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ABSTRACT The emergent field of Educational Futures has its beginning in futurology as a relatively new constellation of disciplines having a strong impact on policy in the form of foresight, scenario planning, and new utopian thinking. This article specifically focuses on Gilles Deleuze's unorthodox approach to epistemology as future-oriented and creative and emphasizes his attention to experimental and experiential *becomings*. While educational system is traditionally limited to acquiring the factual knowledge of the external world, inner knowledge or Gnosis is not addressed in a habitually secular context. In contrast to the prevailing *episteme*, this article positions Gnosis within the universal science of life, *mathesis*. The political impulse of Deleuze's thoughts on mathesis is related to new educational leaders as 'people to come'.

The emerging field of Educational Futures in educational research explores the questions of globalization and knowledge economy, employing such methods of *futures studies* as scenario planning, strategic foresight, imaginative narratives as well as new utopian thinking comprising present *edutopias* (Peters & Freeman-Moir, 2006; cf. Slaughter, 2004; Milojevic, 2005, 2006; Inayatullah et al, 2005). For Milojevic, a predominately neoliberal discourse in education needs to be enriched with new utopian visions that exceed solely critical thought but include alternative epistemologies. One such unorthodox approach to knowledge belongs to Gilles Deleuze whose philosophy is fundamentally *utopian*. His future-oriented, somewhat untimely, experimental and creative 'epistemology' makes an object, in effect, a consequence or a limit-case of the inquiry: it is multiple *becomings* that, for Deleuze, serve as the precursors (NB: quite often, *dark precursors*) of being.

Becomings are *affects*, which are not just subjective feelings or emotions but do reflect the objective structure of experiential events that, in their intensity, can 'spill over beyond whoever lives through them (thereby becoming someone else)' (Deleuze, 1995, p. 127). Deleuze and Guattari say that 'affects ... traverse [one's universe of being] ... like the beam of light that draws a hidden universe out of the shadow' (1994, p. 66), this hidden, invisible, universe becoming known – visible – to us in the form of experiential knowledge. This deep inner self-knowledge – ultimately, the knowledge of human nature, of life itself – is what the ancients referred to as *Gnosis*, from the Greek for *knowing*. Nel Noddings (2006) is adamant about the importance of self-knowledge as the very core of education via an *examined life*, as Socrates would say; that is, a life lived in accord with the ancient 'Know Thyself' principle that was inscribed on the temple of Apollo in Delphi. She insists that 'when we claim to *educate*, we must take Socrates seriously. Unexamined lives may well be valuable and worth living, but an *education* that does not invite such examination may not be worthy of the label education' (Noddings, 2006, p. 10; italics in original).

The ultimate knowledge of life is a prerogative of a unified science that differs from the current positivist paradigm. Deleuze's 1946 publication, titled 'Mathesis, Science, and Philosophy', reflects his profound fascination with esoteric themes related to Neoplatonic tradition of

revolutionary Gnosis that was to be rediscovered and redeployed in nineteenth-century Europe. The essay was his Preface to a reissue of the French translation of Johann Malfatti de Montereggio's work titled *Mathesis, or Studies on the Anarchy and Hierarchy of Knowledge*. Malfatti was a nineteenth-century Italian doctor who practised the *science* of medicine in the tradition of natural *philosophy* grounded *not* in a technical proficiency but in experimental *practice* embodied in lived experience of deep knowledge leading to healing through the sympathetic patterns of vibration that produced what Deleuze would later call *maps* or *diagrams*.

The idea of *mathesis universalis* – a science of all sciences that, if and when realized, would have established a long-sought-after unity of knowledge – has been historically viewed as both occult and politically subversive, defying the then scientific beliefs and religious dogmas alike. As Yates (1964) has argued, part of what led to Giordano Bruno's burning at the stake was his advocacy of a *new religion* that would be centred on love and art together with magic and mathesis. Mathesis as a universal *science* was then not posited in opposition (as per would-be Cartesian dream of reason) to art and magic; they would have been reconciled (cf. Semetsky, 2008a). In mainstream Western philosophy, *mathesis universalis* is associated with Leibniz, who had envisaged an *arithmetica universalis* or *scientia generalis* that would allow a kind of formal or internal elaboration of all possible relations between all concepts in all branches of knowledge taken together. As such, mathesis would be a kind of universal grammar, a sort of formal 'language' of symbols.

