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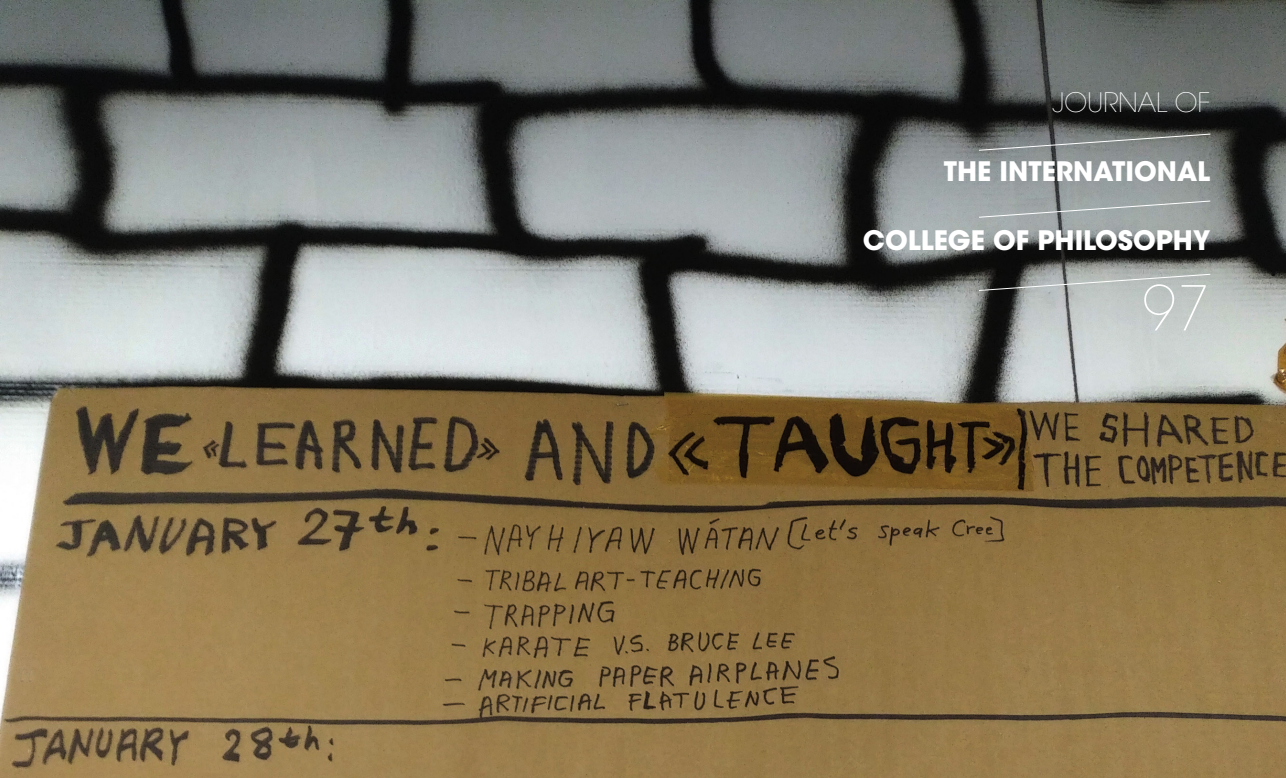

POLITICS OF TEACHING

COLLÈGE INTERNATIONAL DE PHILOSOPHIE

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Introduction

Preparations for this issue of the *Journal of the CIPH* began in 2017 following the protests against the El Khomri law, [1] which led to the blockade of several institutions of higher learning and strikes that went on for months. At the time, discussions were taking place on the need to "reinvent the university," to confront the managerial mediocrity controlling it, and to refound it "in freedom, scrupulousness and emancipation," as recommended by a report from the *Groupe Jean-Pierre Vernant*. Three years later, we found ourselves in yet another period of nationwide strikes. High school teachers had denounced the harmful effects of a reform of the *baccalauréat* [2] that would only weaken educational standards by devoting more time to testing than to reflection and learning. More than 300 university research groups and 145 journals were prepared to cease all scientific activity and mobilize against the *LPPR* [3] that, with its long-term contracts for the most driven "young researchers," further heightens the entrepreneurial logic, competitiveness and insecurity currently undermining the world of research and teaching.

With the call for action on 5 March 2020, followed by the beginning of the lockdown that put a halt to all the reforms underway, we decided to postpone the publication of the issue until now. *Politics of Teaching* does not directly address the problems raised by at-home educational continuity, which is a crucial issue at this time when we seem to rediscover the importance of public service ("there are goods and services that must not be subject to the laws of the free market") and, more specifically, the importance of the school as a place that may reduce some forms of social inequality. From the very first days of the lockdown, the managerial logic structuring our public services has hastened to call on teachers' inventiveness, even as none of those teachers were in a position to choose their own constraints. The experimentation and

educational freedom that were increasingly threatened by the standardization of the profession have quickly become mandatory through injunctions from several principals and head teachers. "A teacher works no matter what happens, even in a historic moment when the schools are closed!" And as our contracts are still in effect, why not take advantage of the opportunity to think up "alternative," "innovative" educational propositions that will put our institutions in the spotlight once the lockdown is over? It is still too soon to know how the educational trial and error that has characterized this period will disrupt our teaching practices. But we can hope that the struggles currently in abeyance due to the public health emergency, and the concerns it engenders, are not neglected.

For years, teachers have been constantly demonstrating, as well as publishing articles and opinion pieces attacking the transformation of their profession that the recent reforms are putting in place. In one piece for *Le Monde*, Fanny Capel, a literature teacher, did not hesitate to stress that the new *baccalauréat* is above all "a powerful lever for transforming the meaning of schoolwork and the teaching profession. Both teachers and students are commanded to adapt to impossible requirements, with permanent testing, immediate results, and lower costs as mantras."[4] So we see the arrival in high schools of the same entrepreneurial model that the LRU law[5] has brought into higher learning. In *La Destruction de l'université française*, the historian Christophe Granger has provided one of the most enlightening analyses of this world, characterized by the weakening of universities, their newfound openness to business interests and the submission of education to free-market precepts. Public universities, subject to the state's disengagement, experience an "autonomy" that in fact forces them to seek their own financing, a regime to which they must submit in order to maintain the quality of their scientific activities. Ultimately, this not only casts doubt on the ability of academics to choose their own research topics (which must now be in line with the priorities and agendas of funders and businesses): it also creates an untenable situation leading to all kinds of work-related stress. Academics are so busy with matters beyond the work of research and teaching – assembling proposals, searching for partners and financing, writing agreements and carrying out administrative tasks – that they no longer have the time to do their jobs. This absurd situation, which Antonia Birnbaum attacked in a satirical text, "*À quoi bon alors l'université?*" ("What Good, Then, Is the University?"),[6] reveals what the assimilation of universities by the economy ends up eliminating: the very possibility of learning.

The burden of professionalization and the subsequent need to relate everything to some immediate usefulness means that higher learning is no longer, as Granger emphasizes, a "special time" exempt from the laws of production, performance and profitability. This temporality of learning is now to be cut short in high schools, where the E3C tests [7] create a profusion of deadlines in quick succession in the hope of guaranteeing immediate results. This "special time" is now threatened everywhere one would hope to find pockets of resistance to the managerial measures structuring the system of teaching and, more generally, of all public services. We could think in particular of the advanced schools of art and design that, following the LMD reforms, [8] ended up modeling the organization of their programs on those of the universities. While art teachers constantly defend the specificity of artistic research, [9] insisting upon the importance of separating artistic experimentation from any productivist or normative logic, it becomes increasingly difficult to leave room in students' schedules for studio work, which is not necessarily governed by the logic of "doing" but by what Fernand Deligny called an "acting" (*un agir*) without immediate purpose. This "fear of emptiness," this terror of unproductive time makes it that much harder to permit students to come face to face with themselves, alone. The words of Deleuze, for whom the role of the teacher is "to reconcile students with their solitude," seem somewhat outdated in schools focused on professionalization, where art students as well as high schoolers become entrepreneurs of their development and their studies, which they themselves design by choosing what interests them in the educational "offer." They are invited to "use the school," to select from the menu of internships that they layer over their courses, which are increasingly reduced to "modules" or "capsules," just so many quick shots of teaching adapted to their new attention spans. Obviously, this does not just endanger the long timeframe needed for a search in search of itself; it also threatens to modify what Barthes called "the teaching relationship." [10] While teachers gradually transform themselves into service providers, students run the risk of developing one of two attitudes: one of a dissatisfied customer, skeptical about the effectiveness of the "capsule" they have just taken, or one of a persuasive seller capable of presenting their project or their artistic method in a few minutes (in a "Three Minute Thesis" [11] style) during a speed dating [12] session – the new format *par excellence* of professional encounters, primed for inclusion into study programs.

How can we resist this new way of managing and governing humans known as "the business of the self" [13] and return to the idea of teaching as a "technique of the self," as the process of working out a way of behaving, a way of life? People constantly say that we must change our way of life, but they don't allow education the possibility of being the lever of this change. Instead of having the properties of a market, the university – and higher learning in general – must "first constitute a form of collective living, a whole way of establishing contact with one another and organizing ourselves, arranged around values that are definitively both collective and collectively practiced." [14] How can our teaching contribute to the reinvention of these ways of connecting with one another? What affects are they likely to arouse? What forms of equality and what inclusive relationships are they in a position to establish? What can our politics of teaching do when faced with the rigid formatting of learning methods and the growing standardization of our profession? What room is there for experimentation (and a certain level of impenetrability that results from it) in a "gridded" [15] world that persists in testing everything constantly and continually in order to best measure the submission of every activity to the economic norms and criteria that govern that world?

Today, as universities everywhere are relying on business models and a professionalizing conception of teaching, the focus of this issue is to bring these debates out into the open, to gather the viewpoints of university professors, art school teachers and high school teachers who wish to examine teaching itself as a matter of research, to allow room for experimentation, or to see the teaching of philosophy as authentic "fieldwork" that puts the concepts and methods of the philosophical tradition to the test. The experiments analyzed by each contribution – in the form of essays, first-hand accounts or interviews – show the way in which the teaching of philosophy attempts to evolve and renew itself, whether in a vocational high school or in a school of art or architecture, even if this means taking the form of a "philosophizing" that some would no longer consider "philosophy."

While the possibility of experimenting with new configurations of teaching seems to define the specific educational situation of art schools, it is also explored in high schools, particularly concerning those students who return to school after dropping out. The goal of these experiments with "flipped classrooms" is to construct a creative, active relationship to knowledge that encourages the students' own initiative and offers them a place in the group,

which then acquires a different structure from the traditional classroom arrangement. We will examine these experiments in teaching alongside those underway in schools of art and design. These new configurations, conceived by guest artists or by the teachers themselves – who for the time being still have the freedom to envision work environments whose effects cannot be calculated or anticipated – seek to place students and teachers in a research-oriented attitude that forces them, more often than not, to come to terms with their lack of knowledge, undermining any sense of mastery. Most of all, they give rise to that special kind of joy that comes about when we decide to invest our time and energy in building something together without necessarily knowing where that will lead us and what the result will be. At a time when integral calculability seems to be the condition of knowledge, this "opening to what surpasses any calculation," which Bernard Stiegler and many other contributors discuss here, proves to be essential, even if only through the emotions it stirs up. For if we keep to a Spinozist approach,[16] only those emotions likely to increase the ability to act and think for oneself let us put a logic of emancipation into practice, and work politically.

"I want to work politically." This requirement that the artist Thomas Hirschhorn has given himself has led him to distance himself from any qualitative logic, preferring work environments where the energy expended is all that matters: "Energy: Yes! Quality: No!"[17] The images in this issue come from a workshop entitled *What Can I Learn from You? What Can You Learn from Me?* that took place in 2018 at the Remai Modern art museum in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. The workshop, lasting 27 days, proceeded according to a set of rules that the artist devised throughout a series of projects, rules that he describes as "Presence and Production." These include: carrying out preparatory "fieldwork" in order to present his artistic project to people who aren't necessarily used to visiting museums; paying fees to those who agree to participate through teaching; and making sure that all the participants receive free admission to all the museum's exhibits. In addition, he is present for the entire workshop to meet the participants and take part in the process, while adopting a principle of "non-programming," and therefore one of "non-satisfaction" of the public, which does not exclude the possibility of a disappointing experience. These rules, which the artist has revised and reconsidered over the course of his work, allow him not only to distinguish his artistic proposition from a mere cultural event, where the satisfaction of the target audience prevails, but also to include within his project what he calls a "non-exclusive" audience, which does not

exclude non-specialists of contemporary art – the very opposite, then, of a select, predetermined audience. [18]

The experimental configuration of this workshop resembles the "ideal game" that Deleuze described in *Logic of Sense*: a game in which the set of rules does not exist before the game itself, but emerges as the game is played and varies as it is invented. While this game without preexisting rules may seem unplayable, Deleuze points out that this ideal is nothing other than the reality of thought, in other words "that by which thought and art are real and disturbing reality, morality, and the economy of the world." [19] That autonomy, that set of rules that one gives oneself, is what allows Thomas Hirschhorn to offer a situation of teaching, transmission and sharing that has the power to redefine the museum itself and reenvision its relationship to the public. If we think of the original project of the University of Vincennes, or the creation of the *Collège international de philosophie* – i.e. the idea of a university or college "without condition" [20] intended for a "non-exclusive" public, without catering to the public at large – we readily see how his artistic proposal harmonizes with some of the teaching and research situations that have been able to participate in the work of defining the institution that welcomed them.

Issue 97 of the Journal of the CIPH was conceived by Vanessa Brito, Malgorzata Grygielewicz and Nathalie Périn.

The illustrations are the work of Thomas Hirschhorn: *What can I learn from you. What can you learn from me*. (Critical Workshop) Remai Modern, Saskatoon, Canada, 2018, with the kind permission of the artist and Remai Modern.

ENDNOTES

1. Translator's note: A reform of labor laws known simply as the "work law" (*loi Travail*) in France, which was presented to the National Assembly by the then labor minister, Myriam El Khomri. The proposed legislation would have made it easier to fire workers, among other provisions. It was withdrawn after a sustained campaign of strikes and demonstrations by several sectors of French society.

2. Translator's note: The final exam that French high school students must pass in order to obtain their diploma.

3. Translator's note: *Loi de programmation pluriannuelle de la recherche*, which could be translated as "Law for the long-term programming of research".

4. See Fanny Capel, "Le Bac républicain est mort. Vive le... quoi?," *Le Monde*, 3 March 2020.

5. Translator's note: *La loi relative aux libertés et responsabilités des universités*, aka *la loi Pécresse*, after Valérie Pécresse, former education minister during the presidency of Nicolas Sarkozy. The law offered to grant universities more autonomy, but in exchange for a reduction in state funding. Following a campaign of student demonstrations, the law was substantially modified to increase available funding and reduce trends toward making schools more selective, but remains in effect.

6. https://lundi.am/A-quoi-bon-encore-l-universite

7. Translator's note: "Épreuves communes de contrôle continu," which could be translated as "common continuous assessment tests".

8. Translator's note: "Licence / master / doctorat," the reforms in the early 2000s that brought the French university system of diplomas into agreement with those in the rest of Europe and the US, where the "licence" is the equivalent of a bachelor's degree.

9. See, in particular, issue 72 of the journal *Hermès*, titled "L'Artiste, un chercheur pas comme les autres" (2015), as well as issue 130 of the journal *Culture et recherche*, titled "La Recherche dans les écoles supérieures d'art" (Winter 2014-2015).

10. "[T]he teaching relationship," wrote Barthes, "is nothing more than the transference it institutes; 'science,' 'method,' 'knowledge,' 'idea' come indirectly, are given *in addition* - they are *left-overs*." Roland Barthes, "Ecrivains, intellectuels, professeurs," *Tel Quel* 47 (Autumn 1971), republished in *Œuvres complètes* vol. III (Paris: Seuil), 887-907 ["Writers, Intellectuals, Teachers," *Image, Music, Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (New

York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 196]. On the current mutations of the teaching relationship, see also the work of Plinio Prado, in particular *Le Principe d'université* and "L'Université, le soi et le marché contemporain," *L'Humanité*, 31 December 2009, as well as the subsection titled "Libéraliser les études" of the previously cited work by Christophe Granger.

11. Translator's note: a competition with its origins in Australia that has become widespread in Quebec and France, where students present their PhD project in less than three minutes while remaining clear yet entertaining.

12. Translator's note: "Speed dating" – in English in the original text.

13. See in particular Sarah Abdelnour and Anne Lambert, "'L'entreprise de soi,' un nouveau mode de gestion politique des classes moyennes?" (2014), on the Cairn.info website.

14. Christophe Granger, *La Destruction de l'université française* (Paris: La Fabrique, 2015), 174.

15. See the joint publication *Derrière les grilles: Sortons du tout-évaluation,* ed. Barbara Cassin (Paris: Mille et une nuits, 2014), as well as the brilliant text by Bertrand Ogilvie, "L'inévaluable," in *Le Travail à mort, au temps du capitalisme absolu* (Paris: L'Arachnéen, 2017), 121-142.

16. See Pascal Sévérac's Spinozist reading of Jacques Rancière's *The Ignorant Schoolmaster and*, in particular, the opposition he establishes between "anti-cognitive affects," which lead to a feeling of one's own powerlessness to think (e.g. the student's admiration for their teacher) and the "affects of knowledge" that inspire confidence in the equality of each person's intellectual capacity. Sévérac, "La position du maître: enseigner, abrutir, émanciper," *Rue Descartes* 71 (2011): 102- 108.

17. See Thomas Hirschhorn, *Critical Laboratory: The Writings of Thomas Hirschhorn*, ed. Lisa Lee and Hal Foster (Cambridge MA / London: The MIT Press, 2013).

18. For more on this project, see the "Conversation between Thomas Hirschhorn and Sandra Guimaraes" published on the artist's website: http://www.thomashirschhorn.com. See also the catalog published by Remai Modern in 2018, *Thomas Hirschhorn: What can I learn from you. What can you learn from me (Critical Workshop).*

19. Gilles Deleuze, *Logique du sens* (Paris: Minuit, 1969), 76 [*The Logic of Sense*, trans. Mark Lester (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 60].

20. See Jacques Derrida, "The future of the profession or the university without condition (thanks to the "Humanities," what *could take place* tomorrow)," *Jacques Derrida and the Humanities: A Critical Reader*, ed. Tom Cohen (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 24-57. On the theoretical foundations of the *Collège international de philosophie*, see François Châtelet, Jacques Derrida, Jean-Pierre Faye, and Dominique Lecourt, *Le Rapport bleu: les sources historiques et théoriques du Collège international de philosophie* [1998] (Nanterre: Presses universitaires de Paris-Nanterre, 2019)


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CHRISTIANE VOLLAIRE

Doublespeak and Paradoxical Injunctions in Educational Policies

Here, I will consider the teaching of philosophy as authentic philosophical fieldwork: putting the concepts and demands of philosophical ambition to the test within the reality of a class in *terminale*.[1]

The first element of this reality principle is the final exam for the *baccalauréat*. I am not questioning either the selective principle behind this exam, or its national character, or the content of its programs, content subject to recurring crises that have affected the world of teachers and academic directors, with no solution found as yet. These crises present a twofold discrepancy: one that is both quantitative and qualitative between the core content of philosophy and the average level of intellectual and cultural preparation demonstrated by students in *terminale*; and one between the kinds of exercises that are assigned (the *dissertation* and the *commentaire de texte*[2]) and the knowledge of logic, syntax and organization that a teacher may reasonably demand of their students first upon entering *terminale*, then at the end of the year nine months later.

We are faced here with a reality principle in two parts: the reality of the final exam as it is stipulated in the decrees[3], and that of the population of students as it manifests itself upon their return to school in September. And it's not saying much to point out the *incommensurability* of these two realities in a class in *terminale* in a technical high school in the Paris suburbs.

1. Twofold Discrepancy

Teaching philosophy to a class in *terminale* is not the same as a *café-philo*[4] intended for fashionable people who wish to cultivate themselves or find elegant answers to their moral questions. It is a preparatory exercise for a required written test, which justifies its inclusion in a study schedule. But it's also the last opportunity many students have to "make an effort to think[5]," to borrow Kant's expression. For that reason, it deserves our time and consideration here.

The twofold aspect of the discrepancies we have just mentioned will not present itself in the logical form of an intellectual antinomy, but in strategic terms of real conflict, in an attitude that will be – latently or overtly – one of a recurring impediment to the class. This affects every discipline, but here we will consider its effects on philosophy. This impediment manifests itself as the spread of behavior that, when it is at a low level, is easy to counter, but which has more or less become the rule rather than the exception. The background noise of chatter is one major symptom of it. It translates the indifference to the content of the course, to the presence of the teacher, to the aim behind what is conveyed. It translates the habitual nature of an attention span that systematically veers off course, with the result that the course itself becomes background noise, like a television left on while having a conversation. In the opinion of most students, listening to another's words and exchanging the questions and responses that those words may engender has become a sort of absurd fantasy, a collective delirium of the teaching profession's unconscious, with no relationship to the reality that is generally known as a course. And the desire to insist on those words, i.e. to simply pass them on, presupposes the establishment of a few coercive measures. Not at all because the students, as a whole, have become more disruptive and undisciplined than their predecessors were, or than the teachers they now have before them were when they were students, but because the structural evolution of the educational system has produced, and continues to produce, the conditions of the impediment to the coursework, conditions that have become the ordinary mode of teaching. The teacher's position is then, always and by necessity, to go against the tide. The attempt to resist the entropy of this tide is, quite simply, what teaching means. What teachers must confront is not by any means their students (even if the course may find itself adopting the forms of that confrontation), but the underlying situation that has produced them such as they are when they start their year in *terminale*. What teachers must therefore confront is nothing more than their own institution. Not because it is repressive or

coercive, which would drive them to demand liberation from it, but on the contrary because it patiently constructs all the conditions that lead teachers to give up resisting the tide. And, in this field as in so many others, the institution's own representatives are then faced with its suicide.

2. The double bind [6] of the teacher's position

Here, we are struck by the profusion of paradoxical injunctions arising from the teacher's position that one must resolve, in one way or another, precisely in order to maintain one's position. If we actually consider the school as the ideational site of republican equality, we have no choice but to note that this conception presents us with two daunting alternatives. In the first case, since schools effectively result in a system of discrimination and social differentiation, we admit that they are unable to carry out the project they claim as their focus, therefore participating, in this sense, in that project's failure and in an increase in the inequalities that they claim to combat. In this case, the teaching profession is but one of the forms of an objective participation in the production of injustice, requiring either complete cynicism or utter obliviousness to participate in it.

In the second case, we consider that schools are in a position to reduce the forms of inequality by undertaking a process of normalization, which only enables complicity in a supplementary right of inspection of the powers that be over their subjects. Schools are only a place for equality to the extent that they are, at one level or another, a place for normalization. And from this perspective, they are at the very heart of the dilemmas of democratic thought. In teaching philosophy, such a dilemma proves to be particularly formidable, and so powerful that it may subsequently become paralyzing. The empty injunction to learn to "think for oneself" is actually a complete rhetorical trap on every level. If we look at it on the basis of the sociolinguistic, political and cultural determinisms that the humanities have brought to light, it appears as a non-sense. If we look at it on the basis of the moralizing presuppositions of apolitical thinking, it becomes a banal truism, as effective as a catechism lesson.

Finally, an injunction of this kind highlights the hypocrisy of a presumed carefree naturalness of knowledge, which would effortlessly appear through mere interplay with the environment. A concept of learning as "fun and games" permeates the eudaemonistic teaching methods that consider the teacher-student relation as a figure of harmony. But this denial of pressure and antagonisms only guarantees that those forces will worsen and become more virulent.

Clearly, none of us have ever had any other foundation for our thinking than the conditionings we have endured, conditionings that became all the more effective as they multiplied. And this possible multiplicity may be the only thing to which schools can bear witness, i.e. a possible conditioning that differs from the one received from the family, or from the totalitarianism of the media that Tocqueville had already foreseen. If schools have a political function, it may, above all, be to furnish a way out of these two enclosures: family conditioning and the regressive criteria of a biological relationship to childhood and to arbitrary parental power (even if this power takes the form of neglectful parenting); and then that homogenization that the tyranny of ratings has become, for which the points of convergence, perfectly separated into genres, boil down to the field of "sports" on the one hand, and on the other, to the "private" lives of "stars" thrown onto the market like products.

Just as clearly, learning has never been the object of a natural impulse, but has always been the result of a set of constraints, the first of which – a physical one – is to keep the most naturally dynamic, excited, energetic and communicative age bracket in a seated and silent position six hours a day. This is always the first condition to acclimatizing students to socialization. So it really is through this physical undertaking that classroom governing begins.

3. Authority and the Two Forms of Governmentality

We will therefore have to examine what we mean by "governing" here. Etymologically, the Greek word "kubernein" (which led to the term "cybernetics") means, as does the Latin "gubernare," the steering of a boat, in other words the perfectly rational techniques making it possible to pilot it and to maintain its course in a natural environment that was not conceived for it. French dictionaries insist on mastery, domination and the exercise of political power. In every case, it involves the centralizing model of a unifying leadership exerted over a multiplicity of those who are led, i.e. a model of authority.

With this authoritarian paradigm as a starting point, political reflexivity can lead to considering the possible forms of democracy on the basis of the idea, itself highly questionable, of a civic responsibility to participate. On the level of schools, this democratic angle is absent, not by some aberration but by its very nature. If in fact schools have a democratic vocation, at least in the decrees (providing a level playing field), there is no democratic reality to conditions in schools, at least when they are seen less as places of instruction and more as places to be filled indifferently with students. We will then have to consider authority, in order to legitimize it, in

terms of a democratizing purpose that contradicts the reality of its exercise. But the attempt that is the most doomed to failure is the one that tries to democratize that exercise itself, for that would mean making it quite simply impossible.

Therefore, the teacher-as-civil servant, after all is said and done, implements the two forms of governmentality that Michel Foucault successively considered. On the one hand, government, as he defined it in 1973 in his lecture on "Truth and Juridical Forms," is "an administrative technique, a management method – in other words, […] a particular way of exercising power."[7] This led Foucault to assert the following in his lectures at the *Collège de France* in 1977-1978 on "Governmentality (Security, Territory, and Population)":

> It is within the state that the father will rule the family, the superior the convent, and so on. Thus, we find at once a plurality of forms of government and their immanence to the state […][8].

Here, the accent is placed on the heteronomic and centralizing dimension of a power that establishes itself from the outside as a force of alienation, and the earlier passage from "Truth and Juridical Forms," concerning the processes of inquiry in medieval Europe, tends to demonstrate that those processes do not in any way strive for a rationalization of knowledge and focus instead on a consolidation of the systems of power. On the other hand, governmentality, as defined in Foucault's 1982 lecture at the University of Vermont on the "Technologies of the Self," presents itself in a dual fashion:

> This encounter between the technologies of domination of others and those of the self I call "governmentality." Perhaps I've insisted too much on the technology of domination and power. I am more and more interested in the interaction between oneself and others, and in the technologies of individual domination, in the mode of action that an individual exercises upon himself by means of the technologies of the self[9].

What interests us here is precisely that the concept of domination no longer just applies to a force of heteronomy, but also to the form of autonomy itself. This means that *subjection* (i.e. domination) produces forms of *subjectification* (becoming a social, psychological etc. subject through those "technologies of the self") that escape the person doing the subjecting. Here, Foucault presents this relationship of the technologies of autonomy to the techniques of heteronomy in terms of interaction, or reciprocal actions.

Schools are also characterized by these processes of interaction. These processes can be interpreted in terms of escape: the more the government establishes itself, the more it

permits resurgences of secrecy, forms of communication that both elude its control and are produced by it. Furthermore, it allows for the emergence alongside it of an authentic oppositional line of thought that, without it, would never emerge from nondifferentiation.
Therefore, teaching is precisely the state of being on the razor's edge between two forms of governmentality: firstly, the one making the teacher the disseminator of state ideology, forms of submission, and intellectual and moral conformism. They become an agent in the system of control and surveillance, taking attendance, grading work, inflicting sanctions or granting rewards. They also participate in the effects of social hierarchization. In this respect, the governing of a class fully participates in the first form of governmentality.
But it also participates in the second form: the one that provides the means of accessing the technologies of the self. It provides those means, precisely, by offsetting the effects of that other form of governmentality: family discipline. We must therefore also be sure to see governmentalities as possibly conflicting, and not merely complicit, if we want to be able to consider, for example, a positively pernicious effect of instruction. But then we will also have to consider a positive reality of discipline as a technology of the self, and understand that it can establish itself correlatively to the exercise of a form of governmentality. Without such a concept, there could only be a shameful or abusive manner of teaching.

4. The effacement of historicity and the fiction of *aletheia*

The current standards for teaching philosophy, on the contrary, strive to efface the limits, to not disclose the referents and the structures, to conceal the sutures, and to act as though everyone has to discover by themselves and for themselves that thinking that we all share by nature and that one only needs to bring out in oneself in the phenomenological manner of Heidegger's *aletheia*. It is a magic trick whose emblematic expression is written at the top of every sheet of paper in the *baccalauréat* exam, below the text to be commented on, a commentary that becomes an "explanation" of it:

> Knowledge of the author's doctrine is not required. It is necessary and sufficient that the explanation account for the problem in question through the precise understanding of the text.

The thinking of the author whose text is to be analyzed is thus simultaneously reduced to the restrictive and unyielding status of a doctrine, and eliminated from the reader's field of investigation. And the students whose syllabus features that author are told that they don't

need to know the author's presuppositions in order to analyze their position, sweeping aside the constitutive historicity of any philosophical assertion, and of any form of thought in general. This effacement of history, this refusal of genealogy, claims to have the liberating vocation of a return to conceptual naturalness. On the contrary, it is radically alienating, because it fundamentally leads students astray.

Teaching philosophy is thus in many respects built upon a series of paradoxical injunctions. There is a syllabus of authors, but the candidate is not supposed to know them. There is a program based on notions, but the questions they are supposed to raise are left to the "liberty" of the teacher. There are rules of argumentation, but each student is supposed to recreate all their steps by themselves, through the magic of the Socratic method. In the end, each side is "free": to learn nothing, to not impose limits on one's teaching, to give one's spontaneism the status of an argumentative construction. Actually, in the end each side is free to impart nothing and acquire nothing, in an educational context that comes into conflict with the very concept of work as developed by Hannah Arendt, at every level at which the work is organized. This naive concept of a form of freedom associated with spontaneism, which refutes the very authors of the tradition one is supposed to hand down and which is the only point of reference, which also refutes common sense, always intrudes, like a return of the repressed, into the world of teaching in general and of teaching philosophy in particular. And it seems to me that an approach to teaching philosophy that is conscious of its aims should free itself from that concept, the most alienating one, before anything.

5. A Post-Colonial School

In this respect, Laurent Cantet's film *The Class* (*Entre les murs*[10]), which won the Golden Palm at the Cannes Film Festival in 2008, raises an enormous set of political questions, both through its content and through its reception. It is based on the book by François Bégaudeau on his experiences as a teacher in a *collège*[11] in Paris, but it is by no means a mere adaptation. Indeed, unlike the book – which is centered on the character of the teacher-narrator and complacently describes his life in self-deprecating terms, sometimes with contemptuous irony – the film avoids the pitfalls of narcissism, clearly displaying its documentary stance by way of fiction. But the problem lies precisely in what it documents. And what it documents is a situation where the transmission of knowledge is completely blocked, a situation in which the institution of the school, the nexus *par excellence* for the possibility of equal opportunity

through shared access to knowledge, has on the contrary become the site of social reproduction and discrimination. Near the end of the film, a female student who has remained essentially silent, one of those who did not participate in the festival of wisecracks and retorts that pepper the script, approaches the teacher as he puts away his things after the last class of the year, and says to him shyly: "But Sir, I haven't learned anything this year." And she adds: "I don't want to go to vocational school."

Nothing more needs to be said. This is when we realize that what we've witnessed for and hour and a half was not a comedy of oratory jousting. It was in fact the tragedy of a stagnated social situation, where everything is prearranged so that those students whose vivacity and intelligence have constantly jumped out at us – as has their ignorance of the cultural knowledge that must be exploited in order to maximize their potential – will indeed be sent to vocational schools, to prepare them for the least sought-after professions. Actually, everything in this film seems prearranged so that the institution, logically and with complete impunity, guarantees the failure of those under its responsibility: a spineless administration, powerless teachers on whom the blame is laid, a situation where communication has broken down. *The Class* does not just put walls (*murs*) up around an institution that has lost its grip on social reality, but also between those involved in it: a staff room where the discussions go round and round in circles, a classroom where there is never a glimmer of understanding. But unlike what happens in *Human Resources* (*Ressources humaines*), one of Cantet's earlier films, there is no critique of the society to help invigorate the exposé of shortcomings. The film shows us what has become – through a form of division that prolongs and sustains racial divisions with impunity – the discriminatory post-colonial educational system as it self-destructs. It does not show us another reality: one involving a political struggle, on a daily basis, in order to avoid that collapse. A book published in 2007, *De la Destruction du savoir en temps de paix*[12] *[On the Destruction of Knowledge in Peacetime]*, gives us a rigorous analysis of this political issue in education. If we really want there to be "proles among the bluebloods," the first thing to do, as Rousseau would say, is to "force them to be free[13]." In any event, precisely by imposing a consequential and demanding authority relationship in the most drastic fashion possible, one can share a passion for the profession of philosophy with one's students (who are, in many places of public schooling and through the effects of social ghettoization in general and educational ghettoization in particular, nearly all from an immigrant background). Because of this, the binary oppositions "obligation / freedom" and "atavism / progressivism" are not only deceptive, but play into the hands of utterly destructive ministers, who ride the wave of that failure in order to impose

a thorough demolition of the educational system. The choice is not between Jean-Paul Brighelli's "atavistic" positions on returning schools to what they were long ago and Philippe Meirieu's "progressive" (and in fact even more discriminatory) positions on what they have become now: a place where unhappy teachers drag themselves around, completely overwhelmed, constantly guilt-tripped while in a paradoxical position as victims, who are made to believe that a "vivacious" class is one where it is no longer possible for students to listen to each other. These teachers are effectively compelled, through force of circumstance, to abandon public schools to their chaos while the elite go to private schools to get the education they will need to work (and think) efficiently. In this respect, *The Class* is a revelation.

6. The Foundations of a Determinism

Clearly, schools are not the locus of freedom. And when they claim to be, they produce the most pernicious forms of alienation. On the other hand, they can be a place that conditions forms of emancipation: but only on several conditions, which involve the explicit recognition of a few determining factors. In this respect, the question of emancipation can only be raised in Spinozist terms: freedom is only what may highlight the foundations of a determinism, and let it be recognized. The school is the emblematic site for the crystallization of determining cultural factors. And if this is true, the philosophy class is the intellectual production of the obviousness of those factors. This is why the history of philosophy – whose method of instruction in secondary schools is, indeed, widely condemned as "doctrinaire" and "dogmatic" whereas it becomes fundamental in universities – is the mainstay of a form of intellectual emancipation. A philosophical line of thought is neither a body of doctrine, nor the truth of a transcendence revealed to a genius. It is the crystallization of a set of historical and political facts within a mode of thought that quite simply enables the understanding of what we are made of. This includes what the strange tradition that produced us is made of, the tradition whose textbooks present St. Augustine as a pioneer of human rights, Aristotle as a representative of creationism and Descartes as the assistant of St. Anselm. On this matter, it is clear that the tradition in schools and universities, a tradition that is so quick to denounce the *doxa* as prejudices spread by the media, is much slower to denounce its own dogmatisms, its own presuppositions and its own blind spots. Some aspects of the program in philosophy and of the formulation of its topics may seem to convey these tendencies. A year in *terminale* only allows for a few glimpses of this bundle of prejudices and paradoxical injunctions at the heart of the "thinking for yourself" to which the

educational system often claims to reduce the ideas of Kant and the Enlightenment, by making them the spearhead of a depoliticization of thought. Foucault, in a 1970 interview with the magazine *Le Nouvel Observateur*, summarized the doublespeak of this system as follows:

> The philosophy class is the secular equivalent of Lutheranism, the anti-Counter-Reformation: the restoration of the Edict of Nantes. The French bourgeoisie, like the other bourgeoisies, needed that form of freedom. After it failed to be attained in the 16th century, freedom was regained in the 18th century and institutionalized in the 19th century, in a bourgeois form of teaching. The philosophy class is the Lutheranism of a Catholic and anticlerical country. The Anglo-Saxon countries don't need it, and they do without it [14].

The "Lutheranism of a Catholic country" is precisely that rhetoric of free thought that claims an unmediated relationship to truth, like the ideology of the Reformation – the product of an interpretation of St. Augustine's thinking – claimed the constitutive and unmediated relationship to divinity that the Catholic hierarchy had distorted by mediating it through the authority of the pope. And Foucault shows that, in a way, the secular institution of teaching establishes a new theological schema, by inscribing that pretension to self-determination into intellectual conduct, a pretension that blinds it to the political reality of its determining factors:

> Secondary schools, which thrived thanks to philosophy, ensured the training of an elite to compensate for universal suffrage, to guide its application, to limit its misuse. This meant creating, on behalf of a deficient Lutheranism, a politico-moral consciousness. A national guard of consciousnesses [15].

Here we clearly see the idea that "thinking for yourself," the individuated and unmediated spontaneism that is the official slogan for teaching philosophy, indeed participates in a political logic of control, and that a veritable system of doublespeak is at the center of that production. But the duplicity of this system, which originally claimed to ensure the "training of an elite," once again enters a *mise-en-abyme*, and is made yet more duplicitous by the massifying conditions of public education, where the injunction this time seems to be to stand in the way of transmission, to not even allow the slightest advancement of the fiction of "free thought." The "thinking for yourself" of the German Protestant elite of the 19th century is thus used as a weapon against a school population that it keeps in a state of ignorance and social inferiority, in a context where the ideological individualism of discourses goes hand in hand with the constant manipulation of the masses. Ultimately, the students understand the injunction as telling them

to learn nothing, while the teachers understand it as telling *them* to impart nothing, in other words to leave the door wide open for the media to have its way with both sides.

7. Teaching, Held at Gunpoint

It seems obvious that the advice that teachers are constantly given – to be willing to listen, to demand nothing, to foster the student's development – is in radical contradiction to the very need to teach, under quantitative conditions that left the one-on-one teacher-student relationship behind long ago. And if the means offered for this come into such open conflict with the tacitly endorsed goal, it is precisely because that goal is not the mandated one. Until the mid-20th century, the "hussars of the Republic[16]" had the duty to promote equal opportunity in schools, but now it is clear that that role is reversed and has become one of standing guard over the state of things, and suppressing the slightest hint of social mobility.

