

A PEDAGOGY OF GENEROSITY: ON THE TOPICALITY OF DELEUZE AND GUATTARI'S THOUGHT IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION¹

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ABSTRACT. In this article, I will try to elucidate the relevance of Deleuze and Guattari's approaches in the philosophy of education, along the lines of the Deleuzean pedagogy of 'do with me' and the absence of pre-established rules for learning or methodological anarchism. To do so, I will consider three important milestones in Deleuze and Guattari's thought: (i) antihumanism as the matrix of a pedagogy of generosity, (ii) the primacy of functioning over meaning as a vindication of practical learning versus rote learning, (iii) the concepts of 'deterritorialisation-reterritorialisation' as the unlearning required by all true learning.

KEYWORDS. Deleuze; Guattari; Pedagogy; Education; French Theory.

INTRODUCTION

In 1972, the publication of *Anti-Oedipus* initiated the collaboration between the philosopher Gilles Deleuze and the psychoanalyst Félix Guattari, which proved to be as fruitful as controversial. With the figure of the schizophrenic as the new philosophical hero, Deleuze and Guattari embarked on a heterodox philosophical journey that sought to approach the unconscious from an epistemological perspective critical of the abstractions and apparent political neutrality of psychoanalysis through the concept of 'desiring machines'. This consolidated 'schizoanalysis,' an anti-humanist philosophy that explained the social field in terms of desire that was no longer confined to the purely private or individual sphere but had a distinctly public or collective —and therefore political— status and implications. With the publication of *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980) and *What is Philosophy?* (1991), this philosophy of desire was integrated into a 'geophilosophy' that placed idiosyncrasy before essence through new concepts such as 'rhizome,' and 'deterritorialisation'.

In this article, I will try to elucidate the relevance of Deleuze and Guattari's approaches in the philosophy of education, along the lines of the Deleuzean pedagogy of 'do with me' and the absence of pre-established rules for learning or methodological anarchism (Deleuze,

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1968/1994). To do so, I will start with the exposition of three important milestones in Deleuze and Guattari's thought, with a view to drawing the pedagogical consequences that follow from each of them. Concretely, I will argue that: (i) the anti-humanism of their philosophy remains fruitful at the educational level from the perspective of a pedagogy of 'generosity' in the Cartesian sense (Descartes, 1964), as opposed to the oedipal or narcissistic stance so widespread today, which allows the educational process to be approached holistically, i.e. by addressing both individual needs and the specific needs of the educational community; (ii) the primacy of functioning over meaning entails a claim for the practical acquisition of knowledge skills over traditional rote learning (Deleuze & Guattari, 1972); and (iii) the concepts of 'deterritorialisation-reterritorialisation' contain the revolutionary powers that education can have today, as an 'unlearning' that leads to new 'learning' that can do away with all dogmatic images of thought.

I. ANTIHUMANISM AS THE MATRIX OF A PEDAGOGY OF GENEROSITY: DESCARTES TURNED AGAINST HIMSELF

In order to elucidate the pedagogical legacy of Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy, it is essential to go back to the former's solo works, in which he elaborated the epistemological approach that assembles the whole of his thought, despite the many vicissitudes that it went through over the years. Such an epistemological commitment responds to the name of 'transcendental empiricism' and determines to a large extent the Deleuzo-Guattarian conception of teaching and learning.

Of particular interest in this respect is the concept of the 'dogmatic image of thought,' which dates back at least to *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (1962). In this book (chap. 3, section 15), Deleuze offers a first systematic approach to this presupposed image or conception of thought, articulated around three theses: (i) *cogitatio natura universalis*, which comprises the right nature of thought, which naturally tends towards the truth it already formally contains, and the consequent good will of the thinker, who invariably pursues the truth when exercising thought; (ii) the existence of forces external to thought —i.e. of a sensible or bodily nature— that divert us from truth and cause us to fall into error, which consists in taking the false for the true and is the only risk to which expose themselves those who venture to think; (iii) that it is enough to observe a method to 'think well,' i.e. to rediscover the truth which is consubstantial to our thought.

