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EMBRACING TRANSFORMATION

Migration and Human Dignity

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The transformation of society is deeply linked with the transformation of our imagination—with our perception of who belongs in that society and what is possible, desirable, and aspirational. This assertion has its roots in Anderson's (1983) claim that all we ever have is an 'imagined community;' we cannot ever truly know everyone in our various social circles, and therefore we imagine others' personal experiences and interpersonal bonds as members of our various communities. From this perspective, the proliferation of human mobility in and across societies is not a 'crisis' or a problem to be solved; the 'migration crisis' in Europe and the U.S. is only called such because it challenges these imaginary visions of one's (supposedly homogenous) community.[1] These images may be of an 'already perfect' society, requiring stability, resistance to change, and immobility in order to remain in such a state. Or, these images may be of a 'culturally-superior' society, with supposed linguistic, cultural, religious, and/or ethnic uniformity. Either way, these perceptions of perfect, static, or homogeneous communities are factually inaccurate. Migration is both a historical and contemporary phenomenon that affects (and has long affected) everyday life in countries around the globe; migrants have been and are an important part of almost every society (Oltmer, 2017).

An Educational Approach Based on Human Dignity

One way for people in our mobile societies to reimagine long-held images of their 'perfect, static, or homogeneous communities,' is through education, which can address the challenges of persistent cross-border movement of people in ways that embrace the reality of pluralism, allow for a more expansive imagination of what is meant by 'us,' and thereby promote a more humane society. Education is already used in many countries and in various ways to address the challenges of migration.

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"Migration and adult learning basically belong together" (Friedenthal-Haase, 2020, p. 14, translation ours). The very fact that migrants are in a new society, often with different languages, customs, practices, and bureaucracies, means that in order to live in their new country, they must be involved in the often arduous and exhausting processes of learning. Friedenthal-Haase (2020) explains the type of learning migrants must undertake:

> Anyone who has experienced radical change and upheaval, endured displacement and flight, knows what learning in a dramatic situation means. It is a forced learning, a crisis learning, which approaches migrants of all ages, young and old, which makes inevitable demands on every single person, hard demands especially on the adults who are responsible, not only for their own survival, but also for security, health, and cohesion of the family members dependent on their care. In such life crises, people are mostly on their own.
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> *(p. 13, translation ours)*

Adult education can play a crucial role in framing migration in human terms. We speak of the need for a more humane framing of migration because much of the current discourse speaks of migrants as in need of improvement through adaptation. Migrants are often portrayed as deficient, as not-yet-there members of their new society. To be on an equal footing they need to obtain specific skills and knowledge that, once gained (imparted by various public and private education programs), will allow them to belong.[2]Lange and Baillie Abidi (2015) explain how society often perceives the learning needs of migrants through a 'difference as deficit' perspective; a deficit society believes can be mitigated through some sort of educative process, the goals of which are often driven not by the migrant, but by the host society. Similarly, Shan and Fejes (2015) describe how the learning needs of migrants are often seen as a 'regime of skills' that society needs people to develop, turning many education programs into a "new mode of control and modulation that defines the desirability of individuals in the labor market, shapes the subjectivities, sensibility, and emotionality of migrants and workers" (p. 227).

In contrast to traditional perspectives (such as those critiqued by Lange, Baillie Abidi, Shan, and Fejes) in which migrants are seen as either a burden or a commodity rather than as individuals with personhood and aspirations, some scholars argue that policies and practices surrounding migration, especially related to education, should acknowledge migrants' agency and human dignity, and regard them with the same level of respect as others in the host society. Adult education researchers (Alfred, 2015; Hoggan & Kloubert, in press; Mecheril & Streicher, 2016; Mecheril, 2019) endorse an ethical approach to migrant education. For us, this approach needs to be grounded in the core value of honoring and protecting human dignity, acknowledging the intrinsic value of every human being.

