

MICRO-FASCISM: PEDAGOGY (OF ART) AND THE SCENE OF ITS POLITICS

[Mikro-Faşizm: (Sanat) Pedagoji(si) ve Onun Politika Sahnesi]

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ABSTRACT

In his essay, “Relation of the Third Kind”, Maurice Blanchot establishes three relations that could be established with the Other. These relationships when compared to its political annotations denote very different connotations. In the socialist state, which is didactic, the educational system is based upon a hierarchy and in the fascist state, hierarchy is threatened as if it does not exist but unification is the sole aim. In order to break from this duality, Blanchot offers a third *Other* whose coming is going to create an horizon in which there is no horizon.

This *Other* when seen through an educational lens, I purport, can claim the intellectual emancipation of Joseph Jacotot. Jacotot’s teaching method depends on three principles: (i) all men have equal intelligence, (ii) every man has the faculty of being able to instruct himself/herself and (iii) everything is in everything. There is no intelligence where there is the binding of intelligence to another. The intelligence occurs where each person acts and is capable of telling and verifying what he is doing. In the conclusion, I try to purport that instead of the intellectual and enlightened pedagogy of Socialism ending in Fascism, wherein the Leader turns out to be one who informs the crowd through teaching, whether on a macro or micro level, a new politics could only start in a relation that should be established as the third relation, without a Leader, without a central pedagogical technique where the

teaching subject neither unifies nor affirms the Other and wherein the Other can turn into an *Atrui* and not a subject, but an *Other Him*, always in distant but still visible.

Keywords: Socialism, fascism, Blanchot, Bataille, leader, Jacotot's intellectual emancipation.

ÖZET

“Üçüncü Tür ile İlişki” başlıklı makalesinde Maurice Blanchot, Öteki ile kurulabilen üç adet ilişki türünden bahseder. Eğer siyasi açılımları düşünülürse, her bir türün farklı bir anlamı çağrıştırdığı anlaşılır. Didaktik olan sosyalist devletin var olduğu bir dünyada eğitim ağır bir hiyerarşiye dayanır. Faşist devletin var olduğu bir dünyada ise, birleşim ulaşılmaya çalışılan en büyük amaç olmasına rağmen hiyerarşi sanki yokmuş gibi davranılır. Bu ikilikten kurtulmak için, Blanchot, ortaya çıkmasının ufku olmayan ufukta belirebileceği bir *Öteki* önerir.

Bu “Öteki O”ya eğitimin penceresinden bakıldığı zaman, Joseph Jacotot'nun entelektüel kurtuluş fikrinin daha iyi anlaşılabilceğini düşünüyorum. Jacotot'nun öğretim yöntemi (i) herkesin eşit düzeyde zekası vardır, (ii) herkes kendini yönetebilecek bilince sahiptir, (iii) her şey her şeydir, şeklinde üç ilke üzerinde ilerler. Bir zekanın başka bir zekaya bağlı olduğu bir yerde hiçbir zeka ortaya çıkamaz. Zeka, ancak her insanın eyleme geçtiği ve de kendi yaptığının ne olduğunu açıklayabildiği ve söyleyebildiği yerde ortaya çıkar. Sonuç olarak, belirtmeye çalıştığım durum, sosyalizm, liderin ister mikro ister makro seviyede olsun kalabalığı eğiterek bilgilendirdiği sürekli faşizm ile sonuçlanan entelektüel ve aydınlanmış pedagojisi yerine, ancak bir liderin olmadığı, merkezi bir pedagojik tekniğin olmadığı ve öğretene öznenin Öteki'ni ne yutmaya ne de olumlamaya çalışmadığı ve Öteki'nin, bir özne değil belli bir uzaklıkta duran ama görünür olan bir Öteki O'ya (*Atrui*) dönüştüğü bir dünyada yeni bir siyaset başlayabilir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Sosyalizm, faşizm, Blanchot, Bataille, lider, Jacotot'nun entelektüel özgürleşmesi.

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“To educate educators! But the first ones must educate themselves! And for these I write.”
Friedrich Nietzsche – Thus Spoke Zarathustra

THE RELATION OF THE THIRD KIND

In his conversational essay, ‘The Relation of the Third Kind’, Maurice Blanchot (1969) talks about an (im)possible relation that the ‘I’ could establish with a completely different Other that lies beyond his own onto-theological field. Blanchot (1969) starts by describing the three possible relationships that could be described as the dialectical operatives between the ‘I’ and the ‘Other’. The first of these relations is the one in which the ‘law of the same’ reigns. Mankind observes separation but wants unity. In order to establish unity, s/he should render the ‘Other’, identical to himself. With adequate identification and mediation as his means or by struggle and labor through history, man tries to reduce everything to the level of the same. In this case, unity passes through totality and truth becomes the movement and affirmation of a whole. Such a relation between the ‘I’ and the ‘Other’ is the description of the state through the Hegelian dialectics inherited from the Aristotelian tradition in which it is described that the state as the absolute guarantor of the distributive justice tries to swallow all of its Others in the pot of Sameness.

The second type of a relationship that Blanchot (1969) describes takes place when unity is not only demanded but immediately attained. In a dialectical relation, the I/subject, by both dividing itself and dividing the Other/object, affirms the Other as an intermediary or as *its* Other and realizes its own truth in it. In such a relationship of coincidence and participation, the Other and the immediate Self divide as reciprocals of each other. The Subject and Other lose themselves in each other through ecstasy, fusion and fruition so that the I becomes the sovereign in the Other who becomes its absolutized horizon. Defined in political terms, this second type of relation refers to the Leftist agenda. The Other, in this

relation is, still no more than a substitute for the One. Be the relationship mediate, immediate, or infinite, the thought itself always points towards unity.

