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Didactics Against Didactics

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didactics, study, politicization, exodus

ABSTRACT

The paper elaborates on the concept of the didactics of immanence. Relying on the discussion contained in a text entitled "Polityczność dydaktyki" ("Politicisation of Didactics"), it differentiates between two types of didactics, one related to transcendence and the other to immanence. Using the theoretical accomplishments of Deleuze and Lewis, the author creates a plan to build an educational machine of war.

The article presents further differences between the didactics of immanence and the didactics of transcendence. The first step was made in a text entitled "Politicisation of Didactics" (Szwabowski, 2017) in the context of politicisation of the theory and the practice of didactics. In the paper, I presented the essential difference between political party entanglements, post-political, micro-political and critical vs. politically post-political entanglements. By referring to the division applied by Joanna Bednarek into politics of transcendence and politics of immanence (Bednarek, 2012), I claimed that the latter refers only to a politically post-political model. Due to the fact that the aforementioned discussion was only an introduction and putt the ideas about politicisation of didactics in order, it was characterised by quite a high degree of abstraction. In this article, I am continuing my discussion in the context of didactics, considering the consequences for this discipline when the above terms are applied.

It seems that similarly to the radical abyss that exists between the politicisation of transcendence and politicisation of immanence – I would not so much treat them as opposite extremes as Bednarek does, but rather as the modes of existence – in the case of the didactics of transcendence and the didactics of immanence, we are also dealing with two different modes of existence and thinking about didactics.

The difference appears already at the approach to the definition of a difference. First of all, when thinking about the didactics of immanence, I do not have the paradigm in mind. It is rather something anti-paradigmatic - as far as it is technical, disciplinary and relegating philosophicity as a bashful past, a source of insecurity and an unproductive outlet line. I have already discussed the problems related to paradigmatic thinking in pedagogy (including didactics) in my other publications. In this place, I am going to reiterate and intensify one of the important declarations: it is necessary to put an end to the use of paradigms in humanities and social sciences. Thinking with the use of paradigms in didactics does not really introduce order, but imposes a certain specific logic, both for the didactic practice and theory. Paradigms become didactic machines: a collection of consistent, excellently operating cogs in the wheel, which almost automatically produce specific effects (Szwabowski, 2014a). Ostensibly, this allows for determining regularities and designing the process of education before any actual meeting. Unfortunately, such designs, advice and plans are not neutral. They create and discipline organs, blocking the emergence of "bodies without organs" (Deleuze, Guattari, 2015), introducing reactionary and repressive codes (Deleuze, Guattari, 2017). The same applies to science instilled with positivism.

Paradigmatic thinking may seem deprived of positivist traces; it may even be post-modernist. Unfortunately, post-modernism may only belong to the sphere of declarations, in particular when the analysis has been narrowed down to the accomplishments of didactics. Positivist thinking soaks through the concept of paradigm, leading to the reign of instrumental rationality, a technical approach to education: this also refers to the critical paradigm, which corresponds to the critical entanglement that I have distinguished (Szwabowski, 2017). In the context of the direction and development of didactics, paradigmatic didactics faces the following alternative: either acceptance of instrumental rationality and technocratic management of education focused on improving the efficiency of specific machines, along with academic supervision over absence of contradictions and racial cleanness of the paradigm; or, by exposing the technical nature of every paradigm, entanglement of didactics in open or covert positivism and bureaucratic spirit, leading to the abandonment of paradigmatic thinking and the style of didactic thinking related to it.

The problem is how to analyse various paradigms in a situation when, first of all, thinking has to take the form of paradigmatised reflection and secondly, functioning in a paradigm imposes specific approaches to competitive paradigms, and finds a solution in didactics which constitutes, at the same time, a display of its core features. Recovered commensurability is the dominance of the technical, of the instrumental mind, focused on design and efficiency and located externally with respect to the analysed problem or process.

Approaching the problem from the political side, paradigmatic didactics is a machine supporting bio-political management proper for the politics of transcendence. It is not only related to the capitalist imperative of development and fixation on effects (Lewis, 2013), but it is also incapable of capturing the autonomy of everything that is grassroots, contributing to the practice of corrupting the multitude (Negri, Hardt, 2012, cf. Szwabowski 2014b), trying to impose co-linearity of wishes and general purposes of the ruling system (Lordon, 2012). This refers both to the practical and the theoretical dimension of didactics - if such dimensions can be distinguished.

