

The Social as a Diamond on the Horizon



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Preamble and Abstract

Preamble - On Sociological Imagination

Mankind cannot overcome its troubles bounded by the private orbits in which they live. The more they become aware that they are spectators of the world around them the more trapped they feel. This gives rise to various defence mechanisms: Denial, withdrawal, blaming others. According to Mills, contemporary history is a mixture of failure and success. Neither the life of an individual nor the history of society can be understood without understanding both failure and success, as personal wellbeing is related to the ups and downs of society. Mills writes that nobody has the quality of mind essential to fully grasp the interplay of man and society, of biography and history, of self and world. We must make do with *Sociological Imagination* (Mills & Gitlin, 2000)¹.

Already in 1959 it was obvious that in no previous period earth had seen such an earthquake of change, affecting every living being on the planet. Change in the course of a single generation is mind boggling. Revolutions occur, totalitarianism is on the rise and capitalism has beaten alternative ideologies, making society into an industrial apparatus that now blankets global thinking as an untouchable Empire (Hardt & Negri, 2000).

Abstract

The global established order as dictated by capitalism, depends on infinite growth from a finite planet. This may lead towards a scorched planet instead of fulfilling humanity's dreams. Sociological Imagination should do justice to the natural limitations of the planet whilst accommodating its inhabitants in an egalitarian society. That grounded normativity could serve as a global moral compass for change towards a more inclusive ecology, handing pragmatism an alternative to its economic yardstick.

The key towards such change lies in a more involved understanding of education. Education should replace today's schooling. Schooling is controlled by the authorities and mainly suits the established order. This should be changed to a more holistic approach, involving parents and teachers to achieve a broader education specifically aimed at the social aspects within the ecology.

Research with multifarious focus groups was conducted to find out what would be needed to achieve a more social focus of the societal order. The focus groups highlighted the importance of communication and the desirability of a dedicated approach to education. An approach that should bear fruit over the next hundred years, as subsequent generations work towards a more sustainable and equitable order of society, keeping their eye on the prize, the diamond on the horizon.

Keywords

Sociological Imagination; Finite planet; Grounded normativity; Egalitarian; Education.

¹ The original version of *Sociological Imagination* was published in 1959.

1. Introduction

Concerns over the sustainability of the established world order are gaining prominence. The impact of capitalism on society leads to multiple issues with the sustainability of the established order (Streeck, 2016), which in turn threatens to result in rising inequality. This is the consequence of keeping a system alive that depends on infinite growth from a finite planet. That system is what is meant when referring to the established order in this thesis.

On a macro level, there are several ideologies and alternatives to run a (hierarchical) world order, while at a micro level there is a disquieting lack of attention to alternative ways of living. Bookchin (1980) puts this into perspective as he states that the environmental apocalypse "...drops a veil over a more fundamental crisis in the human condition that is *profoundly social*²." (Bookchin, 1980, p.58). Bookchin calls for a reconstruction of society along ecological lines. That would put the Social at large, the hierarchy from top to bottom, all the people, in a position of responsibility. Should the fears over sustainability prove to be well founded that would correspond to the need for a relation between responsibility and accountability, bringing together those that drive the decisions and those that risk suffering from those.

Yet, the search for alternative ways of living has not gained momentum. The major stakeholders, like governments and business conglomerates, benefit from the established order. Rather than look for fundamental change towards acceptance of being part of the ecology, both government and business actually seem to benefit from trying to control the problems the current way of living is creating. Environmental problems increase the need for more governmental control, whilst business thrives by creating costly solutions for things like climate change and shortage of raw materials. In this thesis, I propose that change is dependent on the People making themselves heard, necessitating the emancipation of the People. The suggested path towards that emancipation would follow a different approach towards education.

Alternative political ideas like communism and socialism are seen as different ways of controlling a fundamentally hierarchical society to run the established order. Alternative social orders do exist, for example some forms of tribal living like the Nishnaabeg (Simpson, 2017) or the Sami (Law & Joks, 2019). However, these tribal societies suffer from settler colonialism as they must survive within the power structure of nation-states. It is hard for these tribes to sustain their traditions as the established order of capitalism with its expansive dispossession, drives alternative lifestyles away. Apart from the Nishnaabeg or the Sami mentioned above, there are other examples on all inhabited continents where the stereotypical consumerist society threatens indigenous living.

Tribal forms of living have a fundamentally different normativity, a *grounded normativity* where the interdependent land and bodies live in a networked fashion rather than a gendered hierarchy distinct from nature (Simpson 2017, p. 44). Are there alternatives for the established order? Is there another order of living things than the status quo as dictated by capitalism? In its current guise capitalism treats human resources as part of its natural resources (Bookchin 1980, p. 58). From the perspective of these tribal social

² My italics.

orders, capitalism is seen as “the gymnastics of trying to get it right in a structure built on wrongness” (Simpson, 2017, p. 37).

Alternatives, rooted in grounded normativity, living in a more networked lifestyle, don't present themselves easily. The hierarchy is not on the lookout for it. To convince the hierarchy to do so would be through the democratic process. To mobilise that force, an attractive image of how things could be is needed. Creating that image needs time and, as this thesis suggests, devoted education. Education can serve as the instrument for change but will need time. Several generations worth of time, to grow towards an alternative image that has widespread recognition. An attractive image that becomes and remains performative such as Sociological Imagination should be.

An early introduction in education of the dilemma for the established order, the global reality of the unsustainability of infinite growth from a finite planet, will generate the awareness of the need for change. Sociological Imagination should be presented as an appealing thought, going hand in hand with an attractive image of a more egalitarian society, to help making it performative.

In this thesis I will make a case for making use of dialectical thinking when searching for such an attractive image. Dialectical thinking helps the search for what divides, with the goal to unite. There is for instance the clear dichotomy of suprematism (Chapter 2) versus egalitarianism that touches at the heart of society. For the People the escape from their hierarchical colonised status as a natural resource (Bookchin, 1980) is a step towards an egalitarian society. A society of equals, not interchangeable but equals (Stengers, 2004).

To be able to function as egalitarians, we need to adapt our education towards that. When future generations benefit from a radically different education, one that understands and addresses the flaws in the established order, their questions should gain in prominence. Only then will they lead to a search for alternatives and hunger for change. Components of this education should include not just teaching but also practising dialogue, as it can have a capacity to unite rather than divide.

This can be achieved by understanding linguistics, an ability for discussion, and its inalienable counterpart listening. These would benefit from a comprehensive understanding of the role of education (the combination of schooling, parental guidance, surroundings).

This is not a new ideology to run the world order. We must distinguish between living locally, with the effects that have been created, and the global challenge we are also addressing here. Both domains are equally relevant. Concurrent attention towards minimising damages whilst working towards a more inclusive society is required. This thesis concentrates on the latter.

The work in this thesis goes towards the provocative image of normativity beyond wealth, fame and status, a normativity grounded in nature's limits. To find out how the desired emancipation can become an achievable goal I will investigate together with people from a varied background what will be encountered towards change, to contribute towards answering the research question:

How can an inventive setup stimulate an egalitarian imagination in education?

In chapter 2 I will argue why it is important that the People make themselves heard, both in their own interest as for the sake of the general ecology. This should justify the substantial change that is called for. The goal for such change leads to a research method, as elaborated on in chapter 3. The participants in the research go through several exercises

in focus groups towards the creation of 'a Diamond on the Horizon'. This is to stimulate the Sociological Imagination with an attractive image of a fictional reality in the year 2121.

During these exercises, described in chapter 4, several issues affecting the 'how' of the research question come to the fore. The first group concentrated on moral issues. They started from the intricately interwoven levels of society from which there is practically no escaping. That is caused by the priority the nation-states give to the protection of their competitive position. Also, serious authority issues between parents and teachers were expected. That highlights questions about the role of schooling in education. The second group zoomed in on the value of language and linguistic problems as instruments for the social practice. The relevance of words and language was deemed by this group to deserve a more central place in education. Chapter 5 will sum up the findings.