Leibniz conceived of a *lingua characteristica* as a universal pictographic or ideographic alphabet of human thought comprising *arcana*, diagrams, pictures as complemented by *calculus ratiocinator* and reflecting *ratio* embedded in Nature. It is a poetic language of interpretable symbols – contrary to the language of propositions that directly refers to empirical objects of logical positivism – that would have indeed expressed 'the truths of *gnosis*' (Martin, 2006, p. 37) rooted in Hermetic and Neoplatonic philosophies. In his later magnum opus, *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze (1994) refers to mathesis in connection with an 'esoteric' usage of the calculus, claiming that there is a *mathesis universalis* that corresponds to his theory of ideas as the differentials of thought. The ideas are often so enveloped or enfolded deep 'in the soul that we can't always unfold or develop them' (Deleuze, 1993, p. 49) by means of our cognitive tools alone. The ideas are to be different/ciated in the double movement between the multiple – actual and virtual – levels of reality.

Virtual tendencies have the potential of becoming actual through different/ciations of the 'initially undifferentiated [transcendental] field' (Deleuze, 1993, p. 10) so that the actual, unlike the Platonic model and copy, is not exactly a copy of the virtual (Deleuze's Platonism is *reversed*). They are *different*, and it cannot be otherwise because the virtual is posited just as a tendency, therefore *no-thing*. Virtual tendencies as potentialities or *no-things* become actualized as though created *ex nihilo* and embodied in the actual *things*, in the guise of new objects of knowledge, new meanings. The nuance is significant: it is '[f]rom virtuals [that] we descend to actual states of affairs, and from states of affairs we ascend to virtuals, without being able to isolate one from the other' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, p. 160).

It is the affective conditions in real experience when the desire for Gnosis becomes intensified to the very limit that can *unfold* them because this deep inner, Gnostic 'knowledge is known only where it is folded' (Deleuze, 1993, p. 49). As encompassing an affective dimension, Gnostic knowledge is experimental and experiential: for Deleuze:

once one steps outside what's been thought before, once one ventures outside what's familiar and reassuring, once one has to invent new concepts for unknown lands, then methods and moral systems break down and thinking becomes ... a 'perilous act', a violence, whose first victim is oneself. (Deleuze 1995, p. 103)

Such a perilous act of thinking is embodied in the maximum intensity of experience as 'a power to affect itself, an affect of self on self' (Deleuze, 1988, p. 101; original italics) that leads to our learning from experience and becoming-other. Deleuze's model of learning is based on the explication of experiential signs (such as, for example, involuntary memories similar to those awakened by Marcel Proust's famous madeleine; cf. Bogue & Semetsky, 2010), images, or aesthetic and artistic signs as potential sources of meanings in accord with the logic of sense (Deleuze, 1990). This logic exceeds a narrow instrumental reason: it is 'an intensive and affective logic of the included middle' (Bosteels, 1998, p. 151). As Deleuze says, we need all three – percepts, affects and concepts – at the level of real life, of practical action.

The path to Gnosis involves paradoxical *non-philosophical* understanding; for Deleuze and Guattari (1994), 'Art thinks no less than philosophy, but it thinks through affects and percepts' (p. 66). The affects are immanent, and the plane of immanence 'knows only events and other people and is therefore a great creator of concepts' (1994, p. 48). The radical concept of constructing the plane of immanent consistency presupposes a developed intuition (Semetsky, 2004; cf. Noddings & Shore, 1984) because the path to Gnosis involves both 'intuition and the certainty of possessing a method permitting access to such [deep, inner] knowledge' (Faivre, 1994, p. 19): the knowledge of ourselves and human life as a whole. Deleuze agrees with Bergson that human mind is primarily intuition and only secondarily calculation or rationalization. For Bergson – contrary to authority figures in society who reinforce a particular 'contraction' that this society *is* – it is mystics who have the potential to creatively 'expand' (versus 'contract') the aperture of human awareness and consciousness in order to enter into communication with other levels of duration as states in which the energies of the virtual whole can be differentiated and given new forms.

