

(Re)thinking (trans)formation in South African (higher) education

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In this article I outline two broad sets of changes characterising the South African higher education landscape. The first relates to, among other things, structural changes (such as mergers and incorporations), the reorganisation of teaching programmes (influenced by the mode 2 knowledge), and the introduction of performativity regimes, most notably a quality assurance body for higher education, the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC). These changes might be understood as outcomes of forces associated with the ascendancy of neoliberal politics and forces linked to a rapidly changing and globally interconnected world. The second relates to the need to transform higher education in South Africa so as to overcome legacies of apartheid as captured in policies that have been developed to redress past inequalities, including discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation and so on. It is in this area in particular that challenges remain, as reflected in the Soudien Report. I suggest in this article that both sets of changes relate to a broader crisis – a crisis of humanism. Moreover, education might be implicated in this crisis. And so I suggest that we might need to (re)think (trans)formation in (higher) education by replacing the term ‘education’ with the term pedagogy, where pedagogy is understood as a transformative event concerned with the person becoming present in context (Todd 2010).

Introduction

I begin this article with a brief orientation to this work. Firstly, my discussion relates to what I have experienced and what I have seen happening around me. In Foucault’s (in Rajchman, 1985:36) words: “Each time I have attempted to do theoretical [academic] work it has been on the basis of elements of my experience – always in relation to processes that I saw taking place around me”. Secondly, I am both a subject and an object of what I describe in the article. I borrow Ball’s (2004:146) words: “Some of the oppressions I describe are perpetrated by me. I am an agent and subject within the regime of performativity in the academy.” Thirdly, my method of inquiry is writing itself. As Richardson (2001:35) points out: “I write because I want to find something out ... in order to learn something that I did not know before I wrote it. I was taught, though, as perhaps you were, too, not to write until I knew what I wanted to say, until my points were organized and outlined. No surprise, this static writing model coheres with mechanistic scientism, quantitative research, and entombed scholarship.” My interest is to find out more about broader processes impacting on my (and others’) work and to make sense of transformation processes occurring in South African higher education. Moreover, I wish to explore how we might rethink the notion of transformation, not as a process driven by macro-forces (whether global or national) but one that occurs at the micro-level.

Transformation has become a buzzword and is often bandied around loosely. It might usefully be understood as a process that has no beginning and no end. In the context of higher education it is a term that has been used with reference to changes that the modern university is undergoing in a rapidly globalising world and also with respect to challenges within nation-states associated with issues such as access, diversity, equity and (e)quality. As far as the modern university is concerned, Jacobs and Hellström (2000:1) point to three significant developments in the transformation of the university research system over the past two or three decades:

- The shift from science systems to global science networks
- The capitalisation of knowledge
- The integration of academic labour into the industrial economy, also known as the coming of the knowledge economy.

Concerning the first development, we are witnessing research information being captured on international databases such as International Scientific Information (ISI), making it possible to compare countries' growth in, *inter alia*, publications and citations levels. Countries are also compared on several criteria and placed on global ranking lists such as the Shanghai Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU).

The second development relates to the university becoming a partner with industry in transforming primary commodities into manufactured goods which are sold on a global market. It also involves the marketing and selling of academic qualifications on a global market. For example, knowledge is one of the key sources of revenue for countries such as Australia.

The third development relates to the widely accepted idea that contemporary society is a knowledge society that is increasingly being driven by a knowledge economy. Watson (2003) argues that the role of the university in a knowledge society is changing as a consequence of two sets of pressures: "inside-out" and "outside-in" developments. The inside-out developments refer to intrinsic pressures concerned with a set of epistemological challenges. Watson refers to the theoretical intervention of Michael Gibbons and his colleagues – the shift from mode 1 (pure, disciplinary, homogeneous, expert-led, supply-driven, hierarchical, peer-reviewed and almost exclusively university-based) to mode 2 knowledge (applied, problem-centred, transdisciplinary, heterogeneous, hybrid, demand-driven, entrepreneurial, network-embedded) (Gibbons, Limoges, Nowotny, Schwartzman, Scott & Trow, 1994). Outside-in developments refer to social concerns. These include aspects such as socio-economic patterns of participation, including who gains access to education, health care and so on.

Each of these developments is, of course, a contested terrain. However, I shall not explore the contested nature of the developments here. Suffice it to say that these developments have wide-ranging implications for universities, particularly for academics who work in and constitute these institutions. They not only raise the question of the future role of the university, but also of the role of the academic – of what is meant by the concept "academic". It is important to realise that South African universities have not been left unaffected by these developments.