The teacher stands by the bedside of students now considered as "having great difficulties" or, to use a recently-coined nosographic term, "*décrocheurs*[17]", and is tasked with holding the student's hand like a nurse in a ward for the terminally ill, without hope of seeing the slightest improvement in their condition. Of course, we are at some distance from the English school system, where the violence of the disciplinary measures, as pernicious as it was, at least demonstrated some insistence on perfectibility. We are at the heights of doublespeak, where an educational system finds itself robbed of everything that could be called "educational." This robbery is one aspect of a twofold perspective: the discriminatory construction of a class of politically weakened subjects on the one hand, and on the other, the commercial construction of an economically profitable education that is no longer integrated into the circuits of learning, but into those of the consumer society. This two-part process, of robbery and profitability, produces what I called in another text "the humanitarization of public education":[xviii] a system in which the vocabulary of understanding, of the consideration of psychological factors, of pity and, more generally, of a "compassionate" discourse regarding the students, masks the reality of class domination, in which teachers get to the point where they no longer expect anything from those students whose progress they are supposed to further.

The system that has been established does not content itself with producing teachers who are perpetually discredited, and made to feel guilty by the class relations that the public school imposes on them, teachers presented by the standards of the media – in films for example – as constantly confronted by "school violence," and incapable of handling a classroom situation.

It also discredits them through an attenuation of their fields of study, which transforms them into transmitters of what they themselves haven't learned, to the point where they are assigned social functions with no relationship to their training. In this respect, the expansion of the role of the "homeroom teacher" (*professeur principal*) in high schools in the early 1990s is particularly revealing. Here is the passage describing this role in the official guidelines:

> The homeroom teacher, with the teaching staff, regularly prepares an overview of the student's situation, with input from the psychologist/guidance counselor, the educational advisor or chief educational advisor, the student him or herself and his or her family, and if necessary the school doctor, the nurse and the social worker.

In this way, all of the adults – whether professionals or not – who are supposed to participate in the student's development are placed at the same level, while the coordination between them is provided by a teacher whose hiring for this position does not presuppose either any experience or competence regarding this kind of coordination. And the considerable time and energy that such a task entails can only be spent to the detriment of another temporality: the preparation of courses, the correction of homework and the supervision of the classroom's academic progress, which are in themselves a full-time occupation, giving ample justification for the idea that the time teachers spend physically present at a given institution is inferior to their overall working hours.

8. An Education Integrated into the Circuits of the Consumer Society

Edith Wolf, a literature teacher, has given one interpretation of this in the joint publication mentioned earlier, aptly titled *On the Destruction of Knowledge in Peacetime*:

> The IUFMs [19], created in 1989, served as the framework for a reorientation of teacher training, which brings teachers closer to the role played by social workers: remediation, and the consideration of "communities" who are failing in school, are omnipresent in the official discourse, which also borrows a part of its vocabulary from the business world [20].

This highlights the deeper meaning behind this socialization of the teaching profession: not the possibility of reestablishing equal opportunity and a level playing field for schooling, but on the contrary a situation where schools are treated like businesses, associating the humanitarian vocabulary of remediation, help and support with the economic vocabulary of management. This leads to what Edith Wolf analyzes as the direct consequence of the reorientation of the 1990s:

> The private tutoring industry is thriving: there are now countless firms such as Profadom, Complétude, and Acadomia. The sales figures for Acadomia increased by a million euros between 1998 and 2003, and it is listed on the stock market (*Le Monde*, May 2 2005). The families who resort to this system receive a 50% reduction in taxes [21].

Public funds, taken from the educational system through reductions in staff numbers, credit restrictions, budgetary squeezes and destructive reforms, are at the same time redirected through tax reductions to the private tutoring industry. Money is tellingly diverted from the free system of education that it is supposed to secure for the whole population in order to encourage, as a consequence, the transformation of the right to education into a commercial service, and its confiscation by the social reproduction of a creditworthy elite.

In the same book, Kathleen Barbereau takes a broader view by resituating the educational question within the context of the creation of the World Trade Organization in 1994:

> It is an adjustable framework agreement that paved the way for a progressive liberalization of all services, and succeeded in getting countries to ratify the reclassification as "services," that is as commercial activities subject to the rules of competition, of what our societies consider inalienable human rights: education, health, culture, access to water [22].

That says it all about what unites the discredit cast on the teaching profession, the destruction of the public school system, and the humanitarization of public education, each embedded in the same logic, affecting all areas of public life: reclassifying an inalienable right as a commercial service, and intentionally arranging for the deterioration that allows it to happen.

So it is only to the extent that teaching is not concerned with social assistance, and is rather an activity of symbolic structuring, that it may participate in an "isonomy": equality under the law of what nature has not made equal, emancipation in the face of natural determinism, with the aim of producing the determining factors of culture. But the very experience of teaching philosophy, ever since its origins in France in the 19th century, shows us the effects of cultural doublespeak: the pretense of emancipation, concerning the determining factors of class, through the vocation of "public instruction," and the standardization of minds through the project of a national educational system.

But this project of standardization is itself twofold: whereas governmentality presupposes, through the state's commitment, the possibility of a shared access to the same cultural requirements and the same qualification criteria, that ambition, from the outset, was correlative to

the class barrier that the advancement from primary to secondary school represented[23]. That barrier, seemingly lifted by the introduction of compulsory education until the age of sixteen, was well and truly continued in the system of vocational schools. Through that system's magic, what is officially presented in terms of career choices is ultimately translated in terms of social division, then – through the geopolitical configurations of urban planning associated with the map of school districts – in terms of territorial discrimination. In this way, the democratization of education, far from supporting the measures needed for social mobility, has on the contrary produced all the conditions of its inertia. This renders a large segment of the teaching profession powerless on two levels: powerless to further the intellectual progress of the subjects with whom they are entrusted, and powerless to participate in the social advancement of the age groups for whom they are responsible. Jules Ferry, the creator of the system of public instruction – of free, secular and mandatory schools – was also one of the promoters of France's colonial adventure in the late 19th century: this gives us a very clear idea of the paradoxical injunction to which the teaching profession finds itself fundamentally subject. And the massive arrival of immigrant communities in the schools of the Republic – a category of individuals who, in Ferry's view, could not constitute the people – forces the educational system to come to terms with its own aporias, and with the hypocrisy of its doublespeak.

This hypocrisy fully benefits the radically alienating and comprehensively globalizing mission of the WTO: the transformation of a fundamental right into a commercial service. The more public school teachers – and more symbolically philosophy teachers – are driven to give up the basic requirements of their role, the more they become active participants in that alienation. Education is the focus of a veritable social war, and a war is not won with noble sentiments.

ENDNOTES

1. *Terminale* is the final year in French secondary schools, equivalent to senior year in US high schools or the upper sixth form in British and other Commonwealth schools [translator's note].

2. The French *dissertation* is akin to the five-paragraph essay with which American students are familiar, on a topic typically phrased in the form of a question ("Are religion and freedom mutually exclusive?", for example). The *commentaire de texte* is a close reading and

analysis (and not merely a reiteration) of a passage from a given text, philosophical in this case. Both forms are generally more rigorous than their US equivalents [translator's note].

3. Because in France the format of the final exam is established by decrees from the ministry of education, most recently one from 17 July 2020 [translator's note].

4. A concept created by the philosopher Marc Sautet in 1992, where those interested in philosophy meet in cafés to discuss topics chosen through a vote. See Marlise Simons, "Thought For Food: Cafes Offer Philosophy In France," *New York Times*, May 2, 1998 [translator's note].

5. See Immanuel Kant, "An Answer to the Question: 'What is Enlightenment?'," in *Political Writings*, trans. H.B. Nisbet, ed. Hans Siegbert Reiss (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 54 [translator's note].

6. In English in the text [translator's note].

7. Michel Foucault, "La vérité et ses formes juridiques" [1973], *Dits et écrits* vol. I (Paris: Gallimard, 2001), 1452 ["Truth and Juridical Forms," trans. Robert Hurley, in *Power (Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984 vol. 3)*, ed. James D. Faubion (New York: The New Press, 2000), 48].

8. Foucault, "La 'gouvernementalité'" [1978], *Dits et écrits* vol. II (Paris: Gallimard, 2001), 640 ["Governmentality," trans. Colin Gordon, in *Power*, 206].

9. Foucault, "Les techniques de soi" [1982], *Dits et écrits* vol. II, 1604 ["Technologies of the Self," trans. Robert Hurley, in *Ethics: Subjectivity And Truth (Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984 vol. 1)*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: The New Press, 1997), 225].

10. The literal translation of the title is "Between the Walls" [translator's note].

11. In the French system of secondary schools, the *collège* is the equivalent of junior high school in the US or the 1st to 3rd forms in the UK system [translator's note].

12. *De la Destruction du savoir en temps de paix*, ed. Corinne Abensour (Paris: Mille et une nuits, 2007) [translator's note].

13. "[W]hoever refuses to obey the general will shall be constrained to do so by the whole body; which means nothing else than that he shall be forced to be free [...]." Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "The Social Contract" (book I, chapter VII, "The Sovereign"), trans. Henry J. Tozer and Susan Dunn, *The Social Contract and The First and Second Discourses*, ed. Susan Dunn (New Haven / London: Yale University Press, 2002), 166 [translator's note].

14 . Foucault, "Le Piège de Vincennes," in *Dits et écrits* vol. I, 935.

15. Foucault, "Le Piège de Vincennes," 935.

16. A variation on "the black hussars of the Republic" (*les Hussards noirs de la République*),

a nickname given to schoolteachers and associated with the writer Charles Péguy, in reference to their long black coats (in Péguy's text actually worn by the students at teachers' colleges), their attachment to republican values, and their severity [translator's note].

17. "Décrocheur" is typically translated as "dropout," but in this context it is intended to mean "likely to drop out" [translator's note].

18. Christiane Vollaire, "Affronter l'humanitarisation de l'enseignement public," in *Enseigner les humanités: enjeux, programmes et méthodes*, ed. Jean-Noël Laurenti and Romain Vignest (Paris: Kimé, 2010).

19. The *Instituts universitaires de formation des maîtres* (University Institutes for Teacher Training) were teacher training schools established to replace the former *écoles normales*. They were eliminated in 2013 after being criticized for an overly theoretical approach [translator's note].

20 . Edith Wolf, "Les vrais enjeux des réformes," in *De la destruction du savoir en temps de paix*, 186.

21. Wolf, "Les vrais enjeux des réformes," 198.

22. Kathleen Barbereau, "La fin de l'éducation nationale?", in *De la destruction du savoir en temps de paix*, 30.

23. The author is referring to the period during which primary school was free in France (as a result of the famous Ferry laws of 1881), but secondary school was still not (it only became free in 1933) [translator's note].


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ADRIEN ARROUS

Philosophy Workshops in Vocational High Schools

At the vocational high schools where I teach classes in French and history-geography for students who have previously dropped out, philosophy has no formal place in the curriculum. Yet it has accompanied me, in various forms, in my career as a teacher. I have managed to practice philosophy with my students in other guises, free of any constraints it would have as an academic discipline. This practice testifies to a shift. We could summarize this shift as follows: philosophical activity with my students is not a relationship with texts anymore – it is now a stance. This involves a twofold change: a change in objectives (what do you do when you do philosophy?) but most of all a change in the effect that this practice has on the class as a group. This aspect seems to be the most important one today in my view, particularly for what the word "philosophy" means for the students. One could question my use of the term "philosophy" at this point. Describing my history – the difficulties, the failures and the progress – may allow for an examination of what philosophy entails in classes where it is not typically seen as playing a role.

1. First Attempt: Texts "Off the Beaten Path"

1.1. Description

When I started teaching in vocational high schools to students pursuing CAP, BEP, and "bac pro"[1] degrees, my objective was to "democratize" the access to philosophy. "Philosophy" was then the name for texts, questions, and authors not in common use at this level of instruction. It was also the name for a practice of thought that removed the

boundaries between texts and their purposes, boundaries that are very rigid in vocational schools.
We attempted to work on, for example, texts by Foucault, Swift, and Marx, but also excerpts from speeches by George W. Bush and Nicolas Sarkozy. These were therefore texts beyond the curriculum, which also means beyond the students' supposed abilities.
I asked the students to perform analyses of these texts on the basis of closed-ended questions, as recommended by the institution. This means that the analysis requested, even a very simple one (identify the speaker, their aim, their rhetorical tools…), is performed according to an understanding predetermined by the teacher. It was very conventional schoolwork, performed on unconventional texts.
For these kinds of questions, I expect the students to have mastered the categories of textual analysis, for example the construction of a line of argument: understanding arguments, identifying who is speaking to whom, when and where, etc.

1.2. The Logic to this Approach

This practice was motivated by a will to emancipate the students, i.e. to rescue them from being seen only as mediocre and limited to discovering a few classic and functional texts, supposedly adapted to their needs and useful to them in their daily lives.
My goal was to have them discover other sets of questions than the ones I presumed were theirs on a daily basis, as well as other ideas than those defined by the school curriculum (both in terms of their scholastic level, but also in terms of their critical and civic capacities). [2]
I have to admit I was guilty of some condescension in this attitude. This was useless more than anything else, as people can only emancipate themselves.

1.3. The Limits

The educational choice to work on these texts did not take the students' difficulties into account. Another limit: these texts didn't arouse any more interest or motivation than the excerpts from textbooks. Furthermore, these texts, as a result of their length and their style, posed almost insurmountable problems of comprehension. Long texts, complicated operations: what can you do with all of these lines when you have enough trouble reading one paragraph or writing a few sentences? Because I had to deal with that reality with my students as well, a reality that my approach did not change at all.

2. Second Attempt: A Fresh Try After Leaving the Profession

Having given up teaching for six years, I returned almost by chance to a special school, the *Pôle Innovant Lycéen* (PIL).[3] It offers students older than 16 who have dropped out the possibility of returning to school for a yearlong training program. The "dropouts" are students who have left school for more than six months, in general during middle school or an unwanted stint in a vocational high school.

2.1. Description

At the PIL, I really wanted to try a new philosophical approach, one that was freer and more probing. I devised a course lasting an hour and half, which I called "Major Texts," where we had time to read longer excerpts.

There were excerpts from Foucault, Freud, sometimes from Nietzsche. We read Foucault's description of the torture and execution of Damiens from *Discipline and Punish*, his article "Against Replacement Penalties," excerpts from Freud's *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*…

Very quickly, I abandoned all preliminary questions for the main one: "What do you think of that?" There were no rules of order for speaking. Discussions were free-form, accompanied occasionally by writing exercises.

This meant that I stopped coming to class with predefined steps for structuring arguments, but I always positioned myself as someone who would answer questions and provide additional knowledge. I've read a little Foucault and Freud, so I could give them information on the historical context of Damiens's torture or on Freudian theory.

2.2. Applied Logic

The principle was the encounter. Through the encounter with a text, the students could come up with their own questions.

They were somewhat surprised: they requested discussions, and even additional information. On the whole, it was positive. I have to say that the people who were the most surprised about this were my colleagues.

But one thing didn't change: how the students' reasoning functioned. Those among them who spoke in class – many never dared talk about these issues, or at least in the context of a free-form discussion – kept reasoning in a binary fashion: "I agree," "I disagree."

There was the appearance of an "I," at least. That was already something, but it didn't get us much further.

3. Provisional Conclusion

These two experiments had the same limits in my opinion. In both cases, the subjectification of thought is essentially nonexistent. They are dependent on the same logic, in which the teacher's role is to rationalize reality.

Here, the efficacy of thought is extremely limited. At best, you prove that you know your way around the categories that you have been asked to master. That is what you have to demonstrate to get your diploma. We may wonder about the philosophical benefits of such mastery. The reality of thought does not function according to a rational order. We know this, but we persist: this is what Foucault observes in a passage near the end of *Subjectivity and Truth* that is invaluable for the teacher. [4]

4. The 2017 School Year: Two Divergent Experiments

So I did not offer the "Major Texts" class again. There followed a period of uncertainty during which I tried two things simultaneously.

4.1. Discut+

I tried out the "Discut+" set of playing cards developed by the PbSolving company. [5] With this game, the students carry out a debate on a question that the teacher puts forward. A small Platonic dialogue, written by the teacher, gets the discussion going. The students hold cards that they must play every time they speak. The logic is based on meta-cognition: they have to ask themselves about the thought process that they will put into words, and play the corresponding card. For example, the "Idea" card, the "Argument" card, or the "Distinction" card.

We recognize the formal scholastic categories of argumentation, and the complexity of the playing cards increases in a rather Cartesian way.

I tested the game according to the rules suggested by the developers. What I observed is that the students play using the operations they already master, nearly all of the time by affirmation or negation. And only those who are comfortable expressing their point of view take the floor. The interest to the game is that the teacher does not play, and so the roles in keeping the dialogue going are assumed by the students: there is the one who manages the debate, the one

who can provide a quote, the one who must contribute to the debate without giving their own opinion, etc. The exercise is probably the most interesting and the most beneficial for these students, particularly the moderator. Again, we are dealing with a procedure for rationalizing reality, so either we already master the operations for playing the games, or we find ourselves in the configuration of the person who can't play because they don't know how.

4.2. Discut+ v2.0

I tried out another method, which I came up with myself because I absolutely wanted to get past the dichotomy of those who talk all the time and those who wait for the others to finish. I split the students up into teams of two. Each team had a question or an assertion to discuss (for example the claim of Holocaust deniers that "there is no proof of the extermination of European Jews," in relation to a chapter we were studying in history. Or "Is disobedience necessarily a crime?")

I handed out very few cards to each person, two or three, different ones for each student. They then had to discuss the question by putting a card down each time, which they could not play again. The student therefore had to construct a reflection on the basis of formal rules of debate without having the choice of what thought process to play.

The result was fairly constructive. The students were even surprised and motivated by what they had produced, even if it was rather brief. This had the distinct advantage that the teacher did not participate in any team, and every team was at work: if a team wasn't working, this was easy to see, which was another positive result.

5. The AGSAS-Lévine philosophy workshops

I now come to the experiment I am still working on today, which I started to set up at the time of the Discut+ workshops. It took me some time to get going with it, because it was not obvious for me to adopt a different stance and throw myself into the unknown to such a degree. The problem is that in these philosophy workshops, you can't foresee what will be produced, or where the group is headed, which is very unsettling for a teacher.

These are called AGSAS-Lévine philosophy workshops. I should point out that this workshop method is included in my way of using the flipped classroom.

5.1. The Flipped Classroom

The flipped classroom is part of a concept developed in the US: "flipped learning."[6] It is not a pedagogy: it is a set of practices by which the students carry out the tasks requiring little cognition themselves (in class or out of it), which frees up time in class with the teacher to work on harder cognitive tasks.

This approach lets the teacher tailor the activities and aid given to each student. The work patterns change depending on how well or how poorly the students are doing, so the objectives are not necessarily the same anymore for the whole class.

Like many other teachers, I use a work schedule to manage that diversity. Thanks to this tool for planning courses ahead of time, each student can work at their own pace, on different tasks, with different levels of support depending on the difficulties they encounter. I'll add that this does not miraculously increase the students' diligence, but a student doing nothing (while waiting to be corrected, or for the teacher to ask them a question, for example) becomes easier to spot, because I teach nothing in this system: everything is produced by the student. If they don't work, their notebook remains empty, no work is graded: this may seem a bit harsh, but it's an excellent way to highlight work or non-work. This is very important, particularly for returning students who want to stay motivated (and for whom returning to school means showing up, which is not the same as participating actively). We are therefore in a pedagogical stance where the transmission of knowledge by the teacher is reduced to a minimum, or even nonexistent. In practical terms, this means that there are no lectures, or courses consisting of dialogues where only those who are motivated answer my questions.[7]

5.2. The AGSAS

The AGSAS-Lévine philosophy workshops are a product of the "support to support" groups and the association that was formed to federate them: *l'Association des Groupes de Soutien au Soutien* (The Association of Support to Support Groups) founded by Jacques Lévine – psychoanalyst, psychologist and researcher – in the mid-1980s. The Association is a group that analyzes teaching practices. It has developed and tested a "toolkit": the workshops. There are many varieties, whose objectives can be summarized as follows:

- Valorizing the student's skills and verbal communication in the school context, but through non-academic methods.
- Enabling the class to come together in such a way that productive work is possible,

by constructing an educational alliance between the students, and with the teacher.

• More generally, helping the students grow, i.e. bringing about changes in their relationships with their peers and with adults.

These philosophy workshops participate in the "philosophy in schools" movement. [8]

5.3. The Workshops: How Do They Work?

The workshops' formal structure is fairly strict:

There is an introduction: I ask the question "What does being a philosopher today mean to you?" The students respond freely; I take down their answers, all treated as good answers, on the board. For example: "Reading a lot, writing a lot, talking a lot." Or: "Never giving a definite answer." Or else: "Thinking, discussing, arguing."

All of the students are invited to participate. They are seated in a circle, but those who don't want to participate or speak can stay silent. They have to be willing to participate, and the teacher does not punish non-participants. The teacher does not participate, sitting outside of the circle and saying nothing. A question or a word is announced and suggested as a topic for ideas. For example: "dreams" or "What does it mean to be in love?" First there is a minute of silent thought, followed by a ten-minute discussion period. A baton is handed to the first speaker. Each student can only speak if they are holding the baton: they can speak as long as they like, after which they give the baton to their neighbor.

The workshop continues. I only take notes or write down what is said. Once the ten minutes are up, I stop the workshop, then we go over it, the question being: "How did you feel about today's workshop?" During the next class, I hand out the transcript of the previous workshop, or I put it up on the classroom wall.

5.4. What Effect Does It Have?

The philosophy workshop generates a lot of interest: there are many requests to do it again, and to have it last longer than ten minutes. Here are some quotes: "I really liked listening to the others and not talking"; "Could we do another one next week?" "It would have been great if the discussion lasted ten minutes longer."There is an intermediate effect as well. This work, focused on listening and speaking, yields conclusive results since it is an arrangement where those who usually never speak in front of the class, by whatever means, and even when they are invited to speak (which is terrible for some of them!) speak when their turn comes.

I'm thinking of J., for example, for whom speaking in front of a group was a cause for much anxiety, or T. uncomfortable with others and scornful of them. They both spoke in the philosophy workshops, whereas they had never spoken in the earlier situations.
It's also deeply enjoyable to listen to others. One student pointed out that "you can't forget what the others said before, what someone said that was important and interesting. It's hard work remembering."
In the long run, the effect on the class as a group is obvious: a notable change in atmosphere. The students listen to each other much more, there's less teasing. The philosophy workshop helps make the classroom a space where each person knows that they can express themselves without fear (of being laughed at, judged, etc.), which is vital in a class.

5.5. The Underlying Logic

This thought experiment is based on three aspects:

- It is an "I think" experiment with the co-construction of a thought made possibleby the fact that the circulation of speech leads the discussion well past what eachspeaker would have suggested themselves;
- The debate does not have an agonistic dimension: unprompted reactions, associations, contradictions confront or complete each other in a space that strives to be non-threatening. But in order for each student to be able to start working in a class, it is essential that the class be a safe space where they can speak without it affecting their self-image.
- It is a time for work and thought where the students are responsible for organizing the work, as the teacher is absent from the circle, and only there to keep an eye on the clock and guarantee the respect of the formal rules.

Within these workshops, for the first time in my short experience as a teacher, I have heard thought processes being expressed, for example when V. said: "Even if in my head I agree with the fact that you need money to succeed [...] I want to think that you can live without it."
Operations that connected ideas together also occurred, for example this comment on happiness: "Happiness is what leads to pleasure." This would have been highly improbable in a context where the students were reasoning in binary terms.
Finally, for me this was an experience of the fundamental questions: "Who thinks? Who has the right to think?", like when J., for example, asked the group: "Yes, but who defines each

person's happiness?" This experience, this subjectification of thought, was precisely my objective. For me as for them, this was a surprising discovery during these workshops, I think.

Conclusion

For some, perhaps, this practice of reflexivity is not philosophy. Ultimately, if this is a dispute over nomenclature, it doesn't matter much to me. What does matter to me, on the other hand, is the use and the sense that is made by the moments for thought during the AGSAS-Lévine philosophy workshops, as they are incorporated into my flipped classroom. In my view, they have a clear effect, both for the students as individuals and for the class as a group.
The workshops give rise to a sustained desire for thought, in the framework of a research community. They contribute to the construction of a class community that gets to work, following a formal protocol, for a limited time, that guarantees a space conducive to free exchange. The workshops then make it possible to construct an educational alliance between the students and me, and between themselves. There are many "battle classes," i.e. groups where there are always students who come to class with an "I don't feel like it" attitude, always for very personal reasons. Alongside them, there are others whose position is "I'd like to, but..."[9] And then there are the very few, always the same in every class, who do feel like it. The philosophy workshop, like the other AGSAS workshops and the flipped classroom, allow for a change in these attitudes.
This is because the practice of workshops provides the student with a status they've never had before: they institute the student as a "valid interlocutor" (to borrow Michèle Sillam's concept).[10] In the workshops, the students can sense that they are thinking, and that the others are thinking, which is an experience quite foreign to schools, it must be said.
The desire for thought, the freedom to speak and ask questions, a research community, a maxim for action whereby "the answer is the death of the question": for me, the philosophy workshops are philosophy in action.

In conclusion, I think that we could also look at the philosophy workshop from another angle, in relation to its psychoanalytical framework, as a "technique of self" as Foucault defined it. This would probably make it possible to assess the changes that these brief moments bring about in class. These workshops are a way to work on oneself in a group and to construct a place for the students, a place that is not for a student-who-doesn't-know, but rather one for

an interlocutor and a thinker, as well as a place in the group that enables the group to construct itself differently from a traditional class.

ENDNOTES

1. Translator's note: CAP = *Certificat d'aptitude professionnelle; BEP = Brevet d'études professionnelles*. Both certificates are obtained after two years of study; the BEP is generally more advanced than the CAP and is also used as an intermediate step before obtaining the *(bac)calauréat (pro)fessionnel*, the three-year vocational diploma.

2. "The teaching of French in the preparatory classes for the *baccalauréat professionnel* maintains the requirements for teaching French at the middle-school level: mastery of oral and written expression as well as the assertion of a cultural identity founded on the sharing of knowledge, values and languages. [...] In conjunction with the teaching of history, geography, civics, modern languages, applied arts, and art history, the teaching of French participates in the enrichment of the shared culture through the knowledge of movements and works, through attendance of various artistic productions, through the practice of cultural activities." From the law of 10 February 2009 establishing the program for teaching French in preparatory classes for the *baccalauréat professionnel*, on the website of the French government, https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/.

3. The *Pôle innovant lycéen* (PIL), "Cluster for High School Innovation," is a part of the Paris school system allowing students who have dropped out to re-enroll. It is a public high school with a special status: the students attend voluntarily, enrolled upon approval by the teachers. There is no minimum level of schooling required: students attend for one year only, taking classes from teachers who have been trained specifically for this institution.

4. "We know full well that [...] reality does not function according to a rational order. Reality, at least if one means [by this] human practices, is always inadequate, always poorly adapted; it is always in the interstices between laws and principles on the one hand, and real behavior, effective conduct on the other, it is always in this interplay between the rule and what is not in accordance with it that things happen and things

hold." Michel Foucault, *Subjectivité et vérité* (Paris: Gallimard/Seuil, 2014), 247 [*Subjectivity and Truth: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1980-1981*, ed. Frédéric Gros, François Ewald, Alessandro Fontana and Arnold I. Davidson, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Picador, 2017), 244-245].

5. https://jeu-discut.fr/

6. Translator's note: in English in the text.

7. In France the community of "flippers" was created and organized by an association, *Inversons la classe!,* founded in 2014, which has developed a large space for exchange and joint training. There is an annual convention, a week of flipped classrooms (where the classes are open to all), and encounters on the academic, national and international levels. There are flipped classes on all levels (higher, elementary) and in all disciplines. The community is also a network of teachers, researchers, and enthusiasts, who work with the active educational approaches and share their innovations.

8. The AGSAS is thus a co-partner of the UNESCO Chair on the Practice of Philosophy with Children. In this movement, there is also Michel Tozzi's concept of the "philosophically-oriented discussion" (*discussion à visée philosophique*), whose modes and goals differ greatly from the AGSAS approach.

9. Having changed schools in 2018 in order to return to a vocational high school, I am still holding the philosophy workshops, but in a very difficult class context: as every framework and every rule are impaired, the issue of the workshops is an urgent one in my opinion, but also a stumbling block. I will discuss this further in a future article.

10. Michèle Sillam is a founding member of the AGSAS and co-author (with Jacques Levine) of the reference work on philosophy workshops: *L'Enfant philosophe, avenir de l'humanité? Ateliers AGSAS de réflexion sur la condition humaine (ARCH)* (Issy-les-Moulineaux: ESF Editions, 2014). She is a retired mathematics teacher and trainer. For more information, see her blog (https://sillamichele.typepad.com/).


FORM
BEING DIFFERENT

RÉMY DAVID

What Policy for Experimentation in the Teaching of Philosophy?

What Do We Mean by Experimentation?

The concept of experience,[1] although it is part of the syllabus for philosophy in *terminale*, is in my view a theoretical blind spot in our skill set. It seems to be spontaneously understood in an epistemic perspective as the validation (or refutation) of a hypothesis (scientific experimentation) or, in an empiricist perspective, as the subject of *an* experience; finally, in a practical perspective, it is a matter of measuring the efficacy – of weighing the effects – of what is tried, what is sought. Experience is conceived as experimentation, but without consideration of the passage from an epistemic conception to a pragmatic one. And yet, do knowing and acting obey the same logics? Moreover, practical experience is grounded in real life, in what constitutes the matter of habit and the professional skills that the practitioner of "experience" develops.

When we inquire about experimenting, does this mean validating a given set of hypotheses? Which ones? Or does it mean gaining experience? What kind of experience? A professional one, an existential one, one for the teacher, one for the students?[2] When I chose to join the staff of an alternative school in the national education system – the *Clept*[3] – where the intent was to innovate and experiment, I did not really know what was expected of me or, most importantly, what I would demand of myself. Unsure of the educational issues, and wishing to be wary of an excessively dogmatic approach from an ideological perspective, I opted for an

approach centered on doing, on the experience that doing places in us, and therefore for a pragmatic approach in the philosophical sense, which is almost along the same lines as Sartre's existentialist formulations. Teachers who experiment are what they do, are what is done; they rush into existence/experience without seeking to adhere to a concept, instead discovering what it has become after the fact. Ultimately, the model for the experimentation was really one of lived experience, in other words, of an experience that, once lived, is formulated, taken in and considered, while being problematized. In a way, experimentation was a method for constructing a unique professional experience.

It was a political experience, since it was unique and could have been used to examine a certain *doxa* of philosophy teachers, or question the professional category that was involved, through what Yves Clot[4] calls a "professional style" that needed to be invented. How did that practice examine the standards of the profession? Can it help make the profession evolve toward more openness, or allow the students to construct another relationship to knowledge than one of a missed opportunity in their youth with philosophy or philosophizing? But what good will it do to experiment if that experience is left within the confines of one's own class? What collective effects, what professional questions can experimentation generate?

In this sense, experimentation is neither a preliminary detour, functioning as a condition of possibility for teaching philosophy, nor is it the verification of a hypothesis, whose conditions change with each class, in each context. Instead, the point of experimenting is to bring out the potentialities and virtualities that have been discovered – perhaps like Columbus who, in setting off for the Indies, discovered unknown lands. I try to map out these discoveries and share them around: a form of cultivated serendipity, through the attempt to construct the traces they leave behind. There are other *terrae incognitae*, and other possible explorations. I prefer to argue for the collectivization of these practices and explorations, so that we can train ourselves, in order to create an authentic work culture, and not so that my experience, unique in many respects, is put to general use: that is impossible.

Why Experiment?

It seems to me as though we don't innovate, or experiment, if we are satisfied with what we do, and with the effect that it may have on the students. Experimenting presupposes elements of a critical diagnosis we are carrying out on the "simple truth" of teaching. What unsatisfied

diagnosis of our profession are we making, if we contemplate the bold act of experimenting outside of the syllabus? Could we share such a critical diagnosis shrewdly?

Entering this profession means conforming to its institutional expectations and demands. It means establishing a tension between our way of apprehending our philosophical style intellectually, and its disclosure to unprepared audiences who are subjected to paradoxical injunctions. We experiment when we consider that the training that students receive and the standards it contains do not correspond to what the profession requires, to the needs of those benefiting from that initial training. Ergonomists call this the tension between prescribed work and real work: [5] in the space between the two, the desire is born to do things differently, to be more effective, to try and get more students to sign up for classes, to help them do better, to get them more interested in philosophy.

Why experiment? Because experimenting is political, in its questioning of the instituted or implicit standard, enabling one to question what was obvious. Furthermore, experimenting means giving primacy back to practical experience with regard to an out-of-touch theorization of teaching that targets what *has to be* done (prescribed work) but never what *is* done (real work) and its distance from what is prescribed, while taking into account the constraints, the realities of the target groups, and teaching conditions. Experimenting presupposes searching, trying out a practical heuristic, and therefore reassessing the multiple professional *habitus* that have formed us in order to allow for others. This also means abandoning the sole realm of discourse to take a chance with other teaching practices, thereby giving up the *doxa* so that philosophy may construct its own pedagogy. Experimenting means inventing, establishing a new relationship to teaching: the philosophy teacher is first a teacher, *then* a philosopher!

Experiment On What? Objects? Methods? Systems? Groups?

We may try to experiment in various sectors of the field:

• This may mean getting students to declare a new field as their major, one that is appealing because of its aura of reflexivity, because they can talk about themselves and at last "give their opinion," but one that also quickly becomes unpleasant through its complexity, its intellectually demanding nature when working out ideas, its rhetorical formalism, and perhaps most of all through the fear of thinking it inspires instead of the liberation of thought they were hoping for. What can be done in order to build a culture of questioning, of

intellectual surprise, instead of the search for ready-made solutions? How can we move ahead on the steep ridge between the dogmatism of doctrine and its counterpart – the philosophy guru – on the one hand, and on the other, the spontaneous pseudo-thinking of students trying to be popular? How can we enable the conversion of the fear of thinking into the desire to think and the pleasure of thinking?

• Or it may mean getting students to talk and to listen, and giving those skills a more or less central place. It may also mean getting them to form groups in order to reawaken, through various experiments, the sense of the individual and the collective; the diligence of each student in order to increase the thinking capacity of every student; and the power to think together, or collectively. How can we test out that we are more intelligent together [*ensemble*], when schools as a whole [*l'ensemble de l'école*] only seem to recognize individual "performance"? How can the collective empower the thinking of each person?

• Finally, it may mean reevaluating the topic of grading, which is particularly subject to tension and nonsense. In the absence of any real considerations related to our profession, the students are more often than not made to feel that they are unable to think, that they have failed in learning how to philosophize, when quite often we don't really know what we are grading, prisoners as we are of the reproduction of a normativity produced by the elites of the Third Republic.[6] Innovating or experimenting means permitting oneself to explore other exercises in writing, speaking, and producing, in which the students get a sense of their ability to reflect, strengthen it, and feel the pleasure of doing so.

I'll give an example of an unusual teaching situation. For five years, the philosophy workshops at the prison in Nîmes consisted of putting a "Cinephilosophy" workshop into practice with incarcerated adults who volunteered to participate. This practice is not a new experiment, apart from the target group. However, it deserves to be mentioned, as incarceration constitutes a horizon for broadening the practice of philosophy, a horizon that remains invisible much of the time. Prisoners are quite often dropouts, not just from school but also from society and its norms. The wretchedness and existential violence that make up prison life are most often accompanied by intellectual destitution, for those who didn't go to school, who were unable to benefit from it, or didn't know how to, whereas it was "made" for them, or was at least aimed at them.

Practicing philosophy in prison means attempting to get through to people deprived of

philosophy and allowing them to have what is often an unprecedented experience of distancing, working through, collective reflection, and support in thinking (the number of prisoners varies between three and twelve, so one can provide support for each person who ventures to express their thoughts). This open-ended approach, without a syllabus or definitive pedagogical framework, provides an opportunity to let thought take time to find itself, to wander occasionally, but also to take a chance with others in the context of putting what can be expressed to the test, in the presence of a mediating third party who avoids the issues that are too overtly emotional (and the power relations that go with them).

What's more, the film that is examined is seen as a work of art, to which they have occasional access in detention, but without imagining the food for thought it contains in abundance. In this respect, the workshop is truly formative for those who actively participate in it, since they construct a sensibility that is bottled up in detention. They also think about the characters' emotions that are theirs as well: they've never had the chance or the experience needed to distance themselves from those emotions in order to reflect on them once they have come to the surface.

The workshop is an opportunity for strange, memorable experiences: the prisoners watch films portraying criminal activity that present it from the perspective of normal, normalized spectators. The films nonjudgmentally lead the prisoners to identify with positions and attitudes that diverge or are even the opposite of those they adopt in their social milieu and in the prison environment. What is the result of this experience of "contrary" [7] identification? It is difficult to know, and even more so to analyze. But it shows that the current values of society, presented in films, are shared, and that the prisoners identify with them, except on occasion, when they are trapped in their "tough guy," "macho" image. But that attitude can often be problematized fairly easily in today's society, to such a point that it proves to be short-lived, and essentially defensive.

I became a teacher because I wanted to have experiences like the workshop. As it came to a close, I said to myself (on several occasions, much more clearly and intensely than at the high school) that I chose this profession to go through that kind of situation, one that revealed the expectations – in both senses of the term (what was expected, and what was hoped for) – concerning my teaching skills.

What Policy for Experimentation?
Towards a Policy Allowing for Experimentation in Teaching Philosophy

What role can experimentation play in transforming the profession? What policy of experimentation should be constructed collectively? What collaborative practices should be invented in order to teach philosophy differently?

These questions led us to draw up a proposition for the self-institution of the *Grreph*:[8] a think tank and research group on teaching philosophy, by and for philosophy teachers. On the one hand this would be an *Observatory* of teaching practices in philosophy, and on the other a *Workshop* for experimental practices in philosophy. The experience of the *Clept* allowed me to prefer pedagogical clearheadedness to normative hypocrisy, but that took place within an experimental institution of the national education system, i.e. a research institution. Returning to an "ordinary" school in 2010, I realized to what extent the institution – state education in its traditional form – prohibited the transfer of what had been explored at the *Clept*, and how it made us bear the weight of the ambivalence of its constraints. The experience of the *Clept* put me on a rapid path of professionalization and really allowed me to free myself from a large number of self-evident or ambiguous aspects of the job, and got me into the mindset of a reflective practitioner of research, who questions the reality of teaching and learning, and gropes around in search of answers (to be criticized) while accepting any lack of them. Can this experimental practice be generalized? It is pretty hard for me to give a comprehensive answer. In a way, I hope so, and moreover I know how long the work of denormalization was for me, what explorations and doubts I went through and still go through, so I could not insist on my colleagues enduring a similar ordeal. What is certain is that I remain extremely surprised that those colleagues feel prohibited from drifting too far away from the syllabus and the rigidly structured exam that constituted their training. They allow themselves too little. Many of them see neither the interest nor the need. Ultimately, for the relationship to school to be structured differently, a much richer – and therefore more liberating – training activity would be necessary, because for the moment we (students and teachers) all go by the paradoxical injunction "Be free (while obeying me)!" But freedom in relation to certain standards cannot be decreed: it is worked out over time, through jolts where we cannot master the ins and outs before the fact, but must reflect on them after the fact. It seems completely paradoxical to me that the philosophy teachers who claim reflexivity as their specialty in the field are so infrequently reflective in practice.

