



# The Ideology of Education’s Postponed Fantasies: Deepenings on a Pressing Problematic

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## Abstract

This paper revisits and expands upon previous reflections on the ideological construction of education as a repository of postponed fantasies. By deepening the psychoanalytic framework of *das Ding* (Freud) and *objet petit a* (Lacan), the analysis explores how educational ideals—such as equality, inclusion, emancipation, and democracy—often operate as ideological signifiers sustaining an unattainable fantasy of transformation. Drawing on Žižek’s and Rancière’s critiques, the argument situates education within the symbolic order of late capitalism, revealing how its emancipatory discourse is simultaneously upheld and neutralized by the same ideological structures it seeks to contest. Through historical references to the New Education Movement and its humanistic aspirations, the paper highlights the paradoxical endurance of “good intentions” as mechanisms of self-deception. The persistence of belief in education’s salvific role is interpreted as a symptom of a collective denial akin to the first stage of grief—maintained by the enjoyment derived from ideological participation itself. Against this backdrop, the article calls for a renewed critical stance that neither succumbs to nihilism nor to naïve optimism. Instead, it argues for an ethos of lucidity, grounded in post-critical pedagogy, that preserves the ethical demand for hope without fetishizing it. This re-engagement with the ideological unconscious of education aims to recover the transformative potential of critique as a form of philosophical and pedagogical vigilance toward the present.

**Keywords:** Ideology of Education; Fantasy; *Das Ding*; *Objet petit a*; Žižek; Rancière; Critical Pedagogy; Post-critical Pedagogy; Emancipation; Hope

“All right. I can see the broken eggs. Where’s this omelet of yours?”  
Slavoj Žižek

## Echos of Good Intentions

The New School movement produced a set of promising practices of an education committed to the development

of the best of human beings. It could be said that all its dynamics were focused on promoting education guidance to the emergence and affirmation of the person, assuming its own dignity, conceiving itself as capable of freedom and with the right to an existential project, as it is expressed in one of the Kantian definitions of the Categorical Imperative, in which it is perceived that humans are destined to be persons because they must assume themselves as ends in themselves



[1]. This conception defines an ethical line that cannot be broken without losing the true purpose of education.

The seminal creed of the progressive movement of New Education remounts to the Calais Congress of 1921. Nevertheless, considering the vicissitudes and deviations raised by the political authoritarianism of the 1930s, together with the war conditions themselves, it is worth recalling the role dissemination outlet entitled “Principes de L’Éducation Nouvelle”, published by François Châtelain [2], as the programmatic basis of the “French New School” movement already created by him and Roger Cousinet in 1945. “Les principes”, start by asking how to get started with active methods, addressing educators and parents. They also state that instead of indicating the available excellent technical works, which could cause stakeholders to lose their way, it was decided to present a synthesis of the New Education. A short bibliographical note was also furnished to allow those who wish to do so a more in-depth study. The author also assumes that a great number of diverse methods, sometimes even contradictory, was found among the most important contributors to the Movement, while they recognise the presence of common devisable throughout the many writings. It was such very spirit they wanted to bring forth, as although, the various forms of experience can change over time, a few broad guidelines, that could steer the attitude of the educator, may be outlined and remain.

Although the Movement ideals went on being incorporated until the present day, the horizon it created came to constitute, precisely because of the exceptions to the dominant regime in schooling, a perhaps beautiful “ideological fantasy”, as Garcia explains in his analysis of “The eclipse of education at the end of time”. It is under the same sign that we want in this article to address an aspect of educational “wishful thinking”, a mode that seems to be the correlate of a strategy of the hoax that underlies it. It is important to dismantle the process and illustrate the consequences. Among the educational wishful thinking, we could count the concepts of equality, inclusion and emancipation, in which the desired interculturality is also included. Meaning that it was meant to point out certain principles, or simple guidelines drawn from the experience and thinking of the great educators. Enunciated without following a descending or increasing order of importance. Given the framework and caveats, the principles are presented via brief sentences and then explained. The short statements list designate the following: 1. To have a fair view of the child; 2. Mobilise the child’s activity; 3. To be a “coach” and not a “teacher”; 4. Start from the child’s deepest interests; 5. Engage the school in life; 6. Make the classroom a real children’s community; 7. To unite manual activity with the work of the mind; 8. To develop the child’s creative faculties; 9. To give to each according to his or her ability; 10. To replace external discipline with

freely given internal discipline [2].

