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THE COSMOPOLITAN TURN: RECASTING ‘DIALOGUE’ AND ‘DIFFERENCE’

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Abstract

It is held that we now experience a “cosmopolitan turn” within the social and political sciences, including within the discipline of education. But what are the vital characteristics of this turn? And what appears as its potential pitfalls and possibilities? The aim with this paper is to explore the current mantra of cosmopolitanism and the ways in which it is a product of – and produces – a common sense, an alldoxa, and a symbolic universe representing and naming the world: It is here held that “cosmopolitanism” is a name carrying symbolic representations with more or less hidden epistemic functions. But in assuming something which it is not the new cosmopolitanism carries an inherent paradox. The last part of the paper explores this paradox and its impossible possibilities: In what ways may the inherent contradictions of the new cosmopolitanism affect its making? And what may be the potential pitfalls and possibilities of a discourse jeopardizing the very vision of the social world?

THE COSMOPOLITAN TURN: RECASTING 'DIALOGUE' AND 'DIFFERENCE'

*'Dialogue' is the encounter between men,
mediated by the world,
in order to name the world.*
Paulo Freire

Introduction

It is held that we now experience a “cosmopolitan turn” within the social and political sciences, including within the discipline of education: In the 1960s researchers were motivated by the call to discover, map and understand “the human condition” (Arendt, 1958), during the 1980s social studies were to explore the “postmodern condition” (Lyotard, 1986), while at the threshold of the twenty-first century we are now challenged by the call to identify, explore and understand “the cosmopolitan condition” (Beck, 2006; Beck and Sznaider, 2006; Delanty, 2006; Nederveen Pieterse, 2006). But what are the vital characteristics of this turn? And what appears as its potential pitfalls and possibilities?

The first part of this paper pictures the current cosmopolitanism as a way of life, an ideal, and an outlook. The second part, however, moves beyond an encyclopedic mapping of the discourse while pointing out how the new mantra of cosmopolitanism is a product of – and produces – a common sense, an alldoxa, and a symbolic universe representing and naming the world. However, as “cosmopolitanism” assumes something which it is not, the name and metaphor has a paradoxical attribution. The third part of the paper explores this paradox: In what ways may the inherent contradictions of the new cosmopolitanism affect its making? And what may be the potential pitfalls and possibilities of a discourse jeopardizing the very vision of the social world?

Cosmopolitanism: A Way of Life, an Ideal and an Outlook

Within contemporary philosophy and social studies, “cosmopolitanism” denotes, on the one hand, a way of the world, a condition, an evolving and extremely complex social reality, and, on the other hand, a way of *seeing* the world, a form of consciousness, an emerging paradigm of social and political analysis. However, cosmopolitanism is not yet known as some existing social fact or entity in the world that simply waits for a detailed description or systematic analysis. Nevertheless, in order to tentatively map the discourse, the new cosmopolitanism can be conceived as 1) a metaphor for a way of life, 2) a moral, political and legal ideal, and 3) an outlook, a perspective on our common and contemporary social reality.

A Metaphor for a Way of Life

Contemporary philosophers of education use cosmopolitanism as a metaphor for a way of life made possible by the kind of tolerance, flexibility, and openness towards otherness that characterizes an ethics of social relations in an interconnected world of change¹. But how does this cosmopolitan way of life look like?

An extensive study of contemporary round-the-world-travellers, in the age of 7 to 60, found that these travellers “literally embody cosmopolitanism” (Molz, 2006, p. 17). These travellers are “fit to travel” by their privileged position and global appearance. Accordingly, they do whatever to “fit in” by adapting their bodies to changing environments, hiding their stigma of provinciality, and reaching for an identity as global nomads. Round-the-world-travellers desire to “be like chameleons”, not necessarily by adapting and blending in with the locals, but rather to blend in with the “traveller” category. As this is a somewhat superior way of life generated by a cultural climate of mobility, urban sophistication, privileged detachment, and transnational relations, cosmopolitanism is pictured as a form of social or cultural capital produced, upheld, and advocated by those few who have access to such a lifestyle.

