

Some Paragraphs on Education

International Festival

I. From utopia there and then, to efficiency here and now.

It isn't such a big deal to dream up an education that would fulfill all and every desire from everybody engaged, but as we know utopia is there and then. What is difficult is to articulate opportunities that can be realized and function effectively here and now.

It is essential that discussions on education don't end in openness, visions and *anything goes*, but continue through ideological and ethical elaborations based on the means and structures available. To produce discourse describing ideals is done over lunch, but to live the dream is an effort that takes both stubbornness and generosity.

Hope isn't such a great learning experience, but to practice on the spot is always an opening towards knowledge production.

So far utopia hasn't changed the world, but a politics of engagement can definitely offer us opportunities to rehearse the world differently.

II. From education in performance, to performing education.

A frame is always stronger than its content. It is indifferent to what extent the content is radical, as it always will be inscribed in the ideological territory proposed by the frame. As long as education is directional – an education in... - it will always propose knowledge as static, general, consensual and commodity, and can therefore only facilitate information. Shifting the perspective relatively education towards its specific performatives can alter the fundamental conditions of framing, and allow for concepts of knowledge that is processual, singular, dissensual and political.

Directional education defining a territory must inevitably reproduce consolidated knowledge, licensed as proprietary, whereas a performed, or performing education in and of itself, on an ontological level, is deterritorializing reproductive economies and modalities of distribution. It therefore unavoidably destabilizes conventional models of authorship, and performs an open protocol allowing for collaborative modes of production with references to open source.

Directional education essentially homogenizes its territory in order to maintain validity in a given context, as well as its legacy due a particular technology, technique, style or strong author.

A performing education's production on the contrary is heterogeneous as it favors means in front of ends, process in front of result. It is legitimized by its own continuous contextualization, its engagement in performance as a plurality of strategies formed by its specific modalities of activation.

Performing education is not based of what performance, with its different expressions, can be, but on specific potentialities' becoming performance, or in other words, not formed on conventions of presence, embodiment or e.g. narrative structures but on formations of immateriality.

III. From individual program, to programmed individuation.

The decline of the classical art academy, with its elaboration of technical ability within a Fordist economical system, in favor of what is widely known as *individual program*, implied to prepare the student to participate in an art market based on a relocation of aura from the artwork towards the artist's identity and individual performance. The "freedom" of choice estimated by individual programs in effect cancelled out the opportunity for the student's emancipation supporting specific processes of production of identity inscribed in neo-liberal regimes. This process implicitly nourished a romantic image of the artist's identity, however not in respect of an outside of conventional capitalist production but rather as specific niches assimilated in late capitalism, i.e. the romantic artist as sales argument or gimmick.

The individual program with its inevitable lack of categories of assessment, in other words, is rather to be understood as identitarian programation, its main function being to teach the students how to be an artist, and if not to *be* an artist to be recognized as one.

Programmed individuation should not be mistaken for a recapitulation of the classical art academy, but as an alteration of methodology towards education in modes of production, including multidirectional

discourse intensive learning experiences through which the student can engage in individuating processes independent of specific territories of identity production. Such learning experiences propose an oscillation between the conjunctive (“and”) and the disjunctive (“or”), forcing the subject to return to the experience and retroactively interpret it. It is in this particular dynamic that the subject can find herself both in the image and out of the frame. This activates an indefinite series of constellations or states of experience that are recognized and are consummated after the fact by the subject of the experience.

This oscillation generates the possibility of the production of event, not in the sense of causality, but through the performance of knowledge as foreign. Such processes of knowledge production, simultaneously conjunctive and disjunctive, can avoid reinforcing particular processes of identity formation in favor of a becoming, or a programmed individuation.

IV. From student, to participant.

The system of individual program reinforces conventional literacies and homogenizes production through its lack of criteria of assessment. The student’s success or brilliance can not be credited hence that would render the educational unit redundant, but it is instead his/her ability to perform successfully within a known context that is valued.