This thesis is not going to solve any of the challenges that face human life on earth, but working with the research question will provide ideas towards strengthening the social sphere.

2. The People must make themselves heard

A gloomy outlook for the future

I follow Wolfgang Streeck on the state of the capitalist system:

“Capitalism has always been an improbable social formation, full of conflicts and contradictions, therefore permanently unstable and in flux, and highly conditional on historically contingent and precarious supportive as well as constraining events and institutions” (Streeck, 2016, p.1)

Capitalism dictates the established order and structure of society and is all about the uninterrupted progress of private capital accumulation (p. 47). This results in a gloomy picture of future life on planet earth as a framework for this thesis. The fear for the sustainability of the established order hangs as a veil (Bookchin, 1980) over society. A veil we dare not lift, unsure about what comes next. Escaping this fear needs more satisfying and sustainable ways.

In my bachelor thesis (Tiddens, 2020) I suggest that philosophy often treats the established order as a given, picturing that order in three groups: the *haves* living in the clouds, those climbing *the social ladder* of society and the vast majority of people, the People, living on the ground floor. This situation introduces supremacy as it institutionalises dependency of the ground floor via the staircase from those in the clouds. The people on the ladder depend on their contribution to the system for their rise or fall, for their right to remain part of this privileged group. The ground floor, the People, depend on their income as producers to survive as consumers, at very distinct levels of wellbeing.

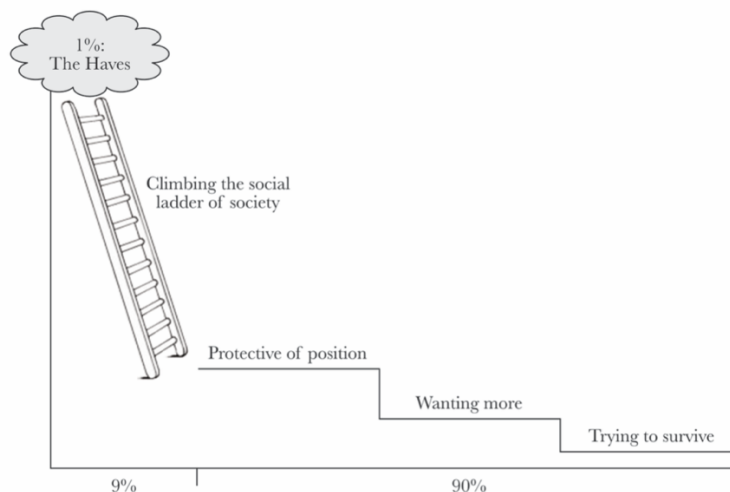


Fig. 1 The Social in the established order³

³ The percentages mentioned are not intended to be accurate statistics but give an idea of the order of magnitude of the various categories.

These relations are not conducive towards addressing sustainability issues and leave too many people by the wayside. Drastic measures are needed to make human life on planet earth both sustainable and more inclusive.

Difference and commonality

The Social differs around the globe. Life in Norway differs from that in Australia, the South of the US has a different ethnography from the north (Cohen, Nisbett, Bowdle & Schwarz, 1996). Political systems of China, Russia, the USA and even amongst the EU countries are very different, yet all play to the game rules dictated by global capitalism. Life may be different at local levels, but a country that loses global competitiveness will try to adapt rather than risk losing out in the competitive pecking order. National governments are getting lost in globalisation with social and cultural consequences (Margalit, 2012) as their room to manoeuvre is limited.

The relevance of the various levels of the Social (Fig. 1) is interesting. The social life that is largely brought about under the guidance of the top 1 or 10 percent, has very different consequences for the remaining levels. That must influence the mindset of the people on the ladder. As long as they depend on the people in the clouds, they must follow their lead. If the People, the 90%, could manage to make themselves heard, that could sway the loyalty of the people on the stairs, bringing about changes to society.

Rather than trying to find ways of coping with what is created through the established order, we should find what is driving developments. Effects are often local, whilst the driving force, the established order of capitalism, has taken hold of most of the world. This phenomenon determines the lives of the global population without being beneficial to that entire population. That is a problem, as for most there is no escaping substantive threats like global warming, geopolitical uncertainty or shortages of life's necessities and other factors that contribute to an uncertain future.

Just criticising or overthrowing the established order is not going to help. A revolution may disenfranchise the current powers that be, but only by replacing them with other uncertain factors of life. Productive change needs to evolve over time, generation after generation. Time is a factor on the way to acceptance of the need for change. Time to get a more attractive image of living accepted and to make it work. History shows a lot can be achieved in a century. If the People want influence in the global discourse about life and living, it ought to be introduced into the People's own educational curriculum. An effort that must be sustained over several generations.

The influence of the People should be welcome if it contributes to grounded normativity as a moral compass to pragmatism. Pragmatism (James, 2008) is seen as an attractive way by the established order to tackle problems of an ever more complex society. However, pragmatism as such does not have a moral compass. It helps problem-solving from the perspective of the owner of the problem, but not for those subjected to it. Within the established order the economy is the default measure for the effectiveness of pragmatic solutions. A more grounded normativity approach (Simpson, 2017) to pragmatism would broaden the perspective and encompass the ecology, not just humans and their economy.

The human beings on the ladder (Fig.1), loyal to those in the clouds, will be spared suffering as they are part of the upper echelons of society⁴. They live a superior lifestyle to the worker bees, the People on the ground floor. To fulfil that role, the people on the ladder will have to accept the suprematist attitude that comes with it.

A more egalitarian vision can provide counterbalancing against the continued asymmetrical application of power. A performative image to that effect will help to find strength in *being*. That helps when demanding a more equitable society and in understanding the ecological boundaries of society. To achieve this the veil of the established order must be lifted.

How to increase the influence of the People on humanity's dreams?

Dewey and Lippmann wrote in 1927 about the role of the public and the limitations of political agencies. In those days the nation-state could still be seen as an entity with meaning, but globalisation has changed that since. The changed society is using inherited political agencies from yesteryear according to Dewey (Marres, 2007, p.769)) and at the time already with scant disregard for public opinion according to Lippmann (Marres, 2007, p.769).

Marres poses the question about the priority between democratic process and solving issues. It looks like solving issues, fighting effects, is keeping politicians fully employed. That puts the burden of achieving real change to this established order on the People. To motivate them to do so is by creating a *performative image of egalitarianism* that can be sustained long enough to gain momentum.

How to influence the impact of the Social on what the Social creates! Nobody, not even the 90% on the ground floor, can claim innocence of what is happening, but they are divided. Different natural and cultural aspects like ethnicity, religion, nationality or even football clubs divide people. To realise a common understanding about the importance of uniting the underlying diversity is a challenge. The common denominators are mankind and the established order of the capitalist system. Some may benefit more than others, yet all are in danger. This is also recognised in the *Notes for a Feminist Manifesto* (Arruzza, Bhattacharya & Fraser 2019, p.114) that points to the fork in the road:

One path leads to a scorched planet where human life is immiserated, if it remains possible at all. The other points to the sort of world that has always figured in humanity's dreams: one whose wealth and natural resources are shared by all, where equality and freedom are premises, not aspirations.

In the manifesto the writers distinguish between 'lean in' feminism, fighting for the right of individual women to join in the fight for position in the established order as a 'handmaiden of capitalism', distinguishing it from feminism as the broader course of developing humanity's dreams.

⁴ There is a growing void here as the continuous centralisation and the platform economy have caused the loss/disappearance of a substantial part of the middle class (as already noticed in Bluebeards Castle (Steiner 1971)).

Audre Lorde points out that to harbour dreams about the future, there can be no hierarchies of oppression (Lorde, Byrd, Cole & Guy-Sheftall, 2009, p. 219). Lorde looks towards the future and speaks about children needing to learn “they do not have to become like each other to work together for a future they will all share.” And, if we “remain divided because of our inevitable differences we cannot join together in effective political action” (Lorde et al., 2009, p. 220).