As a consequence of these developments (and others) the modern university has been described in dramatic terms, as an institution that is in crisis. For example, Jacobs and Hellström (2000:1) note, "After years of battering from without, the walls of the ivory tower are finally crumbling" and Readings (1996) argues that the modern university is "in ruins". Readings (1996:119) characterises the contemporary university in terms of the idea of excellence so as to emphasise the dominance of the institution of performativity.¹ He argues that when university managers invoke the term "excellence", they unwittingly orient the question of value in favour of measurement and accounting solutions in preference to the question of accountability. Readings contrasts the contemporary university with earlier incarnations: the Kantian University of Reason (for which the founding discipline is philosophy) and the Humboldtian University (in which philosophy is replaced with literature). But, unlike its predecessors, the ideal of excellence conceals a kind of vacuity. As Barnett and Standish (2003) elaborate:

Globalisation and the decline of the nation-state create conditions where the currency of excellence can function ideally for a knowledge economy ... The modern university is dominated by procedural reasoning – in its emphasis on skills and on management systems, and in an incipient reduction of knowledge to information (all accelerated by computerization) – to the detriment of a proper attention to content and to traditions of inquiry. In the University of Excellence academic freedom is not so much threatened as effaced.

Put differently, as a unifying principle excellence has the benefit of being entirely meaningless, that is, it is non-referential, as illustrated in an example where a university recently gave a person an award for "excellence in parking" (Peters, 2004:72). Peters (2004) argues that the idea(1) of excellence:

¹ Performativity as used here refers to the way in which Lyotard (1984:11) uses it in *The Postmodern Condition*. As Lyotard (1984:11) writes, "The true goal of the system, the reason it programs itself like a computer, is the optimisation of the global relationship between input and output – in other words, performativity."

... signifies the corporate bureaucratization of the university. Universities have become sites for the development of “human resources”. Guided by mission statements and strategic plans, performance output is measured and total quality management (TQM) assures quality outcomes.

Traces of these developments are evident in the changing landscape of the South African higher education system – and the technology of performativity is firmly entrenched in the country’s universities (cf. Le Grange, 2009). I shall show in the next section how these developments have impacted on the post-apartheid university. However, there is another side to the transformation of higher education that deserves particular attention, namely social concerns as they are related to higher education. Following the dismantling of legal apartheid, it was imperative to transform the higher education system in South Africa so as to overcome the legacies of apartheid. The vision of such a transformed landscape is captured in a series of policies that were developed to address this need, culminating in *White Paper 3: A Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education*. This need is captured in the White Paper as follows:

[Higher education] must lay the foundations for the development of a learning society which stimulate, direct and mobilize the creative and intellectual energies of all people towards meeting the challenge of reconstruction and development (DoE, 1997:7).

The same White Paper summarises the requirements for the transformation of higher education in South Africa as “increased and broadened participation, responsiveness to societal interests and needs, and cooperation and partnerships in governance” (DoE, 1997:10). These requirements include the need to “increase black, women, disabled and mature students”, and to develop “new curricula and flexible models of learning and teaching, including modes of delivery” (DoE, 1997:10). However, more than a decade later issues of access, equity and quality in relation to the core functions of higher education remain challenges and were the key focal points of the Higher Education Summit held in Cape Town in April 2010. I shall look at some of the changes that these developments have effected in South African higher education over the past decades.

Transformation of higher education in South Africa over the past decade

Concerning inside-out developments, Jansen (2002:507) points out that South African higher education policy documents (produced after 1994) bear the unmistakable fingerprints of Gibbons and his colleagues. In fact, some of Gibbons’s colleagues such as Peter Scott served as consultants for higher education policy development in post-apartheid South Africa. However, Jansen argues that the accommodation of mode 2 knowledge production in South African universities is uneven. For example, whilst mode 2 knowledge forms thrive and are expanding at an institution such as the University of Pretoria (UP), there is little evidence of its success in a historically disadvantaged university such as the University of Durban Westville² (as it was formerly known). I acknowledge the unevenness Jansen refers to, and that there is not a simple and linear relationship between policy and practice. However, some policies (or elements of them) do trickle down so as to influence practices (variously and in uneven ways). Therefore, I shall show how mode 2 thinking has penetrated South African universities and how it has (re)configured academic programmes. I shall pay particular attention to what might be referred to as teaching/learning programmes (for the sake of brevity I shall from now on just refer to teaching programmes).