Human dignity is featured prominently in educational discourse and serves as a consensual point of reference across wide-ranging conceptions, approaches, and societal theories. As a foundational idea of human rights, human dignity has a

variety of definitions—in legal, philosophical, and theological fields. To provide a framework for understanding and discussing human dignity, we turn to Daly and May (2018), who claim that the majority of the definitions of human dignity in legal contexts contain four overlapping elements:

1. Autonomy (possibility of determining one's own life path, 'living as one wishes')
2. Living well (adequate living conditions)
3. Living without humiliation (physical and moral integrity)
4. Civic dignity (which enables the engagement in socio-political aspects of one's society)

These elements are relevant beyond just legal contexts. The first and fourth elements (autonomy, civic dignity) are within education's sphere of influence, and therefore relevant to education policy and practice. We see in this framework for human dignity the possibility for new ways for society to perceive migration, and how education might aid in the development of these new perceptions of migration, of 'us' and 'others.' From this, we envision that any societal structure for migrants, including education, would support migrants' autonomy and promote their civic dignity.

Putting human dignity at the center of educational policy and practice would demand more than just providing people with the knowledge necessary for their new environment. It would imply such imperatives as an 'ethics of recognition' (Sprung, 2013, citing Honneth); 'lifelong learning for recognitive justice' (Guo, 2010), and a 'turning to the subject' (i.e., an explicit rejection of using an instrumentalist logic towards human beings) (Hoggan & Kloubert, in press, citing Adorno). Nussbaum (2011) goes even further and demands that we apply human dignity as an ethical frame for societal development, including a list of basic human capabilities that need to be assured in any society.

Adult education has an historic and contemporary self-expectation to facilitate societal development, transitions, and upheavals (Friedenthal-Haase, 2014; Zeuner, 2020). Driven by the expectations and ideals to improve our societies (i.e., to make them more just, inclusive, free), adult education cannot be content with merely facilitating transitions into the labor market or adaptations into existing structures. Its aspirations are to anticipate changes, upheavals, and transformations, and also to support and accompany individuals and societies in overcoming the resulting challenges. Adult education does this by helping people reflect on existing conditions and to think critically in order to formulate societal alternatives where necessary (Zeuner, 2020, p. 2). Based on these principles, adult education in the context of migration would aspire not to merely inculcate specific knowledge and instill societally accepted beliefs into learners' minds, but rather to honor human dignity by supporting learners' individual agency and facilitating their transition into their host culture so they can navigate it successfully, gain sovereignty over their own lives, and become citizens in every way.

The Learning Needs of Society

Migration, as a catalyst of change, reveals the learning needs of society as a whole. In times of upheaval, there can be a tendency to adopt a pragmatic, instrumental approach to educational needs and offerings (e.g., driven solely by a one-sided, short-term logic, by which migrants are the only ones deemed to be in need of learning and change). Even if this tendency is understandable, we consider it erroneous: "[F]rom the point of view of the core values of adult education itself, it is unjustifiable to treat adult learners as means to achieve others' goals" (Kloubert & Hoggan, 2021, p. 34). From the perspective of human dignity, the interests and development of learners (not only of society) need to be at the core of any adult educational endeavor, whether migrant or native. This became clearer as we conducted research (described below) that initially was focused on understanding migrants' learning needs, but evolved in its focus into the role of educators themselves in endorsing, challenging, or modifying the educational system.

Origins and Context of Research Study

This chapter is a meta-reflection on a research study conducted by the authors in 2019–2020 with counselors and teachers who work directly with migrants (Hoggan & Kloubert, in press; Kloubert & Hoggan, 2021). The context of this study was Germany, which had recently experienced a sharp increase in its annual number of incoming migrants, making it the second highest receiver of migrants in the world (UN, 2017). With such a sudden influx, there was a sharp increase in the need to develop systems and practices to identify and address the challenges that arise in supporting such a large number of immigrants. With these new systems and practices already in place for several years, the purpose of the study was to analyze their effectiveness by inquiring into the unmet learning needs of migrants.