“Les principes” does not refer to a set of values as equality, inclusion, democracy and interculturality. Nor do they make claims about public schooling. Nevertheless, all the booklet in itself brandishes an enormous challenge to the school of those and of our times. We can see embedded in it the goodness and specificity of childhood claimed by Rousseau [3]. One can also sense Pestalozzi’s concern with the aptitudes and tendencies of each educands and the correspondent attunement with the gradual and progressive development of all the potentialities [4]. The works of Fröebel resonate, namely through his ideal of schools as gardens of little children flowers (Kindergarten), which were seen as having unique needs and capabilities to be cared with love and respect of their integrity, not to forget ludicity as a pedagogy natural resource. Very present, we can also find Dewey’s [5-8] ideal of an associated mode of living<sup>1</sup> that we could see as the seminal support for current (inter)multiculturalism, which encompasses inclusion, and the democratic utopia of togetherness. It should be also remembered Maria Montessori pedagogy of developing natural interests and activities, emphasizes childrens’ independence and freedom, namely their choices of activity, within an ambience of acceptance, meaning respect for difference and equality in dignity [9]. As to Fèrriere’s [10,11] la pratique de l’école active that was deepen also by Cousinet [12,13]. For its part, Claparède, who will be remembered as the psychologist of the Movement, has left us with the idea of functional education and a tailored school [14,15]. Another inescapable figure we can refer to, is Alexander Neil [16], with his principle of freedom from adult coercion and community self-governance, as well as the progressive ideals of Freinet [17-19], whom everybody remembers because of the educands’ press, but was also responsible by the idea of field trips, which could be seen as the first steps of outdoor education, along with the “*tâtonnement experimental*”, the cooperative learning and rely upon democracy as the way to learn responsibility for their wor and community. Last, but not least, we have to mention Paulo Freire [20], and his Pedagogy of the oppressed, which represent a strong blow on the asymmetrical roles between educator and educands, serving indoctrination for accepting oppression, along with a fierce critique of the, supposedly, educative process that didn’t conduce to an engagement with the political situation of the educands and their being in the world. Which represents already a reverberation on those that just assume to say the truth about injustice but never relate to the oppressed in a manner of compromising with their condition and its transformations.

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1 Taken into consideration that citizenship education begins in school, with the learning of democratic habits to participate in political activities, not solely confined to political institutions.

To conclude this introductory discussion, we will underlie that the importance of “Rousseau’s revolution”, due to the naturalist philosophy and the intuitions of evolutionary psychology, becoming an unavoidable reference of the self-called New Education Movement, whose link with contemporary pedagogy is found in Pestalozzi and Fröebel [21]. Dewey would become the promoter of the movement’s social doctrine, Claparède its psychological mentor and Ferrière its apostle. Obviously, it would be also possible to mention a second, and even a third generation that took the torch of the movement and developed the ideas that it launched, which, all in all, configure the hopes and beliefs we will analyse subsequently.

### The Opening of the Abyss: The Question Ideological Role of “Das Ding”

In Antonio Garcia’s [22], the eclipse of education in the end of times: *Exploring Žižekian notions of fantasy in education, democracy, and multiculturalism*, as a prelude to the abyss, is about to open, the author denounces school as a prison for pedagogy and the mind, which drilling out of such bubble, demands a pluralized pedagogy. The one that could perhaps deconstruct a hegemonic “fantasy of the *unobtainable Thing*” [22] that grounds its ideology. The question becomes to clarify what such “unobtainable Thing” could be, the author put a quartet in tune.

For instance, the “*unobtainable Thing*” (uT) could be the “change we [still] can believe in”, that Obama didn’t get tired to proclaimed. Not surprisingly, in the same line of the appliance, it could also be that final revolution (always) yet to come. However to grasp the role uT plays, we have to come to the notion of ideological fantasy, which Freud called the Thing (*Das Ding*), considering the obscurity of the concept when he tried to construct a “Project for a scientific psychology” [23]; in such case, it refers to a “structural a priori condition for memory and, more broadly, for the subject in its desire” [24]. This could be the equivalent, for the layman, to trying to synthesize while saying very little, as the apparatus elaborated by Freud is of deep complexity and demands a more detailed explanation.

