

Critical Theory, Critical Pedagogy and Diaspora Today

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Critical Pedagogy faces today a very strange situation. While being positioned in a seemingly comfortable position and warmly received by so many liberals, post-colonialists, multi-culturalists, postmodernists, and feminists (to name only few of the long list of its adorers), it is being domesticated, appeased, or even castrated by the present order of things. It became too successful, under different titles, while under the flag of Critical Pedagogy it became domesticated, disoriented, or dogmatized. Today it has become difficult to speak of "Critical Pedagogy"; it is quite ambitious even to articulate the essential elements common to the various and conflicting pedagogies that propagate themselves under the banner of "Critical Pedagogy".

Critical Pedagogy was constituted on the central concepts of Critical theory and on the material, social, and cultural conditions that enabled the critical Utopia. It was part of a rich Western tradition, not just a sign of a dramatic crisis in modern thought and reality. If in classical times the whole was conceived as prior to the parts, and harmony preceded differences and otherness, the imperial Roman era already acknowledged the turn away from the wholeness of the cosmos. Stoa and Gnosis represented it in rich, different, ways. For Gnosis *Being is temporary*; not eternal. *Being is essentially split* and antagonistic to itself. The temporality of Being and its infinite not-identical-with-itself is acknowledged also by St. Augustine in the tenth book of his *Confessions* as well as in the first Letter to Thessalonians in the New Testament. Without abandoning truth, it faced the retreat of classical togetherness of humans and the wholeness of the cosmos, as well as the priority and supremacy of the whole over its individual parts. Cosmic intimacy and unproblematic self-evidence

were replaced by alienation; alienation between the parts and the whole, and alienation within the individual himself. Medieval Christianity offered an alternative – via the "home-returning" project. With the assistance of dogma and well kept walls between classes in society, and between Christian and Jewish sacred truth and existence, it maintained a fairly stable illusion of coherent, steady, relations between the intellect, moral faculty and the aesthetical dimensions of life, and the body. This relative stability was perceived as part of a redeemed, yet fragile and threatened whole: between the Christian, the world, the Other, and knowledge about worthy knowledge. This stable hierarchy, which divided Spirit and body, supra-human and worldly-life, was never genuinely harmonious, stable, coherent, or wholly penetrating. In actuality it did not safely protect the hegemonic social order and its realms of self-evidence: it was actually questioned time and again by rebellious poor farmers, well-educated heretics, witches, madmen, children, women, Jews, and other Others. And yet, it enjoyed relative success in hiding its *immanent violence*, which offered, aside from inequality (after death), suffering, ignorance, and effective silencing of the free spirit. At this price, however, it offered *meaning* to the given reality and *hope* for transcendence. The demolition of the medieval Western Christian world was brought about by the strengthening and universalization of two versions of its arch-rival: the alliance of classical Greek thought and Judaism. Herman Cohen emphasized the *universal realization of Judaism as the expression of the critical spirit and humanism* (Cohen, 1972) – Karl Marx (Marx, 1919) emphasized the *universal realization of Judaism as manifested by the logic and practice of capitalism* (Gur-Ze'ev, 2005, pp. 256-299). The medieval Christian world could not very long resist such united, erotic, transcending powers.

The medieval order could not sustain durable resistance to the new philosophical and scientific revolutionary developments (Horkheimer, 1985, VIII., p. 286), or to the economic, social, technological, and national challenges imposed by the spirit of capitalism. In modernity the critical project was aimed at a positive mission: reestablishing the world as a "home"; *offering a "home returning" project for humans, back to a (pre)meaningful wholeness* enhanced by rational, solidaristic, dialogical, individuals. Within the framework of Enlightenment individuals committed themselves to re-constitute the Garden of Eden on earth via critical thinking and collective rational-political praxis. The Critical Theory thinkers of the Frankfurt School were faced with the problematic of the unattainable metaphysical assumptions for this mission. They also acknowledged the new, irrelevant, social conditions for the realization of the Enlightenment's educational project – and along with Heidegger and existentialism, they not only refused any metaphysics, they further developed a *Diasporic philosophy* – one that addressed humans' ontological *Diasporic existence*. They responded to the human condition as "being-thrown-into-the-world", meaninglessness, and omnipotent-cannibalistic-violence that enhances "culture" and "progress" only as new forms of nihilistic negation of love of Life in its wholeness.

For late Adorno and Horkheimer, this was the beginning of a new, vivid, thinking, not the end of their utopian undertaking. Even if they were not aware of it, we can still identify in their later work that the dissolution of the promise of modernity became, actually, a gate for a new beginning. Earthly, Diasporic, life disconnected from the Exile-Redemption narrative, became an entry for a renewed, negative, ecstatic, intimacy with the world. Out of awareness of the existential situatedness as *being-thrown-into-the-world* they articulated a concept of *living-toward-the-not-yet-in-a-Godless-world*, in the totality of each moment. Living, here, is not so much in the

sense of self protection and reproduction as in the sense of "becoming", of commitment for self-constitution and edification. Diasporic life enabled creative improvisations and births, which made meaninglessness an impetus to new possibilities for happiness, meaning, aim, and togetherness.

Within the framework of mature Critical Theory the concept of *Diaspora* was developed even beyond the Gnostic division between the exiled, hidden, God and the evil God of creation/reality; a division between evil nature and meaningless laws and fabrications – and the wholeness and supremacy of nothingness/chaos. The contribution of Critical Theory to the history of Diasporic Philosophy was made possible by the change of stance of the concepts, ideals, symbols, strivings, and other signifiers which were dissolved, ridiculed, or forgotten in the era of advanced capitalism and its fully administered world in which progress paralleled the broadening of the possibilities for emancipation on the one hand, and the empowerment of the oppression of the individual to the level of the instincts, on the other (Horkheimer, 1974, p. 141). Not only the promise of Enlightenment became irrelevant: the traditional Gnostic rejection of the world of facts and its entire negative alternative became anecdotal at best, in face of the life conditions dictated by the omnipotence of Instrumental Rationality and advanced capitalism and its Culture Industry.

Some Critical Pedagogy thinkers such as McLaren, Gruschka, Mason, Tubbs, De-Oliveira, Zeichner, Roth and Weiler insist on the modernistic-oriented humanist project. Others, such as Michael Peters, Patti Lather, and Gert Biesta, emphasize the new possibilities within the framework of the postmodern discourses and the postmodern conditions. Still others, such as Colin Lankshear, Wendy Kohly, Nicholas Burbules, Raquel Moraes, Mark Olssen, Elisabeth Heilman, Eduardo Duarte and

Henry Giroux, search for a creative synthesis between modern and postmodern sensitivities, conceptions, practices, technologies and paths for communication, existence and education. But this is far from being the only dichotomy. Other dichotomies crisscross Critical Pedagogy today on the level of gender, multiculturalism, post-colonialism, and queer conflicting theories. Sometime the line of division crisscrosses not solely critical thinkers and agendas – they oppose each other even in their own educational philosophy. Other critical philosophers, such as Jan Masschelein, refuse to identify themselves further with Critical Pedagogy, and search for a worthier alternative by long meditative walking in silence and in other paths. Regardless to the degree of identification with Critical Pedagogy, it seems to me that many critical pedagogues are today ready for, or actually searching for *a new critical language in education* that will go beyond the achievements and limitations of Critical Pedagogy.

In itself this is nothing to regret or to be sorry for. What is regrettable, however, is that so much of Critical Pedagogy has become dogmatic, and sometimes anti-intellectual, while on the other hand losing its relevance for the people it conceived as victims to be emancipated. Why is this regrettable? Because the erotic telos of Critical Pedagogy insists on poetic, religiously anti-dogmatic, worthy Life as a manifestation of Love, not of fear or of heated "critique". Because it symbolizes the quest for freedom and refusal of meaningless suffering in face of the *loss of naïve intimacy with the world* and with the truth of Being, and because, sometimes, it actually enhances equality and resists oppression; even if actually it normally promotes new forms of oppression and enhances new ways for *self-forgetfulness*. In detaching itself from the rich works of Adorno, Benjamin, Horkheimer, and the other thinkers of Critical

Theory, Critical Pedagogy in its different versions has abandoned its attunement to *Life* itself in so many respects.