To this end, we interviewed ten educators and counselors in southern Germany who had been working with migrants for at least the previous four years. In the aggregate, these research participants had engaged with hundreds of migrants during their transition process and gained helpful insights into common challenges. Interviews took place between December 2019 and January 2020[3]. In the process of talking with these research participants and analyzing their interview transcripts, an unexpected insight into the learning needs of society as a whole arose: we realized that these adult educators were describing their educational practice as a well-intentioned system with a problematic underlying logic (i.e., that education for migrants often focuses solely on the needs of the host society). They talked about the tension between serving the current system that is in place to assist migrants (e.g., following established practices of pointing migrants to current employment opportunities) and feeling obligated to improve the system (e.g., questioning whether the needs of the local labor market should be the primary consideration).

The main findings of the study have already been extensively analyzed in two publications (Hoggan & Kloubert, in press; Kloubert & Hoggan, 2021). This

chapter presents two overarching meta-themes, or leitmotifs, that emerged in the process of interpreting, discussing, and reflecting on the data. Based on this, we argue that learning in a migration society cannot be restricted solely to addressing migrants' learning needs; rather, as brought to the forefront by our findings, we conclude that we must also address how society as a whole is being challenged to learn and develop, and how adult education can support this process.

Two Overarching Leitmotifs

Synthesizing the overall leitmotifs that were identified in our research induces us to re-envision the role and tasks of adult education in the wake of migration. In the following, we present two major themes from the interviews and discuss their possible implications and relevance beyond just Germany. These themes correspond to the first and fourth elements of human dignity (autonomy and civic dignity). Although presented separately, these two elements are impossible to completely unravel and are therefore interwoven in both leitmotifs.

Leitmotif #1: Reinforcing Autonomy through Personal Development

Our primary insight from this study was the tacit, underlying logic of educational institutions: namely, that migrants can and should be useful for the host society. This logic is illustrated through the policies related to the local labor market and the respective educational offerings, many of which aim to integrate the migrant workers into positions where there is a scarcity of labor power, be it a high-skilled domain such as medicine or engineering, or a low paid domain such as care professions (e.g., in senior care facilities). In the words of one of our research participants:

> [F]or me it's not really the target to say: "Well, [there are] four hundred free nurse options at the university hospital. There is what you can do." ... That's not a sustainable decision in my point of view. ... [I] also offer a new aspect for the people coming to my counseling, because many of them are from the job center, and that is the only way of thinking they've learned. "What I'm interested in is not so important. What is the need of the German labor market? That is the most important."
>
> *(Wilhelm, unpublished data)*

A pragmatic approach of matching current labor market needs with migrants as workers is not necessarily bad, but it can easily devolve into an instrumental approach of seeing migrants as means to be used for the benefit of the local economy. It is against this latter approach that we argue for the logic of acknowledging and respecting human dignity, which fosters and encourages the capacity for migrants to think and act for themselves (autonomy), as well as to imagine and develop new ways of living together in a diverse society (civic dignity). The

difference between these two approaches highlights the need for society as a whole to learn in the wake of migration. It requires the challenging of deeply held assumptions, including the instrumental logic of migration policies and practice. Such a learning process is, by definition, a transformative one.

If we look at migrants as learners who need to be taught in order to integrate or fit into a host society, this implies a pre-defined trajectory of transformation, which leads us to consider the distinction between educational efforts designed to transform others (a prescriptive approach) and efforts that provide knowledge, skills, and other tools that enable a learner to transform in their own way over time (a process-oriented approach), as well as with efforts that recognize that learners are enmeshed in a current process of transformation and support them accordingly (an adaptive approach) (Hoggan & Kloubert, 2020). We consider the first approach (i.e., the educational practice of seeking to transform someone else into adopting one's own worldview or culture) as problematic: "Even when educators believe their worldview is justified and laudable, it hints at indoctrination rather than emancipatory education, and anyone on the receiving end of it is justified in feeling disrespected" (2020, p. 6). Particular transformations cannot be prescribed from any group of people towards another; they should emerge from societal dialogue rather than being pre-determined.