Beck (2006) contrasts this type of “cosmopolitanism” with the “really existing cosmopolitanization” that appears as a disturbed and disturbing event experienced by the great many that lack opportunities to identify with something beyond the day-to-day life dictated by their situation: “The choice to become or remain an ‘alien’ or a ‘non-national’ is not as a general rule voluntary, but a response to acute need, political repression or the threat of starvation” (ibid. p. 19). Consequently, the cosmopolitan turn cannot be known as progress, but rather as a hideous reality camouflaged by the anonymity of an unwanted “side effect”. It is thus pertinent to question the motives behind the common call for a cosmopolitan ethos: Is this call motivated by a sense of global connectedness and genuine solidarity?

A recent survey on interviews of 535 Dutch parents whose children attend international schools found that these parents were more likely to perceive cosmopolitanism as a form of social capital rather than feelings of global connectedness and genuine solidarity (Weenink, 2008). The majority of the parents saw the advantage of an international orientation, but did not relate to a vision of the world as open. They saw the benefit of “cosmopolitan competencies” as a head start for future careers. By contrast, a large minority of the parents advocated flexibility, open-mindedness, and the willingness and ability to look beyond borders. But their multicultural ideology seemed somewhat class biased as they expressed a tendency to avoid non-western foreigners.

In sum, the metaphor of cosmopolitanism seems to be advocating a rather superior way of life as well as an ethos nurtured among those privileged that have access to such a life-style. A cosmopolitan is said to be “a stranger nowhere in the world” (Jacob, 2008). However, this pretty picture is disturbed by the fact that increasingly more people now are strangers no matter where in the world.

Cosmopolitanism as an Ideal

As an ideal, the term “cosmopolitanism” expresses the idea that all human beings – regardless of national, religious, cultural, or political affiliation – should be seen as members of the same community, and that this community should be cultivated. Already to the Stoics the *kosmo politês* were at the heart of their educational program, which aimed at nurturing a moral and political consciousness that cross the barriers of national, ethnic, religious, or political affiliations. Kant (1788/1998) later formulated the cosmopolitan vision as a universal, regulative ideal which all other moral duties are derived from: “Act only according to that maxim whereby you can at the same time

will that it should become a universal law". Accordingly, cosmopolitan rights were pictures as the "right of hospitality" belonging to strangers in a foreign land (Kant 1795/2009).

With the enlightenment and the raise of the social contracts of the nation states, the cosmopolitan ideal was re-formulated in the slogan of the French revolution: *liberté, égalité, fraternité* (Jefferson, 1823/2007; Locke, 1689/1993; Rousseau, 1762/2007). Social-democratic welfare regimes have later coined this ideal with the nation-state's responsibility to ensure all its citizens an agreed range of welfare goods, a de-commodification of these rights and services, and a universal access to, and accountability towards, democratic citizenship (Briggs, 1969; Esping-Andersen, 1990; Marshall, 1950). Education – as one of the most important pillar within a welfare-state – is thus vital for promoting such ideals and for cultivating democratic literacy and citizenship. However, within a new global order carrying a new design for the social production of cultural norms the long-established ideals, beliefs and practices of citizenship and loyalty are now contested. With the decline of the nation-states, new patterns of migration, multiple citizenships, the materialization of a virtual network society, the increasing influence of supranational institutions, and a growing knowledge-based economy, we therefore experience a renewed call for a cosmopolitan ethos, - and thus a resurgence of educational programs that hold the *kosmo politês* as an idealⁱⁱ.