Currently next to no attempts are being made to confront Critical Pedagogy with reality in actual, enduring, pedagogical engagements. No wonder then that next to no attempts are being made to articulate an educational framework for critical teachers' training either, and certainly no ongoing practice of teachers' training at schools. Important exceptions here are the theoretical and practical contributions of Kenneth Zeichner (Zeichner, 1990, pp. 105-131; Zeichner, 1993, pp. 1-13), Daniel Liston (Liston, 2000, pp. 81-102), and Andreas Gruschka (Gruschka, 1986). All this, in face of deceptive calls from the various symbols, strivings, and technologies of globalizing capitalism, and alongside the actuality of anti-reflective and ethnocentric-oriented construction of collective identities of many of the oppressed groups that are so enthusiastically idolized by many disciples of Critical Pedagogy. These are but fragmentary examples of the detachment of current Critical Pedagogies from the wholeness, depths, abysses, dangers, and richness of Life.

Critical Pedagogy contributed more than its fair share in an ongoing attempt to be relevant to political challenges, especially for marginalized and oppressed groups. This is an attempt of vital importance, especially when it is conducted in the wider context of the current crisis in the stance of humanistic-oriented knowledge and its dynamics (as in the work of Burbules, Peters, Heilman, Biesta, Tubbs, Rimon-Or, Marshall, Mason, Gruschka, and Masschelein), or within the context of historical cultural, and economic changes (as in the case of McLaren, Apple, Kellner, and Duarte). The present historical moment, however, needs so much more than that. And overcoming any historical moment and its imperatives, walls, and possibilities calls

for even more than that. We cannot, however, offer, arbitrarily, new master signifiers, strivings, or openness, nor a new critical language, at the present historical moment.

A new critical vocabulary, and not-yet-born master-signifiers, along with other genuine manifestations of **the totally other** (Heidegger, 1993, p. 258; Horkheimer, 1985, VII., pp. 385-404), cannot appear out of the blue, on demand. Master-signifiers, new horizons, and historical shifts are parts of the rich affluence of Being and are manifested differently in all parts and dimensions of the cosmos, preceding any abstraction, law, or control. They might be approached by humans as *manifestations of Love vs. Metaphysical Violence*, or as the infinite/restrained presence of *affluence as Metaphysical Violence*. In any case, these do not behave like domesticated pets, and are never at humans' mercy. They are true manifestations of the infinity and freedom of Being. The new master-signifiers are essentially unforeseeable, uncontrollable, and never totally deciphered, or truly to be mobilized for further productivization, preservation, or enrichment of the instrumental ways for being-in-the-world. They burst into reality – or do not appear at all, beyond determinism, contingency, and unpredictability. Their possible appearance enables freedom and necessity, yet it is not conditioned by laws of freedom, determinism, or representation.

When **the totally other** bursts into a specific historical moment the realm of self-evidence is cracked by this manifestation of "messianic time" (Benjamin, 1980, p. 695), and "now-time" (ibid., p. 701) is irreparably shattered by "redemption"; the epoch of the essentially newly born possibilities becomes not only possible but actually inevitable. It is the moment for untouched horizons, fresh master-signifiers, and fruitful, dynamic, new creations, reactions, and life-and-death wars. The truth of Being and the hidden violence of the historical moment might become unveiled by poetry, philosophy, art, dance, and singing. At such a rare moment dialogue with the

world (that conditions any genuine human communication and "dialogue") and self-reflection face newly born possibilities. The very possibility of such a moment is a precondition for transcendence and for counter-education, which will uncover fresh forms of intimacy and creation with and amid distorted Being.

The possibility of a new critical language in education and of spanking new possibilities for approaching the nearness of truth and the richness of Life are always a matter for human concern. But even at the best of times it is in our hands only partially and always merely conditionally, fragmentarily, and frigidly. And this too, only for a fleeting moment. This is an important positive dimension of Negative Utopia: it means that there is so much that we can do, under the present conditions – actually, under any conditions! And yet, essentially, there is always a limit not only to our possibilities within the historical moment: the very existence of meaningful horizons and their specific material, symbolic, and existential characteristics are essentially *not ours* but a challenge to overcome, a potential to transcend.

Present-day Critical Pedagogy faces, as the authors of this collection manifest, challenges of different kinds, and it responds to these challenges in various, different, and at times conflicting, ways. Among these challenges the contributors to this collection note globalizing capitalism, the introduction of new technologies in communication, the change in the stance and function of knowledge, the dramatic shift in the structure of society, and the transformation of relations between work, finance, and the state in the era of the McWorld (Barber, 1995).

Obsolete conceptions of class-struggle and traditional emancipatory sensitivities, vocabularies, and practices are deconstructed, consumed, reified and neutralized in the present historical moment, while marginalization, suffering, injustice, and structural blocking from cultural and political capital become ever more sophisticated

and harsh for ever more people around the globe. Under these circumstances normalizing education becomes a vital element of the oppression, not solely as part of the direct and indirect violence inflicted on the poor, the homeless, minority races, ethnicities, cultures, and other Others. It becomes at the same time an almost *omnipotent de-humanizing power* by the minorities, the oppressed, and the marginalized – against their own Others, against their oppressive powers and against free spirit, thinking, and Life.

Critical Pedagogy, in its different versions, has usually failed to meet this challenge of emancipatory pedagogy, becoming part and parcel of normalizing education (Gur-Ze'ev, 1998, pp. 463-486). Its identification with the marginalized and the oppressed, and its commitment to a positive Utopia, allowed it to sharpen its critique and become instrumental in many academic radical circles. Committed to its various positive Utopias in the fields of feminist, multi-cultural, race, class, post-colonial, and queer struggles, the different versions of Critical Pedagogy have more than once become dogmatic, ethnocentrist, and violent. Concurrently, they have become increasingly popular in ever widening academic circles, and decreasingly relevant to the victims it is committed to emancipate. What is to be done, for that which the different versions of Critical Pedagogy treat to be seriously re-approached? For a genuine rejection of injustice and the nearness *to truth as Love and as violence, as affluence and as scarcity/fright, as the presence of Eros and the presence of Tanathus*, not to be abandoned in favor of fashionable, domesticating "radical" rhetoric? I limit myself to six aspects of this manifold and rich challenge, from the perspectives of Diasporic Philosophy and counter-education.

1. Critical Pedagogy and Critical Theory. I believe I do not run the risk of exaggeration by asserting that in fact *all current versions of Critical Pedagogy have*

lost their intimate connections to the Critical Theory of the Frankfurt School; not much is left of its original relation with the Frankfurt School that was an enrichment so fruitful for the very possibility of Critical Pedagogy; for Paulo Freire and early Henry Giroux, Peter McLaren, Michael Apple, Ira Shor, and other founders of the unexpected present popularity (and irrelevance) of the different versions of Critical Pedagogy. This historical and philosophical gap is not a regretful condition per se; if only a fruitful transformation and a rich, elevating, alternative had lifted Critical Pedagogy beyond Critical Theory! How regrettable that this promise is still not-actualized. It has not happened, even if the influences of postmodernism, post-structuralism, post-colonialism, new versions of feminism, multiculturalism, and queer theories have indeed enriched many aspects of current Critical Pedagogy. What is it that is lost, and should be courageously addressed?

Most versions of Critical Pedagogy opened themselves up to the influences of postmodern and post-colonialist academic rhetoric, which has become so popular in American and European universities. In their rush to become politically active and relevant in the field of education the Critical Pedagogy thinkers overlooked the essential instincts, ideals, and telos of Critical Theory that Critical Pedagogy, at its best moments, committed itself to "realize".

