‘A TRULY GOLDEN HANDBOOK’

THE SCHOLARLY QUEST FOR UTOPIA

Veerle Achten, Geert Bouckaert
and Erik Schokkaert (eds)
‘A Truly Golden Handbook, No Less Instructive than Delightful, by the Most Learned and Distinguished Professors of the Renowned University of Leuven.’

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Leuven University Press
Diversity without a Group Approach

Katlijn Malfliet, Social Sciences

On Similarities and Differences

This story happened long ago, when communism still existed as a political regime, in the early 1980s. I was studying at the Academy of Sciences in Moscow, preparing my PhD on Soviet property law. Soviet property law defined itself as a communist alternative to capitalist private property and it was worth conducting a PhD I felt, in order to scientifically scrutinize this specific way of designing property allocation. The Institute of State and Law, my research institution, was housed in one of those beautiful old salesman palaces that were confiscated by the Bolsheviks after the 1917 October Revolution and afterwards brutally occupied by negligent users. The building was situated near the Lenin Library in the center of Moscow city, but the scientists attached to it did not feel at home in such a crowded and heavily controlled environment.

Under these rather bizarre circumstances I met with my Russian colleagues, who were eager to invite me to their apartments to show me what ‘real’ Soviet life meant to them. In their small two- or three room flats they lived together with their extended families: children, parents, aunts and uncles. One of them, Vladimir Alekseev, shared his apartment with his demented mother. She wandered about those small rooms, continually repeating a solitary sentence: “Everywhere in the world, people are the same.” Vladimir smiled ruefully: “She has condensed all the wisdom gathered during her lifetime into that one sentence.” Indeed, one can find a treasure of wisdom within that single sentence.

Utopia by Thomas More cherishes that same idea, i.e. that essentially the human race is the same the world over, doing the same, thinking the same, because man with his natural reason should finally come to the same morally inspired considerations and conclusions (which in Thomas More’s view should
coincide with those of Christianity). This thought, developed by Thomas More in the chapter on culture and education, is one of the ultimately pacifist considerations behind *Utopia*.

This chapter tries to further this idea and defends the reality and the usefulness of a utopian vision on inclusive diversity and on the way human beings can be educated towards such an inclusive way of community building; a skill that we need so much in these times of globalization and migration. Utopia in this way is neither a fiction or a dream, nor is it a naive thought of a few well-meaning people. Utopia is about planting the seeds for an alternative way of looking at diversity and finding a common vision for a better world.

Thomas More delivered harsh criticism on private property and the way it rendered impossible a ‘just’ society. As a Marxist *avant la lettre* he reproached the elite, claiming that it selfishly maintained an unjust division of wealth in society, in this way denying equal chances to the members of that society. In our world of today we still face the same problems of myopia and selfishness by an elite, who seemingly care little for the common good, for inclusiveness or solidarity. For that reason, we need utopian thinking as a horizon [a horizon is real but can never be reached] to make genuine diversity become a reality. Utopian thinking in this way claims to imagine a better [diversity-based] world, a world that currently cannot be reached because concepts such as private property, the nation state and a particular group-approach to diversity hinder the accomplishment of a just and peaceful world.

Utopian perspectives on a better, more just and diverse world are confronted with an unavoidable original sin. The ideal human being, fit for harmonious, altruistic and inclusive co-existence, has not yet been born it seems, since the person who could realize this ideal world is not spontaneously evident in society. But this chapter argues that people can be educated in such a way that they take distance from an uncultivated world, where the law of the jungle rules and where diversity cannot flourish. People can be educated for a world of diversity. The *homo educandus* can be inspired by a utopian dream of diversity, a choice for diversity that aims at a just and inclusive society. Instead of preaching revolution, it is preferable to insert experiments with utopian alternatives as antidotes in a given societal situation (as we witnessed with the first small Christian communities, the *mir or obshchina*, an agrarian collective community in ancient Russia, or the experiments with the Kibbutzim).

The ability to welcome diversity is a necessary skill that all human beings who are prepared for society should acquire. It is possible to educate people for diversity, by teaching them respect, empathy, compassion, and an affinity for art and culture that touches human beings in their essence as community members. Utopia brings hope, and hope makes life bearable: ‘Sperarim’.
Some thinkers contend that utopian enthusiasm is misplaced, especially where it concerns diversity. Those who dream of genuine diversity, they claim, cannot reach it, because diversity necessarily splits societies into groups that prevent it from becoming homogeneous. Utopian views on society-building are intended to solve problems of disorder, conflicts and division, through orderly harmony. But this order leads fatally to a complete lack of respect for the individual human being. Both utopias of the 20th century, fascism and communism, these thinkers argue, have proven this.