We must have the courage that befits the institution and our discipline to create a real testing ground for our profession, and promote a wide variety of experiments, as well as their evaluation and dissemination. In other words, we should start with the knowledge and skills that teachers develop, instead of seeking reforms from the top of the hierarchy, while infantilizing teachers instead of considering them as the civil servants they are, or should be.
This should also be accompanied by a substantive training policy for philosophy teachers, centered on their practices, and not allowing them to get out of doing it as is often the case. Actually, what kind of training do fellow teachers benefit from today, in the areas of initial training and continuing education? How is it possible that these training programs are almost exclusively centered on "updating knowledge," on the current state of philosophy, largely neglecting teaching practices and developing a philosophical method? Strengthened by advances in research on (classic and experimental) teaching practices, a *Workshop on Potential Training* should work on problematizing the formative image-repertoires of the profession, and on promoting the formative modes that allow teachers to feel free to develop other ways of teaching their classes, as well as modify the respective positions of learning a philosophical method and teaching philosophy, by questioning the changes in our profession.
The critical look we are taking at the system mainly concerns teaching itself, its contradictory goals, its implicit and "obvious" standards, and its pedagogical practices. Experimenting means daring to question what we have learned, and the way we learned it, even if a large section of the profession considers it self-evident: in other words, it means fighting against the *doxa* of teaching philosophy. It means the practice of teaching takes precedence over great principles and ideologies. By trying out new methods, by teaching differently,[9] we can transform the conditions of practicing philosophy for both teachers and students, so that this discipline – an unlikely one for most adolescents, feared by some, yet desired by many – makes sense to them, contributes to their initial intellectual training, and becomes an opportunity that, for once, they do not miss out on. The policy on which this experimental perspective focuses consists in problematizing the unquestioned political effects of teaching practices, questioning those effects while using those practices by pursuing their goals through other methods, trying out experiments in philosophy that had previously seemed impossible, and drawing the necessary conclusions from them.

ENDNOTES

1. The author plays with the two meanings of "expérience" in French, which can be translated in English as either "experience" (i.e. something lived), or "experiment" (a test made to study a phenomenon) [translator's note].

2. For more on the professional experience of teaching philosophy, see Rémy David, "En quête d'une théorie de l'expérience professionnelle de l'enseignement de la philosophie," *Diotime* 79, www.educ-revues.fr/Diotime/, 2019, Web, 11 May 2021.

3. Le *Collège Lycée élitaire pour tous*, "The Elite Junior High/High School for Everyone," in Grenoble [translator's note].

4. See Yves Clot, *La Fonction psychologique du travail* (Paris: PUF, 2015).

5. This seems to be a categorization specific to the francophone world of ergonomics. See François Daniellou, "The French-speaking ergonomists' approach to work activity: cross-influences of field intervention and conceptual models," *Theoretical Issues in Ergonomics Science* 6.5 (2005): 409-427 [translator's note].

6. The period during which the third revision of the French Constitution was in force, from the end of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 to France's surrender to Nazi Germany in 1940. The Ferry laws were drafted early on in this period [translator's note].

7. In the sense that one can speak of "Contraries" among the Native Americans, as in Arthur Penn's film *Little Big Man*.

8. *Groupes de réflexion et de recherche sur l'enseignement de la philosophie* [translator's note].

9. See the work of the collective "Enseigner la philosophie autrement": www.enseignerlaphilosophie.fr, tab "Enseigner la philosophie autrement."

MANOLA ANTONIOLI

Philosophy in Art and Architecture Schools: Odos *and* Methodos

"I have no rule for all that; there will be
no sacred text for that architecture."
Jacques Derrida,
"*Maintenant l'architecture*" (1985)

An art or architecture school education should be the ideal context for carrying out the constant exchanges between percepts, affects and concepts that are the subject of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's book *What Is Philosophy?*[1] Indeed, these places offer teachers an invaluable opportunity to talk with young artists, designers and architects every day, and to furnish conceptual references to the artistic, urban and architectural projects in becoming. Nevertheless, we know that the situation the students experience on a daily basis is a long way from this ideal and idealized model. Too often in schools, philosophy risks becoming a "touch of soul," a superficial intellectual alibi for approaches that don't even incorporate an inkling of a concept. These approaches are buried in art schools under a surface aesthetic of institutional or "gallery" art encouraged by many artist-professors; swamped in design schools with the omnipresence of demands from industrial "partners" who direct the research of students from the start; approaches that, finally, are stifled in architecture schools by a growing

fascination for the supposed scientific rigor of engineering schools. In a general context of hostility to thought in all its forms (the vast neoliberal market doesn't need thinkers, it needs docile enablers), this teaching is constantly under threat, called into question and probably destined to disappear in the years to come, despite the constant and widespread interest students have for these courses and seminars, which allow them to establish some distance from the frenetic rhythm imposed on them. This rhythm is marked by the "deliverables," the "projects," faithfully mirroring the frenzied search for short-term efficiency that already drives the business world (and so "project-based work" becomes more and more prevalent, from high schools to universities to art and design schools, leaving no leeway for the extended time for reflection that thought, art, science, creation and action have always needed and will always need).

Since I have passed through all of these places of learning (art, design, and architecture schools) over the past ten years, I am therefore torn every day (like many of my colleagues) between a profound pessimism and tremendous enthusiasm about the experiences one can have every day. The pessimism is rooted in the acknowledgment of the power of a "systemic stupidity" [2] that is hostile to any form of thought, and even more so to any requirement of philosophical thought that does not merely consist of the search for second-rate "wisdom" or "personal development." The enthusiasm arises from the admiration for students who are still ready to embark on a period of long and difficult study that does not guarantee any "employability" upon graduation, unlike study in the engineering or business schools that are put forward to them as examples – schools for elites and the "decision-makers" of the "new world."

From the perspective of teaching philosophy (or what's left of it), the schools of art, design or architecture still offer, in the best cases, the possibility of daily experimentation with the resources of what Félix Guattari called "transversality." [3] The requirement for transversality is very different from the façade of transdisciplinarity or interdisciplinarity now required by countless performance evaluations for teachers, schools, or researchers, an assessment activity exhausting resources that could be used more effectively elsewhere: teaching and research, for example. Transversality, a kind of constitutive intuition that took various forms throughout Guattari's intellectual journey during and after his partnership with Gilles Deleuze, is a requirement that was present from the start of his career as an activist-

psychoanalyst-thinker. Over the course of his collaboration with Deleuze, it metamorphosed into various conceptual figures connected with the latter (deterritorialization, production of subjectivity, collective assemblages, micropolitics…). In the perspective of a requirement for transversality, the compartmentalization of disciplines, as it manifests itself in universities and institutions, belongs to the past. Instituted disciplines and practices should only serve as a starting point for the opening of new theoretical territories that involve new practices focusing in the most concrete terms on changing individual and collective "forms of life." In the largest sense of the term, we could define transversality as a relational principle between diverse elements. This always involves traversing domains, levels and dimensions that at first glance have no points in common (desire and politics, nature and machine, individual and group, gestures, affects, percepts, concepts, and language) and allowing these realms to coexist: it means moving between them or operating a constant deterritorialization between several territories and several forms of existence. Transversality must not remain an abstract concept: it must become a tool of self-production for groups and subjects. In my opinion, it is an invaluable tool for the self-production of the group comprising the teachers and students in a school, or for the researchers in a laboratory (when this laboratory is not merely an instrument of control wielded by the "authorities" who continue to proliferate within the French system of higher education).

In 1991, the question of defining the respective "planes" of science, the arts (including architecture), and philosophy became the subject of Deleuze and Guattari's reflections in *What Is Philosophy?* According to the two authors, philosophy has two complementary aspects: it creates concepts and composes a plane like a cross section of chaos. In line with Nietzsche's lesson, chaos is never interpreted as a state of formlessness, or a jumbled, inert mixture, but rather as the site of a plastic, dynamic becoming: "The problem of philosophy is to acquire a consistency without losing the infinite into which thought plunges […]. *To give consistency without losing anything of the infinite* […]."[4] Philosophy, science and art "cast planes over the chaos": from it, the philosopher brings back infinite conceptual *variations*, the scientist brings back *variables*, and the artist brings back *varieties* of affects and percepts: "In short, chaos has three daughters, depending on the plane that cuts through it: these are the *Chaoids* – art, science, and philosophy – as forms of thought or creation."[5] The book's conclusion sketches out a typology of possible interferences between the "plane of immanence of philosophy, [the]

plane of composition of art, [and the] plane of reference or coordination of science"[6] that are irreducible to each other. A first type of interference is one where a philosopher creates "the concept of a sensation" (in the domain of the arts) or the concept of a function (in the domain of science), where an artist works in the domain of the concept, or where a scientist works out a theory of color or sound: "In all these cases the rule is that the interfering discipline must proceed with its own methods."[7] In concrete terms, this means that when we refer to the "beauty" of a geometric figure or a mathematical formula in the context of scientific reasoning, we use criteria such as proportion, symmetry, asymmetry, etc.: in order to enter the domain of aesthetics we have to know how to extract a compound of percepts and affects from the function, a compound that would thus involve the plane of composition of art. Therefore, this concerns what Deleuze and Guattari call "extrinsic interferences," interrelationships where each discipline continues to operate on its own plane, using its own tools.

More complex, mixed figures emerge when concepts and conceptual personae (tools of philosophy) "slip in among the functions and partial observers" (tools of science) or "among the sensations and aesthetic figures" (of the domain of art). Other combinations are of course possible, and Deleuze and Guattari mention the examples of Igitur in Mallarmé's poetry (a literary character who occasionally takes on the features of a conceptual persona) and Nietzsche's Zarathustra (a conceptual persona who imperceptibly becomes a poetic character). Similarly, one can introduce sensory figures into the sciences that are close to aesthetic figures (in particular when this involves the comprehension of space and time, the "*a priori* forms of sensibility" in Kant's "Transcendental Aesthetic").

But there are also "interferences that cannot be localized" between each plane and each discipline, because from Deleuze and Guattari's perspective, each discipline is in relation with its "outside," on which it feeds (if it wishes to avoid losing all its meaning and dying within the sterile hierarchies of disciplines, subdisciplines and fields of university study…). In my opinion, teaching philosophy to future artists, designers, and architects can only feed on these "interferences that cannot be localized," which must be invented and reinvented every day. In order for art to learn how to feel, for philosophy to learn how to conceive, and for science to learn how to know, each of these disciplines must first be "in an essential relationship with the

No that concerns it"[8] (a nonscience, a nonart, a nonphilosophy). This controlled chaos is what enables authentic encounters between philosophy, art, and science:

> It is here that concepts, sensations, and functions become undecidable, at the same time as philosophy, art, and science become indiscernible, as if they shared the same shadow that extends itself across their different nature and constantly accompanies them.[9]

This is why it is out of the question for philosophy and philosophy teachers to "serve the project" (a phrase still heard far too often in art and architecture schools) and unimaginable that course material is still artificially divided into "theory" and "practice."

In a 1984 interview with Eva Meyer titled "Labyrinthe et archi/texture,"[10] Jacques Derrida goes into some detail on the "interferences that cannot be localized" between architecture and philosophy and declares: "We aren't speaking as architects, instead we are raising a question about the thinking that is intrinsic to architecture: architectural thinking, if you will."[11] This statement could easily become a brief manifesto for teaching philosophy in architecture, art, and design schools: "we" (philosophers or philosophy teachers) are not architects (or designers, painters, filmmakers or video artists), but we wish to raise the question of a mode of thought that would inhere to architecture, design, and each of the arts (a gesture comparable to Deleuze's explorations of a "cinema-thought").[12] This means hard work: to come to a successful conclusion, this task presupposes sharing ideas and collaborating with multidisciplinary teams made up of philosophers, architects, artists, and designers, and not working in isolation, giving lectures (under the deceptively prestigious name of "theory") while artificially separated from the collective ebullience of the workshops. Of course, teaching philosophy in an architecture school does not mean "conceiv[ing] architecture as a technique separate from thought and therefore possibly suitable to represent […] in space […]."[13] Instead, declares Derrida, the point is to consider architecture as "a possibility of thought," without reducing it to the status of a representation or metaphor of thought, as philosophy has often done over the years (we could add: while categorically refusing an ancillary function for itself as desired by those who would wish to have philosophy – and, more generally, thought in all its forms – "serve the project").

The rift between theory and practice (which still prevails in the organization of courses) is at

the heart of the problem, insofar as it involves an extremely dangerous and ambiguous "division of labor." Distinguishing theory from practice, Derrida continues, has always been the fundamental gesture of philosophy, dissociating the theorem from the "pratem" and making architecture (but also the arts or design) a simple technique that thereby detaches itself from thought, "whereas there may be an undiscovered way of thinking belonging to the architectural moment, to desire, to creation."[14] Thus language (as used in philosophy, but also language in general) and architecture share, above all, an insistence on "spatialization" and "habitability," blazing trails in a sense, a "production of paths" and routes, which is familiar territory for architecture. Like architecture, philosophy is an affair of paths, thresholds, doors and bridges, corridors, steps, streets and passageways. In keeping with Heidegger's propositions in *On theWay to Language*, Derrida recalls the essential distinction between "way" and "method": a method is a technique that focuses on making the way passable, that tries to lower the number of curves and rough spots through the use of straight lines. As Heidegger put it, *odos* (the way) does not merely consist of *methodos* (and yet *methodos* is an etymological derivative of *odos*). Method has appropriated the pathways of thought thanks to modern philosophy, which – from Descartes to Leibniz to Hegel – has caused *odos* and its complexity to be forgotten. Thought is a pathway, made of labyrinthine turns and detours that cannot be reduced to straight lines or "rules," just as the habitability of the world with which architecture is concerned cannot be reduced to the straight lines of freeways, high-rises, and monuments serving as the seats of power, without risking disaster.

The schools of art or architecture offer philosophy and philosophers the opportunity, the chance, to try and construct, with the students and colleagues who wish to join them, a pedagogy that refuses all "methods," if by "method" we mean the straight line intended for the transmission of preestablished knowledge from the teacher to the student (i.e. the unproductive "method" of the academic paper, the "method" of the art, design, or architecture project, a method following tried and true formulas that can supposedly be handed down from one year to the next, one group of students to the next, one workshop to the next, one project class to the next…).

The questions related to space and spatialization, to method, to the distinction between theory and practice and to aesthetics in general are, by necessity, political questions: as a result, teaching philosophy in art and architecture schools is, by necessity, a political gesture. Among

the many questions of a political nature that could be raised in the context of reflection on "architectural thinking," Derrida mentions one at the end of the interview relating to technique, which could easily be transposed from the domain of architecture to that of the arts:

> How is it possible, for instance, to develop a new inventive faculty that would allow the architect to use the possibilities of the new technology without aspiring to uniformity, without developing models for the whole world? An inventive faculty of the architectural difference which would bring out a new type of diversity with different limitations, other heterogeneities than the existing ones and which would not be reduced to the technique of planning?[15]

Teaching philosophy could thus help defend the need for an "inventive faculty of the architectural difference," but also of artistic difference or difference in design, in the face of a use of new technologies that only serves the purposes of automation and the market: the "smart city" concept or *BIM* (building information modeling) in architecture; the proliferation of service interfaces in design; for the arts, the visual effects in multimedia installations.

The end of the interview also refers to the *Collège international de philosophie*, which at the time was hosting a seminar conceived as a shared workspace between architects and philosophers, "because it became evident that the planning of the 'Collège' also has to be an architectural venture."[16] In Derrida's view, the *Collège* had to become a "habitable place" for thought and for all the forms of mixed figures and "interferences that cannot be localized" between disciplines, between theory and practice. Instead of a monument, constructed and institutional, conforming to the modern type of university as established around 1810 in Berlin, the *Collège* was destined to become, in the eyes of its founders, an open, nomadizing institution, a set of broken paths, a Tower of Babel designed for research in thought. Without a defined architecture, its open and improvised structure ("You take a room here, a hall there")[17] should have invented a place capable of accommodating "a formless desire for another form" of thought, another way to both live and think: "The *Collège* is an architectural promise, and I don't know if it will be kept."[18] It is hard to say, thirty-five years later, if this promise has been kept or betrayed, if this atypical institution (still without a definite location) has retained its uniqueness, or if it has become a mere annex of the university, from which it

borrows its methods, its "straight lines," its syllabi, its grading criteria. In any event, it does not seem to have given much space to "mixed figures" or "interferences that cannot be localized" between philosophy and the arts, philosophy and architecture, and more generally between philosophy and its "No" or its outside. Perhaps this is still its task *to come*.

In contemporary thought, this Derridean attempt to simultaneously consider the philosophical, aesthetic, political and educational dimensions of a "new architectural thinking" – one that accepts technological transformations without going as far as to minimize, once and for all, the dimension of drawing, of marking, of writing present in the architectural gesture in order to dissolve it in an artificial, normalized language – finds an echo in the current research of the British anthropologist Tim Ingold. For several years now, Ingold has been committed to a "comparative anthropology of the line" [19] and to reflection on forms of "non-linear lines" that then allow him to attempt to overcome the dichotomies that are deeply embedded in modern thinking between art and technology, writing and drawing, language and music, theory and practice, *odos* and *methodos*. This project of "linealogy" is firmly anchored in his activities as a teacher, where he works with artists, architects and archeologists (in addition to anthropologists). Ingold translates the question of pedagogy in terms of lines, paths and – again – the figure of the labyrinth, on the basis of two different senses and modes of the term "education," which are in turn derived from two different etymologies for the verb "to educate." In one (from the Latin *educare*), the verb references the act of giving learners instruction both in approved knowledge and on an approved model of conduct. In the other (from the verb *educere*, comprising the prefix *ex-*, "out," and the verb *ducere*, to lead) education's purpose is to *ex-ducere* them, to lead them to the outside world. The first model (the most widespread one today) consists in grounding learners in the models of knowledge and behavior that dominate in the given cultural context; the second consists in putting them in contact with the outside world and helping them to find their bearings in the experience that stems from that. In this second model, education literally occurs "through exposure," by walking in the labyrinth of the world, the same labyrinth that Derrida mentioned in the interview cited earlier, one where neither the starting point nor the final destination are predefined, "for every place is already on the way to somewhere else." [20]

This double sense of "education" goes hand in hand with the evolution of the term "school,"

which comes from the Greek *schole*, a term that was translated in Latin as *otium* and contrasted with *neg-otium*. The time of the *schole* or the *otium* is the time a free person can dedicate to a halt, to rest, to leisure, and ultimately to study, education, learning, and philosophy, and contrasts with the acceleration and saturation of the "useful" time of utilitarian and market-driven action. The *schole* or the *otium* presuppose a rigorous discipline, a demanding path, but they have nothing to do with the "rule," the "method" and their straight lines, which neglect the sinuous lines of paths and labyrinths. There is therefore almost nothing left of the model of the *schole* in the school as we know it today, just as the two meanings of the word "education" are quite distant from each other. One involves instilling knowledge and behavior that have already been mapped out; the other involves providing enough time for the mind to forge its own path. The time devoted to philosophy in schools should thus make it possible to rediscover and safeguard this suspended time of the *schole*, of an unrestricted activity that takes an unknown path. The invention of such a path cannot be an individual journey: it presupposes a sharing within a community comprising "mixed" teams of teachers and students, as mixed as the figures of affect, percept and concept that are to be constructed (and even, in the most concrete terms, "manufactured") in the workshops of an art or architecture school. This community, however, must be able to protect the uniqueness of each person's path: this requires open places of teaching, research, and creation that combine theory and practice during the long period of *otium* and *schole*, not over the short-term, impoverished and overloaded period of the "project," the "deliverable" and the useless, sterile, and unread "research reports" that pile up in the dusty offices of government bureaucrats.

In conclusion, teaching philosophy in architecture schools should take a transversal approach, capable of creating the conditions of a reciprocal deterritorialization between concepts, affects and percepts, making the most of all the potentialities of the "interferences that cannot be localized" between several domains, and positioning itself within a long-term perspective, in the intermittent, suspended time of the *schole* and the *otium* instead of the overloaded, accelerated time of the school and the *negotium*: no sacred text for this architecture, no rules for this requirement, no *methodos* for this *odos*, no order for this chaos, no straight line for these sinuous flights of the witch.

ENDNOTES

1. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?* (Paris: Minuit, 1991) [*What Is Philosophy?*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994)].

2. For more on this concept, see Bernard Stiegler, *La Société automatique* (Paris: Fayard, 2015) [*Automatic Society, Vol. 1: The Future of Work*, trans. Daniel Ross (Cambridge UK / Malden MA: Polity Press, 2016)].

3. See Guattari, *Psychanalyse et transversalité: Essai d'analyse institutionnelle* [1974] (Paris: La Découverte, 2003) [*Psychoanalysis and Transversality: Texts and Interviews 1955-1971*, trans. Ames Hodges (South Pasadena CA: Semiotext(e), 2015)].

4. Deleuze and Guattari, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?,* 45 [*What Is Philosophy?*, 42].

5. Deleuze and Guattari, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?,* 196 [*What Is Philosophy?*, 208]. On this topic, I refer the reader to my article "Chaoïde," in *Les Cahiers de Noesis* 3 *(Le Vocabulaire de Deleuze)*, ed. Robert Sasso and Arnaud Villani (Spring 2003): 55-56.

6. Deleuze and Guattari, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?,* 204 [*What Is Philosophy?*, 216].

7. Deleuze and Guattari, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?,* 204 [*What Is Philosophy?*, 217].

8. Deleuze and Guattari, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?,* 205 [*What Is Philosophy?*, 218].

9. Deleuze and Guattari, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?,* 206 [*What Is Philosophy?*, 218].

10. "Labyrinthe et archi/texture. Entretien avec Eva Meyer" [1984], in Jacques Derrida, *Les Arts de l'espace* (Paris: La Différence, 2015), 25-46 [An abridged English version of this interview, "Architecture Where the Desire May Live," can be found in *Rethinking Architecture: A Reader in Cultural Theory*, ed. Neil Leach (London / New York: Routledge, 1997), 301-305 – translator's note].

11. Derrida, "Labyrinthe et archi/texture," 27.

12. See Deleuze, Cinéma 1: L'image-mouvement [*Cinema 1: The Movement-Image,* trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986)] and *Cinéma 2: L'image-temps* (Paris: Minuit, 1985) [*Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989)].

13. Derrida, "Labyrinthe et archi/texture," 27 ["Architecture Where the Desire May Live," 301].

14. Derrida, "Labyrinthe et archi/texture," 28 ["Architecture Where the Desire May Live," 301].

15. Derrida, "Labyrinthe et archi/texture," 45 ["Architecture Where the Desire May Live," 305].

16. Derrida, "Labyrinthe et archi/texture," 45 ["Architecture Where the Desire May Live," 305].

17. Derrida, "Labyrinthe et archi/texture," 45 ["Architecture Where the Desire May Live," 305].

18. Derrida, "Labyrinthe et archi/texture," 46.

19. See Tim Ingold, *Lines: A Brief History* (London / New York: Routledge, 2007).

20. Ingold, *The Life of Lines* (Oxford: Routledge, 2015), 135.


TO BE SHARED
THE STOLEN YEARS....
1895 – 1983
HOPE
LOVE
PAINTED

ALEXANDRE COSTANZO

The Pile of Sand

I am not going to speak about the way in which teaching philosophy changes between universities and art schools, but rather about my experience, by describing what my method is. In each of my classes, it consists in proposing a dramaturgy by drawing on the work I do elsewhere. I belong to the domain of philosophy: I envisage things from there, I bring things back there at one point or another. But I should say that I teach in a place where the students are not that interested in that domain. I should also say that they aren't that patient, or present, nor do they put much trust in that institution known as the lecture, or respect it in some cases. Ultimately, they often have more important things to do: recover from the night before, go chat, laugh, read, and especially work in their studios, and besides many of them have part-time jobs, so they organize their schedules as best they can… That is pretty much the reality of the situation. Sometimes many of them come to my classes: this is because I go looking for them in their studios first of all, but it's also because I really take my work seriously – not my role, my job, my function or my status, but my work and this moment in particular. And as I was saying, most of the time I create a dramaturgy by showing them several objects in relation to a particular problem. Of course, this is not very representative of what is traditionally done in a philosophy department, but it is representative of me. What I mean by that is that I always talk about what is important to me, trying each time to demonstrate why I like a particular work – a film, or a book – in order to explain my approach by constructing a kind of space where worlds can come into contact with each other. That space is a form of thought. And they probably like to enter that somewhat unusual space to relax or make new encounters,

discover figures, be surprised by a gesture or come face to face with acts. And so, like all of my colleagues, my method consists to a certain degree in presenting objects to my students that they would probably never have seen otherwise, but always so I can say what I do with them. It is then up to them to decide if these objects affected them: to then use them as reference points and invent their own way of coming to terms with them. What I mean, actually, is that I do the same thing in class that I do everywhere else when I give talks: I invent a certain form and assert a position of thought. So that is how I see it, but of course that space actually belongs to those who experience it, pass through it, all those who want to take the trouble to share it.

But if I have been happy teaching in an art school for many years now, it is also because the classroom is no more important than other places. It is no more important than the library, the computer room, the halls, the wood and metal shops, a large terrace where we often meet to have lunch when the weather's nice, or to talk or smoke; it is no more important than an editing room or a studio. These in fact are the places where I spend most of my time "teaching." I spend less time in class than I do walking around from studio to studio, often accompanied by my colleagues like Hubert Marcelly in the past, and today Jean-Marc Chapoulie, Nicolas Tixier or Didier Tallagrand, in order to discover and then talk about the projects, films, sculptures, propositions or situations that the students are creating. And, of course, I learn a lot about my colleagues, but also about the students. What I'm trying to say is that teaching is ultimately something that is fairly ill-defined, including spatially, ill-defined enough that it can always be approached, asserted or invented differently. Most of the time this consists in talking, but also in just being there, paying attention to what is happening, what is said, to the modes of organization, and especially paying attention to the forms that appear. One of my former colleagues – Richard Monnier, an artist I greatly admire – used to go into the empty studio for first-year students very early every morning to see what was there: forms, experiments, little discoveries – the order and disorder of situations as they were being invented. He has retired, and according to what people tell me, he goes to his studio, a converted car storage unit, to work every day. He's not asked to exhibit his work that much, but that doesn't stop him from reading, writing, and creating all kinds of experiments that he can show friends or talk about with those around him. So there we have a way of paying

attention to forms that appear, a way like many others. But ultimately, what I want to say is simply that art interests me in this place, in a school – of course, that is also true of art in books, in museums and everywhere else – but it interests me most particularly here because I have the feeling that it is a fairly anonymous moment of construction where there aren't many other issues at stake, and that I constantly experience simple joys here. It interests me because this is a school where, ultimately, things are sufficiently ill-defined. Finally, it interests me because there are all these shared situations and experiences, and that one is constantly encountering forms, propositions, objects. So much for what I had to say to summarize things. Because the question for me was not really to say how the teaching of philosophy changes or what it displaces, but rather to talk about the objects or situations that I encounter.

So now I would like to talk about one of those situations, a really trivial one. It concerns an adventure experienced by four students [1] who went to Lisbon for an internship, a few years back, as part of the Architecture Triennale. I bring this story up because many of us teachers, starting with my friend Naïm Aït-Sidhoum who brought it to our attention and whose argument and conclusions I literally repeat here,[2] think that it is a sign of what is done in an art school, whether you are a philosopher or not.

These students left for Lisbon, invited by a collective of architects who were bringing a project to completion. Actually, the project was outside of Lisbon in Cova, a village that had been built without permits by a group of fishermen in the early 20th century. Since that time, the village preserves several special characteristics, as it is managed by an association in which the inhabitants are members. This was the setting in which our four students found themselves. After completing their projects, they suddenly decided to make themselves useful, as there was a playing field in the middle of the village covered in sand and broken glass, rendering it unusable and even dangerous. These students got the idea to clean it up completely and then repaint the lines on the field to help out the community. So they started by thoroughly cleaning the area, ending up with a fairly huge pile of sand that they got rid of by dumping it in the trashcans nearby. But the next morning, some villagers went off to look for them and explain the situation. The problem was that the village did not run its own waste management system; it had to hire a private company to do the trash

collection. But when an employee of this company found the sand and broken glass, he left the trashcans untouched because that wasn't covered in the contract, and he even threatened to never return if it happened again. The president of the association came to scold the students: nevertheless, he was conscious of their goodwill and their naïveté. To right the wrong they had done, our students emptied the trashcan and reconstituted the pile of sand. They had no idea what to do with this problematic heap. A woman in the village then suggested that they could spread it over the beach, but then they would have to sift out the glass. They started to do this, while realizing that it would take them a long time. Meanwhile, this whole situation had of course become the talk of the town: people chatted about this group of French students, really nice but very naive, who spent their time sifting sand. Then a lady came who had heard about it and asked them to bring the pile of sand as is, with the broken glass, to the road leading to her house. It turned out that the road was full of potholes and the pile could fill them, as the road was not maintained. So finally things were pretty much resolved and our students made themselves useful at last. The next thing to do was to repaint the lines on the basketball court, which they did one Saturday. But while they were doing it, they realized that the rival gangs in the village used the court every weekend as a battleground, throwing small rocks and empty bottles at each other. Things then became clearer, while these adolescents stood around waiting, somewhat at loose ends, unable to indulge in their favorite activity. It happened that there was one among them who became especially interested in watching our students repaint the court, but he was in fact the scariest one of all: he terrified the village, in particular for painting huge penises on the walls of houses. Through his interest for painting, maybe, or because he was getting bored, he offered to help the students, which really made an impression on the people in the village. After all, if this group of somewhat naive foreign students managed to make a painter out of their worst delinquent, maybe their actions weren't so unimportant. The truth was, though, that the terror of the village was not very gifted or diligent: the lines he painted weren't straight, and there were spots of paint all over the court that served as signs of his clumsiness. So the village had a new, usable playing field, but with the caveat that it had a strange appearance to say the least, with these crooked lines and these spots scattered everywhere.

So that's the story – as our students, left to their own devices, reported it to us – that I

wanted to tell in conclusion, a story of a pretty burlesque, ridiculous situation where young people who wanted to do the right thing ended up creating a few problems around them.

We are well aware of the method of architects and urbanists, but also more generally of people who talk, think or act on behalf of others. Fairly often, they don't really carry out experiments: they mainly tend to identify a problem for which they already have a readymade solution. They import or impose problems so as to respond to them and, in so doing, they demonstrate their competence and the need for their activity in the community. Once we have identified this type of logic, and the presupposition it is based on, we have to draw some conclusions: these people and the world they bring with them are in reality perfectly useless. Like them, our students arrived, wanting to be useful, but they got things wrong. They came with a readymade solution but in reality they invented a problem that took the material form of a pile of sand. For this pile of sand is a form. Of course, it's not a work of art, it's not an urban planning scheme or an architectural proposition, it's not philosophy and even less a political treatise, and yet this speaks to us about all of that at the same time. They didn't resolve or respond to a problem in sculpture, but between the massive cleanup of a playing field and this pile of sand that travels from place to place like a cumbersome supplement only to end up filling holes in a road, we clearly have a form. They didn't really help that population who, besides, didn't need them, but they at least understood how that village was organized, and then ultimately that resulted in an irregular playing field. Moreover, I find that it's a nice proposition in architecture and town planning – it's not a matter of telling people how they should be housed or move around or what they should do, instead it's a matter of burdening them with a pile of sand. All in all, what I mean is that this idea of the pile of sand is in a way stuck between all of these worlds, in an uncertain proximity – sculpture, urbanism, architecture, philosophy, politics – it is burdensome and this is why I feel particularly friendly toward it. In a way, this supplement ends up shattering a certain order of things, or rather it is bothersome and it asserts something – as an artwork or a book does, incidentally. But this story especially interests me because it took place on the periphery, in silence, off to the side, and because the participants are anonymous. They weren't recognized architects, urbanists, philosophers or artists who took part in some cultural event; they were just young people who had ideas of art in mind. But while they

wanted to do a good deed in a village they didn't know, in reality they created a problem by disorganizing things a little. I mean they expelled the presuppositions or the certainties that they had when they arrived. For me, as a professor, a philosopher or a simple passerby, I say that's fine with me. That's fine with me because it gives me an idea.

ENDNOTES

1. Amandine Pichon, Hind Chahoub, Marion Raimbault and Jérémy Lanchon.

2. Taken from a lecture presented during the one-day conference organized by the *Design et Espace department of the École supérieure d'art d'Annecy* on 14 January 2016.

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Artistic Doing, Confronted by Philosophical Saying: A Subject for Thought, or Outside It?

Teaching philosophy in art school means devoting oneself to a method of a particular kind, given that the students' main activity is not to practice philosophy but rather art or design. This does not mean that they are incapable of it: it just means that that is not their main objective, and if it becomes so, it is often through the effect of an encounter or a "bifurcation."[1] This relation of otherness between what I will temporarily call a saying and a doing is what counts, and what seems invaluable to me.

The problem every teacher faces is to lead students to find the right way of bringing out the meaning of texts, to not obliterate the singularity of philosophical statements by associating them too quickly with other statements that appear similar. The classical approach to the work of understanding philosophy consists in associating a thought to the logical and conceptual system to which it belongs in order to comprehend it in all its singularity and subtlety. The goal of this exercise is for the students to gradually get the feeling they are the potential authors of philosophical statements, and for them to learn how to gradually insert their thinking and their wording into a thought that is unknown to them in order to appropriate it over time, and to be capable of reformulating it pertinently. Philosophy students graft language onto language: in other words, they graft two thoughts together that are

homogeneous on a formal level. The problem with art students is that they must simultaneously carry out another graft: they must graft language onto a non-verbal thought, in accordance with the plastic thinking intrinsic to them. Teaching in an art school means being confronted with connection operations that are not performed between statements but between heterogeneous objects, by leaps in thought: a phrase from one book connects itself with one from another, or with a gesture, an object or an artistic practice. As a teacher or lecturer, performing a philosophical analysis of a text in the context of an art school education also means finding oneself before people who are not going to put themselves in the author's position, but will instead construct their place on the basis of the conjured reality, which constitutes another way of fragmenting the conceptual unity of the philosophical text. Far from limiting the philosophical meaning, this manner of getting something directly from the concrete sense of the text proves to be rich with new interpretations of the concepts concerned. How does this happen? What relation takes shape between artistic practice and philosophy at that moment?

Both in his teaching and his writing, Deleuze never stopped fighting against the traditional conception of thought as a reflective and rational activity, instead emphasizing what he called "thought compelled by the encounter." The encounter is what happens to thought when it defines itself not as an internal exercise of reason but as an event that forces it to move. "Thinking is always experiencing, experimenting, not interpreting but experimenting, and what we experience, experiment with, is always actuality, what's coming into being, what's new, what's taking shape."[2] In the case with which we are concerned, the encounter takes place in both directions: on the one hand, the young students or artists' encounter with the philosophical text; and on the other, philosophy's encounter with the foreign matter of art. In art school, however, the presence of art is not exactly the kind that imbued Deleuze's work – films, paintings, works of music. Art is often present in an unfinished form, or one in becoming, via works in gestation, research in progress, or questionings. Many students are not accomplished artists, and their gestures as well as their words are often not necessarily well chosen. The plastic thinking is not yet deployed in a work, but is still in gestation, presented in objects that are sometimes a long way from the true artistic forms to come. Moreover, this practice is accompanied by a whole heterogeneous assemblage, comprising thoughts, ideas, and positive or negative perceptions that help it to develop (words provide

completion by explaining: they reveal something that doesn't yet "stand up" from a sensory perspective). At the same time, this assemblage impedes that practice, as do all of the slogans we carry with us. The philosophical text is confronted by all of these perceptions, while fueling that assemblage at the same time. In addition, teaching in an art and design school means coming into contact with current groundbreaking artistic practices that have not been taken into consideration yet by philosophical discourse and questioning. Sometimes a large section of a problem can suddenly appear dated, or even ineffective, requiring reevaluation on contact with this new reality.

Understanding the Smooth and the Striated through the Practice of Skateboarding

This is how Florian Reigner, a young student at the school of fine arts in Angers, came to understand the notions of "smooth" and "striated" as presented in Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's book *A Thousand Plateaus*: by skateboarding through his town while a can of spray paint strapped under the board left a streak on the road.[3] The artist Raphaël Zarka had already undertaken a reading of the urban space by skateboard, aiming to get a sense of the various surfaces it contains.[4] This experience of smooth and striated surfaces was less concerned with a description of surfaces and their qualities than with a description of the experience itself: skateboarding became in itself a gesture for smoothing out the urban space. This student added a supplementary action to this gesture of smoothing by strapping a can of spray paint under his board. In so doing, the streak left along the way made a new kind of striation appear: not the organized striation of the striated (striation for the purposes of measurement and demarcation) contrasted with the smooth, but a striation intrinsic to the smooth (occupy without counting).[5] Now this is precisely the whole problem of the interaction between the concepts of smooth and striated. The smooth and the striated conflict with each other through their respective modes of inscription in space: a rough trace inseparable from the uniqueness of a trajectory on the one hand, and on the other, a boundary delineation designed to control well-organized movements. What this student's practice reveals is that the smooth produces a specific striation, which does not constitute a system of preestablished coordinates for the measurement of events, instead transforming the traces of gestures into signs for a space open to reinvention. So contrasting the smooth and the striated also means contrasting two ways of marking time and space: one whose marks concern a unit of measure, the other whose marks

form a sign or a rhythm of the event, and a sign for events to come. Paradoxically, the testing of philosophical concepts and their inscription into physical reality lead to the overcoming of the manifest philosophical oppositions between smooth and striated in favor of the subtler differences between two kinds of traces involving two different semiotic regimes. What must be problematized between the smooth and the striated is just as much the opposition between two semiotic regimes as that between space-time and modes of individuation.

The problem, then, is to find the place for plastic thinking and to not presuppose the form it may take. We are the ones who, in turn, return to the sensory nature of the objects shown to us; we return to the literal sense of the expressed ideas. Speaking with students about what they do often means finding something else in their work besides what they say (and see); by the same token, as long as we see clearly and are not mistaken, it means giving them access to a deeper layer of new material to work with, made of questions, perceptions, and ideas… that will stir up new ideas. And if one of those new ideas concerns philosophy, then these two thoughts will become interlinked, or even concealed within each other, only occasionally revealing themselves through their contortions: a strange meaning given to a concept, a word, a philosophical statement, that the student in question clings to stubbornly, despite the remarks we make about that. It is an effect produced in the works that are exhibited, an effect that is completely ignored. But instead of correcting it and making up for it, it seems that the doing that falls to us, as observers of these projects in progress, is to extract and question the fragments that we pull out of the whole. This is not the same position as that of Jacques Rancière's ignorant schoolmaster, who knew how to teach a language that he did not himself master. It means teaching about the interrelationship between verbal and plastic thinking, and the need to swing between the two so that one may help the other along.