Critical Pedagogy thinkers forgot that mature Critical Theory was a *Negative Utopia* – not a Positive Utopia (Gur-Ze'ev, 1998a, pp. 119-155). Later Horkheimer and Adorno dismissed any "revolutionary", "radical", or "emancipatory" project that promised reconciliation, "just peace", an "end to suffering", "salvation" for the victims, or even advancement on this road. Demolition of terror would inevitably result in cultural and social deconstruction, according to Adorno and Horkheimer (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1988, p. 225), and Benjamin asserted that there is no cultural

document that was not a manifestation of barbarism Benjamin, 1999, p. 256). Even the idea of approaching "truth" via ideology-critique was problematic for them, since, according to Adorno, cultural critique itself had become reified, and critical spirit, when content with itself, cannot challenge the total reification of the present historical moment (Adorno, 1993, p. 157).

The mature work of Adorno and Horkheimer is not optimistic, yet it insists on the utopian axis of *Life* in all its manifestations – as a Negative Utopia. Philosophical pessimism makes the Messianic impulse possible, and redemption is what is being addressed here (Horkheimer, 1985, VII., p. 231), while insisting on what in Negative Theology was conceived as *the presence of the absence of God*. Horkheimer notes explicitly in his diary entry for 5 July 1923 that this is his personal impetus for philosophizing (Horkheimer, 1987, XI., p. 235). There is such a rich, infinite, space for creative courage, Love of Life and transcending power in awareness of the presence of meaninglessness in face not of the absence of truth – but on the contrary, in face of the presence of the successful (contingent) production of truths, values, and yardsticks for evaluation of rival values, truths, and passions! All this in the service of a life-and-death struggle between rival arenas of truths-and-values-production, in support of nihilistic *self-forgetfulness* of humans' being-toward-life.

In light of the tradition of Diasporic Philosophy the mature Critical Theory of Adorno and Horkheimer conceived meaninglessness, suffering, and unbridgeable tension between equality and freedom and the abyss between human culture and the harmonic, beautiful-meaningless self-contentment of nature as a starting point for their (negative) Utopia; without being swallowed by false promises to overcome the dialectics of Life, the abysses and dangers facing true love and genuine creativity, and certainly *without promising social "emancipation" or "revolution"* (Horkheimer,

1985, VII., p. 341; Horkheimer, 1985, VIII., p. 346) or a true, unproblematic, educational alternative of the kind Critical Pedagogy educators normally are so quick to promise us in so many voices and agendas (Gur-Ze'ev, 1998, p. 469).

When Horkheimer declares his abandonment of Marx in favor of Schopenhauer (Horkheimer, 1985, VIII., p. 339) he actually comes very close to some of the central Gnostic conceptions within the framework of a Diasporic Philosophy. The foundations and the telos of the Enlightenment's modern emancipatory tradition and its Marxian versions are fundamentally challenged in the later works of Adorno and Horkheimer. Even the young Horkheimer already noted in his diary that he was most uncomfortable with the tranquilizing dimension of the Marxian Utopia (Horkheimer, 1987, XI., p. 269). This part of their work is too often ignored by today's radical and emancipatory educators. Here it might be worth bearing in mind that for the Gnosis authentic freedom is never to be related to the human mind or psyche – which are constructed and policed by historical power-relations and violent manipulations (much in the same manner as the body is enacted by the physical law). Solely the Spirit, the *pneuma*, the foreign, never-to-be-defined-nor-controlled element in Life manifests genuine freedom. Human psyche and mind are part of the evil creation of the *Demiurgus* that rules over all the world of individual existence and thingness.

Late Adorno and Horkheimer did not satisfy themselves in recycling a Gnostic concept of salvation within the framework of the reformulated late Critical Theory; they further developed (a beginning) of a *Diasporic Philosophy*, which refuses to offer any "solution", "method", or "salvation" (Gur-Ze'ev, 2003, pp. 17-35). Their later work acknowledges the *Diaspora* as the gate to rich alternative thinking and becoming-toward-the-world.

This gate I understand as an important starting point for a present-day Diasporic counter-education. Of special importance here is their refusal of any version of Positive Utopia and of all calls for "salvation", "emancipation", "effectiveness", or "success". This is also a refusal of any kind of nihilism and abandonment of hope and Love of Life. For Diasporic humans, here the return to the (absent) wholeness and richness of nature is part of (re)establishing (negative) cosmic intimacy. Adorno and Horkheimer are much closer here to Hans Jonas and Immanuel Levinas than to Heidegger, who, as Jonas rightly noted, had no respect for nature (Jonas, 1992, p. 339).

Parallel to their intensive efforts to become "relevant", "involved", "effective", and "emancipating", the current different versions of Critical Pedagogy lost not only Negative Utopia. Today's Critical Pedagogy lost another essential element of Critical Theory – the attempt to transcend itself and to enable a worthier nearness to dialectical intimacy to the richness of Life in its wholeness. Critical Pedagogy abandoned the Negative Utopian kind of commitment to transcendence in favor of another: commitment to successful political activity and effective practical involvement that will ensure us being successfully swallowed by the continuum of the immanence; a successful return into thingness. This is a switch from a Diasporic project, which is committed to a never-concluding-effort of *transcendence*, to a different one, which while paying lip service to "resistance" and "emancipation" is totally committed to a nihilistic devotion to the closure of *immanence*. It runs away from eternal worthy suffering that is part and parcel of Diasporic nomadism and its struggle for a never-concluding-effort at transcendence – not for a reconciling "home-returning" project (which frequently praises exile too – only to end in nirvana, "redemption", "tragic heroism", "consistent nihilism" or other forms of Thanatos).

This turn was paralleled in the last thirty years by overemphasis on either the intellectual aspects of education (ideology-critique, conscious awareness enhancement, and so forth), or on the subjective "experience" of the oppressed pupil and the self-evidence of diverse conflicting, marginalized collectives that strive for hegemony and "emancipation" that will ultimately effectively enslave their Others, without leaving traces or exacting too high a price.

Contrary to this trend, the Frankfurt School critical thinkers, while opposing the tradition of "life-philosophy", took all kinds of existential self-evidence and philosophical self-contentment as a challenge that might effectively destroy or exile the transcending potential of human existence (Horkheimer, 1990, pp. 276-299). They did not try to establish intimacy with the self-evidence of hegemonic or marginalized collectives. They conceived *self-evidence* as collective closure and as a great danger for the free human spirit. Intimacy, patriotism, and dogmatism for them were threats of being swallowed by thingness, nature, and myth.

As Diasporic thinkers, they centered their thought on the relation between the human subject and the world. Subject and object were not mere abstract theoretical categories for Adorno and Horkheimer. The human and nature, and especially the estrangement between the two, enforced by Western Instrumental Rationality, were a starting point for Enlightenment, and therefore also for Critical Theory, which acknowledges that all along history humans had to decide between two possibilities: enslaving nature or being enslaved by it (Adorno & Horkheimer, p. 71). For them the acknowledgement of humans' homelessness in a Godless world was the gate to the elaboration of possibilities for a worthy response and for the possibility of cultivating what I call *Diasporic response-ability*.

Diasporic response-ability addresses the affluence of meaninglessness and violence since the destruction of the chaos/nothingness and the history of Godly creation/human "progress". Response-ability in this sense is not merely passive and not solely active; it is not a mere manifestation of affluence in Life, nor is it exclusively a manifestation of human scarcity. If, true to its Diasporic essence, it does not offer counter-violence against nature and against humans, nor does it offer what Nietzsche called slave morality as a gate for transcendence: it refuses all calls for escape in self-protection and pleasure/truth as the ultimate goal of Life. Here response-ability acknowledges meaninglessness and suffering, and does not try to escape them or the danger of self-destruction: it transcends them within the creativity of Love, Diasporic, non-sentimental Love of Life and its abysses (Horkheimer, 1987, XI., p. 366). It transcends them in the sense that it challenges the traditional lines of division between "transcendence" and "immanence", "home" and "homelessness".