Didactics is kept in transcendence and in a bureaucratic technique not only by the unfortunate discovery of paradigms, but also by an attempt at proving that it is a science. Just as I postulate rejection of paradigmatic thinking, I also indicate the necessity of resigning from the scientific aspect. Scientificity may be and often is an aspect that expropriates us not only from knowledge, but also from existence, just as in the case of philosophy which transforms into a domain practised by state clerks. Science is not the only one and not even a privileged mode of relating to the world and to others. It sometimes constitutes a rough mode of thinking, which prevents reaching these events, these manifestations of life of an individual and a community which are important for didactics. Scientificity is not only a block, a certain training of how "not to see" and how to see specifically (about the science of seeing and not seeing, cf. Lewis, 2012a), which sometimes becomes dangerous, especially when it is identified with expert knowledge. In this perspective, we have a post-political or even, more broadly, transcendental politicisation, which is trying to govern the immanence of "chaos." The model of transcendence may then reveal its sovereign power in a fully dark capacity, subjugating the life of a matrix created by the administrators (Bauman, 2009).

Didactics of immanence resigns from scientificity for the sake of actual meetings; that is why it has to become philosophical in its core, where philosophy goes back to the sources, to the connection with the existence of a wise-man/ a nomad, or rather tribes: "Every thought is already a tribe, the opposite of a State" (Deleuze, Guattari, 2015, p. 464). Instead of looking for regularities which may be managed

by technocrats, it immerses in another, unique event (which is something individual, cf. Massumi, 2011, a type of messianic cut, cf. Bey 2001): "Ambulant or nomadic sciences do not predestine science to take rule or even to independent development. They do not have the means to do it, as they subjugate all their procedures to the sensual conditions of insight and construction, *following* the stream of matter, *tracing and connecting* the smooth space" (Deleuze, Guattari, 2015, p. 459).

The horizontal nature of the didactics of immanence excludes any externality which is proper for the corruptive nature of the royal science. As part of the immanently understood didactics, the process of education is created during a meeting and is continuously modified. Decentralisation of the teacher and real equality requires constant negotiation of everybody with everybody, co-production as part of the pirate educational networks (Lewis, 2012b). To be sure, it is possible to explain everything that happens during a meeting with the use of a constructivist or humanistic paradigm, simultaneously offering "assistance" to the coach, trying to "improve" activities. However, it entails nothing else but the imposition of old structures, hackneyed interpretative clichés, on the uniqueness of the event, and thus the process of breaking the rhizome, liquidation of the unique" (Deleuze, 2016). The example of "not seeing" and explaining politicisation and the pedagogical with the use of the logic of transcendence are some interpretations of the Occupy Wall Street movement, which not only fail to notice the autonomy of the multitude, but also the specifics of politics worked out during a given event, separate styles of learning, studying or - more broadly - separateness of the OWS reality (Lewis, 2013; Szwabowski, 2015).

Another example of the problematic nature of paradigmaticity and the didactics of transcendence is a project called "Autoetnografie studiowania" ("Auto-ethnography of Studying") in which I am participating together with my students[1]. In the course of it, I have encountered persons presenting a humanistic approach, as well as persons who wanted to motivate the group with the use of penalties and constant supervision; others tried to challenge everything, in contrast to those who tried to convince me to act like a teacher. My leftist critical approach clashed with the pro-market and anti-democratic approach, as well as liberal, varied and multiple mutations, specific ideological collages. In this multitude, approaches intertwined; one strategy was dominant for a while, later another one: controversies and chaos were the inseparable elements of cooperation. I think that we did not need a paradigm. What is more, a paradigm would deprive us of a journey, of get-

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[1] A project pursued since 2015 as part of the work of the Chair of General Didactics at the University of Szczecin.

ting lost together, of learning from each other, of finding one another in the darkness, or re-kindling the flame when it was dying in somebody's hands. This was the "erring science": always unclean, always blurry, dirty and specific (Deleuze, Guattari, 2015, p. 451). A paradigmatic approach would have extinguished the event before it even had a chance to appear. It would have imposed maps and the mode of walking, the speed of walking and the time for a bivouac. A military rhythm, subjugating a war machine to the state apparatus. Meanwhile we, the nomadic horde, during a project were continuously drawing fantastic maps - everybody had a different map, continuously changing (Kaczmarek et al., in print).