Indeed, neither of the great ideologies of Nazism or Marxism-Leninism that dominated the 20th century succeeded in turning the wealth of diversity among people into a source of inspiration and mutual tolerance. On the contrary, the Nazi’s started from a group policy approach that excluded entire ethnicities, relying on extreme racism. Purity of the Arian race became an ideology, a vision through which an exclusive choice was made for that one dominating race. As a consequence of this ambition, other groups such as Jews, Roma people and the physically or mentally handicapped were targeted as unwanted ‘untermenschen’.3

The Soviet regime, profiling itself as anti-Nazi, took another, nevertheless equally reprehensible perspective. This regime, that lasted for seventy years across the territory of the Soviet Union (and forty years in the rest of Central and Eastern Europe), also became immoveable in its belief of the ‘makeable’ human. While pursuing its ideal to create a communist Soviet person – a perfectly happy, perfectly equal human being, who fought for communism – this regime (officially) forgot about traits such as human weakness, selfishness and greed. Also the regime left no room for being different, or for ‘otherness’.4 Dissidents were eliminated as alien to the regime. Ethnic minorities were deported during the Stalinist regime. Collective property became the source of massive corruption. The capital mistake of ‘really existing socialism’ was its premise that the communist human being had been achieved, while this transformation of human beings still had to happen. George Orwell in his utopian novel Nineteen Eighty-Four perfectly described how the individual would be treated in a society where “Big Brother is watching you”.5

Not all hope has gone, however, even after these failed experiments with utopian thinking. We have to go on looking for utopian ways to build diverse and inclusive formats of living together. There is no alternative, especially in these modern times in which, as a consequence of globalization and migration, diversity in society is a fact.

Important thinkers in the past were believers in diversity, for the sake of the survival of societies. Immanuel Kant, for example, was convinced that real diversity, loving each other, supporting each other and having respect for each other was the way to a utopian world of international peace. Kant argued for
a “ius cosmopoliticum [...] of exposure to otherness” in order to foster “the irreducible value of diversity within sameness”.

Also current intellectuals argue for including diversity as a condition *sine qua non* for a desirable society of the future. Martha Nussbaum, for example, one of the most important contemporary thinkers, stresses the importance of what she calls “a cosmopolitan attitude”, meaning that all people, whatever their political identification (citizens within a state, members of ethnic communities, etc.) are members of the same universal moral community. The point of departure of her reasoning is that people all over the world should have equal opportunities to deploy their talents and ‘capabilities’. ‘Capabilities’ are defined by her as the abilities that human beings should possess in order to live a good life. The theory of essential human capabilities was elaborated by herself and her colleague Amartya Sen, Indian economist and Nobel Prize winner. They start from the basic concept that human dignity, whatever the circumstances, deserves respect. Cosmopolitism (Diogenes’ saying that we are all citizens of the world) is for Nussbaum and Sen also the background for their theory of justice. In a response to and at the same time criticism of John Rawls’ theory of ‘primary social goods’, they see the ‘capabilities approach’ as a better instrument to compare life quality of people in different countries and between individuals. The capabilities method can be considered, according to Nussbaum and Sen, as an alternative model to study the welfare in a country, but it is also a normative theory of social justice whereby, according to Nussbaum, the government is obliged to guarantee a list of ten capabilities or abilities that are essential for a humane quality of life. By providing basic goods, a basic income or assets on which a person can rely, a government cannot guarantee, according to Nussbaum and Sen, that human beings effectively develop and flourish in the society in which they live. This way of looking at human rights and diversity asks for an engagement by a government that sees it as a primary task to create those basic goods. Capabilities are about our freedom as human beings to realize our own life plan and life quality. Capabilities (for example the aptitude for physical health, the power of imagination, practical reason, feelings, social connections and modeling of one’s environment) are the basis of human well-being. In order to be qualified as just, societies have to promote a set of those crucial goods for their population or members: provide a series of chances or substantial freedoms which people can (after recognition) make use of or not in their actions – the choice is theirs.