As Lucero e Vorcaro [25] explain, in the so-called “Project”, the psychic apparatus is described by Freud as appealing to the **f**, **y** and **w** groups of neurons, respectively in charge of perception, memory and consciousness. Now, the **y** system divides in system **y nucleus** directly receiving endogenous stimuli-, while system **Y mantle** collects information from the external world from **f**.

As Freud supports his approach in the notion of quantity (**Q**), it means that if the tendency of the organism is to maintain the principle of inertia, any external stimulus would

be felt as unpleasure that must be eliminated by motor action. On the other hand, all elimination of **Q** would be felt as pleasure. As one of the ruling forces of the circuit, Freud finds the pleasure principle circuit, in charge of avoiding all unpleasure and supplying pleasure. Now, the problem is that the endogenous quantities are continuous being the endless spring of the psychic mechanism, which is very loaded by such overwhelming excessive stimulation. Only changes from the outside world can lower the **Y**-tension; something that the human organism is unable to resolve for a long period of time since birth, one may think of the feeling of hunger, which can manifest itself in screams and gesticulations – both means of communication of an appeal-, but that can only get tension relief if someone provides what it takes, thus reducing momentarily **Q** to 0; that is, to activate reflex devices in line to produce the required activity directed to remove the endogenous stimulus. This results in satisfaction, with two essential consequences

1. Occupation takes place in the mantle of neurons (a), which correspond to the perception of the object (“helpful person”), establishing a facilitation between these occupations and the neurons nuclear;
2. In other mantle neurons (b), the news of elimination arrives, felt as pleasure (w), due to the reflex movement triggered after the specific action. These news are if because every movement, through of its side consequences, gives room for new sensory excitations (from skin and muscles) that produce in  $\emptyset$  an image of movement. (Lucero e Vorcaro [25]).

Through the law of association, a series of facilitations are promoted: between the **y** neurons of the nucleus and mantle, as between the **y** neurons of the mantle; if the mantle **y** neurons a and b are occupied simultaneously, through association, then the quantitative occupancy of a passes to neuron b, meaning that “the experience of satisfaction gives rise to a facilitation between the two images recollective (perception of the object (a) and motion image (b), as well as between them, and the nuclear neurons.” (Lucero e Vorcaro, [25]) It is, therefore, to be assumed that a virtuous circle of reactivation memories becomes established.

The recollective image of the object is the first to be affected by the activation of the desire, and it can cause something similar to a hallucination, but if what is aroused is a reflex action, the process will end in disillusionment, since it has not produced any effective satisfaction and hence that the psychic apparatus must avoid such a situation. Facilitations makes quantities always follow certain paths, nevertheless, **Q** will never disappear, as the inner vital drive will always force the organism to a **Q** storage, thus conserving the ways of discharge and the search of actions oriented to the external world seeking satisfaction.

Freud designates the totality of occupations in  $\psi$  as I [26]. It is up to this instance to block the primary psychic processes, preventing the memory image of the object from being abundantly occupied, thus producing a hallucination. In other words, the circuit is blocked because the occupation of desire does not reach an intensity capable of initiating an elimination, something that only a real external perception would have sufficient quantity to activate. But it is still necessary to count on the inhibition of the I as a criterion for differentiating between perception and memory, a mechanism that can fail if the object of desire is occupied with abundance, in which case we would have hallucination again, but not satisfaction. It will be the biological experience to teach the organism as neither occupy the desired recollective images, above a given threshold nor initiate the elimination before the appearance of a sign of reality.

It is also needed to take into account that, as it would be unsafe to initiate elimination as long as the signs of reality do not agree with the totality of the occupation of desire, the perceptual complex must decompose into

- 1) A component neuron **a**, which almost never changes and which will pass to be called “the thing” (*das Ding*);
- 2) A component neuron **b**, which almost always varies and will be called its predicate, activity or attribute.