The example of the above-mentioned project shows one more significant problem indicating the difference between the didactics of transcendence and immanence. Here, I am primarily thinking about the report. In technically oriented didactics, focused on solving (abstract) specific problems[2], writing a report is a logical consequence of external, instrumental rationality, easily jumping to the level of representation and reification. Yet in the case of the didactics of immanence, the report is a treachery. It constitutes unforgettable falsification and a brutal expropriation which is doomed to lose its "subject" exactly in a moment when such event is considered a subject. The report becomes impossible and any references to the above-mentioned project are very risky - in particular when I start to use the pronoun "we" in euphoria. Unfortunately, "I" does not solve the problem, as the difference between "I-writing" and "I-being-then-with-others", "I-becoming-them", "I-becoming the project", woman, man, student, teacher, researcher, wanderer, writing hands becomes blurred... In line with the logic of the event, there is a radical difference between empowerment in the event and outside of the event, which puts the translating software in a neutral gear. Awareness of the above-listed difficulties forced me to experiment with reports and to generate non-reports. I suggested that the participants should write a joint account from the project. Thanks to this, I was hoping to avoid representation and reduction of the voice of the participants to data, a resource which would subsequently be subjected to scientific operations by me-researcher. In my opinion, the non-report became another separate event, loosely related to what happened earlier. Furthermore, a typical dictionary started to crumble. We became foreigners in our own language. Me in my specialisation. Objectives? Effects? Leave us alone, bureaucrats. My assumptions ceased to be significant a long time ago; individualities found something, sometimes common and sometimes different and showed to others what was found. Or they left it for themselves or found nothing. Stud-

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[2] The royal science is not concrete, it cannot flow with the current.

ies absorbed us, became a purpose in itself, a place in which we lived. Or not. People left the camp, sometimes explaining something, sometimes in silence, or slamming the doors. Studying absorbed, exhausted, caused conflicts, both with the authorities, as well as among the participants, or students who could not become accustomed to the strange style. Or it hallucinated, the bodies of wanderers acquired monstrous shapes. Maybe they simply became invisible. Also for me. Did I go to Croatan? Did they go to Croatan? Did we go to Croatan? Can you see the green-eyed Indians?

The impossibility of a report, which would be a treachery, a lie, a reproduction of dominant explanations of own illusions and discipline, poses a significant challenge before the general didactics, a challenge that is set for the entire royal science: its autonomy. By assuming the immanent vision of didactics, it is clear that we have to reject the positivist approach of creating regularities which may be implied, which are used for more or less detailed preparation of the process of education or evaluation of its course and the final outcome. Furthermore, as part of immanent didactics, there is no space for representations and, what is more, a generalisation of experiences of an event.

Does this mean doing away with didactics? In a certain sense it does. Does it mean immersion in practice? In a certain sense it does.

Just as there is no point of contact between the politics of transcendence and the politics of immanence, because they constitute two separate modes of thinking and living[3], there is also no connection between the didactics that correspond to them. The didactics of immanence requires a different dictionary, different methodologies, a different mode of writing and describing. Writing and non-reports become an integral element of the process of such, showing the connection between practice and theory present as part of immanence. The set of problems is also subject to changes. For example, efficiency, outcomes and separate methods are no longer an object of interest; instead of it, the following aspects are co-considered in specific conditions: melancholy of studying, exhaustion, exile and withdrawal. They are not immediately and unequivocally treated as problems, but more as elements of a map, which may constitute trails existing in a degree in which they are followed.

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[3] The radical difference is shown perfectly by the most recent social movements, (Day, 2001) which set off a politics that seems - both for state scientists and for professional politicians - something un-political. The movement as such, for example in Argentina or Chiapas, makes only one claim: "Everybody has to leave" which has to be explained as the exodus of the multitude from the state apparatus and logics functioning as part of it, setting off own war machines with emancipated potential (Sitrin, 2006; Prądzyńska 2014).

