



PAIDEUTIKA

Quaderni di formazione e cultura

36

Nuova Serie
Anno XVIII – 2022



PAIDEUTIKA. Quaderni di formazione e cultura
36 – Nuova Serie – Anno XVIII – 2022
semestrale

Rivista fondata da Antonio Erbetta

Direttore responsabile e scientifico
Elena Madrussan (Università di Torino)

Comitato di Direzione:

Mino Conte (Università di Padova, Italy), Tyson E. Lewis (University of North Texas, U.S.A.), Josep Lluís Oliver (Universitat de les Illes Balears, Spain)

Comitato scientifico

Miguel Benasayag (Université de Lille 3), Malte Brinkmann (Humboldt Universität, Berlin), Gabriella Bosco (Università di Torino), Massimo Canevacci (Universidade Federal Santa Catarina, Brasil), Mauro Carbone (Université Jean Moulin Lyon 3), Rita Fadda (Università di Cagliari), Philippe Forest (Université de Nantes), Enrica Lisciani Petrini (Università di Salerno), Alessandro Mariani (Università di Firenze), Fabio Merlini (IUFPF, Switzerland), Marco Revelli (Università del Piemonte Orientale), Enrico Testa (Università di Genova), Ignazio Volpicelli (Università di Roma-Tor Vergata)

Comitato di redazione

Silvano Calvetto (Università di Torino – Segreteria di Redazione), Gianluca Giachery (Università di Torino – Segreteria di Redazione), Germana Berlantini (Università di Trento – Université de Paris-Nanterre), Silvia Demozzi (Università di Bologna), Pietro Maltese (Università di Palermo), Grazia Massara (Università di Torino), Irene Papa (Università di Roma – Tor Vergata), Anna Maria Passaseo (Università di Messina), Claudia Secci (Università di Cagliari), Maria Volpicelli (Università Guglielmo Marconi)

Paideutika utilizza il double blind peer review process. L'elenco dei Revisori è aggiornato e pubblicato online e in fondo ad ogni fascicolo.

Non sono sottoposti a peer review, per il loro carattere breve e illustrativo, l'Editoriale e le Rubriche "Oggi un filosofo", "Recensioni".

Gli Scopi della Rivista, le Policies, le modalità per proporre contributi sono reperibili on line (www.ibisedizioni.it/paideutika)

Paideutika è una *Rivista scientifica semestrale classificata in fascia A dall'ANVUR dal 2012.*

Autorizzazione del Tribunale di Torino n. 5850 del 26/03/2005

Ibis edizioni s.a.s.

Como – Pavia

www.ibisedizioni.it – e-mail : info@ibisedizioni.it

Stampa: Joelle, Via Biturgense, Città di Castello (Perugia).

Direzione e Redazione

Via Amedeo Peyron, 32 – 10143 Torino – e-mail : rivista@paideutika.it

<https://paideutika.journals.publicknowledgeproject.org/index.php/paideutika/issue/view/202>

ISSN: 1974-6814 E-ISSN 2785-566X ISBN: 978-88-7164-701-2

I diritti di memorizzazione elettronica, di riproduzione totale o parziale con qualsiasi mezzo (compresi i microfilm e le copie fotostatiche) sono riservati.

PAIDEUTIKA

Notebooks on Education and Culture

Editoriale/Editorial	5
<i>Pedagogical transformations in contemporary world. Perspectives of Philosophy of Education in Italy (2)</i>	
Editors: Elena Madrussan, Mino Conte	
Daniele Bruzzone, <i>“L’orrore e l’incanto”: le cose, i valori e l’educazione del sentire</i>	15
Vasco D’Agnese, <i>Plato’s Cave: A Tale of Coercion and Obedience. Untangling the Knot between Education, Constriction and Truth</i>	35
Maurizio Fabbri, <i>Antidogmatism and weak thought: The hinges of Problematicism in the time of Crisis</i>	53
Isabella Loiodice, <i>Brotherhood as a pedagogical perspective in the present and future</i>	67
Mimmo Pesare e Chiara Agagiù, <i>Subjectivation and Psychopedagogy of the Subject: For a Lacanian-oriented Philosophy of Education</i>	79
Ilaria Barbieri, Francesca Marcone, Giancarla Sola, Edoardo Valter Tizzi, <i>Le tre filosofie: della formazione, dell’educazione, dell’istruzione</i>	95
<i>Ricordando Piero Bertolini/Remembering Pietro Bertolini</i>	
Elena Madrussan, <i>Piero Bertolini e la reciprocità della relazione ne L’esistere pedagogico</i>	115
Gianluca Giachery, <i>Recensione alla nuova edizione de L’esistere pedagogico</i>	122
Silvano Calvetto, <i>Un lungo mutamento di paradigma. Piero Bertolini e il disadattamento minorile come problema educativo</i>	127