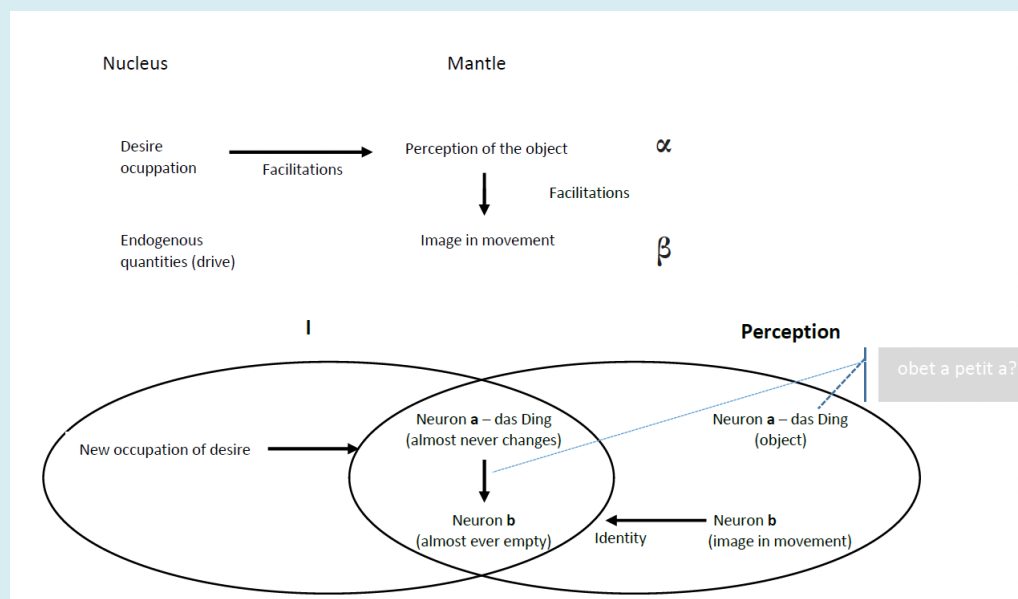
Considering that it is from neuron c that the identity will be pursued to find neuron b. In general, what is interspersed between neuron c and neuron b is a moving image that comes

from an elimination notice, which leads us to think that neuron a is the perception of the object. Now, if, on the one hand, regardless of the perceived object, the psychic apparatus will pursue the image of movement that corresponds to the pleasure provided by the experience of satisfaction; on the other hand, the pressure of needs leads not to think the Thing, that re-established rest, or to desire it, but rather to believe to perceive it, in other words, to hallucinate it.

As Lucero e Vorcaro [25], put it:

The human being, therefore, an organism ill-prepared to deal with life, since its psychic apparatus is not satisfied with thinking what he wants, but “realizes” his thought before recognizing it in the real, we posit, at the same time, that this apparatus exists in a main adhesion to his own fictions or to his own fallacies.

It is even a matter of an apparatus that does not know how to wait for reality to contradict it (or not) in order to cast its hallucinations into the mirage of fulfilled desire. It seems though that the unconscious functions as an obstacle to adaptive behaviour. Hence, it is not surprising that in the face of the formations of the unconscious, the function of the reality principle appears as constitutively precarious, when even in the case where reality seems to impose by itself, it ends up being subjected to the pleasure principle. The truth is that what is not known is articulated to the unconscious plane of the pleasure principle, so even if the reality of survival imposes itself, the human could always be able to insistently seek a parallel mirage. Once the Thing (*das Ding*) itself is inaccessible, it projects itself in myriad phantasmagoria. (See Figure 1, adapted from Lucero & Vorcaro [25])



**Figure 1:** The psychic apparatus behind the “unobtainable Thing” supporting ideological fantasies (Adapted from Lucero & Vorcaro [25]).

And so, if we are not mistaken, we can point now to the third understanding of the quartet, namely, the curious “*objet petit a*”<sup>2</sup>, that Lacan talks about. In each case, it is crucial that the “unobtainable Thing” is configured despite the failure to create any meaningful change. It corresponds to a belief and a hope, being no more than a fantasy construction, unfortunately, applied to some of our most cherished beliefs: change for the better, democracy, universal education,

<sup>2</sup>“The ‘a’ in question stands for ‘autre’ (other), the concept having been developed out of the Freudian ‘object’ and Lacan’s own exploitation of ‘otherness’. The ‘petit a’ (small ‘a’) differentiates the object from (while relating it to) the ‘Autre’ or ‘grand Autre’ (the capitalized ‘Other’)” [27] equality and multicultural education. “Like many of Lacan’s concepts, the object petit a evolved considerably over the course of his work, with perhaps incompatible variations in meaning. In his later seminars, it became a quasi-mathematical symbol for a hypothetical or virtual construct: namely, the ephemeral, unlocalizable property of an object that makes it especially desirable. It is, therefore, a fantasy [28]”. From the interior unfathomable and unspeakable of the *das Ding* to the unobtainable Thing we found the trace of the “objet a petit a” (*das Ding*).