The Philosophical Text and its Accompanying Environment: The Example of Philosophical Reflection on Standards

The concrete example used as a line of attack on the text sometimes literally makes the philosophical remark turn on its own axis. I will take as an example a course on standards that I have been developing since 2014 at the *Ecole nationale supérieure d'art et de design* in Nancy, basing my work on the new approach that Canguilhem and Foucault undertook on that question.[6] Unlike the purely traditional approach that conceives of the standard as a notion

emanating from moral law, Canguilhem and Foucault became interested in the historical dimension of technical standards: the appearance of the use of standards is a historical fact that arose at a conjunction between fields of knowledge, techniques and politics. Canguilhem looked into the various issues surrounding the activity of the production of standards that appeared starting in the 19th century in medicine and in technical fields. Foucault continued that analysis by studying how standards have participated in the history of governmentality as a tool for dealing with populations. Foucault's main argument in Discipline and Punish or The Will to Knowledge is that standards possess a regulatory function that is exercised for the purposes of both normalization and individualization, and in social spaces where they play an explicit role (factories, schools) as well as in spaces where those living on the margins of society are confined, such as hospitals and prisons. Questioning the space of standards is as much questioning their place and how they are exercised as questioning the form of the margins they trace out. Furthermore, Foucault sees hospitals and prisons as the sites for prefiguring standards that will then shape the entire social body.

Often art becomes interested in standards in order to subvert or transgress them. Art does not take standards as a line of attack so much as the different ways of transgressing them, inventing an otherness in the form of a margin that, in so doing, it reveals. As Foucault points out regarding Bataille, transgression does not merely consist in crossing the line but also in staying on the cutting edge of that line by giving it new substance. Marginality, exception, transgression: each of these positions has its form, its substance, at the same time as its value and specific meaning.

The position of designers and architects is different, due to the technical constraints of their professions and their objectives. The objects of design and architecture engage with the question of collective and intensive use and must offer a guarantee of solidity and viability. An example is standards for materials, providing a guarantee of safe use. Another is standards for the dimension of objects adapted to the dimensions of individuals of average size. To a certain extent, there are also the social standards by which the commissioners and the end-users of objects must abide.

And yet in a number of schools, as well as in architecture and design agencies, a subversive

attitude is becoming widespread in the face of this imposed submission. New practices in architecture and design by people like Patrick Bouchain and Loïc Julienne, Anne Lacaton and Philippe Vassal, Stefan Shankland, or Olivier Darné assert an unprecedented level of freedom concerning technical standards. This freedom does not consist in transgressing standards in the way art does, but in disobeying their customary use in an industrial context. The norm in a construction site is to work with standards and new materials, with the standards regulating the use of these materials. The working principle for Bouchain's agency *Construire*, on the other hand, is to work as much as possible with material salvaged nearby: their sites are supplied with material available in the vicinity, sometimes with what remained from another site. The sheets of metal that made up part of the façade of the *Académie Fratellini* in Saint-Denis came from a construction site at Disneyland Paris that rejected them because they were the wrong color. Instead of applying the standards in force for new parts, fresh from the factory where they were produced, the *Construire* team tiled the sheets onto the walls to cover the existing holes, as is done in the slums of African cities. For the old beams at the *Lieu Unique* in Nantes, Bouchain doubled the structures. The technical standards are not ignored: what is ignored, deliberately so, is the customary standard requiring the use of new materials. The *Matière grise* (*Gray Matter*) exhibition organized by the designers Nicolas Delon and Julien Choppin at the *Pavillon de l'Arsenal* in Paris demonstrated the extent to which this principle of reuse has been adopted in the areas of architecture and design.[7] As a result, a branch of engineering is under development that specializes in devising the specifications for this used material.

This concerns all standards, not merely technical standards of materials. In parallel with this subversion of technical standards, an aesthetic subversion takes place as a result of the variegated effect of these recycled materials. Since the sheet metal coming from Disneyland had many different colors, a rhythmic arrangement was chosen. Since the *Académie Fratellini* did not have a building permit, the building can be dismantled in order to respect the law. Contrary to the rules prohibiting the public from entering construction sites, those of the *Construire* agency are open to everyone: Bouchain managed to make people understand that this guarantees security and cleanliness, since the workers are compelled to tidy up more regularly than if they were alone on the site.

What shift does this carry out in the philosophical understanding of the concept of standards and norms as Canguilhem and Foucault understood it? They defined normativity as an activity for producing norms that had specific effects on the people concerned by technical objects. Foucault showed how normativities, by developing in a realm beyond the legal sphere, marked a new mode of functioning for rules and for fields of knowledge, a mode that generated new patterns of behavior. The disciplinary systems like the Panopticon that were established at the end of the 18th century in prisons, schools, and hospitals, and the directives concerning the education of children, did not only have normative and prescripting effects: a whole set of different behaviors was redefined on the basis of their criteria. Normativity is both normalization and individualization: it regulates as much as it individualizes, it does not repress until it elicits patterns of behavior.

Due to their involvement with another configuration of the problem than the one analyzed by philosophy, these examples encourage a shift in the line of attack of the philosophical analysis of standards and norms. What motivates this shift in the reading that philosophy usually makes of standards is the value that transgression of technical standards acquires here. They are neither respected (as in the case of industrial design), nor transgressed (in the sense that an artist may transgress a standard by developing a transgressive practice). They are simply interpreted differently. "The sign said entering the *Giardini* after 6 pm was prohibited; it didn't say anything about leaving it," Bouchain said in explaining how it was possible to permanently occupy the French pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2006.[8] What is transgressed is not directly what is prohibited, but rather the meaning usually lent to the statement of that prohibition (interpreting the "prohibition to enter" as equivalent to a prohibition of presence). Usually the standards that art displaces are of a moral or aesthetic nature, but technical standards can also be affected by this principle of subversion. And when that happens, we discover that the use of technical standards is most often subject to a behavioral normativity that ultimately limits any possible inventiveness. By insinuating itself within technical standards, the question of subversion breaks the link between normative and inventive use.

With these practices, not only does the functioning of the standard undergo reassessment, but also the reading made of the use of standards. For these designers and architects, standards are

not just constraints to respect: they are also statements liable to be interpreted, shaped and subverted in the same manner as any material. The use of standards frees itself from normative habits by relying upon a principle of local variability. As the use of used material requires a regularly adjusted load calculation, the subversion of technical standards as a preestablished and constant value is also an act of subversion in relation to a certain conception of work. Standards are no longer a preliminary to construction: they become a parameter that can be handled differently depending on the situation.

What is at stake here are not so much the subjects caught up in the systems as those who conceive those systems. Once they are conceived and manipulated by creators, objects are no longer just the media for standards and systems affecting individuals: they are themselves endowed with systems of subjectivation provided by the developers grappling with these standards. The experience of teaching a course in philosophy on standards in the context of these new practices reveals that the status of standards is also conditioned by the subjectivation of those who implement standards in objects and invent technical strategies to deal with those standards. Working with the designers Marie Coirié and Anne-Laure Desflaches and the innovation lab *La Fabrique de l'hospitalité*, associated with the university hospitals of Strasbourg, on the question of care – using texts by Foucault and Joan Tronto – has made it possible to highlight the invention of technical systems (facilities, places, objects…) that do not just convey standards, but produce a new approach to them and establish a certain distance from them.[9] It is not simply a matter of reexamining the layout of a waiting room or a living space, but also of understanding to what extent the existing state poses a problem, what perceptions and what attitudes are associated with the facilities, of working on a new way to live within hospitals and on the ways to make that hospitality visible. We have always thought of space and time as frameworks for our intuitions and our mental images. Foucault reversed that conception: he showed that objects are what frame our mental spaces. In its current critical forms, design reveals the possibility of destabilizing that framing function of material systems from the inside, by expurgating the implicit standards it conveys. It is an entirely different mode of functioning for standards than the one in which they are applied.

But on the basis of that, new convergences also take shape between intellectual work in design and in philosophy. From the moment that design puts itself in the position of carrying out a

critical diagnosis of material forms in the light of the modes of individuation to which these forms give rise, it places its operative field within its usual field of action, at the same location where the philosophical critique of systems of individuation takes place. Design no longer relates to philosophy only as a producer of objects and forms for study, but also through the new ideas it brings from the way mental perceptions function. Where philosophy wonders if mental images resemble what they represent or not – if they are within us or outside us, real or ideational – design asks itself the question of how those images interact with objects. There is a psychomotricity of mental images whose objects are vectors and media, and a designer is someone who knows how to act indirectly – to intercede in this set of indirect interactions, either by transforming the perceptions through their action on objects, or by transforming the objects through their action on the perceptions.

Wresting a Philosophical Statement From Its Context

The student Florian Reigner then returned to his project in the plastic arts. But his experiment is a good demonstration of how the fact of taking words literally can open a breach in the understanding one has of a philosophical text, and revitalize the way that text is interpreted. Among more experienced artists, we find a way of shattering the continuity of philosophical thought that consists in extracting an apparently very simple statement from it. A philosophical statement finds itself seized by an artistic thought and removed from its philosophical system so as to be plunged into an environment comprising actions, gestures, objects. Extracting, wresting, removing: there are many different ways of performing this graft.

Take Spinoza's dictum from the third part of *Ethics*: "No one has yet determined what the body can do." For Spinoza, saying that no one knows what a body can do means asking the question of the multiple possibilities raised by the laws of nature as well as the question of the soul and what defines its action. It means saying that no soul, nor anyone, knows what affections a body is capable of, given how dependent that question is upon the modes of encounter and of composition between bodies.[10] When choreographers seize upon that remark, it is in order to encourage dance to try out new ideas: not only new movements, but also a new individuation of the dancing body accompanied by a new relationship between the dancer and their body. When dancers appropriate the remark, they take it literally and return to the question of the

corporeal modes of individuation, the way in which subjects individuate through the movements that are proposed to, or imposed on, their bodies. What makes one movement appear at a given era, instead of another? The gestures of daily life are associated with material and technical systems – objects, facilities, machines, rhythms – according to which they are carried out and through which individuals enter into different processes of subjectivation. A worker standing at her station, a schoolboy at his desk, are caught up in both physical and mental systems of individuation. But, as Foucault has shown, these technical systems are accompanied by a whole set of discourses on the body that are held by different fields of knowledge. Gestures that "couldn't" have been carried out – what does that mean?

For a dancer, questioning what the body can do means going back over the processes of individuation and the diagrams of force associated with movement. But experimenting with Spinoza's remark within dance's field of action also means looking at one's body in a different way, like an unknown object that is at the same time suffused with a history, one structured by the sciences of the body. Learning has maintained a prescriptive or descriptive relationship with dance for a long time: since Louis XIV founded the *Académie royale de musique et de danse* in 1661. From then on, the theoreticians of dance have continually restructured the criteria on the basis of which one should describe and analyze movement in dance.[11] Spinoza's remark has not only given rise to work on movement, but also to a new level of interest in dance within the domain of knowledge.

By returning to the question of what the body can do, dance has embraced the multiplicity of discourses on the body by showing how it is determined and influenced by these discourses. Dancers have exploited the possibilities opened by "research in art" with unbridled joy and a great deal of curiosity for texts and discourses. All knowledge that is produced concerning the body serves to structure it, imposing an organization and a hierarchization upon its organicity and its movements. Take a set of statements defining the role of the tenth thoracic vertebra: for an osteopath/psychoanalyst, that vertebra bears the weight of the relationship to the Name-of-the-Father; for a woman, it's just below the fastener on a bra; for a spine specialist, it's at the center of many cases of scoliosis and problems with vision. Like all other bodies, the dancer's body is permeated and conditioned by all of these discourses. But dancers have the ability to shift the discourses by placing themselves on the level of the force fields that underlie

the movements. Dancing enables the development of controlled weight placement, making it possible to get a distinct feel of the specific effects of these statements on spinal posture – and subsequently, the invention of another way of moving and maintaining balance on the basis of that vertebra. "Space must be constructed,"[12] as the choreographer Angelin Preljocaj said. This examination of the bases of support used in movement allowed contemporary dance to completely renew the formal approach to movement. Spinoza's dictum creates practical and theoretical effects in the field of dance by exposing the activity of the dancing body to the normative realities of discursive practices and to dance's ability to construct variations on these norms concerning bodies. The consequence is not only a freedom of practice in relation to discourses, but also an extension of dance beyond the mere field of art: as "knowledge [*savoir*] by way of the body" asserting its specific form, dance becomes as much a critical look at the "disciplines [*savoirs*] of the body" as a new art of the body and its movements.[13]

Dance develops a critical approach to the disciplines of the body, one that does not adopt the form of a corrective field of knowledge intending to add itself to the others in the discursive domain, instead remaining within the realm of dance.

Indeed, these new statements are not just a new discourse or a new discipline concerning dance's knowledge about itself, but a new alliance between language and movement on the level of dance and spectacle themselves. It is as if language and movement forged a new additional link through the dancer's ability to reveal dance through speech. The choreographed gesture bears a new intensity, with which it can allow the spoken word to be seen, words which as a result then appear to be a declension of dance.

Perhaps these practices do not directly create another philosophical meaning within Spinoza's text. But this extraction of the remark from its context and its insertion into the world of dance enriches the author's philosophical potential by giving that remark a new resonance chamber, within which it becomes available for new virtual relations with other universes and other objects. But the world of movement is not all that dance traverses and appropriates in its fashion. Dance also traverses Spinoza's remark, which is in turn encouraged to traverse the philosophies of the body and of individuation in order to free them from any naturalist perspectives.

Something resembling a new experience of the outside emerges from the fragmentary and willfully incomplete readings that take place in these artistic experiments. How do these experiments open thought to an outside? Any philosophical reading must be coupled with a non-philosophical reading, as Gilles Deleuze often repeated. If entering into the understanding of a text means reconstructing the network of internal relationships that form the philosophical system to which it belongs, understanding also means knowing how to deconstruct the text and furnish it with an outside, putting it in contact with something other than language. Most of the time, these linkages take place involuntarily, on a partial basis, through local connections with similar elements that revive meaning: with memories, perceptions, things seen or experienced… But this outside is actually in contact with another outside, within the texts. This is why thinking always means proceeding by a twofold interior and exterior movement. As Foucault said concerning literature, language does not encounter its interiority by withdrawing into itself, but by projecting itself into an absolute outside.[14]The thought of the outside is the experience of a dispersal and a void, of a shattering in which the act of utterance is broken down into segments. Its movement is what it seeks and what passes between phrases. We clearly see that what makes a painting, a film or a piece of music "hold together" – what really makes it painting, music, film or video, and not just one more painting, film, or piece of music – are neither frames nor forms, but rather its ability to construct a looseness of meaning by letting the individuation at work within it slip away. In the case of history, said Marguerite Duras, this also means describing the impossibility of history, or history confronted by its impossibility. It is a story, a motif, that instead of remaining stable all the way through on the level of its content, undergoes a deformation by suddenly slipping across the frontier between form and formlessness, having become pure image that makes distance perceptible, pure music that plunges us into duration.[15] It is by no means a hidden meaning to be deciphered: it is a meaning that slips away and only becomes visible as horizon. Against the power of images, the thought of the outside is on the contrary the thought of their interstices, the limit-experience of the invisibility of the visible. In the same way, what makes a philosophy text and its concepts hold together is a kind of looseness of meaning. And in the same way that at one moment in the history of painting, literature or music, a particular form enables the invention of a new line of flight, the whole problem in philosophy is reaching that point where concepts feed that slippage, that internal movement where thought encounters, in its concepts, just as many dimensions of itself.

Meaning always contains verbalizable thought, but it is also endowed with another sensory dimension that arises from its own movement. This intimate connection with this inner and absolute outside protects us from the risk of projecting a personal interiority onto the text instead of giving it an outside. In his essay on Blanchot,[16] Foucault listed all the dangers that accompany an oversimplified conception of the experience of the outside: it can be neither reflective nor on the order of a sensory experience of limits and of the other.

What makes artists and designers unique is that they seem to reverse the process. Instead of starting from the vanishing point that philosophy opens in philosophy, they start instead from an isolated statement that they materialize by subscribing to its meaning. If they manage to graft a non-philosophical universe onto the text, one that involves a real outside, it is because what is grafted is not an existing world but a force potential, a world in becoming. What presents itself with this graft is a relationship with an object, an action, things that are not so much concrete cases – to be taken as examples – as new invitations to think, straddling artistic sensibility and philosophical discourse. These experiments do not return us to concrete cases that would be just so many samples or examples of the problem, concept or notion so much as return us to the Real to which thought belongs. It is a reductionist approach to think that the "real meaning" of a statement is a content, like a distinct object that the mind can put in front of itself. Meaning is much more than an object of thought: it is a universe of which we are a part, which lives a life within us that coincides with our mental operations.

But in so doing, artists and designers open a new entrance to this inner outside of the philosophical text. This outside, which is neither the outside of personal associations nor the pure inner outside that Foucault discusses, tears the text away from itself in order to immerse it in another world, and send it back, charged with new potential, into the world of ideas. This is what makes the role of research in art school so special. Philosophy does not progress by speculating or hollowing its questions out from within, but by standing on the edge of unanswered questions that it shares with people whose answers, as they are non-verbal, are so many problems to raise again. It is philosophy's responsibility to extract the philosophical force from these productions, which do not help fill in its gaps but widen them, so that it may rebuild the fabric of its unity.

We may wonder if Deleuze and Guattari hadn't already invented the possibility for philosophy to proceed in this manner. The tremendous effectiveness and strangeness of a philosophy book like *A Thousand Plateaus* comes from how statements and concepts are wrested from their system of meaning, from their technical or philosophical environment, in order to be grafted onto other environments, integrated into other systems in which they start to develop new conceptual potentialities. Deleuze and Guattari's work probably took place in this form because at the same time, artists were extracting fragments from Deleuze's classes and texts that they themselves employed in their artistic endeavors.

What we ultimately learn is that the outside of philosophy is not absolute, but relative. Every philosophy produces its outside like an absolute world of forces (just like the non-verbal, the pure sensible, etc. is absolute) that it situates as its beyond. This philosophical outside is born out of the experience of an encounter with an unfamiliar substance, like art, said Deleuze. But then, in the tension of its own conceptual construction, philosophy may be led to reduce the intense otherness of these outsides. Art then becomes a theoretical object innervated by a theory that passes through it, having managed to regenerate itself through art. These new practices make us understand that a thought, following the example of a machine, also relies upon an associated environment, coupling its forces with that environment like a turbine relies upon the air and water that make it turn. Maybe the art school environment leads us back to this: what we take for an outside has not yet escaped the stratum containing the world of knowledge within which we think. Being in art school means rediscovering the radical exteriority of the encounter with material for thought; it means encountering objects and practices that rupture the fabric of our philosophical knowledge and make us lose the thread of our certainties. But it also means perceiving a horizon within those ruptures: the horizon of a world of thought to be inflected or, more radically, to be remade. If, as Deleuze wrote in his book on Foucault, the universal may be nothing more than "the shadow of a particular and ephemeral combination carried by a historical stratum,"[17] it is up to us to derive from these concrete experiences the possibility of pulling ourselves away from the shadow of that stratum to which we are still tied, of abandoning the universal in order to think in tandem with the new world coming into being.

The question is not only to update or regenerate knowledge. It is also to invent a new way of

thinking and theorizing upon contact with practices that function as centrifugal forces dissolving the continuity of systems, rather than by developing thought from within on the basis of an initial intuition. It means abandoning the metaphor of germination, and reflecting on questions rather than convictions. The questions are not necessarily fundamental. They often have sensory origins: a striking detail, or an apparently minor idea that leads to a bifurcation of thought. The question that remains open is to know whether philosophy should assert this open and collective form, visibly inscribe the maze of these comings and goings, and question the more classic forms of thought, or whether it should seek out the possibility of finding itself in an environment that is not, for the moment, defined as a breeding ground for philosophical thought.

ENDNOTES

1. In the French system, a "bifurcation" is essentially a switch to another subject or major. Historically it also meant the point in a student's studies at a *lycée* when they had to commit to an orientation in either the sciences or the humanities [translator's note].

2. Gilles Deleuze, "Un portrait de Foucault" (interview with Claire Parnet, 1986), in *Pourparlers* (Paris: Minuit, 1990), 144 ["A Portrait of Foucault," in *Negotiations, 1972-1990*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 106].

3. Florian Reigner, thesis for the DNSEP (*Diplôme national supérieur d'expression plastique*) in 2017, written under the direction of Carola Moujan, historian of design at the ESBATALM (*École supérieure des beaux-arts de Tours Angers Le Mans*) in Angers. For a more complete presentation of this student's project, see Carola Moujan, "La forme du raisonnement," in David Bihanic, *Design en regards* (Paris: EnsAD Editions / Art Book Magazine, 2019).

4. Raphaël Zarka, *La Conjonction interdite: notes sur le skateboard* (Paris: B42, 2011).

5. See Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Mille Plateaux* (Paris: Minuit, 1980), 609 [*A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 488]. Deleuze/Guattari borrow this expression from Pierre Boulez

(whose translators rendered "occuper" as "fill"): "[I]n smooth time, time is filled without counting; in striated time, time is filled by counting." Boulez, Penser la musique aujourd'hui (Mainz DE: Denoël / Gonthier, 1963), 107 [*Boulez on Music Today*, trans. Susan Bradshaw and Richard Rodney Bennett (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), 94] [translator's note].

6. I must also recognize my debt to the work that the philosopher Pierre Macherey has undertaken on this question of standards and norms: *De Canguilhem à Foucault: La force des normes* (Paris: La Fabrique, 2009); "La raison et les normes," *Hypotheses*, philolarge.hypotheses.org, 2011, Web, 31 May 2021.

7. Julien Choppin and Nicola Delon, *Matière grise: matériaux/réemploi/architecture* (Paris: Pavillon de l'Arsenal, 2014).

8. Patrick Bouchain, Loïc Julienne, and Alice Tajchman, *Histoire de construire* (Paris: Actes Sud, 2012).

9. This dynamic between philosophical reflection on standards and the work of designers was extended into the context of reflections on care, on the basis of Foucault's work on the societies of care. These reflections were carried out within the framework of a research project comprising a research workshop and a conference – *Design et pensée du care*, organized by Patrick Beaucé and Jehanne Dautrey at the ENSAD (*École nationale supérieure d'art et de design*) in Nancy, 2016 – followed by a book. *Design et pensée du* care: *Pour un design des microluttes et des singularités,* ed. Jehanne Dautrey (Dijon: Presses du réel, 2019).

10. See *Ethics,* Part III, Proposition 2, Scholium [for example in Benedict de Spinoza, *Spinoza Reader: The Ethics and Other Works*, ed. and trans. Edwin Curley (Princeton University Press, 1994), 155 - translator's note], and Gilles Deleuze's commentary on it in *Spinoza: Philosophie pratique* (Paris: Minuit, 1981), 168 [*Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, trans. Robert Hurley (San Francisco: City Lights, 1988), 125].

11. On this question of research on dance as research on knowledge of the body, see Aurore Després and Philippe Le Moal, "Recherche en danse, danse en recherche," in *La Recherche en art(s),* ed. Jehanne Dautrey (Paris: MF, 2010), 83-131.

12. See Rudy Ricciotti, Angelin Preljocaj, Eric Reinhardt, Michel Cassé, and Jehanne Dautrey, *Pavillon noir* (Paris: Xavier Barral, 2006).

13. We could mention, among other projects, the work led by the researcher Barbara Formis

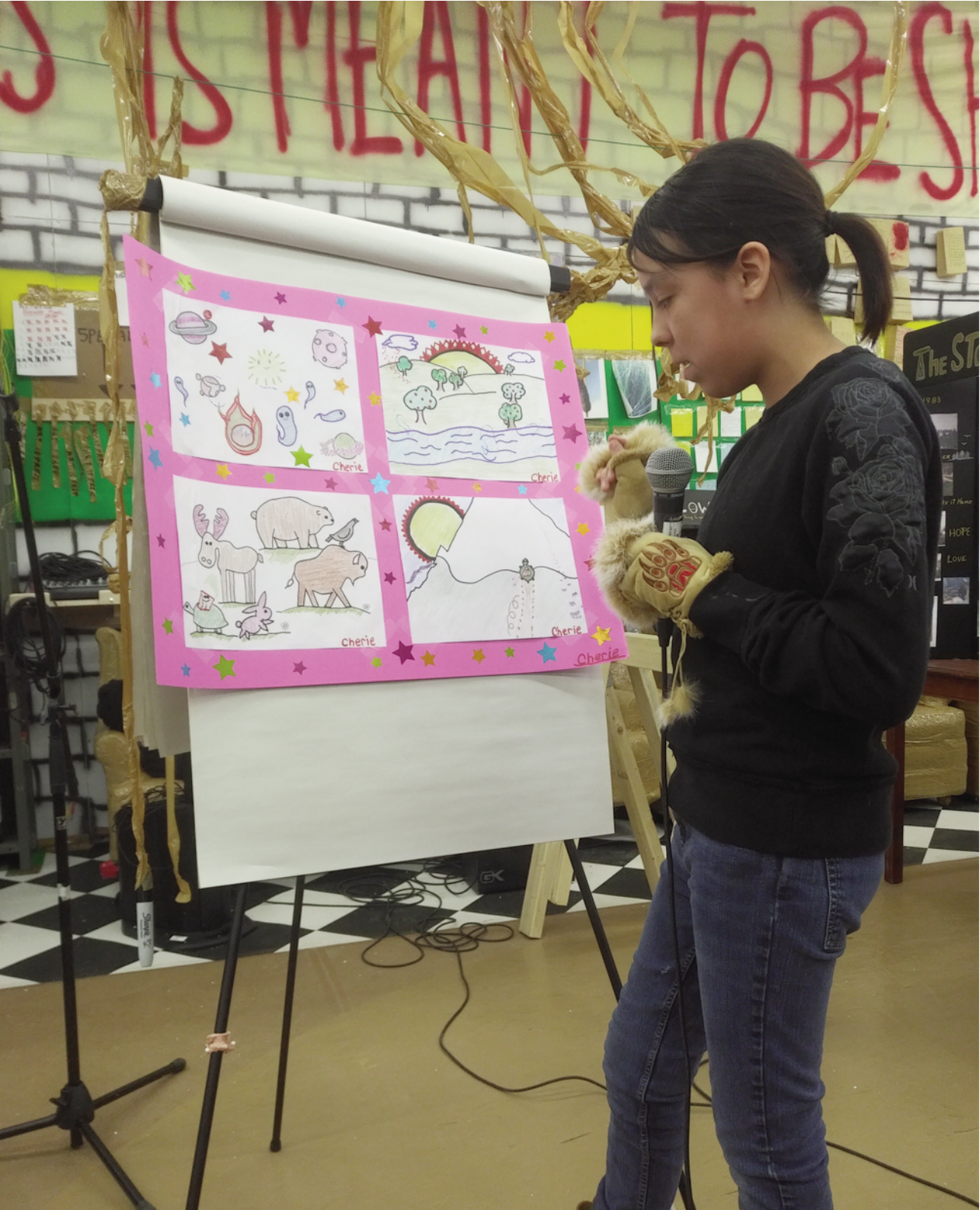
(Université Paris I) within the framework of the *Laboratoire du geste*, or the performances by the *Gens d'Uterpan* company.

14. "[T]he outside never yields its essence. The outside cannot offer itself as a positive presence - as something inwardly illuminated by the certainty of its own existence - but only as an absence that pulls as far away from itself as possible, receding into the sign it makes to draw one toward it [...]." Michel Foucault, "La Pensée du dehors" [1966], in *Dits et Écrits I: 1954-1969* (Paris: Gallimard, 1994), 526 ["The Thought of the Outside," trans. Brian Massumi, in *Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology (Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984 Vol. 2)*, ed. James D. Faubion (New York: New Press, 1998), 154-155].

15. Similarly, in design we find objects within which design and the impossibility of design intertwine. See *Strange design, du design des comportements,* ed. Jehanne Dautrey and Emanuele Quinz (Villeurbanne FR: IT, 2014) [*Strange Design: from Objects to Behaviours*, trans. Jonathan and David Michaelson (Forcalqueiret FR: IT, 2015)].

16. Foucault, "La Pensée du dehors," 518-539 ["The Thought of the Outside," 147-169].

17. "Beneath the universal there are games or transmissions of particular features, and the universal or eternal nature of man is merely the shadow of a particular and ephemeral combination carried by a historical stratum." Deleuze, *Foucault* (Paris: Minuit, 1986), 96 [*Foucault*, trans. and ed. Seán Hand (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), 90].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In the Garden of Academus – A Philosophical and Artistic Encounter

When we speak of the origin of the places where philosophy is taught – the university, the art school, even the high school – it is important to recall that they came from the garden. Philosophy, which is typically assigned to the *agora*, and art, understood as a handcrafted creation linked to the Greek *polis*, are in fact products of the garden. Here I will discuss what seems to us to be the most obvious garden, predating even the Epicurean one: Academus's garden.

Who Was Academus?

In Greek mythology, he was an Athenian hero. Just before the Trojan War, Theseus, an Attic hero, was recognized as king of Athens. His name comes from the same root as *thesmos* (θεσμός): that which is established, assured. The word *thesis* also comes from this root: the action of laying down, instituting, the position of a city according to established laws. The same Theseus, who built the Acropolis, abducted a girl – beautiful Helen, still a child – and hid her in Aphidna, near Athens. Helen, who became the wife of Menelaus, was later abducted by Paris, *and her suitors went on to wage the Trojan War*. She was between five and ten years old… According to other versions, she was old enough to give birth to Theseus's daughter. After this abduction, her brothers, Castor and Pollux – the *Dioscuri* – set off to look for her: Academus was the very hero who revealed her hiding place to them, and they came to free their sister.

Helen returned home. Following this incident, to thank Academus for preventing a war with the Lacedaemonians, the Athenians named a plot of land after him near the river Cephissus where his tomb would be built. This would become the garden of Academus.
We should point out that the prefix *aka* means "soft," "quiet," "light," while *démos* means "place," but more specifically "place inhabited by a people," "land," "country," and just "people." "Academus" [1] would then mean "the quiet region," but also "the calm people." We then have Theseus, he who institutes, who founds, versus he who delivers justice [2] in the calm manner of the people: Academus.

The poetic scenography of *Phaedrus* gives us an example of what the Attic landscape was like, helping us to get a sense of the open-air environment of Plato's teachings:

> By Hera, it is a charming resting place. For this plane tree is very spreading and lofty, and the tall and shady willow is very beautiful, and it is in full bloom, so as to make the place most fragrant; then, too, the spring is very pretty as it flows under the plane tree, and its water is very cool, to judge by my foot. [...] Then again, if you please, how lovely and perfectly charming the breeziness of the place is! and it resounds with the shrill summer music of the chorus of cicadas. But the most delightful thing of all is the grass, as it grows on the gentle slope, thick enough to be just right when you lay your head on it.[3]

The first institute of higher learning known in the West, before the Lyceum and the Cynosarges, was Plato's Academy, one of Athens's three *gymnasia*. Plato belonged to a rich family of landowners. He took great advantage of his wealth by traveling and by holding lavish feasts. He acquired his garden after his political downfall in 387 BCE in Syracuse during the reign of King Dionysius I the Elder. The philosopher founded his garden academy upon returning to Athens. Plato, 40 years old at the time, taught there for 40 more years. During this period, twenty years after founding his school, he returned to Sicily: after the death of Dionysius I, his brother-in-law Dion of Syracuse – who had been won over to philosophy during Plato's last stay – had asked him to become the tutor of Dionysius II, Dionysius I's son. Plato had agreed, thinking he could create a city governed according to his philosophical principles. He had finished writing *The Republic*, filled with innovative ideas, in 372 BCE, and sought to apply them in real life. In his *Seventh Letter*, seen as a biographical text, we read that Plato, during his second stay in Syracuse, lived in a

garden. In his attempt to make a philosopher of Dionysius II, Plato became the prisoner of the king, who locked him up for a year in the citadel of Ortygia, an island near Syracuse. Eventually freed, Plato returned to Athens, from where he made a third and final journey to Sicily in 360 BCE at the age of 68, on Dionysius II's invitation. But the relations between the two soured, and a Pythagorean, Archytas of Tarentum, was obliged to send a war vessel to Syracuse in order to free Plato. Once again, the philosopher was caught in a trap. He died in Athens at the age of 80 during a wedding banquet.

A century later, one of Plato's philosophical heirs, Lacydes of Cyrene, became head of the Middle Academy. According to Diogenes, Lacydes had moved the Academy from its former location to a hall near King Attalus's garden, which contained a great quantity of exotic plants.[4] This botanical garden became a new philosophical meeting place called the *Lacydeum* after Lacydes, whose name is itself the contraction of two words: *laos*, meaning "people" or "crowd," and *kydes*, meaning "glory" or "reknown." Lacydes (Λακύδης) therefore means he who embodies the glory of the crowd, of the people.

For Plato's garden, then, we have two etymologies that differ while completing each other: one for Academus and one for Lacydes.

Hiatus

As our purpose is not to recount the history of Plato's Academy, we will jump forward to the 15th century when the name "Academy" reappeared. The renaissance of the academies participated in the contemporary rediscovery of Plato's writings. There were academies of painting and sculpture in *L'Accademia neoplatonica* founded in Florence in 1459 by Cosimo de Medici the Elder, who invited intellectuals to translate Plato's texts into Italian and add commentary. In 1563 in the same city, Cosimo I de Medici and Giorgio Vasari founded *L'Accademia delle Arti del Disegno*. In Rome in 1577, Pope Gregory XIII founded *L'Accademia di San Luca*, which was initially linked to a religious congregation.

At the end of the 16th century, there was an *Accademia degli incamminati* in Bologna, devoted to the training of painters.

In 1648, the *Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture* was founded in Paris, on the initiative of

the painters Philippe de Champaigne and Charles Le Brun, as the first French art school. Today's *École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts* on the *quai Malaquais* in Paris is its descendant.

Contour of the World

What, then, did the term "Academy" mean in the context of teaching? The practice of artistic instruction had its origins in Plato's garden of Academus. Was it initially intended to assemble artists in order to "draw" and "paint" a contour, a line isolating them from the rest of the world? Or rather one bringing them closer to it? If a school is ultimately nothing but a matter of shared practices, what grounds does this sharing have in the Academy?

The vocation of these academies was to distinguish artists, painters and sculptors from craftspeople. Their purpose was to separate painting and sculpture from the mechanical arts so as to place them among the liberal arts. Drawing, as a body of knowledge on how to represent the world, made this possible. Instruction no longer meant learning the techniques of painting from a master, but rather learning within a school. The master-as-teacher was replaced by teachers who created and accompanied an encounter with a *perspective in motion*. The assertion was that painting and sculpture were first and foremost intellectual and speculative activities.

Leon Battista Alberti, one of the Platonists of the Renaissance, had centered his treatise, *De pictura* ("On Painting," 1435), on *perspective* – I italicize "perspective" because it was dependent on *geometry*, and therefore on one of the *liberal* arts. The discursive model was mandatory: in order to move forward, a discussion took place. Thus the Academy, in Plato's time as well as in the 17th century, was simultaneously linked to teaching a body of knowledge and to being able to *discuss* that knowledge. This was precisely Cosimo the Elder's plan when he turned the proper name "Academy" into a noun, to such an extent that he had a legendary phrase engraved upon the entrance to his academy:

"Let No One Ignorant of Geometry Enter Here."

We know that the inscriptions at Plato's Academy, at Aristotle's Lyceum, and at the Garden of Epicurus look much more like rhetorical devices than a historical tradition recounting a true

fact. Still, that does not prevent us from wondering: who then are these people *learned* in geometry? In an attempt to answer this question, let us return to Antiquity.

We associate the Greeks with the birth of the *agora*, the center of the city where the citizens gathered together to talk. The space opened by politics is a space of shared words: it exists only through public discussion between citizens who, by means of this place, transform their subjective opinions into elements of an objective consideration of the common good. The Greeks invented the city, the *polis*, to preserve the political conditions of existence: the *polis* with the *agora* in its center as the first space of the political. Deleuze wrote: "If we really want to say that philosophy originates with the Greeks, it is because the city, unlike the empire or state, invents the agon as the rule of a society of 'friends,' of the community of free men as rivals." [5] Within the framework of an *agon*, tragedies, satyr plays and comedies were performed. It was a framework that could already be seen in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.[6] Humans are not naturally political beings, since the *agora*, and politics, define them as the creation of a human world, external to nature. Once removed from a political context, humans return to an animal state in a way. But on the way, they stop in the garden where their human nature finds its form. The creation of a political space – insofar as it makes the foundation of a shared world ruled by the *nomos* possible – does not produce the only real place where the humaneness of humanity can be expressed. Alongside the *agora*, where men recognized each other as citizens, there is the garden where men assembled beneath the horizon of a communal world of "togetherness." [7]

The problem with teaching is to take charge of the environment of the world with its surroundings, with its relationships that are constructed and that give meaning to those surroundings. This makes it possible to conceive this environment, to confer a form to it. In the eyes of some Hellenists, the garden of Academus – the birthplace of philosophy – fades away completely. For those specialists, the contemplation of monumental Greek architecture – temples, theaters, porticos, located amidst mountainous landscapes – overshadows the modesty of the gardens, excessively fragile constructions that have been rescued from the heroic era of the Greeks. The garden, more than the stones assembled for the walls of the city, harbors the elemental forces of heaven and earth to an astonishingly intense degree.

The notion of the garden's borders must be reimagined. Rather than a line of separation, it is a relation in motion, a horizon in motion, a perspective in motion: in Greek, *peras (πέρας)*. The Greeks noted that the limit, *πέρας*, was not the place where something stopped. On the contrary: from that starting place, something came into being. The thinking of the Greeks commenced with that border, which marked the beginning of the intellectual journey, not its end. Let us ask ourselves: doesn't the garden, something traditionally enclosed, seem fairly open among the Greeks? Aren't these limits more of a refutation of enclosure than anything else? Aren't they the negation of the function of an enclosure restricting the visual field?[8]

The concept of the garden, the garden as concept, constitutes an enigma in the geography of appearing. After using the word "concept," we should add that the Greeks gave the name *horismós* (*ορισμός*) to the concept itself, in other words the limit, *peras* (*πέρας*), the place where something comes into being. This change in *perspective*, however, allows us to move forward in the concept of the garden. Teaching in the garden would therefore be a consideration of reality as interpretation, assuming that any given interpretation exists only as perspective. We must then reconsider instruction in the garden. We must continually extend the form of the garden and try to understand that it is always in a state of becoming. Herodotus himself was surprised to see a *nomadic garden*, typical of the Libyans,[9] because for passersby, any garden is a perspectival effect, endlessly modifying the horizon. For Herodotus, the relationships between semantic invariants were already at stake. The Indo-European languages do not agree on the notion of the "garden," to such a point that any will to associate the term exclusively with a *bounded* enclosure seems excessive, problematic.[10] The Greek words for "garden" – *kepos* (*κῆπος*), *alsos* (*ἄλσος*), *leimon (λειμών)*, *khora* (*χώρα*) – draw the gaze to the *horizon*, where we find our aporetic place, from which there is no way out, to which there is no way in, no route, no point of entry, no exterior, no interior. The garden represents that horizon.