Nevertheless, the many faces, pretty and ugly, of contemporary cosmopolitanism make it a many-faceted, ambiguous and contested ideal: Moral cosmopolitanism advocates moral commitment towards a global social contractⁱⁱⁱ, while political cosmopolitanism discusses the political arrangements within a new world order^{iv}. Legal cosmopolitanism put global justice to the forefront^v, while cultural cosmopolitanism takes the increasing cultural *mélange* as a starting point for exploring the "cosmopolitan condition" and its inherent values^{vi}. Taking the dilemma between an abstract enlightened morality and the complex aspirations of the hybrid identities of citizens not belonging to any primordial community, Benhabib (2006) argues that the task of a normative cosmopolitanism should be to "mediate moral universalism with ethical particularism" (ibid., p. 19). Normative theories on the new cosmopolitanism thus recognize the dilemma of an abstract universalism from above versus a concrete moral commitment from below. Mignolo reminds, however, that these ideals are still awaiting realization as he – somewhat tongue-in-cheek – suggests that "globalization is a set of designs to manage the world while cosmopolitanism is a set of projects towards planetary conviviality" (Mignolo, 2002, p. 157).

In sum, contemporary normative theories on cosmopolitanism does not only demonstrate an emerging ideal of a global connectedness beyond any border – national, religious, cultural, or political – but also how long-established ideas and ideals of cosmopolitanism are now being contested by a developing world-wide and extremely complex social reality: In fact, we now experience an emerging "cosmopolitan outlook" within and beyond the sciences.

The Cosmopolitan Outlook

The cosmopolitan outlook signifies a new way of seeing the world and a new and emerging paradigm of social and political analysis. This outlook is a key to the cosmopolitan turn: With a cosmopolitan outlook earlier worldviews and ways of categorizing, such as "the old differentiations between internal and external, national and international, us and them" (Beck, 2006, p. 14) lose their validity.

In short, the cosmopolitan outlook is a diagnostic and normative point of view that signifies epistemic ruptures.

Beck (2006) contrasts the cosmopolitan outlook to “the territorial prison theory of identity, society and politics” and recognizes it as “an everyday, historically alert, reflexive awareness of ambivalence in a milieu of blurring differentiations and cultural contradictions” (ibid., p. 3). Next, he identifies five interconnected and mutual constitutive principles of this outlook: First, the principle of the experience of global risks and crisis that results in an awareness of interdependence on a world scale; Second, the principle of the recognition of differences and conflicts on a world scale that produce a – to some extent limited – curiosity regarding cultural differences; Third, of cosmopolitan empathy and perspective-taking, generated by the virtual exchangeability of situations; Fourth, the recognition of the impossibility of living in a world without borders and the resulting tendency to redraw old boundaries and to rebuild old walls; Fifth, the *mélange* principle, referring to the intermingling, interconnection, mutual interpenetration and hybridization of local, national, ethnic and religious cultures and traditions. Beck thus indicate that a cosmopolitan outlook contains both diagnostic and normative aspects, as the outlook concurrently serves as a *diagnosis* of the current age and a *normative stance* supporting, for example, moral judgment and political action.

In order to tentatively avoid reproducing the new cosmopolitanism normative proposals, which on the one hand seems to claim universality while, on the other hand, reflects a parochial westernised social order, Fine (2003; 2007) advocates a theoretical distinction between the cosmopolitan *outlook* and the cosmopolitan *condition*. A cosmopolitan outlook, though, is itself generated by, part of, and justified through the social reality of which it outlooks, and might by implication serve to justify, uphold and reproduce the ways of the world diagnosed, understood and recognized by this outlook. It is therefore vital to further explore the ways in which the cosmopolitan turn implies new ways of naming and reading the world, and by implication the making of the emerging cosmopolitanism.

Naming the World

As a cosmopolitan outlook is itself generated by, part of, and justified through the social reality of which it outlooks, the contemporary mantra of cosmopolitanism may be seen as a product of – and producing – an altered symbolic universe serving as instrument for naming, reading and knowing a globalised world of change. But how does this happen? In order to find out I here invite a “perspective on the perspective” that helps exploring ways in which “cosmopolitanism” mediates symbolic representations with more or less hidden epistemic functions, and thus serves to recast the very vision of the world.