Lorde fights for freedom from intolerance, for the acceptance of being who she is. She is different, just as we all are. All people are as unique as their fingerprint, yet often attributed to groups. Marginalisation of groups is an instrument of the established order. Therefore, Lorde ends this remarkable book chapter with the warning that although today the forces of discrimination appear to destroy her “it will not be long before they appear to destroy you” (Lorde et al., 2009, p. 220).

Are the People accepting to be led onto the scorched path or are we prepared to invest in our dreams? To unite against the supremacist forces of oppression seems like the way to go. A broad unifying force is needed to overcome the idea that it has always been like this and will always be. To increase the influence by the People on humanity’s dream, emancipation is called for. Not the emancipation that helps the People to ‘lean in’ to the established order, but a discovery of the value of the self as an equal. Not as interchangeable persons for any CEO or president, but as relevant individuals.

Knowledge production for performative imagination

The consumerist society has lost sight of the extreme position where an egalitarian society could be at the opposite end of the bandwidth with a hierarchical or supremacist society. The assumed balance we experience, lacks its anchor at the egalitarian extreme of the bandwidth and consequently drifts towards suprematism.

To reconstitute this reality towards a more balanced society, we need inventive research, an exercise of what can be, by waking up the sleeping giant: the People. Inventive research is needed to get the ball rolling.

The research method should steer the mindset away from current political thought by presenting a different society based on sharing instead of the established order. Not a divisive society, but one that is convincing and with increasing understanding of the ecology over time. Socratic in its approach, not debating but reconnoitring and discussing in the tradition of Socrates, Buddha, Confucius, and Jesus. Away from the sophistic hypocrisy of the believers, towards an understanding of the self, a balance of selfhood. Somewhere between being solipsistic or subservient lies an image of egalitarian behaviour.

Research towards a new type of synchronicity, not dependent on uniformity, but on the understanding of diversity. To give meaning to beauty, justice and good within yourself, not dependent on the approval of any group, ideology, or religion whilst allowing for other perspectives. Allowing the flourishing of the self within the group, enriching the group. From follower to participant, constructively challenging assumptions about the world.

The theory behind it

Towards performative imagination

Performative imagination can make things happen. Based on the constructionist ontology “that social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors” (Bryman, 2016, p.29), constructivism places demands on participants in the research. This stands in contrast to the objectivist view that social phenomena have an existence independent of the social actors.

The participants represent different backgrounds, in the expectation that interaction will stimulate dialogue. That introduces a concern with language. It is necessary to present categories in mutually understandable ways, built up through interaction (Bryman, 2016).

In the book *Inventing the Social* (Marres, Guggenheim & Wilkie, 2018) attention is drawn to efforts to reinvent ways of researching social life. A constructivist need is felt to invent rather than just innovate or improve performance: a need for “an active search for alternative ways of combining representation of, and intervention in, social life” (p.18). Marres et al. (2018) argue that social life is not a given, but that it is performed. That makes it transformable.

Archiving towards imagining.

The research outcome shows on a diamond what could develop over a century. I follow Mason in choosing a model of a diamond, representing a product of nature refined by craftsmanship, a true mix of nature and culture. The analogy of the diamond suits the chosen Facet Methodology as introduced by Jennifer Mason (2011) in her paper *The Case for an Inventive Research Orientation*. It demonstrates there could be more facets lighting up the Social than wealth, fame, and education, as cherished in the established order.

The methodology is a playful approach to epistemology that produces flashes of insight. The facet methodology allows the combination of a variety of perspectives as mini studies, the facets, to contribute to the central theme. These mini studies revolve around creative interviews exploring different ways of perception.

Facets revolve around the bandwidth existing between opposed dichotomies that shape the social ecology, dependent on the position on that bandwidth. Facets have different shapes and sizes, but all contribute to the way the gemstone encapsulates the Social. They demonstrate the multidimensionality of the lived social world whilst helping to imagine a holistic view of society. That is taken in contrast to the limited notions of fame, riches, and status that the reductionist society of the established order allows for.

Facets should present flashes of insight from different perspectives. Research participants should draw deductive, imaginative, inventive, creative, and intuitive reasoning into the research practice, with both a scientific and an artistic background (Mason, 2011).

The research archives through recorded conversations. The goal of the study is not producing definitive data but to contribute towards creating images of imagination. Its recordings, with the aid of transcripts, are submitted to conversation analysis (Bryman, 2016) in an empirical sense; looking for those gems that make the diamond shine, whilst keeping a watchful eye for nuance.

3. Research method

Interview set-up towards the creation of a Diamond on the Horizon.

The previous chapter describes why the facet methodology was chosen. The search is on for the Social within the shared natural limitations of the planet. To generate sufficient momentum towards change over time the Sociological Imagination must be created and maintained by an attractive image of what could be, a Diamond on the Horizon. The goal of this research is to think about ways of getting there through a changed appreciation of education.

This should help the People being heard, avoiding a totalitarian society. That doesn't mean doing away with hierarchy. An opposition of totalitarian would be anarchy, but that is not what this is about. It is about placing the hierarchy somewhere on the bandwidth between those extremes to allow for egalitarian relations. This research first seeks to investigate if people still have an active image of what this bandwidth is and what it could be, and subsequently about finding ways to get there. A fictional reality must be created to discover the extreme on the egalitarian end.

The focus group planning

The discovery is carried out with the help of focus groups engaging in several exercises, discussions, and a thought experiment. Persons from a background as suggested by Mason (2011) were invited to participate for a day. The first group consists of philosophy and sociology students, the second group of scientists and actors. The scientists because they are trained in abstract thought, capable of abstraction from what is, to distil from there an image of what could be. The actors because they have the skill to position themselves in an imaginary situation.

The design of the research involved a set of perspectives on key elements of living resemblances (the dichotomies), and critical associations. Three interview encounters with words in a different setting, were followed by discussion about the societal role of education and finally a thought experiment to create the diamond on the horizon.

This program was introduced with an animated movie about natural limits and sharing and a presentation about the motivation behind the research. The first part of the day is devoted to the concept of dichotomies. Vocabulary is important towards understanding in role play. There is substantial linguistic relevance in the awareness of the value in opposition between dichotomies for constructive discussion. The understanding for instance of the meaning of the notion of *culture* may vary substantially with the perspective of different individuals.

It is not about perspectives being right or wrong, but about awareness of possible interpretations and getting used to relevant notions. Awareness of the possibilities of extreme values in a (theoretical) egalitarian society on one side and a supremacist one on the other; the extremes of a bandwidth from which possible realities may arise. Three morning sessions have been developed to work with vocabulary that plays its part in describing the Social:

- Session 1: Groups are given 34 stickers with words (Att.1) with the request to match them in seventeen opposed dichotomies like Suprematist – Egalitarian.
- Session 2: With the same words, this time ordered in pairs, the groups should split them in two columns: Egalitarian and Suprematist agency.
- Session 3: A plenary exercise to discuss which concept is most influenced by:
 - the intangible established order
 - the authorities (government, management)
 - the real self.

This last session is relevant towards answering the research question. It addresses the People, the authorities, and the influence education has on the order of society. The state influences the curriculum of the schooling with its importance for education and in doing so influences the established order. It will show whether the individual can be more than just a puppet.

The next session prepares the thought experiment by questioning how to introduce the finite/infinite dilemma into education. The final session investigates which notions should adorn the facets of the diamond that makes 2121 an attractive time to live in.

- Session 4: If and how to introduce the dilemma of infinite demand from a finite planet and how to go about sharing the finite into education.
- Session 5: Finally, the thought experiment is to *imagine* the year 2121 and create the diamond on the horizon. Imagining that since 2021 up to five generations have been at work to make the world a more reasonable place. What aspects can supplement or even replace fame, wealth, and status, with their limited availability, as ways to enjoy living, changing from a life to survive to a life to live?

Mixing age, art and thinking craft

Mason stresses the need for researchers to be active and imaginative agents: “The researcher needs their intellectual and creative energies and skills honed when they ask themselves how they can get hold of some pivotal, incisive, crucial or vital things about, in our case... ..the facets that make up the Social” (Mason, 2011, p. 80). The people invited, with their differing backgrounds, fit that requirement.