Some own a garden so they can feel settled. They derive enjoyment from their property rights, their fenced-off garden that leads them to display unbearable arrogance. Sedentary philosophers are one example of this. They have no other goal than to persuade us of their glory and their certainty.

The Greek city favored internal citadels, spiritual exercises, philosophical factions, itinerant predications, strolls in gardens. A form of wandering. Strolling as act, as politics, as experiment, as life. A stroll onto pathways of thought, like grass that grows from its middle.[11] A stroll that holds the promise of an encounter.

Instruction in the garden participates in the study of this displacement and this encounter. In taking up the question of the garden, teaching places itself, from the outset, *beyond* the categories that seem the most ready to address the main theme of the *agora*. The city, the *agora* that we take to be the form of the universal course of things, objectifies our thoughts. We must then establish a movement to what lies beyond the city, in order to exit the *agora*, to walk into the garden. Epicurus taught that "nature's wealth has its modest limit."[12] But the notion of the garden's borders must be reconsidered afresh. It is not a line of separation, but a horizon in motion.

To the extent that the garden was in Antiquity a *paideia*, an introduction to reflection that signified *humanity* and that summarized the Greek ideal of human perfection, of that which is *κάλος και αγαθός* (beautiful and good), it accomplishes a sort of rite of passage whose goal is to educate by domesticating the man capable of facing up to the city and the *agora*. The objective of instruction in the garden is to make these students inhabitants of an acropolis, but also of its surroundings.

To conclude, I will mention the story of Theages in one of the dialogues attributed apocryphally to Plato on the nature of knowledge. Demodocus brings his son Theages, an aspiring sophist, to Socrates so that he may receive advice on his education. Socrates offers to speak to the son directly and asks him what he would do if he himself had a son who wanted to become a good painter or musician: "Would you know what to do with him, and where else you should send him if he refused to learn from these [practitioners]?"[13] Do our respective institutions of learning, with their experts – philosophers, artists, theoreticians – let the paths of their acolytes cross?

The communal garden of philosophical and artistic instruction, this garden of Academus that embodies the gentleness of the people even before the Homeric Wars, is a garden of encounters and resistance. A garden that reminds us that the only shared reason for philosophy and art (if one exists) is the encounter. Concerning the state of philosophical

education today, we often notice that philosophy no longer consists in the art of dialogue and encounters, but in the art of commentary.

Art schools, the direct heirs of the Academy, maintain this tradition of dialogue, of the one-on-one relationship at the heart of teaching.

And to Answer the Question: Who Is *Learned in Geometry*?

Perhaps it is a student who becomes a designer, an artist, a gardener, who *measures* in order to push back the limits of the world, so as to reach the *horizon in motion*. The one who asks the right questions at the right place, the place where philosophical and artistic encounters are possible, the place that echoes with creative encounters, where the philosopher and the creator resist: the garden.

To that end, and to counter the temptations of nationalism or fundamentalism, my advice is to reopen the book of philosophical knowledge and to follow the paths of Greek thought as far as life's brevity allows us to risk this sort of daring repetition. So let us finish with a quote from Plutarch taken in turn from Giorgio Agamben's last book:

> Most people think […] that those are philosophers who sit in a chair and converse and prepare their lectures over their books; but the continuous practice of […] philosophy, which is every day alike seen in acts and deeds, they fail to perceive. […] Socrates at any rate was a philosopher [who] jested with [his pupils], and drank with them, served in the army or lounged in the market-place with some of them, and finally was imprisoned and drank the poison. He was the first to show that life at all times and in all parts, in all experiences and activities, universally admits philosophy. [14]

ENDNOTES

1. According to various sources, the name of the Academy comes from that of Hekademos. Other sources say that while Academus was the Athenian who revealed where Helen was hidden, Hekademos was a Laconian companion of the *Dioscuri*.

2. "Delivering justice" is to be understood as the act of handing back the child, thereby avoiding war with Sparta.

3. Plato, "Phaedrus" [230 BC], *I: Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Phaedrus*, trans. Harold N. Fowler (Cambridge MA / London: Harvard University Press, 1953), 423. To bring to life the image of the garden of Academus and its surroundings, featuring thick vegetation nourished by the river Cephissus, see André Motte, *Prairies et jardins de la Grèce antique: De la religion à la philosophie* (Brussels: Palais des Académies, 1973), 412. The author insists upon the devotion to the Muses to whom Plato had dedicated that space. Even at the time, then, there was evidence of the tight bond between philosophy and the arts.

4. Diogenes Laertius, "Lacydes" (book 4, section 60, line 1), *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers*, trans. Pamela Mensch, ed. James Miller (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 206.

5. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?* (Paris: Minuit, 1991), 14 [*What is Philosophy?*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia UP, 1994), 9].

6. Between the assembly of warriors, the assembly of citizens in the oligarchic state and the democratic *Ekklesia* that assembles on the agora, there is a clear continuity. For political debate is a codified struggle that recalls the one put into practice during the funeral games, of which the various competitions organized by the city are avatars.

7. In the *Laws,* the last Platonic dialogue, which deals with the question of an ideal political constitution, three characters – an Athenian (Socrates, who is not named), a Cretan named Clinias and a Lacedaemonian (Spartan) named Megillus – leave Knossos, the city of King Minos, in order to visit the garden on Mt. Ida. This mythic place makes reference to the paradigmatic marriage of Zeus and Hera. This garden of the sacred marriage and the temple of Zeus is presented as the objective to be reached. The friends leave the city and walk toward the garden in order to arrive at truth together.

8. Malgorzata Grygielewicz, *Le Jardin grec, rencontre philosophique* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2017).

9. Herodotus, Book IV, chapter 181, *Histories Books III and IV*, trans. A. D. Godley (London: William Heinemann / New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1928), 385.

10. It is true that the Persian word *pardëz*, meaning "enclosure," or in Ancient Greek *paradeidos* (*παράδεισος*), appears for the first time in Xenophon's writings before reappearing in the Septuagint.

11. Henry Miller said that the grass always has the last word: "Grass only exists between the great non-cultivated spaces. It fills in the voids. *It grows between - among the other things*. The flower is beautiful, the cabbage is useful, the poppy makes you crazy. But the grass is overflowing, it is a lesson in morality." Quoted in Gilles Deleuze, *Dialogues, avec Claire Parnet* (Paris: Flammarion, 1977), 38 [*Dialogues II*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 30].

12. Diogenes Laertius, "Epicurus" (book 10, section 12, line 2), *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers*, 497.

13. Plato, "Theages," *VIII: Charmides, Alcibiades I & II, Hipparchus, The Lovers, Theages, Minos, Epinomis*, trans. W. R. M. Lamb (London: William Heinemann Ltd / New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1927), 369.

14. Plutarch, "Whether an Old Man Should Engage in Public Affairs," *Moralia, vol. 10*, trans. Harold North Fowler (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1936), 145-7, quoted in Giorgio Agamben, *Pulcinella, or Entertainment for Kids in Four Scenes*, trans. Kevin Attell (London / New York / Calcutta: Seagull Books, 2018), 1.

ISABELLE ALFANDARY

An Unconditional Collège

The Collège International de Philosophie is an institution like no other. Perhaps it is not even an institution, strictly speaking – not what is usually understood to be "institution". It is an institutional anomaly. Founded by decree of the Presidency of the French Republic in 1983, it constitutes a *hapax* in the history of philosophical institutions: it is the only institution that, being neither a university nor a research group, benefits from an endowment from a democratic State that in turn does not impose any returns or control on it. How many democratic states in the world today support perfectly independent and totally sovereign philosophical institutions?

Founded over thirty-five years ago, the Collège has known ups and downs, glorious times and times of crisis, but it has maintained itself with astonishing constancy and perseverance despite the most pessimistic prophecies and some very real attacks. "The Collège has only friends", declared Jacques Derrida on the occasion of its tenth anniversary, ironic and somewhat annoyed. No doubt. But the Collège also has for itself – and Derrida was not unaware of it – an asset which explains its longevity and its vitality in a general institutional context that is nonetheless difficult.

What is that asset? The Collège is unconditional. Its extraordinary formula, which is far from being simply rhetorical, gives it its strength, and constitutes its luck.

I have known the Collège for more than twenty-five years, having been successively an auditor, external seminar leader, program director, and president of the Collegial Assembly. Whatever my position, the experience of the Collège has always struck me as being marked by radical and immeasurable freedom.

The Collège is thus neither a research center, nor a department of philosophy, nor a cultural association. Besides, since January 2014, it is no longer a private non-profit organization. In order to be able to benefit from state subsidies on a permanent basis, the Collège had to join, a few years ago, a community of universities—to which its history has been linked since its foundation (Paris-Nanterre and Paris 8)—and associates (museums, libraries, public establishments), the COMUE Université Paris-Lumières. This administrative transfer of the Collège had worried many in 2015. In the end, it went smoothly and allowed the Collège to develop some fruitful collaborations with museums (Louvre, Musée National de l'Histoire de l'Immigration, Beaubourg) and associated public establishments (Archives Nationales, Institut National de l'Audiovisuel).
The Collège is an open place like few others in the world. It is open to research directors with various professional statuses, different life and career paths, multiple nationalities and languages. It is open to a composite audience that is itself in constant evolution.

The proposition out of which the Collège was born is simple. It is formulated at the beginning of the *Rapport bleu, sources historiques et théoriques du Collège international de philosophie*, recently republished in the "Collège international de philosophie Collection" by the Presses Universitaires Paris Nanterre:

> Therefore, if we are proposing the creation of a Collège de philosophie, it is not primarily to mark the complete belonging of this institution to what we believe we can in advance determine as its philosophical destination or essence. It is, on the one hand, to designate a place of thought where the question of philosophy would unfold: on the sense or destination of the philosophical, its origins, its future, its condition. In this regard, thought designates for the moment only an interest in philosophy, towards philosophy, but an interest which is not first of all, necessarily, and through and through, philosophical. It is on the other hand, to affirm philosophy and define what it can be and must do today in our society with regard to new forms of knowledge in general of technology, culture, the arts, languages, politics, law, religion, medicine, military power and strategy, police information, etc. [1]

The Collège was conceived as the place where thinking is exercising a right that one of its founders, Jacques Derrida, called on the occasion of his first seminar at the Ciph "the right to philosophy" and that he glossed as: "Who has the right to philosophy? Who has the power and the privilege?[2] This right is *de jure* as well as *de facto* recognized for all. The Collège was

designed for this sole purpose. This right, as the founders of the Collège understood and wished for, is a right whose prerogative belongs to no one, whose privilege must at all times be questioned and called into question. It belongs as much to those who come to follow courses and activities, as to those who lead their programs there. These asymmetric positions are, moreover, constantly called upon to be exchanged and transformed by each other. The Collège aims to be an open place, as open as possible. The fifty-two members of the Collegial Assembly, based in France and abroad, are elected for 6 years on a project to lead a program. No condition of age (of majority, or foreclosure), nationality, or academic qualifications is required to become a program director. To my knowledge, the Collège is the only institution in the world to operate in this way. The writers of the *Rapport bleu* heard it that way: "The originality, strength, and influence of this institution, the only one of its kind in France and perhaps in the world, are at stake."[3] Of course, each program project is scrutinized and undoubtedly assessed according to scientific criteria of coherence and originality which are not themselves without their own particular determinations. But personal records, origin, level of education of candidates for program director are not taken into account. This formula of unconditionality is a way of not preempting interest, of not insulting the future of an elaboration of thought, of a creative contribution of research.

Inseparable from its formula of unconditionality, the desire of program directors is the real engine of the institution, which admittedly operates with a few internal operating principles and a few administrative requirements but essentially leaves open the possibility to speak, to exchange, to invent, to write, to propose, to think. The Collège was not created "against". Its proposition is fundamentally affirmative. More than ever, it is an essential place for elaborations, creations, inventions, debates, commitments, and why not, sometimes inevitable disputes.

At a time of generalized evaluation and the demand for excellence, the Collège keeps its distance, as far away as possible, from any normative or productivist logic. This does not prevent it – quite the contrary – from sparking a host of innovative and ambitious scientific projects. Since its creation in 1983, the Collège has made the bet that freedom is the unconditional condition for the exercise of thought. It was imagined by its founders and the generations of program directors who have taken it to be a place for the deliberate exercise of indeterminacy and openness "that we refer to", say the authors of the *Rapport bleu*, "in this context, using the word thought".[4]

In this regard, and long before the programming laws, the Collège took the opposite stance of any policy of evaluation and orientation of research and creation. In matters of research, the full and complete freedom of every individual is essential. The supervision of research is part of what Kant called the private use of reason, of a reason under the supervision of institutional and state injunctions. However, the most disruptive knowledge as well as the most original scientific discoveries result from a process which cannot be decided in advance, nor constrained: the authors of the *Rapport bleu* have, like others before them, bet on the unexpected and incalculable effects of the *libido sciendi*. The freedom available to program directors at the Collège is total: it is the condition of possibility of the public exercise of reason of which Kant speaks in "Was ist Aufklarung?" (1784): "This enlightenment requires nothing but *freedom* – and the most innocent of all that may be called "freedom": freedom to make *public use* of one's reason in all matters". It is the exercise of this freedom that allows the emergence of new philosophical objects. For this reason, a place such as the Collège is more than remarkable today – indispensable in the landscape of research not only in France but worldwide.

At the Collège, program directors are free to define their research topics – what in our jargon we call "their program directions"; the themes of their seminars are not subject to the approval of any third party. Program directors only authorize themselves. This does not prevent a very real, and sometimes even conflictual, collegiality.

The Collège does not belong – far from it – to program directors alone. It belongs just as much to its auditors. The Collège's audience is heterogeneous: it is young and not so young, made up of students, professors, researchers, the curious, specialists as well as neophytes. There are no registration or fee requirements. Program directors never know exactly who they are addressing. They face an audience made up entirely of auditors. This situation of address, which is certainly not exclusive to the Collège, is as destabilizing as it is interesting.

The Collège does not issue a diploma; the one that used to be issued was not recognized as a full university title. The Collège has a different type of transmission than that practiced at the University. The teaching offered there is not subject to a verification of knowledge, nor is it sanctioned by any symbolic recognition. The Collège aims to be a place of knowledge and research, halfway between teaching and research institutions and society: it deliberately occupies a median, even marginal, interstitial, even questionable space to which it serves to give shape.

The Collège was conceived as a space where lessons, activities and projects can be invented.

The astounding appeal to the scientific and creative imagination that its proposal and formula represent has not escaped the attention of its partners. Throughout my term as president of the Collegial Assembly, I was struck by the fact that even though the Collège's resources were limited, the partners we solicited, however prestigious, were eager to collaborate with us. I often wondered why. No doubt the reasons for this enthusiasm to work with the Collège are the consequence of our prestigious history, and perhaps of the originality of our work offers. But the underlying reason for this enthusiasm for the Collège is also due to the powerful effects of the freedom from which all of our work emerges. At the Collège, almost anything is possible: creating an international and interdisciplinary research group, giving a contemporary artist *carte blanche*, setting up a *soirée* in the form of a performance on the work of a philosopher, organizing philosophical walks in a museum, engaging in debates on philosophical subjects with autistic adults, establishing links with French and international institutions, to host a radio show, etc. In all of these cases, the desire of each individual and the will of the Collegial Assembly are essential to the realization of actions outside of norms and outside of the walls.

The Collège is committed to the City: it wants to be on the same level as the world. The contemporary is as much its object as its subject. It reaches out to new audiences and engages with issues that the philosophical institution traditionally does not address.
The Collège has set itself a double mission: to engage in thought as experience and to situate itself in the contemporary world. Remotely but resolutely Kantian in inspiration, the Collège's birth certificate—its *Rapport bleu*—reaffirms that philosophy cannot turn away from what surrounds it, and must engage and question its practice. This is the reason why the research topics have continued to transform since its creation. New or still marginal questions tend to be formulated over the course of a program's direction. The archive and climate issues have emerged in recent years to give rise to collaborative projects of international scope. The Collège has the ability to generate and federate around itself research networks that are greater in number and older than it is: the lightness of its structure and the simplicity of its internal functioning, the originality of its transversal proposals give it a real acuity and plasticity in the identification, setting up, and direction of even very ambitious projects. Such was the case with the "Archive Project" developed between 2017-2020 and supported by the COMUE Université Paris-Lumières. Aiming to bring theory and practice

together, this project consisted of bringing together practitioners and theorists of what is called archives – or what philosophers with their incorrigible tendency towards conceptual abstraction refer to as the "archive" – around a problem at the heart of the Collège's project. For three years, at the rate of three seminars per year, archivists from major French and international archival, museum and heritage institutions (the Louvre Museum, the Académie des Sciences, the Archives nationales, the Archives diplomatiques, the INA, the Musée national de l'histoire de l'immigration, the IMEC, etc.), philosophers, historians, sociologists, literary critics, and psychoanalysts from the Collège and other institutions met to discuss technical and political issues related to archives in the contemporary era. A book – *Dialoguer l'archive*, co-authored by the members of the group, and published by the INA in 2019 – as well as an international colloquium "Défis de l'archive: rencontres internationales" held at the Archives nationales and the Collège de France in January 2020, were born from this working group.

What are we doing at the Collège? Teaching, research – teaching immediately resulting from research, training and self-training in research – experiments, even experiments which the authors of the *Rapport bleu* rightly foresaw could, if necessary, turn out to be artisanal: "The speculative attitude and the artisanal experimentation will find here the most welcoming place for their cohabitation". [5] One has only to leaf through the Ciph's paper or electronic program to be convinced that this wish has not gone unfulfilled. The program directions and seminars cover specific or oblique fields, revisit old problems or put forward – at the risk of certain errors, of encountering certain dead ends – new "objects". The advances in knowledge and the creativity of thought are at such a price that the Collège had the merit of recognizing even before it came into being: "This Collège will not be an establishment, an immobilized institution in which one would seek to cover fields recognized by programs assured of their efficiency, of their performance and their productivity. Rather, it will be a place of provocation, of incitement to research, of speculative or experimental exploitation, of proposals and stimulation in new directions." [6]

Teaching holds a central place at the Collège and takes many forms: seminars, colloquia, book Saturdays, and major conferences. But teaching is not the only thing that is transmitted in the philosophical or around the philosophical. Since its creation, the Collège has never stopped thinking about new methods of intervention and incursion into the cultural, artistic, and social field, taking up spaces outside the classroom, meeting spectators in cinemas (the Écrans philo),

theaters or dance halls (the Bords de Plateaux), or in museums (the Promenades philosophiques). These formulas provide the opportunity for experiences that are sometimes perilous for those who lend themselves to them, but are always enriching. I am thinking in particular of the Philosophy in the museum [*Philo au musée*] evenings organized at the Centre Georges-Pompidou, which were an opportunity for program directors to comment on contemporary works of art or to imagine tour routes, thus responding to the wishes expressed in their time in the *Rapport bleu*: "Freedom, mobility, inventiveness, diversity, even dispersion, such would be the characteristics of these new philosophical 'training courses".[7] Such an experience was for everyone an opportunity as well as a risk. That of occupying unknown spaces to the point of losing one's bearings, of letting oneself be disoriented in one's discourse, one's habits of thought:

> These new incursions oblige the philosopher to question a certain type of authority (fundamentalist, transcendental or ontological) which sometimes accommodated itself to a certain exteriority (and thus a relative incompetence) with regard to such or such determined field of knowledge; they oblige him, in any case, to change style and rhythm, and sometimes language, without for that matter disavowing philosophy and without believing in its pure and simple invalidity. Without ceasing to question the meaning and the destination of philosophy and of what continues to affirm itself under this name, the philosopher seems to have to transform today his modes of questioning to answer the provocations and the expectations coming from places still ignored, most often, of the philosophical institutions, excluded by the issues they recognize and legitimize. [8]

The Collège is a place where one can expose oneself to the limits of what one knows and what one can do, where one can try new thought experiments born of new or singular situations. From these encounters, new avenues of research may emerge that one had not previously thought of.

Collegiality is one of the pillars of the Collège, along with internationality and intersectionality. Debates can be fierce. Oral memory, now fully digitized and accessible[9], or the editorial archive – for example, the colloquium "Lacan with the philosophers" (1990), which is about to be republished in the Collège international de philosophie collection – bears the imprint of disputes that were not purely formal, but attest to the expression of sometimes irreconcilable positions on theoretical or filial problems that shake the collegial Assembly and to which it does not necessarily respond with a unanimous voice. This culture of debate at the risk of dissensus is also inscribed in the history of the Collège since its foundation.

The Collège can do a lot, but cannot do anything without a minimum of material resources. Research requires time. The loss of the time off that program directors in secondary schools were able to benefit from until the beginning of the 2010s—and which, despite our repeated attempts, has not been compensated for by any alternative arrangement—prevents many members of the Collegial Assembly from being able to direct their programs in normal conditions. This point is not a mere detail: the Collège international de philosophie is itself historically linked to an association founded by Jacques Derrida in 1974, the GREPH (Groupe de Recherches sur l'Enseignement Supérieur Philosophique), created to defend the teaching of philosophy and the possibility for secondary school teachers to pursue their research. This mission is in fact written in black and white in the *Rapport bleu*:

> The most rigorous and the most creative thought would be represented there in the person of the so-called thinkers, philosophers, scholars, writers, artists, of course, but also analysts or practitioners competent in the most diverse fields, from law to medicine, from computer science to military strategy, from industry and commerce to urban planning, etc. The Collège's activities will be open to all. They will be both research and research training for students or non-students, academics or secondary and primary school teachers, who would obtain from their administration the means to free themselves for this purpose, under certain conditions to be specified, from part of their teaching obligations. This last point is crucial and responds to a demand as well as a need deeply felt by teachers. [10]

All teachers, whether they are schoolteachers, certified teachers, *agrégés*, today those who are on contract with the French Ministry of Education and higher education, or university professors, also have a place at the Collège. The only difference between them is that some of them—teachers in higher education and in large research organizations—have the necessary time in their professional activity to exercise this need that is also recognized for all the others. The need we all feel to be able to free up time for research and research training, according to the subtle distinction made in the *Rapport bleu*, has been recognized and supported by the Collège since its inception. The discharge system—or any other alternative system that has the same effect—is and remains consubstantial with the Collège's project and vocation.

The intersectionality that the Collège has been promoting and practicing for nearly forty years is not a simple interdisciplinarity. The notion of external and internal "borders" to which the

authors of the *Rapport bleu* resort leads to a philosophical type of questioning of plural disciplines, including philosophy. What is at stake is the questioning of philosophy as a discipline and of the philosophical in its disciplinary sovereignty:

> The philosophical recourse in this case no longer has its classical hierarchical form: arbitration of an ontological or transcendental authority legislating on questions of possibility, etc. What is now being sought is perhaps another philosophical style and another relation of the philosophical language to the other discourses (more horizontal, without hierarchy, without radical or fundamental recentering, without architectonics and without imperative totalization). Will it still be a philosophical style? Will philosophy survive the test of these new knowledges, of this new topology of limits? This will be the test and the very question of the Collège. [11]

The founders were not mistaken. The resistance of the philosophical to its exposure to the outside, in the friction with other disciplines, other discourses and practices, including social, artistic, and cultural ones, is neither easy to overcome nor to dissipate once and for all. It is constantly at stake and in question within the Collegial Assembly, in the collegial as well as individual activities of the program directors—philosophers by training or not. This putting to the test of hospitality, but even more so of the hegemony of the philosophical in the face of the stranger, is a necessary test for a democratic society as well as for the future of philosophy itself. Far from weakening it, the Collège's formula allows philosophers and others to question their disciplinary unthought [*impensés*] and their institutional blind spots. It is not by chance that the authors of the *Rapport bleu* refer in several places to the text of the *Conflict of the Faculties* (1798) where Kant notes that if philosophy is considered the queen of the faculties, the department of philosophy is subject to the disciplines representing the power of the State, in this case theology, law, and medicine. It is this "Kantian paradigm" that the Collège, instituted and subsidized by the State, intends to question: "a certain hegemony of the philosophical goes hand in hand with the confinement, even the repression of philosophical teaching and research by civil society or by the State apparatus". [12] It is understandable that some guardians—philosophers or not—of the temple of the history of philosophy did not all see the creation of the Collège in a positive light. Yet the Collège is anything but a threat to institutional philosophy. It is next to the university, and in no way competes with it. At the very most, it enriches it by displacing it and by the dialogue that it addresses to it.

The Collège is the place of the *between*. It lies at the jointing of disciplines and lives. This is the

sense of program directions that last only a short time and are not renewable. They offer those who benefit from them the possibility of using them as a springboard for research, for a thematic reconversion in the most literal sense of the term. The Collège is a place of passage, the occasion for a possible displacement, for what the authors of the *Rapport bleu* call a "transferment" ["*transfèrement*"]. It is the place where the question of the universal can be criticized and posed anew. In the Collège, rhythms and forms for thought are invented, philosophical styles and individual and collective lifestyles are renegotiated.

What can the Collège do today? This is the question that the Collegial Assembly is asked, whose average age is currently that of the institution (just under forty). This rejuvenation can only be welcomed. The current program directors have not experienced the early days of the institution: the culture or the conflicts that marked the Collège's beginnings. They are now occupying an institution that they will be responsible for keeping alive according to their own desires and the means that they give themselves. What does the Collège want? This is the question that each generation has had to answer. To reinvent itself, to appropriate a place that is open and free, based on what nearly forty years of thought and experience have given them. Unconditionally.

ENDNOTES

1. François Châtelet, Jacques Derrida, Jean-Pierre Faye, Dominique Lecourt. *Le Rapport bleu*. Paris: Éditions des Presses universitaires de Nanterre, 2019. p. 31. [Translated here from the original French.]

2. J. Derrida. *Du Droit à la philosophie*. Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1990. p. 10. [Translated here from the original French.]

3. *Le Rapport bleu. op.cit.*, p. 49.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 37.

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Ibid*, p. 37.

7. *Ibid.*, p.35.

8. *Ibid.*

9. The recordings of the seminars and colloquia of the Collège international de

philosophie can be freely consulted on INA terminals throughout France in libraries and media libraries, in particular at the Inathèque (Bibliothèque Nationale de France) and at the IMEC (Caen). List of consultation locations: http://www.inatheque.fr/consultation/services-de-consultation.html

10. *Ibid.*, p. 52.

11. *Le Rapport bleu*, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 48.


From Whom I learned. From Whom we learned:
From Whom I was taught. From whom we were taught:
Photos from all Sharings/Teachings/Learnings -
SMUDGING CEREMONY

Interview with Jean-Christophe Bailly: conducted by Vanessa BRITO

To Infinish[1] *Learning*

Jean-Christophe Bailly found a way to use the essay as an "extendable" form of writing that transcends literary genres and academic formatting in order to better explore all the resonances of his phrasing. He proceeds through rebounds and ricochets to try and amplify the movement of his formulations and attain what escapes his own momentum. This amplification of meaning, generated by anything introducing accidents into the method – an anecdote, circumlocutions, a slip – allows him to enlarge the range of beings, presences and voices that his writing can evoke. How has this writer, who appreciates logics of rebounds and ricochets, devised his teaching method? Bailly tells the *Journal of the CIPH* how the development of his method became one with the process of defining the school that welcomed him. At a time when French schools of architecture, art and design are conforming to the LMD model, creating doctoral programs and research units, he stresses here the importance of shielding artistic research from the world of experts and – in opposition to the logic of results –

of defending the possibility of leaving room for trial and error, of infinishing education and of turning away from a productivist approach to learning.

Journal of the CIPH: **You have been teaching for nearly twenty years at the *École de la nature et du paysage* (Nature and Landscape School) in Blois. Teaching the landscape does not involve teaching in a particular discipline: it allows for a journey through several fields of study, making it, as you put it, "a real factory of entanglements." How did you devise your teaching method?**

Jean-Christophe Bailly: The school had just come into existence: given that it was finding its footing, the work of defining my own teaching was an integral part of the work of defining the school as a whole. I worked with very open-minded people and with an incredible director who had the utopian idea of offering an arc of possibilities between technical training and an aesthetic, sensory education. I was hired to create a course that was the equivalent of the general culture course in architecture schools, but with the idea of connecting it more closely to the question of the landscape. It was somewhat pompously called "History of the Formation of the Landscape and its Representations." In my mind, the word "formation" was to be taken *stricto sensu*: a historical and critical approach, a questioning of what formed the landscape as we see it and spend time with it, and as the students in the school, once they graduated, would find themselves intervening within it. The course was split over two years. In the first year, the students mostly worked on urban issues. I covered the history of the appearance and development of cities, starting from before cities, from the caves to today's housing projects. I made much use of anthropology, literature and a few philosophical schemas. The trick was to always use extremely long genealogies, to always start from before, from a time when what was to come did not yet exist. To understand a house, you had to start from a world where there were no houses; to understand the city, you had to imagine a world where the city appeared, and so on. The year after, they worked on what is called "the open landscape," i.e. everything except the city: the wilderness, high mountains or forests. Here I dealt with problems more connected with humanity's relationship to nature and to agriculture. I am not an agronomist, but agriculture is also a culture and a relation to the world.

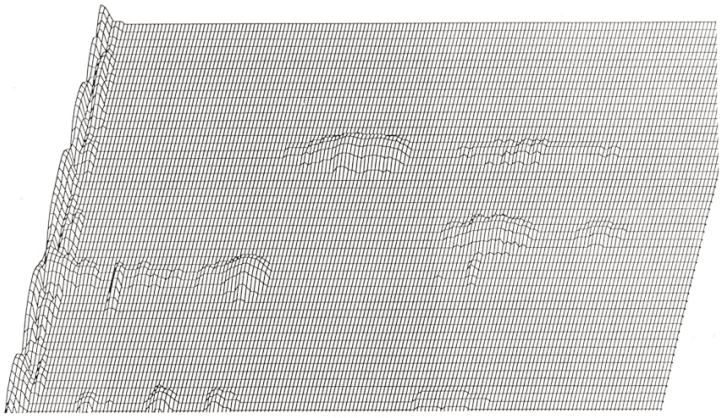
The question is to see how for each stage of the "human rocket" there corresponds a stage of development in agriculture, which varies from one region to another. You could say that my course was part history, part geography and part art history, on a foundation of essentially philosophical reflections.

Journal: **I've never sat in on one of your classes, but I can imagine you recounting the history of land ownership, or the public sphere, by willingly starting with an anecdote and proceeding by ricochets. Have you taught like you write? Does teaching also mean seeking to tell stories differently?**

Bailly: Absolutely. The work in Blois and the lectures I've given in many schools, especially at the *École de la photographie* in Arles, mean that I'm used to addressing a public, whether in a class or a conference. I've learned the importance of narration, the fact of relating, recounting. In order to keep people's attention – but actually I wasn't even thinking about it – I would spontaneously illustrate my words with stories or anecdotes. I often used an image as a starting point. I'd photocopy them all before the class, which forced me to be quite choosy. I would always start with two of them: the first presented an Aborigine drawn in the early 19th century by an engineer among the first explorers of Australia. The drawing is very beautiful

Facing an empty, unspoiled, unexplored landscape – the Blue Mountains – the Aborigine sits calmly, on his side, in contemplation. These are Western

schemas of representation, but at the same time there is in this drawing a respect for the indigenous gaze. I would also show them a spectrogram, the graphic translation of a sound sequence, in this case a phrase spoken by an actor. I would explain to them that if we took another actor, or if we changed a word in the phrase, or even took the same text and the same actor while using a different accent or a slightly different rhythm, the spectrogram would not be the same. This led me to introduce my main idea: phrasing, the landscape as a phrasing, with an infinite number of layers and locutions that result in the "phrase" that corresponds to the visible surface.



What is fairly surprising in the history of the landscape – even though the changes are enormous, especially since the Industrial Revolution and even more so over the past thirty years – is that there were nevertheless some constants. For example, there is the relation that prehistoric people created between the place of their encampment and a source of nourishment nearby, which first led to the emergence of the trail, then the path, then the road, and so on. But the

creation of a technical advance does not systematically erase what preceded it. We therefore have a stratification whose end product is the extremely composite nature of any landscape. I tried to make them conscious of that.

Journal: **Your teaching has been accompanied by your work in publishing. Since 2003, you have been publishing the journal *Les Cahiers de l'École de Blois*, and one of your issues was in fact devoted to "The Teaching of the Landscape" (*L'enseignement du paysage*). In that issue, you insist upon what you have just said, the notion that considerations on the ways of teaching the landscape presuppose that one first looks into what the landscape itself teaches. Could you clarify what you mean by a "pedagogy of the landscape"?**

J.-C. Bailly: I worked in publishing before I started teaching. It was even because I lost my job in publishing that I found this new profession. The director was insistent that the school produce its own publication, and I think he was right. At the time, the *École deVersailles* was already publishing *Les Carnets du paysage* (Notes on the Landscape), where each issue focused on a theme. So we had to do something else. The idea I had was to orient the journal more toward landscaping as a profession and to consider it as something like the school's unfinished rough draft. This is why I really wanted the students to participate in the journal. On the basis of a few interesting final projects, we would manage to define a theme, or rather a focus for our thinking. The students' work would be accompanied by contributions from the school's professors but also, of course, by texts from authors outside of the school: anthropologists, geographers, writers, philosophers, etc. I would ask them to contribute texts in relation to the theme.

For the "Teaching of the Landscape" issue – my memory is quite clear on this – the title was deliberately ambiguous. It meant how you teach about the landscape but also what the landscape itself teaches. I preferred that ambiguity to "The Lesson of the Landscape," which seemed pretentious. The two ways of reading "The Teaching of the Landscape" came together in the problematic of the school itself. We tried to train students – this was the specific role of my

class – to become acutely attentive to everything that produces, drives, energizes the landscape in its existence. We taught them to put nothing aside, to do fieldwork without preconceived interpretations. There was something anti-technocratic about the school's logic. We paid for that, incidentally, but we didn't back down. So I encouraged the students to listen to the landscape, since the landscape itself produces meaning, the thing to understand and interpret. Let me come back to that idea of phrasing. You have to know how to read the landscape's phrase, and it is written in, or rather translated into, several languages simultaneously: the geologist's language, the agronomist's, the farmer's, the painter's, etc. We didn't ask the students to master all of these areas, but to have in mind their existence and their intrication. This yielded excellent results, particularly with the final projects dealing with the rural environment where we noted a generalized curiosity, let's say. What's more, the school underwent a transformation. At the beginning, nearly all of the final projects were urban ones, then they focused more and more on the rural environment. There was a whole process of raising awareness and most of the teaching boiled down to that, developing their curiosity and attention to an impossible level. It's hard because you notice that mindsets and ideologies associated with standardized training are extremely present and prevalent.

Journal: **You have spoken of the school in Blois as a school of the gaze, where students learn to observe the existent before intervening. That makes me think of the task that Bergson assigned to philosophy: to expand perception, which is at the very origin of what one can conceive. In this sense, do you see your approach to teaching as a philosophical one?**

J.-C. Bailly: I don't deny that there is a relationship between what I write and what I discuss using philosophical questions. I have read some philosophy, I have friends who are philosophers, but I clearly see that they have an overall familiarity with the philosophical corpus that I absolutely do not. The number of authors who I have barely read is very large, too large, and I am somewhat ashamed of that. When I go to a philosophy conference, I take notes like a

student, sometimes I get bored and doodle, but I have to remain very modest. It is also true, though, that in discussing schemas of the landscape such as the horizon, the "far," the forms of habitat, my approach has become more philosophical than I thought it was at the beginning. If you take a topic like the horizon, the near and the far, if you approach it while including the visual aspect, if you adjoin it to the history of art, and then if you take a saying from the most famous French landscape architect, Michel Corajoud, who says that the landscape is the place where the earth and sky touch each other, the ideas that you suggest in response necessarily become philosophical. But philosophical in a generic, almost spontaneous way.

Journal: **But when you talk about the essay as an "extendable" form of writing, it could be said that you are trying to widen the scope of philosophical writing…**

J.-C. Bailly: Yes, of course. There is the idea that what is thought or what behaves like a theoretical formulation can also and maybe must also be conjugated as writing. And conversely that writing, contrary to a certain gospel, enriches itself through being innervated by characteristics that come from philosophy and that are directly related to the concept. Obviously it is not a matter of establishing a sort of middle way, but of multiplying the contacts, the injections, the transplants.

Journal: **I was thinking of someone like Benjamin, who tried to open philosophical writing to daily experience while distancing himself from institutional philosophy…**

J.-C. Bailly: The form of thought toward which Benjamin was moving did not conform to the norms of German academia in the 1920s. Actually, it may have been a lucky break for him that he did not pursue his *Habilitation* and enter the university system. As a result, he learned his lesson: his creative capacities opened out like a fan; his theoretical imagination was set free. And what was holding that fan was precisely the question of the city, the history of the city's development of its power to condense. Benjamin's ideas are probably those

with which I am the most familiar. When you read him, you get the feeling that there are no barriers, no separation possible between a sensation and a thought. And this is exactly what happens when you walk through the city: you go out into the street, it starts to rain and you have a kind of little thought. It could be related to the rain, or to a woman you're happy to see again, or a cat sheltering itself in front of the door across the way. This little thought is neither eliminable (*éliminable*) nor pitiable (*minable*). It is part of an enormous register in which other forms put their signature: more developed, conceptualized forms. But those forms may in turn make way for anything that comes along, that emerges unexpectedly.

Journal: **The need to call attention to that little thought is why it seemed important to me, as we said earlier, to try and recount it differently. Is encouraging a level of attentiveness that becomes sensitive to the equality between all forms of thought as they exist and manifest themselves (I am reminded of Plotinus for whom all life is thought) a gesture that could define a politics of teaching?**

J.-C. Bailly:I don't know about a politics of teaching, but ways of doing, yes, definitely. Ways of doing that favor a form of improvisation that grows more intense, until you yourself have a sensation of moving forward, of discovering detours, bifurcations as you move forward. I always insist on the connections, the rebounds, the ricochets, as well as on the capacity that concrete words have to designate things or phenomena (just like "ricochet") that make the spontaneous, dynamic nature of thought visible, almost palpable. Making something visible and making it legible are one and the same thing, as you jump from one domain to another, varying the sources, the echoes, the light you shed on it. The exact opposite of what specialists and experts do… As well as the opposite of mere dilettantism, you understand.