<i>BOOK REVIEWS</i>	139
Enza Colicchi, <i>I valori in educazione e in pedagogia</i> (di Maria-Chiara Michelini)	139
Daniel Mendelsohn, <i>Tre Anelli. Una storia di esilio, narrazione e destino</i> (di Gianmarco Pincioli)	143
Lamberto Borghi, <i>Educazione e autorità nell'Italia moderna</i> (di Silvano Calvetto)	145
Luigi Saragnese, <i>I comunisti e la scuola. La politica scolastica del Partito comunista italiano, dalla Liberazione al Congresso di Rimini (1945-1991)</i> (di Silvano Calvetto)	150
Massimo Baldacci, <i>Praxis e concetto. Il linguaggio della pedagogia</i> (di Alessandro Casula)	154
Cornelius Castoriadis, <i>La rivoluzione democratica e Contro l'economia. Scritti 1949-1997</i> (di Gianluca Giachery)	156
Nick Land, <i>Nessun futuro. Scritti 1995-2007</i> (di Gianluca Giachery)	159
 <i>Lecture dalla Francia</i>	
Simone de Beauvoir, <i>Les inséparables</i> (di Marta Baravalle)	163

Subjectivation and Psychopedagogy of the Subject *For a Lacanian-oriented Philosophy of Education**

Mimmo Pesare

Associate Professor, University of Salento

e-mail: mimmo.pesare@unisalento.it

Chiara Agagiù

PhD Student, University of Salento

e-mail: chiara.agagiu@unisalento.it

The article presents a review of Subjectivation theory starting from the Foucauldian-Lacanian perspective and considering it as one of the main theoretical questions that, according to the authors, should found the basis of Philosophy of Education. In the essay are presented such heuristic devices belonging from Lacanian psychoanalysis that are used to investigate the relationship between the subject and the social discourse, considering it in all its declinations and its inner dialectic nature. Imaginary and Symbolic dimensions are both explored to give back the transformation power in Subjectivation, with such socio-political issues that emerge in considering the contemporary subject and that naturally concern the foundational questions in the psycho-pedagogical field.

Keywords: Subjectivation; Psychopedagogy; Philosophy of Education; Psychoanalysis; Lacanian Theory.

Soggettivazione e psicopedagogia del soggetto. Per una filosofia dell'educazione di orientamento lacanianano

L'articolo presenta una rassegna sulla teoria della Soggettivazione a partire dalla prospettiva foucaultiano-lacanianana, che, secondo gli autori, rap-

* Mimmo Pesare e Chiara Agagiù hanno discusso ed elaborato insieme il presente saggio. In particolare, Mimmo Pesare è autore del primo paragrafo. Chiara Agagiù è autrice del terzo paragrafo. Il secondo paragrafo, invece, è stato condiviso in toto.

presenta una delle principali questioni teoretiche, precisamente alle basi della Filosofia dell'educazione. Nel saggio sono presentati quei dispositivi euristici provenienti dalla psicoanalisi lacaniana utili a indagare il rapporto tra il soggetto e il discorso sociale, e ciò considerandolo in tutte le sue declinazioni e nella sua implicita natura dialettica. Le dimensioni dell'Immaginario e del Simbolico sono entrambe esplorate per restituire la cifra trasformativa della Soggettivazione, insieme alle questioni socio-politiche che emergono nello studio del soggetto contemporaneo, naturalmente fondative dell'ambito psicopedagogico.

Parole-chiave: soggettivazione; psicopedagogia, filosofia dell'educazione; psicoanalisi; teoria lacaniana.

Why Subjectivation is a Philosophical-educational and Psychopedagogical Grundfrage

Discussing *subjectivation* in the field of contemporary *paideia* (education) means talking about a question that is strictly connected to the entire formation of the human being, therefore, *how* the subjectivity of a 'complete' human being is shaped according to the Foucauldian-Lacanian perspective, beyond any personal characterization. Above all, the question of subjectivation, what a subject is/how it is constituted, in light of the great anthropological and sociological transformations that make incandescent the problem of the relationship between the subject, the social world and the educational institutions which should guarantee their link, strongly asks to be reviewed and, possibly, rewritten.

If the subject is the product of culture on nature and, at the same time, it is the work of singular and unrepeatable assumption of this product, and if its construction paths are linguistic and symbolic, then our time presents us with a condition within which an ancestral pre-symbolic – and, therefore, pre-cultural, pre-Oedipal, only-instinctual – disposition of new forms of subjectivity seem to emerge strongly, appearing unable to think about their own internal world (Bollas 1987; 2018) and, often consequently, allergic to all kinds of otherness and epiphanies from the outside world.