The individual program’s fundamental base in conventional hierarchical institutions implies that however individual the student will always remain a student. Together these two conditions give preference to an active student, i.e. active in respect of recognizable and interpretable, and student as a subordinate individual in need of guidance.

The active student performs action. Actions are repeatable and propose particular protocols for production and evaluation that are innately rational and linear, which indicate that the student is consuming education within a pacifying regime. The active student is regurgitating information.

Activation on the contrary presents no form, ideological or ideational, remaining vague as to the source, nature, and location of the experience, carrying a minimum of content.

This proposes a learning experience distinctly offering only an *activation contour*: a variation in intensity of feeling over time, without addressing subjects’ cognition, but rather bodies’ irritability (positive or negative). Activation contours are perceptual cues activating direct bodily responsiveness rather than reproducing a form or transmit definite content. Activation contours initiate bodies/individuals to inevitably express their attunement to affective modulations in their own unique ways.

Activation is signals without signification. If a signal triggers activation follows, prolonging the situation along a line of flight. The experience is a dynamic ingathering of activation assuring the continuity of its serial unfolding, moving the reality of the situation.

The diversity of the resulting activations offers each engaged individual to position him- or herself subjectively in relation to others, proposing a moment of reflection after the experience, a retrospective review consolidating activation into set of actions.

The participant of activation is productive of his/her own competences and desires in relationship to sets of situations engaging in actualization processes. Activation sets in motion indiscernible fields of knowledge through which the subject engages in a process of becoming, i.e. production of knowledge.

This approach requires an ethical shift from difference and multiplicity to particularity and multitude. It involves a reformulation of participation in order to avoid difficulties of sustainability implied by the inherent temporality of the multitude. The objective initially is to invent and introduce decision-making protocols consistent in both procedural and operational modalities of production, rather than to dissolve hierarchies and functional institutional frames.

Each participant, independent of his/her position and context, should therefore be inscribed in the same system of negotiation. Inequality will not be absent but will distinctly be given temporary manifestations according to the intensity of engagement communicated by the participant, and the will

for discovering and combining new relations. There should be no hierarchy of capacity, independently of whether it is of discursive, performative or bodily character. Equality implies process, and emancipation is becoming conscious of this equality of nature. Equality is not given, nor is it claimed; it is practiced, it is performed.

V. From control, to discipline.

Self-precarious, alternative and local educational models once radical and convictional have today been entirely assimilated into governing neo-liberal moods of production. The precarious individual is today a creative asset that offer additional license to a society of control, i.e. hyper dynamic, short-term, opaque, global and operating through difference of degree.

The once necessary departure away from disciplinary, i.e. static, long-term, transparent, local and enabling emancipation, operating through difference in kind, pedagogical models towards models of control, coincided with the individualization of technique and dissolved notions of material in e.g. visual art (a shift of attention from what was depicted or represented, to how, and its performance).

This shift is symptomatic to post-Fordist economies and imperative for the development of artistic practices, but must today be scrutinized in order to offer educations in the arts that 1. avoid further corporatisation of educational units 2. avoid equalization of students due a totalitarianism of openness 3. stimulate emancipation through avoiding the illusion of “here we are all equal” and 4. that engage in consecutive, common, local assessment models.

The voice acquired by self-precarious movements especially during the 60s, has to the same extent been integrated by global market economies, performing a catchy edge of neo liberalism. Regimes of control produce momentum precisely through incorporation, illusions of emancipation, the pretence of lateralization and offer its citizens/students, at best, the opportunity of a murmur, but never the agonistic intensity of a voice.

This murmur is the inarticulate sound of complaint, consolidating the police, whereas a voice performs the promise of a politics. Its expression is further dependency towards an *allowing* authority, reproducing ad infinitum neurotic offspring. Control is a univocal machine without any prospect for lines of flight, but is productive of an endless stream of differences given sanction through tolerance.