The theory of Nussbaum and Sen, although original and interesting, sticks to an essentially liberal approach of equal chances for all human beings, whatever the differences and specific features might be. However, this approach starts from the position of the individual in society, and his or her challenge to take up
chances in society. It makes the same mistake as the two major ideologies of the 20th century (Nazism and communism): too much wishful thinking about the moral qualities, social empathy and the educational development of members of a given society. Surely, this way leads to a divided society where, to quote George Orwell, “all animals are equal, but some are more equal than others”?

Inclusive Diversity Thinking or Group Approach?

One can ask whether this utopian view of equal chances for individuals can be a starting point for inclusive diversity thinking. Is it not necessary to develop a policy towards well-defined groups marked by special features, to help them out of a deficit situation, and using this strategic choice, to make equal chances a reality? One can ask whether the capabilities theory is compatible with such a group approach. Or is a collective approach towards diversity (towards minorities) not in its essence discriminating and thus objectionable? And is it, moreover, not impoverishing for society as a whole? Diversity has to exist in all its richness within society.

Should we not, because of our basic similarities, simply include all human beings, just because they are human? An inclusive world is the utopia of all utopias. Indeed, how rich and peaceful would a global society be, when appreciating each individual with his or her talents, particularities and deficiencies, and including them in a ‘community of equal anomalies’. Each division in groups, along the lines of qualifications or features, impoverishes and constrains this natural, complex and fruitful diversity. Is this not an attractive utopia: a world of human peculiarities, where each individual can flourish and be accepted? Our real global world of today is not quite promising for this utopia of inclusive diversity. From a paradise-like description of diversity and a utopian idea of the richness of differences and talents, we descend these days to a situation of exclusion and unequal treatment. Currently, we observe a worldwide crisis in which people flee from violence, a crisis of religious radicalism or extreme nationalism and its attempts to ‘purify’ the settlement of peoples within state borders or group boundaries. Furthermore, people with a physical or mental restriction are not sufficiently included, age remains a primary factor of discrimination and women are habitually discriminated against around the world. Inequality and social injustice rule, it seems.

The refugee crisis that haunts Europe today is humiliating for those who once believed in the slogan of creating a Europe where unity and diversity would go hand in hand. But this crisis raises concerns that Europe with its idea of economic growth and linear development continues to underestimate the need to manage the diversity of its populations. It is as if some evil spirit has disturbed
this ideal situation of diversity, and abuses and even mass crimes have broken down the belief in the richness of diversity. We should have learned lessons from the past. There are examples from long before the creation of the European Union of a cruel erasing of diversity. The Armenian Genocide in 1915 for example, which in the period of a disintegrating Ottoman empire created a massacre that was closely connected with a developing national conscience and nationalist power politics of the upcoming Turkish state.

This is why we should not stick obstinately to the idea of similarities among people, but should look instead for a ‘framing’ of their differences, and an acceptable group approach that takes into account contextual differences. Differences can situate themselves along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical capacity and religious or ideological convictions. To recognize diversity implies accepting these individual differences and not turning a blind eye to them. However, this extends much further than simply tolerance or ‘neutrality’. Only when these differences are explored in a safe, positive and nurturing environment, can the rich dimensions of diversity in each individual be embraced and celebrated; only then can we speak of a healthy experience of diversity.

Therefore, we need group contexts to realize the equal access to opportunities and to identify the access to the source of identity markers. What context should this be? The state? Well-defined ethnic groups? Communities reflecting a cosmopolitan view of the world? Inclusive diversity is difficult to realize in a state context. The idea of the social contract between the individual and the state, according to which the individual gives up part of his freedom in exchange for goods from the state, atomizes individuals within that state. The difference between Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft is of importance here.9 Inclusive diversity can more easily be realized in a context of Gemeinschaft. However, when Gemeinschaft is defined as an ethnic community, it will have the tendency to become exclusive. We need to look for new forms of Gemeinschaft-communities where inclusive diversity emanates, now that the traditional ones (monasteries, communist communities, sects) are fading away.

In legal terms the question of how to approach diversity can be translated as follows: is it preferable to protect individual rights by basing oneself on the principle of equal chances and non-discrimination, or do we need a principle that confers special rights to the members of a group with special diversity features? In this way the liberal-individualistic or liberal-neutral concept stands against the ‘diversity accommodating’ principle or the pluralistic model. The awareness is rising – Sen and Nussbaum would certainly agree with this position – that a traditional liberal attitude cannot provide a solution for environments (for example multicultural environments) in which equality implies equal
rights to cultivate one’s identity, or to obtain the ability to develop all talents from an original unequal position, and to live a life that is human, good and decent, so that each individual can participate in an inclusive and optimal way in society.

