

# Here and Now: Rethinking philosophy of education

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## Abstract

*The TV-series “Here and Now” (HBO 2018) may be seen as an allegory of the current situation within philosophy of education. The main character is the depressed philosopher Greg Boatwright, father of four: three adopted children – from Liberia, Vietnam and Colombia – and a biological daughter, who calls herself “the boring white chick in the family”. Raising this family was to Greg and his wife a “great progressive experiment in diversity”. However, on his 60th birthday he delivers a disturbingly pessimistic speech: “It all failed”. Later he confides to his daughter: “sometimes I feel like the world’s falling apart”. Admittedly, today’s philosophy of education may fall short of such a bleak description. Nevertheless, in face of such a crisis it seems pertinent to re-think philosophy of education, old and new. The aim of this paper is to explore to what degree Alain Badiou’s anti-philosophy may represent a way of doing so.*

*To Badiou, an “anti-philosophical” practice is first of all faithful to the present situation. Next, it articulates the means of philosophy. Philosophy is thus turned towards and against itself in order to renew and strengthen its task.*

*In the first part of this paper I map out the many faces of current philosophies of education. Next, I perform a close reading of Alain Badiou’s “ethics of truths” and “logic of worlds”. In doing so, I hope to reveal the epistemic and ontological assumptions that generate Badiou’s anti-philosophical position. In the third part of the paper I compare and contrast Badiou’s position with some contemporary philosophies of education. Referring to Greg’s pessimistic speech we may ask: Did they all fail?*

Keywords: Philosophy of education, Alain Badiou, anti-philosophy

## *Introduction*

The title of this paper may be associated with the TV-series “Here and Now” (HBO 2018), which can be seen as an allegory of the current situation within philosophy of education in face of social and historical change. The main character is the depressed philosopher Greg Boatwright, father of four: three adopted children – from Liberia, Vietnam and Colombia – and a biological daughter, who calls herself “the boring white chick in the family”. Raising this family was to Greg and his wife a “great progressive experiment in diversity”. However, on his 60th birthday he delivers a disturbingly pessimistic speech: “It all failed”. Later he confides

to his daughter: “sometimes I feel like the world’s falling apart”. Philosophy of education may fall short of such a bleak description. Nevertheless we may still consider it pertinent to re-think the potential topicality and relevance of a philosophy of education of and for the present. The aim of this paper is to explore a way of doing so through a diligent reading of Alain Badiou’s anti-philosophy, as I ask: Could Badiou represent a fruitful way of re-thinking philosophy of education? To what degree may Badiou’s anti-philosophy help to strengthen the potential topicality and relevance of a philosophy of education of and for today?

In the first part of this paper I map out the many faces of current philosophies of education. Next, I perform a close reading of Alain Badiou’s “ethics of truths” and “logic of worlds” in order to clarify his mission and ontological position. In doing so, I hope to reveal the epistemic and ontological assumptions that generate Badiou’s anti-philosophical position. Next, I compare and contrast Badiou’s position with some other contemporary philosophies of education. Referring to Greg’s pessimistic speech we may ask: Did they all fail?

### *The many faces of philosophy of education*

Today, philosophy of education comes forward as diverse, many-faceted and numerous engagements with different issues and problems concerning both the fields of philosophy and of education (Phillips, 2010; Strand, 2012). The multiple faces of philosophy of education make it difficult to distinguish this field from other fields of study. However, a common denominator seems to be a strong commitment to various aspects of education. This commitment shapes the course, topics, approaches, methods and dissemination of the work of contemporary philosophers of education.

In general, philosophers of education frequently use tangible educational situations as points of departure in their philosophical investigations. They tend to draw on their background as educational researchers or former teaching experience in their work. Their ways of performing philosophical analysis therefore often reveal radical approaches and openness to new ideas. This strong commitment to education is also seen in the fact that their work is published in a wide range of journals on educational theory, research and practice, not in philosophy journals. But even though contemporary philosophers of education dedicate their work to the practical discipline of education, there seems to be a tendency to question the social significance of their philosophical work (Clark, 2006; Smeyers, 2006; Strand, 2012).