The Name ‘Cosmopolitanism’

Despite being a utopian idea carrying somewhat ugly connotations promoting distorted and disturbing practices, the notion of “cosmopolitanism” has been adopted as a symbolic representation of the contemporary ways of the world. But what is in this particular name? And what happens in the act of naming?

The term “cosmopolitanism” is composed of ‘cosmos’ and ‘polis’: ‘Cosmos’ derives from the Greek ‘kósmos’, which literally means “order”. ‘Cosmos’ is distinct from ‘chaos’ and carries the connotation

of a universe regarded as a well-ordered whole. To Eliade, cosmos is the ideal archetype of an orderly system, embracing “all that is perfect, complete, harmonious or fruitful ... Cosmos is the pattern created by the gods, their masterpiece” (Eliade 1952, p. 64). ‘*Polis*’ literally means “city” or “city-state” and carries the connotation of a body of citizens. ‘Citizens’ are distinct from ‘nomads’, in that they signify stability rather than movements or relocation; ‘Citizens’ are also distinct from ‘barbarians’ in that they are educated; ‘Citizens’ are natives of a civilized community or city. The term “cosmopolitanism” thus carries an essential ambiguity, as ‘cosmos’ is here juxtaposed to ‘polis’; an orderly whole is juxtaposed to a lively particular; an unlimited order to a limited space; an all-encompassing universality to a definite body of fellow citizens; a divine design to a really existing reality. This binary feature of the term draws attention to the logical order of “cosmo-polis” because when juxtaposing ‘cosmos’ and ‘polis’ the harmonious patterns of ‘cosmos’ is paralleled with the social dynamics of a ‘polis.’ In sum, “cosmopolitanism” literally denotes the idea of a well-ordered body of citizens. But the term should not be read literally. Rather, within the current discourse “cosmopolitanism” is used figuratively, as a metaphor comparing and contrasting the contemporary ways of the world with an image provided by its name.

The Work of Metaphor

“Metaphor”, according to Aristotle, “consists in giving the thing a name that belongs to something else; the transference being either from genus to species, or from species to genus, or from species to species, or on grounds of analogy” (Poetics 1457b 6-9). To name the present ways of the world “cosmopolitanism” is thus implicit to compare and contrast the contemporary reality with an image of something which it is *not*. The reason is that a metaphor is a relation between two references; – the one being the images of the world provided by the metaphor’s name, the other the contemporary ways of the world designated. It is exactly this dual reference that distinguishes the metaphorical statement from the literally one. In the case of “cosmopolitanism”, *the metaphor is the relation* between an image of a perfect design and the dynamic social and political order of today. Or to be more exact, the metaphor is the *proposed* relation between an image of a perfect well-ordered civilization and the contemporary ways of the world. The work of the metaphor happens through this relation, as – according to Aristotle – the relationship is about “*giving* the thing a name that belongs to something else”, and thereby *transferring meaning* “from genus to species, or from species to genus, or from species to species, or on grounds of analogy” (Poetics 1457b 6-9, my emphasis). Adopting the name “cosmopolitanism” is thus adopting a relationship that compares and contrasts the contemporary ways of the world to an image of something which it is not; – namely an orderly, ordered, stable, and harmonious whole – and thereby transferring the meaning provided by the name to an image of the contemporary ways of the world.

In this way, the metaphor of cosmopolitanism concurrently emphasizes difference and resemblance, in saying that the perfect blueprint of a harmonious body of fellow citizens differs from the contemporary ways of the world while simultaneously pointing to the similarities between the two. Such dissimilar similarities lie at the heart of metaphors, as “... a good metaphor implies an intuitive perception of the similarity in dissimilars” (Poetics 1459 a 3-8). The quality and vigor of a metaphor thus depends on the ability to perceive the similarities of very different things. Aristotle offers some examples: “... as in philosophy, too, it is characteristic of a well-directed mind to observe the likeness even in things very different. Thus, Archytas [the Phytagorean philosopher] said that an arbiter and

an altar were the same thing; for one who has wrong flies to both. Or [another example is] if someone said that an anchor and a rope hung from a hook are the same thing, for both are the same, but they differ in that one is hung from above and one from below. And to say that [the allotment of land in] cities “have been equalized” is the same thing in widely different cases: the equality is in the surface of land and the powers [assigned to each citizen]” (Rhetoric 1412a 14 – 23). These examples illustrate that the work of a metaphor depends on the ability to observe the likeness in very different cases. Or – as Ricoeur puts it – “the dynamic of metaphor would rest ... on the perception of resemblance” (Ricoeur 1977, p. 24).