Defined in political terms, both of the two relationships mentioned above operate on the plenitude of Fascism. Fascism, as Deleuze and Guattari have shown us in L'Anti-Oedipe (1972) operates through intensities. Wherever an intensity shows itself, whether voluntarily through unification as in the first type of relation or involuntarily as in the second type of relation, there is always an overarching 'I' that either tries to render the 'Other' in its sameness or to swallow the Other through a differentiation from itself.

How does this overarching aspect of Fascism operate? The phrase 'machinery of Fascism' is borrowed from Deleuze and Guattari (1972) but the content of the phrase is not fully explained by them either. In an article, "The Psychological Structure of Fascism", Georges Bataille (1979) tries to explain the operative plenitude of Fascism. Bataille's main concern is to understand why German Fascism has emerged out of Nazional Sozialitisch Deutche Arbeiter Partie? Or why in every other country that it emerged throughout Europe, did Fascism ever occur by transforming the movements that have started with principles of Socialism?

Bataille (1979) contends that a possible answer cannot be given first without understanding how the capitalist society operates. According to Bataille (1979), a capitalist society operates as a monolithic society that is in itself homogenous. This homogeneity is created through the establishment of productive citizens, each one usefully operative through their own tasks. Of course, this order is nothing other than the Platonic division of labor. Homogeneity is the calculation of the sum of all successfully functioning citizens under one common denominator: the production of money for the benefit of the state. In other terms, in both Liberal Capitalism and Fascism, every dynamic of society is either united or overridden for a higher identitarian determination of the state. It is the emergence of petit bourgeoisie as the imperative agency that stultifies the homogeneity of the capitalist society and

turns it into a *heterogeneous* body. For Bataille (1979), the proletariat remains as the Other of that *heterogeneous* world that imperative agency sets up. As a heterogeneous Other, proletariat is perceived as a taboo or as a dirt, in comparison to the sovereignty and the hygiene of both the homogenous state and its heterogeneous civil body. Of course, socialism is not without any sovereignty either. Socialism is run by an organizational operation, which is leveled by a leader through military or paramilitary means. According to Bataille (1979), the proletariat, seizes its own image through this peerless outside, in another Other who also remains as an Other even to itself; hence, the leader. In other terms, proletariat, as the Other of the heterogeneous civil world of bourgeoisie creates its own Other as its Leader. The operation of Socialism occurs through a reign of a heroic inclusion which is still endowed with sovereignty and as a result, proletariat receives its allocation by the rule of the Leader. Already oppressed, proletariat becomes more alienated and repressed by this other Other called Leader. In other words, the effervescence of the revolutionary desire is stalled back into the process of the disintegration of the homogeneity and grilled into the reverse direction of an orgy of revolutionary authoritarianism. This is the reason why, for Bataille, the very cause of fascism's existence as an outcome of socialist principles is based not upon an economic, political or cultural but a psychological reason.

In Blanchot's (1969) explanations and Bataille's (1979) elaborations, it could be said that in Socialism, equal to the unificatory world of Being/God and the Same/Equality, it is the rigor of the One/ State that holds thought captive. And surely, it is not some madness that will free this system from the One/State; because in such a society, each citizen is in the order of completing his/her task in terms of working or speaking (meaning there is no time or place for madness to occur either) and the establishment of the societal central power that works toward the affirmation and the accomplishment of the world as a unity of the whole is not allowed to exist by the *heterogeneity* of the liberal bourgeoisie, since this heterogeneous/liberal bourgeoisie already tries to think in the name of the Other/proletariat and establishes itself as its Leader. In short, what Bataille (1979) tries to purport is that it was with the emergence of the Leader that the socialist working class movements have turned into Fascism in Europe.

Since the first two types of relations both create a subjugation of the Other, in the continuation of his essay, Blanchot (1969) refers to a third type of relation. This third type of relation is not a relation of unification or differentiating division. It sees the One/State as the ultimate horizon, not any more than a Being/God or a thought. For Blanchot, this relation should break with what has always been our exigency or responsibility, if it wishes to be guilty of the parricide as the decreeing of the death of God. In this new relationship, a new sense and form of speech and another kind of relation with the very presence of the Other returns us neither to ourselves or Being/God nor to the One/State. Therefore, it is not a relation of fiction or of hypothesis, but one that,

though diverted and caught up in the (real) relations between men, is always in play as soon as they speak and encounter one another. A mobile-immobile relation, untold and without number, not indeterminate but indetermining, always in displacement, being without number, being without a place and such that it seems to draw-repel any 'I' into leaving its site or its role – which, nonetheless, the 'I' must maintain, having become nomadic and anonymous in an abyssal space of resonance and condensation (67).