The answer of modern authors such as Descartes to the problem of the fallibility of thought was method, through the observance of which it was possible to reunite fact with law, that is, the difficulty that is in fact opposed to thinking and the consubstantial or natural relation of truth to thought cherished by the dogmatic image. Deleuze, on the other hand, warns that a merely formal solution such as method is not enough to channel thought once the stupidity in which its natural state consists has been ascertained. In this sense, he contrasts method with culture or *paideia*: while method always presupposes the good will of the thinker to apply it, *paideia* is a set of forces, violence that affects thought independently of the thinker's will and forces it to think. For Deleuze (1962), then, it is in the neglect of the links established between thought and that which stimulates it to think that the dogmatic image of thought becomes strong: such is the ultimate meaning of stupidity in his philosophy (pp. 105-108). Therefore, it is the more or less involuntary exposure to that which disturbs thought, provoked by *paideia*, that is capable of truly stimulating thought. As is well known, current pedagogy has its origins in the Greek *paideia* (Helskog & Weiss, 2021), which denoted the shaping of the individual's personality through a process of instruction aimed at the development of their physical and mental faculties, and it follows that Deleuzian approaches have important implications for the former.

Two years later, in *Proust and Signs*, Deleuze returned to the question of the image of thought, contrasting the search for truth based on signs of sensible origin proposed in *In Search of Lost Time* with the usual approach of rationalist philosophy. To the rationalist model of the search for truth, which is based on the above assumptions and in which 'intelligence always comes first' (p. 120), Proust opposes in his opinion an empiricist model in which 'the search for truth is the adventure of the involuntary' (pp. 116-117), so that thought is rather the consequence of something that forces one to think involuntarily — 'the sign' (p. 118) — than of a good will. Consequently, intelligence or the concept always follows a contingent encounter with a sign that nevertheless guarantees the necessity of thought (pp. 120, 124). It is not for nothing that Deleuze and Guattari (1991) would speak years later of a 'principle of contingent reason' in relation to philosophy (p. 93).

However, the decisive milestone in the systematisation of the dogmatic image of thought theory is *Difference and Repetition*, where Deleuze presents the most finished formulation of this question, already stated 'in his own name' and inscribed in a problem that ends up configuring Deleuzian anti-humanism as a logical consequence of the previous involuntarism (see Deleuze, 2003/2007, p. 303). In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze relates the critique of the image of thought to the more general problem of the foundation or beginning in

philosophy. The problem of the beginning in philosophy is certainly a complicated one, insofar as 'beginning means eliminating all presuppositions' (Deleuze, 1968/1994, p. 129). The difficulties increase if we take into account the specific character that differentiates properly philosophical presuppositions from those that correspond to science. While the prejudices that one has to deal with in science are exclusively 'objective,' presuppositions in philosophy are both 'objective' and 'subjective'. Objective presuppositions are the concepts explicitly presupposed in a given concept so that they are not escaping analysis except by the carelessness of the interpreter. Subjective or natural presuppositions, on the other hand, are enveloped in a sentiment and are therefore implicit.

When philosophy bases its beginning on subjective presuppositions, it claims to be prior to all prejudice. Thus, the critique of presuppositions stops at those that are explicit and neglects the implicit or natural presuppositions, which do not cease to weigh down thought because they go unnoticed in conceptual analysis. In philosophy, the implicit or subjective presuppositions come from the empirical self (p. 129) and are summarized in the four natural postulates of the dogmatic image: (i) the *cogitatio natura universalis* or the belief in the right nature of thought and the good will of the thinker that we considered above; (ii) the ideal of common sense, which elevates thought as the unity of the subject to the status of meta-faculty in charge of coordinating the remaining faculties for the sake of recognition, projecting the subjective identity into the objective reality (p. 133); (iii) the model of recognition, according to which thinking is above all 'knowing' that objective reality prefigured in the subject under the government of common sense (p. 134); (iv) the postulate of representation, according to which difference is subordinated to identity in the concept, analogy in the judgment, opposition in the predicate and similarity in perception in order to become the object of representation (p. 138). Therefore, the critique of the dogmatic image of thought is a critique of representative or grounded thought, which submits the matter of being to representation with the guarantee of a first principle and finds its main ally in the implicit or natural presuppositions of the empirical self.

In an effort to go against this dynamic, each faculty is henceforth oriented to explore the vast domain of the pre-individual or the virtual independently of the concord of faculties that takes place in the common sense constitutive of the subject and the world of objects that goes with it, giving rise to an experience of the transcendental-immanent that has nothing to do with the experience of the empirical-represented provided by thought under the shelter of the dogmatic image.