The various conflicting collective Positive Utopias, and individual escapist, nihilist, and relativist "home-returning" projects, were for them a manifestation of the forgetfulness of human forgetfulness; not a worthy response to this challenge, which in advanced capitalism became stronger and more sophisticated than ever. In their mature work, after the publication of the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, they searched for a third, Diasporic, path between the Scylla of collectivism-dogmatism and the Charybdis of selfish, relativist-oriented Instrumental Rationality that sees nature and the Other as a mere standing reserve, an object of manipulation or a source of danger.

The Diasporic counter-education that we can reconstruct from the tradition of Diasporic Philosophy (and here Adorno and Horkheimer are of special relevance to us) challenges modern nihilism, in all its forms. It maintains both dualism and dialectics, yet insists on Love and intimacy in a Godless world, where human

rationality cannot establish any alternative Garden of Eden, meaning, aim, or an authentic "I".

Current Critical Pedagogy either continues the anti-Diasporic conception of the human as a mere "rational animal", or is swallowed by the sweet soporific power of the reformulated Sirens who call us with their irresistible beauty, as with Odysseus in his day, to come *back "home" to harmonious nature*: to the homogeneous-totalistic-infinity of the thingness; a safe "home-returning" to the infinity and the beauties of nature and harmonious thingness; back to nothingness, after finally defeating and abandoning the wonder, danger, and openness of otherness in Being and in the human being. In these two versions of Critical Pedagogy, its thinkers reveal a lack of attention and the importance of their avoidance; the significance of neglect of a theoretical, practical, physical, and existential synthesis.

This neglect offers a synthesis between human and world; a synthesis, yet never a symbiosis, between the moment and eternity, signifier and signified, becoming and nothingness, Diaspora as an ontological, epistemological, existential attunement to the call to self-creation, as against self-forgetfulness; as an alternative to being swallowed by all "home-returning" appeals and all salvation/emancipation agendas and educational projects that offer to constitute the "I" via the "we" and the self-evident, true, or relevant values, truths, ideals, and strivings.

Critical pedagogy's abandonment of Critical Theory's Diasporic Philosophy is constructive indeed. This desertion enables its easygoing disregard for the educational connections between and among dance, poetry, play, singing, responsibility, intellectual edification, and non-oppressive political involvement. Critical Theory's Diasporic Philosophy's addressing the richness, meaninglessness, and potentialities of being-toward-the-Godless-world, with no absolute, with no undeceiving "home-

returning" telos, is the only gate for hope (Gur-Ze'ev, forthcoming). Here we should remind ourselves that hope was so central to Critical Theory (Horkheimer, 1985, VII., p. 386), not part of a normalizing education that calls us to be swallowed by ethnocentrism and dogma as an alternative to an irrational intimacy with the cosmos, but on the contrary, as the only open gate to a mature, Diasporic, intimacy with loving, creatively improvising, Life in a Godless world. It is a Godless world not in the sense that there is no meaning to God but in the sense of the meaningful absence of God, and the *presence of creative metaphysical violence*, suffering, and meaninglessness in a human life.

Critical Pedagogy, in all its versions, did not even try to develop a serious response to the theological and philosophical challenges presented by "environmental" education at its best (Bowers, 2001; (de Haan, 2001; Palmer, 1998). This absence also signifies the lack of courage to search for a connection between **(A)** passions, intellect, the ethical-I, imagination, responsibility, and creative-improvisation; **(B)** human and nature, or Being and human beings; **(C)** the totality of eternity and (the totality of) "the moment"; **(D)** signifier and signified (which are dissociated only as an abstraction). This neglect is not a mistake, a shortcoming, or an abandonment, to be "fixed" by the new masters of Critical Pedagogy. It is essential to the very philosophical foundations of current Critical Pedagogy.

The various versions of current Critical Pedagogy do not continue the attempt of Critical Theory to offer a holistic (negative) Utopia, within which new, yet, essential, *connections are established between the aesthetic, the ethical, the intellectual, the existential, and the political*. Surely it does not follow Horkheimer's critique of Marx, according to which his work misses too much when it disregards Love. Current Critical Pedagogy, so it seems, rejects any effort to become an actual attempt at a

counter-educational Eros, that refrains from becoming "a project", a "system/dogma", or a new form of collectivism.

And last but not least, current Critical Pedagogy has lost the connection to *Love of Life*. I have to say these hard words even when they refer to some of my best friends: their "critique" does not manifest love and distances itself from Life, packs itself into the mechanical, abstract, and violent level of the political and the historical; it is not only far from becoming creative – it is ultimately even irrelevant, dogmatic, and normalizing, and of the kind it is committed to emancipate us from.

Critical Theory in its mature form manifested *religiosity* as a relation to the cosmos. It was aware and proud of it. The present versions of Critical Pedagogy, while normally being committed anti-traditionalist and anti-religious, tend to assume an anti-religious position to the kind of religiosity that Adorno and Horkheimer praised in Judaism (Horkheimer, 1985, VIII., pp. 182-183). At the same time Critical Pedagogy itself has become more of a religion in the traditional, institutional, dogmatic, and oppressive sense.

Much more than a religious-creative-cathartic experience and an erotic dialogical edification, the "implementations" of the ideas of Adorno and Horkheimer by Critical Pedagogy masters tend to become rival, close ideologies, reproduced by closed sects of naïve, fanatic devotees. Their coldness, mechanism, and commitment to "effectiveness" distance them not only from the Critical Theory, but from *Life* and from possibilities of genuine creativity and worthy struggles to transcend educational violence.

Present-day versions of Critical Pedagogy tend to reproduce and defend collectivism and self-evidence (even if only that of the oppressed and not that of their victimizers). In their commitment to defend the victims and support their efforts to

regain security, honor, wellbeing, and possibilities for rich development, Critical Pedagogy masters tend so often to justify and enhance the self-evidence and ethnocentrism of the marginalized and the oppressed. Here too in distancing themselves from the mature Critical Theory they have aligned themselves with greatest threats to the autonomy, happiness, responsibility, creativity, and solidarity of humans, as understood by Benjamin, Adorno, and Horkheimer. And they have surely missed the self-irony that was so much part of the religiosity of Adorno, Horkheimer, and Benjamin. That is why these versions of Critical Pedagogy, for all their importance – and they are so important in so many ways, are to be considered much more as part of normalizing education and less as part of current worthy counter-education.

What is there to be said about counter-education in relation to the current versions of Critical Pedagogy? Much is to be said about the relation between the possibilities of present-day counter-education in relation to Critical Pedagogy. This is because Critical Pedagogy, even when it collapses into dogmatic, non-creative, and ethnocentrist practices of "emancipation" and "critique", still symbolizes the quest for **the totally other**; a refusal to be swallowed by the temptations, imperatives, and fashions of the world of facts, the productivity of its power-relations and the limits set by its historical horizons; transcending what Gnosis considered the manifestations of the (evil) presence of the God of creation. Even in face of an anti-utopian "reality" it still symbolizes the essence of the utopian commitment – even if against its own will. Its critical impulse¹ still symbolizes in its essence the possibilities for genuine, transcending, anti-collectivistic, and anti-instrumental-oriented reflection; its essence

Notes

¹ Even when articulated in a manner that serves nothing more than an alternative, rival, violent realm of self-evidence that will enhance the violent productivity of the "we" against the "they" and their otherness.

still insists on calling for *the birth of the nomadic eternal-improviser*. Critical Pedagogy, when true to itself, might still summon humans to overcome the reality it serves and represents; its call, however, if true to itself, is always negative, and it could only become a not-yet-deciphered *invitation*. As such, and only as such, it should send an invitation to transcend the numerous assorted temptations and practices that each moment join forces anew to push humans back into thingness; into the meaningless continuum of the immanence. This is where genuine counter-education might embark on its awakening; here is the potential starting point of Diasporic philosophy and its relevance to the field of education. This is where today's Critical Pedagogy, at best, is silent. This is where, at its best, it could learn so much from Critical Theory.