There have always been teaching programmes in universities. However, one outcome of the higher education policy developments of the late 1990s was the reconfiguration of teaching programmes at all South African universities, regarding both organisational and design features. Several universities have changed their organisational structures to create larger units such as schools and colleges, resulting in the abandonment of traditional academic departments organised along disciplinary lines. School and/or programme directors have been appointed and the traditional posts of heads or chairpersons of departments have been done away with. In many instances these larger structures are organised around programmes and not disciplines. Furthermore, regarding programme design there has been a shift in the

2 The University of Durban Westville has since merged with the University of Natal and the amalgamated institution is called the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

sense that academic disciplines do not necessarily inform the goals and visions of programmes, but instead the outcomes (some generic to all teaching programmes in South Africa and some specific to particular programmes). These outcomes are linked to the needs of both global and South African societies. The approach to curriculum design is one of “design down, deliver up”, where modules (that were traditionally organised around disciplines) now have to be (re)designed in the service of the vision and outcomes of a programme. This is how it works in theory – the extent to which these changes are reflected in practice varies depending on the institution. North-West University is an example of an institution which has made fairly comprehensive changes to its organisational structures regarding academic programmes (both research and teaching). At Stellenbosch University new programme structures were put in place, but academic departments were retained. Smaller programmes are located within departments, while larger ones extend across departments. The situation of having both programme chairs and departmental chairs does create tensions. For example, staff members are appointed by departments and departmental chairs manage operational budgets, but programme chairs are responsible for managing programme renewal, which might have staff implications over which they do not have control.

How does this relate to mode 2 knowledge production? Mode 2 knowledge production concerns a shift in the way knowledge is produced in a socially distributed knowledge system – essentially it pertains to research. I have tried to show here that the influence of the advocates of mode 2 thinking on higher education policy development South Africa also resulted in a reconfiguration of both the organisation and design of teaching programmes. Mode 2 thinking therefore does not only relate to the production of knowledge, but also to its transmission and acquisition, in the sense that knowledge included in teaching programmes becomes reframed.

Teaching programmes have further been affected by another development in South African higher education, namely the emergence of an audit culture associated with the rise of neoliberalism. The emergence of quality assurance (and related terms) in discourses on higher education might be understood against the backdrop of a rising culture of performativity in society, in general, and in education, in particular. In his seminal work *The Postmodern Condition* (a commissioned report on the university sector for the government of Québec) Lyotard (1984) introduces the term “performativity”. Since its coinage this term has been widely invoked in the criticism of contemporary education practice. As Barnett and Standish (2003:16) write:

The term aptly exposes the jargon and practices of efficiency and effectiveness, quality assurance and control, inspection and accountability that have become so prominent a feature of contemporary educational regimes. Whatever is undertaken must be justified in terms of an increase in productivity measured in terms of a gain in time.

The rising culture of performativity is closely intertwined with the ascendance of neoliberalism in the past four decades (*cf.* Peters, 2004). Ball (2003:216) argues that “performativity is a technology, a culture and a mode of regulation that employs judgements, comparisons and displays as means of incentive, control, attrition and change – based on rewards and sanctions”.

My interest here is to look at how these developments have played out in South African higher education. The Higher Education Act of 1998 legitimised the establishment of a Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC), responsible for monitoring and regulating the quality of all higher education programmes through a process of accreditation of such programmes/qualifications. On the neoliberal agenda the idea of self-regulation is evident in the work of the HEQC through systems and processes of peer auditing, evaluation and review, leading to what is referred to as the attainment of self-accreditation status on the part of higher education institutions. Self-regulation and self-accreditation are misleading terms because they imply an association with academic freedom and institutional autonomy. However, these terms do not mean the abandonment of state control, but the establishment of a new form of control – what Du Gay (1996) calls “controlled de-control”, or what Vidovich (2002) calls “steering at a distance” – so performativity remains the regulatory regime. Teaching programmes in South Africa not only have to be reconfigured because of mode 2 thinking, but are also subject to regulation by the state, although this might be by “remote control”.

