that there is some underlying ‘substratum’ which can be the carrier of such characteristics. This brings us close, again, to the idea of an underlying human essence, and thus would bring humanism in through the backdoor. There is, however, a second problem which in my view is the more important one. This has to do with the fact that if we would only relate to others in order to make clear how we are *different* from them, there would, in a sense, be nothing ‘at stake’ in our relationships with others. Or, to put it differently, we would only need others in order to make clear how we are different from them, but once this has become clear we wouldn’t need others any more. Our relationship with others would therefore remain entirely instrumental.

The philosopher who has helped me to think through these issues and articulate an alternative way of approaching the idea of uniqueness is Emmanuel Levinas. What is most significant about Levinas is *not* that he has generated a new theory about the uniqueness of the human being – which he has not – but that he has introduced a different *question* about uniqueness. Instead of asking what makes each of us unique – which is the question of uniqueness as *difference* – Levinas has approached the question of uniqueness in an existential way by asking when it matters that I am unique, when it matters that I am I and no one else. Levinas's answer t this question is that my uniqueness matters in those situations in which I am called by a concrete other and where I cannot be replaced by someone else, that is, in situations where it matters that I am there, and not just anyone – and this is the idea of uniqueness as irreplaceability (see Biesta 2010b, chapter 4).

The situations Levinas has in mind are those in which I am being addressed by a concrete other, that is, situations in which someone calls me, singles me out, so to speak, and where it is up to me to respond. It is in situations in which I am *exposed* to the other – or to be more precise: where I am exposed to an ‘imperative’ (see Lingis 1994, p. 111) – that my uniqueness matters, as it is in those situations that it is for *me* to respond, not just for anyone. It is important to mention that for Levinas this responsibility is neither issued from our will or our decision to become responsible, nor from a judgement that we should take up our responsibility. For Levinas responsibility comes *before* subjectivity, which is why he has argued that responsibility is “the essential, primary and fundamental structure of subjectivity” (Levinas 1985, p. 95). Uniqueness, then, ceases to be an ontological notion – it is not about what we posses or are in terms of identity – but becomes an *existential* notion, that is, something we can realise (or not) in ever new situations.

One important implication of these ideas is that they do not lead to some kind of educational programme that can generate action and produce uniqueness. Action and uniqueness are phenomena that are structurally *beyond* our control. My 'capacity' to act and through this come into the world depends on how others take up my beginnings – which is precisely why it is not a capacity – just as 'my' uniqueness is never in my possession but can only be realised through my response to an 'address' or a 'call' from the other. While such a response can never be produced by any educational intervention or strategy – it is, after all, my response to a call that is addressed to me and to no one else – we can conceive of educational arrangements that never expose us to such a call and those that try to keep the possibility that such a call may arrive and be heard open – without any guarantee, of course, that anything may emerge from this.[[6]](#footnote-6)

**Discussion: Cultivating humanity or educating the human?**

The problem with the dominant manifestation of the knowledge society as a knowledge economy is that it calls for a very specific subjectivity, that of the *homo epistemicus*, the flexible knowledge worker who has made learning into its lifelong task. While from a sociological perspective that sees the education system as a function of society it might be entirely reasonable to expect that education contributes to the production of the *homo epistemicus*, from a wider – and older – educational interest in the humanity of the human being, such an expectation becomes problematic. This raises the question how education might not only resist and interrupt such an expectation, but can actually provide a viable alternative. Some have suggested that we might (and should) oppose the instrumentalisation and functionalisation of education by means of a (re)turn to forms of liberal education that focus on the cultivation of the humanity of the human being. While at first sight this may seem a viable response, I have in this paper questioned the humanistic framework that comes with the idea of education as a process of cultivation.