Philosophy of education seems to be caught between the academic disciplines of philosophy and of education: On the one hand, it is a daughter of philosophy, drawing from the traditional fields, approaches and methods of its parent discipline. On the other hand, the issues studied concern processes, purposes and ideals of educational theories, policies and practice (Curren, 2007; Phillips, 2010; Siegel, 2009). For example, what constitutes upbringing and education; what values and norms are revealed through educational policies and practices; what are the conditions, possibilities, legitimacies, and limits of education as an academic discipline; and how should we understand the relation between educational theory and practice. The ambition is not necessarily to contribute to philosophy, but rather to contribute to educational theory and practice. Thus, it may seem relevant to determine philosophy of education as a field of philosophical inquiries that “focuses upon issues arising within the domain of education” (Phillips 2010, p. 18). However, the danger is that such a definition may conceal the distance between philosophy and education.

In contrast to a tentative covering of the distance, the French philosopher Alain Badiou (1937 - ) points to the fruitful gap between philosophy and real life. To him, it is exactly this distance that conditions and justifies philosophy (Badiou, 1992; 2001; 2006; 2011)<sup>1</sup>. On the one hand, Badiou holds that “philosophy is not worth an hour’s effort if it is not based on the idea that the true life is present” (Badiou, 2009b, p. 14). On the other hand, he argues that philosophy should never be mixed up or confused with real life. Philosophy is different from real life. And real life can never be turned into philosophy. Badiou therefore maintains that a genuine philosopher commits herself to the incommensurable relation between the rules of philosophy and the ordinary rules of life. Because this relation – which is not a relation – conditions philosophy:

I insist on this point: it is not because there is ‘something’ that there is philosophy. Philosophy is not at all a reflection on anything whatsoever. There is philosophy, and there can be philosophy, because there are paradoxical relations, because there are breaks, decisions, distances, events (Badiou, 2009b, p. 16).

In other words, Badiou holds that philosophy is conditioned by real life events. But also that philosophy must never be confused with or mixed up with real life. However, philosophy has to commit to the completely incommensurable relation between the rules of philosophy and the rules of everyday life. Because it is precisely in life's many paradoxes, ruptures and decisions that philosophy can find, in the situation, signs of a new problem or a new thought.

It should be said that Badiou belongs to the group of contemporary French philosophers who, in the wake of poststructuralism, postmodernism and deconstruction, seek to renew philosophical thinking by developing a new type of materialistic realism. Badiou’s two books on logic (Badiou, 2005a; 2009a) – the third is forthcoming – provide a systematic and strictly formal description of the ontological and phenomenological conditions for the subject’s (or thinking’s) being, creation and transformation in worlds (situations). To Badiou, thinking is historically situated and always incorporated into a material process. Consequently, his anti-philosophy may well inform the discussion on the aims and mission of a philosophy of education<sup>2</sup> in the present. So let me start by a brief presentation of Badiou’s anti-philosophy and the ways in which he portrays a genuine philosopher.

### *Badiou’s anti-philosophy*

«Anti-philosophy» is a term Badiou has taken from Lacan (Clemens & Bartlett, 2012). In general, the term has helped Badiou to systematically re-think philosophy, or rather the philosophical practice, through its internal and external relations. To Badiou, the term “anti-philosophy” primarily designates a conditioned philosophy: the acts of philosophy have to be true to real life situations, be it in the spheres of science, art, politics or love. However, to pursue “anti-philosophy” is also about systematically articulating the means of philosophy. In this way, Badiou turns philosophy towards itself. So, anti-philosophy is to Badiou a philosophical practice driven by the ambition of actualizing, renewing and thereby also strengthening philosophy (Badiou, 1992; 2001; 2011; Strand 2017).

