

## **EDUCATION AND WORK IN THE TIME OF FLEXIBILITY. RECONSIDER THE PEDAGOGICAL POTENTIAL IN THE EXISTENTIALIST PLANNING**

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***Abstract.** Nowadays European Union support many training projects reserved to “young adults”, that should sustain the creation of skills and competences that will enable them to move in the business world. The liquid-times scenario is leading young adults to the loss of the capacity of thinking about long-term project.*

*Using the Educational Clinic approach –which legitimate the opportunity of a crossed and inter-disciplinary reading of the educational fact – we try to reason on the conditions that made the pedagogical setting an alcove for the existential planning of the individual, transcending the simple transferred knowledge.*

*The purpose is to go back and ask ourselves about the contemporary context with a look that is enriched by the experienced elements, in order to show a possible niche of the education device, in which the disclosure of the idea of education as a space of potential development for the existential design can be possible.*

**Keywords:** Education, Existential Planning, Pedagogical Setting, Pedagogy, Work.

### **Introduction**

“Forget about it, your job now is to learn!” there is nothing that contains more truth than figures of speech, idiomatic sentences or all-purpose answers. A simple truth and somehow all too cruel that cages and closes the matter, so forcing the average interlocutor to glance down and go back to his work. How many kids and young adults have been addressed in this way? And how many of them, after having completed their duty just like good little soldiers, have ended with the feeling of having nothing in their hands?

“Waste paper”, “By now everybody’s got it”, “If everything goes well you’re ending up working for a McDonald!”, these are words that often arise, just mentioned whispers by those who no longer believe, that echo and crawl among the walls of the Educational Institutions. In what do they no longer believe? The first answer that comes to light appears to be: in the abundance and in the potential of the education received. In the text “*Conversazione sull’Educazione*” (Bauman, 2012), Mazzaro informs us about the fact that in Italy, while it is registered almost a 100% success up to the end of the lower secondary school, the scenario radically and suddenly changes if we look at the secondary school, where the drop-out rate before the diploma is above 30%. According to the data every year more than one hundred and twenty thousand kids between fifteen and nineteen years old enter the ranks of the *neet* (*not in education, employment or*

*training*). These data seem to match perfectly with the statement that Bauman shortly after proposes, where he says that “The liquid-modern culture is no longer a culture of learning and of accumulation, same as the cultures reported by historians and ethnographers. It is more likely a culture of *disengagement, of discontinuity and of forgetfulness*.” (Bauman, 2012p. 44)

So we find ourselves observing without any specific commitment, the myth of the contemporary hero: a young adult, without any specific education, but equipped with that knowledge that has allowed him to conceive an innovative idea – is there today a word more overrated and deprived of sense? – and to develop it in its garage. A young person who, supported also by the right amount of luck – conveniently quoted to justify the failure for anybody else – all of a sudden becomes a billionaire. Here too, we think that what has been lost is once again that part of the individual that believed in the potential of the investment and of the choice made for his own educational path, together with the rejection that this responsibility implies. Everything, in the chaotic scenario of the liquid modernity, looks like happening by chance, in a simply uncontrolled manner, engulfed in the whirlwind of the momentary pleasure that only proceeds by accumulation, prey of the lost of sense and ratio (Recalcati, 2003). Limits and rules look like existing only to be crossed, to be proven useless, rejections of a dream for growth that looks like having become impossible even only to be “*thought of*”.

And what about all those who, equipped with abundance and will, move forward unperturbed until they reach the last degree of formal education, that is the university degree?