Adult education professionals who work with migrants face an ongoing tension in their work. On the one hand, migration poses practical challenges for society and for individual migrants, and the transitional processes of migrants need to be effective in terms of both. On the other hand, there exists a core ethical commitment of adult education to privilege human dignity, which we envision to mean supporting and developing autonomy and capacities for socio-political participation, in addition to addressing pragmatic, immediate needs. Faulstich (2016), for instance, refers to this tension when suggesting that adult education engage in a permanent search for ways human beings can grow, even if the 'restricted conditions of reality' are always dictated by immediate circumstances (p. 59). He uses the term 'life-unfolding education' ('lebensentfaltende Bildung') to describe the endeavor, aiming first and foremost for personal development through a constant expanding of learners' horizons and possibilities to act (Faulstich, 2003, p.15). Personal growth and the ability to responsibly co-shape society is linked to autonomy, to "gaining increasing sovereignty over one's own life" (p. 301).

The described tension (between immediate practical needs and long-term growth) was a recurring topic in our interviews. The counseling service of the German federal labor agency, for instance, seems to operate based on the logic that laborers should meet market needs, and migrants often adopt the same logic and value system into their own thinking. In doing so, they neglect their individual aspirations out of a sense of desperation to find employment anywhere, doing anything, and adopt the desperate view that 'work is work.' One of the research participants explained this tension:

> And quite often ... it was never their decision what they want to make in their professional future in Germany, but it was always the decision either of

> the [job center] or of friends who have a clear plan what is the best option right now here in Germany. But they never came to a point to think on their own: "What are my competencies? What is my educational background? And, what can I do with it in Germany?" … And that's one point that is very important for me at my counseling. I will step-by-step bring them to this point. Giving them a good foundation of information about the German educational system, about how it works, the structures, the processes. So, step-by-step leading them to a point where they can really make a good … sustainable decision, which doesn't plan for the next one or two years, but where do you want to be in ten years? So that we can make step by step the plans to really reach [their own] goals. Because quite often they—especially refugees—are under a huge time pressure: "We want to make money." For example, [if] the family is still living in Syria, etc., a certain income is a condition to be able to bring them to Germany. So many are under extreme pressure. Well, of course I can understand that, but I always try to [put] the focus on the long term.
>
> *(Wilhelm, unpublished data)*

If adult education's role is to develop a more humane, equitable, and inclusive society, then educators and the systems they serve must do more than simply help migrants acclimate to the current societal structures:

> Whether or not someone has migrated to another country has no bearing on this premise. Therefore, the task of adult education is to help learners develop their own path rather than advise them onto a path dictated solely by the needs of their new society
>
> *(Hoggan & Kloubert, in press)*

On one hand, using our example of Germany, adult education needs to help migrants adapt to an already-pretty-good society: a stable political system with a (currently) successful economic system. At first glance, this is a goal worth pursuing, but it can be problematic if it neglects the development of migrants as individuals.

Too much attention on serving the perceived (short-term) needs of society can cause adult education to be an instrument solely of those in power. In contrast, a core premise of adult education as a discipline is a commitment to democratic and emancipatory values

(Kloubert, 2018), including the power to challenge authority (Hufer, 2016, pp. 13–20). It is not just a matter of serving individual interests instead of those of society at large. Rather, from this perspective, learners are treated as agents of democratic and emancipatory development, which serves both individual and societal interests. Adult education provides the means by which people can succeed within current societal structures, but also focuses on helping individuals develop the capacities to shape their own lives (autonomy) and co-shape the society in which they live (civic dignity).