### Ideological Disappointments in Believing in “Great Expectations”

In what respects the concept of ideological functioning, above explained, Garcia follows also Slavoj Žižek’s propositions and thoughts of fantasy construction regarding democracy, equality, inclusion and emancipation, in which the much-evocated interculturality is also included.

In Žižek’s reading of reality, schools, even as state institutions were never meant to encompass everyone in an egalitarian and equanimous way. Nevertheless, we keep on insisting on “redundant discussions, and the flaccid rhetoric of the Left evoking ‘hope’ and ‘faith’ in education” [22]. Nevertheless, the few “pockets of hope” are subtly relegated to the margins of the hegemonic domain of schooling. As the author poignantly refers, the mirific equalizer potential of education is predicated on, as Jacques Rancière believes, an unequal societal order. “The project of an organic modern society is the project of an unequal order that makes equality visible, which includes such visibility in the governing of relations between economic powers, institutions, and beliefs [29].”

2 “The ‘a’ in question stands for ‘autre’ (other), the concept having been developed out of the Freudian ‘object’ and Lacan’s own exploitation of ‘otherness’. The ‘petit a’ (small ‘a’) differentiates the object from (while relating it to) the ‘Autre’ or ‘grand Autre’ (the capitalized ‘Other’)” (Sheridan 1977, p. xi).

Having grounded his critique, Garcia [22] turns to Elizabeth Kübler-Ross’ book *On Death and Dying*, so to justify his claim of “The eclipse of education at the end of times”, where “eclipse” and “end of times” seem references to “dying” and “death”. The author declares it overtly: “The death that I believe we will soon confront is that of the fantasy of public schools being liberal-democratic institutions, or that there is anything really public about public schools” [22]. By relying upon Kübler-Ross five stages of dealing with death, namely denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance, Garcia starts by describing the first stage of denial, as the most common and embraced by a multitude of irredeemable naïves, self-deceived and wishful thinkers, from all classes and political backgrounds. While the rabid console themselves with the almost poetic rhetoric of good intentions. We believe that many are also bargaining, while an important portion, still to be defined, are suffering from depression, and a no lesser number has just fallen into acceptance.

Regaining the phase of denial, one can see that in many, so-called, democratic countries, even the most advanced economies, the pleading voices –made louder through media dominance– claiming for the public schools’ benefits, are covertly captured by pious rhetorics: as the insurance of an educated electorate; the defence of balkanization into class, racial, and religious groups; not to mention being the lift for economic opportunities of those coming from the bottom. As values “per se” they aren’t contestable –and this is the trick–, not if the heralds behind the claims are good actors of cynicism (Sloterdijk). If the proclaimed public school represented a real commitment to uplift the socio-economically and culturally disadvantaged, it could not be intrinsically imbued by capitalism and its hegemonic ruling class, hence it could only be the fantasy of “public” schooling as the Thing we believe it was meant to be – while, in fact, we are subduing to the hegemonic logic, the capitalistic one. As is recalled by Garcia [22], “If we are unable to be outside the system – to venture into the Real – then are we not always-already attached as an appendage to the Machine (i.e., the Symbolic order)? And, for Žižek, the symbolic order is dictated by the logic of capital.” It should be stressed that, from what was adduced so far, it seems that both educator and educand are being imprisoned within a machine that concerning the subject (teacher/student), does not go beyond the recognition of an agent (a machine part), or at best, an actor’s role (an operator of machines); it never acknowledges the possibility of an author of meanings [30]. It is this core tendency that destroys any space for the inclusion of differences such as interests, motivations, desires, rhythms and dissident speeches, along with the purpose domain of subjectification – a domain that “has to do with how children and young people come to exist as subjects of initiative and responsibility rather than as objects of the actions of others” [31]. Meaning this