Also for them it is possible to find a category, they are the “*as if*” ones. Warriors of the as if they believe in it. Ranks of youngsters – as Bauman observes – that have got no other choice than to behave as if they really believe in the fact that the top is unlimited, that there is always further room to climb to the top and reach a higher place, where every effort they and their families have done up to that point will be repaid by a prestigious job and an amazing salary that will raise them to a higher degree in the social ranking, letting them become the family pride and salvation. All they need is a university degree. As if they believe in it and forget about the perspective of being forced to “draw up countless job applications that are almost never answered, accept an infinitely long unemployment and be obliged to undergo uncertain and unstable jobs, two thousands leagues beneath the power rooms, as only alternative”. (Bauman, 2012, p. 52)

Consequently the social and international policies are starting to get their gears into action. All of a sudden European notices show up that support training projects reserved to young adults, to the creation of skills and competences that will finally enable them to move in the business world, attractive resources for a market that would like them to be liquid and without any link, commitment and border, same as the society that surrounds them. Without any long-term project,

if not the desire to keep on carrying out that climbing, to then stick out with increasing greed and with both hands reaching out looking for pleasure. A climbing that, when lucky enough to start, wants to be refunded by a single currency: flexibility. Another key word of this liquid time, where the incorrect, manipulative and unscrupulous use looks like having jeopardized its meaning, so that it loses that positive feature that referred to resilience and to the right ability of adjustment to the external environment to turn it into the supposed capability to withstand the neurotic changes of the contemporary society.

Simultaneously also the academic world is advancing. Constantly busy in coping with the restrictions fixed by the superior politics – actually insurmountable – and the needs of a generation, although hoarse, that craves for help. In particular during international conventions, people start asking: what can education do in front of all this? Once again the request looks like assuming the need to obtain a concrete answer, almost a counter-recipe book including a solution in ten small pills to be swallowed one after the other, but this is not the direction our research demand has taken.

What we are asking ourselves right now and that, from our side, we aim to propose, is: what can pedagogy and education do in front of this scenario? In education, do there exist potential development areas that, if controlled, could work as alcove for the growth and the existential planning of the individual that transcend the technical data of the transferred knowledge? And, if yes, which are they and under what conditions can they be recognized and activated?

Some of these questions contain an implicit answer, others maybe an impossible one. The purpose of the present work will therefore be to present a first re-crossing of literature that aims to bring back to light and to argument at least part of that implicit, so as to let it become a new starting point.

The pedagogic school from which we would like to draw in order to define education as we mean it, specifying the shape we would like her to take in the reader's mind in order to immediately disconnect from a culture that tends to program and contain it within the terms of a business-like education, mostly focused on training, is the one of the "ClinicadellaFormazione"<sup>9</sup> by Riccardo Massa (1994). Although almost thirty years have passed since the first publication of the masterful text *Educare o Istruire?* (Massa, 1987) the context is still valid and it is worthy of a continuous examination. In particular the writer believes that nowadays, in order to define the steps forward done by those who as follower practise the Education Clinic, becoming in turn its constructor and theorist, it is possible to match our proposed idea of training with the idea of education that Massa himself proposes in the above mentioned book.

According to the author, education moves according to a spiral motion: this derives from life and it goes back to it. This movement is carried out only after the advent of a separation, in which education becomes repetition of life itself;

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<sup>9</sup> By now we refer to it as "Education Clinic" n.d.r

repetition that as such takes place among the sphere of experience separated from immediate life, although maintaining its peculiar feature of vitality.

It is thanks to this repetition feature that education seems mostly to be characterized by its tendency to keep distance from that same life in which it is rooted, dragging strength out of it.

Hence education becomes the stage of life (Massa, 2001). It is in virtue of this ambivalence that for Massa education appoints itself as a pragmatic device specifically featured by an experiential dimension that guarantees her a specific level of factuality, which the design of each methodological device should be able to aim to. It is moreover important to underline how the educational relationship that has developed in this contest, could be interpreted, and therefore distinguished from other kinds of relations, as an effected experience, where pedagogy qualifies itself as a science of action in order to produce it. This can be asserted only if, in the same way as Massa, we interpret as *pragma* the make-believe dimension of the educational work. The educational experience proceeds in fact along a dual register that oscillates between the real and the make-believe, in respect to the common passing of the real course and that also proves itself able to directly intervene on it.

Other aspects that allow identifying a tight meaning of the concept of education as a factual as well as intentional factor are those related to the centrality that the relational dimension and the group one, the initiatory and the ritual one, the prescriptive one, the expressive one, the motivational and the transitional one assume in it. Massa clearly explains the features of this transitional dimension, expression with which it is meant that education comes to establish an intermediate and mediating region, one of contact and passage between external world and personal life, cognitive requests and sentimental needs, real things and childish imagination, through processes of symbolic substitution and operative test.