2. Critical Theory and Diasporic Philosophy. Critical Theory of the second stage in the development of the Frankfurt School might be considered part of a philosophical tradition with roots much deeper than those of critical philosophy and modern revolutionary praxis; one might consider its roots in Gnosis, or even in the philosophy of Heraclites; maybe even in that of Anaximander and the problematization of Being and nothingness, thinking, and cosmos in light of the principle of individuation and Life and its inevitable suffering, punishments, and redemption (Anaximander, 1986, p. 29). Here I shall be content with only few words on Diasporic Philosophy and its implications for counter-education in light of the shortcomings and relevance of current Critical Pedagogy. To this topic I have devoted some effort on other occasions (Gur-Ze'ev, 2007, pp. 386-381).

I begin with the assertion that Diasporic Philosophy is more than a philosophical "stance" or "orientation"; it has a rich, deep, and wide-ranging past – if we dare to reconstruct and re-interpret in this light works of thinkers such as Heraclites, Marcion,

Pascal, de Montagne, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, Kafka, Heidegger, Adorno, Camus, Derrida, Levinas, Rushdie, and Deleuze, to name only a few. Some non-Western cultures have given rise to other important Diasporic thinkers. Not all cultures have done so, however, certainly not in the same forms and with equal richness. Nevertheless, their philosophical importance is vital for any further enhancement of a future genuine cosmopolitan Diasporic Philosophy that will offer a serious counter-education. What we are facing here is the possibility of counter-education in a multicultural world governed by Instrumental Rationality, global capitalism, and the reactions of the world of Jihad to the MacWorld in face of the speedy, daily, McDonaldization of reality (Lash & Urry, 1991).

Diasporic Philosophy – of which I consider Critical Theory in its second stage of development a part – has no starting point; nor does it have a telos or a territory; and it undoubtedly distances itself from all forms of "home-returning" projects (Gur-Ze'ev, 2004, p. 71). Still, above all Diasporic Philosophy manifests *the erotic essence of Being itself as Diasporic, never at home*. Love of Life – not "critique" or a claim for justice to the oppressed, or revenge, is essential to it. Eagerness and dynamism, creation and renewal of creation in face of production toward nothingness; creation as a birth of Love, as a loving impetus – all these are essential. Its very existence, however, inevitably faces violence, meaninglessness, anti-creative horizons, and de-humanizing preconditions for any authentic creativity, for any quest for nearness to the truth of Being, for any responsibility that is more than an echo of the original, innovative, violence that enforced it, and for thinking itself.

Not being at "home" at all cost; refusing becoming swallowed by the self-evidence, self-content, and the negation of the Other at "home" and "there" is essential to Diasporic Philosophy. Refusing any identity thinking (Adorno, 1999) or any

positive Utopia is essential here ontologically, epistemologically, ethically, existentially, and politically. This runs counter to the historic tension between the concepts of Diaspora and Redemption, which was traditionally conceived within a framework of a promised synthesis, "salvation", or "solution"; even if in the form offered by Pyrrho the skeptic, who insisted on a concluding, total, silence; or Philipp Mainlander, who asserted that the act of suicide of entire humanity and the destruction of all the world will invite a renewed pre-creationist harmonious nothingness (Mainlander, 1876).

Diasporic Philosophy refuses all forms of positive Utopia in theory and practice. It overcomes any theoretical or political "home", self-evidence, truth, self-content, nirvana, and all other manifestations of Tanathus. In this sense it insists on consistent negativity as a form of Life.

Diasporic Philosophy emphasizes, but does not idolize, difference, *improvised continuation* as an alternative to *deterministic-mechanistic continuum*; it seriously faces *immediacy* in its intimate relation to *eternity, meaninglessness, violence, and historical productivity*. At the same time, it refuses relativism, nihilism, and pragmatism, and insists on religious existence, poetic creativity and courageous nomadism. It calls for a responsible self-constitution and reflection as one of the manifestations of human uniqueness in an infinite cosmos that is present in eternity as well as in the totality of each and every moment. It is focused on the presence of **the not-yet**, the potential, **the totally other**, and its wholly-presence in a Life which, ultimately, is not to be totally represented, controlled, or predicted.

The human being, as part of the infinite openness of Being, is essentially *free* because it is lost; it is lost in the cosmos, and as such it is in the state of becoming-toward-the-world and becoming-in-the-world alike. The human is potentially open to

overcoming the successes of normalizing education, which is committed to turn him or her from **some-one** into **some-thing**.

3. Subject and cosmos. Critical Pedagogy keeps aloof from the birth-giving tension between humans and cosmos. This challenge was essential to Critical Theory throughout its evolution. Critical Pedagogy abandoned even the standard topics that are regularly dealt with in the framework of "environmental education": issues such as global responsibility for conservation of natural beautiful sites and important recourses; sustainability of the planet and resistance of humanity to dangerous practices of control and consumption of nature; education to critical reconstruction of economic and political interests that legitimate and drive the destruction of inner and outer nature and resistance to their treatment of ecology; and finally, education to responsibility for the future coexistence of humanity and nature.

Until today, Critical Pedagogy almost completely disregarded not just *the cosmopolitic aspects of ecological ethics* in terms of threats to present and future life conditions of all humanity. It disregarded the fundamental philosophical and existential challenges of subject-object relations, in which "nature" is not conceived as a standing reserve either for mere human consumption or as a potential source of dangers, threats, and risks. In many respects the ecological dimensions of Ulrich Becks' concept of "the risk society" (Beck, 2004) are much more advanced and promising than the ecological dimensions in the work of Henry Giroux.

Critical Pedagogy disregarded the *intimate* relations between humans and the cosmos, an intimacy that Diasporic Philosophy conceives as an abyss and mystery, and at the same time as an impetus for Life, Hope, Love, and creativity. Here "nature", "environment", and "ecology" are conceived in a much deeper and wider sense, and are identified in the Other, in one's self, and in the world of representations

and their fruits. Counter-education that takes the tradition of Diasporic Philosophy seriously begins here, in the fundamentals of existence, as Heidegger articulated it, in the relations between Being and human beings, or the challenge that humans face according to the myth of Odysseus and the Sirens as interpreted by Adorno and Horkheimer. According to them, this dichotomy is the precondition for the dialectic of Enlightenment and the possibility of the enslavement of humanity to Instrumental Rationality that was supposed to enslave and consume nature in the service of humanity. Effective conquest of the cosmos as a form of "home-returning" after **the Fall** is revealed historically as an anti-diasporic stance that ultimately internalized violence and is in the end directed not solely against brute "nature" as potential human "resources" but against other humans and against the individual himself or herself. Diasporic philosophy might offer here hope, imagination, alternative logics and alternative creative responses to the human situatedness between *cosmic exile and* scarcity (from human's point of view) and *inhuman cosmic affluence*.

Counter-education that takes the tradition of Diasporic Philosophy seriously makes an attempt to establish a Diasporic relation with the "successful", instrumental, enslavement of "nature". The governing borders, disciplines, dichotomies and life possibilities that are founded on instrumental subject-object relations are transcended. Homelessness in the various manifestations of the subject-object dichotomies enable a kind of diasporic life that reopens (negative) intimacy in the cosmos. This intimacy in and with the cosmos is enriched by alienation, sensitivity for suffering and enslavement of other people, creatures, and representations, and opens the gate to Diasporic hope. This hope makes possible Diasporic morality and Diasporic creativity, which manifest love of Life, and not dissatisfaction, greed, fear, and colonialism as a starting point for an alternative relation to the world.

4. Love. Love, as the opposite of violence, stands along with hope, imagination, and authentic, improvising creativity in contrast to fear, self-forgetfulness, greed, and conquest. Diasporic Philosophy represents a kind of homelessness that is opposed to the *self-forgetfulness* manifested in love of God, dedication to control-oppression-mere survival and to any other forms of enslavement to Tanathus.

