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Didactics of Remembrance

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Abstract: The ability to learn and the dependence on learning is one of the anthropological universals. Learning was and is subject to control processes at all times and in all places. All cultural heritage has its anthropological foundation in learning. Dealing with this dimension of cultural heritage takes on a new questionability in view of the post- and decolonial perspectives in the second half of the 20th century. It becomes clear that such narratives of cultural heritage were and are usually narratives of domination. At the same time, a look at human learning teaches one thing above all: the perspectival limitation of every narrative, which goes hand in hand with repressions and fade-outs. It can no longer be a matter of reassuring oneself of one's own identity through history. On the contrary, the function is precisely to perceive what is supposedly identity-forming as the foreign, the other, the confusing. What stands before one's eyes is that strangeness opens one's eyes to one's own. Reflection creates the possibility of seeing through what is supposedly self-evident as what is not.

Keywords: Cultural identity; Cultural heritage; Anthropology; Decolonialism, Postcolonialism, Learning, Alienation, Hebrew Thinking.

Resumo: A capacidade de aprender e a dependência de aprender são dois pontos antropológicos universais. Aprender foi e é sujeito a processos de controle em todos os tempos e lugares. Todo o patrimônio cultural é baseado antropologicamente no aprendizado. Na dimensão do patrimônio cultural, surgiu na segunda metade do século XX uma nova problemática considerando as perspectivas pós e decolonial. Fica claro que tais narrativas do patrimônio cultural foram e são comumente narrativas de dominação. Ao mesmo tempo, um olhar ao aprendizado humano destaca, acima de todas as outras questões, os limites de perspectiva de toda narrativa, que andam de mãos dadas com repressões e desaparecimentos graduais. Isso não pode mais ser questão de reassegurar-se de sua própria identidade por meio da história. Ao contrário, a intenção é precisamente perceber o que supostamente forma a identidade do estrangeiro, do outro, do confuso. O que fica diante dos olhos é que a estranheza abre os olhos do indivíduo em relação a ele mesmo. Refletir cria a possibilidade de ver por meio tanto do que é supostamente evidente para si quanto do que não é. Palavras-chave: identidade cultural, patrimônio cultural, decolonialidade, pós-colonialismo, aprendizado, alienação, pensamento hebreu.

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1. LEARNING AS THE FOUNDATION OF CULTURE

Humans learn. Humans can even be distinguished by the fact that they are capable of learning in a comprehensive sense. Humans learn because they are able to absorb pieces of information from the outside and integrate them into their own perceptions and actions. They thus permanently and continuously transform themselves. Humans learn by dealing with such external information or by internally communicating, like in a kind of inner monologue, with themselves about themselves and their thoughts and actions. Humans learn. Being equipped with instincts is not enough - no matter the cultural context, may it be labeled as "primitive" or "highly civilized". Mankind is equally condemned to learn and may hope to learn. Mankind is equally dependent on and capable of learning. Does the human exist? Yes, of course; no, of course not. Both is correct, but shall remain undiscussed here. Learning is the basis of all human existence. Human existence, however, is determined by culture, by cultural participation (in contrast to nature - as problematic as this comparison might be). The human being is a cultural being. Cultural participation is both a prerequisite and a goal of all learning. All learning is based on, embraced by, embedded in culture. Whatever form culture may take, it is only imparted through learning and yet, at the same time, it is always the very basis that makes learning possible. What does this mean for the individual human being? In the course of one's life, the glimmer of individual freedom shyly flashes up, has entered through the act of learning as mastery of nature. Yet, at the same time one surrenders to the patterns of interpretation of culture. For humans, culture and cultural participation are thus simultaneously liberation and imprisonment, are freedom and prison in the same breath (cf. Jullien 2017). Pedagogy, as the reflection on learning between life course and culture, needs to integrate this doubleedginess, this ambivalence in its thinking. Differently, unseasonably stated in a time of over-emphasizing differences: the ability to learn and the dependence on learning belong both to the anthropological universals. Despite all skepticism towards universals the above statement must remain possible because it is both formal and, so to speak, banal at the same time.