But to understand education as a factual factor it is necessary to go investigating a latency level even more elementary and submerged, that is, we have to investigate the educational device as structural device. In it, the spatial, the temporal, the corporal and the symbolic dimensions result tangibly structured and they determine the education in its specific happening. The fact that education is a socially determined item results obvious for Massa, but not the fact that this resolution is not direct and determined, but takes place through specific means of a structure that is procedural, with method and experiential; even less the fact that these structuring refer to the substance that creates them. It is from the kind of structuring of space, of time, of corporeity and of symbolization, of the exposition to them within defined educational practises or non voluntary or non intentional educational situations, from the qualitative and quantitative ratio between them and the spatial, temporal, corporal and symbolic experience of current life that the efficiency of education, its factuality and its ideal implication ultimately depend upon.

But before understanding how pedagogy could go back to ask itself and re-think its own areas dedicated to education, we think it is mandatory an attempt in that direction of integration of pedagogic knowledge around which the Education Clinic works all along. This in order to highlight once again the fact that, although if up to now we intentionally referred only to the most intentional element of the formative event as programmed action, underlining over and over again the materiality surrendering to any element that constitutes the structure of the device in which it takes place, we do not intend to forget what until now presents itself as the most pulsing core in continuous evolution of the Education Clinic: the profound questioning regarding the interpretations between the emotional, the cognitive, the corporal and the existential variables that design the deep texture of each educational happening.

For this reason the attitude of those who want to “clinically” get to know education appears as “the attitude of who distances himself from it [...] exactly to get better involved and understand it once again, of those who interrupt any tendency of generalization in order to be able then to contribute more efficiently to it, of those who retreat from goals and values at the same moment, in which they recognize them as fundamental for any kind of educational event, of those who are not afraid of revealing to themselves and to others the unpleasant and irrational hidden behind the desire of educating or being educated, of those who accept the erotic and power implications of the educational relationship without sublimating them, denying them or naturalizing them surreptitiously (Massa, 1990 p. 583)”

Facing all this, as Mottana (1993) reminds us, means to analytically segment the body of the educational fact in all its structural components – from the planning level, to the analysis of the needs, the inclination of specific communication techniques – at the level of the existential past experiences, of the pre-comprehension and of the cognitive classification, of the sentimental dynamics and of the anthropological and cultural factors that structurally define and influence the happening of the event itself. Therefore the Clinic anticipates and legitimates itself the opportunity of a crossed and inter-disciplinary reading of the educational fact in which phenomenological, existential, cognitive and psychosocial, anthropological-cultural elements merge, and in which the psychoanalysis acts both directly at the level of the analysis of the sentimental dynamics submitted, and at the level of the methodological structuring itself of the device.

In particular, as we are dealing with existential planning and as we are choosing to set us in that part of the pedagogy that focuses on that new category – still fully to be disambiguated at a social level – of the “young adult”, we think it can be useful to ask about the way, in which psychoanalysis has brought back to its own inside the processes regarding educational thinking and the elaboration conducted by psychoanalysis regarding the role of work in human life. The purpose will therefore be to go back and ask ourselves about the

contemporary context with a look that is enriched by the experienced elements, in order to finally show, in a through and through open way, a possible niche of the education device, in which the disclosure of the idea of education as a space of potential development for the existential design of the individual and the groups that there reside can be possible.

*Il lavoro come momento di connessione tra mondo interno e mondo esterno attraverso la mediazione del principio di realtà* (Pagliarani, 1975) is the title of the work we will refer to in order to clarify how psychosocioanalysis looks at work and shows Pagliarani signature. The key that represents the starting point, is Bion's *Learning from experience* (1962), text in which the psychoanalyst questions the problem of the development of thinking, asking himself about the causes of its origin and its obstacle in psychosis situations.