Contradiction, negation, and tension are not in opposition to Love. On the contrary, according to Diasporic Philosophy *Love* is manifested in Life; and there is no Life but amid, within, and against contradictions, abysses, dangers, and self-constitution amid suffering, meaninglessness, and dialectical dynamics. Love of Life is love of creativity from, against, and towards difference, plurality, impasse and contradiction; yet it represents being-towards, becoming, and transcendence. This is why counter-education, as a manifestation of love, transcends meaninglessness and insists on revealing as creating meaning, aim, and alternative togetherness with the world and Others. Precisely because homelessness is its home it enables (negative) intimacy with the world and its realities and with the Others without a false promise of final reconciliation that actualizes nirvana, or "home-returning". This is the gate to counter-education that enhances genuine creativity that is fertilized by sensitivity to suffering, imagination, hope, and commitment to self-constitution and transcendence; a kind of creativity that is so much more than "art education" or "critical cinema studies" of the kind that are sometimes advanced within the framework of current Critical Pedagogy. Here creativity is an *ecstatic* experience that is essentially religious and manifests love of Life that might become poetically meaningful, good, and beautiful because there is no final point for the "home-returning" project nor any "solution" to meaninglessness, suffering, and loneliness. Love of Life, here, accepts Life as the rich presence of the absence, the absence of the absolute, the endlessly

new manifestations of the **not-yet**, the potential. This is why the Diasporic human, as a loving, creative, human, is actually an eternal improviser.

5. Creativity. Diasporic Counter-Education might offer new possibilities for human creativity that goes beyond the limits of "art education" which even in its limited form was foreign to most versions of Critical Pedagogy. Diasporic Philosophy faces the instrumentalization of Eros and poiesis as a precondition for culture and successful social structures. Creativity is recruited in the service of teleological collective and dogmatic "projects", represented and served by all versions of normalizing education. The autonomy of the human subject and genuine creativity, in all spheres of life, not solely in the arena of what is determined as "art", are a threat to normalizing education, to "law and order", and to "peace". Critical Pedagogy is no exception here.

For Critical Pedagogy too, authentic creativity and its affluence in all spheres of life are a huge threat. Original creativeness is a great peril to the ideology of "emancipation" and to the truths, values, and collectives it is committed to. Genuine counter-education, however, will offer a Diasporic relation to the present achievements of cultures and ideologies, their truths, interests, symbols, agendas, and enemies. In face of meaninglessness, from the edge of the abyss of homelessness in the world of representations, abstractions, and violence it might enable the attendance or at least the quest for the eternal-improviser. The eternal-improviser does not simply abandon "critique". Neither are responsibilities as a citizen and a fellow human neglected: they are transcended.

The eternal-improviser tries to develop an alternative *gaze* and an alternative *eavesdrop*. Such a Diasporic existence makes possible much more than an alternative "art education"; it opens the gate to *Life as a form of art*, while offering a kind of homelessness that enables a new, nomadic, intimacy with the cosmos and all its

forms of creativity/destruction. For the Diasporic human, as an eternal-improviser, this new embrace of Being is not in the sphere of abstraction. It is not an ideal to live by, or a mere "inner absolute imperative"; it is beyond "external" and "internal" power; it transcends the dividing line between two versions of metaphysical violence: scarcity as manifested by alienation and fear of the totality of the moment on the one hand, and being swallowed by/open to the *affluence* of intimacy with/against the infinity of eternity on the other. Creativity as a manifestation of Love of Life, for the eternal-improviser here is a manifestation of challenging metaphysical violence in the name of hope by the power of Love and creativity, without being overwhelmed by an optimistic, sentimentalist, or abstract conception of life, art, and education.

Counter-education here goes beyond the best achievements of Critical Pedagogy, yet it does not abandon them. Here ideology critique and empowering the skills and tools of deciphering the politics of cultural reproduction become an important part of art education; and art education becomes integrated with physical education, environmental education, critical cyberspace education, cooking, car repairing education, history lessons, literacy, economics, and so much of the canon. And yet, counter-education transcends all these not solely on the pedagogical level: it transcends all these in a religious sense by re-introducing poiesis in a postmodern world.

Re-approaching the original act of the human hands and reintroducing the body, poetry, play, and erotic togetherness are not abstract and mere fantasy. They are actual life possibilities for mature, religious humans, especially when they are young. As such, they are innovative and inviting. They invite creativity of the kind that opposes and overcomes the reification of art in face of globalizing capitalism and its culture industry. Counter-education here is Diasporic, refuses the calls for consensual

reception and embrace by the fashion and hegemonic ideologies and institutions. Here too creativity, if true to itself, must be homeless and not strive for domesticating acknowledgement, consensus, admiration, and domesticating rewards. At the same time, however, it is part of a *nomadic life*, whose happiness and creativity amid suffering, meaninglessness, aimlessness, and misrecognition on the way to an alternative togetherness are enabled by the affluence of Love and the imaginative potential of hope. This path does not lead to nihilism, relativism, solipsism or cannibalistic joy, nor to irresponsibility. On the contrary, for the creative, nomadic, eternal-improviser, response-ability is a precondition for genuine creativity, for re-entering togetherness in a mature manner, and for caring and edifying all loving and transcending manifestations of courageous Life.

6. Response-ability. Diasporic Philosophy is in a sense immoral. Still, it negates all forms of nihilism. It is beyond the hegemonic moral politics because it relates seriously to the possibility of an "ethical I" (Levinas, 1987, p. 56). It relates in the most intimate way to the infinite richness of the world and its beauty, meaninglessness, and suffering in the totality of the moment on one level, and to the Other and the political arena on another, historical, level, as one, unifying (yet not systematic), Diasporic existence. On the one level it relates primarily to *response-ability*. On the other level it relates primarily to *respond-ability*.

Response-ability precedes respond-ability. It is related more to the ethical sphere and to the existential more than to the moral-historical-political arenas of human existence and human work. The two are not opposed to genuine responsibility, while they are opposed to the hegemonic social conditions, philosophical foundations, political practices, and fruits of normalized morality. An unsolvable tension, if not an

abyss, exists between the two, even if both are authentic manifestation of the richness of Life.

Situated in Diaspora as a Utopian existence, Diasporic responsibility unites response-ability and respond-ability. It addresses the *infinity of the moment* in its endless creative possibilities, dangers, and abysses. It calls for a fundamental communication with the otherness of the Other, which precedes cultural borders, political interests, race, national, gender, and other differences. It precedes yet enables truly rational moral elaborations and critiques. As such it relates to the most intimate manifestations of *becoming-toward- the-world*, the Other, and one's self as a challenge and as an object of shared responsibility, love, creation, and happiness (which might include suffering).

At the same time, however, Diasporic responsibility must also be ready to address the historical moment. And when the moment comes, also to position itself against injustice and even join a wider political practice. It must be relevant to the cognitive, historical, and political dynamics. Yet *it cannot ensure a non-violent consensual historical action* concerning the ongoing silenced genocide in Southern Sudan, and so much more.

For Diasporic Philosophy, all calls to respond are manifestations of Life as a *call*, as a challenge, as a potential to be addressed and creatively surmount. In face of *the abyss between the ethical and the political* it insists on nomadism and love, creativity and negativity. And as such, it cannot share the positive utopia of Levinas, who to a question in an interview replied: "Yes, an agreement between the ethics and the State is possible. The just State will be the work of just people and the saints, rather than of propaganda and preaching". It insists on what Adorno told us so many years ago, namely "a philosophy forswearing all of that must in the end be irreconcilably at odds

with the dominant consciousness. Nothing else raises it above the suspicion of apologetics. Philosophy that satisfies its own intention, and does not childishly skip behind its own history and the real one, has its lifeblood in the resistance against the common practices of today and what they serve, against the justification of what happens to be the case" (Adorno, 1998, p. 6).

Diasporic Philosophy tries, negatively, yet as a form of Love of Life, to address the question of **The Good**. Benjamin, Adorno, and Horkheimer are of vital importance for us today, in responding in a worthy way to the calls of Life and their challenges. Responding here is active. While acknowledging the importance of contemplation, reflection, gaze, openness, and silence, it is directed to *giving birth*. It concerns actual activity not philosophical challenges as a closed arena; it directs philosophy as an art of life to calls and challenges that are material, physical, emotional, and spiritual, "inner" and "exterior" ethical, aesthetic, existential, and political. It relates also to the conditions of "the call" as well as to the possibilities of a worthy response and their all-embracing practices.