This type of relationship is not instrumental or objective as in the first relationship of the Hegelian Monarch, or in the second type of relationship when the 'I' seeks to study the 'Other' as an object of knowledge or truth seeing in it another of itself and wanting to make himself recognized by that Other so that in such a free recognition that is both equal and reciprocal, a movement between the 'I' and the Other can be accomplished through labor and the liberating action of history. However, in this third type of relationship, nature transforms into the world although the world does not lay claim to full and real transparency; but the whole supposedly accomplished as the reign of liberty still substitutes itself for the reign of necessity. This is a relationship that is not going to be one of a subject-to-subject or a subject-to-object but can infinitely remain without unity or equality. In this third type of a relationship, the 'I' can go into a fusion with the Other without uniting or equalizing with it and draw the other into itself in an effusion where there remains neither the One nor the Other. In other terms, since there exists

no horizon that is based on the coordinates of power, inclusion or exclusion, in this third type of relationship, neither the One nor the Other can ever be the sovereign subjects.

Just as how Bataille (1979) was outlining the transformation of the socialist revolutionary desire into a fascist orgy that stalls itself by the emergence of the leader representing the Oneness of the State itself, the third type of relationship for Blanchot (1969) is nothing but an escape from all measures knitted in the plenitude of the One. This is the relationship of man with man between both of whom there is no longer any metaphysical entity like the proposition of a God, a state, a leader, an ideal, a unity, the mediation of the world, or the subsistence of nature. What remains between man and man is an ‘empty space’, which is not full of nothingness either. This ‘empty space’ can be represented only by the word ‘between’ and as such it is an infinite space without a horizon. It offers itself in the exigency of speech in which the limits of subjective possibilities are reached out. According to Blanchot, (1969) such a relationship, first of all, means that man is what is most distant from man and thus man is far more separated from the limit of the Universe than he would be from God. It also means that this distance represents what escapes human power. This third type of relationship is the pure lack in speech where in all possibilities of subjection falls away. The empty space created in-between by the lack of speech, is transformative. It transforms the involved subjects by relating the central subject to another of itself and produces a completely different new Other out of the central subject’s own embodiment. Detached from all horizons and already have become a presence without a present, thus foreign to everything visible and invisible, ‘a man without a horizon’ can come into appearance by speaking to the central subject in the exigency of his words. Blanchot (1969) calls this newly emergent Other ‘*Autrui*’, who acts as the agent starting the transformational process of the central subject. This word *Autrui* is the Other in the objective case and based on the word “*lui*”; it is a combination of two words: *Autrelui*, meaning *Other Him*. *Autrui* is thus the Other when the other is not a comprehensible object in the onto-phenomenological field of the central subject. Using this linguistic particularity as a reminder, it could be said that *Autrui* is lacking an ego as well; but this lack, nonetheless, does not make him an object either. *Autrui* does not designate a nature, cannot characterize a being or an essential trait and distorts what it tries to call into question. *Autrui* is never a self for the central subject and the central subject is

not a self for *Autrui* either. This means that the Other who appears in front of the central subject – as the one who is coming from the Outside into the central subject’s horizon – is *for himself* nothing but a self who would like to be heard by the Other, to be received by the Other and stand in the place of the central subject’s presence, as if the central subject were the Other as unidentifiable, ‘I’-less and nameless.

When this new Other speaks to the central subject, the speech remains radically separate, including the possibility of speaking to each other and not understanding – because it is not a trans subjective or an intersubjective relationship either. *Autrui*’s speech does not speak to the central subject as a self. When the central subject calls upon the Other, since the other does not have a horizon, the central subject speaks from no site and having spoken from no site, he forms neither a dual equality nor a unity with the central subject.

The *Autru* that is in a horizon less relation remains radically out of the sphere of the central subject’s perspective and defines the span of the Outside. This proves that the real exteriority is not that of the objects, or of an indifferent nature or the immense universe, all of which can be captured within the realm of representation or through the network of power relations. This exteriority created in the central subject by the Outside does not distinguish men by making them interchangeable but keeps them in relation with one another under the judgment of the commons.

This third type of relationship is an experience in which the *Autrui*, the Outside, exceeds any positive or negative term and as such is the ‘presence’ that does not refer back to the One or the exigency of a relation of discontinuity where unity is not implied. The *Autrui* is a *He* as long as this third person is not a third person and as far as this *He* brings ‘the neutral’ into play. ‘The neutral’, according to Blanchot, is neither a third person nor the simple cloak of impersonality. The narrative of *He* in which ‘the neutral’ speaks is not content to take the place usually occupied by the subject. The narrative *He*

sits in every subject just as it misappropriates all transitive action and all objective possibility. A transformation created by *He* happens to both the 'I' and the Other in which they can only recapture what happened to them by relinquishing their power to say "I". In other words, the *He*, whether absent or present, whether it affirms itself or hides itself, marks the intrusion of the other in its irreducible strangeness. Thus, in the presence of the one who comes into view as *Atrui* and responds to the depth of the strangeness of this irregularity and this inoperativeness, both the central subject and the Other become exposed to the speech of the Outside. In 'the neutral', the relationship between the central subject and the Other becomes an asymmetrical one and a relationship without a relation occurs.

For Blanchot, (1969) although the relationship with *Autrui* is attained through the experience of death in language, it is the Other that starts to speak to the subject in a new language wherein the decisive interruption of the relation turns out to be an infinite relation in the speech of the Other. However, could it be claimed that when the subject speaks to the *Autrui*, he is being spoken like a dead person, being called from the other side of the space 'in-between'? In speaking to the Other, the 'I' speaks rather than dies, which also means that the 'I' speaks in the place where there is not a space left for dying.