In his pondering about the process of the thinking genesis, Bion proposes three terms that point out the phases of the development of the thinking itself in the child's mind: pre-conception, conception and concept that we will briefly sum up, as they are useful for the argument we are proposing. The pre-conception indicates the expectation of something and produces a kind of empty thinking. The conception represents the second phase, where pre-conception and actualization gather together, which is the making contact between the expected and the real. From the emotional experience of satisfaction that arises from this encounter, we have the beginning of the conception. Eventually, the concept represents an idea defined by a name, a term, a *word* that can identify and define it.

From this sequence of steps Bion deduces that in the child's mind the thinking is not built as the result of satisfaction, but after the frustration of which the moment that precedes the actualization is burdened, because it is in that moment that the non-present, the expected non-existing take shape in the mind. The form of the desired would give origin to the first thought, lighting up in the mind the capability of thinking that will then develop during the course of life and that will reproduce itself always according to the same model, each time triggered by new emotional experiences; of course all this is possible provided that the quantity of frustration generated by the expected does not result unacceptable for the individual. The detachment between an acceptable and an unacceptable frustration reveals itself in the individual with the same difference that already exists between what leads to the creative and transformative act of the reality, which the subject identifies with, and, on the other hand, what leads to the escape in front of a task, gesture in which it is located all the pathological product rising from the pain caused by the feeling of frustration. It is in this situation that we set ourselves, starting to ask ourselves about the expressed potentialities of the pedagogic and educational result that establishes itself in the education space. A space that, as it has been observed over and over again (Massa, 1987; Mottana, 1993; Riva, 2004), is by its own constitution

simultaneously located in the here and now and, at the same time, built in the elsewhere. It is the peculiarity of the elsewhere that makes this place full of creative and transformative potentialities for the subject that inhabits it. A doorstep space, freely organized and reconstructed among the grips of the institutional commitments and the ability of who is governing it to exploit its power, permeated but undeniable, that forms it. A setting, a container, in which rules, rituals and real curiosity can find the right composition to accompany the forming through the strain dictated by the frustration in order to achieve the possibility of a new thinking and a new project; a place in which it becomes possible “to recapture the existence”(Bruzzone, 2012). In this context we can also think about the genesis of the thinking as it is proposed by Bion, that is something that fills the emptiness of the frustration and that, being born from the capability of tolerating it, in turn contributes to increase this capability, in a virtuous circle that tends to restore itself keeping itself alive.

In the gratification of the desire for that not yet present and in the creation of a new thinking Pagliarani finds in turn the link to provide a first psychoanalytic definition of what work is:

“Work, from a psychoanalytical point of view, is nothing but the possibility of fulfilling our desires accepting an extension between the moment of the birth of the desire, or of the need, and the moment of the fulfilment. That is, against the principle of pleasure the leads either to claim for a total and immediate fulfilment or, as this fulfilment does not exist, to the escape from frustration in different ways [...] in the name of the reality theory. (Pagliarani, 1982 pp. 214-215)”

A reality that, it is important to point out, in this phase shows up as twisted by the paranoia masks and by the projective identification (Klein, 1935), that drives the individual to escape from the task and from the effort that the idea of the newness – idea non only as rising thinking, but also as out-and-out conception, mating, birth. This mechanism finds its support in the name of the simple archaism, that refers primitively to the work as mere way of surviving, except for interrupting then that self-generating and really satisfying cycle for that individual who, the more he surrenders to the temptation of escaping, the more he gets mixed up in the psychosis press, until he loses– temporarily – the capability of thinking.

“This is work: the capability of accepting that reality dimension that is time – that is the expansion in view of a fulfilment – always acted in name of the principle of pleasure, but with manners that also consider the reality tenet. (Pagliarani, 1982 p. 215)”

Therefore work displays itself as an attempt to modify the frustrating reality, letting the reality principle become the centre of one’s own interest – typical of the individual or of the group – maintaining anyway a certain balance and a certain inclination for the gratification of that sane side that is located within the pleasure principle.

All this refers to the own individual situation that belongs to a working institution: if work gives substance to the double aim of modifying the frustrating reality and of avoiding the frustration that is not possible to bear, then, in the working institution, it happens that if the institution coherently fulfils the aims for which it was created, it is also able to modify the frustrating reality and it works transforming it, becoming itself agent and mean for the change and positive container of the anxieties of the individuals that inhabit it.