We need a place, utopian probably, in-between, where inclusiveness and group approach are not detrimental to one other.

The Crimsonians

I recently came across a secret plan, elaborated by the Russian intelligentsia (several of whom write for the critical journal Ekspert) shortly after the annexation of the Crimea by Russia in the middle of 2014. Whether this annexation can be considered as legitimate and legal, and whether it should be called a ‘Return to Russia’ (Khrushchev donated Crimea to Ukraine in 1954), or whether it should be qualified as Anschluss and annexation, is much discussed, especially among the Russian intelligentsia. In particular, under the circumstances of Russian ‘Putinism’, they agree, such a new frozen conflict is risky and a threat to peace.

However, this situation should not necessarily lead to a deadlock. The Russian intelligentsia counts some creative thinkers among its members. They suffer deeply from the idea (and the reality) that after the fall of communism, and the loss of the communist utopia, the world inclined towards an evil story of liberal capitalism (that, indeed, came out of the Cold War victorious) with unlimited competition, and an imbalanced elite dominance as the basis for a social system without hope or future.

Thus, some of them came up with the idea of setting up newly-designed types of communities, dispersed on the peninsula of Crimea, based on a utopian view of diversity. These communities are designed as ‘schools for learning diversity’. Like the island described by Thomas More in his Utopia, Crimea is also a small peninsula that possesses the ideal features to become a seed-bed for a new and better society. Crimea was once part of the Ottoman empire, and annexed by the Russian empire in 1783. Russia (the Soviet Union) in its turn donated Crimea to Ukraine: this almost impulsive act was accomplished by Khrushchev in 1954. Now Crimea is annexed by Russia, but its international status is disputed. Crimea is a place of ‘nowhere’ [ou-topia] from which good places [eu-topias] may grow and flourish.

The geographical and [geol]political conditions of Crimea as a peninsula invited the possibility for a unique experiment in the field of education for diversity. The idea is, according to these (anonymous) Russian thinkers, to insert utopian communities on the peninsula of Crimea, as spaces-in-between. Crimea is indeed a place where ethnic conflict is at its highest, where ethnicities fight each other, where the division between East and West has reached its summit. It is
also the place where several people, who were at home on the territory of Crimea, were removed and displaced to other countries and regions [Crimean Tatars for example]. This is the place where an extremely peaceful community project can grow and develop, and thereafter this ‘prototype’ could be exported worldwide.

Figure 1 Crimea

How should this utopian situation in Crimea be described? Let us, first of all, make clear that the people living in Crimea will not be displaced in order to free the territory for this utopian project. It is not the idea to evacuate people living in the territory of Crimea. On the contrary. New communities are implanted so as to enrich this ‘territory of nowhere’.

These new communities are called ‘Crimsonian communities’ and start from a strong belief in the ‘homo educandus’. Human beings, according to the basic assumption of this experiment, can distance themselves from a ‘natural state’ of inequality and exclusion. It is possible to educate people in such a way that diversity for them becomes an asset in society. It is true that this belief in the power of education (e-ducare: to guide away from an inferior status of ignorance and animality) has led to many failures in the past. However, this should not make us pessimistic for the future. People can be educated towards openness to one another, towards respect and compassion, but this of course cannot happen in a huge state structure or a polis situation. You need a community for that aim.

This brings us to the experiment of Crimsonia. Crimsonia represents a network of schools, where an entirely self-organized utopia of civic and art
education takes form. For that experiment one needs places in-between, where inclusion and group approach are the two extremes of the continuum. Learning communities are created in empty buildings, schools, monasteries, military headquarters, caves and former soviet houses of culture. People participating in this project accept a situation of ‘being nowhere’, which is a powerful position for a breakthrough of group autonomy or shared autonomy. New forms of independence are searched for by means of a critical repositioning.

Crimsonian communities take the form of genuine schools. Crimsonians are making school, following the old idea of school, as a form “that best embodies the knowledge man has discovered of his capability to shape himself/herself and the world, to do justice to himself/herself and the world and to come together or to be gathered in a particular way”. This requires investment in time and energy (engagement is needed). Crimsonian schools start from active alienation; the situation can only develop further once there is an openness that allows both the abandonment of the society’s previous situation and a genuine interest in a new beginning.