Responding in a worthy manner is never given, easy, or without a price. Nor is it a skill to be developed by normalizing education. By itself it is a *possibility* as well as an *imperative* for worthy Life that resists becoming swallowed by any "home-returning" project; nor does it abandon responsibility to creation and Love. As such, it is "practice oriented". Its ultimate test is in actuality, in creation, deeds, actions, endeavors that are fundamentally authentic or inauthentic, relate to worthy eavesdropping or to its negation – to its replacement by instrumentalist-oriented focusing. Its actuality is in the attempt to approach new ways to gaze, overcoming the calls to satisfy itself in mere "rationalist" and instrumentalist-oriented use of the eyes. It even directs itself to abandon the collective and positive attempts to unveil the inner

truth and the potentials of "the object" of manipulation. Active, responsible, involvement in the world presumes response-ability. In its absence humans' poiesis deteriorates into instrumental-oriented consumption and oppression that begins in self-oppression and concludes in the neglect or oppression of fellow citizens of the cosmos.

Response-ability is born each moment anew among the plants, among the animals, and in the birth of each new human baby. The human, however, treats this potential in a unique manner. So normally, this potential is robed, reworked, and productivized by the system at the instant of the new baby's birth. For humans within sophisticated cultural systems it is a neglected potential, not a given skill. In the framework of the political arena it is to be historically re-created, edified, cultivated, and protected only at the cost of its transformation into its opposite.

Response-ability is not only a potential: for the ethical I it is a gate to being true to oneself, a way for self-constitution as some-one and not as some-thing. Response-ability is a potential transcendence that does not disregard the whole and the call to retreat into the infinity of immanence. It aims at transcending thingness. At the same time, it is committed to *overcoming the division between immanence and transcendence*. It acknowledges this challenge as an ethical moment that is also an ontological sign. It does so even if in postmodern conditions humans are urged to self-forgetfulness and loss of genuine response-ability in the most efficient ways, in the name of promised pleasure, economic, emotional, and political rewards, and other agents of self-forgetfulness that work in the service of normalizing education. Diasporic Philosophy offers ontological signs and ethical calls that enable re-facing response-ability, at least as a (negative) Utopia. It enables a kind of counter-education that will call for, never ensure, overcoming self-forgetfulness and normalized

morality, nihilism, ethnocentricity, and other "homes" that guard the hegemonic legitimacy of the discourse concerning moral and responsibility.

Diasporic nomadism invites the human; it cannot do more than that. It cannot guarantee or offer anything, not even a clear dividing line between its alternative and other, more attractive or "rewording" alternatives. If true to itself it can only invite the human to follow indirect paths to re-work his or her gaze while widening it and enriching it in new ways and towards more manifestations of Life, in the infinity of each moment. It invites the cultivation of a gaze that is beyond the industrialized focus, as it is developed within the framework of the system that is committed to the fabrication of the "rational human". It invites a different kind of focus; a focus that opens itself to attunement, to a happy attunement to each every degree out of the 360; an attunement that relates also to that which is absent but not from a standpoint of anger, revenge, or greed. It is a focus that enhances new kind of listening.

Eavesdropping to each and every voice of the cosmic music, like the one we had as babies and lost with the success of normalizing education. Like the one poetry, music, and dance offer us again and again at rare moments of transcendence. Diasporic life here questions, deconstructs, subverts, yet preserves, accepts, and transcends. It does not offer an abstract negation, abandonment, or forgetfulness of politics, culture, habits, friendships, or experiences – it relates to them differently and overcomes their limiting, domesticating, enclosing effects. In this light it also relates to the category of responsibility.

By overcoming responsibility in terms set by patriotism, devotion to the class, commitment to a race (or against a certain race), dedication to individual "achievements" or narcissistic-oriented enjoyment, this counter-education does not put forward an ethical desert: it presents an alternative kind of ethics, a new,

Diasporic, response-ability. Diasporic response-ability goes beyond the normalized responses to the post-modern reality on "authentic" paths that enable penetration into "the real" or new age "spiritual" moral transcendence. The gate to genuine response-ability is opened at the moment of accepting responsibility for overcoming the fruits of the violence of normalizing education in the form of aggression, fear, greed, narcissism, and "responsibility" in light of the self-evidence and the other manifestations of "home".

Homelessness without the promise of an emancipatory "home-returning" project in face of the presence of the absence of "God" opens the gate to *true responsibility*. This kind of responsibility is not only opposed to the one constructed by the various human "homes" and "home-returning" projects. It is opposed to the fundamental philosophy of "home", which also offers a kind of psychology that pretends to justify "home" and clarifies its inevitability from a psychological point of view. Diasporic Philosophy opposes the philosophical foundations of this psychology while offering a dialectical critique of the concept of "home" and the kind of responsibility it offers.

Responsibility, within the framework of Diasporic Philosophy, is part of and enables The Good, yet it is a Diasporic Good, not a domesticated good. The Good here accepts and responds to *Life* in an *eternal Diaspora* as a starting point for any reflection on historical and political arenas of human life and the possibility of an alternative philosophy of education. Responsibility here is grounded in Diasporic response-ability as a worthy response to Diaspora in history and Diaspora in politics, and only as such is it true responsibility that enables *The Good*. A true response to the infinite, uneducable otherness of the Other and a worthy response to the richness and meaninglessness of Life unite here in a new, Diasporic, kind of responsibility.

True responsibility is aware of the absence of God, it faces the withdrawal of the Absolute, the arbitrariness of master-signifiers, and the contingency of omnipotent effectiveness of meaninglessness. Today, it must challenge, beyond the dichotomies between modernism and postmodernism, immanence and transcendence, the very possibility of meaning and human activity as becoming-toward-the-world. It must search for new, Diasporic, ways to question that which produces (contextual) truths, (contextual) valid values, (contextual) yardsticks, and (contextual) safe havens and realms of self-evidence. This is the starting-point for a Diasporic *responsible response* to humans' being-in-the-world as becoming-toward-the-world. There is an abyss between *being-in-the-world* and *becoming-toward-the-world*. This tension, however, is a possible gate to caring for the self, for the edification of one's own difference in its relations to the world and to the otherness of the Other (Levinas, 1996, p. 9).

But how relevant is it to the ongoing silenced genocide in the Southern Sudan, to the systematic starvation of entire populations by the interest rate of loans sent by "the free play" of world exchange centers? Or for the future of women's, or children's rights in the Arab world? It is exactly in light of *the abyss between the ethical and the political* that a Diasporic responsibility might enable responsibility also in the historical moment; as an active citizen and as a politically engaged man or woman who is not a prisoner of the Platonic cave, who is not a mere echo/construct/product/agent of contingent power relations and violent educational manipulations. Such a citizen is a Utopia. It is, however, a concrete utopia. It is so far from what (even at their best) the hegemonic program of democratic education, peace education, and Critical Pedagogy offer us today.

The political aspect of Diasporic responsibility is not relevant solely to the politics of the construction of the human and the effective reproduction of her impotence for

reflection, self-constitution, and worthy response-ability to its Diasporic situatedness in Life. It is at the same time of vital importance for the relation between this kind of becoming-toward-the world and worthy *response-ability* as against being-in-the-world and the possible *respond-ability* as a human situatedness in a specific historical moment, as a counter-educator.

Diasporic response-ability in the physical, psychic, spiritual, existential, ethical, and poetical aspects is a precondition for a worthy respond-ability in the social arena. In many respects it challenges the political dimensions of life and enables the nomadic eternal-improviser to free herself from the limits, imperatives, and manipulations of "the political". Diasporic counter-education must be very clear on this point: it is political in the sense that it challenges the political. It does not disregard the historical moment and the specific material, social, political, and cultural context. It relates to the historical sphere and the social arena in the most specific and concrete manner – in order to avoid being swallowed by their manipulations.