On method

The thesis gives a glimpse of what different societal conditions could do for the mental ecology of the People and their identity, away from being governed as generic citizens. It presents an idea of what could become over time, to challenge the imagination. Such an image lies far removed from today’s human being, used to living in a hierarchical structure (Fig.1). The method employed will be crucial to make a relevant outcome a possibility.

The method follows the constructionist approach that social phenomena are continually accomplished by social actors. This becomes clear when looking at the dichotomy *culture vs. nature* that is relevant in the research. That dichotomy is seen as obsolete by some (Possamai, 2013). We no longer conceive of nature and culture as two distinct entities. This merits reconsideration when searching for clarity in a common language. Language is performative, and the original linguistic extremes are still relevant.

The current meaning of a notion is the mix on the painter's palette, but the colour still originates from two different tubes. We may wonder why a dichotomy like culture vs. nature seems to have lost its bandwidth and is considered obsolete.

According to Possamai's article that loss started with modernity. Francis Bacon and the like, conceived nature as an object to be controlled by mankind. This was seen as progress for a long time, but mastering nature is not the same as abusing its natural capacity. It may be worthwhile to restore the bandwidth of the dichotomy to its full value.

There the meaning of culture is: "the integrated pattern of *human behaviour* that includes thought, speech, action, and artifacts and depends upon man's capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations." Nature is "a creative and controlling *force* in the universe." (Webster, 1979).

A similar case can be made for another dichotomy no longer fully recognised: debate as opposed to discussion. It benefits the debater whilst taking away a crucial distinction from discussion. The debater wants to win a debate by attacking or defending a position. That would do nothing for a discussion, which is an interactive process between persons towards developing a position.

The challenge of working towards change

If sustainability of the world order needs change, it needs clarity of common language towards understanding society. As the needed change can be seen as paradigmatic, hardly any real-life example can be called upon to aid conceptualisation. To generate an attractive image, we need common understanding. Once that has been built, a thought experiment can help finding a starting point. Apart from a shared understanding of the situation, it needs a willingness to abandon, for the purpose of the experiment, factual realities of today's society towards a different tomorrow.

I have chosen a timeframe of a century from 2021 to 2121 because of the constructionist standpoint and its relevance of time (Bryman, 2016). The chosen timeframe allows each subsequent generation to act as a point of reference for the next one.

Based on that point of departure, a fictional reality, a story, is created through interviewing based on the concept of dialogue. The constructivist approach to the Social guides towards this method. Method as impacted by ontological politics (Mol, 1999) and the epistemic cycles it goes through, as it reverberates between what the method does and the social world it seeks to understand (Law, Ruppert, Savage, 2011).

This thought experiment expects to see a variety of persons converse in a setting that stimulates discussion. Discussion towards tentative conclusions about the mental ecology of people in an egalitarian world, which has shaken off dominant aspects of today's reality. The participants originate from today's reality. They know their background and consider the different 'selves' in the multifarious group. The free flow of thought may be disturbed by the forces at play (Fig.2), real or imagined.

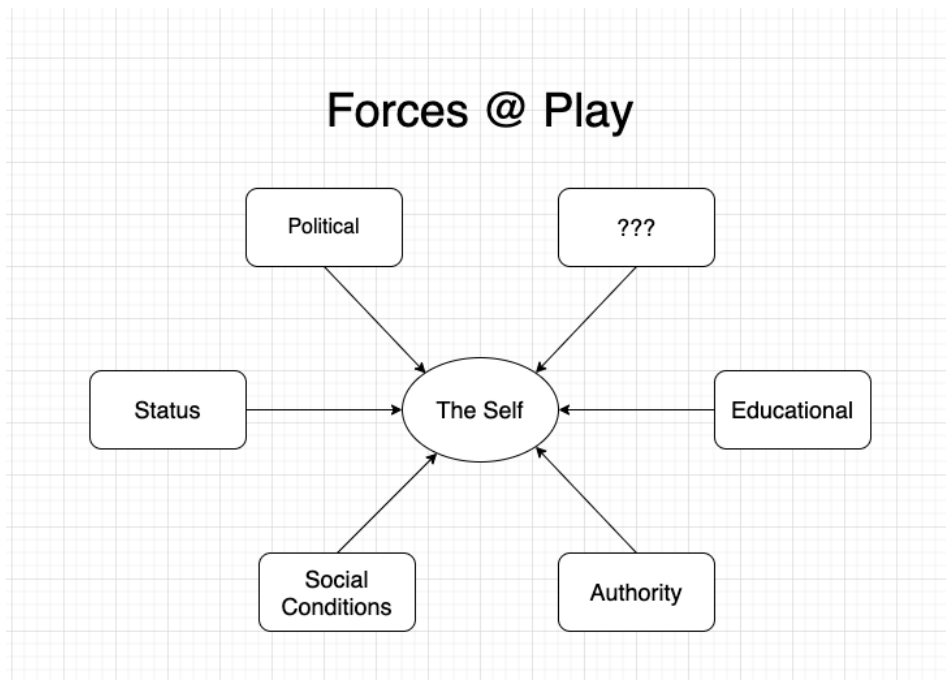


Fig.2 Some of the Forces @ play

This chapter depicts how and why the recorded material is produced. The conclusions of the research will always be interesting, whichever way they may point. A lot depends on freedom of thought around the “What if?”. The next chapter talks about the struggle of being a stranger to our own world and to mount an attack on the ontology of society’.

4. Results and Analysis

Organisation

The event with the students on May 25th, 2021, was held on the Erasmus University campus. The one with the mix of actors and scientists on May 28th in a central location in Utrecht. Dates were dictated by the covid-19 restrictions. Both events are equal input for the study. The language was Dutch.

Process management was in the neutral hands of Roel Noten⁵. Sound recording was by Bert Vermijs. Recordings were transcribed using Amberscript.com.

Common content of both days

For the opening of the Day of the Diamond I produced a short, animated film (Tiddens 2021):

*Sharing fair on planet earth – the fundamental question*⁶.

It introduces a different ontology of the Social, based on the vision of sharing our finite world. Not to present that as an ideal, but to provide extremes of the dichotomy shared world versus the established order. This introduces the image of the shared world as the basis for educational change.

After the film, I introduced the project with a presentation before handing over to Roel Noten as chairman. The program was followed as outlined in chapter 3.

Data and Analysis

The participants were recorded with individual microphones. This resulted in an enormous amount of saved data. The recordings were then combined for the individual sessions on group level and for the plenary sessions as such. The combined recordings were automatically transcribed. The quality of the transcriptions was good enough to follow the conversations in combination with listening to the recordings.

The transcripts were first redacted to correct misrepresented words, to remove all nonessential interjections, and non-related banter. That provided enough insight for most parts. Intense conversation, like the one about introduction of sustainability issues in education, was again radically pruned to get to its essence. The results as reported in the following sections are an analysis from these recordings and transcripts and represent the gist of the discussions. Sentences felt by me to be particularly relevant or forming a conclusion on a certain topic are rendered in italics. Interjections by me or the chairman were few and far between and only served clarifications. My conclusions are identified as such.

⁵ A former colleague from the business world with extensive experience in managing large scale IT projects and hence in managing a wide variety of projects.

⁶ Eerlijk delen op aarde – de fundamentele vraag. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iVuSg1HWKBw>

Results May 25th, 2021 - Student groups A & B

The May 25th event was held on campus in Rotterdam with the aid of master students: Sander Tuns, Nicolaas Sondervan and Mirjam van Helden in group A and Claire Tio, Marlijn Mulder and Sietse Leeflang in group B. All of them have backgrounds in either philosophy and/or sociology. The average age was around 25.

Session 1

Of the total of seventeen opposed pairs both groups agreed with the originally suggested ordering (Att. 1) in nine cases, however agreeing amongst the groups only in six. Of all seventeen oppositions therefore fourteen were recognised along similar lines as the suggested pairs. I conclude that validates those suggestions, whilst also confirming that understanding based on language needs attention to the meaning of key-concepts.