In Deleuze-Bergson's terms, our current educational system would be qualified as a kind of hyper-contraction, and even frozen; it habitually ignores intuitive or integrative approaches such as the would-be way to Gnosis by means of Deleuzian practical construction of the plane of immanence. Education is reduced to formal schooling (for children) or perpetual training (for adults), thus *a priori* marginalizing the realm of lifelong human development and learning devoted to the knowledge of this very life as *mathesis*. Yet, Gnosis would be invaluable with regard to diverse educational contexts. Inayatulla (2002), in the context of futures studies in education, refers to multiple deeper interpretations that would have exceeded the 'views of reality for which only empirical data exists' (p. 3) and encourages a reflective approach problematizing the nature of the current *episteme* as the very foundation for knowledge (Inayatulla, 2006).

Contrary to detached *observation* performed by an independent subject forever separated from the world of objects, and which became equated with the 'objective' method of natural sciences as a current episteme, indeed, Gnosis would be achieved by *participation*, by a 'mutual solidarity' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 45) in terms of affective relations between subjects and objects because 'neither of them can be identified otherwise' (p. 45). Gnosis is produced along the transversal line of flight connecting two 'inseparable planes in reciprocal presupposition' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 109) when the 'subjective' world of mind comes in contact with the 'objective' world of matter in their mutual *integration* at the deeper, *soul*, level, thus 'establishing the bond of a profound complicity between nature and mind' (Deleuze, 1994, p. 165).

Ultimately, such Gnostic knowledge created first as just a singular *experiment* becomes a constituent part of what one author (Semetsky, 2008b) has called *nomadic education*. Deleuze's nomad metaphor affirms the multiplicity of paths that nomadic tribes wander along in their movement in the 'smooth space' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 371) of the *steppe* when "every now and then" crossing [traversing] closed deserts' (Deleuze, 1991, p. 111). The alternative law that guides nomads in their travels is *nomos*, the 'law' of the Outside and the outsiders. Nomadic place is always *intense* because the nomads' existence is inseparable from the region or space they occupy. The nomad's relation to the earth is deterritorialized to such an intensity, 'to such a degree that the nomad reterritorializes on deterritorialization itself' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 381).

The adjective *smooth* is contrasted with *striated*, both terms defining different musical forms: striated – as ordered by rigid schemata and point-to-point connections ensuring a linear and fixed structure (as an episteme of positive science) – and smooth – as an irregular, open and heterogeneous, dynamic structure of fluid forces – as the would-be mathesis. A classical episteme of metric systems, technical objectives and precise measurements and classifications gives way to an experimental and experiential 'field ... wedded to nonmetric, acentered, rhizomatic multiplicities' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 381) and filled with the polyvocality of directions taken by nomadic tribes that could be found 'in the Greek milieu' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, p. 88) and which would have included a path to Gnosis.

Nomadic education 'takes place' along the lines of becoming when the path to Gnosis produces 'a shared deterritorialization' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 293) that Deleuze and Guattari illustrate by their famous example of wasp and orchid: 'the wasp ... becomes a liberated piece of the orchid's reproductive system ... the orchid ... becomes the object of an orgasm in the wasp, also liberated from its own reproduction' (p. 293). Two series, two planes – of the wasp and

the orchid – are transversally (non-locally) connected *in between* via the line of flight that runs perpendicular to both planes and – by virtue of being orthogonal to both – represents 'the absolute speed of movement' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 293). Such a limit-experience in real life appears to be achieved only by mystics, shamans, magicians, or sorcerers (Semetsky, 2009a; Delpech-Ramey, 2010).