If we interfere on Bataille's (1979) narration into Blanchot's (1969) descriptions, it could be said that when proletariat escapes into its own organizational culture, it should not be scared of risking the possible mis-communication that could occur among its members or the communication between itself and its Leader to inquire an non-horizontal plenitude in which dialogue is already based on the difference of speech. To further Bataille's explanation about the emergence of the Leader, it should be inferred that it is proletariat itself who helps create the Leader because of a possible fear of mis-communication that could appear in its own organizational culture.

Towards the end of the essay, Bataille (1979) explains that the condition for working class movements not to turn into Fascism by forgetting their essential principles lies in the key opening of the 'unconscious' of the working class. As far as, there is unconscious, a communication has a more

chance to occur. For Bataille, (1969) it is Freudian psychoanalysis that is going to wit the political heterogeneity of the proletariat. It is only when proletariat discovers its own ‘unconscious’ and integrate it into its cultural production, then could it escape from the task of finding a leader and from the possibility of finalizing its own movement into Fascism. In other terms, the dialogue that occurs in ‘the empty space’ between the I/Subject and the *Autrui* to be operative without a horizon requires the procession of the ‘unconscious’. When every member of the movement can open their unconscious, perhaps the singularity of each of their unconscious will not create a coherent unity in which assimilative functions can proceed or the dialogue that might occur between each of them may not even have an equally sensuous meaning. No matter which is taken as the path, the usage of the unconscious is the only condition of moving without a horizon on an infinitely open movement.

Of course, mimesis and art play a crucial role in the opening of the unconscious. It should never be forgotten that the artistic production was one of the main means through which Goebbels and Hitler was propagating their politics. One also should always be reminded that the main paradigms of propaganda (confetti flying around the convergence space, the politician speaking to the masses over the speech platform etc.) that is developed during the reigning period of Nazism is inherently over-present in the contemporary world’s political mass propaganda campaigns. In order to understand how the machinery of this aesthetic propaganda operates, a questioning of what art is will not be sufficient or rather will remain unnecessary since most of these interrogations do not take into consideration a certain class’s interests into view and mainly remain in a pre-dialectical epistemological framework. In order to be able to talk about a form of working class art, further meditations on how this horizon less plenitude operates as the production of Art are needed. Artistic production is not a single apprehension of thought but intrinsically linked to it in a mimetic relation and according to Badiou, (1998) it finds its explanation in two different philosophical approaches; the first one set up by Plato and the second one is built upon the first one and advanced further by Aristotle. The first of these schemas is the *didactic* one, whose thesis states that art is capable of truth and thus all truth is external to art. This thesis certainly notifies that art represents itself under the guise of an immediate truth and that this truth exposes art as the appearance of an unfounded or nondiscursive truth that is exhausted in its being-

there. The point of the Platonic location of art was that the seduction or charm of it had to be rejected. The Platonic polemic about mimesis designates art not so much as an imitation of things but as the imitation of the effect of truth, drawing its power from being the immediate character of truth. In other terms, if truth can exist as charm, then we are fated to lose the dialectical labor of ascending to the truth. Remaining as the prisoners of an immediate image of truth, we might divert from the supposedly immediate truth of art as false truth, as the semblance that belongs to the effect of truth.

Semblance and Art

For Plato (1998) if it is really needed, art must be limited to an instrumental function since it presents the transitory force of semblance or of charm to a truth that is prescribed from Outside. This is why according to Plato, ‘acceptable art’ must be subjected to the philosophical surveillance of truths. This position upholds a didactics of the senses whose aim cannot be abandoned to immanence. In other terms, the function of art must be education, the norm of which is set up by philosophy. Art represents the Outside from which the *Autrui* comes as well. Since *Autrui* is not a man or a subject and thus bereft of having a didactic purpose for the central subject, it could be inferred that the encounter of the central subject with *Autrui* is nothing but an aesthetic phenomena as an effect of truth without a horizon. The essential reason why art, although just a semblance of truth, is still loaded a didactic task is based upon a potential struggle that would occur about its controllability. In other terms, much more important than what art itself is, by whom and by what means will it be controlled sets the determination of its production. If the truth of art is possible as far as that truth comes to it from outside, the deliverance of the ‘good’ of art tends to be conveyed in its public effect rather than the artwork itself. The public effect of an artwork is mainly controlled by politics. Politics, as it is known by Plato’s schema, does not produce the truth either. Thus, it can only control another thing that is similar to itself. This is the reason why the way through which art is controlled becomes much more important than what it itself is because in the realm of politics, it is always much more important to control the semblance of truth or the effects of speech rather than the truth or the speech itself. Since it still has not been allowed to be scrutinized well enough and although a considerably serious and analytical study about it has not yet

been done properly, a close reading of Walter Benjamin and Theodor Adorno's writings should always remind us about how the public art during the Nazi era was used as the most effective way of propagating politics.

As it can be inferred that Aristotle, while trying to dissect his definition of art from the Platonic one, has defined art in two theses:

- Art is incapable of truth because it is mimetic and its regime is semblance. In other terms, art is perceivable as much as it can approximate itself to the truth. However, the truth mentioned here is only a truth which is set up by philosophy,
- If art is not able to present the truth by itself then its purpose is not the production of the truth itself either.