The study participants also criticized the deficit-oriented (rather than asset-oriented) logic behind the design of educational and job counseling systems, which (as described earlier) aim to help migrants compensate for their deficiencies. For instance, Alexander described this approach:

> [Migrants] are people spending their lifetime with a goal that is not … theirs. … [I] think this is the perspective from which those programs are made, like: "OK. How do we get them to become like we want them to be, or like we need them to be?"
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> *(as quoted in Kloubert & Hoggan, 2021, p.33–34)*

The participants in this study consistently demonstrated an orientation toward recognizing the assets of their learners: their unique histories, talents, goals, strengths, and desires. In doing so, these adult educators seek ways to modify the official system wherever possible to serve the actual needs of the migrants. They try to facilitate the personal development of their learners, to pay attention to their individual assets, while also appreciating the rationality of the labor market and society's needs that underlie most of the existing structures and inform the motivations of their migrant learners.

An important consideration is that oftentimes the migrants actually *want* or *do not mind* an instrumental approach. (This is referred to by Wilhem above and is discussed more thoroughly in the next section.) This desire can be based on a sense of urgency. They are in a new country, fully aware that there is a new language, different social norms, and unknown legal and work qualification requirements. And they come to adult education programs in search of the learning necessary to adapt to their new home. Our vision, that adult education needs to consider personal development, does not ignore the desires of these migrants. Rather, our assertion is that migrants (and all learners) should be assisted to make goals based not only on urgency or immediate demands, but also on individual attributes and aspirations. (See Faulstich, as discussed above) These goals are not mutually exclusive.

Leitmotif #2: Reinforcing Civic Dignity through Agentic & Dialogic Skills

The second leitmotif refers to Daly and May's fourth element of human dignity: civic dignity, which can be translated into the commitment of adult education to foster the ability to participate fully in socio-political processes. This can include, for instance, the development of agentic skills, e.g., exercise of agency, self-efficacy, capacity for action and, when needed, resistance. This also requires dialogic skills necessary for deliberation and communication across differences. The promotion of civic dignity in educational contexts does not presuppose or need special civic education courses or explicit political participation. Rather, for civic dignity, agentic and dialogic skills can be developed in any educational program.

One essential starting point is for people to gain an understanding of relevant systems and structures so they can build confidence in their ability to co-determine

the affairs affecting their lives. As societal norms, labor market requirements, and educational systems are interwoven with each other and vary widely across cultures, an understanding of these interconnections inevitably necessitates knowledge acquisition. Knowledge of different paths and processes, institutional landscapes, gateways to certain occupations, as well as tacit knowledge inherently needed in each profession, are all things migrants must learn in order to find their 'own' place in the new society. To learn how to navigate the institutions and structures, migrants need culture-specific knowledge from both within and outside of their similarly cultured peer group. One participant described the types of culture-specific knowledge migrants need in order to take the next step towards becoming part of the host society:

> We had more and more people here who didn't know at all the German educational system, which can become a big problem if you make decisions about your future career on a wrong basis. That means on the basis of the system that you know from your home country. ... They tell me they know already what is their goal, and I show them a pathway to reach these goals. ... I try to figure out what could be the options and step-by-step we are making [them] more concrete .... At the end, it has to be always very concrete. You have to give these people a ... like a lead-map. A time lead-map. What will be the next steps, where do I have to address in order to make [the system] more transparent and in order to empower [the migrants]?
>
> *(Wilhelm, unpublished data)*

In addition to this procedural knowledge, what also emerged from our research is that migrants' efforts to integrate into a new society often intimidate them and lead to feelings of failure and inadequacy. It is not enough for migrants to pose for themselves a clear goal and to have a vision for pathways to their own possible development. On the road to this goal, a number of wrong decisions or missteps can easily be made because they do not understand the myriad systems and tacit norms of their new society; such missteps, according to our research participants, can lead to fatigue, disenchantment, and apathy.