It is mystics and poets (even if they were forbidden to enter the Academy) who traditionally played a *participatory*, embodied role in the relational (as Deleuze would say, *rhizomatic*) network that forms an interdependent holistic fabric with the world, thus overcoming the dualistic split between subject and object that has been haunting us since the time of Descartes. Such apparently *mystical* inflection can be traced through Deleuze's corpus of works; still Deleuze's mysticism is *practical*. It is not solely reduced to what dualistic thinking equates with the occult and which is traditionally posited as a binary opposite to science or analytic philosophy alike and, as such, incapable of being explained (Semetsky, 2009b; Lovat & Semestky, 2009; Delpech-Ramey, 2010) in rational terms as a sole prerogative of either.

Rhizome is a biological metaphor used by Deleuze and Guattari to describe a model for knowledge-structure irreducible to a single, stable foundation as a scientific episteme. Growth and movement are embedded in a network of traversing lines leading to the creation of concepts. This network, in contrast to a map that *a priori represents* a given territory, would *engender* the very territory to which it is supposed to refer; would create it in practice! As a symbol for unlimited growth through the multitude of its own transformations, rhizome is contrasted with a tree, the latter symbolizing the linear and sequential reasoning rooted in finite knowledge. The tree metaphor accords with the infamous tree of Porphyry, which is an example of the classificatory system, or a hierarchical structure based on precise definitions that serve as the foundation for the rationally justifiable theoretical knowledge.

The tree of Porphyry incorporates an arborescent reasoning; that is, a type of syllogistic logic based on the method of division – of the *excluded* middle – to form a precise catalogue. The hierarchical structure precludes the existence of the interdependent, *sympathetic* relations between the separate branches of the sacramental tree. But a rhizomatic structure consists of a network of imperceptible relations in the form of zigzagging and crisscrossing lines of flight comprising critical, clinical and creative dimensions as three Cs of holistic education (Semetsky, 2007, 2010a) in contrast to the habitual three Rs of formal schooling confined to standardized testing and measurable objectives.

Thus the model of education pursued by Western liberal, democratic society is not liberating itself. It is Gnosis as intuitive knowledge of the individuating forces of life which is truly democratic. It is democratic – but not because it will subject itself to free debates and discussions. As Deleuze and Guattari (1994) ironically point out, 'Rival opinions at the dinner table – is this not the eternal Athens ... ? ... This is the Western democratic popular conception of philosophy as providing pleasant or aggressive dinner conversations at Mr. Rorty's' (pp. 144-145). Rather, Gnosis is democratic in that it symbolizes reciprocity expressed in the capacity 'to affect and be affected' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. xvi) as part and parcel of self-knowledge and animating principles effectuating these debates and discussions. The liberating capacity of mathesis lies in the embodiment of the fundamental elements in nature as *symbols* so that they immediately impart a power to act for the sake of life itself.

To step into nomadic spaces – even if such a space is a paradoxical 'empty square' (Deleuze, 1990, p. 47) – is liberating: the 'Politics of Sorcery' (Delpech-Ramey, 2010) brings new creative 'magic' into a presently disenchanted world which has long been disengaged from 'a critical *attitude* or ethos' (Simons et al, 2009, p. vii; italics in original). Such politics would be devoted to the invention of new concepts (indeed, in a Deleuzian spirit) and new communication systems (cf. Peters, 2009). The overall aim would be the creation of 'the open society' (Peters, 2009, p. 303) as the transformation of the knowledge economy. Nomad's way is an immanent trajectory and not a transcendental end; a deviant footpath and not the royal road. As a symbol for becoming, nomads always 'transmute and reappear in the lines of flight of some social field' (Deleuze, 1995, p. 153). Contrary to the method of direct instruction that continues to stifle and striate contemporary pedagogy, Gnosis 'leaps from one soul to another ... And from soul to soul it traces the design of an *open* society, a society of creators' (Deleuze, 1991, p. 111). A society of creators is an *integrative* society: because the path to Gnosis crosses – traverses – the supposedly dual opposites, Gnosis is an

integrative way of knowing; at once the intellectual (mind), spiritual (soul) and practical (body), activity, that – in the process of repeated de/reterritorializations – marks 'the possibility and necessity of flattening all of the multiplicities on a single plane of consistency or exteriority' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 9) which is 'laid down' in real experience and enables an intuitive access to the multiple 'truths of *gnosis*' (Martin, 2006, p. 37).