At the same time, if by psychopedagogy we also mean that field of knowledge that tries to structure some of the fundamental questions of

pedagogy through their deep dynamics of an emotional and affective nature (Fabbri 2012; Riva 2004; Ulivieri Stiozzi 2008; Pesare 2018), we cannot consider them detached from the consideration of the historical contingency within which they manifest themselves, as well if we assume that the singular/plural dialectic is at the basis of the construction of subjectivity. In this sense, a reflection on subjectivation, even in the pedagogical field, is believed to have a strong political, as well as speculative, value.

Subjectivation is a lemma that comes from philosophical thought, mainly from the nineteenth century and, in other respects, from that of psychoanalysis. For both (philosophy and psychoanalysis), the net of the uses and research methodologies within which the notion of *subjectivation* appears, it is possible to isolate a transdisciplinary red thread that characterizes its semantics. Whether it is philosophy, psychoanalysis or other fields of knowledge that have borrowed the notion from them – some sociological orientations, some anthropology, the history and hermeneutics of systems of thought – we can agree on the fact that in the social sciences it is associated with the transversal concept of the construction of one's own subjectivity.

What is important to underline in this context is the *dynamic* nature of this process; in order to trace its pedagogical legitimacy, in the case one assumes the philosophical roots or the psychoanalytical ones, subjectivation implies the consideration of a *transformative dimension*. In other words, and more specifically, for the human being to constitute himself as a subject, it is necessary to amend every form of innatism and postulate that his life is determined by that principle of *psychic causality* that builds him in contamination with the other, rather than thinking of it as the repository of a pre-constituted plexus of temperaments, dispositions, attitudes and tendencies, inherited from some predetermined genetic or character code. There is no ineluctability (and this is, probably, the political element in the question) in all the paths of existence. We are always the result of a law of cause and effect that shapes our lives on the basis of a phenomenology of the encounter with the other, understood both as similar and as a socio-cultural structure.

Contrary to this innatist interpretation, both Foucault and Lacan insist on the fact that human existence is always “the product of a discourse about a body,” where *discourse* is a sort of technical term that describes all that the linguistic, cultural, values-based, social code represents for our daily life and within which it is immersed even before our birth. Lacan defines this code

as “the Big Other” or “the discourse of the Other” i.e., the transcendence of a third structure which removes the naked life of the human being from its physiological and animal framework, guaranteeing the subject its cultural intelligibility.

If pedagogy is the discipline that reflects on man’s education and psychopedagogy represents a particular expression of it that privileges the deep dynamics of this formation, the process of subjectivation or the path along which the human is singularized and separated from the other (even if it is structured with the other as we will see in the next chapter), cannot but reenter, by right, into the question of education.

The construction of an existence takes place, pedagogically, through this singular/plural dialectic: the subject is built through encounters with his *Bildungsrats* and, at the same time, through the unique and unrepeatable singular assumption in relation to these encounters, in a continuous communication between intrapsychic and interpsychic. After all, our idea of the subject, that is, the idea of the subject shared by those who internalized Freud’s lesson (also in pedagogy), is not that of an autarchic, monolithic subject, endowed with a self-defined aura.

Freud, in lesson 31 of *Introduction to Psychoanalysis* (1917), compares human subjectivity to a dialectical institution: the Ego is not the ruler of subjectivity, an absolute monarch who enjoys a stable and definitive unity and compactness. Subjectivity, rather, is the site of a permanent debate between a multiplicity of instances and voices. This new subject that overcomes and overturns Descartes’ modern subject and that constitutes itself in that gap between being and truth, is the “subject of the unconscious,” the *insu que sait*, the “not knowing that knows” (Lacan, 2001).

For too many years, this expression has been associated with an irrationalistic understanding of Freud’s work and psychoanalysis: the unconscious as a container of chaos and destruction, as the Danaids’ barrel, as the dissolution of the Logos that shapes life. At the end of the 1970s, however, even the pedagogical sciences, especially through Riccardo Massa’s work, re-elaborated the psychoanalytic notion of the unconscious not only as a form of other rationality – or as Lacan intended it, “the discourse of the Other” – but also as a device for rethinking the theory of the subject within pedagogy, assuming it first, within its epistemological status, and then in its clinical one.

The unconscious, as the primary vector of subjectivation – as the bearer of this transformative and relational dimension – is then, above all, thinkable

as a form of social discourse, as the singular and irreducible decode that the human being makes of the structure – cultural, linguistic, educational, anthropological – that pre-exists it, re-elaborating itself in a personal way. In these terms, shifting from the clinical language to the philosophical-educational one, the subjectivation would, therefore, represent a device that catalyzes the social discourse (the Lacanian *Big Other*, the Foucauldian *structure*) in the singular assumption of the personal and formative history of an individual.