This is the meaning of transcendental empiricism, which constitutes the epistemological challenge of *Difference and Repetition*, drawing the consequences relating to knowledge from the renunciation of the foundation. Thus, transcendental empiricism consists in directly communicating aesthetics or the sensible with dialectics or thought—that is, thought with its pre-individual ‘foundation’— without passing through the individuated and therefore transcendent instances that are objects and subjects (Lapoujade, 2014, pp. 94-96). In other words, to relate thought to the pure immanence of a groundlessness populated by individuating differences or pre-individual singularities in permanent redistribution. And Deleuze establishes such a relationship through an impersonal transcendental field, which ‘cuts off’ the chaotic groundlessness snatching a consistency from it.

But why is an impersonal transcendental field necessary? If the dogmatic image of thought rests on the natural presuppositions of the empirical self, it will be necessary to get rid of the subject and the represented world it carries with it as ‘objective’ reality to set up the foundations of a philosophy freed from this image. Deleuze then notes the need to conceive of a strictly impersonal transcendental field in order to found thought without falling back on transcendence. Deleuze’s anti-humanism is, therefore, the logical consequence of his previous involuntarism, the only approach that makes it possible to avoid the dogmatic image of thought and to achieve a thought without image.

Likewise, this transcendental field has a problematic nature, since ‘a problem is only determined by the singular points that express its conditions’ (Deleuze, 1969/1990, p. 185), and such singular points are the pre-individual singularities that constitute the realm of aesthetics or the differential groundlessness that acts as the new immanent foundation of thought in transcendental empiricism, beyond constituted subjects and objects. It follows that the problem, in Deleuzian thought, has its own ontological and epistemological status, not being identified with a subjective state of ignorance that would disappear as soon as a solution is obtained (p. 86). Therefore, problems always persist to any solution, as the horizon of knowledge itself. This also implies a positive relationship with ignorance, which is no longer something to be ashamed of or a negative state of knowledge, but its very condition of possibility:

We write only at the frontiers of our knowledge, at the border which separates our knowledge from our ignorance and transforms the one into the other [...] to satisfy ignorance is to put off writing until tomorrow—or rather, to make it impossible (Deleuze, 1968/1994, p. xxi).

On the other hand, being neither individual nor social, pre-individual singularities constitute the ontological substratum of Deleuzian thought and make every private affair a collective problem (Deleuze, 1969/1990, p. 152). Deleuze and Guattari will characterize in this way the flows of desire that constitute desiring-machines as an immanent synthesis of the unconscious in *Anti-Oedipus*. Desire is always both individual and collective, giving a social and therefore political dimension to individual problems in clear contrast to the pretended neutrality of psychoanalysis.

This anti-humanist approach has a long trajectory in Deleuze's work and also encompasses his joint production with Guattari:

Chapter 3 [of *Difference and Repetition*] [...] provides an introduction to my subsequent books, including my work with Guattari, in which we claim a vegetable model for thought in the rhizome, as opposed to the model of the tree (Deleuze, 2003/2007, p. 303).

At both private and public, individual and social levels, philosophy has to banish the presuppositions of the dogmatic image and, with them, the reactive forces of the human being that appropriate thought and lead it to the senselessness and baseness in which stupidity consists. But why is stupidity a question of baseness as well as senselessness? Although stupidity in Deleuzian thought is, above all, the disconnection between thought and what forces it to think, it is also an inescapably collective problem related to the individuation of the subject (Deleuze, 1968/1994, p. 152). Referring to other authors who develop Deleuze's ideas can help us to clarify this.

Derrida stated that stupidity is always 'a social or even political accusation,' so 'one is never *bête* (stupid) all on one's own, and [...] one never mocks *bêtise* (stupidity) on one's own' (2008/2009, p. 165). Therefore, stupidity always presupposes a public context and responds to ego inflation (Deleuze, 2003/2007, pp. 139-140). Thus, we incur stupidity when we try to assert our individual sovereignty at the expense of others —baseness— and this excess causes us to embarrass ourselves, as it leads us to narcissistically neglect thought by embracing a dogmatic and self-satisfied version of it —senselessness. Hence stupidity 'would be a way for that particular thing that the 'I' is to take itself for the whole' (Derrida, 2008/2009, p. 193). It follows that, rather than a lack —of intelligence, for example— stupidity is always an excess with which we try to respond to the deficiency that we are, that is, to the precariousness of individual agency when it is submitted to public scrutiny.