To Badiou, a genuine philosopher is someone who decides on her own accounts when to intervene, when to present a problem for everyone. In other words, a genuine philosopher

intervenes only when she sees signs - in a tangible situation - that calls for a new problem. But what are these signs? What constitutes a philosophical situation? Or, in Badiou's words: "On what conditions does the philosopher find, in the situation, the signs for a new problem, for a new thought" (Badiou 2009b, p. 2)?

In his pamphlet "Thinking the Event", Badiou (2009b) pictures three exemplary philosophical situations in order to give an impression of what he refers to: Plato's dialogue *Gorgias*, the death of Archimedes, and a scene in Mizoguchi's film *The Crucified Lovers*. All three situations contain two totally incommensurable logics. In *Gorgias*, there are no common measures between Socrates' and Callicles' ways of thinking. In the death of Archimedes, there are no common measures between the violence of the state and the creative thoughts of Archimedes. The scene in Mizoguchi's film clearly illustrates that there are no common measures between love and the ordinary rules of life.

In *Gorgias*, there is no relation, no dialogue, between the two types of thought. Badiou holds that Plato has written this dialogue in order to illustrate that there can be two different kinds of thought, two types of thought that remain incommensurable. The discussion between Socrates and Callicles amounts to a relation between two terms devoid of any relation. Callicles argues that the happy man is one who prevails over others by cunning and violence. Socrates maintains that the happy man is the just man, in the philosophical sense of the term. But the opposition between justice as violence and justice as thought cannot be solved by arguments, since the arguments cannot relate to a shared value. This is not that kind of simple opposition that can be dealt with in terms of arguments covered by a common norm. Consequently, the discussion is not a real discussion; it is a confrontation. And in such a confrontation, there will be a winner and a defeated. The discussion becomes a matter of winning. The witness to this situation must decide whether to take the side with Socrates or with Callicles. Faced with this situation one must choose between two types of thought. This situation thus illustrates thinking as choice. Consequently, to Badiou *Gorgias* is exemplary since the dialogue illustrates thinking as choice. The task of philosophy is here to throw light on the fundamental choices of thought. In short, *Gorgias* illustrates how "a philosophical situation consists in the moment when a choice is elucidated; a choice of existence or a choice of thought" (Badiou, 2009b, p. 5).

In the death of Archimedes, there are no common measures, no real discussion, between the right of the state and the creative thoughts embodied in mathematics. Badiou portrays Archimedes as "one of the greatest minds ever known to humanity," an exceptional mathematical genius. Archimedes had the habit of drawing geometrical figures on the sand. One day, as he was contemplating the complicated figures he had drawn on the shore, a Roman soldier, a courier, arrives and tells him that the Roman General Marcellus wishes to see him. It should be said that at that time, the Romans had invaded Sicily, and that Archimedes took part in the resistance by inventing new war machines. Nevertheless, the Roman soldier insists that Marcellus wants to see him. But Archimedes doesn't move. The soldier repeats the message. But Archimedes still doesn't reply. So the soldier, who probably did not have any great interests in mathematics, shouts: "The General wishes to see you". Archimedes barely looks up as he tells the soldier that he wants to finish his mathematical demonstration. Archimedes continues his calculation. But after a while the soldier draws his sword and strikes him down. Archimedes falls dead and his body wipes out the geometrical figures in the sand. In this way, the situation illustrates an infinite distance between state

power and creative thinking. To Badiou, the death of Archimedes is exemplary as it illustrates that there exists no common measure between the right of the state and the creative thoughts of Archimedes. The task of philosophy is to throw light on this distance.