Session 2

Both teams saw the agency for the individual concepts largely in accordance with the suggested categorisation (Att. 2). Both teams placed the dichotomy stubborn vs. maverick the other way around, probably because it is always debatable in Dutch. Apart from that there was a difference for global vs. local for one team and for goal vs. cause for the other one.

Both teams decided to create a middle category. They clearly did not agree that all pairings could be hard extremes enveloping a bandwidth. Each team placed two different pairings there. I see the basic idea confirmed.

Session 3

The plenary discussion to establish which concept is most influenced by the phenomenon of the established order, the authorities (government, management) or someone's personality. This resulted in complete pairings being placed at the level of established order (4x), authorities (3x) and personal level (5x) (Att.2).

The discussion showed how interwoven these three levels are. Another theme revolved around the established order not being static. The seventies saw Neoliberalism coming up, leading to a different version of the hierarchical established order of the feudal reality during the Middle Ages. It was agreed that an individual's personality or character may or may not suit the requirements of society. Also, it was understood that, whilst authority governs a local society, government cannot escape the necessity to remain competitive on the global market.

It all has a human element, as we grow up in a system that we perpetuate, albeit at different levels. Every time we stop at a red traffic light, we signal agreement with the system. We learn that we must stop for the red light, play our role in society, from primary education onwards.

Session 4

The conversation started with the question whether the animated film would be appropriate for the primary education curriculum. The animated film as such received criticism against the production itself. Since it was only produced as an example and not an actual teaching aid, that criticism is accepted but put aside. I concentrate on the

conversation about its topic: sharing the finite planet in contrast to the established order. That highlighted several issues:

- The age group that could or should be confronted with this fundamental societal challenge.
- The persistence of fundamental ethical and moral differences.
- The authority struggle between teachers and parents.
- The role and position of education in society.

The idea that such a sensitive item deserves a place in the curriculum was hotly contested, also because the finite-infinite limitations were not viewed by all as threatening. The central question was whether children should be made aware of the potential shortfall in sustainability of the established order or should be shielded from it. That led to the question whether shielding was morally acceptable. One participant responded with the following words: *As a parent I always want the best for my child. This animation would show my child something that I dare not possibly accept as a parent. It would say that as a parent I am wrong and belong to a bad part of society.* The response came back that the animation may suggest that the present is problematic, but this would not lead to children condemning their parents.

The question about the appropriate age for children to be confronted with existential problems, at primary or secondary school level, triggered the discussion that the societal debate would move talks about the benefits of capitalism and its reward system into the home. *How much influence would that give the school, and would that threaten the authority of the parents?*

The group suggested that if the animation would be shown at primary school level, it would lead to a lot of very angry parents, all individual people with specific private interests. Can there be grounds for authority issues between parents and teachers?⁷ Can there be a reason for not wanting to find a better way of inhabiting the planet? Sure, today's reality is different, hence the sustainability issues. Are parents interested in finding solutions or are they part of the problem?

The possible unquestionability of complex situations with their global impact makes ethical implications of parenthood relevant. Remarks were made like: *"I do not want to be changed by my child"*, *"Children are not in a position to mount a fundamental and functional discussion"*, and *"I grew up in this system and that is more important than anything else in the world. Let Africa look after its own children"*.

The conversation about these attitudes at the basis of societal interaction with children was seen to limit the accumulation of wisdom in today's system of inequality. It led to questions about the sanctity of parental authority, the responsibility for education.

Parental involvement was however found to be crucial towards the necessary snowballing effect towards change. If you want to maximize what can be achieved in the

⁷ In my book *The Power of Ten* (Tiddens, 2014) I suggest that control over (primary) education should be in the hands of a structure of neighbourhood citizens instead of government. If that would be the case such authority issues would have their own forum.

time span of a century (five generations), you need parents who can have these conversations with their kids. This is the motivation to bring it into the classroom. Younger generations discussing with their parents will in due time be confronted with similar discussions once they become parents. That will contribute to a snowballing of the societal involvement that would be needed. So basically, it was stated: *"If you want this to be a success then parents have to be involved in the discussion with their children. To achieve that the parents must have a system of being familiarised with the teaching materials.*

Session 5

Finally, the group set about the thought experiment of defining attractive social concepts that should become relevant in the new social climate of 2121. Concepts that will shine on the 13-facets of a diamond (Att. 4) and enhance motivation towards a more inclusive future than the fame, riches and status of today's society allows. The first question the group addressed was whether those notions even deserve a place on the diamond. The group concluded that there are more attractive notions worth striving for, so they were abandoned.

Love was brought up first in competition with sympathy. Love prevailed. Next was the word *care*. This was specifically stated in English (the rest was in Dutch) as the notion of care was felt to have a richer meaning than its Dutch equivalent. Next the word *collective* came up. Discussion ensued, as it had to be distinguished from the hierarchical group, and to be understood as togetherness.

A notion that kept coming back throughout the discussion was *creativity*. Here it would be needed for *creation*, the aspiration is to take evolution to new forms of global order, with more *common goals*.

Gratefulness did not make it and neither did self-determination. The discussion about egalitarianism led to the notion of *divinity* being suggested. The notion collectivity was felt to be narrower than divinity. In the ensuing discussion it was explained that we are all modifications of the same substance and that this does not play out in today's order. Divinity was embraced and included on the diamond. That was almost as if *diversity* became superfluous, but it still was included in combination with the *complementarity* of diversity. It brought forward the relevance of *singularity*, the right to be your own person, whilst not forgetting the general, to make collectivity a possibility.

The discussion turned to the importance of the notion of *identity*. That fed into the next choice, that of *self-development*. As a word that was felt to fall short of what the group tried to express, it still came closest. The uncertainty was attributed to the critical nature of today's society and led to the inclusion of something resembling resilience, described as *forgive-forget-rebound*.

To deal with uncertainty *faith* was included. Not in its religious sense, but as the right to believe, to have faith in, for instance, love. It earned its place on a facet, but in combination with the recognition that the notion of *doubt* must go hand in hand with faith.

This completed the task of finding the thirteen notions on the diamond (Fig.3) that would allow for a more attractive social climate in 2121. As one participant summed it up as follows: *I don't know if you share my experience, but this exercise gives me the idea that fame, riches, and status get a totally different position.*



Fig. 3 The diamond of May 25th, 2021 (See Att.4 for more detail)

Results May 28th, 2021 - Actors & Scientists

On May 28th the group was made up of three persons from the science community: Prof. Dr. J. Jolles (professor neuropsychology), Dr. P. Delaere (faculty member philosophy) and Dr. A. Schinkel (associate professor educational studies). From the world of the (performing) arts Monique Kuijpers, Marike van Weelden and Pieter Tiddens⁸ attended. The average age of these participants would be about double that of the earlier group. Most of them are parents. The format of the day was identical to the previous day.

Session 1

The result of today's first session (Att.3) showed the relevance of the group compositions. The outcomes differed substantially. The actors first clarified amongst themselves what the goal of the session would be and agreed that the dichotomies were oppositions that were important to each other. They delved deep into the various meanings and tried to reach agreement amongst each other, admitting to a natural urge to say something original. They used up all the allotted time. Ultimately the actors had four pairs in accordance with the original ordering. Nine pairs were combined in a different manner. That left eight concepts unordered.

The scientists decided on a different approach, which they felt to be more constructive. Rather than look for oppositions of the dichotomies they tried to find matching pairs and quickly agreeing on those in about eleven minutes. That produced only one conforming dichotomy, but in view of the object of the exercise, getting used to a common vocabulary, it was an interesting take that met its goal.

As the findings of both teams were brought together at the end of session 1, one of the scientists remarked that it was impossible to reach agreement on all meanings. A thought felt to be worth keeping in mind when thinking about education.

Session 2

As was the case in the previous event on the 25th, these groups also needed a middle category. The actors left a few word pairs intact, placing three of them as a pairing in the egalitarian category and one pairing in the suprematist one. Three pairings (different from those on the 25th) were placed in the middle category. The scientists put seven pairs in the middle category.