Pre-Symbolic Questions on the Subject

In the first chapter, we outlined, albeit briefly for reasons of space, the framework within which it is possible to include, in our opinion, a perspective on *subjectivation* intended as a founding theoretical question in the pedagogical discourse. At the same time, a political urgency is highlighted, as the theoretical inquiry should not be considered as separated from the contemporary subject's *new symptoms*.

If we assume as a starting point, therefore, that the weakening of symbolic structures is connected to a re-emergence of pre-Oedipal instances¹, before fully entering into the symbolic dialectic between singular and plural, it is worth dwelling on the fundamental pre-symbolic aspects which determine subjectivity. In this sense, it is understood that the process of subjectivation concerns the intrapsychic and interpsychic dynamics, as well as the cognitive and learning ones. Every possible construction of the self has to do with the *constituent* image that the subject realizes through its relationship with language, with the other, and with the vectors of desire. These constructions, the true basis for every possible formation, are proposed, through the Lacanian lens, not only as clinical knowledge, but, above all, as a critical thought for the present time.

The Lacanian subject is structured within the simultaneous and inseparable interactions of three *Registers*: 1. the *Symbolic*, which concerns language – the cultural code, the Law, everything that guarantees intelligibility to the subject; 2. the *Imaginary*, or the identification with an image of oneself, starting from

¹ The theme of narcissism connected to aggressiveness (e. g. hate speech on social media) and, also, to paranoia is widely treated in Pesare (2019).

the *Mirror Stage*; and 3. the *Real*, which is the dimension of the body and its drives. Even if in this paper we will mostly work with the dimensions of the Imaginary and the Symbolic, it should be remembered that in the construction of subjectivity these psychic instances (indeed, the Registers) never act separately, and to the point that Lacan represents them graphically by borrowing the figure of the Borromean rings, where *tout se tient*.

In the Imaginary dimension, Lacan thinks of the Ego as an ‘onion’: a set of stratified identifications which do not reach any cohesive core as they are simple internalizations of the image of ourselves that *the other has given back to us*. The Ego could represent the unconscious answer to the popular question: “who do you think you are?”

Jacques Lacan, who dedicated the first studies of his training specifically to the question of narcissism, theorized in 1936 the idea of the Mirror Stage, an original reworking of the Freudian clinical elaboration on narcissism (Lacan, 1966). If for Freud the genesis of narcissism resided in the relationship of the subject with its own image, Lacan increases the dose, affirming that, in general, this *ideal* image of oneself acts as a *morphogenic* function, meaning it is designated to a preliminary *genesis of the form* of the ego. In other words, the encounter with the ideal image of our body, when we are not yet aware of its perimeter and its conformation, allows for what Lacan defines as the *first sketch of subjectivity*: the ego.

In fact, Lacan explains that in everyone’s life there was a time when there was no awareness of one’s own body image. In the first months of life, the child is a *corps morcelé* (*fragmented body*), absolutely confused by the indistinct post-birth chaos and thrown into an unrepresentable sensation of fusion with the mother-object. Between six and eighteen months, a *logical* moment takes place in the child that inaugurates the unprecedented ability (until then) to have an *anticipation* – through a visual image – of his body’s totality, continuity, morphology and coherence.

Lacan, reinterpreting Henri Wallon’s and Roger Callois’ ethological studies on animal mimicry and making them interact with the Hegelian intuitions filtered by Kojève’s teaching, uses the clinical metaphor of the mirror. Between six and eighteen months, through a series of intermediate stages while placed in front of a mirror, the child recognizes the figure he sees as his body image, obtaining a ‘jubilatory reaction’ i.e., receiving gratification. This experience, which we could define as an internalization of one’s totality through the mirror image, realizes, according to Lacan, the *first*

self-awareness, that is the ego itself. The *Mirror Stage*, therefore, constituting the first sketch of the ego, represents the original identification with one's body as a functioning totality with its own autonomy and, at the same time, represents the basis for the subject's future and infinite identifications.

The mirror, while being an object that allows the observation of this logical moment, is basically the metaphor of a presupposition, the one according to which the identity of the Ego is realized through the mediation of the *other*, the other understood as an *external* image, as the first conscious encounter with the concept of otherness. The mirror can also be thought of as the 'first other' – the mother, the primary caregivers – that allows the child to access a reflective experience of *recognition*. The mirror, as well as the encounter with the other, produces a doubling whereby one's image (and one's recognition of it) exists by virtue of the presence of another image, the one that the mirror or the others send back to it. The mirror as a morphogenic function, therefore, metaphorizes this dialectical movement of recognition that marks the first sketch of subjectivity and which, according to 'psychic causality,' produces the ego in its imaginary nature, that is, identifiable with an external image to the subject itself.