In this sense, the Belgian philosopher Roland Breeur (2015), a leading scholar of stupidity whose work is notably influenced by Deleuze, has established that ‘the reverse of stupidity is not intelligence, but generosity’ (p. 127). This is because intelligence is often shrouded in narcissistic self-sufficiency that is a breeding ground for the excesses of stupidity. Therefore if anything protects us from stupidity, it is generosity, which in a way is always a setting aside of oneself in favor of others. This is why the concept of generosity plays an important role in Cartesian philosophy: it is the paradigmatic virtue of morality, based on which the transition from the metaphysical principle that is the cogito to moral autonomy or free will takes place. For this reason, Descartes (1964) sentences: ‘Those who are generous [...] consider that the most important thing is to do good to other human beings and to despise their interest [...] Moreover, they are entirely masters of their passions’ (art. 156). We can conclude that generosity, claimed by Breeur as a corrective to stupidity, tempers the passions of human beings, tempering the exaggerations of subjective identity towards the virtue in which freedom consists when it is genuine.

Thus, we could consider that Deleuzean anti-humanism constitutes the highest exponent of this generosity which, taken to the limit, turns Descartes against himself: it is in the de-subjectivation (the ‘fourth person singular’: see Bradley, 2015) that generosity is at its best in the setting aside of one’s interests in favor of others. In this way, Deleuze’s philosophy frees us from the presuppositions of the empirical self that sustained the dogmatic image and allows us to exercise thought for ourselves, giving a new Nietzschean-inspired fulfillment to Kantian intellectual autonomy (Kant, 2009), which also entails generosity in the form of pedagogy oriented to promote that others also reach this autonomy for themselves: ‘Like his teacher Nietzsche, Deleuze never allows us to forget about the real world we also share, and like Nietzsche he accepts the ethical imperative to teach others about it’ (Morss, 2000, p. 199). For this reason, I consider Deleuze’s and Deleuze and Guattari’s ‘passionate’ pedagogy (Morss, 2000) to be first and foremost a pedagogy of generosity.

But what are the consequences of these epistemological approaches for the philosophy of education? The first consequence of Deleuzean transcendental empiricism is that intelligence must always come after in the educational process, that is to say, that learning must take place in the form of experience anchored in life and must not consist of a mere intellectual search guided by the solely formal guidelines that make up a method. Deleuzean considerations about ‘do with me’ as the only possible path to learning are in this way understood:

Our only teachers are those who tell us to ‘do with me,’ and are able to emit signs to be developed in heterogeneity rather than propose gestures for us to reproduce. In other words, there is no ideo-motivity, only sensory-motivity. [...] To learn is indeed to constitute this space of an encounter with signs (Deleuze, 1968/1994, p. 23).

The mimesis of the ‘do as I do’ is not, therefore, an appropriate vehicle for the transmission of the concept because it supposes the application of a pre-established method for the attainment of an end equally given in advance or the resolution of a problem already posed by the teacher by virtue of their authority, in no way an experience with that which involves the otherness beyond the representation —the sign. This is why the teachers with whom we really learn are those who say ‘do with me,’ who overthrow the old hierarchy of the teacher concerning the learner to embark us and embark themselves on experimentation, on a joint search based on the experience of otherness provided by signs —this renunciation of their privilege in favor of a shared exposure to the unknown gives the measure of the generosity of these teachers. Intelligence, the concept, comes at the end of the experience of that which removes us from the natural lethargy that afflicts thought and forces us to think.

The following fragment leaves no room for doubt about the above, confirming John Morss’ (2000) assertion that: ‘It may well be Deleuze as teacher that best represents the educational heritage of Deleuze’s work’ (p. 199). In contrast to the myopic disregard of teaching by the ‘new philosophers,’ Deleuze stated:

Giving courses has been a major part of my life, in which I’ve been passionately involved. It’s not like giving individual lectures [...] It’s like a research laboratory: you give courses on what you’re investigating, not on what you know. I never told that audience what they meant to me, what they gave me. Nothing could have been more unlike a discussion, and philosophy has absolutely nothing to do with discussing things [...] it was there that I realized how much philosophy needs not only a philosophical understanding, through concepts, but a non-philosophical understanding, rooted in percepts and affects (Deleuze, 1990/1995, pp. 139-140).