Aristotle's lending innocence liberates art from the Platonic condemnation. For Aristotle, through catharsis, art comes to have a therapeutic function by involving the deposition of the passions in transference onto the semblance of truth. What such an insertion means is that art is not theoretical but inherently ethical and its semblance is to be done by the creation of its identification with audience through the transference of passions. Thus the truth of art is constrained within the imaginary, which makes it not a form of thought but exhaustion liberated in its act and public operation. Aristotle's description of art, then, clearly grants itself the possibility of being without verisimilitude and demarcates it as 'the unlikely truth'. Thus the cost of the peace between philosophy and art is achieved by asserting that art dwells in the imaginary and is of public service.

After all, this is how it is understood by the state in the "vassalization" of art and artists by absolutism, as well as in the modern vicissitudes of funding. In terms of the link that preoccupies us here, the state is essentially classical (perhaps with the exception of the socialist state, which was rather didactic) (Badiou 5).

The socialist state is didactic in the sense that it tries to turn the One/State into the semblance of truth without the aestheticization of art and if it ever tries to aestheticize it, it falls back into Fascism. Following Benjamin's maxim at the end his seminal essay, 'The Work of Art In the Age of Its Mechanical Reproduction', that while fascism tries to aestheticize politics, socialism answers by politicizing art, it could be inferred that unlike Fascism, Socialism should not try to claim that truth is intrinsic to art. Considering Bataille's remarks about the emergence of the Leader, it is not too difficult to comprehend that this oppressive and sovereign imperative agent is also a personality that comes from the Outside in an aesthetic phenomenon. This is the reason why socialist working class movements end up in creating a central Leader figure so that a control mechanism can be established. Repeated in Badiou's lines, what art in the socialist state did, was still to teach its own truth either through ecstasy or unification. Since the Socialist State remains didactic, art is important for its operation as far as it serves a public good. Thus knowing that once left to its own immanence, the transformative power of art will be revealed, Socialist State as oppressed by the condition of its Leader still controls art by trying to affirm it as an intermediary and realize its own political truth through art. What socialism should know is that a work of art is finite and moves within the fulfillment of its own limits. However as Benjamin was suggesting, what Socialism should have done was to try to disjoin art from the realm of philosophy and leave it as a form of thought entirely unapparent; in other terms, to politicize art itself.

Given the previous lack of intersection between the didactic Socialist state and art's immanence, how could art be understood as a transformative encounter with an *Autrui* in which there is neither assimilation nor unification? Since it is not really so easy to step out of Plato's Republic, it will not be easy to purport that art can dislodge its didactic and pedagogical paradigm. However, the real question that should be asked upon is how art itself could be thought if it already does not have an essence or a truth of its own? How could a thing that is not the truth itself but only its semblance and not having a definable pedagogy be taught? In other terms, how could art be thought in a way that would surpass the limits of the scene in which the student disciple will not be oppressed by the tyranny of a master like

the working class movements being oppressed by the tyranny of a Leader in the early twentieth-century Europe as Bataille was specifying?

The Platonic discourse about the pedagogy of art in Symposium (1999) built upon the erotic bondage between the disciple and the master will not be enough to cover the scope of what Blanchot is trying to propose in the scene of the ‘man without a horizon’ encountering an *Autrui* in ‘the empty space’ and speaking in *the neutrall* in which both of their subjectivities are effaced. Since the Master that Plato describes is already the sovereign subject in his didactic manner and looking down upon his disciples in order to produce his own siblings or trying to treat them with an open mind in an egalitarian distance in order to either assimilate them or to unite with them. If we are trying to define a different approach in which art can be defined and taught without a hierarchy between the master and the disciple, it is crucial to scrutinize Jacques Ranciere’s book The Ignorant Schoolmaster in which a radical pedagogical method is explained and wherein the one being taught is *emancipated* from the control mechanism of the one who teaches.

In this book, Ranciere elaborates on the teaching method of the eighteenth century French educational philosopher, Joseph Jacotot, who was driven into exile during the Restoration Period in France. Jacotot is given the task of showing illiterate parents how they themselves could teach their children to read. However, through his experience, Jacotot encounters an enlightening experiment in which he discovers that he (The Master) is not any more intelligent than his students (The Disciples) or rather that the entire process of teaching can be established without intelligences.

Emancipation of the Intellect

Around early 1800s, Joseph Jacotot, as a lecturer in French literature at the University of Louvain teaches rhetoric, analysis, ideology and law at Dijon. By the return of the Bourbons in 1818, he is forced into exile and decreed by the King of Netherlands, he obtains a position of professorship at half-

pay. His classes accumulate a great interest among the students at Dijon but he unfortunately discovers that a good number of the students do not know French at all. Thus Jacotot understands that there seemsto be no language in which he can teach them what they are seeking from him. Yet he wants to respond to their wishes. At that time, a bilingual edition of Télémaque was being published in Brussels. Jacotot delivers this book to the students and asks them to learn the French text with the help of translation. A book is always a circle of totality in which one can understand new things and find new ways to say what one sees in it. Jacotot supplies his first grade students, first, with letters and then with words and grammar, until the students find meaning in what they are doing and want to learn further. This is the first principle of universal teaching: one must learn something and relate everything else to that something.

First, he tries to break up the totality of the book into fragments. When they make through the half of the book, he makes them repeat what they have learned so far and then tells them to read through the rest of the book until they could recite it. This philosophical experiment unleashes a chance experiment in Jacotot's mind. Until that time, like all conscientious professors believed, Jacotot also thinks that the important business of the master is to transmit his knowledge to his students and bring them to his own level of expertise so that the students can avoid distinguishing the essential from the accessory or the principle from the consequence. In classical pedagogy, the essential task of the master is to *explicate*, to disengage the simple elements of learning and to reconcile their simplicity in principle with the factual simplicity that characterizes young and ignorant minds. To teach means to transmit learning and form minds simultaneously by leading those minds from the simplest to the most complex in an ordered progression. The Master has to teach, to govern for the lettered elite, to design new machines for the new avant-garde.