Indeed, nomadic places constitute an open territory that provides an emancipatory potential to those – mystics, magician, sorceress – who, by virtue of wandering in the smooth spaces (in contrast to being confined to 'contracted' striated spaces), become capable of *making a difference*. For Deleuze:

difference is not diversity. Diversity is given, but difference is that by which the given is given. ... Difference is not phenomenon but the noumenon closest to phenomenon ... Every phenomenon refers to an inequality by which it is conditioned ... Everything which happens and everything which appears is correlated with orders of differences: differences of level, temperature, pressure, tension, potential, difference of intensity. (Deleuze, 1994, p. 222)

Deleuze, describing *difference*, stressed that it must be functionally differing: it creates a 'tangled tale' (Deleuze, 1990, p. 51) and assures a passage from one singularity to another. It is a difference that itself can make a difference. It is the subtle and as yet imperceptible difference in the second degree functioning in a derivative sense along the line of flight such as, for example, the line of flight produced by acceleration as a derivative of velocity. By virtue of its being 'the in-itself of difference' (Deleuze, 1994, p. 119), it has a power to as if magically *speed* things up. In this sense, it is capable of transcending 'spatial locations and temporal successions' (Deleuze, 1994, p. 83). We can thereby achieve an expanded perception of time and space, which therefore become 'released from their human coordinates' (Deleuze, 1986, p. 122) that capture space merely in its three dimensions and time as chronological and linear. The knowledge of mathesis – that went underground by the nineteenth century when the advances of positive science took over – is necessary for such a transformation. It is through mathesis as a science of intensified, Gnostic, knowledge that society would be able to at once know and transform (heal) itself. The knowledge of the symbolic language in which Gnosis expresses itself thus becomes imperative (cf. Semetsky, 2011)!

Mathesis employs a sympathetic system of the right hemisphere referred to by Deleuze (2003a) as capable of interpreting the symbolic 'language of relations, which consists of expressive movements, paralinguistic signs ... the analogical language par excellence' (2003a, p. 93). In his preface to Malfatti's *Mathesis* Deleuze writes that, unlike scientific explanation (which is, we add, a currently privileged model of pedagogy oriented to acquiring factual knowledge of the external world):

the symbol is the identity, the *encounter*, of the sensible object and the object of thought. The sensible object is called symbol and the object of thought, losing its scientific signification, is a hieroglyph or a cipher. In their identity they form a concept. ... [T]he mysterious character of mathesis is not directed to against the profane in an exclusive, mystical sense, but ... indicates the necessity of grasping the concept in a minimum of time, and that physical incarnations take place in the smallest possible space – unity within diversity, general life within particular life. ... If vocation defines itself through the creation of a sensible object as the result of knowledge, then mathesis ... is the vocation of vocations, since it transforms knowledge itself into a sensible object. Thus we shall see mathesis insists upon the correspondences between material and spiritual creation. (Deleuze, 2008, p. 151)

It is connecting the different and seemingly incommensurable planes or levels in real practical life – such as material and spiritual – that can make a difference! The task indeed appears esoteric – still, there is method in madness, even if this method as mathesis cannot be reduced to the method of positive science which is an a priori dualistic enterprise, grounded in the binary opposites of subjects and objects and employing the principle of non-contradiction and the logic of the excluded middle.

The alternative method of mathesis is grounded (or, rather, ungrounded, considering that its unorthodox 'ground' is difference itself) in a paradoxical and 'different logic of social practice' (Bosteels, 1998, p. 151): the analogical logic of affects and sensations. It is the transversal line of becoming that functions as the included 'third which ... disturbs the binarity of the two, not so

much inserting itself in their opposition as in their complementarity' (Deleuze, 1987, p. 131), thus forming in practice a system of relations, analogies, and sympathies. The practitioners of mathesis – the educators in Gnosis – will have been employing the knowledge of symbolic language to transform life, to transform education. Paradoxically, in their function as the included middle, this language itself would function as the set of transformations to which our experience is immanent. What appears mysterious and paradoxical (but paradoxical only in the framework of classical science that takes the principle of non-contradiction as its basis) is that symbolic knowledge is coextensive with life: knowledge and the method of its attainment coalesce (cf. Semetsky, 2011). A potential human ability to raise 'each faculty to the level of its transcendent exercise [and] to give birth to that second power which grasps that which can only be sensed' (Deleuze, 1994, p. 165) becomes the very actuality of applying mathesis in practice.