It is understandable how migrants, feeling lost in a system they do not fully know, would desire that someone simply tell them a reasonable goal and the appropriate path to obtain it. Support systems are indeed necessary to facilitate migrants' adaptation to their new society, including for instance, learning the language, education systems, and credentialing processes. However, support systems that treat migrants as deficient or lacking autonomy can lead to migrants' incapacitation, rather than to their transition into functioning members of their new society. Migrants benefit from developing a sense of competence, agency, and self-sufficiency; all of which help them become more able to take steps to identify and realize their goals and find their way in the new society. Pedagogically, the distinction here is between developing a life path *with* people rather than *for* people. One participant described his philosophy: the best way he can help migrants is to

acknowledge their role as agents in deciding what they want for themselves, and then provide them a clear path to accomplish that goal.

> People coming to Germany need clear perspectives and clear decisions. They feel disoriented and lost in an unknown context. They request instruction, a clear decision made for them by someone more knowledgeable. … Many expect something I couldn't offer them. "You make the decision what is good for me. Tell me what would be a good future professional career in Germany." … That's the first thing I say, "No, that's not my decision. It's *your* decision. I try to support you. I create some kind of transparency of the German educational system, of the labor market. We work out together some alternatives, some potential professional pathways." And at the end they often accept: "I [the migrant] make the decision"
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> *(as quoted in Hoggan & Kloubert, in press)*

This is a point of tension in the learning process of migrants. Becoming overwhelmed in a system they do not know, they can be tempted to metaphorically throw up their hands and ask an educator or counselor to simply make decisions for them. Yet, an important part of their transition process is developing not only a knowledge of the system, but also a sense that they can navigate it now and in the future, in order to create and manage their life in their new country. This is described well by Friedenthal-Haase (2014): "A social integration that does not suppress the individual, but sets them free in their independence, can help to overcome hopelessness, apathy and the spirit of submission so that new things can arise" (p. 40, translation ours).

On a final note, adult education can have a special role to play in different communities where people come together, namely, to initiate and support a dialogue, and to promote dialogic competencies among adults. These are essential for civic dignity, as they allow for full participation in socio-political processes, which necessarily implies dealing with conflicts of interest and clashing worldviews. As one participant described anecdotally:

> And then there are the differences between the Arabic and the Kurdish, and that is another problem even if they [Kurds] are Yazidi. Because Muslims say Yazidi are kind of "satanic church." (laughs) Because they have a god who is a fallen angel, and this angel went back to god, and now that is their god. And the Muslims say: "Yes, we know about that angel fallen from heaven, but it never came back—and it is Satan." And sometimes there are some problems. If one says "Okay, you pray to Satan." —"No, I don't!!" This culture problem results sometimes even in the progress of learning, because there are differences.
>
> *(Alexander)*

The more heterogeneous the society, the more it demands attitudes and skills to address such plurality. It is necessary to develop skills to communicate across

differences, not only between the so-called group of migrants and the host society, but even among the migrants themselves. Any heterogenous group will have such differences, and the ability to exercise civic dignity requires dialogic capacities. At the center of any society that aspires to be free and democratic must be a mutual responsibility for the shared world(s). Migrants can and should have the right to co-shape the societies in which they live, and their experiences in adult education programs can foster, rather than ignore or inhibit, the capabilities for this shared responsibility.

Discussion

Our vision is that adult education should first and foremost acknowledge and respect human dignity, specifically in this case by helping migrants develop autonomy and civic dignity, which are necessary pre-conditions for participation in a pluralistic democratic society. If we want to live together in societies in such a way that voices are not suppressed and decisions are made fairly and deliberatively, we need to rely on individuals' ability for autonomous thinking and acting, and for participating individually and collectively in socio-political processes.

This commitment of adult education to human dignity, as discussed in this chapter, may require a constant (self-)examination by educators of the fundamental ethical orientation that influences their practices. This examination might include, for instance, considerations such as: (a) whether migrants' histories, goals, and aspirations are recognized and incorporated into the curriculum (rather than solely conveying the expectations of the host country), (b) whether the educational practices and policies are oriented towards developing agency and self-efficacy in the new society (rather than simply telling migrants what to do), and (c) whether diversity and dialogue are promoted rather than ignored.