A second situation occurs if we go after what the socioanalysis by Jaques tells regarding work, according to which work would be *an exercise of discrimination within preset limits*. In this context the limits, the rules, the deliveries represent the prescriptive aspect of work: within this more or less defined space, each of us, as he works operates choices. That is, he takes decisions for which he feels responsible, of which he is liable, decisions whom positive or negative result is not immediately known, but some test time has to elapse that allows to state if the make choice has been proven valid or wrong. And it is precisely in the act and in the exercise of the discretion that the anxiety content is situated. In the work, each time the “individual is going to do something, it is as if he is mentally planning something that has to come out of his hands” (Jaques; 1970).

Jaques comes back to the topics of the choice that, in turn, refers to responsibility and wait, a break space in which the anxieties, that attack the individual, arouse snake-like, letting him at the mercy of symbolic and tangible meanings that work and its plan drag, sinking him into a state of insecurity.

Jaques divides this state of development of the project in six stages that tend to repeat themselves in a cyclic way starting from the “relationship of the subject with the objective” and with the object that he intends to produce, in order then to move to what he calls the “appointment of the mental capability” and that Pagliarani translates in “appointment of psychic energy”, whose amount determines also the level of motivational investment that the person puts in the realization of the task. The third stage is that of the “organizational reticulum” and could be compared to the phase of the frustrating wait, in which the thinking takes shape in the mind of the individual and starts to organize the structure of the project on the base of a conceptual network that the subject is self-building. In the fourth stage there is the “concentration on the task” that involves the examination and the research of all elements that can facilitate its realization. From the <<lysis>> of the fourth stage we get on to the “summery” of the fifth, in which the earlier untied elements are put back together driving to the taking of the decision and to the decision for action, that leads to the creative action, that by itself shows to be an interpretative act of the process of lysis and summary, reason why Jaques calls this sixth stage: “interpretation”.

At this point it starts to become more clearly the reason for which work is considered a moment of connection between the internal world and the external world; the capability of experiencing the symbolic meanings of what the individual is doing on multiple levels and the capability of managing different stages of the planning, depend – according to Pagliarani – exactly upon how the individual experiences work, its meanings and the relationships that, thanks to it, are established with others.

But for Jaques work takes also a third meaning, that somehow makes the so far outlined scene more difficult, adding further elements and, at the same time, clarifying others:

“At the level of the meaning of transferable - that is belonging to the emotional meanings for us who work – work would expose us, more or less unconsciously, to a double experience. From one side, as we give birth to a creature that is our piece of work, we shape ourselves on the mother that gave us birth: that is, we – men and women, no matter - as we give birth to pieces of work, we relive a maternal experience, of the <<mater>> who gives birth to something; thus with all hopes that this product becomes a good son, and with all the fears that this son turns out to be phocomelic, crippled, handicapped, misfit, etcetera.

From the other side, according to Jaques, an even more deep experience is the fact that, in the working activity, the work is liable to be experienced also as an exhumation of our relationship as children with the mother's body. Therefore, from the point of view of the deep meanings, according on how we proceed with work (meant in this case as renovated experience in the relationship with the maternal body), it can take on the meaning either of creating, fixing, integrating, enriching the mother's body, or, on the contrary, of a destructive attack experience, of deterioration, of disablement and of death of the mother's body.”(Jaques, 1970)

The deep meanings and the lived past that the working experience calls back and collects in the person's unconscious become deeply rooted in the relationship with the mother's body, always dual and squashed in its symbolic meanings of double experience of creation and fix of a maternal body that generates, in the infant, the experience of the primary envy. Envy that in the past of the adult individual connotes with the expression of <<work related injury>>, so meaning both what occurs in the relationship between individual and the object work, and what happens in the relationship with the external world (reality in which the subject lives, but also relationship between the subject and the individuals that surround him at work) or, more commonly, the failure of the creation experience that aborts the role of the subject in the work-system in which he is integrated. All the good is contained in the mother's body that the son is trying to imitate and recreate at the time when he prepares himself to give birth to a creature that “belongs to him”, but the mother keeps this goodness for herself and this generates anger in him, that gives voice to the resenting feeling

and “blocks” its germinating capability and with it – going back to Bion – the thinking capability that, as it includes the hallucinatory function of an object that does not yet exist, already takes on the statute of a first work form that modifies the perceived reality. If all the psychic energies are fossilized on the original way of feeling, that is primary envy, the individual loses the capability of staying mentally set in the present reality, thing that makes him actually an aberration of the work system within the organization; an aberration that can also become collusive towards the sick organization.