The name and metaphor of “cosmopolitanism” thus have some paradoxical attributions: First, the name itself carries an essential ambiguity, as ‘cosmos’ is here juxtaposed to ‘polis’; an orderly whole to a lively particular; an all-encompassing universality to a definite body of fellow citizens; a harmonious design to a dynamic social reality. Next, the metaphor compares and contrasts the contemporary ways of the world to this impossible image, while concurrently saying that “this is that” and “this is not that”. Some impossible contradictions thus emerge: First in the name, which actually contradicts itself in simultaneously saying that “polis is like cosmos” and “polis is not like cosmos”; Next in the metaphor that compares, contrasts and parallels the contemporary ways of the world to this ambiguous and conflicting image, and thereby offers an outlook of the contemporary ways of the world as concurrently “cosmopolitan” and “not cosmopolitan”. The mystery of “cosmopolitanism” is therefore that it compares reality with an impossible image, while concurrently asserting it to be something which it is not, namely this image^{vii}. “Cosmopolitanism” thus seems like an impossible paradox.

A paradox is a self-contradictory. Or to be more accurate, a paradox is an argument where the premises are true and the reasoning appears to be correct, but the conclusions contradictory or mutually excluding^{viii}. As with metaphors, which by accepted ways of reasoning concurrently leads to two inconsistent, contradictory and mutually excluding conclusions; “this is that” and “this is not that”. Quine (1966) holds that these kinds of paradoxes (anomalies) are productive as they “bring on the crisis in thought.” In taking us by surprise they “... establishes that some tacit and trusted pattern of reasoning must be made explicit and henceforward be avoided or revised” (ibid., p. 7). To Quine, metaphors thus help expand already existing ways of knowing.

Aristotle, however, argues that metaphors also carry the potential of providing genuinely new knowledge. As when he underlines the productivity of a riddle spoken in metaphor: “Good riddles are pleasing for the same reason; for there is learning, and they are spoken in metaphor, as is what Theodorus calls *ta kaina legein* [saying new things]”. However, Aristotle stresses that “... this occurs when there is a paradox and not, as he says, in opposition to previous opinion; rather it is like the bogus word coinages in jests” (Rhetoric 1412a 33 – 38). The mystery of the paradoxical attribution of cosmopolitanism is thus that the metaphor surprises, bewilders and educates by articulating truly new things in an unexpected manner. In this way, the metaphor of cosmopolitanism may not only serve to expand earlier ways of knowing, but also to produce truly new forms of knowledge. But how does that happen? And what may be the potential pitfalls and possibilities of a mysterious riddle that seems to jeopardize the very vision of the social world?

The Riddle of Cosmopolitanism

The new cosmopolitanism carries a paradoxical attribution as it compares and contrasts reality with an impossible image, while concurrently asserting it to be something which it is not; namely this impossible image. However, it is precisely this paradoxical attribution that signifies the impossible possibilities of cosmopolitanism: Providing contradictory images of the world as concurrently “cosmopolitan” and “not cosmopolitan”, the emerging new cosmopolitanism surprises and bewilders. In short, it appears as a riddle. Of which Aristotle says: “The very nature indeed of a riddle is this, to describe a fact in an impossible combination of words (which cannot be done with the real names for things, but can be with their metaphorical substitutes)” (Poetics 1458a, 24-29). And further: “Good riddles are pleasing ... for there is learning” (Rhetoric 1412 a 26). But is it possible to recognize the riddle of cosmopolitanism as a good riddle? In exactly what ways does the mysterious riddle of cosmopolitanism surprise, bewilder, and educate?