Journal: **You make regular appearances in art schools, not just to give lectures but also to talk with students about their work. These discussions are the core of education in the arts. Art is taught and passed on verbally, perhaps more than by learning**

techniques: it takes language itself as material to be shaped. What do you get from these talks? Have they influenced your work as a writer?

J.-C. Bailly: At the school in Blois, I only had this kind of relationship with the students I was supervising as they worked on their final projects, which I really loved doing. It was very important for me to accompany the student to the site they had chosen. Since it was not my profession, not being a landscape architect, my relation to the issues raised by the site was not of the same nature as the project, so I could say just about anything that came into my head. I discovered many things thanks to that, which I ended up using in *Le Dépaysement*.[2] For example, seeing a spring and discovering to what extent a spring is an idea that resonates with the idea of gushing, of welling up. At that point, the dialogue with the student became fascinating.

In the art schools my relationship with the students is much more limited. I'm just passing through. At the photography school in Arles, which I visit regularly, I abandoned what could be called the magisterial aspect that I used at the beginning in order to focus exclusively on discussions. The students show me their work (photos, videos, small books) during these discussions, which are not one-on-one, but remain open to anyone who wants to participate. It's an absorbing but fairly exhausting exercise. I see six or seven students per day, and the thing is not that it takes six or seven hours, but that each time I have to start from scratch. But in this school (*école*), which for now hasn't sought to become a movement (*faire école*), the work is quite varied, different each time: one student wants to explore the seedy world of a nightclub, another takes a fairly formal black and white approach, yet another portrays sweeping vistas… and each time I have to start from scratch. It makes sense only if you put yourself in that situation. It's almost like a theorem. If I have something to say immediately, that's not a good sign. I need to be a little taken aback. It really corresponds to a theory of interruption. An image's ability to interrupt the previous discourse of the person seeing it is proportional to its force. If an image applies a lesson, if it is obvious, you see what you can say about it right away. In general, I use a process of elimination, trying to narrow my

comments, rejecting anything that seems imprecise or indulgent. It's a very good exercise, but I don't really know what I get from it. I have been doing this work in Arles for fifteen years. The danger for me would be fatigue, when you feel like you've exhausted your supply of stories, anecdotes, or even of concepts. In that case, you should maybe call it quits. If I felt like that, I would stop. Ultimately, at the Landscape School, I think I've come to the end.

Journal: **You can learn with things, as Francis Ponge did, or with animals, about which you have written so much, experimenting with sensations beyond human existence and trying to get away from oneself. In the schools where the organization of studies is built around the development of a personal project, would the role of so-called theoretical coursework be less about teaching a particular content and more about encouraging decentering experiences?**

J.-C. Bailly: In an art school, purely theoretical coursework would be absurd. But I think an excessively personalized curriculum is dangerous as well: it leads the students to treat the school as a mere base camp where they only stop by occasionally. Workshops [3] are a necessary practice but there is an ideology of the workshop that I am wary of. The transmission of content via courses or conferences remains fundamental, and I don't see why it has to be opposed to decentering logics and experiences, on the contrary!

Journal: **Until now, the focus has been on bringing the organization of study in art schools into line with that of universities. But the issue is almost never considered from the opposite perspective. In your view, what could an artistic approach to teaching contribute to university education?**

J.-C. Bailly: The teaching method in art schools, as I see it, changes greatly from one school to another. There are schools where a trace of utopia still remains, sort of in the spirit of the Bauhaus or an idea of the Bauhaus, including in the relations between professors and students; then there are others where an overly perfunctory, fairly nonchalant atmosphere prevails. But there can be

no question that the ideology that privileges the useful and the profitable above all else threatens the spaces reserved for trial and error in general, and those in art schools in particular. That started explicitly under Sarkozy and it is even more manifest today. At best, art is seen as an ornament, as decor, or as entertainment, but it is never taken seriously. It is or should be the main way to refine an experience, to enable an experience of things, but instead it is consigned and shut away.

You could say that there is open warfare between the world of experts and the world of experience. Today, the problematic in art schools is fragmented because there are experts, technocrats who want to guide it, orient it, force it into their preconceived slots. The example of the landscape school in Blois, even though it is not *stricto sensu* an art school, speaks for itself. In fact, the school no longer exists as an autonomous entity. It does not have a legal identity anymore. It merged into a National Institute of Applied Sciences (*Institut National des Sciences Appliquées*), where the watchwords are "performance," "excellence," "professionalization," essentially the opposite of what had been envisaged at the start. Gradually, the independence and spirit of adventure forming the bedrock of the school were whittled away. This is a widespread trend that also concerns art schools. The institutional formatting, and therefore the formatting of their modes of operation, supports this process of ideological conformity. Creating huge machines conceived as visible, self-proclaimed "clusters of excellence" is the exact opposite of what should be done. In order for art schools to have any meaning, they need to be very independent, preserved from formatting and standardization.

A regulation is not the same thing as a standard. The problem isn't that there are operating regulations, that a course of study lasts so many years, that there are tests from one year to the next or required courses. That's not what formatting is. You see it coming in art schools, the mentality of the artist who knows who Louis Vuitton is but not so much who Michelangelo or Francis Picabia were. I am only slightly exaggerating, unfortunately…

In art school, there is the beauty of youth. You have to leave it alone, accord it the right to make mistakes, to wander, to learn. The founding idea of modern

art, not necessarily contemporary art as it is today, is the destitution of mastery. The master is himself an apprentice. Just think of Pierre Boulez, a composer and a great conductor: his book is called *Stocktakings from an Apprenticeship*. It is an idea that correlates with the idea of the unfinished work and the ideological critique of the masterpiece. As a whole, artistic creation is seen as a gigantic studio (*atélier*),[4] where things are crafted, then forgotten, then you come back to them, etc. It's not a place where finished products are made, but a place – I quite like this neologism – where everything is infinished, where nothing is taken for granted. Which is the opposite of logics of pure and simple production.

I've spent a lot of time visiting artists' studios (*ateliers*). I've never wanted to be anything other than a writer, but I've always been a little jealous of artists. There's not much to what a writer has at hand: a pencil, a pen, a piece of paper… you can amuse yourself with small matters of stationery, and now there are computers, but at the same time they remain fairly limited, the only material joy you get is from their design. On the other hand, I've always envied the materiality of what artists handle. Piotr Kowalski's studio, for example – he taught for a while at the *Académie des Beaux-Arts* in Paris among many other things, he had been trained as a mathematician and had real scientific knowledge – was a place whose disappearance I regret every day. There were car mechanic's tools, high-end computer gear, small collections of pebbles and shells, books, workbenches. It was a place pervaded by a Faustian desire to grasp the world through knowledge: knowledge that is not taken for granted, but seen as a series of foldings and unfoldings that blur into experience. In places like that, form always comes later. This is why I called my book on painting *L'Atelier infini* (The Infinite Studio). Schools of art, architecture or landscape should be large studios first of all. And stay that way most of all. Instead of being loaded with "workshops"[5] that officially recognize skills, they should be buzzing hives whose guiding principle never strays from the primary function of the artist, which is to know how to find, identify and gather pollen.

ENDNOTES

1. Translator's note: a translation of Bailly's neologism "infinir," where "finish" is negated with "in-" and simultaneously combined with "infinite."
2. Jean-Christophe Bailly, *Le Dépaysement: voyages en France* (Paris: Seuil, 2013).
3. Translator's note: in English in the text (for both instances in this sentence).
4. Translator's note: "Atélier" can be translated either as "studio" or "workshop": in some cases here "workshop" would work better, but Bailly explicitly uses the English word in a pejorative sense in his comments.
5. Translator's note: in English in the text.


B
MasterCard Developer Zone

Interview with BERNARD STIGLER

conducted by
Malgorzata GRYGIELEWICZ
and Nathalie PÉRIN

The School of Tomorrow

Journal of the CIPH: **In your work with the *Ars Industrialis*[1] association, as well as in your book *Taking Care of Youth and the Generations*,[2] your main theme is the question of education and the school's role in particular. You argued for an "ecology of the spirit" because we must be concerned, as you put it, about the nature of the "psychic environments" in which the student, in which people, develop. How do you see this problem today, ten years later?**

Bernard Stiegler: Ten years on, I think that the situation has grown much worse in terms of mental ecology and disturbances of the psychic apparatuses and the psychic environment – pupils, students, parents and teachers. Here, an explanation about this "psychic environment" is necessary. Typically, the psychic realm does not refer to the environment – in other words the exterior – but the interior: the individual's interiority. I am among those who, like many in the *Collège international de philosophie*, feel that this model of interiority inherited from classical philosophy is unsatisfactory. Whether we say

it with Wittgenstein and Jacques Bouveresse, with Jacques Lacan and the signifier, with Jacques Derrida and writing, with Heidegger and *Dasein,* or with Ludwig Binswanger and *Daseinsanalyse*, the psychic realm is not in the head, it's not in the individual: it is between the "heads," and of course between the bodies of these heads – depending on how artifacts link them together, I would add.

The psychic realm comprises "tertiary retentions," i.e. exteriorization produced by the activity of human beings – their everyday, artistic, sports-related, or play objects, or their constructions, which can be *manifestly* technical objects or verbal artifacts: sentences, phrases, stanzas, discourses, or *corpora*. This exteriorization, however, takes place in response to an interiorization in a process that must be envisioned on the basis of Freud's notion of the *Abreaktion*. Tertiary retentions are those things *outside* of me that *make up* my psyche because I interiorize them. Learning and study are specific cases of this kind of interiorization. And the concept of tertiary retention – the phenomenological counterpart of what I have called epiphylogenesis – is the starting point for *Technics and Time*. [3]

Just before writing *Taking Care*, I started getting interested in Donald Winnicott and the transitional object. Since then, I have also worked with Marianne Wolf, a neuropsychologist, who has shown that the brain of what we call the psychic individual – the *noetic* brain – has the ability to immerse itself in the environment, including the technical environment, continually reconfiguring what Stanislas Dehaene has called neuronal recycling, and which constitutes what Alfred Lotka calls exosomatic evolution. Marianne Wolf focuses her studies on the process of learning to read and write texts, but she also discusses digital technologies, and shows that they *short-circuit* this work of interiorization by the cerebral organ, which only *forms* the psychic individual through (and on condition of *passing through*) what must be seen as a threefold individuation: psychic, collective, and technical. [4] We must study Lev Vygotsky more closely.

At the time of *Taking Care*, Facebook had only just started. In 2004 I had published "The Allegory of the Anthill," a chapter of the first volume of *Symbolic Misery* [5] that foresaw the imminent emergence of social networks – and

their catastrophic effects, which Norbert Wiener had himself foreseen as early as 1948.

Technology is the basis of anthropology: the work of André Leroi-Gourhan highlighted this starting in 1943, at the time when Georges Canguilhem was writing *The Normal and the Pathological*. In 1945, Lotka published an article that gave Leroi-Gourhan and Canguilhem's theories an entirely new and fundamental relevance for human biology while incorporating the question of entropy. [6]

Recently there has been a debate on the reform of the *baccalauréat* and the role of philosophy in this diploma and therefore in high schools, a debate that started with the question of how many hours to dedicate to philosophy, the weight [7] philosophy should have in the diploma, etc. The response to this is *not to immediately* "defend the subject matter," but to ask *oneself first* the question of philosophy's place, *not first of all* in high schools or in the *baccalauréat*, but *in thinking today*, and in *society* today – concerning its role, and its relations with other academic fields, with their civic, religious, legal and of course technological bodies of knowledge in the early 21st century, as this period discovers the terrible reality of the so-called Anthropocene era.

***Journal*: The knowledge to which you allude presupposes a reassessment of the current form of knowledge. Is there a field that is best suited to take this critical look?**

B. Stiegler: In fact, *every academic* field is critical in this respect: an academy should develop and safeguard these *critical spaces*, and philosophy must lead the critical debate given that this debate *always spreads into* other disciplines. To grasp its relevance in the un-knowing (*inscient*) consciousness of the Anthropocene era, I insist that we must study what I have called "doubly epokhal redoubling," which constitutes the dynamic of epiphylogenesis and the tertiary retentions that result from it through the process of exosomatization.

To confront these issues today, we have to revisit the history of the production of knowledge based on the founding principles of Greek philosophy, and before

that the ideas of the pre-Socratics insofar as they generated the organization of the *politeia*, and after that, of theology, which profoundly reconfigured the Greco-Roman heritage. In 1158, 70 years after its founding, the university of Bologna began to form the matrix that would emancipate itself and the clerics from papal domination, through the independence guaranteed to them by the *Authentica habita* that emperor Frederick Barbarossa promulgated the same year. This matrix would engender – alongside Oxford firstly, then the Sorbonne – the model that Kant would later critique in *The Conflict of the Faculties*. With the University of Berlin, which created the department of philosophy in the wake of Kant's text, as with the *École normale supérieure* created by the National Convention during the Revolution, then with the *Grandes écoles* founded by Napoleon, then through the educational and scientific policies of Jules Ferry, the university was to serve the interests of industrial modernization, and therefore of the economy (what the Romans, devising the concept of the *otium*, called the *negotium*), but always under state control.

Ever since the hegemonic entrenchment first of neoliberal, then ultraliberal, and now libertarian thinking – which combines the ultraliberalism of the "conservative revolution" with the disruptive technologies that proletarize the state itself, literally disintegrating the connective tissue that education in the *skholeion* maintained with politics from Ancient Greece to the present (see Henri-Irénée Marrou) – the university is well on the way toward privatization, i.e. also toward defunctionalization and refunctionalization (redefinition of its functions). Both abroad and in France, more or less pitiful attempts to conform to this model fail regularly, leading to the collapse of an academic culture that was a model for centuries, and which has literally been demolished. This is the result of the tide that Jean-François Lyotard saw coming 40 years ago in *The Postmodern Condition*.

I believe, however, that the herd instinct in this matter has been disastrous, for France and more generally for Europe: to a large extent because Europe has not understood that it is *not Europe anymore* – it has become a colony on the road to underdevelopment, and the question many ask is whether it will remain within the American sphere (with or without NATO) or whether China will finally seize it for itself. But I am still hoping that Europe will "wake up," and this is

also what drives the work of the *Institut de recherche et d'innovation*, [8] *pharmakon.fr*, [9] and the *Internation/Genève 2020* collective. [10]

We must try to think (*penser*) these questions through, care-fully think (*panser*) [11] them through. Before anything this means trying to *reconsider what is happening to knowledge in the 21st century*, concerning both its "production" (i.e. scientific institutions – in the broad sense of the *word* science, irreducible to the computational and narrow-minded mechanicism that is currently ultra-dominant) and its transmission, at a time when *knowledge is required (cf. Greta Thunberg) in order to "save humanity" from what its adulterated knowledge, transformed and distorted into information* (i.e. models of calculability)*, has brought about*, as even the value of this knowledge is put into question (this is what we call post-truth).

An absolutely disastrous ideology – but one that is perfectly in sync with the short-sighted objectives of the *negotium* of high finance – has finally managed to impose on the more or less muddled state of French public opinion (from the "elites" to the "bottom of the pecking order") the *doxa* according to which complete calculability is the condition of science and, more generally, of any form of knowledge. But on the contrary, its *openness* to *what always exceeds any calculation* is what makes a domain of knowledge *know*, and also what makes it *make*, allowing it to fight against entropy. This is what Alfred North Whitehead called the function of reason. [12]

What burst forth from the 18th century, from the Enlightenment in Europe and America, was at once a product of humanism, the Reformation, the Counter-Reformation, and the Academies – with their origins in the Republic of Letters – that led to printing, the successive proliferation of libraries, and the emergence of gazettes. The Académie de Dijon, in whose competition Rousseau participated, is one example. Why has digital reticulation not instigated a renewal of the academic system descended from Plato's academy by way of those in Dijon and elsewhere, and by way of the universities and faculties as they have transformed themselves over the last millennium? Because exosomatization "abhors a vacuum," and because philosophy has made that vacuum possible. The time has come to wake up. [13]

We must ask ourselves these questions at a time when the place and the role of fields of knowledge and their institutions – the family is one such institution – are at the heart of vital issues that dominate the Anthropocene era. What can the academy, the university and their collective knowledge do in this era? And what do they know about this era? It is therefore incumbent on us to envision the future of what we must see as the academic system – in the sense that, since the 19th century, it is impossible to separate the disciplinary, didactic and pedagogical training of primary and secondary school teachers from research and coursework in the university.

The academic system, such as it became established in France at the end of the 19th century (and in a more or less similar fashion throughout the world), must first be considered as what constitutes the institutional reality of what I have called the "doubly epokhal redoubling," the second period of this double redoubling to be precise, as the first was one of a technological shock brought about by exosomatization.

I will briefly summarize the argument underlying this concept. Every human society is firmly based upon a technical system that transforms itself regularly. Ever since the Industrial Revolution, this transformation has been systemically underpinned by the economic war in which the industrial and national capitalisms are engaged. Every time the technical system is transformed on that systemic scale (in Bertrand Gille's sense of the technical system) the adjustments that had previously been established between it and the social systems (in the sense of Gille and Niklas Luhmann) are put into question, triggering a noetic reconstitution that appropriates the new technical system while creating new circuits of transindividuation, i.e. new knowledge – in academia as well as in the empirical practices that characterize what consequently forms an epistēmē.

On the other hand, we should bear in mind that this whole system, which was first developed out of the fundamentals of Western philosophy – first Greco-Roman, then Christian – and later from modern philosophy and what Marx called German idealism, is as a result based upon a repression of the question of technics – German ideology, however, asserts that this is its starting point.

With the arrival of industrial society, the academic system had to train producers who were capable of playing various roles in production, from the proletarian to the engineer and the banker, up to the head of the firm: it had to train a "national elite." And what was true of production was equally true of the army, the legal and medical systems, the arts, etc., who had to deal with constant technological change. This responsibility to train producers, which was assigned to the academic system, had at one time belonged to craftsmen's guilds.

In addition, a trained citizenry was then required to guarantee national unity, above and beyond the borders of European France. This was a crucial issue for Jules Ferry, a colonial and colonialist issue: not only did the unity of the colonial empire have to be produced, but there had to be unity among the regions of the national territory and fewer "particularities," with the "universal" as the operator of what, however, laid the groundwork for the homogenization of the marketplace.

Concerning all of these new arrangements and the way they came to be, which deserves closer study, I would like to outline an overall perspective on their consequences in the Anthropocene era, emphasizing first of all that the academic system has been, in a clearly un-knowing way, the primary operator. The result is that in today's "post-truth" context, what prevails is a feeling, if not of uselessness, at least of inefficiency and of disrepute: a fundamental sense of unease in the academic system, whether in primary, secondary and high schools or in the universities.

In various texts,[14] I have tried to demonstrate that this unease has been engendered by a situation in which the programming industries (both audiovisual and algorithmic) are now competing with the programming institutions that form the academic system. This means, on the one hand, that children no longer have the necessary attention span to be ready to listen, and on the other – but this is less widely admitted and obviously hard to say and to accept – the teachers are themselves massively affected by this competition. This is just as true of the parents, who don't always tolerate being told that: and many of us are parents as well.

The result is that attention, and consequently the sense of responsibility, grows ever weaker – and this is also what Greta Thunberg says to her elders, i.e. to us. In fact, the whole problem is what is going on in the academic field in the broadest sense. When the name of the TV show Star Academy [15] is more or less the symptom of a functional disintegration of knowledge (academic or otherwise), effectively, at the end of the Anthropocene era, all that has therefore become illegitimate. The legitimacy of the academy has crumbled under the influence of analogic and numeric technologies whose implementation is entirely beholden to the programming industries, while we ask the programming institutions to adapt more and more to these industries and their informational and communicational models.

Journal: **Through your association and your work as a philosopher, you acknowledge what François Châtelet called the splintering of knowledge as a form. Today, philosophy knows that it can no longer work in isolation if it wishes to keep producing concepts.**

B. Stiegler: Yes, and I actually discussed this with François Châtelet: shortly before his death, I had interviewed him about these questions that were omnipresent in *Le Rapport bleu* (The Blue Report), which he wrote with Jacques Derrida, Jean-Pierre Faye and Dominique Lecourt and which led to the creation of the *Collège international de philosophie*.

Today we must try to act on this splintering, as you put it, and like Châtelet said, but we must then deal with the consequences of that act. That act calls for another one: a legal act, transforming a de facto situation, and in a very unusual context – the Anthropocene era – where we have an absolutely incommensurable responsibility. Never before in human history has it been supposed that the world community could see the approach of its own end, through entropy. This assigns a *colossal* responsibility to everyone, particularly in academia, and even more particularly to the philosopher who must reevaluate *everything* in relation to that, both before and after the fact, if I can put it that way. Incidentally, what I'm saying is drawn from an initiative that we are launching with *Ars industrialis,* the IRI [16] and the Internation/Geneva2020 collective.

In this terminal phase of the Anthropocene era – which will either be overcome or will truly put an end to this "human adventure," as Arnold Toynbee had foreseen the possibility – knowledge, its nature, its evolution and the conditions of that evolution, i.e. its opening but also its closing, *all of this* has undergone profound mutations, especially over the last thirty years. This had been manifest for quite some time, particularly through a process of acceleration that is another defining aspect of the Anthropocene era: in view of this, Jason Moore prefers to call it the Capitalocene era. This is why we should now perform an epistemological critique of the Anthropocene era[17] – preferably a hypercritique, to the extent that it should detect the *epistemological repressions* of the *conditions* of any critique by unearthing those repressions.

The economic war for the control and exploitation of innovation has led to what we now call disruption insofar as it overtakes everyone, in other words everything that makes a world, from the parents and the helpless teachers to the most advanced laboratories of scientific research. All of them can only *follow* what the disruptors do, constantly stumbling through "trajectory corrections" of processes that they set in motion without precisely knowing what they will bring about (such people used to be called sorcerers' apprentices). Consequently, the doubly epokhal redoubling no longer leads to the noetic phase, which is overtaken. This is what I have called the absence of epoch.

This situation, characterized by feedback hyperloops and metaloops being produced at a "lightning pace rising constantly" (an expression whose ridiculousness is at the very heart of the matter – though fiber-optic communication is twice as fact as lightning) poses the problem of a reconsideration of recursivity in an open exosomatic system. We have been discussing this with Yuk Hui.[18]

This situation, which arose with the creation of the World Wide Web, and which has been perceived and problematized only recently – within the last ten years – means that in an ever-growing number of areas, it has become nearly impossible for teachers in a middle or high school to put into practice the prescriptions taught to them in their academic training. Today's realities simply did not exist at the time they themselves were students, and these realities now

make up the *bulk* of the process of transformation underway, affecting children and parents as well as teachers. All three groups are helpless in the face of this process, as are the President of the Republic, the Secretary-General of the UN and the board of Google.

Such is the cost of what had been described in *Technics and Time 2* as a "primordial disorientation" that – and here we cross a threshold – it requires unprecedented measures never before conceived [*impensées*], making the situation appear untreatable [*impansable*]. While those in charge of Google cannot control what is produced there, they do however co-pilot it – and this is why people will have to go back to studying, yet again, the "French theory" [19] that inspired my analysis, [20] particularly everything taking form within that theory (without managing to completely establish itself inside of it) concerning what I call pharmacology, based upon the organology that studies exosomatization.

***Journal*: In Antiquity, education – as learning, as exercise – consisted in *taking care*, care of oneself: of one's body, of one's soul. The training technique for this self-care first manifests itself in the form of schooling, which is always dominated by the written word. Does the question of care remain an open one for you today?**

B. Stiegler: More than ever, as a question of self-care, but also as an economy, both political and libidinal ("government of oneself and of others"). Foucault asked that question while introducing new considerations into it, precisely as examples of *technê*. I am currently trying to reread all of that in the light of Whitehead who, in one of his few relatively accessible books, speaks of the art of living. [21] In Greek, that is called *technê tou biou*. According to Whitehead, reason *serves* this art of living, which is a *technê*. What does "*technê*" mean? And what, then, is life? What is living when this means noetic life, insofar as it is technical, i.e. exosomatic? Living means *knowing how* to live, and learning to live. The text by Lotka that I have already mentioned says this in a particularly powerful and dramatic way (here we should discuss *Learning to Live Finally*, an interview Derrida gave shortly before he died, but we don't have time.)

All of this points back to Canguilhem: positing that the human is that being who has "the power and the temptation to fall sick," and to do so through technics, he wonders why we have to study biology. Answer: because we have to take care of the *pharmakon*. He doesn't use the word "*pharmakon*," but he says that *we*, the noetic souls (as opposed to fainthearted and vegetative souls) need biology, i.e. knowledge, noesis in all its forms (from cooking to art, taking in philosophy, mathematics, sports, etc.). Biology concerns the knowledge that a technical life has of itself (see the beginning of *Knowledge of Life*). If you were to ask me today to write a text, like the Greph [22] did at one time, with Derrida – this was exactly how the *Collège international de philosophie* was created – against the Haby reform, [23] saying what philosophy's place is, I would suggest that philosophy's place is always in the time of the process in which the biosphere finds itself. For philosophy today, maintaining its position and measuring up to its own *ethos* – both in high schools and universities – *first* means *rethinking the teaching of technology*, not in order to say that philosophers are the ones who should be teaching it, nor to say what it should consist of, but in order to problematize it in the Anthropocene era, and to make a case for the conditions under which it would be advisable to promote the creation of an *agrégation* [24] in technology or something similar, perhaps something better than an *agrégation*. To be able to do that, there would have to be the development of what we at the IRI call "Digital Studies." [25]

***Journal*: This is what you mean when you talk about deproletarianizing schools in your fascinating book *L'École, le numérique et la société qui vient* [26] (The School, the Numeric and the Coming Society), where you associate the therapeutic role of school structures with a deproletarianization of schools…**

B. Stiegler: Instead of producing good employees who can adapt themselves to a task predefined by a massively automated system of production, the school of tomorrow has to produce critics: workers who are capable of critiquing the economy in order to induce it to produce better, i.e. more economically. In the Anthropocene era, "more economically" means reducing entropy, increasing the negentropy, which is the function of all knowledge.

At the moment when disruption got underway (in the early 1990s), the IPCC's [27] reports were starting to reveal the extremely serious situation in the biosphere, and the immense responsibility that the economic world had concerning the transformation of that state of affairs. From now on, the question is to act so that the economic world can increase its ability to fight against entropy and to correspondingly reduce its production of thermodynamic, biological and informational entropies.

The issue is to improve the standing of fields of knowledge and to undertake a vast process of deproletarianization – here, "proletarianization" first means the loss of knowledge, which now affects all human activity, including the sciences, a situation that was already the focus of *The Postmodern Condition*, calling it the "exteriorization of knowledge with respect to the 'knower'." Schools have to learn how to retrain producers who are *knowing* and *learned* [sachants *et* savants], in other words endowed with knowledge and not only skills, who as a result know how to fight against entropy collectively, by transforming the industrial models tied to proletarianization.

How can primary, secondary and high schools, as well as universities and the major scientific establishments be prepared to fight against entropy? That is the question. The first condition is to give added emphasis to technics in teaching, to perform an in-depth reconsideration of its place in primary, secondary and high schools, in every discipline, first in history and geography, through which we will need to reassess the role of technics in the constitution of the biosphere that is becoming a technosphere. We will have to train the new generations and their teachers in the concepts of Vladimir Vernadsky, as well as in prehistory and archeology as seen by Leroi-Gourhan, in Lotka's biology in the life sciences, in thermodynamics in physics and chemistry, in the mathematics of dynamic systems, etc. In addition, we will have to profoundly modify the teaching of philosophy so that it incorporates these questions in its reconstitution and its teaching of the history of philosophy – by including for example Lev Vygotsky, Ignace Meyerson, Eric Havelock, Walter Ong, Jean-Pierre Vernant and Pierre Vidal-Naquet (concerning Ancient Greece for these last).

This also means the need to enhance the teaching of technology, to develop a

real program for studying and teaching technology – which therefore means appropriate examinations. The teachers of technology will need to have studied technics very carefully as well as its curative and toxic dynamics from the perspectives of prehistory, ethnology, ethnography, history, anthropology, sociology, psychology, law, economics and critical philosophy. They should also have practical skills, and the practices of craftsmanship should be reevaluated in a sense that needs to take its inspiration from the work that Richard Sennett has been carrying out for more than ten years – in reference to Hannah Arendt.

Furthermore, philosophy should be taught over three years, as it used to be in Italy where they started by teaching the history of philosophy as early *as la seconde*[28] – while maintaining close contact with the study of technology as well as the human and social sciences. These sciences, such as they appeared in the second half of the 19th century with Emile Durkheim, have not been incorporated into secondary education at all, which is all the more damaging given that they allow for a rational consideration of the specific features of contemporary societies.

These changes should be introduced not by decrees or new laws, but by initiating experimental approaches that should function both through what we at the IRI call contributive learning territories (*territoires apprenants contributifs*) on the one hand, and on the other, by calling on the teacher training schools (ESPE)[29] with whom we have started to introduce – in middle and high schools, and in territories for experimentation – the previously mentioned recommendations. This means that there would also be, on the local level, universities who apply as candidates for training teachers in these different domains – technology, history, geography, human and social sciences and philosophy, reimagined in accordance with these matters, as well as secondary establishments that present their candidacies alongside universities in order to put these frameworks in place.

To that end, there would need to be an implementation of the contributive research method described in the fifth section of the *Conseil national du numérique's*[30] "Jules Ferry 3.0" report published in 2014, which proposed a call

for applications with a view to awarding grants for dissertations under the following conditions:

• That the candidates work on what the numeric technology of "binary digits" [31] is doing to their discipline and what their discipline can contribute to a scientific, epistemological and epistemic study of knowledge at this time where this technology is massively entrenched in every academic discipline, as it is in every social and individual practice, whether daily or occasional;
• That they carry out this work within transdisciplinary teams;
• That they work in the field, enlisting the inhabitants of that field (who could be the students in a middle school, the workers in a company, the students in a teacher training school, the inhabitants of a neighborhood, an association, etc.);
• And that they publish and share the results of this work with the members of the transdisciplinary team and the inhabitants over the course of the research.

This method is currently being put into practice by what is now called the contributive clinic, within the framework of the contributive learning territory that was launched two and a half years ago in the Seine-Saint-Denis *département* to the northeast of Paris. There, parents and children who have been seriously intoxicated by the smartphone can receive treatment. The work – which is carried out under the supervision of Dr. Marie-Claude Bossière, child psychiatrist – bases its initial methodology on the work of Donald Winnicott, François Tosquelles and Gregory Bateson. Here, unfortunately, we can easily see to what extent the psychic environments are literally ruined by disruption in that it nullifies the intergenerational exchanges without which any future cannot come into being.

ENDNOTES

1. An international cultural and philosophical association created in 2005 on Bernard Stiegler's initiative that has initiated a critical reflection on the "technologies of the

spirit" not unrelated to capitalism and its economic imperatives. For more information, visit http://www.arsindustrialis.org

2. Bernard Stiegler, *Prendre soin: De la jeunesse et des générations* (Paris: Flammarion, 2008) [*Taking Care of Youth and the Generations*, trans. Stephen Barker (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 2010)].

3. See Stiegler, *La Technique et le temps* (Paris: Fayard, 2018) [Translator's note: the French edition is a compilation of three previously published volumes whose English translations have all been published by Stanford University Press: *Technics and Time 1: The Fault of Epimetheus*, trans. Richard Beardsworth and George Collins (1998); *Technics and Time 2: Disorientation*, trans. Stephen Barker (2008); and *Technics and Time 3: Cinematic Time and the Question of Malaise,* trans. Stephen Barker (2011).

4. On this point, see Stiegler, *De la misère symbolique* (Paris: Flammarion, 2004) [*Symbolic Misery, Volume 1: The Hyperindustrial Epoch*, trans. Barnaby Norman (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014)].

5. Stiegler, *De la misère symbolique* [*Symbolic Misery*].

6. Alfred Lotka, "The Law of Evolution as a Maximal Principle," *Human Biology* 17.3 (September 1945): 167-194.

7. Translator's note: The weight (*coefficient*) – the relative importance in the overall result – that philosophy has in the *baccalauréat* is, for example, 7 in the Literary orientation of the *baccalauréat général*, while in the *baccalauréat professionnel* (essentially a vocational orientation) there are no questions on philosophy.

8. https://www.iri.centrepompidou.fr/

9. http://pharmakon.fr/wordpress/

10. https://internation.world/

11. Translator's note: I borrow this translation of "panser" from Daniel Ross, as it neatly alludes to the usual meaning of "panser" – to heal, or to dress a wound – while maintaining Stiegler's play on words with "penser."

12. Alfred North Whitehead, *The Function of Reason* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1929).

13. As for the *Académie des sciences*, it has *dared* (to borrow Greta Thunberg's expression) to publish an absolutely pathetic report in 2013 on the effects screens have

on the younger generations, which was barely reconsidered during a session the Academy held on 9 April this year – while one of its rapporteurs, Olivier Houdé, seems to have distanced himself from this tepid document.

14. In particular in *Technics and Time 3*, in *La Telécratie contre la démocratie* ["Telecracy Against Democracy"], in *Taking Care of Youth and the Generations* and in *La Société automatique 1.* I will return to this soon in *La Société automatique 2.* [Translator's note: *La Société automatique 1* has been translated as *Automatic Society, Volume 1: The Future of Work*, trans. Daniel Ross (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2016)]

15. Translator's note: a talent show franchise in many countries similar to *America's Got Talent, The X Factor*, etc.

16. *Institut de recherche et d'innovation*, created at Bernard Stiegler's instigation within the Centre Pompidou.

17. This is the focus of *Qu'appelle-t-on panser? 2: La leçon de Greta Thunberg* (Paris: Les liens qui libèrent, 2020).

18. See Yuk Hui, *Recursivity and Contingency* (London / New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2019).

19. Translator's note: in English in the text.

20. See Antoinette Rouvroy and Thomas Berns, "Gouvernementalité algorithmique et perspectives d'émancipation," in *Réseaux* 177.1 (2013): 163-196 ["Algorithmic governmentality and prospects of emancipation: Disparateness as a precondition for individuation through relationships?," trans. Elizabeth Libbrecht, accessible on the Cairn.info website].

21. Whitehead, *The Function of Reason*.

22. Translator's note: *Groupe de recherches sur l'enseignement philosophique*, founded by Derrida and others in 1975 to fight for changes in the high school philosophy curriculum.

23. Translator's note: the Haby law of 1975 extended free schooling to secondary schools (the Ferry laws of 1881-1882 only covered primary schools) but at the cost of a standardization of the curriculum which substantially reduced the role of philosophy.

24. ranslator's note: A series of competitive examinations in various disciplines that facilitates access to teaching posts in *lycées* and universities, and guarantees a higher salary than teachers who have not passed them.

25. See https://digital-studies.org/wp/call-for-digital-studies/; *Digital Studies:*

Organologie des savoirs et technologies de la connaissance, ed. Bernard Stiegler (Limoges: Fyp Éditions / IRI-Institut de recherche et d'innovation, 2014), and http://realsms.eu/. [Translator's note: "Digital Studies" – in English in the text.]

26. Stiegler, Denis Kambouchner, Philippe Meirieu, Julien Gautier, and Guillaume Vergne, *L'École, le numérique et la société qui vient* (Paris: Fayard / Mille et une nuits, 2012).

27. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, associated with the UN.

28. Translator's note: the first year of schooling in the three-year program of French *lycées*, corresponding to the sophomore year at US high schools. *La première* corresponds to junior year and *la terminale* to senior year.

29. Translator's note: *Écoles supérieures du professorat et de l'éducation*, called *instituts nationaux supérieurs du professorat et de l'éducation* (Inspe) since 2019.

30. Translator's note: the French Digital Council, set up to advise the government on matters concerning digital technology.

31. Translator's note: in English in the text.

"What I can learn from you. What you can learn from me."

(Critical Workshop), Saskatoon Remai Modern

PRACTICAL INFORMATIONS :

- 27TH JANUARY 2018 TO 25TH FEBRUARY 2018
- WORKSHOP-SPACE IN THE MUSEUM 'CONNECT GALLERY' / GROUNDFLOOR
- EVERY DAY FROM 10AM TO 6PM / TUESDAYS AND FRIDAYS FROM 10AM TO 10PM / MUSEUM CLOSED ON MONDAY
- FREE ENTRANCE TO ALL MUSEUM-EXHIBITIONS FOR WORKSHOP-PARTICIPANTS DURING WORKSHOP
- EACH 'TEACHER' WILL GET A FEE OF100 $CAN FOR HER/HIS 'TEACHING-LESSON'
- THOMAS HIRSCHHORN IS PRESENT ALL THE TIME
- EVERYBODY IS WELCOME / FREE ENTRANCE

«Gramsci Monument», 2013
Art School: 'Energy: Yes, Quality: No !'
Forest Houses, The Bronx, New York, 2013

"Flamme éternelle", 2014 (Workshop)
Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 2014

"Globalization Reversed", 2015
'Atopolis', Mons, 2015

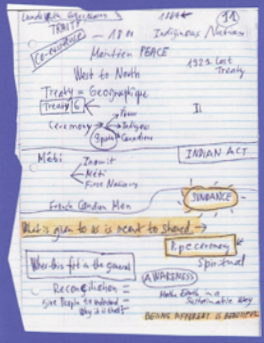
This is a Critical-Workshop. An everyday workshop, from morning to evening. I want to invite different and diverse residents of Saskatoon to be present and to share their specific knowledge, specific skills or specific history with the other. I, myself, will take part with my own input. I will be on site from morning to evening, every day.

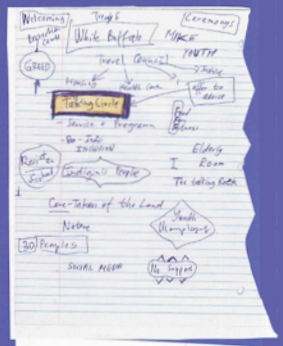
The idea, the philosophy, the guideline, the affirmation of this workshop is: To share the PARTICULAR and in sharing it to make it UNIVERSAL. Because everybody can learn something from the Other. And because everybody can teach the Other something specific.

Art is universal. Universality means Equality, Justice, Truth, the Other, the One World. Art – because it's art – can provoke a dialogue or confrontation directly, from one to one. Therefore I think that each human being can get in touch with art, each human being can be transformed by the power of art. I believe that art is the way to reinvent the world. Art is autonomous. Autonomy is what gives an artwork its beauty and its absoluteness. Art – because it's art – can create the conditions of an implication, beyond anything. Art is resistance. Art resists facts; Art resists political, aesthetical, cultural habits. Art is positivity and intensity. Art – because it's art – calls for equality. There is no other fundament, there is no other mission. The absolute affirmation of Equality is the link, the hidden and invisible connection which holds a work together. Precisely because it's not a fact, pure equality needs to be fought for at every moment. Therefore I believe there is something "I can learn from you" and there is something "you can learn from me."