Learning as an anthropological universal is, for all that, inseparable from and at the same time dramatically intertwined with the notion of culture. After all, learning at all times and in all places was and is subject to regulatory processes. This notion of regulation reconciles two sides of culture: culture as facilitation of liberation from the animalistic state and at the same time culture as imprisonment in the conditions for everyday life (conditions that can only be conceptualized as regarding alienation). Freedom and imprisonment are simultaneously understood in terms of participating in and sharing of culture. What is valid for culture in the greater sense shall as well be valid for dealing with memory. Cultural remembrance and its cultural "heritage" are nothing different than a dimension, a supporting layer of culture in general. One can regulate learning - in a specific cultural context, from a specific cultural context, with regard to a specific cultural context. In this way only, culture can preserve itself over time, i.e. reproduce itself - its potential benefit remains to be proven. Pointedly: the anthropological roots of all cultural heritage lay in learning. That remains banal and formal.

Let us have a look how the above thought about the ambivalence of freedom and imprisonment in and through culture works on the level of *content*: the reminiscent narrative about the manner of such deliberate regulation, education as well as of the (seeming) unintentional belongs to the diversity of cultural heritage. The handling of this dimension of cultural heritage is usually labeled as "History of Education". The history of education is thus a very specific and at the same time very basic approach to the facets of *how, by what*, and *for what purpose* we share cultural heritage. It is a special approach because the idea of culture is itself fundamental for the concept of education. The history of pedagogy

is thus not only the subject of reflections on participation in cultural memory, but also includes reflections on the conditions and possibilities of such sharing and participation. It is about the motif of human learning and the cultural references of freedom and captivity.

Today, the more detailed measurements of the conditions and possibilities of a history of pedagogy pose a new, serious problem. The theoretical background for this statement implies that history in itself does not and cannot exist. History is always told, constructed, and designed from a certain point of view, from a special perspective that is inevitably linked to certain values, world interpretations, and ideas of life. Pointedly once again: History in itself does not exist. History is always based on systematic considerations, on more or less conscious systematic decisions about the conditions of narration, construction, design. Precisely this aspect of all historical narratives being tied to certain perspectives reaches another, a new stage in light of the post-colonial developments in the second half of the 20th century. This new stage has at least two sides.

2. THE ASCERTAINABLE AND THE SILENT REPRESSION

On the one hand, we must remember that such narratives of a history of pedagogy are usually narratives of domination - in more than one sense. It is obvious that previous narratives were written, may it have been consciously or not, from certain standpoints on what was considered "normal". These notions of normality, of a certain order of the world and the environment, inevitably include fixed constellations of power - between the sexes, between the 'civilized' and the 'barbarians', between the above and the below. Those fixed constellations are under consideration for some time already. But apart from the content of the fixation, also its form presently challenges us. The power dimension of a narrative is expressed above all in a supposed unambiguity and clarity (cf. Foucault 1977). With regard to participation in cultural heritage, this is apparently inevitable, meaningful, and fateful at the same time. By being cast into language, history produces a supposedly clear view. History describes allegedly clear paths of thinking and interpreting. This act of identifying, of ascertaining is orientated towards a point, a line, a setting of attributed characters. The room to express possible alternatives is at least kept short, if not the larynx of memory is completely constricted. What has been established and fixed conceals the actual dispute - overwrites, covers up, misshapes the "différend" (cf. Lyotard 1989), the contrasts, the irreconcilability of human life. There is no room for alternatives, for controversies, for example like the tension between the Mishnah and the Gemara that is playfully represented in the Talmud. The Talmud stages the conflict of the struggle for reality. This can only happen in the awareness and recognition of the absolute difference between Man on the one hand and the one for whom Man has used the symbol "God" (whose name itself remains intangible and indescribable) on the other hand (cf. Koerrenz 2020c). The mainstream cannot bear such a dialectic that aims for contradiction and ultimate incompleteness. We would have to relativize ourselves.