This machine, which is able to measure a time of presence, a time of social engagement by the subject, but are unable to measure the subject's contribution, and offers no opportunities to function transversally, must be substituted with a series of constructed devices producing machinic empowerment. While subjection concern social selves or global persons, machinic empowerment consists of mobilizing and modulating pre-individual, pre-cognitive and pre-verbal components of subjectivity, causing affects, perceptions and sensations unassigned to a subject. Machinic empowerment, contrary to the molar economy of the machine of control, connects infra-personal and infra-social elements thanks to a molecular economy of desire, difficult to maintain within stratified social relationships. Yet the machinic does not consist of smooth absences, but must be constructed as a multitude of particulars, incompatible and superimposed, therefore disciplinary and functioning transversally, linking material and semiotic elements, from non-discursive, un-namable, un-repetable sets of entry-points, in order to construct political, economic and aesthetic devices where existential transformation can be tested. This implies a politics of experimentation, inscribed in a disciplinary regime of particulars critical precisely because it produces the outside as an inside, because of its insistence on the separation between power and knowledge, simultaneously a place of alienation and of a new happiness.

VI. From representing, to practicing practice

Any educational endeavor with ambitions superseding strict formation, i.e. technical training assessable through consecutive protocols, necessarily engage in preparing the student for activities in a general practice; a life as e.g. choreographer.

The preparation inevitably takes on a theatrical characteristic as it represents practice, and the assignment, or contract, proposed to the student function on the basis of *as if*, i.e. it is pretended.

The design and motif of the representation must inevitably be idealized, as its capital precisely is the maintenance of desirable, mystical, heroic, successful positions, which simultaneously acts as the attractor to the education. This idealization concurrently depends on a separation from other modes of circulation on a territory in order not to perform a threat, i.e. an education must be detached from common economies.

Every attempt to prepare the student for a life in practice through representations of *as if* will consequently have the opposite effect: the student will feel deceived and misled.

A proposal for an education with ambitions to contribute to the renewal and expansion of a general practice therefore involve to combine, as singular

1. sets of knowledge experiences that are disconnected from practical applications and instead are concerned with methodological, epistemological, onto-ethological questions, i.e. the pedagogy of the concept, which subtracts apprenticeship, or learning, from the representational logic of instruction, making it into a matter of sub-representational contemplation or rather contraction of singularities, into the ability to extract material schematisms, or spatio-temporal dynamism, out of student's or participant's encounters with the outside of thought.

2. sets of actual apprenticeships, subtracted from learning, attached to in situ situations of practicing practice in which the student become a participant of activation, inscribed in multitudes of (incompatible) knowledge production.

This implies that the individuation of a practice is an involuntary adventure, the movement of knowledge production that links a sensibility, a memory and then a thought, with all the cruelties and violence necessary. Practicing practice as a result avoid the empirical actuality of a solution endeavouring to link the subjectivity of the apprentice or participant to singular points of the objective in order to form a problematic field.

The facilitation of information coupled with the counter productive modus of representing practices (*as if*), can accordingly be passed to the *praxis* of a territory and, so to say, what the doing does.

VII. From stable structures to dynamic resources

Repetition in language consolidates states of affairs.

For how many years do we need to repeat catchphrases on negative trends in subsidies, and *we-have-a-very-tight-budget*-litanies before the contraction of energy is bursting its barriers?

Next year will not be better. We know that but economies within the cultural sector are still not changing significantly. We also know that to continue will bring nothing else than misery, self-pity, bitterness and forced illusions of radicalism.

The imperative is not to do something better or differently. The cultural sector will only survive if the circumstances and conditions for cultural activity and engagement change fundamentally and distribution of power is decompartmentalised. Time for change has arrived, to simply revolutionize ways of doing business in order to gain leverage knowing that independence is just not part of the deal.

Networks, institutions and most conventional corporate economies, after an initial expansive phase, unavoidable experience a shift of impetus from dynamic resources towards static structures, i.e. from innovation and creative expansion to maintenance of hard structures, growing administrative and managerial requirements, minimal risk-assessment and wide-spectrum target orientation.