In this sense, Deleuze will refer to properly philosophical or conceptual learning as ‘one of the two wings’ of philosophy (pp. 139-140), by no means self-sufficient. And this is because ‘passionate’ or ‘non-philosophical’ learning is also needed to bring about the pedagogy of the concept that he proposes (Carlin & Wallin, 2014). Intelligence must always follow experience, rooted in the non-philosophical realm of affect and perception, to fulfil the

maxim of not neglecting the concrete when dealing with concepts (Deleuze, 2003/2007, pp. 362-363) and to generate genuine thought in spontaneous or natural thought.

It is not by chance that Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy transcended the sphere of the academy or even the sphere of the very discipline of philosophy. Of course, the conditions of teaching at Vincennes were favourable: the subjects were not ordered by courses, everyone attended those subjects that interested them regardless of their speciality, the classrooms were open to attendance by people not linked to the university, etc. (Deleuze, 1990/1995, p. 139; Dosse, 2010). But another reason to explain this 'transversality' of Deleuzo-Guattarian philosophy is that the foundations of this conceptual learning were rooted in affections and perceptions, aroused both in the classes and in the very particular and 'passionate' style of many of the texts of both authors (see for example: Deleuze & Guattari, 1991, p. 110).

Deleuze's frequent rejection of dialogue (Deleuze and Parnet, 1977/2007, p. 1), as polemical as it is often misunderstood, must also be understood in line with this last fragment. Deleuze rejects a model of learning based on 'dialogue' understood as communication and debate, i.e. as mere transmission and confrontation of knowledge. This rejection is because in this model of learning there is no real exchange. Each interlocutor ends the dialogue as they began it, so there is no real experience or experimentation but a competition to make one's position prevail over the others' employing discursive techniques. Hence the ideal of a joint search for truth is absorbed in the dialogue by individual interests (in their narcissistic or oedipal form) and thereby perverted. Thus, this rejection of dialogue does not mean that, in an unjustifiable aristocratic outburst, Deleuze disdained the contributions of others in favour of his own: one need only listen to the recordings of his classes to see this, given the freedom with which the students took the floor, and the interest, humility and even sense of humour with which the professor received these interventions (Université Paris 8, n. d.; Purdue University, n. d.). As a philosopher and as a teacher, Deleuze proposed the schizophrenic experiment of 'conversation' as opposed to dialogue or discussion (1977/2007, p. 7; 2003/2007, p. 308). Conversation takes place between friends, i.e. between equals, and thus is presided over by generosity towards the other and what they have to say. It also lacks moderators or an itinerary of topics proposed in advance by an authority. Conversation is rather a joint search around a problem or a question, which is not directed by any of the interlocutors—and is, therefore, de-subjectivised—but follows its internal logic of encounter or resonance between ideas. A good example of this model of conversation is the structure of the book *Dialogues*—whose title is wilfully paradoxical—, in which the contributions of Deleuze and Parnet are mixed according to an itinerary that is

neither fixed in advance nor driven by interrogation or debate. As the translators of the English edition note: ‘these “dialogues” are themselves offshoots of Deleuze’s famous seminars at the University of Vincennes’ (p. xi).

Another consequence of the above philosophical approaches in the field of pedagogy is the need to propose teaching based on the posing of problems, placing the question of sense and value implied in them before that of the true and the false (Deleuze, 1968/1994, p. 162). Insofar as they have the ontological and epistemological entity proper to that which stimulates thought (‘problems and their symbolic fields stand in a relationship with signs,’ p. 164), problems cannot be identified with a provisional state of subjective uncertainty: ‘Problems are acts that open a horizon of sense, and which subtend the creation of concepts’ (Zourabichbili, 2012, p. 202). This consequence is also intertwined with Deleuze’s methodological anarchism. Since it is not enough to start from a good will to follow a pre-established method that would lead us to knowledge, it is necessary to experience the action of that *paideia* that forces us to think and, therefore, to learn, which responds rather to the very logic of the problem that guides the search in the paradigm of the conversation than to a set of prior and merely formal indications given by the teacher. In this regard, Deleuze (1968/1994) states: ‘We never know in advance how someone will learn’ (see pp. 164-166).