The role of relations or *sympathies* is significant in specifically educational contexts. In her latest book, *The Maternal Factor*, Nel Noddings (2010) addresses the capacity for empathy and a *sympathetic* understanding as a maternal instinct for survival developed in the course of human evolution. Jim Garrison refers to *sympathetic* data as describing intuitions and perceptions that would make possible our understanding of others; he is aware, nonetheless, that 'our culture has not evolved highly refined methods of collecting [those] data ... researchers do not perform careful interpersonal experiments, [and] the theories of human thought, feeling, and action remain ... remarkably underdeveloped' (Garrison, 1997, p. 35). Yet, it is precisely sympathetic, inter-subjective data that are maximally 'relevant to the topic of teaching' (Garrison, 1997, p. 36) and learning, to pedagogy as a whole that as such, would have acquired a maternal, caring, feminine dimension.

Indeed, in the context of spiritual education that as a rule remains on the margins of policy making in secular contexts, Noddings refers to the Goddess spirituality as an alternative feminist critique to the story of the Fall and in which the biblical serpent is not presented as evil but instead educates humans in Gnosis thereby bringing healing and wholeness to human condition. Non-incidentally, for Deleuze it is a *becoming-woman* that is a key to all other becomings (cf. Semetsky 2010b). The series of multiple becomings as the multiplicities of experience start from a movement *away* from the patriarchal Ego in its isolation from the body as a separate Cartesian substance and *toward* the feminine, holistic consciousness embodied in becoming energetic, vibrational patterns immanent in *life* at the very interface of history and myth (cf. Delpech-Ramey, 2010; Semetsky, 2011). It is by ordering the chaos of *in-formational* patterns that the *trans-formational* education in Gnosis will have taken place (cf. Semetsky, 2009c).

Deleuze presents mathesis not as a province of some initiated elite: mathesis is democratic, situated in the midst of experiential conditions, and 'to believe that mathesis is merely a mystical lore inaccessible and superhuman, would be a complete mistake ... mathesis deploys itself at the level of life, of living man ... Essentially mathesis would be the exact description of human nature' (Deleuze, 2007, p. 143), not unlike the language of mathematical physics that describes natural laws. In fact, for Deleuze, the very spirit of experimentation rejects the binary opposition between universals and particulars – the general life coincides with the particular life – and combines in itself an apparent mysticism with the mathematicism of concepts: for example, Leibniz's infinitesimal calculus becomes compatible with philosophy as a virtual form of thinking. In this respect, the mathematical form cannot be taken away from natural laws; the latter are models and not just 'mere expressions of linguistic truths' (DeLanda, 2002, p. 127).

The science of mathesis employs the logic of the *included* middle, the affective logic of lived experience. In the context of holistic, nomadic, education, it is this logic that precludes the nomadic ideas from meeting 'the visual condition of being observable from a point in space external to them' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 371) – that would have otherwise guaranteed a supposedly epistemic certainty of scientific empirical method, which subscribes to the spectator theory of knowledge. Deleuze's empiricism is radically *transcendental* because the very foundations for the empirical principles are left outside the common faculties of perception. Deleuze purports to show the as-yet-imperceptible by laying down a (visible) map of the (invisible yet intelligible) territory or, in other words, creating a mediatory link, the included third, belonging to the family of 'non-localizable connections' (Deleuze, 1994, p. 83) between what are customarily considered the dualistic opposites of sensible and intelligible, matter and mind.