Because the mainstream functions differently, the narrative of history usually targets unambiguity; targets what is supposed to be ascertained. Even if this is perhaps a crude reduction: the origins of the ideology of the unambiguous, of the ascertainable have many different facets (cf. Bauer 2018). It is a philosophy that excludes the difference between the speakable and the non-speakable in favor of a speech about the supposedly ascertainable. To use a deliberate cliché: the great Platonic-Aristotelian conjuring of the ascertainable, of the narrative ontological. The sphere of the ascertainable may be reached in different ways. Stoicism and the philosophy of Epicurus can easily play this game alongside Plato and Aristotle, too. The little remains are some certainties of knowledge about oneself, fellow human beings, and the environment. The unambiguity of the world, of human existence, of

culture leads to the illusion of a revocable alienation, an illusion that leads the individual to a nervous fading out of the irrevocable tensions, contradictions, conflicts in their own life, in human culture, in existence (cf. Koerrenz 2020a). This is unreal, however, a mere expression of a thinking that indulges in the abstract notion of Man, in the improper. Yet, it is precisely this illusion that provides indispensable relief because we have not learned to endure the contradiction. In this respect, the ancient Greek ways of thinking, despite their presumed different approaches towards determining what life is, are a soothing balm for our wounds. The wounds are our inability to even think about, and let alone live, existence with its inherent inner contradictions. Yet, the new, the post-colonial, the post-modern situation challenges us in our existence - once again anew and in difference to what the previous existentialism may have done. If one wants to summarize the core of this intermediate step, one could say: The painful insight into the irrevocability of contradiction and antagonism establishes its own form of post-modernism, of post-colonialism which not only addresses dependencies, power relations, and hierarchies, but also questions and ultimately dissolves the form of the ascertainable itself. The post-colonial, post-modern view exists despite, with, because of this strange, nearly unthinkable paradox: the act of analyzing power constellations and dependencies and, at the same time, identifying the ascertainment itself as the basic evil of power and dependency.

In this viewpoint of simultaneous ascertainment and non-enquiry, the view on history (also of pedagogy) teaches one thing above all: the perspective-bound nature of every narrative, which comes along with denials and suppression, leaves its traces. But this is only one side of the story.

3. SPEAKING AS A DARE

On the other hand, a postcolonial perspective highlights the necessity of asserting the history of pedagogy as a dimension of cultural heritage, which takes up an intercultural-comparative perspective and is hence collectively formulated and accounted for (cf. Koerrenz et. al. 2017). How else could something like Human Rights, human dignity beyond sex, skin color, or origin, be thought of, let alone be justified? It is the paradox of speech in silence and silence in speech. When we talk, we are silent about what we do not say. When we are silent, we loudly proclaim the unsaid into the world. Facing the inability to talk, the need to talk nevertheless is the framework of attempting to narrate history as a part of cultural heritage. The history of participation in culture, in pedagogy as a transformation belt for culture must be acknowledged and then readjusted in this light. Learning must be defended; learning as an anthropological universality, learning as the foundation for a definition of human dignity as a dignity to partake in culture (cf. Appiah 2007). For how else are we to meet, to approach each other by careful listening, and to communicate? Narrating must be dared while acknowledging its impossibility, its unforgivable and yet responsible power mechanisms.

From this point of view, it is appropriate to conceptualize the history of pedagogy (also considering it a device for contemporary teachers education) as a multi-faceted problem, as an example altogether of a different share of history. This multi-perspectivity is firstly expressed by admitting the fixed subjectivity to a specific perspective. This fixation cannot be ignored. In addition, the fundamental function of the preoccupation with the history of pedagogy needs to be reformulated. It can no longer be seen and used as an intermediate to affirm the history of personal identity (which was previously mostly conceived as national). On the contrary, its function precisely consists in perceiving the elements previously used for identity building as foreign, other, confusing. It means questioning the given with the help of instruments that make the supposed normality of the given appear simultaneously

as irritating, coincidental and as the product of a process. For a start, the guiding image of this perspective is that of the alienating, alien mirror. In addition, such an approach to history opens a "window" (possibly into another world).