Since all the relationships in adult life spring from the internalization of the first mirror image, the narcissistic dimension of the human being is inaugurated: the subject eroticizes his image and rivals it, giving rise to the mechanisms of aggression, envy and, in more extreme cases, of paranoia (Pesare, 2019). Therefore, with the theory of the Mirror Stage, Lacan clinically explains one thing: the first identification with a virtual *monument* (the *Moi*) which has the purpose of receiving care and social gratifications, constitutes as a consequence an *Ideal-Ego* (*Ideal-Ich*), a psychic formation belonging to the Imaginary Register and representing the first sketch of the libidinally-invested ego.

This explains why the ego cannot be thought of as the *subject*, because it is not its substance, as all previous thought postulated. The ego is not the substance of the subject because it itself does not have its own substance, formed, as it is, by an infinite stratification of identifications with external images. The ego is not the *subject* because it is an *object*; it is taken 'from the outside,' it is not born as an original entity. The ego, therefore, is not that moment of unitary synthesis of its conscious part, as the idealistic philosophy wanted, but the result of a different form of unification thanks to an external image that will reverberate forever in the representation of an Ideal-Ego.

In this sense, we can say that for the Lacan who cites Rimbaud's famous *Je est un autre*, the discourse on the psychic causality of the ego is not an auroral process – original and autonomous – but a *constituent*, derivative, aggregate process that inevitably opens a deep gap between the subject and his *image*. The *Moi*, while being unavoidably precious for the first constitution of subjectivity, is otherwise alienating, split, because it does not have a *self-founded* character, but *hetero-founded*, *heteronomous*. In identifications with external images, starting from the mirror, there is a grasp such that the subject is forever, as Lacan says in Seminar II, 'aspirated by the image,' in a movement which, while gathering the ego by making the *recognition* effective, it exiles forever the *barred subject* to a place of *misrecognition* (Madruassan, 2017, pp. 65-83).

Starting from the 1950s, Lacan focuses on the clinical consideration according to which the passages of psychic causality cannot remain stagnant within the identifying alienation. As if to say, "not only of the ego will man live!".

The object of the relationship that each subject has with the image of the *other* – the mirror, the mother, the like – is indicated by Lacan with an *a* (read as little *a*). Any consideration on issues that affect narcissism, aggression, paranoia are, in some ways, a reflection of the relationship between $\$$ and *a* i.e., between the *barred subject* and his objects of identifying love.

Starting from the end of Seminar II and then with Seminar III (*The Psychoses*, French Edition 1981) and Seminar IV (*The Object Relation*, French Edition 1994), but above all with essays such as "The Instance of the Letter in the Unconscious, or Reason Since Freud" and "The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis" (both in the *Ecrits*, 1966), Lacan focuses on the elaboration of the so-called *Symbolic Register*. The symbolic order is that category of psychic life that has to do with the overcoming of imaginary alienation, therefore, of the subject thought of as a sum of identifications that create the 'onion' constitution of *Moi*, and that structures the reality of the subject, its *Je*.

What Lacan wants to demonstrate is that beyond the ego – understood as a 'copy paper' of a series of identifications which, by stratifying themselves, form its imaginary matrix – the human world cannot be reduced exclusively to the drama of the mirror, to its narcissistic claustrophobia, and the $\$$ does not end in its derivative relationship with the self-image. In the next chapter, therefore, we will explore the singular/plural dialectic that permeates the symbolic dimension of subjectivity.

Heuristic Tools and Psychopedagogical Devices from Lacan's Lesson

We have seen how the genesis of that psychic instance that Freud calls Ego occurs through a process of identification with an external image which Lacan defines as 'morphogenic,' that is, constituting the Ego itself and how its nature is imaginary, therefore derivative. This paradoxical and projective status of the Ego causes its dimension to be at the basis of the psychic phenomena of narcissism and aggression, because the logical time of the mirror, according to Lacan's theory, compels the subject to compete with that identifying image that it tries to assume as constitutive of itself and which, however, will never contain it in a precise and complete way.

When we talk about the device, Michel Foucault's work immediately comes to mind, according to which the constitution of the subject takes place through a series of *technologies of the self* (devices, practices) that inscribe its formation in an order of meaning. For Foucault, in fact, the ultimate goal of all social sciences should be to demonstrate how the subject of knowledge is constituted through a social structure (linguistic, historical, epistemic, educational, artistic, economic) within which the subject himself is *subjected*, that is, immersed even before his birth, unable to avoid it.