The scene from Mizuguchi's film *The Crucified Lovers* illustrates that there are no common measures between love and life. Badiou refers to this film as one of the most beautiful films ever made about love. The film is set in traditional Japan. It is about a young woman married to the owner of a small workshop, an honest man, whom she neither loves nor desires. So she falls in love with a young man, one of her husband's employees. But as adultery was punishable by death in that period of time, the young couple end up fleeing to the provinces. The honest husband tries to protect the runaways by pretending that his wife has left for the countryside. Nevertheless, the couple is captured and sent back to be executed. Here, the film's final images constitute a new instance of the philosophical situation: The two lovers, tied back-to-back on a mule, heading towards their death. Both seem enraptured, devoid of pathos. On their faces there is simply a hint of smile. "Their faces reveal that the man and the woman exist entirely in their love. But the idea of the film, embodied in the infinitely nuanced black and white of their faces, has nothing to do with the romantic idea of the fusion of love and death. These 'crucified lovers' have no desire to die. The shot reveals the very opposite: "love is what resists death" (Badiou 2009b, p. 11). This situation illustrates something extraordinary. It is an exception, an event<sup>3</sup>. Badiou holds that the smile of the lovers is a philosophical situation, since this smile is a sign of something incompatible; a relation that is not a relation. The smile signifies that there is no common measure between the event of love (which turns everything upside down) and the ordinary rules of life (embodied in the city and the laws of marriage). The lovers' smile reveals signs of an exception, a rupture, an event. The task of philosophy is here to throw light on the value of this event.

In sum, these three situations illustrate the three vital tasks of philosophy: To clarify the choices of thought; to throw light on the distance between power and creative thinking; and to elucidate the value of the exception, the rupture, the event. To Badiou, a genuine philosopher is someone who

at a deeper level [...] looks for the link between three types of situation – the link between choice, distance and the exception. I argue that a philosophical concept, in the sense that Deleuze<sup>4</sup> speaks of it – which is to say as a creation – is always what knots together a problem of choice (or decision), a problem of distance (or gap), and a problem of the exception (or event) (Badiou, 2009b, p. 13).

In this way, the three philosophical situations illustrate Badiou's argument that philosophy is exclusively interested in relations that are not relations. With the three stories above, Badiou stages the impossible relations between Callicles and Socrates' ways of thinking, between Archimedes and the state, between love and life. These are relations that are not relations. In other words, with these three stories, Badiou illustrates how philosophy is conditioned by paradoxical relations. So, each time there is a paradoxical relations, philosophy can take place: "There is philosophy, and there can be philosophy, because there are paradoxical relations, because there are breaks, decisions, distances, events" (Badiou 2009b, p. 16). But what may be the vital mission of a contemporary philosophy of education, and how may this mission be justified? It is exactly these questions Badiou helps to illuminate in his *Ethics* (Badiou, 2001).

*An Ethic of Truth*

Badiou opens his *Ethics* by offering a critique of “the major ‘philosophical’ tendency of today”, which he sees as a mixture of philosophy and politics. Further, he claims that the current “ethical turn” within philosophy mirrors a Kantian – more than a Hegelian – ethics, since philosophy often comes forward as some indefinite regulations of social life; either in terms of “bio-ethics”, “medical ethics”, or “professional ethics” implemented by national or transnational ethical committees or councils. Badiou characterizes such regulations as an ethic of nihilism that amounts to “a threatening denial of thought as such” (Badiou, 2001, p. 3). On the background of this critique, he outlines a radically different ethic that refers back to particular situations:

Rather than link the word [ethic] to abstract categories (Man or Human, Right or Law, the Other...) it should be referred to particular situations. Rather than reduce it to an aspect of pity for victims, it should become the enduring maxim of singular processes. Rather than make of it merely the province of conservatism with a good conscience, it should concern the destiny of truths, in the plural (Badiou 2001, p. 3).

Badiou names this ethic “an ethic of truth” because, to him, it is the only ethic that enables the continuation of truth-processes<sup>5</sup>. It does so by affirming the three major dimensions of such processes: The event, the fidelity and truth<sup>6</sup>.