Cosmopolitanism Surprises

The metaphor of cosmopolitanism surprises. Immediately, it may seem surprising to adopt such an alien name – “cosmopolitanism” – to depict the contemporary ways of the world. However, the surprise is not in the new cosmopolitanism’s alien name. The surprise is rather in the act of moving, shifting, or changing from one scene to another.

Let me explain: To Aristotle metaphor is something happening; an act of naming; or of “*giving* the thing a name that belongs to something else” (Poetics 1457b 6, my emphasis). Ricoeur (1977) pictures this activity as a movement, a displacement, or a transposition of meaning “from ... to...” (ibid., p. 17). While *metaphor is this activity*, the new cosmopolitanism should thus be conceived as a verb, a process, a discourse, or simply something happening. This is underlined by the fact that Aristotle’s term *meta-phora* literally means “between-motion”, which in and of itself is a metaphor for a kind of change (*phora*) or ‘meta-change’, namely the transposition of meaning from one location to another (Derrida, 1982). The new “cosmopolitanism” is therefore not just a novel noun, distinction, or category. Rather, the new cosmopolitanism is an *event*, a surprising *shift* between scenes; a *movement* from one realm of language to another; or a *transposition* from one outlook to another.

This transposition happens, first, as a *deviation* from the current modes of speech. The reason is that the metaphor’s “alien name” (Poetics 1457b 31) or “name that belongs to something else” (ibid. 1457b 7) provides a discursive rupture by breaking away from ordinary language use. As with the unfamiliar term “cosmopolitanism” which differs from frequent terminology and thus breaks away from common discourse. This is underlined by the fact that recent cosmopolitanism is still an empty concept, not pre-given or foreclosed by the definition of any particular society or discourse. The metaphor of cosmopolitanism thus speaks *para to kurion* – against the *current*. The metaphor of cosmopolitanism also speaks *para to eidthon* – against the most *common*. However, in deviating from the current, the most common and ordinary modes of speech, the metaphor carries a potential to escape banality: “The Diction becomes distinguished and non-prosaic by the use of unfamiliar terms” (Poetics 1458a 21).

Next, the transposition – *meta-phora* or meta-change – happens through a *borrowing*: “Metaphor consists in giving the thing a name *that belongs to something else*” (ibid. 1457b 9, my emphasis). To ‘metaphorize’ is thus to borrow meaning from another discursive order, time, place, or realm and to displace it into a new. While the displaced or transpositioned meaning comes from somewhere else, Ricoeur (1977) thus holds that “it is always possible to specify metaphor’s place of origin or of borrowing” (ibid., p. 19). As in the case of “cosmopolitanism”, which deviates from ordinary language usage by adopting the alien terms *kósmos* (order) and *polis* (city) borrowed from Greek. By implication, some hold that the emerging new cosmopolitanism is nothing more than a borrowing from ancient Greek and Western philosophies adapted and applied to the contemporary ways of the world. Which may be conceived as parallel to how the Stoics borrowed Diogenes’ non-conformist idea on the *kosmo politês* and developed it into an universal ideal on a moral and political consciousness that cross the barriers of national, ethnic, religious, or political affiliations (Nussbaum, 1997). However, the work of metaphor goes beyond a break with the current and borrowing from tradition. The work of metaphor also happens as a bewildering jumbling of categories.

Cosmopolitanism Bewilders

The metaphor of cosmopolitanism bewilders. The bewilderment happens as the metaphor is bringing together logical opposites, namely a divine design versus the really existing reality:

“Cosmopolitanism” denotes an idea that all humanity belongs to the same community. But in fact, such a community is a utopia not yet known as existing. “Cosmopolitans” are seen as strangers nowhere in the world. But in fact, increasingly more people are now strangers no matter where in the world. Moreover, it appears a common belief that education should nurture a cosmopolitan ethos of genuine global solidarity. But in fact, recent studies reveal that “cosmopolitan education” is perceived to provide social capital as a head start for future carriers within a global knowledge economy. Nevertheless, – despite being a utopian idea carrying ugly connotations and promoting somewhat distorted and disturbing practices – the notion of “cosmopolitanism” has been adopted as a symbolic representation of the new ways of the world. The metaphor thus jeopardizes the very vision of the social world.