When the Poitiers philosopher – in his 1980s lectures at College de France and, in particular, in "Hermeneutics of the Subject," 1981-82 – speaks of "active practices" of subjectivation, he does so by underlining the *self-constituting* power of such practices. The subject is hopefully engaged in the effort defined by Lacan as *subjective rectification*, that is, each individual is always called to subjectively respond to the ways in which he will take charge of the impersonal character of the social structure in which he is immersed.

The Foucault-Lacan line is strengthened in this passage; both start from an idea of non-auroral subjectivity – as determined by the socio-cultural discourse that subjugates it – but, at the same time, both trace the possibility of each of its most authentic realization within the *devices* that to some extent *singularize* this discourse, as Riccardo Massa well summarizes in one of his essays on the *pedagogical* Foucault:

Self-formation and self-constitution of the subject means not only that I am not a given and guaranteed subject, but that I have to "sustain myself" through specific practices. (Massa 1997, p. 185, TdA)

The formative genealogy of the subject, therefore, presents itself to us in its inexhaustible *transformative* gradient: I subjectivize myself – in other words, Foucault and in other respects Lacan – on the condition that I undertake continuous work of self-modification, even in the apparently claustrophobic determinism of the social structure that pre-determines me but towards which I can put in place a useful *apparatus*² not to be in a *minority* state.

Pedagogical *devices* would then be all the practices “through which one takes charge of oneself, through which one modifies, transforms and transfigures oneself” (Foucault, 2001, p. 13). In this sense, every aspect of our formation would be characterized by a “psychic causality” (Lacan, 1966), or an intertwining of relationships that determine our subjectivity on the basis of the psychological field in which they are immersed and the *encounters* that build it. Quoting Lacan, “we are the product of the encounters we have had. We are the product of the word of the Other.” In other words, our existence is built by the words we have encountered, which modify and transform our inner world and make us the subjects we become. In our opinion, this Lacanian assumption seems not only an ethical-clinical horizon impregnated with educational context, but above all, also a sort of compass to orient a new thought on subjectivation in the pedagogical field: subjectivation as a synonym for *psychopedagogy of the encounter*, where the term *encounter* is not referred to exclusively to the other understood as similar, but also to otherness in a broad sense, to everything we encounter in our life, to every experience that makes it unique.

This paradoxical relationship, this chiasm between the internal world and the encounters/clashes with the outside world and otherness, represents the etiology of what we call *psychopedagogical subjectivation* and which we will *extract* from its extra-pedagogical roots, trying to legitimize an autonomous epistemological status, while acknowledging the debt to other disciplines.

Both perspectives – Foucault and Lacan – start from the idea of the subject as a short circuit, as a paradox: the subject is the product of a social *discourse* on a body (first position) but the subject is also the singular and unrepeatable path of *identification* of an individual within this *discourse*

² A Foucauldian concept, borrowed from Seneca and developed by Demetrio, is the one of *paraskeué*.

(second position). Where this paradox remains problematic with Foucault, Lacan radicalizes it, showing how this apparent aporia is never disjunctive, never binary but *structuring*. The Lacanian solution to the question of how a subject constitutes himself is intrinsically composed of two answers: 1. the process through which a subject is produced (position of the structure); and 2. the process through which a subject constitutes himself in his own singularity (position of individual assumption).

The reason for which, according to Lacan, there is no contradiction between *being-subjected* and *subjectivating* oneself is that the constituent movement of subjectivation is by its nature *singular/plural* in the sense that the social structure in which we are immersed and the ways in which we *color* it with our individual irreducibility, not only are they not related, but they are also co-structural in the formation of our concrete, historical, anthropological subjectivity. The pair of *singular/plural* adjectives in the title of this work alludes to this: psychopedagogical subjectivation proceeds along the crest of an apparent dichotomy that intersects the *encounter* with *subjective assumption*.

What Lacanian psychoanalysis can offer to the educational sciences is the idea that “there is nothing natural in human life.” Therefore, one enters the “social bond” as subjects only on condition that biological life is *marked* from the sign of the *Big Other* i.e., of the linguistic, social, cultural, educational structure. This *marking*, however, is not enough. To complete subjectivation, the individual must “make something of that *Big Other*,” he must assume it individually in his life, totally, partially or critically submitting himself to it, or on the contrary, completely refuting it, contesting it, invalidating it. In other words, shape it to a principle of unity, at the basis of which lies the awareness that we are always – in a Sartrian way – responsible for what the social structure does with our life, even when this structure is ferocious, cruel, authoritarian, tyrannical.