By way of illustration I next discuss how an interconnected global knowledge economy has influenced the way in which the state funds research publications in South Africa. Universities receive direct state funding by way of subsidy income that is based on teaching inputs, teaching outputs and research outputs. Research outputs comprise completed master's and doctoral research, and research publications. The state only gives funding for articles that have been published in accredited journals (peer-reviewed journals approved by the Department of Education). Prior to 2004 the national Department of Education (DoE) had a single list of accredited journals. Journals were included on this list based on submissions made by South African universities through their research divisions. The submissions were evaluated by a panel appointed by the DoE and decisions were made as to whether a journal was placed on the list (in other words, it received accreditation). Since 2004 this has changed. Journals are now automatically accredited if they appear on the International Scientific Information's (ISI) master list, the International Bibliography of Social Sciences (IBSS) list and the DoE list for South African journals only. Editors of South African journals have been encouraged to have their journals placed on the ISI list. Of the three lists, ISI has by far the most journals, but is owned by a private company, *Thomson Reuters*, which is a multi-billion dollar USA company. The upshot of this is that a private company is now indirectly controlling which journals South African academics publish in. If academics choose to publish in journals (although they may be the best quality journals) not included on one of these lists, the income that their institutions receive will be reduced. This could impact negatively on the academic's research funding, career advancement and the status of their institutions. South African academics and the universities in which they work have not been unaffected by this capitalisation of knowledge.

I have attempted to show by way of a few examples how the transformation of higher education in South Africa might be understood within broader transformations occurring in global society, namely its transition towards what has been variously described as a knowledge society, learning society, knowledge economy and post-industrialised age. Wittingly or unwittingly South African universities, the academics who inhabit them and the knowledge they produce are affected by, and are also co-producers of, this epochal change.

However, the South African higher education system remains challenged by several transformation issues that pointedly remind us that transformation is an ongoing process. These issues relate to structural matters (size and shape issues), staff and student diversity, and language and access (both formal and epistemological). We have witnessed several changes in the restructuring of the public higher education system regarding its size and shape, of which a key outcome was the reduction of 21 universities and 15 technikons (akin to polytechnics in other countries) to 23 higher education institutions, divided into three categories: Universities, Comprehensive Universities (outcomes of mergers of universities and technikons) and Universities of Technology (former technikons or mergers of former technikons). The mergers and incorporations were introduced ostensibly to make the system more efficient – to reduce wastage as a result of duplication of programmes, etc. On the success of these mergers and incorporations the jury is still out. Many merged institutions have separate campuses (the predecessor universities/technikons) that mainly still function as separate units, which is, in certain cases, problematic. An example is North-West University, where the Mafikeng Campus is mainly black and the medium of instruction predominantly English, whereas the Potchefstroom Campus is mainly white and the language of instruction predominantly Afrikaans. The altered size and shape of the higher education system has also not resulted in dramatic increases in black graduates in key fields such as engineering and medicine. Moreover, across the board, the success rate of students doing three-year bachelor's degrees through contact mode is only 22.5% (Letseka & Maile, 2008:2). Despite the altered size and shape, the system as a whole remains inefficient.

The slow pace of transformation regarding staff and student demographics remains a challenge at institutions such as Stellenbosch University, which was recently slated by the parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Higher Education for the slow pace of its transformation regarding these two aspects. At the same institution there is an ongoing controversy about language of instruction – in particular whether Afrikaans is used as a barrier to formal access by black students. Other issues concerning formal access relate to whether a lack of finances should deny historically disadvantaged students access to higher

education and thereby deny them life chances they deserve as citizens. The government's National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) and occupation-specific bursaries (e.g. the Fundza Lushaka bursaries for initial teacher education), and the recruitment bursaries that individual institutions provide, are examples of laudable attempts to provide wider access to, and participation in, higher education. However, here, too, challenges remain, as witnessed by ongoing student protests at various universities, and calls by them for free higher education. Moreover, at the University of Cape Town there has been a debate recently as to whether race remains the best surrogate for admitting historically disadvantaged students to the university, or whether other categories such as class might be more appropriate (*cf.* Soudien 2010).

Thus, there are ongoing challenges that universities in South Africa face which, it could be argued, are legacies of apartheid. But a specific issue worth noting, which has raised its ugly head in post-apartheid higher education, is that of racism, evident through several incidents, most notably at the Reitz residence at Free State University, which involved the humiliation of black workers by white students. This incident (and other concerns) prompted the then Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor, to establish a Ministerial Committee on *Progress Towards Transformation and Social Cohesion and the Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Institutions*. The brief of the Committee was to "investigate discrimination in public higher education, with a particular focus on racism" (Soudien *et al.*, 2008). The overall assessment of the committee was that "discrimination, in particular with regard to racism and sexism, is pervasive in our institutions" (Soudien *et al.*, 2008).