Following the above, this pedagogy of generosity brings Deleuze’s approaches closer to those of important educational proposals of his time, such as the critical pedagogy developed by Paulo Freire. It is worth considering in this respect that Deleuze would unhesitatingly subscribe to Freire’s (1968/2005) insistence on: (i) the need to root learning in the everyday experience of the learner, (ii) the consideration of the posing of problems as the basis of pedagogy, (iii) the abolition of the hierarchy of the teacher concerning the learner to consider them as a ‘co-researcher’ (pp. 71, 81-84).

Notwithstanding the concomitances, it should be noted that Deleuzian pedagogy of generosity does not share the humanist assumptions that inspire Freire’s. However, Deleuze’s pedagogy is based on the indistinction between the individual and the collective that entails his Nietzschean anti-humanism to disregard all individual and, therefore, spurious interests in favour of the collective and disinterested search that teaching should be. As we have seen, the same assumptions underlie the philosophy of desire that Deleuze elaborates together with Guattari.

II. THE FUNCTIONALISM OF *ANTI-OEDIPUS*, MEANINGFUL LEARNING VERSUS ROTE LEARNING

First of all, it is necessary to briefly contextualize the remarkable theoretical shift between Deleuze's solo works and his works with Guattari. Running through *The Logic of Sense* is an unresolved conflict between the two dimensions at stake or, rather, between the right over thought that each one claims (Deleuze, 1969/1990, pp. 82-93; Lapoujade, 2014, pp. 131-132). The new right conquered on the surface of sense is opposed to an old 'corporeal' right, that of depth under whose influence *Difference and Repetition* is still built. This is a conflict that is, therefore, that of two alternative grounds for thought.

In *The Logic of Sense* the surface prevails, in spite of everything. However, the encounter with Guattari offers Deleuze the opportunity to resolve this opposition by banishing from his thought certain theoretical coordinates, surface and depth, which still belong to the undesirable foundation whose necessity must, however, be preserved in an immanent principle. In *Anti-Oedipus*, the nonsense of the depths rises to the surface and, in this way, both are rejected in favor of a 'body without organs' whose multiplicities respond to the machinic logic of the rhizome (Lapoujade, 2014, p. 137), leaving behind once and for all the structuralist logic that still distinguished a signifier series and a signified one, and consequently a surface and a depth (Deleuze, 2002, p. 261; 2003, pp. 65-66).

In the new stage of Deleuze's philosophy there is, therefore, a destitution, if not of the dimension of sense as such, at least of its primacy: it leaves room for a body without organs as the new 'foundation' of thought that embraces the strictly horizontal logic of the rhizome, which is a vegetable metaphor for the logic of purely immanent relations that characterises the thought without image. This distinguishes immanent fluxes —or 'desiring-machines' that organise the concrete forms of life in the BwO— instead of heterogeneous series, and its main problem is, consequently, use or functioning and production, but no longer sense (Deleuze & Guattari, 1972/2000, p. 109).

Having finished the theoretical exposition, we can ask ourselves about the practical implications of Deleuzo-Guattarian 'functionalism' in the field of education. It will help us to pinpoint the approach by recalling those considerations about the book:

We will never ask what a book means, as signified or signifier; we will not look for anything to understand in it. We will ask what it functions with, in connection with what other things it does or does not transmit intensities [...] A book itself is a little machine (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980, p. 4).

The book is hereafter understood as a ‘machine,’ that is, as an entity that relates to reality on a more complex level than that of signifier and signified, or semiotics and semantics. A book is a meta-affordance that ‘functions’ with the reader and with the surrounding reality, it mobilises some aspects of both, leading them to establish new relations with each other, to transform themselves. We do not emerge unscathed from the reading of a book, as we do not emerge unscathed from a love affair or from our time at school. Hence the apparently puzzling —and willfully exaggerated— statement that there is nothing to understand in a book.