I believe in art and I have faith in art. I think that art is an inclusive movement; art should include the 'Non-exclusive audience', the Other, the Neighbor, the Stranger, the Unknown, the Un-interested. Art can never act in resentment or negativity, art is always and in all circumstances against discrimination, racism, and exclusion. As an artist – I want to express my belief in equality and my understanding of Equality as a common wealth: A wealth which we have in common. Equality – as wealth – is something to achieve and defend, day-by-day, work-by-work, again and again. Achieving and defending equality – as an artist – means making an egalitarian work of art and taking an egalitarian artistic position. The competence to do this – my competence – can only come from the work itself, from making it, and asserting it. I consider my competence to give form a mission. Competence is an important term to me because the competent one has to prove his or her skill with acts. Competence towards Equality demands asking myself and giving a response in working, in doing a work of art. "What I can learn from you. What you can learn from me." wants to work this out.

Working – as an artist – means understanding art as a tool, an instrument or a weapon. I understand art as a tool to confront reality. I use the tool 'art' to encounter the world I am living in. I use the tool 'art' to live within the time I am living in. I use the tool 'art' because it allows resisting the historical fact beyond the history I am living in – precisely because it allows me to make an a-historical work within the chaos and complexity of the moment. I want to use art as a tool to establish a contact with the Other . I am convinced that the only possible contact with the Other happens "One to One", as equal. I want to make a work that gives form – a form of equality – to the affirmation: the Other is included in "me" and in "I". As Edouard Glissant wrote in his beautiful and powerful sentence: "The Other is in me because I am me. Equally – the I from whom the other is absent – perishes". This is the problematic, the challenge, the mission, and why I love making a work of art so much. My 'Critical Workshop' "What I can learn from you. What you can learn from me." is an attempt to give Form.

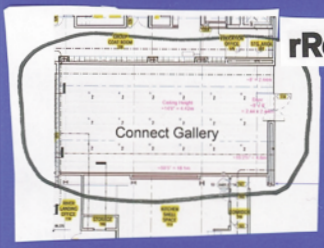


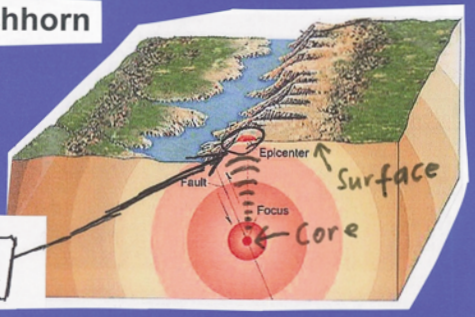


Extracts from the Fieldwork notebook

Thomas Hirschhorn

rRemai mModern





THE MUSEUM AS AN EPI-CENTER

PLÍNIO PRADO

The Erotics of the Teaching Relationship

PROFESSOR: You have argued that there is an intrinsic and intimate relationship between Eros and teaching. A kind of "eroticization" of the teaching relationship, as one might understand. "You only learn from whom you love", you bluntly posited. It seemed rather light during these times of lifting of silence on the sexual, psychological, and emotional harassment that takes place in higher education, where tongues are finally being liberated.

SHE: That the vow of silence be lifted on a subject as compromising as sexual and emotional harassment, I could ask for no better.

PROFESSOR: I thought as much, actually.

SHE: Still, I maintain that it is imprudent – to say the least – to extend the #MeToo opinion movement, as it is, to higher education without any form of precaution. Considering the always-hasty and often-hysterized controversies in the media and the so-called "social networks", it must be recognized that the problem of "harassment" remains very poorly posed. As a rule, we do not take the time to address and really question, first of all what "sexual" means, as if it were something that goes without saying… Whereas history and the theory of sexuality show that it is not quite what one may think. As for my argument…

PROFESSOR: The fact remains that there is sexual harassment and it is spreading in the academic environment; you yourself are a witness. Let's return to what is more current and more pressing. Right now it is #SupToo or whatever you have. We urgently need an academic ethics in this matter.

SHE: Still, I insist: transposing #MeToo as it is in the University leaves me perplexed and worried. We had every right to hope that the problem of "harassment" would gain in clarification and in nuance, moving from media haste to time for reflection, which was still supposed to be the prerogative of academics, who in principle are well-versed in the art of reading, questioning, thinking, and analyzing discourses – as well as in the art of teaching this art (we will come back to this, since we are talking about the art of the teaching relationship!). But it is true that for quite some time now, the University has tended to speak more and more the language of instant-thought of the media…

PROFESSOR: I do not see how your reservations contribute to meeting the urgency of our need.

SHE: As you know, the media always operate in all haste, with opinion, misconception, and prejudice. By bringing their language, with #SupToo, within itself and without questioning it, doesn't the University capitulate to its responsibility, which is to have to flush out the prejudices and the "evident facts" that circulate in society, and subject them to severe scouring work?

PROFESSOR: What evident facts are you talking about?

SHE: The false evidence of what "the sexual" is, of what equality is, what symmetry is… Is there equality when it comes to sexuality? What is consent in this case, the right of the other to say yes or no? Where does asymmetry begin and where does it end? Why did the author of the four volumes of *The History of Sexuality* maintain in principle that "sexuality is by no means a matter of any legislation whatsoever"? Héloïse will always speak up against Abelard's punishment.
All of this is all the more complex and delicate as higher education is not part of the star system *milieu*, nor quite that of businesses (not yet completely, in any case); the relationships mediated by knowledge that take place there constitute a very particular world, with the eros specific to intelligence that this implies. By ignoring this difference, your "ethical" remedy

runs the risk of being just as bad, if not worse, than the evil. Take a look at the witch-hunt sparked by American-style "sexual harassment" on college campuses.

PROFESSOR: Let's look at what is new and important in the French affair! Colleagues and students are rallying today to denounce the ravages of psychological and sexual harassment in higher education. Harassment lurks there under the exercise of well-established hierarchical power relations: teacher and student, thesis advisor and PhD candidate, full professor and associate professor – against the backdrop of unbridled competition, sometimes in exchange for a few favors, a recommendation or a promotion. As if the feudal primae noctis right was quite simply perpetuated there! Hence the need for an academic ethics which (and I quote our code) "aligns the university disciplinary regime with that adopted, in good sense, by physicians in the doctor-patient relationship". In plain language, this amounts to saying (again, I quote) an "ethical prohibition in principle of any romantic, sexual, emotional relationship [...] between teachers and students".

SHE: Which is to say, to strip the teaching relationship of any affective dimension...

PROFESSOR: To ensure healthy working conditions.

SHE: That is where the problem lies.

PROFESSOR: How so?

SHE: In the hurry to pursue #MeToo under the watchword #SupToo, we "only" forget, there too, to ask ourselves what a teaching relationship is... In particular in the Humanities. And consequently, from where the energy that animates it and makes it possible comes. Another "evident fact" played out, presupposed. And we simply crush this relationship, under the "good sense" of a medical-academic ethical discipline. What was once a powerful pedagogical lever – emotional investment – training for the "profession of being human", is now becoming the object of "disciplinary procedure"! Good health from now on is the "disaffected" teaching relationship. We might as well forbid transferential investment in the analytical relationship! Well, what do you know! This is already happening today: it's called psychotherapy.

PROFESSOR: Freud had a very strict ethics of the transferential relationship. He held that transference love is part of the patient's symptoms; any acting out would therefore amount to sustaining the symptom and was strictly prohibited.

SHE: That is what I am saying. It is quite another thing to want to proscribe the transferential dimension. On the contrary, Freud made it the resource *par excellence* of the analytic relationship, and this was its strength, in contrast to the so-called "ethics" of a Breuer. Well, the same goes for the teaching relationship: the affective dimension is consubstantial with it. Even if it means working it out and working through it. All things being equal, this is the stake of the Socratic erotic, at least according to Plato: to convert the love of bodies into the love of truth, *erôs sôphrôn*. The analogy with the function of the Freudian transference is evident, including its functioning on the teaching scene. Still, it will need to be explained to us what "truth" means, which always arises where we do not expect it… In short, wanting to purify the teaching relationship of this affective function, to "cleanse" it as your medical and academic good sense advocates it, would be to liquidate it purely and simply. Ultimately, this means playing into the hands of the techno-managerial and authoritarian system in place, including "pedagogical management", with its arsenal of instruments to manage and evaluate human "resources".

PROFESSOR: Assuming that your charge is admitted, the fact remains that it is not an answer to the initial question, not to say the suspicion: the one we may have with regard to your arguments on teaching Eros. You have gone so far as to unearth the anachronistic definition of pederasty as a pedagogical method.

SHE: Our contemporaries believe that "Eros", "erotic", simply boils down to the sexual act, to coitus. They do not imagine that one can postulate an eroticism of reading, for example. In any case, they do not believe that the man in love, *erôtikos anèr*, can be an essential determination of the philosopher, and that between spiritual desire and sexual love there can be anything other than a gap.
And yet, the stigmatized arguments are inseparable from the very origins of philosophy and constitute the principle, *arkhè,* governing it. It is symptomatic of the zeitgeist that university professors take offense, including philosophy professors, isn't it? The love of young people,

paid-erastia, is *paidagôgos*, guide of young people, educator in essence, initiating them to a *tekhnè* of life, an art of existence (I almost blush at having to recall this). What is there to say against that? You only have to think of Socrates-Eros, whose two *Banquets* that have come down to us, that of Plato and that of Xenophon, have drawn a famous portrait, so vivid that it ended up erecting the great initiator as a model of loved objects, a living embodiment of the unity of teaching, *paidagôgia*, and of love, *érôs*.
And do not forget, dear professor, that if Socrates could profess to know nothing, "other than matters of love, *ta érôtika*", it is because according to Plato's account, the initiator had himself been initiated into the mysteries of Eros by a woman—foreigner and priestess to boot. Which, under the auspices of a female figure, originally binds philosophical teaching to initiation, *télétè*, and to *érôtika*. Far from any conception of teaching as "filling a vase", pure and simple impersonal transmission of accepted knowledge.

PROFESSOR: Come to your senses, my dear. The University—nor even its Humanities—is by no means this place of initiation with an "erotic" dimension, or better said: transferential, that you imagine, within which the student would be led to work on themself and on self-transformation and to learn an art of living. This is from another age. Besides, you do not hide that your model is that of the schools of wisdom of Antiquity, where a strong loving relationship between master and disciple actually took shape—a relationship that was both intellectual and existential, in which women—and I grant you that—the Hipparchias, the Aspasias, the Artemis, not to speak of Diotima, also took part; the issue being just as much that of knowledge as that of the choice of lifestyle. Well, all of that, dear friend, is the culture of the past.

SHE: And yet, from Shakespeare and Goethe to Freud and Lacan, including W. Jensen, S. Zweig, D. de Rougemont to R. Barthes and beyond (I quote almost at random), countless are the modern works that have not finished meditating on this strange intrinsic link between love and initiation, even love and cure, desire and knowledge, the spiritual and the sexual, passion and thought. That's my point!

PROFESSOR: But as soon as we look at things from the point of view of the modern University, we quickly realize that the essential is elsewhere: from now on, it is a matter of transmitting proven knowledge, imparting operative skills, and ensuring through evaluation procedures

that their acquisition has taken place, sanctioning it with credits and diplomas that their holder will in turn cash in on the job market, at the University or otherwise. All of this in as objective, formal, and impersonal a way as possible, oh yes, whether it is a question of the relationship to knowledge and its object or the relationship between teacher and students.

SHE: Oh! I am in a good position to know that! In the end, we are only concerned with the management of the university machine, and with the reproduction of knowledge serving as a productive commodity. And may the factory run, leaving everything as it is: may the students get their credits, teachers get their pay and promotions, and may the civil servants continue to train other civil servants.

PROFESSOR: No matter what you say, the fact remains that there are no longer masters and disciples, only teachers and students, and increasingly, information providers (or service providers), and student-clients. It is less a "relationship" as such than a contract of exchange between partners, the object of which is knowledge, which in fact has itself become a commodity. Besides, we hardly teach anymore, we just pretend to; rather, we are obliged to think about our books, for the advancement of our careers—as the Bologna process requires. We do not care about emotional, love or any other bonds. We just need equality in respect, which means: distance, so that the students can study and conduct their research work in good conditions.

SHE: Of course! And that is precisely why I care about the apparatus of the teaching relationship as if it were the apple of my eye. Because, from the very inside of the ordinary university routine, it still traces one last line of resistance to this state of affairs.
And as for the rest, it would be necessary that all those who at the University, and in particular in the Humanities, recognize themselves in your rather cynical picture of the university drudge… they should nevertheless stop pretending to consistently speak there of "emancipation", "concern for oneself and others", "solicitude", "new subjectivation", "courage of the truth", etc., under penalty of falling definitively into academic rascality: the one that consists in merely discoursing *on* the criticism of the state of affairs, *on* the ethical imperative, by making them a simple object of discourse, of autonymic representation, and thereby neutralizing their practical enforceability. Thus, reassuring the establishment that academic discourse does no harm to anyone (as Nietzsche used to say): it still does not have the slightest

implication on the *êthos* of the subjects, nor *a fortiori* on the zeitgeist or the aforementioned "reality".

PROFESSOR: Still, your "initiation apparatus" raises yet another question.

SHE: Well!

PROFESSOR: By placing emphasis on the teaching relationship and circulation and the work of affects, you seem to neglect the "contents". I mean: training in technical, philological aspects, methods of approach, relating to the study of texts or objects, which provide the material for the conversation we have with each other and with ourselves on such theme or such problem. The teacher relationship nevertheless takes place on the occasion of these skills. A fragment of *Antisthenes*'s, for example, the Latin poem by Lucretius, or even Descartes' *Meditations,* or *Critique of Judgment*, or even *Philosophical Investigations*, cannot be read just like that, *intentionio recta*. They pose problems of exegesis, require a critical apparatus, a reading protocol, an interminable work of deciphering their machinery, their presuppositions and their innuendos.

SHE: It goes without saying that this is the daily bread of the modern scholiast – the academic. Whether he is a "transmitter" (of content) or an "initiator" (of subjects). What you want to point out corresponds to one of the dimensions of my apparatus. This one articulates and originally links three of them, namely: 1) the "erotic" dimension, in the said sense; 2) the "epistemic" dimension of knowledge or of thought; 3) the "psychagogic" dimension of the care or concern for the self.
The two protagonists in relation are situated, respectively: in 1) as *érastès*, the lover, and *éroménôs*, the beloved; in 2) as master and disciple; in 3) as *therapeutès* (the one who excels in the relation to the self, the *sapiens* in Latin) and *anoetos* (the one who defines themself by the non-relation to the self, the insane, the *stultus*).
All this will lead Lacan to say that Socrates announces in a sense the figure of the psychoanalyst. I would like to say today: the talking cure must be understood as *cura sui* (no offense to Foucault's theory of confession, but we can explain it).

PROFESSOR: The comparison between the classroom and the *iatreion*, the clinic of the soul, was indeed a recurring theme in Antiquity that Epictetus insisted on in the 1st century.

SHE: Well, precisely, there is the unconscious in the classroom. And it is better to count on it than to have to suffer it. That said, from the structure of my apparatus it follows that dimension 2, of knowledge, that you questioned, remains inextricably linked to the other two: to the dimension of érôs and to the psychagogical dimension—which implies that the problem must be posited again differently. Roland's initiation into Zweig's *Confusion*, for example, is naturally inseparable from the philological competence of his master, a profound connoisseur of the Elizabethans, Shakespeare and Shakespearians, as well as from his resolutely "vitalist" approach to literature. Thus he spoke to his audience: "I ask you to put yourselves in unison with this *supreme* zeal for life [which the Elizabethans are and express]. For there is no philological intelligence possible, if one does not penetrate life itself". Nietzsche is not far off, of course, but neither is the Aristophanian flame.

PROFESSOR: I find it difficult, however, to fend off the impression that your initiate, Roland, is very likely to be doomed to imitate his master, to be ventriloquized by him for life. Forced to repeat, to what Proust called the involuntary pastiche. His confession at the end of the story remains very disconcerting: "All this is forty years ago [meeting with the master], yet still today, when I am in the middle of a lecture and what I am saying breaks free from me and spreads its wings, I am suddenly, self-consciously aware that it is not I myself speaking, but someone else, as it were, out of my mouth. Then I recognize the voice of the beloved dead, who now has breath only on my lips; when enthusiasm comes over me, he and I are one. And I know that those hours [the hours of the initial meeting] formed me."

SHE: There is a surprising transferential power of speeches, of tones, of gestures, which communicates with the unfathomable unconscious life of the soul. So much so that until the 19th century, Bernheim's notion of suggestion, which Freud would take up again, was impregnated with connotations of magic, witchcraft, demonic practices… Examples of transference mimicry abound. Wittgenstein told in his "non-courses" that he had noticed one day that he himself was walking like Russell; we have seen passionate young scientists trying to imitate Oppenheimer; and we all know disciples of this or that contemporary French thinker taking on the accent of the master's voice, even their physiognomic traits, including their stylistic tics.

But taken as it is, it remains anecdotal; here is the important thing. From his first encounter with the master, Roland, on his way home, takes out of the trunk a volume of Shakespeare and begins to read it, he confides, "I had never had such an experience before." "I heard my voice unconsciously imitating his, the sentences raced on in the same headlong rhythm, my hands felt impelled to move, arching in the air like his own". And he concludes: "as if by magic, in a single hour, I had broken through the wall which previously stood between me and the world of the intellect, and passionate as I was by nature, I had discovered a new passion [...]".
In short: this accent, the voice, the right tone "caught", has a hermeneutical scope, so to speak: it magically allows meaning to appear (Wittgenstein wrote to a friend: "When the poem is read according to this tone, everything becomes clear!"). And it also has heuristic significance: as soon as you hold air, Proust said, thoughts and words quickly come together on their own.

PROFESSOR: Are you saying that this would be it then—a tone—which would ultimately be transmitted in this case, let's say by contagion, contracted by the initiator, rather than what the linguist calls a content of signification?

SHE: Absolutely! A gesture of intonation, a singular breath, with a power of inspiration, of its own, capable at the very least of inciting minds to research and experimentation. What shall I say? Capable of teaching inspiration itself—the unteachable, par excellence. Which is therefore, once again, quite another thing than the simple transmission of stocks of ready-made knowledge and conventional syntactic turns, which one would have to repeat all one's life.
We should move resolutely towards a musical conception of teaching. The course as a vibratory field, matter in movement, flow of tonal, conceptual, and emotional matter. Deleuze's *Sprechgesang*.
It is on this condition that the paradox of teaching, its stake, is possible: to teach others to stand on their own two feet. That is to say, to do without the master-teacher. According to the model of the paradoxical injunction: "Have the courage to think for yourself". Here again, the analogy with the analyst is essential.

PROFESSOR: This reminds me of the final words of *The Fruits of the Earth* [*Nourritures terrestres*], addressed to the reader for whom the book is nevertheless intended: "Nathaniel, throw away my book."

SHE: The teacher is only there to make a difference in the life of the other, to initiate or to convert them, as we say since Socrates, and then to step aside; to let this other be, according to their becoming. This is the teacher's raison d'être. Someone has formulated it with rare accuracy, extending it to human relationships in general: "What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead".

PROFESSOR: It sounds like Socrates's plea in *The Apology*.

SHE: That is Nelson Mandela. In his address to his fellow ANC fighter, Walter Sisulu, at his 90th birthday celebration. It is significant that this is not an academic philosopher speaking here, but an avid fighter for freedom, and for an indivisible freedom ("the chains on any one of my people were the chains on all of them, the chains on all of my people were the chains on me").
And to make a difference in a life, to change it (precisely in the sense in which it is said in *The Apology* that a life that does not question itself is not worth living), here it means: to transform a frightened young man into someone daring, a lawyer abiding by formal laws into an insurgent, a husband and father into a wandering rebel, or even forcing a lover of life to live as an ascetic monk.

PROFESSOR: I understand that you have been firmly standing by your point since the beginning of our interview, namely the imperative that "we must change life". Hence the conversion and the initiation. Even if we are treading initially unexpected paths, as with this anti-apartheid struggle, where we go beyond the University, in the strict sense, and where initiation is no longer, or no longer only, a revolution in the second person singular.

SHE: A vast subject, in the era of "networks" and the wiring of the planet: where does the University begin and where does it end?... What about, from now on, its so-called inside and its outside?

PROFESSOR: You will grant me in any case that, within the agreed-upon limits of the University today, one cannot imagine that its horizon would be to train insurgents, say, Michael Kohlhaas,

or if you prefer, the Yellow Vests, who seem to me, in a sense, to be the Kohlhaas of today; or even what we call climate activists.

SHE: Of course, the Freie Universität Berlin of the fifties and the sixties or the Centre universitaire expérimental de Vincennes, are from another age, as you would say. And that does say something about your University's relationship to honor: its intrinsic rascality, which we were talking about.

PROFESSOR: But since we only have this one, let us return to your apparatus of the teaching relationship. I still do not see how one could, under these conditions, found a "line of resistance" on an apparatus that, I repeat, is outdated. Look at your examples: from Socrates to Freud… They hardly refer to university professors as such. The only ones in your pantheon that one would think could be counted as such—Nietzsche or Wittgenstein—are in fact in deep conflict with the University. Nietzsche left it in its 35th year. And Wittgenstein went so far as to call Cambridge "an English civilization in the process of disintegrating and putrefaction". As important as their work may be, they are basically anti-academics, to use an epithet that was applied to Lacan.

SHE: And that the latter willingly claimed, moreover. But then look at *Confusion*. The "Socratic" teaching relationship, the originary ancient scene of the typical initiatory encounter, resurfaces in the midst of modern university: in Germany at the beginning of the 20th century.

PROFESSOR: A beautiful work of literary fiction.

SHE: It could not have found its strength of veracity if it had not been able to grasp and elaborate the material of a real experience, which was that of the writer and his time. Its literary veracity is the guarantee of its historical possibility. This is obvious when you read Zweig's short story together with the author's posthumous autobiography, *The World of Yesterday: Memoirs of a European*. Well, read the chapter called "Universitas vitae".

PROFESSOR: But precisely, it is entirely dedicated to what the narrator-hero does outside the University!

SHE: The narrator was then in search of the "University of life", especially on the side of literary experimentation, "the most austere school of life". But the great discovery will be made by Roland, the hero of *Confusion*: it is the revelation that the "University of life", which Zweig sought, can take place within the University itself! And this revelation is Roland's own initiation. It takes place on the occasion of the improbable meeting with a professor, in fact a true master, certainly lost in the modern unheimlich university, with whom an intense vital, intellectual, and existential relationship could nevertheless be established.

PROFESSOR: It was the world of yesterday… Or if you prefer, the world of yesterday's University. Zweig wrote about it in his last book as a farewell. It means something. As soon as the manuscript was sent to the publisher, he and his partner took their own lives.

SHE: However, beyond the universe of Zweig's short story, we can observe that the "non-courses" of a Wittgenstein in Cambridge, for example, in the thirties, the scene of his dictations to his students, that anticipate, as if in a strange premonitory vision, the startling pages of *Confusion*; or even the teaching of a Heidegger in Marburg, inspiring the passion of his Jewish disciples, Strauss, Löwith, Jonas, Anders, which was also the place of his meeting with the young Hannah Arendt – all of these resurgences of the teaching relationship that I am talking about, and many others, less famous perhaps but just as exemplary, do indeed belong to the modern, university space. Where the originary scene of the initiatory encounter can nevertheless always be opened or reopened. A scene in which the writing of *Confusion* masterfully exposes the axiomatic, if I may say so.
And as it is to be expected, these are always teachers whose essential person and thought are merged with their teaching. All that precisely, exemplarily, Roland's unnamed master embodies. In short, we always come back to the so-called Aristophanian model. For the hundredth time: teaching is not filling a vase, it is lighting a fire. And it is precisely to this extent that the teaching relationship can still constitute a last line of resistance in the University – including to the University. It opens up and spawns a kind of external zone inside. *Unheimliche*, like that famous strangeness that squats the intimate. The extimate thing is always already forgotten and unforgettable.

ÉLISE LAMY-RESTED

Portrait of the Cyborg Student

In our given context, I will use my experience as a starting point to try to think about the difficulties that a philosophy teacher may encounter today. This will therefore be, first and foremost, a testimony that would like to pave the way for a debate without claiming to bring the "truth" on what would constitute the "essence" of the senior year student in philosophy class in the years 2010-2020. If the title of my talk, "Portrait of the Cyborg Student", might have suggested, the goal of this conference paper is certainly not to produce a theoretical reflection on the challenges of new technologies for the teaching of philosophy today or on the impact of new technologies on this teaching. Rather, I wish to give an account of the undoubtedly unprecedented phenomena that emerge on a daily basis, starting from my own ground, that is to say, from the classroom of a general or technological public high school within the *Académie de Créteil* where philosophy is taught. I would also like to specify that my angle of view deliberately excludes all the aspects that escape the problems posed by the use of new technologies by our students. It goes without saying that the reasons for the difficulties faced by a philosophy teacher in a high school classroom in the *Académie de Créteil* greatly exceed this single dimension, and that it would undoubtedly be necessary to gather other testimonies adopting other angles of attack, in order to begin to have a slightly better representation of the complexity of the situation, and a portrait of a student with a slightly more precise outline. The recent events that took place at the Edouard Branly high school in Val de Marne (a teacher was threatened by a student who held a fake gun to her head so that she could mark him "present"[1]), for example, cannot be explained by the sole need of the

students to "create a buzz" by posting a video on YouTube, even if this need for celebrity *via* new technologies is undoubtedly at play in this act [2].

To begin with, I will take as my point of departure these two postulates: first, I will argue that the cognitive capacities and psychic representations of young people who have grown up immersed in new technologies are significantly different from those of their elders. Secondly, I suppose that the cousin-like teaching of philosophy, which is still in force in the national education system in the senior year of high school, is each year a little more inadequate to these new intelligences partly built by new technologies. My feedback is not intended to propose avenues of reflection for an eventual reform of philosophy syllabi and exercises, although this is undoubtedly urgent and necessary—I have neither the means nor the skills to do so[3]—but rather to engage in a reflection of an "anthropological-philosophical" nature on the behavior and the way of thinking of the average student in a classroom (as you will have understood, I am not talking about the model student of a good Parisian or provincial high school destined for the preparatory class[4]). The construction of the "portrait of the cyborg student" has therefore no other objective than to lay some foundations or some milestones to which we may possibly refer in order to develop a reflection on the possible reasons for the gap, which is widening a little more every year, between the teaching of philosophy, as it is always taught in school, and the capacities of the students to receive it.

First of all, what about the students' relationship to new technologies and more precisely to the cell phone that has invaded classrooms? As a teacher, this fusional relationship of the student with the telephone has forced me to establish a rule that the students—not without some prior protest—have come to accept. At the beginning of each class, I remind them that cell phones must be put in their bags, which, themselves, must be placed under the tables. Any visible cell phone will be immediately confiscated until the end of class. I inform them that it is not a question of reading the messages or even looking at the home screen, which for all of the students constitutes a violation of their privacy and sometimes very violent reactions: the cell phone will simply be placed face down on the desk for the duration of the class. It is on this condition that they agree to give me their phone when I catch them playing with it, without any immediate conflict or power struggle erupting. My expectations are in fact those of the school and of the exercise they will have to face as early as possible in the year

in order to be ready on the day of the final exam (i.e. the essay [*dissertation*] and the text commentary [*explication de texte*]): globally, I expect the students' attention to be focused first on a course that unfolds in an ideally linear way (I say "ideally" because a course is never linear, in that it must constantly adapt to the students' reactions and questions, which are sometimes unexpected). I teach them the notions on the syllabus, the essay and the text commentary, which require them to have a certain extremely conformist way of thinking and a standard bodily attitude: all movement in the classroom is forbidden, chatter is forbidden, the student's body must be turned towards the board. Saying things like this may seem extremely conservative, but one must realize that on the one hand, it is impossible to teach a class in the midst of a hubbub, and that on the other hand, it is indeed the general framework of the philosophical exercise (or more globally of the high school as a structure) that imposes such class management. Nevertheless, don't imagine that my classroom resembles a mass, because the students obviously do not respect this protocol and resist – apart from a few – learning not only the lessons but above all the exercises for the baccalaureate, which the majority of them will not be able to acquire in one year anyway, since they lack mastery of the French language, whether from the point of view of spellings or syntax. Thus, papers full of grammatical and spelling errors and sometimes bordering on the incomprehensible from beginning to end, but showing the student's effort to produce a structured reflection or to reproduce philosophical knowledge, obtain a grade of around 8, whereas a clear paper written in correct French, but devoid of any philosophical or other reference, will immediately receive a grade equivalent to at least 10. In any case, the majority of students will obtain their baccalaureate and the Ministry of National Education will certainly be able to congratulate itself again this year on an increase in the percentage of baccalaureate holders. From this observation, which may seem extremely shocking to someone who is removed from teaching or who is part of it but who is so afraid of feeding into reactionary comments about school that he or they prefer to mute them (even if some of them are really optimistic, it should be noted), the students are not fooled. They know that the baccalaureate will not bring them anything and that they can obtain it with little to no work, by skipping school, or by behaving badly all year long (which is indeed true every year). This lucidity obviously does not encourage students to get to work and accentuates the difficulties of teachers, but that is another debate…

To return more directly to my subject, I would like to start again from this fusional

relationship of the student to their cell phone and beyond that to the social networks which magnetize them totally and absolutely. The reactions of students, when their cell phone is confiscated, can thus be particularly strong and border on a reaction of terror or anguish that greatly exceeds the simple fear that the teacher is using or looking at the information contained in the cell phone. It is more profoundly a feeling of amputation or castration, which may have led students to threaten their teacher physically or verbally. How can we explain this fusional link that the student has, but perhaps as do the adults that we are, with the cell phone? I suppose that in order to attempt a very first and very superficial explanation, we could start out from Derrida's philosophy which, I believe, can give us some elements of answer. According to Derrida, the technical object is not an external element that we manipulate, but it is constitutive of the singularity. In other words, the technical object is not an extension of the body or the hand that facilitates our action on the world, but a true – although non living – member of the living. The latter indeed invent their singularity out of a technical object possessing the capacity to detach itself from its progenitor in order to allow it to survive after their biological death (this is how Derrida conceives of writing in his first texts based especially on the analyses of Husserl and Plato). What Derrida raises by this means, is the fact that no living being can construct itself without an object which is at the same time internal and external, and which will necessarily be the site of a multitude of affective or intellectual projections. The ingenuity of the designers of the cell phone lies perhaps in this deep understanding (and non Derridian of course) of this need for a living being to appropriate such an object to the point of not being able to separate from it. Thus they have designed an object capable of simultaneously meeting our vital needs and the constraints of the consumer society. Insidiously, it is a question of ensuring that individuals, by appropriating their object, always conform and integrate themselves a little more into a consumerist system. This initially "empty" object has enough plasticity to allow each person to make it their own, until we are finally no longer able to distinguish it from ourselves. This plastic capacity specific to the cell phone, without which it would be much more difficult for us to enter into an addictive relationship with it, has a "computer jargon name" which initially designates the fact of putting into image or giving figure: configuration. The imaginary universe of the student is thus indistinguishable from the universe contained in their phone and to cut them off from the relation to their object is to cut them off from themself. But, as we know, while the student – as well as any other individual – may have had the opportunity to configure their cell phone to

suit their tastes, their interests, or their friendships, they are not its inventor. The object as well as all its applications were conceived by companies in a specific economic context whose purpose is certainly not education or the training of minds. Likewise, the ways of using them are certainly not the fruit of the student's personal imagination or creativity – except perhaps for some of them, more expert in new technologies or already sufficiently constructed to be able to put these new technologies at the service of an already very singular mental life. But for most of the students, largely influenced by the liberal ideology centered on the heroization of the individual, in this case confused with the enjoyment that the admiration of one's social network or the expression of one's "power" in a game can arouse, it is above all a question of using them to stage themselves in all possible ways. In other words, the student only has the illusion of being the master of the construction of their universe, because they only respond to the stimuli of society, using the applications that are made available to them in the least innovative way possible. How does the young cyborg teenager construct themself, who then become, by ministerial choice, the improbable student of the philosophy teacher in the senior year of high school? I imagine, a bit like Rousseau imagines his man in the state of nature in *Discourse on the Origin and Basis of Inequality Among Men* (1755), this young man devoured by the desire for recognition and who desperately seeks the means of his individualization. I imagine that all the applications he can download on his computer or his phone are as many ways to achieve this. Two types of applications are of particular interest to my cyborg: applications for surfing on social networks and games. In both cases, he enters a derealizing world where he distances himself more and more from his real abilities to enter the skin of a phantasmal self. I imagine this student in total immersion in this other world which provides him with the all of his sensory and psychic stimuli. In this world, he illusorily occupies a central place from which he manages his networks and the actions he decides to accomplish. He lives his life through the prism of others' eyes, which emanate from invisible and sometimes equally phantasmal eyes. How many views are there of my video, my photos, my comments? Life is only worth living if it is captured and mirrored by thousands, or even ideally, millions of eyes. More exactly, life is only real if, paradoxically, it is integrated into social networks or projected inside a game. In this world, the modes of connection (since I won't dare to speak of modes of thought) are non-linear, the reactions are immediate and perhaps closer to reflex. Verbal language is almost useless since most of the exchanges take place through images. The life lived is first of all a captured life, broadcast on social networks preferably in an instantaneous

way. You no longer memorize your life, any more than you tell it. There is no need to have a memory and to manipulate language to put one's memories into words and order. One's life is disseminated through images; it is immediately displayed on applications such as *Snapchat* or *Periscope*. The imaginary body, the image body or the body projected in social networks is also a fragmented body that paradoxically recovers in the fantasy of a unified individual. Through these applications, one does not build the story of one's life, one throws the most intense moment of one's life to the eyes of the other. The individual is this eroticized or rejoicing [*jouissant*] hero whose existence has suddenly become more intense than that of all the others. He embodies the absolute presence, the sovereignty of the phallic subject. The same goes for comments, whether it be via Twitter, which invites one to react on the spot to any type of information, or *Facebook*, which mixes commentary and the broadcasting of one's life through images. For the *Facebook* commentator, articulate language is just as useless: it is a matter of reacting by using smileys expressing the whole gamut of emotions, or by writing a short message that does not need to be written in correct French. The writing should be as fast and intense as the way one broadcasts one's life: it is about writing to make one's reaction and emotion heard. Spelling is of no use since it is a matter of writing the word as you hear it. The message must be short because it invites neither reflection nor repartee: it is written in the mode of the punchline. The punchline is this striking sentence which could be the descendant of the moral maxim if it had not become essentially marketing. Its aim is to shock, to mark the minds that are supposed to return to it obsessively. If it can be elegant and can invite reflection, the punchline of my cyborg is first of all an impulse which responds to an emotion and which modulates itself or expresses itself in an almost inarticulate cry. Once again, it is a question of *jouissance* which seems to be the only possible mode of expression and existence. A *jouissance* put to the benefit of an exacerbated narcissism where the individual must appear in his glory and his omnipotence, when in fact he is in absolute solitude and completely disarmed by his lack of mastery of the French language (or of any other language). The disjunction between the individual staged in the phantasmal world created by new technologies and their misery in their real life, pushes them to remain more and more in what I would call a "hallucinogenic world", which functions like a "virtual reality" whereas it is not one.

To move closer to my conclusion, and so that I am not immediately accused of "technophobia",

I would like to question this expression, already obsolete in the philosophy of technology, but nevertheless useful for thinking about my object: "virtual reality". Virtual reality is classically defined as the result of the construction of a world entirely shaped by new technologies and as such fictional or non-existent. It is said to be "real" because the subject who evolves in it in a state of complete immersion, receives all their sensations (haptic, visual and sound) from this world with which they can interact. It was apparently of this world that I was speaking when I constructed my representation of a cyborg student. This expression, "virtual reality", does not seem to me to correspond to the world that we sell to our young people.

In philosophy, since Aristotle, the virtual is opposed to the actual. The virtual is existence in potential, while the actual is the process by which the virtual expresses itself and tears itself away from its being in potential. In other words, actualization is a becoming: it is that process by which an object comes into existence. The tree is thus virtually, but well and truly, contained in the seed. This is what made Deleuze say in *Différence et répétition* (Presses Universitaires de France, 1968), that the virtual is not opposed to the real but to the actual. The virtual is real, full of its becoming, while the actual is the accidental but also real expression of this virtual object. The relation between the virtual and the actual is not, according to Deleuze, determined by a teleology. The process of actualization is not simply the process of advent of a final cause that precedes the efficient cause in Aristotelian terms, but it is a process of singularization without a predetermined finality. Actualization is, in other words, a process of creation: if the virtual data can be identical, their actualization always takes place in a unique and potentially changing context. By implication, the actual object is not the embodiment of the end of a process. The actual does not thus exclude the virtual but the one is always contaminated by the other. This contamination makes possible the repetition of the process of actualization. Within the framework of new technologies, the expression "virtual reality" does not refer to the idea that the new technologies produce a fiction capable of producing a feeling of reality in the user, as hallucination could, for example. Rather, it means that virtual digital data is waiting to be actualized by a user who can totally reinvent their world according to the way they use it. Virtual reality is thus ideally a space of invention actualized by a singularity that is itself a force in the making or a process of actualization. The process of singularization is not different from the process of actualization, which itself is not different from confronting reality.

This virtual reality is certainly not the one in which our cyborg students live. The new technologies at their disposal do not invite them to invent or create. I suppose that they immerse them in a world that is fictitious, but which also has the capacity to provide them with a large part of their sensory stimuli and which can have an impact on reality. The applications they use do not invite them to enter into a process of actualization that supposes the confrontation of reality or the experience of patience that any creative process requires. They project them in a world where they are invited to enjoy [*jouir*] immediately, as I described earlier. Their purpose, which is not separable from the purpose of the capitalist society in which we evolve, is above all to use available brain time, to use this well-found expression of Patrick Le Lay, and to integrate the individual into the consumer society, that is to say, to make them a "super individual".

In conclusion, I would maintain that the teaching of philosophy as it is practiced to these cyborg students is completely inadequate and inappropriate. However, it cannot be a question of wanting to adapt to this type of intelligence or to use the new technologies without thinking about them at length and deeply beforehand. I believe, on the contrary, that teaching of philosophy starting with and using new technologies is possible, as my embryonic reflection on virtual reality has been able to suggest…

ENDNOTES

1. On this point, one can for example see this online *Le Monde* article: https://www.lemonde.fr/police-justice/article/2018/10/21/creteil-un-eleve-soupconne-d-avoir-braque-une-arme-factice-sur-sa-professeure_5372499_1653578.html

2. I would like to point out right away that this text was written before talk about banning cell phones in high school started—an idea that coincided with the news story I just reported.