Referring to psychophysical parallelism, Deleuze asserts that there must be a threshold that brings thought to the body. At the ontological level, the same parallel relation exists between the virtual and the actual – both real – the connection between which would require passing through a threshold, creating a transversal communication – a likeness, a relation, an analogy, a sympathy – between the opposites. For Deleuze, what is traditionally called a mystical experience is a real event: it is an art of perceiving the otherwise imperceptible. Deleuze (1989) equates mystical experience with an event of a sudden actualization of virtual potentialities, that is, awakening of perceptions, such as seeing and hearing, by raising them to a new power of enhanced perception; a becoming-percept which is future-oriented. Such 'a vision and a voice ... would have remained virtual' (Goddard, 2001, p. 54) unless the intensity of experiential situation would have reached its maximum enabled by the desire for Gnosis at the very limit of the individuating force. Such are the necessary conditions for the actualization of the virtual that 'ensures the resonance of two series' (Deleuze, 1990, p. 104) by virtue of passing through the threshold of perception.

Deleuze contrasts the logical copula 'is' with his radical conjunction 'and' that establishes analogies, sympathies, correspondences, 'actions at a distance ... resonance and echoes, objective chances ... which transcend spatial locations and temporal successions' (Deleuze, 1994, p. 83). Indeed, the method of analogy as the method of *nomadic* inquiry defies the privileged role allotted to the conscious subject that observes the surrounding world of objects with the cool 'scientific' gaze of an independent spectator so as to obtain *episteme* as certain and indubitable knowledge. It is, as Deleuze says, our very 'experimentation on ourselves [that] is our only identity, our single chance for all the combinations which inhabit us' (Deleuze, 1987, p. 11). These combinations are produced by the physicality of affects in nature, in experience, that are capable of affecting and effecting changes and in this process contesting one's supposedly stable identity towards its transformation into multiple becomings. As affects, becomings are 'at once social and desiring' (Deleuze, 1995, p. 144) and do 'affect' the very *intensity* of difference, or one's power to make a difference because of an 'increase in valence, a veritable becoming' (Deleuze & Guattari 1987, p. 10) of the present experience. The present propels toward the future as 'a new threshold, a new direction of the zigzagging line, a new course for the border' (Deleuze, 1995, p. 45).

According to Garrison (1997), it is desire or Eros that is the fundamental, albeit implicit, element of the educational process. Ian Buchanan comments (in Semetsky, 2008b) that Deleuze always said that education was an erotic, voluptuous experience, perhaps the most important experience we can have. The symbolic Eros 'does not take as its object persons or things, but the entire surroundings which it traverses, the vibrations and flows of every sort to which it is joined and in which it introduces breaks and ruptures' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 292). Yet, it is not the conscious *Gogito* of a Cartesian subject that possesses desire: vice versa, it is itself an erotic intensified desire – the desire for Gnosis – that 'produces reality' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 30) in the guise of new, sensible objects of knowledge; even if the virtual objects per se are just potential tendencies and not exactly *res extenza* in a physical sense as Descartes would want them to be in their binary opposition to *res cogitans*. In Plato's *Symposium*, Diotima the Priestess teaches Socrates that Eros or Love is located *in between* lack and plenty; it is a spirit or daimon that, importantly, can hold two opposites together as a whole, therefore to eventually reconcile that which analytic thinking habitually perceives dualistically; that is, as binary *irreconcilable* opposites.

Let us recall the myth: Eros was conceived in a foolish, bordering on a pre-conscious, act that had occurred 'in the excesses of intoxication, a kind of madness' (Garrison 1997, p. 7), in the middle and muddle of 'a sort of groping experimentation ... that ... belongs to the order of dreams, ... esoteric experiences, drunkenness, and excess' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, p. 41). Being a pure difference and bordering on 'veritable becoming-mad' (Deleuze, 1990, p. 1), its symbolic function is nonetheless to produce a union, to unite the opposites by virtue of the power of intensity. While Eros in itself is 'chaotic [and] formless' (Garrison 1997, p. 8), its purpose is nevertheless to *in-form* and *trans-form*: it is a powerful and erotic desire for Gnosis which is capable of intensifying the present experience to such an extent that it 'imaginatively anticipates and creatively constructs the future' (Garrison 1997, p. 144) in the expressive form of the new, emergent, object of knowledge!