There are changes in higher education associated with a rising culture of performativity, but these changes thwart the development of personal capacity. All ideas are welcome, but the higher education system is guided by a genre of discourse whose end is performativity – in this sense performativity is anti-transformational. Despite policies that have been developed to transform higher education, discrimination remains prevalent and it is this issue I wish to pursue as a way of initiating discussion that critically examines the very idea of (higher) education, namely that education itself might militate against transformation. I shall try to show that, although we might assume that the role of education is to bring about change (to transform), the outcome might be formation (socialisation) rather than transformation.

Transformation as becoming present

Almost two decades after the dismantling of legal apartheid race continues to define and divide South Africans. Race has come to take on a unique form in South Africa – it has become reinserted, entrenched and naturalised in complex ways in post-apartheid South Africa. As Soudien (2010:225) writes: "It fills every vacant space. It infects these to the point where its contagion is experienced, narrated and analysed as a kind of base-line ontology."

South Africans are inevitably both the objects and subjects of racial categorisation. The different spaces we inhabit/occupy engender complex and often contradictory encounters with the construct "race". Although race might take on unique forms in particular contexts, I argue that its manifestation (and that of other forms of discrimination) across the globe is part of a crisis of humanism, in which education might be implicated. In light of this, I turn to a discussion on education, specifically its link to Enlightenment humanism and its inherent tension in that it involves both formation and transformation. Following Todd (2010), I shall open up a discussion on "pedagogy as a transformative event".

Education has traditionally been understood as an intervention into someone's life – a process that makes a difference to a life. Therefore, education cannot simply be constituted as practices of socialisation, although novices need to be equipped with the cultural tools to participate in a particular form of life so as to ensure cultural and social continuity. For Biesta (2006:2), the danger of viewing education narrowly as socialisation is that socialisation contributes to the reproduction of inequalities. Therefore, education additionally includes individuation, that is, it focuses on the cultivation of the human person or the individual's humanity. This idea that education is about cultivating the human person might be traced back to the tradition of *Bildung* – an educational ideal that emerged in Greek society and, through its adoption in Roman culture, humanism, neohumanism and the Enlightenment, became one of the central notions of the modern Western educational tradition (*cf.* Biesta, 2006). The upshot of these developments was

that the notion of a human being was configured in a particular way. For example, when *Bildung* became intertwined with the Enlightenment and, in particular, the influence of Emmanuel Kant, a human being came to mean a “rational autonomous being”. Consequently, the purpose of education was to develop rational, autonomous beings (Biesta, 2006).

However, some have sought to question humanism (the Enlightenment idea of what it means to be human) and education based on Enlightenment humanism. For example, Heidegger (1962) points out that humanism’s response to the question of what it means to be human focuses on the essence or nature of the human being. He argues that the focus should instead be on the being of this being, on the existence of the human being, on the ways in which the human being exists in the world. The problem with focusing on the essence of a human being is that it opens up possibilities for defining “human” in particular ways that declares others as less human or non-human. The holocaust, apartheid, genocides in Bosnia, Rwanda and Cambodia forcefully remind us of the manifestations of humanism. Levinas (1990:279) goes as far as to argue that the crisis of humanism began with the inhuman events of recent history, for example, the 1914 War, the Russian Revolution refuting itself in Stalinism, fascism, atomic bombings, genocide, and so on.

Biesta (2006:9) provides an alternative to the Enlightenment understanding of education, which is based on the idea that it needs to produce rational autonomous persons. The educator in this instance takes on the role of midwife so as to release the rational potential of the human being. In contrast, Biesta’s idea is not based on the educator producing or releasing anything, but that education “should focus on the ways in which the new beginning of each and every individual can come into presence” (2006:9). He not only shifts the focus away from education as developing autonomous, rational beings, but also away from education’s socialising and reproductive functions. However, Todd (2010:5) points to the paradox of the term education, “since both in practice and theory it works in the impossible space of formation and transformation”. Thus, she brackets out the term “education” and inserts the term “pedagogy”, which she views not as a teaching-learning encounter or a political project, but as a transformative event, namely how the individual becomes present in the world. Drawing on the work of Hannah Arendt and Adriana Cavarero, she writes about becoming present as a second birth, a pedagogical birth. The birth is not from the mother’s womb, but involves our unexpected becoming as we speak and act in the world in the presence of others. Furthermore, one’s becoming present is uniquely singular and occurs in context with others – “uniqueness ... emerges in a particular time and context” (Todd, 2010:6).