Jacotot gives no explanation to his students on the grammatical elements of language. However, what his students do is to look for the French words that correspond to the words they knew. The students learn to put the words together to make French sentences whose spelling and grammar become more

and more exact as they progress through the book. As a result, a sudden illumination occurs in Jacotot's mind. He truly understands that there is no real need for an explication. He realizes that the basic logic of explication is the principle of a regression ad infinitum and the singular art of the explicator is the art of distance, to show to the ignorant that he cannot learn by himself, to recognize the distance between the taught material and the person being instructed, the distance between common sense and science. On a double gesture, the explicator has to set up the mythical trick of pedagogy. On the one hand, the explicator sets the beginning of the ignorant student's life by the moment of the encounter with the explicator as the beginning of a new world. On the other hand, by establishing what the beginning is, he also appoints himself the task of lifting up the veil of ignorance.

In the explicative order, an oral explication is usually necessary to explicate the written explication. This presupposes that the reasoning is clearer and better imprinted on the mind of the student than when they are conveyed by the speech of the master. He says to his students that such and such must be learned and after that, this other thing. The master's procedural process is based on election, progression, incompleteness. Rules are learned as elements, applied to some students and then some exercises are done based on the acquired rudiments. When another higher level is attained; some other more exercises are done. At each stage, the abyss of ignorance is trenched again and again. Each fragment of knowledge adds up to a whole followed by a master with whom the student will never be able to catch up. Since it is a totality, the book can never be finished, the lesson can never be over, and so the master can keep on teaching. Even if the student understands correctly, the master has to correct him again. Since the genius of this educational system is to transform the loss into profit, the newly educated student has to suffer from this mutilation. Although he has been taught, and learned, there is the discrepancy that he also might forget; behind him, the abyss of ignorance might be trenched again. This is what establishes the genius of the master: out of the realm of humiliation, he attaches, to the inferior creature the stultification of his own power.

It is the very incapacity of the student that structures the fiction of the explicative conception of the world. It is the task of the explicator to constitute the incapable as such. For the explicative order to be overturned, the master should not use speech. Thus what Jacotot realizes is that for comprehension to occur, understanding remains to be nothing more than a translation. There is nothing beyond the written text and there is no necessity that requires the work of the intelligent explicator, no language of the master's language whose words and sentences are able to speak the reason of the words and the sentences of a text. Since he cannot escape from his own freedom, the student will see everything by himself, compare and response. Released from the chains of the master, the infinitude of the student's answers become his own method. In this circle of power, there is nothing more the master can hide from the student and nothing more the student can hide from the master because both of their wills are only linked to the intelligence of the book once it is finished.

If there is stultification whenever intelligence is subordinated to another one, then that subjection is purely one of will over another will. In classical pedagogy, the student is linked to a will (that of the Master) and an Intelligence (that of the book). The Master acts as the supervisor who encloses intelligence in the arbitrary circle from which he can only break out in order to become necessary to that circle again. However, what Jacotot tries to do is to emancipate the student since it is emancipation that already allows one intelligence obey itself while letting his will obey another will. To emancipate someone else, one must be emancipated oneself first so that the comparison is no longer between methods but rather between two uses of intelligence and two conceptions of the intellectual order. The rapid route is not that of pedagogy but that of liberty. Beneath the pedagogical relation of ignorance to reason, the more fundamental relation of stultification and emancipation must be recognized.

Jacotot experiments with four variously combined roles: an emancipatory master, a stultifying master, a learned master and an ignorant master and finally decides on the very last one. He understands that one can teach what one does not know if the student is emancipated and obliged to use his own intelligence. Thus Jacotot only asks this emancipatory question to the ignorant student: "what do you think about the

text?” The entire power of this question lies in the emancipatory consciousness that it realizes in the master and gives birth to in the student. The ignorant can still learn what the master does not know if the master binds himself the task of realizing the student’s own capacity. In classical pedagogy, it is the circle of powerlessness, inherent in the very workings of the social world, which ties the student to the explicator master. The learned teacher is powerless because he is not emancipated and the ignorant student is powerless because his will is linked to the powerless learned master. On the other hand, the circle of power can only be effective by being made public. What Ranciere proposes is that this method is practiced out of necessity by everyone but no one wants to recognize or confess its existence and cope with the intellectual revolution it could bring out. Everyone in their educational life has learned things without explanation, i.e. the mother tongue, the religious stories that are never written etc. It is the circle of powerlessness that prevents this from being recognized and it was Jacotot’s intelligence to come to the recognition of the innate presence of this method.

Jacotot’s method is based on three principles:

- (i) all men have equal intelligence;
- (ii) every man has the faculty of instructing himself/herself and
- (iii) everything is everything.

The first of these two principles are dependent on the fact that every man, ignorant or pre-educated, has equal intelligence and already has the faculty of self-learning. And the third principle refers to the educator’s or the educated one’s not having much difference in intelligence, meaning that the process of teaching can proceed without a fixed point in time.