As part of didactics of immanence, the role of general didactics as an academic discipline is subject to transformation. One may also wonder whether it is not being abolished, because as "general" it seems to belong to the royal science, per necessity jumping to the level of autonomy and representation, dealing with items. It is possible that as a discipline, general didactics could constitute a museum where collections of ruins left after meetings will be created, where ephemeral records of past networks will be collected, as well as part of sentences of unknown authors, melodies and moods; piles of non-reports, which become secret books where a specific spiritual practice constitutes an interpretation key, opening the magic of words. The museums of general didactics no longer accumulate certain knowledge, recipes and provisions, but only blurry traces which might inspire us to wandering. As a non-science, general didactics becomes a guard of the meeting doomed to failure, a poet extolling and arousing the desire of travelling to the unknown, a jump into the abyss. Nevertheless, collecting cannot be understood as a process of expropriating the jewels of nomadic hordes, but as nomadic reconstruction of the rhizome, which upsets all generality, universality for the sake of the multitude.

"Doing away with the coercion of utility and accumulation, an embodied value, similarly to enamoured clarification, could not consist in cataloguing items, events, or texts. The core of collecting would be to rebuild, with the use of a collection of rhizome, broken by the capitalist deterritorialisation" (Pospiszyl, 2016, p. 141). It is not about recording the past, subordinate to police-like archives, but about "giving voice", about setting off specific practices, reconstruction of what has been suppressed and uprooted by the royal science and accumulating machines. A collection sets an aphorism against descriptions, conclusions and judgements (Deleuze, Guattari, 2015, p. 464), their breakdowns, military constellations.

The above-mentioned immersion in practice cannot be treated as reduction of positions, setting a specific practice against an abstract theory. Thinking in such categories would require acknowledging the existence of a theoretical and practical level and thus would be related to a certain externality and/ or vertical vision of being; both such features are lacking in immanence. It is also not to be understood as appreciation for every practice. Let me repeat once again: the practice of didactics of immanence is a practice related to an event, or, putting it differently, to studying (Lewis, 2013).

Does it mean the dissolution of the didactic in the things that happen? In a certain sense it does. Does it mean that the didactics of immanence is helpless in reference to the didactics of transcendence? In a certain sense it does.

This is not about any practice, but the practice of an event. The post-political politics pinpoints the specific type of subjectivity and relation. This is one of the main distinctive features between immanence and transcendence. Thus, didactics could concentrate on producing relations. This problem is well illustrated by Piotr Kowzan (Kowzan, 2017). Didactics of immanence as the "general didactics" would be the practice of a practice, the studying of studying. This does not entail a transfer to some sort of a meta-level as in the case of didactics of transcendence, but doubling or wobbliness. Immersion in an event causes multiplication, not transfer. Didactics becomes non-distinguishable from the network as such; it is in the connections, it is not a single separate connection. It exists only in the network, the specific one. The general didactics is not a researcher's theory, and it is not a teacher's reflexivity, but a transient swarm intelligence (Lewis, 2010), which is not reified in representation, it cannot be separated from a meeting/ folding and is diffused together with the collapse of a network.

In relation to practices related to technical thinking, dominant educational practice or bio-political learning and requirements set as part of technocratic didactics, didactics of immanence seems helpless. The incompatibility of such perspectives is visible at least on the level of immanent social movements and official politics. Political dilemmas are insignificant for the immanent social movements and are rejected as an element of "bad politics." The case is analogous for didactics. This does not mean that the didactics of immanence is not capable of influencing "bad practice." In this context, starting to study studying may lead to the halt of the machine and set off a different production of knowledge, as part of the logic of internal breakup.

Summing up, the didactics of immanence, as a didactics entangled politically post-politically, is radically different from the technocratic didactics of transcendence entangled in political parties or criticism or post-politically. Its core philosophicity does not mean adoption of a specific philosophical concept or an attempt at reading didactics or implying its theses, terms or whatever was reified, in the didactic process. Philosophicity is not identical to an academic discipline, but an existential experience, a specific lifestyle and an attitude to others. It constitutes an element of operating networks, oozing together with didactics, through its lines and nodes. The aforementioned features are reflected in the methodology which may also be described as a form of "workman's research" (Szwabowski, 2016) or as an anarchist methodology relying on the absence of a method - the nomadic thought is also a thought without a method (Deleuze, Guattari, 2015, p. 464; cf. Manning, 2016). The didactics of immanence restores the key place to friendship, love and desire, which is not defined by the absence, but that has its own, im-

manent joy (Deleuze, Guattari, 2015, p. 186) and thus purposelessness proper for studying. The desire fuelling the didactics of immanence is not subjected to any superior desire (of a teacher, an institution, a system, a truth, etc.), thus blocking the way of techniques used to establish co-linearity – this desire spills and the only line that is drawn is the outlet line.

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