The *event* is unexpected and unpredictable, something that vanishes and disappears. But it institutes a radical rupture, as it brings to pass instituted outlooks, knowledge and opinions. An event is to Badiou a conceptualization of the possibility of change. According to Badiou, an event will not in any way appear sensible in the light of everyday rules of life or the rules that usually apply to the situation. The event strikes a radically different logic. “An event” is not “it’s” an ultra-one “in relation to the situation” (Badiou 2005, p. 507). The event is such an ontological “impossibility”. In this way, an event is both situated and something that goes beyond the situation: On the one hand, the event is conditioned by a lack – or situated void – around which a plenitude of outlooks, knowledge and opinions circulates. On the other hand, the event carries a radical novelty, a deep-seated change<sup>7</sup>, a radical different logic that implies that it is impossible to continue to practice – let us say a field of science, politics or arts – in the same way as earlier. *Fidelity* amounts to a persistent exploration of the situation under the imperative of the event itself. Fidelity is thus the name of the processes of immanent and continuing ruptures. *Truths* (or truth procedures) are internal to the situation and produced by fidelity: “Truth is what the fidelity groups together and constructs, bit by bit” (Badiou, 2001, p. 68).

If we read Badiou’s *Ethics* in light of his two manifestos for philosophy (Badiou, 1992; 2001; 2011) it becomes evident that the problem for Badiou is that philosophy seems to pretend both to be a science and an ideology. This fluctuation between two types of discourses is due to the fact that philosophy – at least within the French tradition of historical epistemologies – has been seen as a discursive construct; or rather a double discursive construct that can never escape the discourse it aims to throw light on. Evil, to Badiou, is the failure of philosophy to break off from or escape these discourses. To him, Evil has three names: (1) To

believe that an event convokes not the void of earlier situations, but its plenitude, is Evil in the sense of simulacrum, a “feel-good” image, or terror (2) to fail to live up to fidelity is Evil in the sense of betrayal, and (3) to identify truth with total power is Evil in the sense of disaster (Badiou, 2001, p. 71). Applied to the many faces of contemporary philosophy of education, Badiou would call for a conditioned philosophy, underlining that

1. it is evil to believe that educational phenomena today assemble not the void, but the plenitude, of earlier situations
2. it is evil, in the sense of betrayal, to fail to live up to fidelity
3. it is evil in the sense of disaster if philosophers of education identify truth-procedures with power

Badiou’s philosophy can thus be read as a continuation of and break from the very tradition he himself critiques: He adopts Canguilhem, Bachelard and Althusser’s call for epistemic ruptures. But to him, the solution is not to withdraw philosophy from the field of politics and place it within the field of science, as his predecessors tended to do. Nor is the solution to place philosophy within the field of politics, in the way some of his contemporaries tend to do. Badiou rather turns to philosophy itself as he clearly distinguishes the rules of philosophy from the discourses that are its conditions, be it science, politics, love or art. So, let us again take a closer look at what contemporary philosophers of education may learn from Badiou.

### *Conditioned philosophy*

Badiou holds that political, scientific, artistic and amorous discourses, or praxes, precedes and orient philosophy. But philosophy should never be fused with its conditions (Badiou, 1992; 2008). When Badiou claims that philosophy is subject to its conditions, he uses the term “condition” in two ways: On the one hand, “condition” is the generic name for the four truth-procedures as procedures. It is the name for that which marks truth-procedures in their compositional singularities. On the other hand, “condition” is the name for the form or shape that creates the situation (or condition) for these autonomously operating truth-procedures. Thus, a “condition” is or will necessarily include philosophy. There is never an independent philosophy. Philosophy cannot think for itself. But philosophy – and philosophy only – contains the resources to reveal and preserve the being and appearance of truths. It is thus only within philosophy that the “truths” produced by the four conditions can be thought together. “In this sense the conditions prescribe, and absolutely so, the possibilities of a philosophy’s form” (Bartlett, 2006, p. 43).