This shift is preferential in relationship to recognition, sustainability and accountability to the same extent as it impairs processes of heterogenization, down-up or lateral protocols of decision making and proliferation outside a named and given territory, i.e. this shift homogenizes protocols distribution, accountability and authorization.

Modern education has been dependant on location, distinct modes of gathering and consequently on structures connected to static costs. In an educational environment fundamentally supported by digital networks these categories have taken on new meaning and often lost its relevance for the students' active participation. A significant part of the students learning experience is today taking place over the

internet, which has rendered yet other structures abundant. Analyzes accordingly involves identifying forces that strive for the maintenance, or even proliferation of static structures.

Certain types of education depend on particular spatial conditions but these can be facilitated in different ways than through centralized institutions, e.g. using outsourcing, temporary short-term contracts or investment and proliferation of structures used by for instance active creative communities. Systematic and consistent implementation of education economies into existing structures and generative smaller and more informal institutions could circumvent the conventional institutions' reduced mobility, restricted and linear modes of change?

Study the total cost of a student including staff, structures etc. and consider how the same economy could be used to enhance and offer further momentum to already active participants in the field. This can take place without institutionalizing the economy through assigning the students, i.e. participants, to, from a collection of subscribing institutions, companies, choreographers and other suitable capacities of knowledge production (qualified by students and other active agents in the educational frameworks), choose how to allocate and activate economies, in response to facilities and conditions proposed by hosting capacities.

Economies with such characteristics risk becoming strongly market orientated but can through proper regulations function as a self-regulatory system where participants evaluate each other diagonally and through shared interests, especially in an organization where the position of the student is abandoned in favour of participation.

Structures cannot be escaped but will always succeed action. Structures emerge from preverbal, affectual states and are coming into representation. Action is the repetition of activation, yet it is only possible to articulate the meaning of a situation in relation to an action undertaken to transform it. To propose a different territory of education implies new modes of subjectification, which is both political and existential. A model for education that shifts perspectives from defensive tendencies of structural allocation to benevolent heterogeneous allocation in dynamic resources is one that emphasizes opportunities for new modes of subjectification for all participants as well as for educators and new institutionalities.

From “For them” to “For us”

The direction of production is always complex, as well as estimations of political or social relevance and potentiality. If the state governs and guarantees education its direction is redundant and criticality must be sought for differently. Education is productive as governmentality, which implies that assessment on the basis of efficiency will offer insufficient complexity, but must be the result of algorithms recursive to user value and transformative capacities.

Considering the allocation of economy, creative investment, deviation from personal/artistic practice and further the extended duration of educational operations in comparison to e.g. conventional production it is important determine trajectories of use.

Conventionally education is understood to support and serve the students, whose responsibility it is to maintain and expand a tradition, legacy, technique etc. But what are the arguments for a community of active participants, such as interpreters and authors, to compromise their activities “for them...”, particularly when education to such an extent is instrumental and dependant on subsidy structures which inevitably cultivate weak and defensive strategies.

Educational frames whose departure point is “For us...”, e.g. in accordance with what has been proposed above, offer a proposition that can involve and empower a multitude of *practicing* users associated with a minimum of appropriated funds for administration.

It is our responsibility, and opportunity, to take on such an adventure, which indeed is self-jeopardizing and a departure from consensual and universal notions of education and its relationship to individuality and protocols for knowledge production, education thus being closer to engineering than consolidation. An engineering of abstraction defined as equipment, both tools and lure, linking material and semiotic elements, from non-discursive, un-namable, un-repeatable sets of entry-points, in order to construct political, economic and aesthetic devices where existential transformation can be tested.

Each individual case of engineering proposes a tangible threshold, or force to think and create through, a “bad will” as opposed to good will which however joyful and affirmative will allow for consensual production.

An education “For us...” initial ambition is to honour what forces us to escape good will, consensual thought, and insist on bad will, which fundamental concern is to examine the reliability of claim, in favour of an open speculative operability that empower us to venture all the way along the question that gave power to oblige us to think: how to produce incoherence where coherence rules.