A recently published work, Jansen’s (2009) *Knowledge in the Blood*, is illustrative of the limits of education and the possibility of viewing pedagogy as a transformative event. When Jansen began his work as a black Dean at the UP³ in 2000, he was startled at the views of young Afrikaner students about a past (including rigid feelings about black South Africans) that they had never lived. He discovers that their views had been formed through a process of socialisation involving the home, church, schools and sport. As an educationist, his response might reasonably have been to somehow intervene in the lives of students (and perhaps this was his intention when he visited schools, students’ homes, took students to the movies, etc.) so as to influence their beliefs or to change their views. Such a response would be conceivable given the context and that education’s occupation since Greek antiquity has been concerned with “influence”, “change”, “transformation” – how through education we might change people’s lives for the better or to conscientise people, as Freire suggested. However, Jansen’s narrative is, in part, about how he becomes singularly (uniquely) present in a particular context; as he spoke and acted in the presence of (young) white Afrikaners, he was transformed. He writes: “At UP I have had some of the most profound and life-changing experiences that any human being could expect to face in one career” (Jansen, 2009:7). From this, it is clear that becoming present in context is not an easy affair. Arendt (in Todd, 2010:9) asserts that when our lives are spoken in a way that enables us to appear to others, we set in motion unpredictable outcomes; in our exchanges with others our actions strike others and are released into the world, generating unpredictable reactions, even unpredictable sufferings. Arendt writes that these (inter)

3 The University of Pretoria is a historically white and Afrikaans university whose monocultural identity is being challenged (and is changing) in post-apartheid South Africa.

actions are “boundless because one deed, and sometimes one word, suffices to change every constellation” (Todd, 2010:7). Jansen’s narrative is also about how young Afrikaners become present in context.

Importantly, it might not be grand narratives, macro-events or elaborate policies that will effect transformation, but events at the micro-level at which human beings become present in context – it is at the level of the miniscule that newness could emerge. The power of the miniscule or singular event has been documented in the field of physics as early as the 19th century and evidenced by Maxwell’s words:

... the system has a quantity of potential energy, which is capable of being transformed into motion, but which cannot begin to be so transformed till the system has reached a certain configuration, to attain which requires an expenditure of work, which in certain cases may be infinitesimally small, and in general bears no definite proportion to the energy developed in consequence thereof (in Pindar & Sutton, 2001:11).

Conclusion

In this article I discussed the transformation of higher education in South Africa following the dismantling of apartheid. One way of connecting all the aspects that I have discussed (globalisation, neoliberalism, the technology of performativity, higher education policy, education itself) is to investigate how these forces play a role in the production of human subjectivity. Forces of globalisation have influenced higher education (policy) in South Africa, but globalisation has resulted in the domestication/homogenisation of subjectivity (*cf.* Guattari, 2001). Moreover, modern education itself has produced subjectivities that are passive and uninspiring (*cf.* Le Grange, 2008). Despite its dream of transformation, education by definition inevitably becomes formation – socialisation remains a powerful element in it – or at least when we invoke the term “education”, it necessarily sets up a tension between transformation and formation.

I have attempted to open up the possibility of imagining transformation differently by considering pedagogy as a transformative event (as Todd has termed it). Viewing pedagogy in this way shifts the discussion away from the aims, objectives or outcomes of education. It shifts the discussion away from what we might need to do to bring about change in the future. As Todd (2010:9) writes:

Viewing pedagogy as transformative event in fact means shifting our understanding of the relationship between education and time, which would radically alter our focus on educational phenomena ... It means paying attention to the singularly different ways students take their place as speaking and acting subjects and it means engaging with the ‘who’ of education and not simply the ‘what’.

Pedagogy as transformative event does not lie in invoking old ideas and using old formulae. Transformation lies in becoming present in a world of supercomplexity, where the biosphere intersects with the mechanosphere, and systems with the life world, where suffering is evident in the ecologies of mind, socius and nature. The vectors of escape from domestication/homogenisation lie in interaction with the world as it is. I end with Kappelar’s (1986:212) words: “I do not really wish to conclude and sum up, rounding off the argument so as to dump it in a nutshell for the reader. A lot more could be said about any of the topics I have touched upon ... I have meant to ask the questions, to break out of the frame ... The point is not a set of answers, but making possible a different [higher education] practice ...”

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