However, as Ranciere warns, the paradigm built upon the principle that the ignorant can teach to the ignorant what he does not know might sound like a pious image of a housewife’s recipe. The ignorant master is not simply the expert who allows the poor who have neither time, nor money, nor knowledge

to educate their own children. There is no intelligence where there is the binding of intelligence to intelligence. Intelligence occurs when each interlocutor can act and is capable of telling and verifying what he is doing. The existence of the book keeps the two minds at a distance since the examined thing in question is already an available source of material verification: the ignorant master's task is to bring the examinee back to the material objects, to a thing that he can verify with his own senses. The examinee is always beholden to verification in the opening of the book. This is why the ignorant master can verify the extension of his competence. This is the way that the ignorant master can instruct the ignorant student: by verifying the fact that he is also searching. And in the meantime, the master may not always find what he is looking for, but he can find something new to relate to the thing that he already knows. Thus the ignorant master is the one who keeps the researcher on his own route by following him.

According to Ranciere, emancipation is the consciousness of that equal reciprocity that alone permits intelligence to be realized by verification. What stultifies the common people is not the lack of instruction, but the belief in the inferiority of their own intelligence. Socratic philosophy is the perfected form of this stultification. Like all learned masters, Socrates interrogates in order to teach to the Other. Socratic Method stultifies the 'inferiors' and stultifies the 'superiors' at the same time. The only verified intelligence is the one that speaks to a fellow-man who is capable of verifying the equality of his own intelligence. The superior mind condemns itself to never being understood by inferiors. He can assure himself of his own intelligence by disqualifying those who could provide him its recognition. However, if one wishes to emancipate someone, one must interrogate himself in a humane manner and not in the manner of a scholar because rather than eliminating it, explication enhances incapacity further. This is how the temporal structure of play which later on would become the entire myth of Progress in the nineteenth-century has developed; this myth, as Ranciere denotes, is the pedagogical fiction erected into the fiction of the entire society and the general infantilization of the individuals who form it. This is why Jacotot's third principle is fringed by setting out that 'everything is everything'. The power of this tautology proves that equality of intelligence in every humane work requires a process of learning to improvise instead of transferring a certain pre-conceived and

memorized speech to an ignorant student. Learning to improvise means learning to overcome oneself, to overcome the pride that distinguishes itself as humility or as an excuse for one's incapacity to speak in front of others, to submit oneself to their judgment and to break the totality of language out of its own circle.

Only in those means, Jacotot's discovery is also a breaking off of the progressive's circle of power. A man of progress is a man who moves forward, observes, experiments, verifies his knowledge and erects that science to the level of the dominant explication of the social order. Explication is not only the stultifying weapon of pedagogues but the very bond of the social order as well. Putting into ranks presupposes the explication itself and the distributory, justificatory fiction of an inequality that has no other reason than being. In other terms, explication is also the work of laziness. It only needs to introduce inequality which is usually done at a very little effort or expense. Every progressive pedagogical practice explains the inequality of knowledge as an irreducible evil that is in complete contrast against the *goodness* of the society. The progressives' explanation is that there once was discordance between the grand explication and the little explicators and both were stultifying in a disorderly fashion, steps were taken gropingly and blindly, words were gathered more or less from the mouths of the unenlightened ancestors, things were guessed about and the false ideas were drawn from the first encounter with the material universe. Without doubt, such an explication still forgets the pedagogical fiction built into the fiction of the society as a whole. Of course, curing will never be realized because nature always makes sure that there will always be some delay since, at the same time, it should be made sure that inequality should not be overcome. Since every progressive believes that the World begins from 'nothing', they claim that now, a new age has begun, wherein the man-child takes the right road to maturity. So progressives do not just need a method but they believe that a *good* method is necessary. Without a *good* method, the child-man is prey to childish fictions, to routine and prejudices. The progressives' circle of power wants to tear minds away from the old routine, from the control of priests and obscurantists of any kind. And in order to do that, more rational explications and methods are necessary. The century of Progress is that of the triumphant explicators, of the childish humanity pedagogized. With a *good* method, the progressive sets his feet in the footsteps of those who

advance rationally. The *good* methods must be tested and perfected by comparing them with way of commissions and reports. Qualified and licensed personnel, taught in the new methods and monitored on their execution must be employed to educate people. The improvisations of incompetents must be avoided because one must not permit minds to be formed by chance or routine and it must be made sure that the possibility of opening a school and teaching anything in any way should not exist. Families (or any of those routine vicious circles that reproduce inveterate superstition of empirical knowledge and obscure sentiment) must be prevented from taking on their children's instructions. However, at the same time, the main task of the progressive is to make sure that never will the student catch up with the master, nor the people with their enlightened elite so that hierarchy always exists and the hope of reducing the hierarchical inequality makes them advance along the good road. This is the reason why a well-ordered system of public instruction, a University and a Master that controls it are necessary. And it is the Progressive himself that is this Master, as the one who is supposed to earn the money out of the pockets of the ones who he considers to be the ignorants. Since the sole principle of the inequality of intelligence is in play, public instruction becomes the secular arm of progress, the way to equalize inequality progressively or in other terms, it is a way to unequalize equality indefinitely.