It is not difficult to extrapolate these considerations to teaching and learning. The transmissive or rote model of teaching and learning, which has traditionally prevailed in the educational system (see Mayer, 2002, p. 226), reduces our relationship with knowledge either to meaning, at best, or to signifier, at worst. In other words, the transmissive model of education consists in making us understand in a merely formal way the meaning of given contents or in mechanically reproducing such contents as a signifier without such reproduction being mediated even by an understanding (see Bradshaw, 2017, p. 15; Freire, 2005, p. 71; Mayer, 2002, p. 227). This is an inadequate pedagogical model because it is impoverishing and certainly ungenerous. It establishes a hierarchy between the teacher and students, reducing the role of the latter to that of re-producers of formal contents by exclusively technical means with the individual interest of the marks as the only aim of the educational process. Nothing functions in the student with this learning. There is no ‘inner journey’ or passionate teaching at the level of those affections and perceptions, and students finish the process as they started it. Hence Deleuze (1968/1994) distinguishes learning in the strict sense, which takes place through practice or experimentation and is ‘the subjective acts carried out when one is confronted with the objectivity of a problem’, from the knowledge that corresponds to ‘the generality of concepts or the calm possession of a rule enabling solutions’ and is the only thing to which the transmissive or rote model of teaching can aspire (p. 164). Nowadays, this real learning is called ‘meaningful learning’ by educational psychologist such as R. E. Mayer (2002).

Thus, when teaching is based on the rote model, those exercises that can be qualified as ‘spiritual’ (Hadot, 1995) are left aside insofar as they complicate the whole of the human psyche and not only remembering and understanding —specifically, meaningful learning also complicates applying, analysing, evaluating and creating (Mayer, 2002, pp. 228-232). This confirms the danger pointed out by Helskog and Weiss (2021) that instrumental rationality will displace other aspects of practical rationality from today’s education, occupying in our

societies areas of life that do not belong to it. In contrast, there is empirical evidence that, when not reduced to the transmissive model, teaching contributes to students' intellectual development and enables them to deal with complex and changing problem, i.e. with reality itself (Nussbaum, 2010).

III. DETERRITORIALISATION OF KNOWLEDGE OR 'UNLEARNING' AS AN ANTIDOTE TO THE DOGMATIC IMAGE OF THOUGHT

The above reflections lead us to consider a further aspect of the distinction between rote and meaningful learning. In rote learning, there is knowledge acquisition, but this is done only through 'retention', which consists of remembering a set of content as it was presented during instruction. However, the 'transfer' implied in meaningful learning is the ability to use or put into practice what has been learned in a different context, such as solving new problems or questions. As an example of meaningful learning, we can think of the learner who not only remembers the laws of syntactic analysis and solves the corresponding exercises he or she has been instructed in but manages to apply them to improve their writing. Therefore, 'retention requires that students remember what they have learned, whereas transfer requires students not only to remember but also to make sense of and be able to use what they have learned [...] retention focuses on the past; transfer emphasizes the future' (Mayer, 2002, p. 226).

But let us reflect on this more generally, starting from the Deleuzo-Guattarian concept of 'deterritorialisation'. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, the body without organs is identified with the earth plane of immanence (p. 40), and hence the desiring-machines are replaced by the assemblages that stratify the earth's surface in territories, performing the same function of organising concrete forms of life. Therefore, the strictly philosophical itinerary puts thought in relation to the earth and territory rather than to a subject and an object always constitutive of a transcendence (Deleuze & Guattari, 1991, p. 85). This leads to the strictly immanent and materialist explanation of 'geophilosophy' as an event or encounter. Philosophical thought will be modulated according to the singularities that distinguish the territory in which it takes root, as long as it finds in that territory the material conditions of possibility that make it deterritorialise or communicate directly with the earth. Thus, what we have called 'transfer' in pedagogical terms involves a kind of deterritorialisation, which removes knowledge from the context or territory in which it was learned to insert it into a new context or even to create this new context.