In this reading, the historical dimension becomes particularly efficacious as a pool of systematic constellations. The wasteland of the presumed empirical dimension however, constituted by "social history" and "hard" facts, is revealed to be the foundation for a narrative manner that is ultimately and only accounted for by individuals. The individual cannot refuse having responsibility for their personal narration, construction, and design. That can be ascertained. In addition, it opens up spaces for thoughts and representations. Finally yet importantly, all of this is a useful remedy for the dust-covered mildew like coat that sticks to historical pedagogy. The mirror mentioned above is simply not boring depending on the light incidence, it changes the apparition arising between the glass and the foil. The historical dimension itself penetrates our perception as a different, alienated reflection in which we see our own existence, our own activity as researchers and teachers. The accompanying music of the mirror sounds clearly: when we want to share it, the cultural heritage is unavailable in its availability. For us and between us. The idea we have in mind is the following: foreignness opens our eyes so we perceive ourselves. Through this reflection, the possibility arises to deconstruct the supposedly self-evident aspects of the construction of ourselves as not self-evident.

4. THE HISTORY OF PEDAGOGY AS AN ACT OF ALIENATION

One exciting and yet challenging point when dealing with the history of pedagogy is the following: in order to be able to think at all, we need to think in terms of familiarity and strangeness, here also understood as availability and unavailability. This may happen as a conscious decision or an unconscious act. The confrontation with history, the way of perception then becomes the systematic foundation for further determinations of the general nature of pedagogy.

One possible question that may come up, even during a first contemplation, is with regard to cultural heritage: was education in ancient Babylon, early Egypt, ancient Greece, or other places truly something different from education in 21st century Europe? Yes, no, still, perhaps, somehow, never. Of course, in terms of economic and technical development our age differs from the one of Pericles or Cicero. Yet, the question arises whether there is something like a basic pattern of education that stands the test of time. Basic patterns of how education is legitimized to regulate learning processes, basic patterns of how education is shaped to regulate learning processes, basic patterns of what is connected to education in terms of future hopes and expectations. Familiarity and strangeness, proximity and distance appear not only as siblings but almost as "conjoined twins".

Precisely this relationship, however, shaped by tensions of inner and communicative conflicts, shows the potential of the preoccupation with the history of pedagogy: the own, the already existing can become strange in a double sense when facing the mirror of history. In a way, it is strange to see some parallels, for example between "school" teaching and learning in antiquity and today. The strange element at this point is the irritation caused by the non-alien, the similar, the comparable. At the same time though, when the criteria of difference are emphasized, for example the social conditions or the legal framework, history also precisely reveals this difference. Moreover, it displays why the temporarily (or spatially) alien is not only alien, but shall remain this way. The existential dimension of narrating histories seems to be a necessity. The reason is that both variations, the experience of the alien and the experience of the non-alien, are intertwined with the understanding that what

is present, what belongs to the self is always something that has (already) come into being at a specific point of time. After all, when the own, the present - from a historical perspective - is revealed as something that has come into being, it loses its claim over normality and self-evidence. It could also be different, quite different. This revelation can make good for the everyday school life where the normality established by power occasionally seems to be unquestionable. It could also be different - become different, completely different. This also draws attention to the necessity of reconstructing and discussing the normative background of pedagogical practices in everyday life. Differently expressed: bearing this in mind history, being preoccupied with that which is eternally same and eternally alien at the same time, plays the role of pointing out and critically questioning the conditionality (and the limitations) of each individual perspective. Speech, including historical narrations, can build on this - everything else would be an undisputable deception. For the passage through equality and strangeness takes place in the mind (inspired, of course, by communication with a book, in a seminar, or in a lecture). Thus, the other's mirror makes insight possible; one's point of view and one's history are only one possible position in the global horizon, one possible position besides other. Moreover, in the above mirror one eventually appears alien; unnatural and repressed traces of memory appear, at least to some extent.

Behind the repressed traces of memory ultimately and always lies the confrontation with what we perceive as and call normal. With regard to an apparent self-evident institution and society, however, a problem arises for prospective teachers: how normal is our idea of normality? Children and young people are constantly tangible. Relationships of power and dependence in the school system are constantly tangible. Looking in the mirror is constantly tangible. But the question how "normal" the tangible, the concrete is, or how colorful, diverse, questionable, uncontrollable and, by incorporating the viewpoint of the colorfulness, diversity, criticism, and uncontrollability, relaxing it might be, remains.