Does this mean that Diasporic counter-education is escapist and apolitical, and actually offers a tempting retreat into the "inner" world of the elect?

Politics. This is a fair question. It was not easy to answer even for late Horkheimer and Adorno. Late Horkheimer explicitly asserts that not "the revolution" is the aim of mature Critical Theory but the struggle of and for the autonomy of the "spiritual" individual. (Horkheimer, 1985, VII., p. 341) My reply would be that such a counter-education would become politically involved and would not abandon politics. But it will become politically involved in the most responsible manner, namely engaging the contextual social realities in order to enable the individual to realize his or her respond-ability; respond-ability whose actualization will offer creative possibilities for doing **The Good** while *overcoming the logic of the politics altogether*. Here many

of the fruits of Critical Theory would be very relevant and productive. Again, all this only to direct a critique and to respond to injustice not within the framework of an alternative collective or worthier dogma. Counter-education here offers an invitation to a kind of political involvement that manifests the situatedness of the ethical within the framework of the political only to overcome the political and to transcend the historical moment – not to enslave one's life to the imperatives, limits, and possibilities of the political. Again, it is not the bridge between the ethical and the political; it is the situatedness of the Diasporic eternal-improviser in the specific historical moment that enables his or her involvement in the social arena. And such an involvement is not only unavoidable, it is a worthy manifestation of the attempt to approach the truth of counter-education and the Diasporic existence.

In another sense, the "realization" of Diasporic counter-education in the social arena in each historical moment is never solely critical of and negative toward politics. It must become dialectically engaged in manners that will give birth to new possibilities for human togetherness. Of special importance it is for such a counter-education to open the way to *new kinds of togetherness* amid suffering, injustice and manipulations, for victims and victimizers alike, freeing them from their "homes" and normalized responsibilities. There should be a way for forgiveness and charity to all humans – yet not for all human deeds.

Central to a Diasporic counter-education are the sensitivity and self-directedness to human life as *becoming-toward-the world*. It manifests self-accepted transcendence as Love of life, and not as a mere echo, or a reaction of fear. As counter-education it does not educate to fear *loneliness in the Godless world*. As a Diasporic alternative it tries to offer concrete practices for edifying skills, sensitivities, knowledge, and practices that will enable the existence of the nomadic human that maybe we could

call *the eternal-improviser*. The nomadism of the eternal-improviser enhances skills and knowledge of various kinds. Of vital importance among these are the response-ability to a changing and ever-veiling dynamics. Authentic responses are potentials of Life as a serious play, as a form of art; (Marcuse, 1967, pp. 863-870) they edify creativity as an ethical, physical, and intellectual becoming-toward-the-world. It is a nomadic becoming on all levels, and as such it challenges the fruits of normalizing education and the subjectification processes that precondition "home", "responsibility", stable "I", social order, and cultural progress. Like freedom, however, the connection between response-ability and respond-ability cannot be guaranteed, delivered or "correctly realized" in advanced – it must be freely decided, struggled for, each moment anew under odd conditions.

And yet, responding in a worthy manner to the call of **the totally other** and the new possibilities, it might (or might not) introduce/impose a potential that might be learned and cultivated. But it assumes a different kind of learning and a new kind of thinking. It relates very much to what Adorno conceived as educated maturity.

Here the responsibility of the counter-educator will be actualized in self-education and in inviting other individuals to self-education in manners, by skills, with and against methods, and practices that are already elaborated and partially realized in the history of counter-education. Here too, Critical Pedagogy, when it is true to Critical Theory, might become of much relevance. But ultimately response-ability and respond-ability as manifestations of Diasporic responsibility are not to be ensured or authentically delivered. Openness, danger, and Eros, here too, must have the last word. It is always put to the test in relation to the connection of human life to the moment, to history, and to eternity. Critical Pedagogy restricted itself to the historical sphere and the social arena. Diasporic counter-education that takes seriously the work

of the Frankfurt School thinkers, however, might contribute so much if it related to the tensions, gaps, and connections of the moment, history, and eternity, for humans, animals, plants, and other manifestations of Life as a source of hope and transcendence, not solely as different manifestations of the Platonic cave. Politics, or the world of contingent power-relations and violent symbolic and direct dynamics, here becomes a very relevant factor, yet never has the upper hand. The Diasporic eternal-improviser, when true to himself or herself, is never a totally controlled citizen of **The Earthly City**; he or she resists becoming-swallowed-by-the-system, the historical facts, or the social horizons. He or she crosses from the infinity of each moment to eternity, or from eternity retreats to the historical sphere and to the infinity of a fleeting moment. Parallel to the asymmetry and the absence of hierarchy and determined order between the *moment*, *history*, and *eternity* is the absence of hierarchy and determinism between *reality*, *its hermeneutical depths*. *It parallels also the "cosmic music"* of that which is symbolized by "reality", its representations, its courageous-edifying critique and its creative-transformative interpretations. These two levels are parallel, but do not constantly relate to each other in the same order. So "the moment" relates to "the deeper meaning of reality"; "history" relates to "reality" and its power-relations; and "eternity" relates to "that to which the meaning and telos of history/reality refers too. This third element is not a mere abstract metaphysical category. Not only does it enable the moment and history – it also bursts into the continuum in all its richness, from time to time, in the form of Hope, **the totally other**, or the not-yet. For the Diasporic eternal-improviser, as a genuine nomad, this third, uneducable, uncontrollable, element of Life is of utmost importance. It enables the Diasporic existence to become-toward-the-world in infinite ways beyond being swallowed by the immanence and beyond being fragmented and disappearing in one

of the "home-returning" projects that promise transcendence and an end to homelessness. Only within this framework is politics challenged from a Diasporic perspective in a way that enables **The Good** in its concrete material, historical and social context.

Togetherness. Counter-education from the sources of Diasporic Philosophy counters collectivism, combats dogmatism, and opposes all other "homes". It refuses any plea or call for recycling, defending or enhancing the present order of things and its realms of self-evidence. Normalizing processes cannot but end up in collectives that surrender themselves to the destruction of the otherness of the Other as a concrete form of "salvation" (Gur-Ze'ev, 2003a, pp. 1-24). Diasporic existence is anti-collectivist-oriented and anti-dogmatic. It refuses the self-abandonment of the individual that is so vital for the historical production of a stable collectives and progressive cultures. This is true not solely in pre-modern and modern spaces, which are so quick to summon their armies, habits, and temptations against the otherness of the Other. It is valid also in postmodern spaces such as the cyberspace. Maybe the Hacker, or that which the Hacker symbolizes, is one of the very few exceptions (Gur-Ze'ev, 2004, pp. 77-92).

Here, in light of a never-ending struggle for overcoming any "home" and collectivism, new possibilities are opened. New prospects are given birth not solely for the self-constitution of the eternal-improviser as a genuine nomad: new leeway is opened for genuine solidarity and for new kinds of togetherness.

The new kinds of togetherness are not committed to the imperative of normalizing education to destroy the otherness of the "ethical I" and the otherness of the Other. *Becoming-toward-the-otherness-of-Being* and the infinite expressions of Love of Life might enable a kind of togetherness with the cosmos and all other Life manifestations

on new paths that Diasporic self-constitution will pave. This new, Diasporic, togetherness with the otherness within the "I", the Other, and the world might crisscross "the moment", "history", and "eternity". Such a self-positioning amid and against Being might enable a better eavesdropping to *the call*, when and if it comes. It might enable a worthy response in the right moment toward and with other Diasporic humans in ways that will give birth to *a new, Diasporic, togetherness*.

A community, not a collective, is here enabled, for a moment, solely for a fragile moment, among Diasporic individuals. If true to themselves they will cherish moments of togetherness as creative, improvising, responsible, Diasporic, individuals, yet will refuse any institutionalization or dogmatization of their – yes, their – togetherness. The moment such counter-education is self-content and domesticated it will immediately transform itself into nothing but an old-new collective and an old-new form of normalizing education.

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