If we consider adult education as a catalyst and facilitator of societal development (i.e., that it helps society to learn and improve, in order to become more humane and inclusive), then a temptation can arise to see adult education only in an instrumental role, as a means of 'forming' good workers, good democrats, good citizens, etc. (and this role is sometimes even expected by the migrants themselves). Such views of adult education assume that its goal is to help migrants 'fit' into a democratic, developed society. This goal is worthy only at first glance, if at all. When we take human dignity as a fundamental premise of any educational endeavor, then the practice of trying to mold someone into a preexisting form is problematic from at least two perspectives. First, such an approach bypasses the ethical commitment of adult education to hold human dignity as both an assumption and a goal. If adult education does not foster personal growth, autonomy, and self-determination in learners, then it may serve to undermine learners' long-term civic dignity, suppressing agency and self-efficacy in favor of filling vacancies in the workforce.

Second, from the perspective of the continual improvement of our increasingly heterogeneous migration society as a whole, the aspiration to 'help certain groups to fit' into a seemingly unalterable social/cultural system impairs the broader work

that needs to be done across society: to continually learn and improve. This requires effort from *everyone,* to constantly strive to make our societies better. If education focuses all its attention on migrants' need to change, it contradicts the necessity for all members of the society to see the current state as alterable, improvable—and themselves, accordingly, as agents of desired change, as actors rather than spectators or, worse, silent sufferers.

A better framing of adult education in the wake of migration is to help people find their voice and their path, to develop effective strategies and tools to navigate their worlds, to provide opportunities and foster capacities to have a dialogue across differences: about one's own values and principles, worldviews, traditions, and cultural and personal idiosyncrasies. At a practical level, such an adult education would need to occur in public spaces, even 'counter publics' (see Finnegan, Chapter 2, this volume), where encounters with different cultural achievements are as important as the possibility to find new models and forms of living together. The type of adult education we envision neither imposes nor compels learners to simply adapt or assimilate to the status quo, as defined by economic needs or a supposed cultural homogeneity. When we speak of new imaginings for heterogeneous societies, we do, however, presuppose that they are built on premises of democracy as a sine qua non for human dignity.

Adult education as envisioned here embraces transformation as the foundation of human dignity by engaging the imagination about ourselves and our societies, dealing with questions about what is possible, desirable, and aspirational for society. Who belongs? Whose norms and heritages are accepted? Who is authorized to co-shape the evolving nature of the society? The corresponding adult education would facilitate transformation, not from a 'prescriptive' approach (dictating how migrants need to change), but from both an 'adaptive' (recognizing the transformational challenges migrants are facing), as well as a 'process-oriented,' approach (fostering dialogue and critical reflection in a constant pursuit of better ways of thinking and interacting). It is an engagement with society as a whole to imagine new possibilities for living together in an increasingly diverse world.

Adult education plays a role in shaping societal responses to migration. From the perspective of this chapter, it would of necessity promote heterogeneity and dialogue, as well as reject uniformizing, incapacitating, and instrumentalizing tendencies. Such an approach would entail, inter alia, the imperative that no person may be used as a means to achieve someone else's ends, and that no person's dignity is of less value than any other's in the society. This is essential because the implicit and explicit messages embedded in educational policies and practices shape perceptions about such issues as whether all people inherently possess human dignity, regardless of their status as 'migrants' or 'natives.'

Notes

1 We refer here to concerns voiced over a diluting of the (imaginary) native culture (e.g., German *Leitkultur*), including the xenophobia usually implied. However, we recognize that there are also concerns about potential economic challenges due to the need to

provide adequate living conditions and employment for large numbers of incoming people. We would also contest the legitimacy of these latter concerns as a 'crisis,' but do not do so here, as that is a separate issue.

2 Such 'belonging' might be overstated, as, taking the German example, the official categorization for migrants as 'citizen with migration background,' applies not only to the migrants themselves, but to their next two generations.

3 Research participants were given the option to respond in German or in English; they all chose to speak in English.

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