5. DIDACTICS OF REMEMBRANCE - METHODOLOGICAL FANTASIES

After having discussed the global-postcolonial approaches to being human, learning, and pedagogy, a methodological question is to be raised. How do we actually want to broach the issue of, represent, and stage the didactics of remembrance and the embedded sharing of cultural heritage? We have become accustomed to a certain understanding of science that is based on different traditions of thought oriented towards ascertainment. We merely debate which method offers a better, more realistic, and precise ascertainment. Rarely do we address science as a *blurry* space of possibilities, of interpretation, and contradiction. Ironically, this description of blurred spaces partly applies to those traditions that highlight dialectical contradictions as the core of their historiography, since they are eventually and indisputably able to determine the goal of all history. The motif introduced in this last chapter asks whether *poetry* can (at least occasionally) be considered a different, perhaps even better language of science. We have become accustomed to the paths of philosophical logic and argumentation. But what if, in extended hermeneutics, we seek to embrace the contradictions of being the linguistic way?

Let us consult someone who has developed the notion of "metaphorical truth" in philosophical contexts. Let us follow the thought of Paul Ricœur in his studies on "Die lebendige Metapher" (Ricœur 1986). It is impossible at this point to retrace his great train of thought covering the time from antiquity to the present. There are, though, a number of motifs that are worthy of our attention because of their didactic approach to remembrance. We all talk (in different ways, with sounds and gestures, in different constructions of language prosody). We all speak and produce meaning on the level of

spoken sentences. Literature, poetry is a special form of speaking, mostly in written form. Literature wants to be understood in some way (despite all the irritation it may cause) - even as a provocation. For it can only be identified as a provocation if it remains recognizable as a provocation, i.e. as a calculated deviation. The first step of speaking and writing is the following: we produce meaningful language that can be translated by other humans into their perceptual horizon. At first we only perceive one thing from our counterparts: their language, the sense of speech they produce - statements that are more or less decipherable to us. Beyond that, however, the spoken word touches another level of our perception. We do not only perceive the purpose of speech but also (often in the same breath) relate it to reality. We correlate the spoken word with interpretations or possible actions of our reality. This is especially true for literature because while reading we let images come alive in our minds. The metaphor, the metaphorical narration, for example a parable, has its own role to play. It wants to initiate, to initiate thoughts for interpretation, for change of reality - but only indirectly, conveyed through images and translations, which should arise foremost in the heads of the listeners and readers. Being a metaphorical narrative, the parable wishes to inspire by eloquence - and yet in its eventual didactic intention it aims at establishing something factual or a sense of reference. Paul Ricœur therefore speaks of the "main distinction between the semantic innovation at the level of sense and the heuristic function at the level of reference" (Ricœur 1986, III, translation from the german edition by the author). Following up, his related question is whether metaphorical speech exposes completely different dimensions of recognizing and interpreting reality. The question, expressed as an ultimate provocation, is whether metaphorical speech opens up a much better access to reality than all other forms of language (e.g. "science") because it takes into consideration the freedom of the audience. Between the non-existence of language, the silence of language, the incapacity of language, literature creates a new possibility of speaking while being aware that speaking is actually not possible. Are Ricœur's motifs of poetry as a language of reality representation worth considering when we address memory and cultural heritage? Does the present not become more readable through history, i.e. in its mirror or through its window? In any case, Ricœur ascribes the "function of redescribing reality" (ibd.) to metaphorical narratives. He discusses this idea in detail in the fifth chapter of "Metaphor and Reference". Ricœur's point is that he attributes this quest for truth, the "appropriate", "correct" description of "reality" not only to science in its narrow sense but also to poetry, to metaphorical expression (Ricœur 1986, 215). Pointedly: poetry is the better, perhaps even the best form of empirical thought and expression. Therefore, poetry is a better form of science when it comes to capturing reality. "For do we know what that means: reality, world, truth?" (Ricœur 1986, 216). The achievement of poetry is to open the eyes (and hearts) to a broader, more comprehensive perception of the existing. "It is what it is" is only revealed in the poetic space when, building "on the ruins of the literal sense", a new "logic of discovery" appears. This "logic" include its own "cognitive process, a rational method with its own norms and principles" (Ricœur 1986, 228) conveyed through its metaphorical power and elegance. The conclusion is simple: "One may speak of a metaphorical truth to denote the 'realistic' intention associated with the re-descriptive capacity of poetic language" (Ricœur 1986, 239).