that education ought to address the empowerment and emancipation of living minds. Such an ambience's cleavages the ethical relation expected from allowing education as an interplay that preserves the subjectivities in presence. As proposed by Orbe, Bondía & Sangrá [32], education supposes an "experience of openness", a "poetic and political incision", which introduces novelty from the perspective of a free relationship with the world. In this relationship, we construct ourselves as persons, because "poetics in education is the plot, the story and the narrative that help us invent ourselves" [32]. To escape the machine's short circuit (ideology), one might refer to Buber's pedagogy of encounter and attempt to accomplish the reincorporation of the subject in all its dimensions, following a kind of education that can and should be developed through in an inspired way of speaking, as proposed by Vansieleghem & Masschelein. Such an approach requires an understanding of education as an invitation to speak, one invites those involved in pedagogical relationships to engage in an inspired and inspiring way of speaking that specifically requires and affirms their full and personal presence. As Martin Buber, so subtly enlighten us, the "living speech" that plunges one into "the truth of relation" or which one encounters as being deeper and higher than "the spirit of knowledge and the spirit of art" [33]. In the absence of a relationship within the mode I and Thou, where "the word has from time to time become life, and this life is teaching", the authenticity of the ethical realm can take place. In reverse, within the frustrating condition of denial, by surrendering to the experience of hallucination we edly live in the self-confidence, which does not even deceive the deceived, who says to himself that –after all– reality isn't so bad. Which is nothing more than a fetishistic disavowal, "this disavowal helps to structure the fantasy in which ideology protrudes as a means of enjoyment [22]". The triumph of ideology meaningfulness occurs by its conjugation with the irrational enjoyment, of those that fake to believe in the promises about public schooling. This brings forth the idea that ideology is not just blind belief, it is a belief that needs a certain enjoyment, precisely, by living a belief. Such reasoning takes us to the point where we can unveil the ideological mechanism of fantasies production. "'Reality' is a fantasy- construction which enables us to mask the Real of our desire [34]". As a fantasy construction for appeasing lived 'reality', is itself a good 'illusion, strong enough to structure the rottenness of social relations while masking unbearable reality rooted at phantasmagoria held by the powerful.

Such illusions become then fantasies to ascribe everyone to the proper place. So people are bound to make choices like selecting shampoos in a supermarket, lots of different packaging for the same content, supposedly free choices then become a superficial relationship with a misleading broadness of misleading differential paths that, in fact, lead to the same desired effect [22]. Once manipulated on their

inner psychological conditions, people couldn't be able to have thoughts of their own. Even if, sometimes, there is a simulation of asking for dissenting viewpoints, already formatted they will forcefully come up to the ingrained distortion or illusion of freedom and choice.

Thus we have come to the "End of History" [35] too, as the capitalist morphine that has bled into the masses' brains and has become the only game available, naturalized as the utopia of "this is as good as it gets", the "the best of the possible worlds, to paraphrase Leibniz [36], although in this case not to defend the justness of God, but, perhaps, the for the sake of the "Cerberus" dog that guards the gates of the capitalist phantasies, which reflect on reality "as the bourgeois respectability, competition, instrumentality, and Eurocentric monoculturalism" [22].

### Epilogue

AT this point, where the unveiling of the capitalist illusion construction, fantasy mode of domination should be clear, it is time to state that the way out of such a regimen of manipulated thinking and practices relies on the willingness to abandon hope, in its role of fantasy inciting. This is if we are strongly assured that we want to have a chance of re- entry reality, disavowing fetishisation of the Real, escaping the false consciousness or liberal blindness. In times where "Hope" has turned into a matter of belief, and belief becomes a matter of faith, while terms –or components of fantasies instigated by ideology–, empty of any signification for supporting education changes, being the core of the trap configured by "belief in belief", about how the world ought to be, rather than what it really is, we should realize that kind of hope does not offer us a point of escape. The still believers have made zombies of themselves while adhering to it by desire. "If the problem to be addressed is the impermeability of the top down structure of society, politics, and schooling then why do we believe that permeation is possible? This thought of permeation is a fantasy (*objet petit a*) that causes us to believe in possibilities while knowing that these possibilities may never be realized in any macro level intent [22]". This is so since the zombie mode is inscribed in a social mode of a "need to know basis", meaning "we only need to know what the political power institutions (hegemony) tell us that we need to know [22]". Which comes very close to what, Étienne de La Boétie has devised, if we change the conveyer, as a self-inflicted tyranny:

Poor, wretched, and stupid peoples, nations determined on your own misfortune and blind to your own good! [...] He who thus domineers over you has only two eyes, only two

hands, only one body, no more than is possessed by the least man among the infinite numbers dwelling in your cities; he has indeed nothing

more than the power that you confer upon him to destroy you. Where has he acquired enough eyes to spy upon you, if you do not provide them yourselves? How can he have so many arms to beat you with, if he does not borrow them from you? The feet that trample down your cities, where does he get them if they are not your own? How does he have any power over you except through you? How would he dare assail you if he had no cooperation from you? What could he do to you if you yourselves did not connive with the thief who plunders you, if you were not accomplices of the murderer who kills you, if you were not traitors to yourselves? [37]

Schooling has become, nowadays, the pasture for standardized testing and teaching- to-the-test are creating, which are bound to create passive learners.

How can we, then, face such Cila of ideological fantasy and the Caribdis of the discourses of flaccid rhetoric that fail to grasp getting into action and change induction? How can we be realistic in times of “zombie idealism”? Garcia points to Žižek and his indication of willingness to intervene through forms of disruption “the sublime slumber of ideological fantasies” [12]. We must realize that the reigning myths are made to endure even in the face of their deconstruction, as they are instruments for the individuals to reenter the politically public spheres. Moreover, they have the power to install a “doublethink” process, where tautologies, contradictions, and confusion can be part of the daydream fantasies. Even if people can sense their contradictory nature they still can go on believing in them. This relieves them of the horrific reality, allow them to forget, whatever it was necessary to forget, or, in other words, “consciously to induce unconsciousness [22]”.

Now, what is the importance of education to all this process? One can imagine what power could be obtained if someone could manipulate the epistemological foundations of children raising processes. From this ground, it wouldn't be much difficult to manipulate the adult citizen. It just takes to frame a selective tradition, legitimated by the ideological epistemology of what one needs to be, to know, to believed. A surreptitiously framed curriculum can take care of this. So, the only thing necessary is to make children, parents, and citizens in general, believe in established hegemonic schooling, within which you don't have many chances to be taught to unveil false consciousness, as the primacy of the process goes to the pedagogy serving to promote the dominant ideology and in parallel serves to marginalize and alienate students. Differently of Neo, from The Matrix, they don't have to choose between two pills (reality and illusion), “but a third pill that would allow for the ‘reality in the illusion’ [...] knowing and accepting” [22]. This demonstrates we are in the first stage of grieving, denial, the moment when we bestow “more faith in the Thing (“*objet petit a*”) perpetuated through the empty signifiers of faith, belief, and hope [22]”. All it is needed is an emotional projection, for conjuring

dream-like wish fulfilment. Such process is well supported by the “belief structure truth inherent to collective practice [, i.e.,] the religious-like practice of belief [that] is practised in the temples of capitalism, school buildings, and almost always in times of depression and crisis [22]”. This ensures that, although sensing being captured by a fantasy, people can still cling to belief. Nothing much different than the naturalization of history [38]. It is worst to mention that, once enclosed in such apparatus, educators and educands live a relation which has to suffer the sieving of all the threads of the ethics of authenticity.

After all the reasoning we haven't presented so far, an answer to some questions was raised along with this text, namely when we realize that hope could play a deceptive role that serves to enclose in a fantasy mode, where the “*objet petit a*” serves to fill in the emptiness of our fantasies. “In the end times, education harbors ‘hope’ as an *objet petit a* that fosters no evidence of progress, it only fosters dreams that we hope to come true [22].” Hence, the only path seems to be the one philosophy has been trying to unravel, every time it assumed itself as an attempt to get “out of the cave”, that is by critical thinking that question the “philodoxers” and the “misologues” of this world [39]. Meaning that the time has come so “to abandon the ideological fantasies (*objet petit a*) in order to welcome the traumatic Real” [22], meaning to face and frontally take a look into the abyss. So, the hard way ahead still calls for hope to save us from despair, a kind of hope focused on the real, and its potentialities for enfolding substantive change.