Metaphor disturbs pre-existing logical order by deviating from ordinary discourse. In addition, while borrowing meaning from an external realm and displacing it into a new, metaphor re-describes reality (Black, 1962; Ricoeur, 1977; Petrie, 1979). So, as the metaphor operates in an order already existing and in a game with rules already given, the metaphor bewilders the very rules of the game and thus the game itself: Metaphors “make everything move and live” (Rhetoric 1412a, 9). By implication, metaphor does not only *violate* the rules of the game by speaking *para-doxa* – against the pre-existing doxa. Metaphor also carry the potential to *transposition* meaning, to *re-describe* reality, and thus to *create* a new. While bewildering our modes of classification and changing our framework of understanding, the work of metaphors happens through and beyond its paradoxical attribution. Metaphor thus – according to Ricoeur (1977) – works at the root of classification, at the very origin of logical thought: “The “metaphoric” that transgress the categorial order also begets it” (ibid., p. 24). In other words, while the metaphor of cosmopolitanism brings together logical opposites it first surprises, then bewilders, and finally educates by uncovering a relationship hidden beneath the paradox.

Cosmopolitanism Educates

The metaphor of cosmopolitanism educates. The education happens by the fact that the metaphor proposes an impossible image of the world as concurrently “cosmopolitan” and “not cosmopolitan”. The paradoxical attribution of the new cosmopolitanism therefore not only surprises and bewilders, - it also opens possibilities of learning something radically new.

But is it possible to learn something radically new, or to make intelligible the acquisition of radically new knowledge? This is the famous Meno paradox of Plato “...a man cannot enquire either about that which he knows or about that which he does not know; for if he knows, he has no need to enquire; and if not, he cannot; for he does not know the very subject about which he is to enquire”. However, Petrie (1979) holds that metaphors – with their paradoxical attributions – operate in a way that opens possibilities of acquiring genuinely new knowledge. In fact, metaphors “is one of the central ways of leaping the epistemological chasm between old knowledge and radically new knowledge” (ibid., p. 440).

Petrie describes the educational work of metaphor like this: Assuming the metaphor to be an assertion on the contemporary ways of the world, the learner finds it obviously false. However, reading the implicit comparison, the bewilderment is overlooked and the metaphor may contribute to extend already existing knowledge. However, as in the case of the current cosmopolitan turn, the relationship between the logical opposites of the metaphor bewilders and violates the cognitive framework or the logical categories generating the very modes of learning, or ways of expanding already existing knowledge. Thus, the paradoxical attribution of metaphors opens possibilities of learning something radically new. Or rather, as Bateson (1972) also holds: The paradoxical attribution of metaphor does not facilitate learning. It is rather the very condition for learning radically new things.

ⁱ See for example Appiah (2008), Kemp (2005), Nussbaum (1997) or Papastephanou (2005).

ⁱⁱ See Appiah (2008); Hansen (2008), Kemp (2005), Klafki (2001), Noddings (2005), Nussbaum (1997), Papastephanou (2002; 2005) Peters (2008) and Rizvi (2008).

ⁱⁱⁱ See Appiah (2006) and Nussbaum (1997).

^{iv} See Habermas (1997), Held (2005) and Pogge (2008).

^v See for example Fine (2007) or Nash (2007).

^{vi} See for example Beck (2006) and Mignolo (2002).

^{vii} On the work of metaphors, see Black (1962; 1979), Derrida (1982), Laclau (1998) and Ricoeur (1977).

^{viii} On paradoxes, see Olin (2003), Sainsbury (1995) or Quine (1966). Ricoeur (1977) explores the paradoxical attributions of metaphors.

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