A process, with tones significantly referring to Klein, that once again refers to the split and the capability more or less carried out of internalization of the internal object from the individual side. Also the envy, as all psychic processes, is always present in the individual experience, what changes is the degree according to which it reveals itself and, according to Pagliarani, the fact that it is more or less endurable by the person, depends once again upon the meanings that the work the individual is carrying on, acquires in his inside world, that is in relation with the external world with which he is in touch:

“This is the reason why work is the moment, in which, in the name of the exercise of the reality principle, it occurs a soldering or an attempt of soldering and of integration – not of confusional fusion – between internal world and external world.”(Pagliarani, 1982)

The principle of reality shows to be then, once again and more and more, an essential glue to keep the individual close to the present, actual and experienced reality, preventing the slipping into more archaic and primitive areas of the psyche, in a way guaranteeing the real possibility of the fulfilment experience for the individual through its own work and with that the possibility of keeping the working institution, in which he is integrated, alive – a true life, stimulating and creative.

It is for this reason that, in the attempt of crossing again the present, it is not possible to think of a education space without wondering which meanings feed it and appoint it and how in its deontological integrity (Contini, Demozi, Fabbri, Tolomelli; 2014) it can live through the schizophrenic changes of a society in a continuous transformation and more and more unable to offer itself as a device able to receive the individual and to offer him spaces in which gaining a sense for his identity.

Identity that macerates itself and looks like splitting apart, as soaked paper, the very moment in which a strong decrease of the working offer related to the expressed request is spotted. The consequence of this reject is clearly explained by Pagliarani when, reflecting about the passage from the adolescence to the adult age, he highlights the feeling of deep frustration that the boy feels as soon as he leaves school when realizing that outside there is no longer a place for him. A frustration that leads him to literally ask himself, “why have I been

born?”<sup>10</sup> A condition of “having been thrown into the world”, from which the falling of the contemporary institutions and of the retaining devices looks like not leaving any way of escape.

The range of this condition is also quite easy to be grasped with Bordoni (2010), when he states:

“Work represents the man’s dignity, that otherwise would have no sense in life. He would pass his time with useless actions, seeking for pleasures and satisfactions free from social meaning [...] the present working crisis has deprived the man from his identity, without offering him an alternative. It is the end of the industrialized society that requires new shapes of identity (and new compensations) on the base of an individual recognition, devoid at present of any social explanation. [...] it is the end of the ethic of work so as it had been set in origin” (Bordoni, 2010 p.4)

And if the market crisis is for sure not the only element characterizing the contemporary society, the reflection it has on the organizations and on the individuals, fills for sure a bulky space, space that invades – by now not even too shiftily, but with arrogance and energy more and more evident – the places dedicated to the planning, the desire, the transformation and the dream. Places that pedagogy inhabits and whose challenges, made of imprecise and mutant shapes – with the double meaning of shimmering, but also horrific – has to find today a way to reply by entering it, taking again the challenge in order to renovate itself and show itself in a social contest that has lost the feeble notes of hope with which it is often dressed. Today also pedagogy finds itself, same as all the sciences that are dedicated to the development of the individual, forced to face the challenge of the “liquid fear” (Bauman, 2006), so different in terms of quality from the fears and the ghosts that have crossed men’s lives since ever, and to do so, it is mandatory its proceeding on contaminated roads (Riva, 2004; Bainbridge, West, 2012). If it’s true that doing research means “getting one’s hands dirty”, it really appears impossible to penetrate the territory of the complexity, without becoming complex in turns, without becoming “liquid” in turns, able to flow on the lands of alike knowledges, carrying with us those small grains of knowledge that will help us to recreate our lands of sense. The “liquid fear” that permeates our age, presents itself to us as different in