Consequently, Badiou calls for a return to philosophy. His mission is to strengthen and renew the task of philosophy: “... at least if philosophy is to count for something in life, to be something other than an academic discipline” (Badiou 2009b, p. 12). Some may even claim that Badiou aims at moving back into Plato’s cave in order to “return to philosophy itself” (Bartlett, 2006; Pluth, 2010): A philosophy of the cave may witness an event and, if truthful to that glimpse and living up to fidelity, introduce the truth by naming it in worldly situations. To Badiou, Plato is the first philosopher practicing the conditioning of philosophy: science in shape of geometry, love in the desire of Socrates, politics in *The Republic* and art in the construction of the dialogues. Badiou states:

An attentive examination of Plato ... results in the following theses ...: Before philosophy – that is, in a “before” that is non-temporal – there are truths. These truths are heterogeneous and occur in the real independently of philosophy ... Philosophy is a construction of thinking where ... it is proclaimed that there are truths. But this central proclamation presupposes a specifically philosophical category, which is that of the Truth (Badiou, 2008, p. 10-11).

So, Badiou here speaks of two types of truth. On the one hand, he speaks of “truths”<sup>8</sup>, which are the conditions of philosophy. On the other hand, he speaks of “Truth”, which is the condition for the philosophical identification, articulation and affirmation of truths<sup>9</sup>.

In “Logics of Worlds” (2009a) Badiou brings the concept of conditions forward, replaces the notion of “situations” by “worlds”, and attempts to describe in more detail the appearing and disappearing of truth-in-worlds. Badiou now holds that a world (situation) cannot be understood simply as a multiple (a set), but should rather be conceived both in its being and appearing. “I insist, since this is the very problem that this book is concerned with: truths not only are, they appear” (Badiou, 2009a, p. 9).

There is no doubt whatsoever concerning the existence of truths, which are not bodies, languages or combinations of the two. And this evidence is materialist, since it does not require any splitting of worlds, any intelligible place, or any ‘height’. In our worlds, such as they are, truths advance. These truths are incorporeal bodies, languages devoid of meaning, generic infinities, unconditioned supplements. They become and maintain suspended, like the poet’s conscience, between the void and the pure event (Badiou 2009b, p. 4).

Arguing against those who tend to conflate politics with philosophy and also truth with knowledge, Badiou (2006; 2011) contends that there is no such thing as a philosophical truth. The purpose of philosophy is not to develop a credo. Philosophy cannot and will not tell what particular position to take in politics or science. Because truths are produced and continue to emerge in other, non-philosophical spheres of life: In love, art, politics and science. Here, “truths not only are, they appear” (Badiou, 2009a, p. 9). However, philosophy – and philosophy alone – contains the resources to reveal and preserve the appearance of truths. In this way, philosophy deals with logical transformations; truths as creation. But philosophy is neither the interpreter nor mediator of truths. The task of philosophy is rather to “examine the constitution, in singular worlds, of the appearing of truths, and therefore on what grounds (sic) the evidence of their existence” (Badiou 2009a, p. 9).

#### *Truths exists as exceptions*

Badiou’s doctrine “there are only bodies and languages, except that there are truths” (Badiou, 2009a, p. 4) holds the very key to Badiou’s anti-philosophy, since the “except that” in this axiom suggests that truths are neither an addition to nor a synthesis of what there is. Truths exist as exceptions. In this way, Badiou takes a stance against the “logic of immanence” contained in Marx’s dialectic materialism, which stands in a clear contrast to his “logics of worlds”. Here, Badiou does not only reformulate, but also clearly moves beyond Marx’s axiom on the primacy of praxis. Because philosophy, to Badiou, is not only conditioned by politics,



but also by art, science and love: These four discourses all precede and orient philosophy as they contain incommensurable logics and exceptional events. Next, the task of philosophy, to Badiou, is to address these events while elevating and strengthening the generic truth procedures emerging from the radical choice, the inevitable distance, the exceptional event.