3. I am writing this text at a time when the reforms of syllabi and tests have been announced but not yet fully known, which puts me in a very uncomfortable situation. It must be said that the modification of the tests can certainly lead to a change in the form of the classes and in the behavior of the students without, however, leading to a

modification of their psychology. This change, however necessary it may be, is not necessarily desirable, because one has the right to fear that the tendency is rather towards demagogy and oversimplification of the syllabi. On the other hand, it can be worrying, because it must be admitted that this reduction of requirements is in line with the new capacities of “cyborg students”, which the National Education system probably does not yet know how to leverage...

4. This is another problem that should obviously be discussed at length and that could perhaps be the subject of another article: the educational inequality between students from the most disadvantaged backgrounds who no longer expect anything from school and dream of easy money; and students from privileged backgrounds who still see the possibility of accessing rewarding jobs thanks to their studies. To this, we should add the collapse of the authority of the teacher who has lost all credit in a society that privileges individual success, in this case confused with access to fame and/or wealth, over the construction of singularity in all its dimensions (physical, psychological, intellectual), which is nonetheless (or rather was?) the official objective of the school.

FRANCK JEDRZEJEWSKI

Forms of Life of Mathematical Objects

What could be more inert than mathematical objects? Nothing distinguishes them from rocks and yet, if we examine them in their historical perspective, they don't actually seem to be as lifeless as they do at first. Conceived as they are by humans, they offer a glimpse of the breath that brings them to life. Caught in the web of a language, they cannot extricate themselves from the form that the tensive forces constraining them have given them. While they do not serve a specific biological purpose, they are still, above all, possibilities of life, objects imbued with power. Though they know neither pain nor laughter, their mode or style of existence endows them with a special form of life that structures the givenness, the matter of the other entities in which they participate. Because of this, by intervening in the framework of these entities, mathematical objects condition their form of space, enjoining the entities to submit to a structure that they have not chosen.

Forms of Life and the Plane of Immanence

The expression "forms of life" seems to appear for the first time in the texts of Wittgenstein, particularly in *Philosophical Investigations* where there are no less than five examples of it. In one example, probably the most important, Wittgenstein places the form of life in the lineage

of the theory of language: more exactly, in that theory's project of a general pragmatics. He gives more credit to cultural practices and linguistic variations than to architectonic, logico-structural elements: "[T]o imagine a language means to imagine a form of life."[1] Naming a thing is not just giving the name of a thing, hearing the sound of the word that designates it, but also understanding the forms of life that make this word designate what it is. We do not come to understand what the word means merely through a distinction between an expression and a content or between a signifier and a signified. Its meaning has a broader scope, involving lived experience; environmental, social and cultural practice; an intertext as much as an extratext; and a way of considering the designated thing that is shared by everyone. For Wittgenstein, all of these intraworldly relations are just so many grammatical forms, and for Bruno Latour, regimes of enunciation. Understanding the word "compassion," for example, supposes the understanding of what afflicts the other person, of the intentional forms the word contains, and of the forms of life that constitute and shape it. The interpretation or the arrangement is not limited to Hjelmslev's distinction between content and expression or Saussure's between signifier and signified: rather, it is a functional approach that abandons the sign in favor of the object. It is oriented and defined by the coalescence of a single plane of immanence that arranges the objects regardless of their origins – whether they be signs, words, sounds, entities, or forms of life – according to the forces that group them together, independently of any interpretative presupposition. A second example of the expression, also from *Philosophical Investigations*, demonstrates that forms of life are an activity that encompasses language-games. "The word 'language-*game*' is used here to emphasize the fact that the *speaking* of language is part of an activity, or of a form of life."[2] It follows that forms of life are dynamic models that, depending on who is describing these models, are distinguishable or not from lifestyles marked by their static social determinations: they can reinvent themselves at any moment. Therefore, for Jacques Fontanille, forms of life cannot – on principle and by definition – be the subjects either of any general typology or one of a sociological, anthropological or ideological nature: this then sets them apart from any totalizing attempts at classification.[3]

Giorgio Agamben has a radically different way of conceiving forms of life. In *Means Without End*, he notes that the Greeks had two words for "life": *zoé*, which expressed the simple fact of being alive that all living beings share, and *bios*, which signified the form or way of life specific to an individual or group. The modern world has not retained this distinction, using a single

expression, "life," starkly designating the shared presupposition that one can always isolate within each of the countless forms of life. "By the term *form-of-life*, on the other hand, I mean a life that can never be separated from its form, a life in which it is never possible to isolate something such as naked life."[4] For Agamben, the constitution of this bare life is the precise operation on which the political sphere is based.

> Each behavior and each form of human living is never prescribed by a specific biological vocation, nor is it assigned by whatever necessity; instead, no matter how customary, repeated, and socially compulsory, it always retains the character of a possibility; that is, it always puts at stake living itself. […] But this immediately constitutes the form-of-life as political life. [5]

Agamben's conception of the "form-of-life," made possible by the multitude of forms of life and influenced by Foucault's ideas on biopolitics, is therefore founded on the impossibility of separating the individual from politics, science, arts or literature. "I call *thought* the nexus that constitutes the forms of life in an inseparable context as form-of-life."[6] Thought "must become the guiding concept and the unitary center of the coming politics."[7]

The idea reappears in the work of Yves Citton, for whom forms of life are expressions emphasizing the fact that human life is never a raw given (whether material, physical, or biological), but is constituted by a certain kind of shaping (always simultaneously social, historical and esthetic) of material conditions that could be arranged otherwise.[8] In *Lire, interpréter, actualiser* ("Reading, Interpreting, Actualizing"), Citton draws the anatomical portrait of *Homo hermeneuticus* by trying to grasp what makes it at once the product and the co-producer of our forms of social life.[9] By privileging a contemporary reading of historical texts, allowing them to be interpreted in the light of our modern world instead of reconstructing the context in which they were written, the author seeks to perform what he calls a "disruptive overcoding" (*surcodage disruptif*) in order to highlight, in the act of reading, both the analysis of contemporary forms of life and ontological reflections.

To sum up, forms of life are eminently political and are indexed on the ambiguities of being. Because of this, they interest semioticians as well as writers of fiction, architects as well as philosophers. They participate, as Agamben says, in an *ontology of style*. "What we call form-of-life corresponds to this ontology of style; it names the mode in which a singularity bears

witness to itself in being and being expresses itself in the singular body."[10] Some forms of life devote themselves to a search through time; others delve into territorialized spaces. But all refer to a collective becoming, a shared immanent force that drives the object to become what it is. To illustrate our ideas, we will use two examples of mathematical objects: the Fourier transform and the monad in mathematical category theory.

Avatars of the Fourier Transform

In 1811, Joseph Fourier began his work on the propagation of heat. In 1822, five years after his election to the *Académie des sciences*, he published his 670-page magnum opus, *The Analytical Theory of Heat*. In the first two chapters, he presents the physical aspects of the question and derives the partial differential equation that regulates the change in temperature within a homogeneous mass, which is now called the *heat equation.* The solution of this equation depends upon the initial and the boundary values. The third chapter presents the use of trigonometric series. Fourier considers the canonical problem of a solid homogeneous mass contained between two planes that are vertical, parallel, and infinite, and endeavors to resolve the question of how to know what the temperature of this mass will be once the thermal equilibrium is established. This is a classic Dirichlet problem that consists in finding a harmonic function ($Du = 0$) on the basis of its boundary values. By seeking a solution broken down into trigonometric series, Fourier arrives at it. He then has to demonstrate the convergence of these series and rigorously establish their decomposition, which Dirichlet will accomplish some years later. But in Fourier's text, he already sets out all the formulas that we use to calculate what we now call Fourier coefficients. He was the first to understand that this new form of trigonometrically-based analysis could be extended to many other problems besides the heat equation. He writes:

> If we apply these principles to the problem of the motion of vibrating strings, we can solve difficulties which first appeared in the researches of Daniel Bernoulli. The solution given by this geometrician assumes that any function whatever may always be developed in a series of sines or cosines of multiple arcs. Now the most complete of all the proofs of this proposition is that which consists in actually resolving a given function into such a series with determined coefficients.[11]

Since then, the Fourier transform has found a wide variety of applications. Its form participates in that ontology of style mentioned by Agamben. We see it already in Fourier's

work. He takes a geometrician's problem and makes it an analytical one. The applications to mathematical physics highlight this possibility of resolving differential equations by shifting from one space to its dual. The Fourier transform converts an equation in time and space into an equation in the frequency domain that is usually easily resolved. The inverse Fourier transform allows for a return to the desired solution in time and space. Thus Euclidean space and the frequency domain, via the Fourier transform, become dual reciprocal spaces.

The extension of the Fourier transform to topological groups has shifted the problem toward other styles: algebra and topology. In mathematics, a group is a purely algebraic notion, which mathematicians have made topological as well by requiring that the group composition law and its inverse be two continuous applications. Applying a topology to a space is, for the mathematician, simply choosing what the continuous applications are on that space. Continuity is the fundamental essence of topological space, which is defined by sets of equivalent axioms, concerning open sets, closed sets or neighborhoods. In order to extend the Fourier transform to locally compact abelian (or commutative) groups – in other words commutative topological groups whose underlying space is locally compact – mathematicians have devised the notion of a group's characters and considered the dual group, formed by the set of these characters. With this notion of character, the calculations are transferred from an arbitrary group, whose objects may be fairly unusual, to the multiplicative group of non-zero complex numbers, whose calculation is well known. To be more precise, let us say that a character is a group morphism of the group G toward the complex group, i.e. it is an application that respects the group's structure. Thus the character $\chi(x)$ of an object x in G is a complex number that can be easily inserted into an integral, no matter how complicated the object x is. If G is a locally compact abelian group with a Haar measure μ and with χ as a character of G, then the Fourier transform of an integrable function f of the Lebesgue space $L^1(G)$ is the integral relative to the Haar measure of the product of $f(x)$ and the complex conjugate of the character $\chi(x)$

$$Ff(\chi)=\int_G f(x)\,\overline{\chi(x)}\,d\mu(x)$$

This bounded continuous function is an element of the Lebesgue space $L^\infty(G)$ where x is the set

of characters of *G*, known as the dual group of *G*. When $\mathbb{R}^n$ is the real space of dimension *n*, the characters are the exponential functions $\chi_a(x) = e^{ia.x}$. When *G* is the torus $\mathbb{R}/2\pi\mathbb{Z}$, the characters are the functions $x \rightarrow e^{inx}$ for an integer *n*. We thus reencounter the definition of Fourier series. The generalized Fourier transform allows for an inverse transform that is the integral relative to the Haar measure *V* on the dual group. It has the same properties as the regular transform. The convolution product of two functions *f* and *g*, which is the mathematical representation of the notion of a linear filter, is represented analytically by the function:

$$(f * g)(x) = \int f(x-t)g(t)dt$$

The main property of the Fourier transform is that it transforms a convolution product into a simple product of the Fourier transforms

$$F(f * g) = Ff \cdot Fg$$

It satisfies Parseval's theorem on the conservation of the scalar product[12]

$$\int f(x)\overline{g(x)}\,dx = \int Ff(x)\overline{Fg(x)}\,dx$$

whose corollary is the Plancherel formula[13] obtained when the functions *f* and *g* are equal:

$$\int |f(x)|^2 dx = 1(G)$$

What this generalization shows is that it transforms a problem of mathematical analysis into an algebraic problem. The new form of life of the Fourier transform is only possible because the set of characters of a locally compact abelian group is itself an abelian (i.e. a commutative) group: the dual group. This result, discovered by Lev Semenovich Pontryagin, is known as the Pontryagin duality theorem.[14] This duality allows the Fourier transform to carry the algebra under convolution $L^1(G)$ to a multiplicative algebra $L^\infty(G)$, and reciprocally by inverse transform

$$L^1(G) \underset{F^{-1}}{\overset{F}{\rightleftarrows}} L^\infty(\hat{G})$$

The generalizations of this duality did not allow the Fourier transform to change its way of

life. Throughout the 20th century, it remained an object whose essence was the duality of algebraic structures. In 1938, Tadao Tannaka generalized the duality theorem to noncommutative compact groups.[15] Mark Grigorievich Krein[16] built upon Tannaka's work; William Forrest Stinespring [17] then extended duality to the case of unimodular locally compact groups (1959).[18] Pierre Eymard (1964)[19] extended the classic results of the harmonic analysis of abelian groups to the case of locally compact groups even when such groups are not unimodular. The work of Nobuhiko Tatsuuma (1967) followed that of Eymard, establishing a weak duality on three types of topological groups.[20] From around 1965 on, at the instigation of mathematical physics, the research turned toward the establishment of a duality for the Hopf and Von Neumann algebras. One of the pioneers of operator algebra, Masamichi Takesaki, sought a general theorem of duality, which was ultimately established by Leonid Vainerman and Georgiy Kac (1973)[21] and independently by Michel Enock and Jean-Marie Schwartz (1973)[22] for von Neumann and Kac algebras.

In the late 20th and early 21st century, the Fourier transform opened itself to yet another form of life through developments in category theory, which Samuel Eilenberg and Saunders Mac Lane had created in the 1950s. We have just seen that the Fourier transform over abelian groups enabled the emergence of the Pontryagin duality, which is generalized in the non-commutative case as a Tannaka-Krein duality. We will now see that what lies behind this Tannaka duality is precisely the category of representations of a group. The representation of a group is a way of describing a set of abstract and unwieldy algebraic objects like the elements of a group by a set of matrices and to transform the operations on these algebraic objects or group elements into simple operations like adding or multiplying matrices. When the representation is one-dimensional, matrices are reduced to numbers. For example, instead of working with sets of algebraic operators like rotations, it is more convenient to work with matrices that represent them. In this case, a simple product of matrices represents the composition of two rotations, the rotation at a given angle following another rotation. When the determinant of matrices (or their volumes) is equal to unity, we say that the representation is unitary. Representations are either reducible or irreducible. An irreducible representation is one that has no subrepresentation (other than itself and {0}). It therefore presents a character of uniqueness that reducible representations do not share.

When the group *G* is commutative, its dual is the group of characters, in other words the group of unitary one-dimensional representations. Calculations become possible because the dual of *G* is a group. But when the group is no longer abelian, the group of characters no longer exists. Its equivalent is the set of equivalence classes of irreducible unitary representations. The analogue of the product of characters is the tensor product of representations. Furthermore, since the irreducible representations of a given group generally do not form a group, we are limited to considering the monoidal (or tensor) category of all the irreducible representations of finite dimensions equipped with the tensor product of representations. Tannaka then provides a way of constructing a compact group on the basis of the category of its representations, while Krein gives the necessary and sufficient conditions for a category to be a dual object of a compact group *G*. The Tannaka-Krein duality theory is therefore the study of the interrelations between a group and the category of its representations. This allows us to grasp the transition from an algebraic to a categorical way of life.

To be somewhat more exact, we should say that the Tannaka duality was a product of the development of mathematical physics, low-dimensional topology (knot and link theory) and quantum groups. As André Joyal and Ross Street[23] emphasize, Shahn Majid[24] demonstrated that one could use the Tannaka duality to construct the quasi-Hopf algebras introduced by Drinfel'd in relation to the solution of the Knizhnik-Zamolodchikov equation. Many questions in mathematical physics are linked to the Tannaka duality, such as the theory of the composition of angular momenta, Racah-Wigner algebras, knot invariants and Yang-Baxter operators. All of these questions, which we cannot fully explore here, are centered on quantum groups and are deeply connected to the theory of monoidal categories.

In a 2011 article, Brian Day[25] gave a categorical construction of the Fourier transform. A category is a broader mathematical notion than the set. Unlike the set, the category has its own collection of operators and acts, involving objects, arrows and morphisms linking these objects together, which satisfy elementary properties such as the transitivity of morphisms. Between two categories, functors are defined that carry both the objects of one category to the objects of the other and the arrows of one to the arrows of the other. They are called functors, not functions, as they apply to two kinds of entities at once: objects and morphisms.

When a category possesses a tensor product that satisfies certain axioms of compatibility, we say that the category is monoidal; if it only satisfies some of them, we say that the category is promonoidal. In order to define a Fourier transform in the categorical sense, Day starts by defining a promonoidal category for which he establishes two convolution products of two functors: an upper convolution and a lower one. Day then gives the definition of a multiplicative kernel *K* that is used to present the Fourier transform of *f* as the left Kan extension

$$\overline{K}(f)(x) = \int^{a} K(a,x) \otimes f(a)$$

and its dual transform as the right Kan extension

$$K^{v}(f)(x) = \int_{aa} [K(a,x), f(a)]$$

He then demonstrates that the Fourier transform *K* preserves the upper convolution

$$K(f(*)g) = K(f) * K(g)$$

and that its dual K^{v} preserves the lower convolution

$$K^{v}(f * g) = K^{v}(f) * K^{v}(kg)$$

Next, for the product defined as the coend of the tensor product of *f* and *g*

$$\langle f,g \rangle = \int^{a} f(a)^{*} \otimes g(a)$$

Day establishes the Parseval relation

$$\langle f,g \rangle \cong \langle \overline{K}(f), \overline{K}(g) \rangle$$

To sum up, we have just seen that the Fourier transform has, in different realms, experienced ways of life inspired by key moments in the development of mathematics. First used in mathematical analysis where it was linked to harmonic theory, in its first generalization it

became an essentially algebraic object. The Pontryagin duality was then the Fourier transform's driving force. Its generalization to the case of non-commutative groups brought about the Tannaka-Krein duality, which allowed for the emergence of strong categorical connections. The definition via coends produced by Kan extensions breathed new life into the Fourier transform. That new life reminds us that one of the subsections in Mac Lane's book was titled "All Concepts Are Kan Extensions."[26]

The Monad and the Fold

Mathematical category theory is currently the focus of many developments both in low-dimensional topology and in quantum field theory. As we have just seen, a category – in the mathematical sense – is a collection of objects and arrows that satisfy elementary axiomatic properties. In a category, all objects have become featureless. They belong to one and the same level and are ontologically equal, without distinction or quality. Category theory is therefore a flat ontology where all things are equal.[27] But in the world we live in, things are placed in a hierarchy, structured, made of differences and intensities of all kinds. Indeed, we must take into consideration the action of the ontological fields by which things are structured, mutate and become differentiated objects, objectively differentiable (through the interplay of a category's arrows) both by the mathematician and the philosopher. The disembodied thing becomes a full, entire object, with all its references, relations and distances, which is *something qua what it is*. It is both what constitutes it as a particular reality caught in the forms of its existence, and what produces it like the categorical objects from which it is derived, which are caught in the web of the world. Thing and object are distinct, complex entities that are not limited to the inclusion of things within things and subsequently to their transformation into objects. But there are no hierarchies of objects and things in categorical ontology, just as there is no zoology of first- and second-level entities. Thing and object are sufficient for the ontological interpretation of categories. The definition of universality, the Yoneda lemma and Diaconescu's theorem are the most immediate examples of this toposic hermeneutics.[28]

In category theory, the notion of the monad was introduced in the 1960s. In 1958, Roger Godement,[29] for reasons associated with homological algebra, constructed the first monad (a *comonad*, to be more precise) as the embedding of a sheaf in a flasque sheaf.[30] Three years later,

Peter Huber[31] demonstrated that each pair of adjoint functors results in a monad. Heinrich Kleisli,[32] as well as Samuel Eilenberg and John Coleman Moore,[33] independently demonstrated the reciprocal theorem (every monad is the result of an adjunction), Eilenberg and Moore referring to monads as "triples." The first to use the term "monad" was Saunders Mac Lane in 1971. This monad relies upon two mathematical concepts in category theory, *adjunction and functoriality*, both of which recall Leibniz's philosophy, as well as Gilles Deleuze's rereading of it. Functoriality, or the functorial character, is the existence of a functor making it possible to envelop and represent a multitude in a unit and to define the monad. Adjunction is this twofold character represented by the two leaves of the Deleuzian fold, symbolized mathematically by the two natural transformations that participate in the definition of the monad and that justify the principle of individuation. As Gilles Châtelet emphasized repeatedly, the monad is a living mathematical object.[34]

As mentioned earlier, the existence of functors between two categories is used to carry properties from one category to another, like the property of isomorphism, but also to transform categories, like the forgetful functor that abandons the structure of the initial category, or the abelianization functor that makes the laws of the final category commutative. The non-existence of a given functor is another important result: the lack, for example, of a functor from the category of symplectic varieties, which form the mathematical framework of classical mechanics, to the category of Hilbert spaces, which constitute the framework of quantum mechanics, poses the problem of quantification or the transition from classical to quantum mechanics.

In mathematical category theory, the monad is a functor equipped with two natural transformations, the unit and the multiplication, whose axioms of identity and associativity mimic the behavior of an algebraic germ. This triad (on which the former name of "triple" was based) defines the monad of the category theorists. For Leibniz, the monad is a simple substance that folds the world into a unit endowed with perception and appetite. It is an astoundingly categorical conception: considering the monad as an object (a unit) bearing morphisms (of perception and appetite). Going even further, the universe itself is seen as a category whose objects are the monads and the morphisms are the resulting phenomena.

In his classes on Leibniz and the fold, Deleuze[35] explains that the world is folded, that the fold has a particular inflection or curvature and that this curvature, as in the case of the foci of an ellipse, determines one or several points of view. From this point of view, we can measure the curvature and become aware of the fold's inflection. The curvature of things, Deleuze says, demands a point of view. And the point of view is consequently the condition for the emergence or the manifestation of truth in things. But why, asks Deleuze, are things folded? Because what is folded is necessarily enveloped in something that occupies the point of view. And what envelops the points of view is precisely the monad, which for Deleuze is the individual: an individual, however, who encompasses the infinite on their own, like the assemblages of monads or the bodies of which Leibniz speaks. Saying the world is folded means that it can be individualized. We must therefore comprehend the fold as an abstract notion, a functor, and not as the geometric pleats of physical space. It follows that via a monadic interpretation, the principle of individuation intertwines with the functoriality of the fold.

In category theory, the fold is created by the natural transformations of the monad, and individuation is the condition for a category's algebraicity. Saying a category is individualized means that it can be likened to an algebra or to the category of its representations, that it can be the subject of a calculation. Beck's theorem[36] is precisely what stipulates the conditions of monadicity. In order for there to be monadicity of a given category B toward a category C, one must be able to describe category B on the basis of a monad of category C. Given a functor of B on C, category B is called *monadic* if B can be considered the category of algebras of a monad of C. The existence of this monad enables algebraic calculation on B as if everything took place in category C or that C is calculable. The monad then becomes the condition of algebraicity (and therefore of calculability) of a category. As Lawvere has partly demonstrated, algebraic theories are the monads of mathematicians. Even in the most recent cases of Hopf monads that are used to comprehend the differences between braided and non-braided universes, mathematics returns to Leibniz's idea that the monad contains a representation of the world and that in the universe defined as the ontological closure of things, the individuation of a category ultimately corresponds to its monadicity. The monad becomes the indicator of the algebraic representations of a category and its possibilities of calculation.

ENDNOTES

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3. Jacques Fontanille, *Formes de vie* (Liège BE: Presses universitaires de Liège, 2015), 5.
4. Giorgio Agamben, *Means Without End: Notes On Politics*, trans. Vincenzo Binetti and Cesare Casarino (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2008), 2-3.
5. *Ibid.*, 3.
6. *Ibid.*, 8.
7. *Ibid.*, 11.
8. Yves Citton, *Lire, interpréter, actualiser* (Paris: Éditions Amsterdam, 2007), 341.
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10. Agamben, *The Use of Bodies*, trans. Adam Kotsko (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015), 233.
11. Joseph Fourier, *Théorie analytique de la chaleur* [1822] (Paris: Jacques Gabay, 1988), 249 [*Analytical Theory of Heat* [1878], trans. Alexander Freeman (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 198].
12. Marc-Antoine Parseval des Chênes, "Mémoire sur les séries et sur l'intégration complète d'une équation aux différences partielles linéaire du second ordre à coefficients constants" [1799], in *Mémoires présentés à l'Institut des sciences, lettres et arts, par divers savans, tome premier* (Paris: Baudouin, 1805), 638-648.
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25. Brian Day, "Monoidal Functor Categories and Graphic Fourier Transforms," in *Theory and Applications of Categories* 25.5 (2011): 118-141.

26. Saunders Mac Lane, *Categories for the Working Mathematician* (New York: Springer, 1971), 248.

27. On these questions, see Tristan Garcia's book, *Forme et objet: Un traité des choses* (Paris: PUF, 2011) [*Form and Object: A Treatise on Things*, trans. Mark Allan Ohm and Jon Cogburn (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014)].

28. On these issues and their relationships to Alain Badiou's metaphysics, see Franck Jedrzejewski, *Ontologie des catégories* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2011). A *topos* is a non-pathological category where all the particular properties of categories are in general satisfied.

29. Roger Godement, *Théorie des faisceaux* (Paris: Hermann, 1958).

30. Developed in algebraic topology by Jean Leray, the notion of the *sheaf* is a generalization of the notion of the set of sections of a vector bundle. The sheaf is *flasque* if for any open subset, the application is surjective.

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32. Heinrich Kleisli, "Every Standard Construction Is Induced by a Pair of Adjoint Functors," in *Proc. Amer. Math. Soc.* 16 (1965): 544-546.

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34. Compare with Leibniz's monad, *Monadology* § 63: "The body belonging to a monad, which is its entelechy or soul, constitutes together with the entelechy what may be called a living thing, and with the soul what is called an animal. Now this body of a living thing or animal is always organic; for since every monad is in its way a mirror of the universe, and the universe is regulated in a perfect order, it must be the case that there is also an order in whatever represents it, that is, in the perceptions of the soul, and consequently in the body, in accordance with which the universe is represented in it." *Leibniz's Monadology: A New Translation and Guide*, ed. and trans. Lloyd Strickland (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), 27.

35. Gilles Deleuze, *Le Pli* (Paris: Minuit, 1986) [*The Fold*, trans. Tom Conley (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993)]. See also the session of his seminar on 16 December 1986 in Saint-Denis: "Le pli, récapitulation" ["Leibniz and the Baroque, Lecture 04, 16 December 1986," trans. Charles Stivale, deleuze.cla.purdue.edu, n.p., November 2019, Web, 15 July 2020].

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LUCA PALTRINIERI

Critique of Field Philosophy: A Plea for Philosophical Investigation

A review of Christiane Vollaire's book, Pour une philosophie de terrain*

At a moment when the great opposition between "analyticals" and "continentals" seems a thing of the past, it may be time to reopen a discussion on philosophy, less on its method than on its subjects. In doing so, another opposition appears that, in my view, seems to become increasingly important today. On the one hand, the great renewal of analytical or "continental" metaphysics revives a philosophy whose subject is the world and/or reality "taken as a whole," which characterizes itself as a meta-reflection on the categories of thought. On the other, the post-pragmatist and post-structuralist philosophies tend to expand the "empirical" horizon because they assert a "regional" character – associating themselves exclusively with a certain kind of subject (vulnerability, "care,"[1] gender, social relations of domination, etc.) – while endeavoring to rethink the relationship between philosophy and the social sciences that are definitively abandoning the "imperialist" temptations of the past. Christiane Vollaire's book, *Pour une philosophie de terrain,* participates in this debate by undertaking a very useful examination of the difference between the work of the 21st-century philosopher and that of the sociologist, historian or anthropologist.

It is true that philosophers typically worked on texts from a canonical tradition representing the history of their discipline as well as on the debates of their time. They would then produce a theory on the basis of their knowledge of the concepts, using the coherence of their discourse and their line of argument as justification for the necessary distance they kept from empirical or "field" data. The role of researchers in the social sciences was completely different: they would work on people or on archives seen as "documents" or "monuments" of the past, objectifying their experience and their position as observer as much as possible in order to provide a scientific justification for their data and their results. But this clean and clear distinction has been weakened, and not just theoretically: by the very way in which the "profession" of philosopher has evolved. A new generation of philosophers has not only made themselves historians, asserting a particular approach toward the archives of philosophy that has the merit of calling the canonical tradition into question: it has also, with increasing frequency, put forward a new form of approach toward human reality (or indeed the reality of animals and plants), which involves appropriating the tools or the results of sciences such as ethology or botany. In this sense, philosophers can no longer claim an "unfettered" relationship to the empirical, based upon their intuitions or their "private" experiences with the subject, in total indifference to the questions raised by the "fieldwork" of social sciences. We must not forget that the "fieldwork"[2] of social sciences refers as much to a research attitude, which involves the researcher's first-person commitment to intersubjective interactions in order to produce qualitative knowledge about reality, as it does to this reality itself, the subject of the investigation: i.e. all of these interactions, their organization and their effects. But the philosopher who is concerned about reestablishing their relationship to this fieldwork, understood as both attitude and subject, can and must choose between several options.

From a more traditional epistemological perspective, as we know, the philosopher works on the definition of concepts, or even on the methodology of the social sciences, often with normative ambitions. Naturally this attitude runs the risk of returning the philosopher to a domineering position in relation to the researcher in the social sciences, a position that has already been subject to much dispute (we could mention, for example, Bourdieu's quite relevant critiques concerning this "imperialist" attitude that philosophy has). But an even greater risk in this scenario could be the ban on any relationship between philosophy and the

field as a subject, reducing it to data carrying a meaning that only a particular philosophical conceptuality could bring to light.

Yet philosophy may also choose to give more credit to the data and results collected by the social sciences, relying upon them to (re)construct a certain interpretation of reality that allows it, in particular, to revisit some of the achievements of political or moral philosophy (this is often the case with the contemporary approaches that take their inspiration from the Frankfurt School). In this scenario, philosophers do not claim a more constitutive access to some significance of the data to which researchers in the social sciences remain blind, so to speak. At the same time, however, philosophers will not themselves do fieldwork, leaving that to a division of labor sanctioned by the academic and disciplinary classifications of learning. Once again, the risk is in constructing a "theory" over the shoulders of the ethnologist or sociologist, less for the inability to take the field into account as a primary subject than for the impossibility of developing a specifically philosophical attitude toward the field.

What remains is a third path, one that Vollaire invites us to take in her book: defining that attitude. Her book does not really discuss the interrelationship between the work of researchers in philosophy and in the social sciences, but rather the possibility of defining a "philosophical field" by going behind the social sciences, or to put it better, doing without the social sciences. We could say that her arguments for distinguishing the philosophical notion of the field from that of the social sciences could be expressed in three points. Firstly, there is a difference concerning the aim, as philosophy does not seek to provide objectifiable data or contextual constants concerning the field as a subject: rather, it demonstrates transformative ambitions (p. 38). Philosophy seeks to act upon the world, to exercise a critical function or, to quote Marx as Vollaire does on this point, to "change the world" (p. 64-75). In other words, philosophy comes less close to classical research in social sciences than it does to the objectives of action research. Secondly, philosophy abandons any search for objectification, its goal being less to create interpretable data than to get the questioner and the questioned to understand each other. This results in the flat rejection of the directive method of the interview, and the defense of the non-directive or semi-directive method (p. 40-50). Thirdly, the philosophical investigator is, according to Vollaire, a scrounger who must question their position, who must work upon themselves, abandoning any overarching position in relation to

the subject of their investigation in order to adopt, in particular, the perspective of the subordinates (p. 41).

On all these points, we must note that the philosophical approach is actually not that far from the qualitative methodology of the social sciences, most particularly in the fact that the researcher in the social sciences must also be able to question, indeed objectify their position in relation to the interlocutor (this is why, in ethnomethodology, the researcher keeps a diary most of the time). This is as true for the Bourdieusian school (see Bourdieu's *Sketch for a Self-Analysis*) as for what is called the school of symbolic interactionism. And yet Vollaire's philosophical approach is intended as more radical in its refusal of the objectifying approach, in that it focuses more fundamentally on the recognition of the processes of subjectification at work in thought and the interrelationships between those involved on the ground. Only "through this data that has been subjectively experienced and considered can a possible objectification of the situations and relations of power take shape" (p. 179). The real controversy with the social sciences, then, is with the illusion of axiological neutrality, rooted as much in the fact-value distinction as in the myth of the objectivity of the given. Vollaire's field philosophy, on the other hand, accepts its "political" stance from the outset alongside the "subjugated knowledges," as Foucault would have said. This means that, even where it is not yet overtly normative, field philosophy positions itself among the subordinates and the dominated in order to produce a twofold transformation: of the social situation, but first and foremost of the philosophical stance itself, which is put into question. From this perspective, if the philosophical field does not initially produce givens, it is because it must instead produce a spiritual change in the philosopher who enters it. It means working on oneself, a chance to change oneself and the world where the philosopher becomes a participant by abandoning both their superior position and the abstract world of ideas in order to confront "the real" (an expression that Vollaire uses several times). The effects of the "field" attitude need to be discussed more than the field-as-subject does, as those effects are ultimately measured more through the philosopher as a person than by obtaining a "scientific" result from the investigation. That is probably why the notion of the "field" as developed by Vollaire seems more useful for philosophy than for the social sciences. We cannot blame her for this, but it does raise at least two questions.

The first is: what does Vollaire call "the real," and why is the "real" that philosophers encounter in the field more "real" than the one they encounter in theory? To avoid getting into metaphysical issues, we could put the question another way: Can a field philosophy base itself on the mere commitment by a philosopher to delve into a reality beyond that of their profession?

The second question concerns the nature of the "philosophical field": how does it differ from the field of the researcher in the social sciences? What are the conditions for a specifically philosophical field investigation? And above all, what does the philosophical field give us that the field of the social sciences does not?

Christiane Vollaire's book is brave and valuable. It puts us on the road to a philosophical problematization of the notion of the field: in this sense, it opens a breach through which others will hopefully soon pass. The gist of our criticism could be summarized as follows: the book could have benefited from a less frontal and exclusive approach to the methodology of the field investigation and the qualitative approaches devised in the social sciences. But this criticism does not in any way cast doubt on the value of this work that, in the author's own words, should be read as the embryo "of something possible that is not yet formed, whose potentials are still multiple and will only take shape in the real when called upon" (p. 178). The idea that philosophy should remain open to such moments, such solicitations, and such possibilities to expand on, is probably what informs Vollaire's whole approach and makes it so profound and fascinating.

ENDNOTES

* Creaphis Éditions, 2017. [Translator's note: the title could be translated as "For a Field Philosophy."]

1. Translator's note: in English in the text.

2. Translator's note: in English in the text.

OLIVER FELTHAM

Political Action According to Tassin: A Reactualization of Hannah Arendt for Activists

A Review of Etienne Tassin's Book, Pourquoi agissons-nous? Questionner la politique en compagnie d'Hannah Arendt*

Etienne Tassin's project is to reactualize Hannah Arendt's political philosophy. To do so, he uses several tactics. First, he develops a reading of Arendt with overtones of Jacques Rancière and even of Etienne Balibar – occasionally of Deleuze and Claude Lefort – by drawing on a few instances of Arendt's thinking that lend themselves to a contemporary terminology directed toward notions such as singularity, plurality, the process of subjectification, and the refusal of the state or of any political organization. Second, this reading helps the author outline a realm of conceptuality for political activity that differs from the dominant framework in political philosophy, that of normative, liberal juridicism (p. 117-122, p. 182). Third, at the pragmatic level of the book's intended audience, Tassin develops a philosophy of political action destined not for the politician, but for the contemporary activist involved in a struggle for some form of justice. But what underlies these three tactics, what grounds the book and its thirteen chapters

(all previously published) is a much larger project: to construct a phenomenology of political action. Tassin's approach is to derive all of the key concepts of his vision of politics from a conception of the phenomenality of action taken for the most part from Arendt's *The Human Condition*. In other words, he reimagines the political subject (chapter 4), citizenship, the public sphere (chapters 6 and 9), political violence (chapter 8), human rights (chapter 9), revolution (chapter 10) and domination (chapter 11) as just so many emanations, epiphenomena or perversions of political action. Thus the conditions of possibility for any political institution or practice not only draw from the prior existence of a plurality of political actions, but the very being of these institutions and practices consists in an assemblage of these actions. We are therefore dealing with a kind of monism of action. As a result, one of the characteristic approaches of Tassin's book is the ontological reduction of each phenomenon or status – citizenship, the public space, etc. – to the status of an epiphenomenon of action.

However, there are two operations that are prerequisites to this ontological reduction: first, one of differentiating action from other concepts of human activity, such as production or behavior; second, an attempt at a positive definition of action. Before revisiting Arendt's three-part distinction between labor, work, and action, Tassin carries out his own preliminary differentiation: action is not mechanical reaction or behavior; action is not the creation of products or works, action is not a kind of instrumental operation assembling means for an end, and finally action is not a way to manage, appropriate or organize society (p. 27). On the other hand, providing a positive definition of action is not so simple: one cannot draw up a list of properties or qualities, or identify action through the construction of its ideal subject, all the more so given that Tassin proceeds by rejecting the traditional categories – intention, will, consciousness, deliberation, decision (p. 63). To construct a concept of action, Tassin's tactic, following Arendt, is to focus on two aspects of what action does: natality and plurality. We could easily say that these two concepts – natality and plurality – are the keystone to Tassin's project.

What Tassin means by "natality" is action's ability to conjure up the "who" of its own subject, manifesting itself and distinguishing itself beyond any attempt to assign a "what" to this subject, i.e. an identity or a sociological type. With Arendt, action is no longer considered an effect of its author: the subject of the action is understood as a cause. Action must be grasped as what gives birth to its actor (p.34, p. 64). This is the first ontological derivation: the actor

is produced by their own action. Despite the second chapter, which attempts to explain that production through a series of analogies with theater, its nature is not entirely clear. The identification of an agent could be explained by using Locke's nominalist approach for interpreting the action of the other: attributing a nature to an action, and an intention to its subject, depends upon the sociolinguistic context of its addressee or its judge. But Tassin has found his way by following Arendt, not Locke: moreover, he tries to differentiate the question of the manifestation of action from the question of its interpretation or its intention, lending more weight to the determination of the meaning and principle of an action (p.37-8).

What Tassin means by "plurality" is the interrelationship between actors through action. He presents his second ontological reduction: "action gives birth to a community of actors, but this community does not preexist in this form – its form born of action – to the action itself" (p. 35). In other words, each political action creates its own community of actors. But one could object that on the level of its motivation or intention, an action presupposes the prior existence of a political community. We note that the key warning – "this community does not preexist in this form – its form born of action" – allows Tessin to sidestep the objection that any political being thereby evaporates. He doesn't say that no community preexists a given action, but that its particular form does not exist before the action in question. If, on the other hand, the entire existence of the actor, the public space, the citizen or the community depended on the prior and primordial existence of action, in a place where there was no political action anymore but just administration or strategic, instrumental operations, these phenomena would no longer exist and neither would the means of envisioning the duration (of an organization, a movement, or a tradition) in politics. This risk of evaporation is what lies behind Tassin's distinct taste for invoking a revolutionary essence of political action in modern times, a revolution that must always begin anew in order to reestablish, or rather bring to light, the community of actors and its public space (p. 40, p. 189).

ENDNOTE

* Etienne Tassin, *Pour quoi agissons-nous?,* Éditions Le Bord de l'eau, 2018 [Translator's note: the title could be translated as "Why Do We Act? Questioning Politics with Hannah Arendt"]