Therefore, the deterritorialisation involved in meaningful learning plays a fundamental role in education and, more generally, in knowledge and social advance. For real learning to take place and the consequent advancement of knowledge and society that it implies, a transfer or deterritorialisation is always required that distances the learner from what is established in the present territory, the epistemological and cultural customs in which their existence is embedded (present assemblage), to bring them closer to the earth that acts as the foundation of thought and undoes those established habits to generate new or unprecedented habits, that is, untimely ones (assemblage to come). If we take as an example the advancement of scientific research as described by Thomas S. Kuhn (1962/2012), we will find that scientists have to deterritorialise the knowledge in which they have been educated to give rise to the scientific revolutions that make science progress by establishing new paradigms—even if Kuhn confined his idea of progress to normal science, by the arguable incommensurability between paradigms that prevents us from speaking of progress in this respect. It follows that genuine learning always requires an ‘unlearning’ that relativises given knowledge and opens us to the experimentation of that *paideia* which, as we have seen, stimulates thought.

This allusion to ‘unlearning’ is not superfluous. Before becoming a key concept in management studies and even before being reclaimed in contemporary pedagogy, unlearning was part of valuable teaching traditions such as the Eastern one. In an interesting article, Tadashi Nishihira and Jeremy Rappleye (2021) expose the meaning of unlearning in the performance theory of Zeami, a 13th century Japanese playwright inspired by Zen, which will allow us to relate this concept to that of deterritorialisation. Zeami’s educational model distinguishes between three distinct stages of learning. The first stage takes as its starting point the lack of skills in the immature learner and initiates a process of acquiring skills or embodied patterns for the resolution of a particular task so that ‘the more proficient one becomes, the more the pattern becomes a part of the self and feels ‘natural’’ (p. 3). The second stage already concerns those who possess consolidated skills, but it is ‘an appeal to put down or leave behind those skills’ (p. 3), i.e. to unlearn. As the skills acquired become part of the learner’s own identity, this unlearning implies certain depersonalisation (‘self-denying’) that leads to reaching the state designated as *mushin*, defined as ‘being without intent’ or ‘selfless level of art’ (p. 3). And this is not only an epistemological state (concept) but also an affective and perceptive state (affects and percepts): ‘It is possible to see that *mushin* would be [...] a zero-point for cognition (epistemic representation) but also far more: the disappearance of affect, imagination, and appetite, plus the very ‘field of responsiveness

in which they function’’ (p. 4). Finally, the third stage is already a reconstruction, which draws unprecedented skills from the new kinds of intention that have been raised in the second stage.

Subsequently, Nishihira offers a second explanation of Zeami’s model in terms of context or ground (earth) that allows us to appreciate the relationship of deterritorialisation-reterritorialisation with unlearning. In the first stage, the acquisition of a skill separates the individual from the ground, i.e. it reterritorialises them. In the second stage, there is an unlearning that returns the individual to the ground but with a critical distance that they did not have at the beginning —deterritorialisation. Finally, the third stage re-launches learning on the new basis of a broader or enriched ground, constituting a new creative reterritorialisation. Therefore, the transfer at stake in meaningful learning always implies an unlearning understood as a deterritorialisation of knowledge with a view to a new reterritorialisation in a different context.

This also explains the inevitable inscription of learning in plural cultural contexts, but equally valid as long as there are the minimum conditions that configure the idiosyncrasy of pedagogy beyond any essence.

Anyway, one of the greatest challenges in the philosophy of education today is to develop pedagogical strategies to shape a *paidea* that stimulates thought —that is, meaningful learning— and promotes the abandonment of outdated ways of life in favour of new ones. This *paidea* has nothing to do with current strategies based on continuous demands that modulate students’ lives according to the sovereignty of control societies (Deleuze, 1990/1995), preparing them either for the stress of businessmen or for the stress of exploitative work.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Through the analysis of three important milestones in the philosophy of Deleuze and Deleuze and Guattari, I have carried out a reflection on the validity and importance of their thought concerning the philosophy of education that I consider opportune. In particular, I have tried to bring the valuable intuitions of these authors in the sphere of a complex and very technical thought closer to the current reflection in the discipline. Starting from anti-humanism as the matrix of a pedagogy of generosity in the thought of Deleuze and Guattari, I have highlighted the need to approach learning as problem-based experimentation that challenges the learner in their daily life experience and the interesting possibilities presented by deterritorialisation to

shape a critical pedagogical proposal at a socio-cultural and political level. I am aware of the limitations of the text due to the reduced length that this type of article must have, but I also understand that its main interest may well lie in constituting for the reader a ‘small machine’ that exerts on them that *paideia* that stimulates to continue thinking and deepening in those aspects that most concern them according to their interests and experiences.

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