During the discussion at the end of the session it was suggested that the actors had more emotion involved in connection with the words, making their thought process time consuming, whereas for the scientists it was a quick academic process. The different conversations had different pairings as an outcome.

Session 3

The actors stressed the value of language and the confusion it can cause. They articulated the hope that in 2121 you would have to speak less yet be better understood. They voiced that the use of words is a discriminating process that plays an important part in hierarchy. The elite feels entitled to use their vocabulary and suggests that others should

⁸ My brother.

increase their literacy, rather than feel compelled to tone down their rhetoric towards using a more accessible vocabulary.

This brought the scientists to introduce the notion of epistemic injustice in the use of language, distinguishing two types. The first that the words of some persons (for instance children) are being discounted. The second injustice is caused by a hermeneutic shortfall. That happens when there are no words (yet) for an injustice, as it is not yet recognised by society (like sexual harassment).

As words and language are so central in communication, their approach in education must be considered. The scientists put forward that the meanings of words are often approximations, allowing people a lot of leeway with what can be achieved by it and that includes abuse. The actors suggested debate is more than just words, it is also theatrical. So, *both rationality and emotion influence dialogue and should therefore be relevant in the way education deals with language.*

Session 4

There was again criticism of the animated film as such, but the idea that the topic the film covers should be included in the curriculum was supported. It would need a better fit with the methodologies used in schooling. *From a didactical point of view, it was considered preferable if the question arose from the kids instead of telling them what they should know.*

The scientists wanted the teachers to ask more questions. That should stimulate thought in the children. The actors agreed and suggested giving information to the children and making them play their reality. Theatre likes to put things in front of you and then put that to work. The science side warned of certain limitations, as many schools do not have enough diversity to be truly representative of society, limiting the possibilities to react based on identification.

A good film will show the inevitable. Its content should be non-negotiable and induce a sense of urgency without falling back on the political tunes of yesteryear. If human life on our planet is threatened, then it affects all and moves beyond politics. That is the film the theatre producer would like to make. Make the kids feel what it would be like if they experience penury, that something is no longer available. It was made specific that: *You must reach the children personally to get beyond their jaded appreciation of video and news broadcasts.* Confirmation of this reaching-out-theory and everything about the danger of failing to impress the kids comes from the science side. They must feel involved, related to the situation.

The generational aspect was also brought up. Teachers are of a previous generation to the children, and they have been trained in institutes by persons preceding them. That influences and temporises the ethics of teaching staff.

On the previous research day, the concern for parental feelings was prominent but in this session that was not a concern at all. Not even after the chairman tried to steer things in that direction. The actors came up with a different perspective. Rather than the technocratic arguments about abusing the planet they suggested the Social as a more fertile area to achieve a better lifeworld. The scientists embraced the idea of *the Social being a more fertile area and suggested making the social aspect a more important element in the curriculum of the schools.*

This should include special attention towards problem solving, understanding the value of compromise, about being inclusive or the opposite. You can make games for children to practise these things and experience them first-hand. That would prepare the

Social better for situations where solidarity is called for and would prepare the ground for a more involved dialogue in secondary education.

Primary education should be about learning how to live in the world. Addressing questions about the meaning of diversity, and how to experience life outside the immediate family environment. The more worrying aspects like sustainability should only be introduced as a second stage. The comment was made specific that schooling by itself stands relatively powerless when it comes to changing society.

Session 5

The final session turned to the diamond. It resulted in different desirable facets of social life from the day with the students. The outcome proved identical in two instances, whilst three more may be seen as similar. In total the two days saw at least nineteen notions that could make for a different world order in a changed society in 2121.

The conversation started again questioning the desirability of maintaining today's fame, riches, and status. To wipe them off, reference was made to the work of happiness professor Ruud Veenhoven of the Erasmus University in Rotterdam. He has interviewed people over the course of many decades about what could possibly make them happy. None of these three, fortune, fame, and status, gained a prominent place in his research. Instead, Veenhoven's work puts *self-determination - autonomy* as the prime driver for happiness. The group accepted this suggestion. Next came *compassion - solidarity* as an important element in social living.

The third concept revolves around the social notion of *belonging*, seeing humans as *social animals*. Attachment is one of the most important things from an early age onwards. It starts within the family and expands towards being a member of a group in the very large society. Here it should be considered that people can feel comfortable with a hundred to hundred and fifty or at most two hundred people around them. The brain cannot handle anything beyond that. The composition of the group may change over time, but it will not surpass such limits. *Having 800 friends on Facebook is an illusion, also because it will not carry the element of reciprocity that is a prerequisite for true belonging*. That makes the city as a social environment too large. Focal points, like schools, could be useful to gather around.

The next notion to go on the diamond has a more psychological and even biological background. *Curiosity* is an important tool to adapt to an environment. A stimulus to be *enterprising*. That combination is seen as a biological necessity towards survival. Seemingly similar, the notion of *wonder* needed to be included separately on the diamond. It goes beyond curiosity because of its interest in the mystery beyond. That creates room to investigate an interest in the why and how of things, in alternatives. It takes a next step from the curiosity for survival towards a fuller understanding, challenging the senses on different levels.

It was suggested that if we live in the society of 2121, where prosperity is reasonably well distributed and egalitarianism is an accepted fact of life, we will no longer be focused on growth, production, and consumption. That raises the question what people will do to get through the day. Some will make music, others will study philosophy or start acting, start a reading club or develop themselves in whatever way that suits them. *Self-development* would be an essential element of such a society.

Today the individual cannot feel responsible for the general situation making solidarity outside the direct environment a difficult notion. Solidarity will always be dependent on a shared sense of *responsibility*. In today's individualistic society it is beneficial to be famous, as you will get noticed. That is seen as a biological need for survival, as it avoids being forgotten. Being rich has a similar motivation, as a lot of money will prevent you from getting into trouble. These individualistic goals were compared to those of youngsters who grew up in Japan, educated in group thinking. They had to get used to European individualism when coming over here. Subsequently, *it was suggested that it would be nice if people would get rewarded with a higher status for their social investment*. That brought the notion of *care* to the fore.

Next came recognition for the necessity of *diversity* in society. *You need people at all levels and that should have an influence on an egalitarian appreciation of diversity*.

By now both actors and scientists felt that it was getting very well behaved and might not suit the human drive for *adventure*. Whether that should be in the shape of space travel was contested, as it might not fit the societal priorities at a given point in time. It was agreed that our need for adventure could be satisfied by exploring the greatest or the smallest, as appropriate. There the notion of *self-control* came up. As our need for adventure is one of the more complex things. What are the priorities and when is something enough? That again needs to be seen with the right *sense of perspective*. Its relevance is measured by its ability to be seen with *humour*.

The remaining facet on the diamond brought forward the idea of *freedom*. It was agreed to place freedom on top of the diamond but not without a proviso though. To avoid that this entire day would get the notion of just shooting the breeze, the group concluded that whilst freedom may be good, society needs institutions to run it. Institutions, like education, that should serve the facets on the diamond.

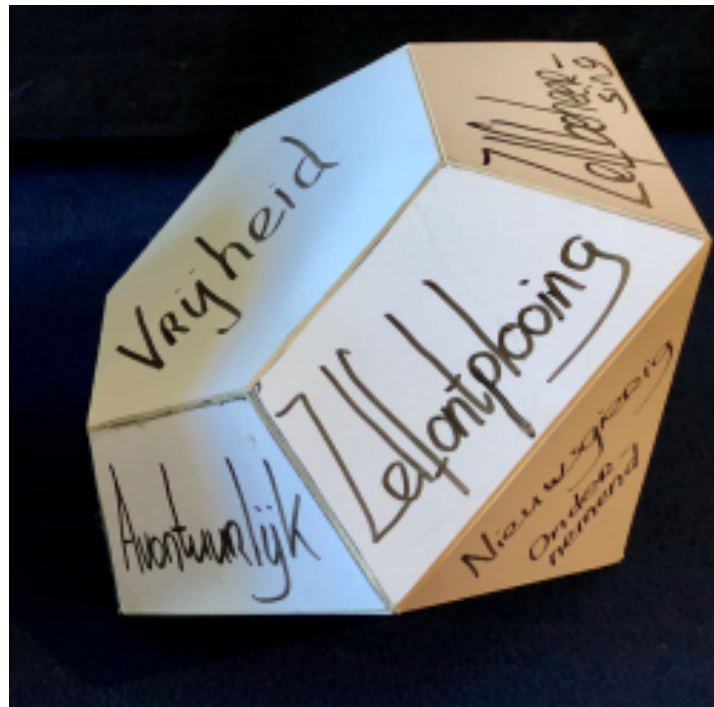


Fig. 4 The diamond of May 28th, 2021 (See Att.4 for more detail)

Analysis of the days combined

Looking at both days confirms the desirability of making the Social a more important element in the curriculum of the schools. Both point to the necessity of a holistic approach, making education a joint enterprise of the Social, of parents, schools, and environment. The relevant flashes of insight of the individual days are rendered in italics in the Results as described above. Here I emphasise a few differences of perspective as they serve the complementarity of the two days.