Crimsonians live together on the basis of an alliance (league, union), not a social contract or a treaty. Crimsonian communities are marked by a very diverse composition. They do not separate the old from the young, the disabled from the fit, the extremely intelligent from the average, the women from the men. The members of the group commit themselves to respect and sustain each other, and to live in a harmonious community with each other. Crimsonians are self-supporting and live on the basis of autarchy. This implies that sustainability (low carbon emission, green agriculture) is an important aspect of their lives. They run a circular economy, where waste is reduced to almost nothing and everything is reused.

Crimsonian people see each other as the members of one body that can only function when all limbs cooperate. All of them live in community (Gemeinschaft, not Gesellschaft), inspired by one spirit of peaceful and sustainable coexistence. People support each other when necessary. They abide by the principles of the Sermon on the Mount: they bear and endure each other in love. As in the monasteries of long ago they structure their days in work, sleep and free time for meditation, education or prayer. All kinds of religious buildings (churches, mosques, etc.) are used, but ‘spaces of silence’ are established as well. Religion is considered a source of peace and not a legitimation for violent conflict. Interreligious dialogue is thus an important activity.

Art and culture are considered as important assets for cultivating respect, community spirit and happiness. A new architecture is used to express this utopian idea of religious open dialogue. Artists and art school teachers create pieces of art that reflect tolerance, empathy, compassion and peace. Weapons
are literally turned into pieces of art. Pieces of art make clear which new beginning they are embarking upon and with which visual manifestations a precarious world can be made imaginable. The United Nations has recognized this experiment. The concept of Crimsonia is recognized as ‘intangible world heritage’. Crimsonian communities are also sponsored by the United Nations for their art projects in particular. The United Nations asked its members to each invest the budget reserved for one fighter plane towards Crimonia, in order to sustain these communities that are designed for Crimea but will soon proliferate throughout the world.

In Crimsonian communities, women are treated as the equal of men, in many aspects. One of the most important features of Crimsonian communities is that female leadership is fully accepted, along with male leadership. Women are heading Crimsonian communities. The classic format of a family with a father (the breadwinner), a mother (the homemaker) and children is instead replaced by partnerships with an equal distribution of caring tasks. In exceptional cases with only one of the partners (of whatever sex or sexual orientation) taking up the role of the caring person within the partnership, that caring person is entitled to an insurance for the risk of a radically changing situation in their relationship, for example a divorce or serious illness of their partner. But men can also free themselves of all gender-oriented roles attributed to them (especially in the military, which in Crimonia is nonexistent). Transgenders, homosexuals and lesbians are fully accepted and can live in peace with each other.

Crimsonians speak Russian, Ukrainian, English, French and German – no one language dominates the others. They translate for each other when necessary, but much of the communication is through song, dance and body language. There is little need for money: people exchange services and goods and rely on each other’s talents. They follow what was once a Leninist principle: “from each according to his capacities, to each according to their needs”. Each newcomer goes through a course on inclusive diversity ‘thinking and acting’ and receives a mentor to guide him or her through the first year, which is a kind of novice internship.

Crimea is surrounded by water and its climate is very southern, which makes it suitable for such an experiment. Crimsonian communities are established to form new persons who are free, empathic, long-suffering, patient, fearless, wise and peaceful. In the schools, people are encouraged to make their engagement explicit, to reflect on how they can serve their community. They discover what their talents are and how they can use them to help or create. The poor, the sick, the exhausted and the excluded are loved; Crimsonians participate in one another’s pain. They care for each other in a friendly way, as
mothers and fathers do for their children. They feel the responsibility to build peace and to instill justice.

This project needs teachers and guides. Each community has a steering group of wise men and women: philosophers, pedagogical experts, artists, people with life experience. Most of them have charismatic healing capacities, and cure people from their blindness – not physical blindness, but blindness to what really matters: a humane and peaceful environment, where each person can develop his or her talents supported by the community that surrounds and sustains them. This has, however, nothing to do with any sectarian initiative. Freedom and flexibility are very important in Crimsonian communities. The education in Crimsonian groups focuses on civic and religious education in all disciplines. The wise men and women give the participants insight into themselves and the world. Art education is central to the teaching. Art creates freedom and openness to alternative views on global diversity. Art helps people to see into the future: how this inclusive utopia can take form, and people can enjoy beauty and an emotional response to these creations. Each sexual orientation is tolerated, as long as it leads to peaceful cohabitation. Everyone is respected and recognized for his or her own input in the community, so there is no need for interest groups such as LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender), feminist, ethnic or religious groups. The same goes for economic, political or cultural orientations to the left or the right. In Crimsonian communities, diversity without a group approach has become a reality.