With regard to a "scientific" approach to cultural heritage, the following question comes up: is metaphorical truth also truth? Is poetry at this point even the better form of science when it comes to thinking and working empirically? Is this thought worthwhile? Yes. Let us break it down.

Empirical ways of thought and interpretation try to grasp reality. But what is "empirical"? Above all, what actually is "reality"? Those are the questions at the heart of the word "science". Let us consider a third element in this mental game. "Reality" and "science" come together in the notion of "truth". Even Pilate struggled with this truth. In

the German language, these three terms seem to be inseparably interwoven and mutually self-explanatory. "Science" seems to be clearly defined by methods and techniques by which "reality" is grasped and "truth" is formulated. The magic wand to bring all this together is called "empiricism". Eventually, the philosophical and scientific techniques of finding truth do not differ in their empirical manner. The vast majority of techniques aim at unambiguity, determination, and exclusion of the other, the foreign, the unavailable. The empirical manner of a truth that was established, nailed down, set in this very manner, hence enables secure communication and apparently painless comprehension because the excluded, the oppressed, the whole otherness of existence is silenced. Especially in the places of apparent freedom, for example at universities, the spirit of the empirical manner has often become the executioner of the deviant. Even when groups set out to reinvent the empirical manner or at least to fashion it in new way, they soon fall prey themselves to the fate to exclude that which is not accepted as empirical. In fact, it is always about power, about the power of the interpretation of the truth - identified, established, and formulated by means of a supposedly alternative-free methodology. At the end awaits what can be counted in a rationally comprehensible methodology. This is the basic evil of time - the rule of numbers, the rule of the measurable, the rule of the established. This is the basic evil of all times - the suppression of the relativity of our perception, the suppression of the relativity of our organizing, the suppression of the relativity of our speech. As if we could understand each other beyond a necessarily open and interminable understanding.

There is no getting past critically questioning ourselves and our ability to speak. We strive – in a meaningful way – for bilingualism, multilingualism in both theory and praxis. Both statements that Jacques Derrida formulated in his reflections on "The Monolingualism of the Other" are correct. "One always speaks only one language" and "One never speaks only one language" (Derrida 2003) – precisely this open space between the two sentences, in the very midst of the obvious contradiction, is able to shed a realistic, an "empirical" light on our linguistic abilities. Keeping in mind the importance of multilingualism the insight into the power of public language, of linguistic standards defined by school lessons, leads to the view that our humanity is first and foremost determined by our linguistic limitations.

Let us conclude: the basic idea of didactics of remembrance is to develop a different view of oneself mirrored in and through the foreign, mirrored in and through that which cannot fully merge and be identified with today's reality, neither at first nor second glance. It is about the flare-up of a conflict within oneself and with oneself – and then with others too. Within oneself and with oneself; the foreign, the alienated, the distanced has its own, its special value in a professional field that is characterized by permanent, interdependent proximity. Going to school – day after day. The daily work routine of being close to children and young people, to colleagues, to the subject content, to the dynamics of public debates on education – all this almost cries out for strategies of distancing oneself in order to not thoughtlessly fall for oneself and for the retrograde tendencies of the system. The task of the history of pedagogy is to use various images to render plausible the necessity of such distance.

Poetry, overall metaphorical speech openly deals with this insight because it does not claim having a definition of reality. A parable, for example, is especially apt for an examination of oneself since it hands over the translation of a sense of speech into a possible sense of fact to the listener or reader. A metaphorical way of thinking offers the possibility to experience oneself as a translator of the unreal into the real. The direction of translation may be predetermined. "The" correct translation, however, can and will never exist because translation is always an existential act that can only be made more or less comprehensible to other people.

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