Humanism here refers to the idea that it is possible to define the essence or nature of the human being and to use this as the foundation for educational or political projects. I have not only argued that it is questionable whether it is possible for human beings to define their own essence or nature – something which is connected to discussions about the death of the subject and the end of man. I have also argued – and this, for me, is the more important dimension of the discussion – that humanism is an undesirable strategy because it introduces a dividing line between those who meet the particular 'norm' of what it means to be human and those who do not or are unable to meet this 'norm.' With Levinas I have particularly highlighted the inability of humanism to counter the 'inhumanities' of the 20th century, to use Levinas's phrase, and the fact that many of these inhumanities were actually motivated by, if not based upon a very specific conception of what it means to be human. While it is, of course, not without risk to give up on a particular idea of what it means to be human, I am inclined to agree with Levinas that on historical grounds the risks of sticking to such a definition are more severe than the risks of denouncing humanism on the ground that, in Levinas's words, it is not sufficiently human.

Against the 'humanism of the self' that seems to underlie the idea of education as cultivation – and the link with the idea of a 'humanism of the self' stems from my observation that cultivation always focuses on the fostering and pruning of something that is already 'there,' that is, 'inside' the human being as a potential to be developed – I have outlined a set of educational concepts that take their inspiration from what, after Levinas, we might call a 'humanism of the other' (Levinas 2003), that is, where the question of what it means to be human is approached educationally in terms of our existence-with-others rather than in terms of a nature of essence we already carry inside ourselves.

Here I have suggested that education should focus on the ways in which individuals come uniquely into the world. I have approached the idea of 'coming into the world' in terms of Hannah Arendt's idea of 'action' – which is never an individual capacity but the outcome of the ways in which others take up our beginnings in new and unpredictable ways; ways that are fundamentally beyond our control. And with regard to uniqueness I have made a distinction between uniqueness-as-difference – which focuses on those characteristics that are in my possession and that *make* me unique – and uniqueness-as-irreplaceability – which focuses on the ways in which I am 'singled out' by the call of the other; a call that puts me in a position of responsibility, and where it is entirely my responsibility whether to respond to this call and thus realise my uniqueness, or not do so.

To think of the humanity of the human being in existential terms, that is in relation to and in response to the very 'thing' that is *never* already inside of us but comes to us from the outside, as an intervention, means that there is nothing for education to cultivate and therefore nothing for education to produce. In this regard we might say that there is no educational 'agenda' that follows from these considerations, no educational work to be done. But that doesn’t mean that there is no educational responsibility. Yet this responsibility is not to be understood in terms of production and cultivation but in keeping open the possibility of what, in a general sense, we might refer to as the 'intervention of the other.' From the perspective of the knowledge society such an intervention is most likely to be perceived as a disturbance, as something that threatens the smooth functioning of the system. Yet it is precisely in these moments of interruption that the possibility of a different kind of existence, a different kind of being-human emerges (see also Biesta 2013). It is here, therefore, that the educational responsibility in face of the ever increasing demands of the knowledge society is located.

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1. The organisers of the conference at which an earlier version of this paper was presented, did not only articulate the educational challenge in precisely this way, that is, as the task to "re-conceive the post-industrial selfhood, sensitive to the changed economic environment while resisting dehumanization, self-fragmentation and nihilist culture consequent on the knowledge economy" call for papers). They also suggested that the cultivation of the human being's humanity might perhaps provide us with an adequate educational response to what is going on. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. One way to appreciate the difference my turn towards a humanism of the other makes, is by comparing it to the contribution by Hong (this issue), who, also by making use of similar literature as I have, ends up with a rather different educational 'agenda.' [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=cultivate> accessed 30 September 2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. I focus here on the idea of 'paideai' which I am inclined to see as a different educational idea(l) than that of *Bildung*, although there are connections between the two traditions. For a discussion of differences and similarities, see Biesta 2012b. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. I take Nussbaum here as a (prominent) example of the idea of education as the cultivation of the human being's humanity, though do not intend this section as a critical discussion of her position. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The first kind of educational arrangements can make us eventually even immune for any interruption from the outside, for any intervention of the other (for this phrase see Fryer 2004; on immunisation see Masschelein 1996; Masschelein and Simons 2004). For a thoughtful discussion of some of the tensions in the ideas of exposure and interruption in education see Bonnett (2009). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)