The central idea is that faced with the diversity within the community, there is no group policy on the one hand, but also no idea of neutrality on the other, as we find in a traditional citizen-within-the-state concept. What is more, people are engaged in a peaceful and sustainable community in love.

Let us now develop this idea of inclusive diversity, focusing on several key concepts.

Normality

A diversity policy implies acceptance and respect, especially for those people who do not meet the standard of normality within a society or a group. Normality is a strange concept, having a connotation of imposing a norm on both the individual and the collective. It is well-known that in a sociological perspective the norm for normality differs from community to community.

But who defines what normality stands for and who decides whether deviant attitudes or features are tolerated or not? In the sense of ‘conforming to a norm’, normality comes close to assimilation, in which case new members of the group are asked to conform themselves to the prevailing ‘normality’.
The expectation is that new members of the group become indistinguishable from members of the dominant group. In this sense multiculturalism can induce cultural assimilation. But another approach is possible: people from different origins and with a variety of diversity markers can contribute to the diversity of the group (which is what happens in the case of Crimsonian groups) and form a global culture composed of the elements of different origins and orientations.

There is no ‘normality’ standard in Crimsonian groups – it is their variety that brings people together. Crimsonian groups start with a fundamental questioning of the normality standard. Why is it that people who deviate from normality are so admired (for example in art and literature), or else rejected or excluded (for example for reasons of ethnicity)? Why is being different from the norm not rejected, but even admired in certain situations? The debate in the media about the need for special schools for children labeled as intellectually high potential students is a typical example of the divided opinions about targeted group policies. Those promoting such special schools argue that high potential students are less challenged in a regular school and become bored, encounter difficulties interacting with others, and may even develop learning problems. Others say that there is no need for special schools: good schools value intelligent students and give them a place in the normal educational process. This is the position taken by Crimsonian schools. Diversity without a group approach asks for solidarity among the members of the group. An interesting point of note is that our own educational system has become so individualistic that there are no longer any mechanisms of solidarity whereby the strongest pupils ‘carry’ the weaker ones.

Equality

The law of the jungle, taking the form of a power game, is still the dominant organizing rule in societies and groups the world over: structural differences between rulers and subjects exist everywhere. It is deeply human to adopt diversity as an alternative to this power game. Real equality between humans is perhaps a utopia, but it remains odd that the global community is not more upset by the obvious inequality in the world. Social equality is a state of affairs in which all members within a specific group have the same status in certain respects, often including a broader system of public services, progressive taxation, regulation of markets to ensure fair distribution of wealth, equal opportunities and equality of outcome. The International Labour Organization expressed this fundamental thought in clear words: “universal and lasting peace can be established only if it is based on social justice”. Crimsonian schools
take social justice as the purpose of human rights education (Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (VDPA), 25 June 1993). Civil rights, freedom of speech, property rights and equal access to social goods should be combined in a harmonious interconnection that leads to a fundamental respect for each human being. Social justice should also be considered in terms of (re)distribution of wealth, opportunities and privileges in society (the capabilities theory includes this idea as well).

So long as inequality is not strongly criticized, many reasons will be devised and put forward to reject affirmative action. Affirmative action implies a conscious program of privileged treatment for a group, based on the idea that this group has a disadvantaged position in the access to a social good. Dworkin’s concept of ‘reverse discrimination’ is illustrative in this respect, i.e. that the right to equal treatment is different from and subsidiary to the right to be treated as an equal. In this matter, philosophers or perhaps sociologists can do useful work in identifying the paradigms that play a role in arguments about justice. Dworkin explains in his theory about ‘interpretive concepts’: “There is nothing neutral about conceptions of justice: the libertarian philosopher opposes income taxes and the egalitarian philosopher calls for more redistribution because their conceptions of justice differ.”