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<sup>10</sup> In *Educazione sentimentale* (2001) Pagliarani writes: “There is nothing that makes us suffer more than feeling left out, because it is like feeling non-existing. This is about managing the situation in such a way as to obtain that attention we are entitled to. This is also a social problem together with the problem of unemployment that is more and more widespread. The status of unemployed involves due kinds of suffering. The missing salary is the first, but the other, the exclusion, is even stronger. Our children experience a quite more gratifying and enjoyable life compared to those of my generation. On my birthday I was given as a present a mandarin or, I remember, a tin rifle that quite soon broke. While now, the rifles that are given to children as presents, are more expensive, they are very similar to real rifles. If you think about it, birthday parties are luxury country festivals, where all companions that attend bring a present. Than the moment arrives when we have grown up, maybe after university, and the world states <<there is no job for you>>. In other terms, <<I let you enjoy so far, but now I tell you that if you would not have been born, it would have almost been better >>. This is mortifying. I think that many problems that today teenagers show are due to the fact that they feel they are a burden their family and society would rather not have to bear.” p. 32-33

constitution and infinitely more dangerous and disturbing, because untied from the existence of “tangible” dangers – although they persist, in their constant and monstrous repetition – but innate and permeated in the own existence of the individual, inhabitant of times and spaces deprived of position, global spaces and deprived of limits that force the man to the fulfilment – or its attempt – of the impossible operation:

“At the end of the journey we have lost the *illusions*, but not the *fears*. [...] *the most horrible among the occurring fears is those of not being able neither to avoid nor to escape from it.* [...] We fear what we do not know. We call <<incomprehension>> that inability: <<understand>> something is in fact the knowledge of doing that allows facing that same thing. [...] *Comprehension arises from the ability of managing.* What we are not able to manage is for us <<unknown>>; and the <<unknown>> is scaring. *Fear is a different name we give to our being without shelters.* [...] it happened, in recent years, a discontinuity that has made visible the dreadful strength of what we can/must define as the sphere of the unknown, of the unintelligible, of the unmanageable. So far, this decisive news has been indicated with the term <<globalization>>,, (Bauman, 2006 p.119)

Observing this attempt of evolution, these signs of afterthought, dropped in a context that looks like when the ground falls out from underneath the feet of who resides there, at such a speed that almost does not even leave them the time to perceive the gradual weight change that comes from this emptying, requires a great effort. We are witnessing today a progressive and programmed crumbling away of each element that was, in some ways, making the structure of the global society on average reassuring, a condition in which the “alterity” becomes threatening. A condition that concerns each individual as part of a social matrix that, at a transpersonal level, shapes and includes everybody (Brown, Zinkin; 1994), including observing suitors. Pondering over Bion, over the genesis of thinking, over the role of work in man’s life, we can’t avoid of asking ourselves, what about thinking?

They come back, more alive and biting than ever, the questions that the pedagogical debate was feeding in the 80’, maybe because never really resolved, but only tired out and finally soothed by the inevitable attempt of chasing the needs of yore that in the meantime has also almost lost its rhythmic and vertical scan, broaden and strained in such a dimension, that has all of a sudden become horizontal and simultaneous. An asthmatic dimension that doesn’t give any time to education and training, meant as space for education and growth – sometimes even for care – of the human being and of the groups that live through it. They prove to be still useful then, after thirty years, but as present as ever, are the words of Massa who in those years was writing:

“Education is therefore in the contemporary culture something not said and hidden, that can no longer be conceived and planned, expressed and plotted, but, for this reason, not less real and factual. Something that in its same unconscious and unintentional actuality is not easy to legitimate, and that, for what concerns its design, has to be censured; something that cannot be mentioned and about which it is better not to talk, if not indirectly, although in the end it represents the very one foundation of the historical accuracy. (Massa, 1987 p.14)”

It looks like today there exist, locked and implicitly recognized in the already known perspective of life-long-learning, on average scattered figures of black pedagogy, that daily and, in an almost candid way, invade our homes through the most common information channels. Scenes of terrorism, violence and misery that set themselves in an underhand manner, easily overstepping the limit of the Skin-Ego (Anzieu, 1974) to cling to a flexibility that looks like losing more and more its fundamental feature of resilience, to gradually turn into fragility. How can therefore this fully contemporary new category of the “young adult” succeed in proceeding through all this without losing that dimension, that is so essential for its own existential planning that is the dream?