The students addressed moral issues, resulting in a discussion about parental authority being threatened. That highlighted suggestions about the role of schooling in education and the involvement of the parents in the curriculum. On the second day the group zoomed in on the value of language and linguistic problems as instruments for the social practice. The relevance of words and language was deemed to deserve a more central place in education that would benefit over the generations with parental involvement.

Agreement was shared about primary school being too early to confront children with the challenges of society. At that age they should concentrate on how to live in this world, leaving sustainability aspects for secondary education.

5. Conclusion

It is scary to lift the veil that lies over the profoundly social crisis leading to an environmental apocalypse. Leaving the veil untouched, will lead to an ever more repressive society. It calls for a different approach of education with more attention to the social to emancipate the People on the ground floor (Fig.1). The People owe it to themselves to engage in their education to achieve this emancipation.

Aided by the facet methodology (Mason) an effort was made to address the research question *How can an inventive setup stimulate an egalitarian imagination in education?* Two multifarious groups engaged in constructive conversation about what could be, starting from an appreciation of what is.

The metaphor of the facet methodology of course has its limitations. It is not the glass-cutting edge of the diamond but, if used in a gentle and suggestive way (Mason 2011), it helps in finding flashes of insight rather than producing maximum data of a descriptive kind. Such insights directed attention towards relevant things to be considered when evaluating the notion of education as a tool towards an egalitarian appreciation of the People. Education can help the voice of the People to gain prominence whilst feeding their hunger for change. The thought experiment shows that hunger to be well founded. There is a clear consensus in the focus groups about replacing the current societal aims of fame, riches, and status with more appealing facets on the diamonds as listed in attachment 4.

To achieve such change, schooling should come under review towards its function within a more holistic education, better geared towards its role for the Social. The need to make the Social an important element in our education suggests an educational shortcoming and must be an element of general concern.

Education should be about communication, the meaning of language, the art of listening and understanding of both rational and emotional aspects. This should help problem solving, appreciating the value of compromise, and understanding inclusivity. The setup should include parental involvement for education to become a joint enterprise of the Social. Discussions will be taken home and that should promote snowballing of the awareness of the desired effects rather than lead to conflict about the sanctity of parental authority.

Accepting that the established order does not need to be seen as static, the research addressed many elements that need to be considered in education, like method, appropriate age of children in combination with educational focus, moral and ethical considerations, the importance of time and generations, and parental involvement in discussing the teaching materials. The appropriate size of a social environment we can engage with, also applies to schools, is important as it helps social development. The downside could be that such a right size may limit the awareness and thus the understanding of diversity in society. Such understanding would do justice to the actual need society has for diversity and that should lead to egalitarian appreciation.

Education is a fertile area for influence of the Social in societal change. Notions of compromise and inclusivity would benefit from practising games. Practicing dialogue should help towards involving the children and would illustrate the role of both rationality and emotion. It would be preferable for educational purposes if the curriculum was driven by questions arising from the children. This would also improve the chances of breaking through the children's jaded appreciation of video and news.

Such momentous change from schooling to education is an ambitious undertaking. The thought experiment with the diamond as an image of a changed society justifies the belief that such education might be worthwhile. The image of that diamond would derive strength from pulling the future towards today. It will feed our sociological imagination, making it performative.

The facet method proved to be an enlightening approach to constructive and creative thought engaging with informed knowledge. Opinions about a challenging topic were critically tested amidst a group of imaginative, inventive, creative, and intuitive participants. They collaborated in conversation to suggest a variety of valuable insights towards the research question. Possibilities, limitations and expected pitfalls were addressed from a variety of perspectives. They bring an awareness of challenges that will continue to need development by generations ahead. Subsequent generations of the People will get a better understanding of the *how* in the research question, built on the efforts of the generations before them. Building based on a grounded normativity towards more egalitarian living within the limits of our finite planet.



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The illustrations were all own design. Fig.1 was realised by Thomas Arts. The diamonds were produced by Simon Haen.

Attachment 1 – The dichotomies

Suprematist	Egalitarian
Debate	Discussion
Haste	Tranquillity
Stubborn	Maverick
Reactive	Proactive
Overwhelming	Humble
Critical	Understanding
Substitute thinking	Empathic
Culture	Nature
Goal	Cause
Knowing	Thinking
Impulsive	Thoughtful
Tough	Hesitant
Dictate	Supported
Materialist	Spiritual
Global	Local
Applied	Fundamental

Attachment 2 - Session campus Erasmus University May 25th, 2021

Session 1 – Group A

Conforming dichotomies:

Materialist – Spiritual; Egalitarian – Suprematist; Global – Local; Cause – Goal; Impulsive – Thoughtful; Reactive – Proactive; Culture – Nature; Haste – Tranquillity; Humble – Overwhelming.

Variance

Stubborn – Fundamental Discussion – Dictate Hesitant – Knowing Applied – Debate Tough – Supported Maverick – Understanding Critical – Empathic Substitute thinking- Thinking

Session 1 - Group B

Conforming dichotomies:

Substitute thinking – Empathic; Reactive – Proactive; Egalitarian – Suprematist; Global – Local; Dictate – Supported; Materialist – Spiritual; Haste – Tranquillity; Debate – Discussion; Culture – Nature.

Variance

Impulsive – Overwhelming; Stubborn – Fundamental; Goal – Fundamental; Understanding – Maverick; Knowing – Hesitant; Applied – Goal; Tough – Thoughtful; Critical – Humble.

Session 2 - Group A

Egalitarian:

Discussion; Supported; Stubborn; Proactive; Thoughtful; Humble; Understanding; Spiritual; Empathic; Global; Cause; Substitute Thinking; Hesitant; Fundamental.

The middle category:

Haste; Tranquillity; Culture; Nature.

Suprematist:

Debate; Dictate; Maverick; Reactive; Impulsive; Overwhelming; Materialist; Critical; Thinking; Local; Goal; Knowing; Tough; Applied.

Session 2 - Group B

Egalitarian

Humble; Supported; Fundamental; Discussion; Tranquillity; Stubborn; Understanding; Goal; Nature; Hesitant; Proactive; Substitute Thinking; Empathic; Thoughtful.

The middle category

Spiritual; Materialist; Global; Local.

Suprematist

Applied; Dictate; Overwhelming; Haste; Debate; Critical; Goal; Maverick;
Reactive; Culture; Impulsive; Tough; Knowing; Thinking.

Session 3 – Groups A and B combined.

Who to blame? The self, the state, the established order?

The established order

Debate; Discussion; Spiritual; Material; Humble; Overwhelming; Egalitarian;
Suprematist.

The authorities

Goal; Reason; Global; Local; Dictate; Supported.

Personality

Maverick; Stubborn; Knowing; Thinking; Empathic Substitute thinking;
Hesitant; Tough; Thoughtful; Impulsive.

Attachment 3 - Session Utrecht May 28th, 2021

Session 1 – Group C

Conforming dichotomies:

Impulsive – Thoughtful; Stubborn – Maverick; Tranquillity – Haste; Reactive – Proactive.