As concluding, we cannot forget here the “Manifesto for a post-critical pedagogy [40], that came, precisely to propose the following principles: 1) There are principles to defend. 2) From a hermeneutic pedagogy to a pedagogical hermeneutics. 3) From a critical pedagogy to a post-critical pedagogy. 4) From cruel optimism to hope in the present. 5) From an education for citizenship to a love for the world [41]. Although recognizing the Manifesto as a whole, we want to focus on the fourth and the fifth principles.

The authors are tired of relativism, in which they are close to the aforementioned misologues, who in the Cave had despair from trying to master the flow of shadows. Not without some reason, since in the aftermath of the postmodern demolition one feels a lack of normativity and champions despair, disenchantment and disillusionment... It is the case to ask if believing in what reality is offering could be an effective way of addressing the amount of “broken eggs” on sight.

Not wanting to fall into a perspective grounded in hate or a negative attitude –which we could make correspond to the phase of rage to face death, above referred–, the authors state that education claims for a loving posture and a love

of the world, which could attribute a more positive role to educators. So they insist in a proposal of a set of “principles founded in the belief in the possibility of transformation, as found in critical theory and pedagogy, but with an affirmative attitude: a post-critical orientation to education that gains purchase on our current conditions and that is founded in a hope for what is still to come [40].” For now we could questioning the very possibility of compatibilized the “possibility of transformation” and “a hope still to come”, once the latter –following our reading in progress–, could be offering ourselves to enter the wolf’s mouth. Nevertheless, the authors say they pretend

“to affirm to acknowledge and to affirm that there is good in the world that is worth preserving. It is time for debunking the world to be succeeded by some hopeful recognition of the world. It is time to put what is good in the world — that which is under threat and which we wish to preserve — at the centre of our attention and to make a conceptual space in which we can take up our responsibility for them in the face of, and in spite of, oppression and silent melancholy [40].

Now, to defend “what is good in the world” and “is under threat” along with taking “up our responsibility [...] in spite of, oppression and silent melancholy” corresponds to a posture we could accept if, and the “if” can make the difference, it also entails to be critical towards what is wrong, the “broken eggs”, while asking for the “omelete”. This is what Ramírez [42] questionings in advancing that not only the author of the Manifesto do not reach to hit the problematic nucleus of the critical approaches at the same time that they bypass a crucial issue for pedagogy. Complementary, it implies that the critiques of our condition are not willing to preserve and care for what is good, and conversely to insist in “protect and care” without assuming an interventive critique of what goes sower, seems to be a fall in pure conservatism. In a way, Hodgson, Vlieghe & Zamojski [40] seem to believe that the power relations installed could be taken as if they just volatilise, when what we are needed is “tools for understanding the new ways in which power operates, which are more subtle, less obvious and, above all, intimately linked to the individual exercise of freedom [42]”. Moreover, if the horizon of education is humanization we need to care of the quality of the political and ethical processes unfolding under the current regimen of power relations installed. It could also be questioned why would educators abandon their role of unveiling oppression and repression. As to the hate to what is wrong, maybe we could assume that many monstrosities of our world, that erase all ethical principles inscribed in Human Rights, deserve at least indignation. As Foucault says

“The critical ontology of ourselves is certainly not to be considered as a theory, a doctrine, or even a permanent body of knowledge that accumulates; it is to be conceived as an ethos, a philosophical life in which the critique of what we are is both a historical analysis of the limits imposed on us and a test of their possible transgression. [...] I don’t know if today it is necessary

to say that critical work still implies faith in the Enlightenment; it needs, I think, a work on ourselves, that is to say, a patient work that gives form to the impatience of freedom [42].”

So being Rodríguez [42] propose to make use of critique as a tool for regaining the conceptual horizon of an “antropotechnic” work of over self-governing, which means to lay it on an ethical stance. But nothing of this means to assume that “the present is not so bad at all bad [43-47]”. We are currently pressed to surpass both the hollow scepticisms as the illusory dogmatisms of complacency, in need of a critical re-foundation in which hope could be nourished by the potentialities we glimpse in ourselves. Taking into consideration what the post-critical pedagogy could imply, our expected endeavour does not allow us to abdicate critique but rather to deep on it, which makes us gloss over a well-known text, we need a critique of the critical critique.

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