Lacan summarizes this intersection (between the moment of the social code and the moment of its singular assumption) in the second topological formulation of the famous *Graph of Desire*:³ (fig. 1)

³ This topological scheme is presented by Lacan in the essay “The Subversion of the Subject and the Dialectic of Desire in the Freudian Unconscious” (in *Ecrits*, 1966) and more widely in Seminars V and VI.

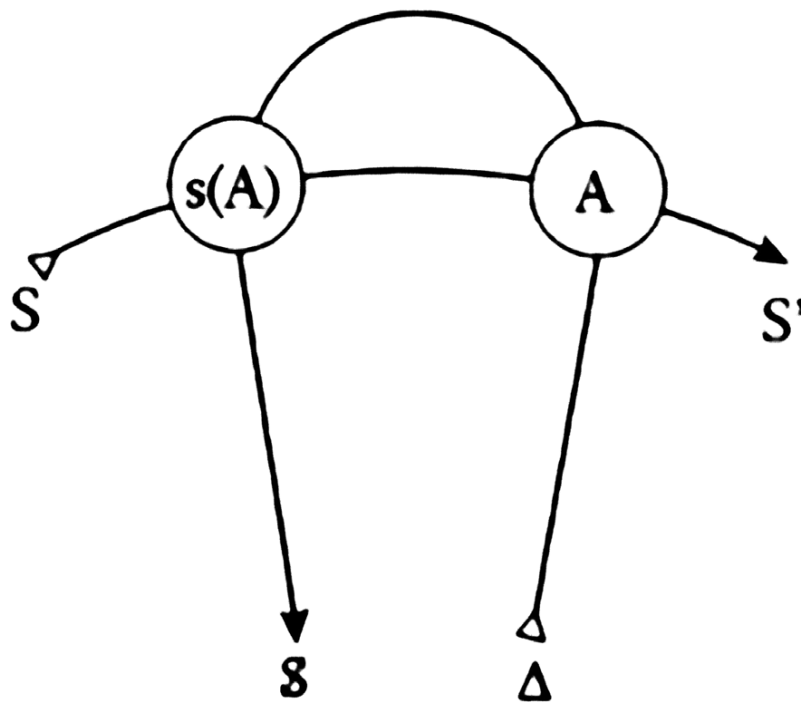


Fig.1
Graph of Desire

Inside we find a retroverted vertical vector (from right to left)⁴ defined by the points Δ and $\$$, and a horizontal vector defined by the points S and S'. The first vector represents the concrete, historical, embodied life of every human being, where the point Δ (Delta) is the “pre-symbolic intention” (Lacan, 1988), that is human existence in power in its physiological nudity, and $\$$ *animal* nature, prior to its encounter with the linguistic and cultural structure (A). The point $\$$ (*barred subject*) represents the anthropological outcome following that encounter and, therefore, the *subjectivation*. The second vector S-S' is defined as the “signifying chain” (*ibidem*), that is, every possible social, cultural, linguistic sign that characterizes the structure of the collective imagination in which we are born.

Human life, therefore, encounters the signifying chain in a first intersection⁵ within which Lacan inserts the *Big Other* (A). At this point,

⁴ The retroverted vector reproduces the ‘afterwardsness’, i. e. *après-coup* – “after the fact” – a concept that Lacan identified and developed starting from Freud’s *Nachträglichkeit*.

⁵ The so-called *capitone point*, a definition that owes its name to the textile terminology of the ancient mattress makers, being the *capitonnage* the knot that held together the padding and lining of pillows and mattresses.

each of our lives is marked by a baptism of fire from a structural point of view. We meet the code of our existential *principium individuationis*, participating (and not being able to ignore it, from that moment on) in a linguistic, social and cultural endowment that will forever define our inner world, even before the external and relational one.

We meet a language that will determine our thinking, our emotional grammar, and that will permeate our unconscious. We meet a system of values, beliefs, ideologies, institutions, practices, trends, behaviors, which will, to use a computer term, forge our *operational system*. Furthermore, we meet an *infosphere* that will outline our lifestyle, our habits, our consumptions, our desires.

“A,” the *Big Other*, is *transversal*, however. In power it is a basin of information which, taken in a homologous manner for everyone, would make a uniform anthropological phalanx without differences and waste. In other words, if everyone absorbed in the same way the socio-cultural code (A) in which we are born, there would be no differences between individuals: we would desire the same things, we would participate in the same ideologies, we would lead a life marked by the same styles. The moment of the *code*, or the moment our existence encounters the *Big Other* of the social structure, must then, hopefully, be followed by the moment of the *punctuation* (Lacan 1966; 1988), which in the Graph is indicated as $s(A)$, that is the *meaning* (s) that each of us gives to the *Big Other* (A). The punctuation $s(A)$ is what guarantees an authentic psychopedagogical *subjectivation*. It is the moment of the singular and critical assumption of the inherited system of values, ideals, beliefs, attitudes from the signifying chain that precedes us, so much so that we could redefine that portion of the vector, A to $s(A)$, as a *Bildungsroman*, not in a literary sense, but in a psychopedagogical and educational one.