This is why Progressives do not have any difference than the Republicans or Nazis. Republicans still and Nazis used to, take the sovereignty of the people as a principle but they know very well that the sovereign people cannot be identified with the ignorant swarm devoted to the defense of their own material interests. They also know very well that the republic claims the equality of rights and duties but it cannot decree the equality of intelligence. For them, it is very clear that a backward peasant does not have the intelligence of a Republican Leader and there is nothing to do about it. Republicans think that this inevitable inequality derives from social diversity that is based upon the inexhaustible richness of nature. One need only to make sure that the inferior intelligence not be prevented from understanding its own rights and duties. Since the progressives think that, little by little, time will attenuate the deficiency caused by the centuries of oppression and obscurity, the commonality in both of their approaches that the cause of equality will be achieved by the public instruction of the people, programmed by the representatives of the sovereign people, the instruction of the ignorant by the

learned, of the men of pre-egoistical material concerns by men of devotion, of individuals enclosed in their particularities by the universality of reason and power. If the principle of the inequality of intelligence is cast out then it is made sure that the intelligent's management of the 'stupid' multitude is guaranteed. Whether Republican or Progressive, whoever has consented to the fiction of the inequality of intelligence, in order to reconcile inequality of intelligence with the reciprocity of rights and duties, can do nothing besides run from one fiction to another, from ontology to institutionalized corporation.

How could one make the hierarchically superior Master come to the realization that what he has encountered as a disciple who is an *Autrui*? How could it be realized that as far as there is superiority between intelligences, every kind of infinitized inequality will always lead to a mastering of one sovereignty over inferiority? Remembering Bataille's lines, was not the infinite emergence of a central sovereign subject in every working class movement always ends up in a Fascistic orgy led by a Leader who claims to be the 'hero of the day' or the 'pedagogue' of the movement (to inspirationally adopt from Ranciere)? How could 'heroism', which is nothing more than another eighteenth-century fiction, be ended in any radical political working class movement? How could both the Progressives and Republicans ever understand that the mission of the luminous is not to enlighten those who dwell in obscurity but to accept that there is no one who is really in obscurity? Which men of science and devotion would accept to leave his own light under a basket and lose his superiority and his mind of being a savior? And how would the Republicans, Progressives as well as the Leaders of radical movements accept that the childlike minds of the sovereign people can still ripen without the beneficial dew of explications? How could they understand that the way for them to rise up in the intellectual order is not to learn what they do not know but to learn while teaching what they do not know? Perhaps an unlearned human can understand this but a learned master will never understand it. It has taken such a chance experience of turning himself into an ignorant schoolmaster that led a person like Jacotot to understand it.

If the first type of unificatory relation that Blanchot was describing above is based upon the maxim that ‘the nature of totality cannot be the same as that of its parts’, then it is evident that whatever rationality is given to the society is at the same time taken up from the individuals that make it up. Since its dawning, the age of progress has been alert to the mortal danger of separating the children of the people from the condition to which they were destined and from the ideas that were present in those conditions. This means that the age has always been turning back and forth on this contradiction: as Blanchot was describing in the second type of relationship, in the socialist state, all of the sciences were known to be founded upon simple principles that were available to all minds who want to make use of them if they follow the right method and as in the first type of relationship, in the fascist state, in which the sciences were opened up for careers in a social order, classes are separated and individuals conform to the social state that they accept as their own destiny.

One must choose to attribute reason to real individuals or to their fictive unity. Individuals are real beings and society is a fiction. The equality of value is for real beings, not for a fiction. One needs only to learn how to be an equal man in an unequal society. This is what Jacotot meant by *being emancipated*. Jacotot’s *madness* was to realize that there is no pre-conceived intelligence among men and that the Master is either as stupid or as intelligent as the student. His was the moment when the young cause of emancipation as the equality of men was being transformed into the cause of social progress which only could be developed to the detriment of the emancipatory efforts of reasonable individuals at the price of stifling the human potential. The enormous machine of public instruction was to promote equality by making it represented, socialized, made unequal, good for being perfected from commission to commission, from report to report or from one reform to another one. Jacotot was alone in recognizing the effacement of equality under progress or of emancipation under instruction at a period of history at which Republicans and Nazis alike hated the progressed because just like the progressives themselves, they confused the idea of progression with instructed maturity. This is why Jacotot remained as the only real *egalitarian* to perceive the representation and institutionalization of progress as a renouncement of the moral and intellectual adventure of equality and public instruction as the grief-work of emancipation.

One must say that the enlightened pedagogy of Socialism with all of its hierarchically progressive methods, inevitably always ends in an unacknowledged Fascism by a Leader at the centre of the operation collecting and enlightening an autonomous body of a fictive mass. If one learns Blanchot's lessons, it should not be too difficult to comprehend that whether on a macro or micro level, a new politics on the scene of education could start only in a relation that would be established as the third type of relation; without a Leader, without a central pedagogical technique where the teaching subject neither unifies nor affirms or equalizes the Other so that the Other can turn into an *Atrui*, an *Other Him*, always in distant but still visible and left untouched by the *good* method of the progressive master. Thus the dissolution of the pedagogical enchainment's great narrative is not just to turn its hierarchical center upside down but also to confess the fact that there already is no hierarchy at all. Without further ado, this should already be the apparent case in the pedagogy of art, since there is no such a thing as 'art' but just a sole attempt at producing a semblance of truth. To put it in Ranciere's terms, it should be shouted at the ear of the Great Progressive, who is not so much different than the Oppressor Republican or the Oppressed Nazi that the student is truly *emancipated* not when s/he is taught as either a subject of art or an autonomous object of a scientific examination but when the Master is *emancipated* by realizing that such a discourse called 'teaching' does not exist at all from the very beginning.

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