The thinking that resides behind the research in this area of poetic but steep shades, arises from the evocation of a border idea, an edge idea that, in its thin and uncertain condition, allows those who try to balance there, to give a look outside, to the society, and a look inside, to the scholastic and educational institution (UlivieriStiozzi, 2013b), with the advice of staying steadily clung to one’s own frame, hoping for it to be solid enough not to run the risk to be swallowed up in the becoming of the final catastrophe:

“It will be never enough reaffirmed that the “final catastrophe” that threatens, is produced by the intrinsic logic of modern life. The perspective of a disaster is especially difficult to avoid, because the pathological (better said suicidal) potential of modern civilization is due to the same qualities from which it draws importance and prestige, that is its inability of setting limits, its innate inclination to break the law and its rejection and non-observance of any kind of boundary and limit, and from the same idea that there exist ultimate and final limits. [...] The modern civilization hasn’t got neither the time nor the interior pressure to ponder on the darkness at the other side of the tunnel.(Bauman, 2006 pp.95-96)”

Referring to these words of Bauman, we call back the necessity of the attempt of tracing a margin, a suspended line from which – lost any presumption of neutrality with regard to such a situation that, as sons of this modern age, associates and involves us all – it should be at least possible to recover, almost pulling it by the feet, that thrust to a reflection and a thinking that, once again, with a more and more increasing heat, refers to the necessity of the individual to exercise the negative capacity and to live the frustration of the mandatory wait in the state of uncertainty.

The concept of doorstep, in our case, takes on also a third meaning, linked to the legitimacy of exercising a pedagogic-clinical glimpse, designed to the discovering of the hidden dimension and of the common inspirations, that allows to think to the educational device as a place in which it should be possible to take all the necessary time (Riva, 2004; Bauman, 2012; UlivieriStiozzi 2013b), in order to elaborate that state of pervading frustration and retrieve the possibility of dreaming the own existential planning.

In the painted scenario, we believe, pedagogy and education have the same tangible, terribly tangible, opportunity to do something. Terrible, because rejecting the prescriptive dimension, it requests, to those who operate, the wager linked to the putting into play and to the firsthand exposition of who becomes guardian of the educational device and of those submerged parts that, at the beginning of this work we have intentionally left aside. Such a posture involves the ability of actively becoming involved in the experience with one's own relational and communicative ability, and that is more and more characterized as fundamental for the care of that huge space full of possibilities, but equally undervalued and often even twisted, that is the sphere of education.

Awful because in some ways, it is loaded with the responsibility of the care, in an environment, in which still today often actions of the singles simply stay as they are, at the mercy of the common sense and of the self-righteousness. If it is decided to go beyond the intentional and planned educational action, as the profession of the educationalist fails to have a codified and common code of conduct (Contini et al, 2014), the only remaining way to penetrate this space with awareness and respect seems to be that of a meditative and reflective space, in which it is possible to adopt a kind of deep feeling towards themselves and the others. A way of listening that brings into play the wide appeal that words and the body gestures of the other causes us, showing up as a relational listening that allows the subject to directly face the fact, that it is not possible to understand "the other" if not starting from ourselves. Therefore a path that instinctively presents itself opposite to that merely transmissive.

This implies that the one who is guarding it, has to take charge of creating a container within the container, a "group-skin" in which the thoughts of the inhabitant could find that necessary support essential to overcome the frustration state driven by the external reality, and that allows the rethink of the educational experience to make her "of matter" and truly fordable again (Bion, 1961; UlivieriStiozzi, 2013a). For us this is presented as the only viable way so that work can develop and germinate within an educational space, a space in which each individual, since it is its inhabitant, has to take care of it. An emphatic place whose study, we feel like saying, is just at the beginning.

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