Arguably, a liberal policy of equal chances does not sufficiently answer the claim for social justice. Equality before the law is respected when each citizen is indeed the addressee of a legal rule that confers a civil right. In principle it is not advisable to differentiate between citizens in terms of criteria (for example gender) that lead to locked, caste-like categories of legal subjects. But this is countered by a more open concept including the relevance of the differences among individuals who are targeted by the rule. Justice-corrective or distributive justice is a possible alternative – it assigns rights and duties to individuals in relation to institutions such as education, health care, social security and labor rights.

Interreligious Dialogue

Thomas More argues for the freedom of religious cults, which includes the capacity and the opportunity of mutual confrontation between religions, but only in terms of argumentation, and not in terms of violence. Religions have the capacity to valorize reflection on their religious texts. Speech and reason can replace physical violence and the temptation to annihilate one another. By doing so, members of religious groups have the opportunity to improve their own internal coherence. Perhaps, as More remarks, God has allowed this diversity of religions in order to guarantee a variety of cults. To impose truth
with violence would be haughty. That different religions of the world start an interreligious dialogue and come together to pray for peace is a utopia that can become reality. There can be no peace without interreligious dialogue.

Education can also help induce and strengthen religious tolerance. Crimsonian schools study the writings of different religions (the Bible and the Quran for example), in order to find commonalities and to understand how different religions understand the way to peace. By looking for commonalities and not differences, religions can communicate with each other in a peaceful way.

Gender and Sexual Orientation

The future of gender and sexual orientation as identity markers and social role patterns remains the most important issue in this utopian story on diversity. Men and women, homosexuals, lesbians and all varieties on the continuum from feminine to masculine can find each other in the search for a less compartmented society. Men and women are complementary and ‘condemned’ to each other, but after a centuries-long oppression of women the balance must be restored, by men as well as women.

As social and biological differences between men and women are extremely pronounced – poverty in the world is female, but women form an important social capital in developing societies – the procurement of compensatory privileges is an obligation of legislators and governments. The doctrine of equivalence of compensatory advantages between men and women is then rejected in favor of a context-sensitive judgement, in which the legislator is sensitive to the actual structure of disadvantages within society. In this way we move in the direction of a real or just equality of chances, according to which actual inequalities are considered as relevant for the inequality of chances in a society of systemic inequalities.

Conclusion: An Education for Diversity

Thomas More engaged himself with his story on utopia. Curiously, we are invited and challenged to do the same in this turbulent period in which we find ourselves today. Utopian thinking tries to imagine a better world, that is likely unachievable, but nevertheless is a real alternative; yet because of human muddling along, perfection cannot be achieved. The ideal human being has not yet been born, the human ‘savior’ who could make the ideal world become a reality. This chapter started from the belief that human beings can be educated for a better world. In a utopian vision, Crimsonian schools, spread all
over Crimea, develop models of such an education for diversity. Thereafter, in a second wave, Crimsonian communities would be transplanted as schools for diversity throughout the world.

We should not lose hope that people really can be educated for diversity. The good thing about utopia is the natural human desire or instinct to dream of an ideal world, and hence the hope emerges that makes us direct our lives towards such a horizon.

Notes

1 See also Lieven De Cauter, 'Utopia Rediscovered: A Redefinition of Utopianism in the Light of the Enclosures of the Commons', in this book (p. 534). According to De Cauter, Marx has taken the double crime to which Thomas More refers in his Utopia (of illegal expropriation of the commons and enclosures) as the focus of his monumental chapter on the 'original accumulation' at the end of volume one of Das Kapital.
9 Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft are sociological categories introduced by the German sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies for two types of human association. Gemeinschaft is found in small social structures such as the family, tribe, or village where human relationships are prized and the welfare of the whole has precedence over the individual. Industrial societies, on the other hand, are characterized by Gesellschaft, where human associations are governed by rationality and self-interest. Tönnies, F., Community and Civil Society, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
10 See also An Verburgh, Maarten Simons, Jan Masschelein, Rianne Janssen, Jan Elen & Goele Cornelissen, 'School: Everyone Can Learn Everything', in this book (p. 263).
11 Masschelein, J., 'Making the School: Stories of Caves and Tables', in Lambrecht, W., and Van-sieleghem, N. (eds.), Old School/New School, Luca School of Arts, p. 44.
12 The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (VDPA) is a Human Rights Declaration adopted by consensus at the World Conference for Human Rights on 25 June 1993. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights was created by this declaration endorsed by general Assembly Resolution 48/121.