Variance

Empathic – Suprematist; Hesitant – Debate; Dictate – Discussion; Supported – Global; Knowing – Spiritual; Humble – Substitute thinking; Nature – Goal; Thinking – Material; Overwhelming – Understanding.

Not ordered

Local; Applied; Cause; Tough; Egalitarian; Critical; Culture; Fundamental.

Session 1 - Group D

Conforming dichotomies:

Material - Spiritual

Variance

Tough – Overwhelming; Local – Tranquillity; Substitute thinking – Stubborn; Knowing – Reason; Supported – Applied; Reactive – Impulsive; Global – Haste; Critical – Debate; Dictate – Suprematist; Hesitant – Fundamental; Nature – Proactive; Culture – Thinking; Goal- Egalitarian; Empathic – Understanding; Thoughtful – Humble; Maverick – Discussion.

Session 2 - Group C

Egalitarian:

Tranquillity; Maverick; Stubborn; Critical; Understanding; Empathic; Hesitant; Tough; Nature/Culture; Thinking/knowing; Applied; Spiritual; Local; Supported.

The middle category

Proactive; Reactive; Humble; Overwhelming; Impulsive; Global.

Suprematist

Debate; Discussion; Haste; Substitute thinking; Fundamental; Materialist; Dictate.

Session 2 - Group D

Egalitarian

Discussion; Tranquillity; Stubborn; Proactive; Humble; Critical;
Understanding; Empathic; Thoughtful; Supported.

The middle category

Applied; Fundamental; Spiritual; Materialist; Global; Local; Tough; Culture;
Nature; Cause; Goal; Knowing; Thinking; Hesitant.

Suprematist

Debate; Haste; Maverick; Reactive; Overwhelming; Substitute thinking;
Impulsive; Dictate.

Session 3 – Actors and scientists combined

Who to blame? The self, the state, the established order?

The established order

Supported; Haste; Overwhelming; Substitute thinking; Spiritual; Suprematist;
Global; Dictate; Discussion (3x);

The authorities

Debate; Discussion (3x); Stubborn; Reactive; Overwhelming; Substitute
thinking; Hesitant; Supported (2x).

Personality

Discussion (3x); Tranquillity; Stubborn; Humble; Critical; Understanding;
Empathic; Impulsive; Thoughtful; Hesitant; Tough; Spiritual.

Ideal

Egalitarian.

Discussed but not attributed:

Fundamental; Applied; Maverick; Proactive.

Not attributed:

Local; Nature; Culture; Materialist Cause; Goal; Thinking; Knowing.

Attachment 4

Shining facets on the Diamond of [May 25th, 2021](#)

Love
Care
Collective
Creativity
Striving for common goals
Divinity
Creation
Diversity, complementarity
Self-development
Identity
Forgive-forget-rebound
Faith (not in a religious sense, but the right to believe, have faith in love)
Doubt, uncertainty

Shining facets on the Diamond of [May 28th, 2021](#)

Self-determination - autonomy.
Compassion – solidarity
Belonging - social animal
Curious – enterprising
Wonder
Self-development
Responsibility
Care
Diversity
Adventurous
Self-control
Sense of perspective – humour
Freedom



CHECKLIST ETHICAL AND PRIVACY ASPECTS OF RESEARCH

PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

Project title: The Social as a Diamond on the Horizon.

Name, email of student: W.H.M. Tiddens. pim.tiddens@gmail.com

Name, email of supervisor: W. Schinkel. schinkel@essb.eur.nl Start

date and duration: April 12, 2021, handed in on June 20, 2021

Is the research study conducted within DPAS YES

If 'NO': at or for what institute or organization will the study be conducted? (e.g. internship organization)

PART II: HUMAN SUBJECTS

1. Does your research involve human participants. YES

2. If 'YES': does the study involve medical or physical research? NO

3. Does your research involve field observations without manipulations that will not involve identification of participants¹⁴.

NO

3. Research involving completely anonymous data files (secondary data that has been anonymized by someone else).

NO

PART III: PARTICIPANTS

1. Will information about the nature of the study and about what participants can expect during the study be withheld from them? NO

2. Will any of the participants not be asked for verbal or written 'Informed consent,' whereby they agree to participate in the study? NO

3. Will information about the possibility to discontinue the participation at any time be withheld from participants? NO

4. Will the study involve actively deceiving the participants? NO

5. Does the study involve the risk of causing psychological stress or negative emotions beyond those normally encountered by participants? NO

6. Will information be collected about special categories of data, as defined by the GDPR (e.g. racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a person, data concerning mental or physical health, data concerning a person's sex life or sexual orientation)? NO

7. Will the study involve the participation of minors (<18 years old) or other groups that cannot give consent? NO

8. Is the health and/or safety of participants at risk during the study? NO

9. Can participants be identified by the study results or can the confidentiality of the participants' identity not be ensured?⁹ YES
10. Are there any other possible ethical issues with regard to this study? NO

The 'YES' answer to question 9 should not be an issue. The people have been invited to participate on a personal title, aware of the subject and contribute actively towards the findings of the research. It is not a 'he said, she said' type of dialogue description. The recordings will keep track of who said what through numbered and identified microphones. All participants signed consent forms (Att.6) accepting these recordings.

Participants were fully involved all day and will receive a copy of the thesis. It contains a word of thanks for their willingness to contribute. We (chairman and I) discussed beforehand the unintended circumstances that could cause harm or have negative (emotional) consequences to the participants. Accepting the finite – infinite conundrum of the established order can be confrontational. Although all participants are well educated people, used to dealing with the kind of questions that are being addressed, it was decided never to force the issue. There was some resistance by some, but nothing that should cause problems.

PART IV: SAMPLE

Data collection

Data have been collected during two days with the character of a workshop end of May. The first on EUR campus, the second one in a central location in Utrecht.

Sample size

The total size for each group will be 6 people. The duration of the (recorded) day was about 6 hours, so I have $6 \times 6 = 36$ hours of individual recordings. People obviously were not speaking simultaneous all the time. About 10 hours has been transcribed.

Sampling was made possible by groups A&B, master students of philosophy and sociology. Group C consisted of performing artists and Group D of scientists.

Data storage and backup

Data are stored on my computer at home and on my Cloud location. The sound recordings as well, but they are also on a separate data drive from acquisition.

The responsibility for the immediate day-to-day management, storage and backup of the data arising from the research lies with me. The running of the day was guided by Roel Noten, and the sound was recorded by Bert Vermijs. The update through the cloud connection is continuous. The master tape with all the recordings in parallel has one back-up and is safeguarded.

No personal data have been collected other than for the specific goal of identification.

PART VI: SIGNATURE

⁹ Yes, the identity will be made public in the study and no, there is no need to ensure the confidentiality of the participants.

I followed the ethical guidelines in the conduct of this study. This includes providing information to participants about the study and ensuring confidentiality in storage and use of personal data.

The acquired data are authentic, of high quality and properly stored. I understand the principle that the supervisor (or strictly speaking the Erasmus University Rotterdam) remains owner of the data. All data can be handed over to the supervisor.

Hereby I declare that the study will be conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the Department of Public Administration and Sociology at Erasmus University Rotterdam. I have answered the questions truthfully.

Name student: W.H.M. Tiddens

Date: June 20th, 2021

Attachment 6 - Consent form¹⁰

Research for the project *Towards a diamond on the horizon*. The project is towards the master's thesis of Pim Tiddens (464200).

Name: _____
Email: _____

I, the undersigned, am aware of the fact that I am participating in a thought experiment with regard to alternative thoughts about the established order. My contribution, along with that of the other participants, will be continuously recorded for sound (only). These recordings will be transcribed and analysed as a basis for the thesis.

References to or quotes from participants mentioned in the text, will be by first names. The full names of the panel will be in the pre-amble. Signing this declaration signals my consent with this approach.

Although the personal contributions are recorded and transcribed, the responsibility for the analysis itself lies with Pim Tiddens. The participants will receive a copy of the thesis in due time.

Signed: Utrecht, 28th May 2021

¹⁰ Signed copies in my possession.