In summary, the punctuation $s(A)$ of the code A allows Δ , which is the anonymous naked life, to become $\$$ or the *barred subject*, a subjectivity marked by language. This passage is not granted and does not happen for everyone, guaranteeing the *Eigentlichkeit* with which Heidegger (1927) distinguished the creation of an *authentic* existence (*Mann*) from an impersonal and homologated existence (*man*).

In this icastic passage of the Lacanian *Graph of Desire* the subjectivizing paradox of the singular/plural is visible, which from the ethical and aesthetic point of view makes every critically assumed encounter that which we define as a *psychopedagogical Bildungsroman*. Singularity and plurality, therefore,

constitute the extremes of a dialectical tension that makes subjectivation a device conceivable as a *psychopedagogical Bildungsroman*. In this tension probably also resists every possible ethical-political reservoir that distinguishes a pedagogy understood simply as the passage of rules, teachings and values, from a principle of authentic self-formation, making life not only worth living, but, above all, strong against any possible gregarious temptation.

References

- Agagiù C. 2020. Speech, Event, Desire: Psycho-Pedagogical Perspectives about the Symptom. In *PsychoEdu. International Journal of Psychoanalysis and Education*. vol. 12. n. 2. 2020. 6-11.
- Bollas C. 1987. *The shadow of the object*. London: Free Association Books.
- Id. 2018. *Meaning and Melancholia. Life in the age of bewilderment*. London: Routledge.
- Fabbri M. 2012. *Il transfert, il dono, la cura*. Milano: Franco Angeli.
- Freud S. 1917. *Vorlesungen zur Einführung in die Psychoanalyse*. In Id. 1968. *Gesammelte Werke*. 18 vol. Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer.
- Foucault M. 2001. *L'herméneutique du sujet*. Paris: Seuil-Gallimard.
- Granese A. 1976. *Dialettica dell'educazione*. Roma: Editori Riuniti.
- Heidegger M. 1927. *Sein und Zeit*. Tübingen: Verlag.
- Lacan J. 1966. *Écrits*. Paris: Seuil.
- Id. 1978. *Le séminaire de Jacques Lacan. Livre II. Le moi dans la théorie de Freud et dans la technique de la psychanalyse (1954-1955)*. Paris: Seuil.
- Id. 1981. *Le Séminaire de Jacques Lacan. Livre III. Les Psychoses (1955-1956)*. Paris: Seuil.
- Id. 1988. *Le Séminaire de Jacques Lacan. Livre V. Les formations de l'incoscient*. Paris: Seuil.
- Id. 1994. *Le Séminaire de Jacques Lacan. Livre IV. La relation d'objet (1956-1957)*. Paris: Seuil.
- Id. 2001. *Autres écrits*. Paris: Seuil.
- Madrussan E. 2017. *Educazione e inquietudine. La manœuvre formativa*. Como-Pavia: Ibis.
- Mariani A. (Ed.). 2004. *Attraversare Foucault. La soggettività, il potere, l'educazione*. Milano: Unicopli.
- Massa R. 1997. Formazione del soggetto e proceduralità pedagogiche. In Mortari L. 2006. *La pratica dell'aver cura*. Milano: Bruno Mondadori.
- Pesare M. 2018. *Il soggetto barrato. Per una psicopedagogia di orientamento lacaniano*. Milano: Mimesis.
- Id. 2019. La società paranoica: soggettivazione e radici dell'odio. In *MeTis – Mondi educativi*. v. 9. n.2.
- Riva M. G. 2004. *Il lavoro pedagogico come ricerca dei significati e ascolto delle emozioni*. Milano: Guerini.

- Semeraro A. 2013. *Abbandonare Babele. L'educazione per il tempo che viene.*
Pisa: ETS.
- Sola G. 2004. *Umbildung. La «trasformazione» nella formazione dell'uomo.*
Milano: Bompiani.
- Ulivieri Stiozzi S. 2008. *Pensarsi padri. Narrazioni nel corso del tempo.*
Milano: Guerini.



Ibis si impegna nella difesa dell'ambiente
e per questo stampa su carta prodotta
a partire da boschi gestiti in maniera responsabile.

Finito di stampare nel mese di novembre 2022 da Joelle srl.