We have to select each path for ourselves in our nomadic travels; only as such do our lives proceed along the dynamic lines of genuine becomings and not remain at the level of forever static being. Rather than discovering the pre-existent domain of a scientific Truth (with a capital T), learning consists in the experimental and heterogeneous production of meanings for our lived

experience as the newly created *embodied* concepts. Experience is rendered meaningful not by grounding empirical particulars in abstract universals but by experiments, experimentation on ourselves. Each new concept creatively emerges in practice out of its virtual 'origins' as an object of, first and foremost, 'an encounter ... I make, remake and unmake my concepts along a moving horizon, from an always decentered center, from an always displaced periphery which repeats and differenciate them' (Deleuze, 1994, pp. xx-xxi).

It is in *practice* that Deleuze-Guattarian transformational pragmatics would be enacted. One author (Delpech-Ramey, in press) refers to such an experimental practice as *spiritual ordeal* that would not only transform oneself – making one a unique, *singular*, individual, but – and the most importantly – ultimately would elicit changes and transformations at the level of social institutions; that is, in the context of this article, schools, universities and the educational system as a whole. Deleuze's reversed Platonism would have likely agreed with the story of prisoners told in the *Republic*. They live in illusion among the shadows on the walls of the infamous cave while remaining unaware of the bright light produced by the sun as the metaphor for true, real, knowledge. The soul's quest parallels a freed prisoner's journey away from the cave toward the sun, to which he is drawn by his love for light, for wisdom, for Gnosis.

This knowledge is to be shared with those who are still chained to the walls; and this is the most challenging part of Plato's story; that's where the *ordeal* starts, indeed. Mathesis is not a private quest for initiation and literally 'seeing the light' but the creation of novel concepts that would make it possible to forge new social institutions and new types of organizations. Still the metaphor of light is the poignant one for Deleuze; he is concerned with the possibility of transcending toward 'the divine part in us [and establishing] the spiritual relationship in which we are ... with God as light' (Deleuze, 1986, p. 54). The 'light' metaphor will not, however, take us back to the over-rational *Enlightenment* of modernity but will lead to a postmodern spiritual *Illumination* that would defy pessimism and the frequent fatalistic resignation currently permeating individual and collective consciousness, locally and globally, especially under the conditions of the economic meltdown.

To 'integrate sympathies' (Deleuze, 2003b, p. 21) as the new spiritual values should become part of policy making in education; indeed Deleuze is explicitly interested in mathesis to the extent to which it can energize a specific political project as the formation of new social institutions. This formation – as trans-formation – does not proceed by means of revolutionary overthrowing of the current establishment but by developing sympathies and actualizing relations which are as yet hidden in nature, or in the unconscious. Deleuze and Guattari speak of the people of politics who can create real changes as a *people to come*. This people as would-be leaders and policy makers are themselves produced in virtue of experimentation; they belong to 'an oppressed, bastard, lower, anarchical, nomadic, irremediably minor race. [These people] have resistance in common – their resistance to death, to servitude, to the intolerable, to shame, and to the present' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, pp. 109-110).

The people yet to come will appear only via the creative forms of becoming, among which *educating Gnosis* should become one! The facilitation of creativity and emergence thus belongs to a particular, and necessarily paradoxical, type of educational leadership which, even if de-centred, demands the presence of a singular, unique, individual whose task is human service through spiritual ordeal and whose presence would have de-/reterritorialized a hierarchically designed structure typical of formal education. The role of a creative thinker becomes one of the clinician of culture described by Deleuze as an inventor of new immanent modes of existence, crucial for educational futures. Deleuze's vision of human solidarity gives us reliable clues of how to put it in practice. People to come in *education* will be genuine nomads who can create magic in our real life, cross the limits of the present and become able to tap into the future. As John Dewey was saying long ago, they will 'act on the basis of the absent and the future ... [For them] nature speaks a language which may be interpreted. To a being who thinks, things are records of their past, as fossils tell of the prior history of the earth, and are prophetic of their future' (Dewey, 1991, pp. 14-15). To educate in Gnosis and mathesis is the ethical task of people to come. Or are people 'who think' here already?

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