To Badiou, truth procedures are generic in terms of a truth that reveals and unfolds something radically new; something unknown; something that cannot be grasped by the already established categories of thought; something that moves beyond the situation: "Created in one world, it is valid actually for other worlds and virtually for all" (Badiou, 2011, p. 20). Badiou clearly admits that "what there is" – that which makes up the structure of the worlds – is a mixture of bodies and languages. "But there isn't only what there is. And 'truths' is the (philosophical) name of what interpolates itself into the continuation of what 'there is'" (Badiou, 2009a, p. 5). Consequently, philosophy emerges in response to certain forms of demands exterior to thinking, exterior to philosophy, exterior to the work of philosophy. While philosophy, at the same time, must also be committed to the completely inconsistent relationship between the rules of philosophy and the incommensurable rules of everyday life. Badiou holds that "understood in this way only, and only in this way, philosophy really is that which helps existence to be changed" (Badiou 2009b, p. 13). To Badiou, true life is in the choice, in distance and in the event:

The most profound philosophical concept tells us something like this: 'If you want your life to have some meaning, you must accept the event, you must remain at a distance from power, and you must be firm in your decision'. This is the story that philosophy is always telling us, under many different guises: to be in the exception, in the sense of the event, to keep one's distance from power, and to accept the consequences of a decision, however remote and difficult they may prove (Badiou, 2009b, p. 13).

But to what degree may Badiou's discussion on the task of philosophy inform the on-going debate on the aims and missions of a philosophy of education?

### *The timeliness and relevance of philosophy of education*

It may seem contradictory that Badiou sharply rejects the tendency to create philosophical credos, as he himself has published no less than two philosophical manifests and several polemical writings on the (missing) timeliness and relevance of philosophy. In all, it appears that Badiou - and even philosophy itself - is surrounded by a number of contradictions and dilemmas: Badiou's ambition is to return to, restore and enhance traditional philosophy while also strengthening its timeliness and relevance. He clearly takes a stance against the current tendency to engage in polemic philosophy, while he at the same time publishes polemical texts; He portrays a genuine philosopher as one who constructs her own problems, while he at the same time advocates a first and conditioned philosophy. An obvious dilemma is how it is possible to be rooted in tradition while simultaneously wanting to radically renew it. It is exactly this dilemma Badiou discusses in his somewhat overlooked essay "What Is a Philosophical Institution?" (Badiou, 2006).

Badiou addresses the dilemma by introducing the metaphor of a theatre. Philosophy is a theatre containing a myriad of voices, discourses and truth procedures. It is a tragic theatre, because conflicting events, polemical scenes, and separate subjects are taking place. It is also a comic theatre, as grotesque figures like the sophist, the anti-philosopher, the reactionary, the obscure or the ideologue are here being divulged. The theatre is huge, with numerous scenes, multiple actor groups and myriads of spectators, as Badiou's doctrine of a conditional philosophy allows for several stages and multiple groups of actors. Armed with this doctrine and Badiou's concepts of event, fidelity and truth, it is possible to re-read the history of philosophy, reorganize it on the basis of various configurations of truth procedures, and point out how these truths are more or less recognized by earlier philosophers. This "history of truth procedures" (which should not be confused with a person's history) is to Badiou a history of ideas that next generates more scenes, involving several groups of actors and affects more spectators. Consequently, it becomes clear that to Badiou, the genuine philosopher is not a lone actor in the desert of theories. On the contrary, the genuine philosopher is a sophisticated artist, a scientist at the edge of madness, an amorous lover, and a socially engaged human being surrounded by - and interacting with - diverse actors and deeply committed and involved individuals. Philosophy is a diverse, varied and rich engagement, in which the mission is to see the situation (the world), appreciating the unusual, and asking new questions.

Philosophers of education are invited to participate in this theatre. The commitment concerns the incommensurable relationship between philosophy and education, in which a productive thinking emerge in the distinction between the rules of philosophy and the (educational) discourses that condition philosophy, whether it is about education by science, politics, love or art. The task of philosophy of education is to read and compare the truth procedures emerging in the four discourses, and to point out the educational potentials of these truths. Philosophy of education must think that which is impossible to think within the given categories of the discourses. This can happen through a thorough reading of the situation (the world), by appreciating the unusual, and by asking new questions.

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> One of Badiou's axioms is that truth is produced and continues to grow in non-philosophical spheres of life; in love, art, politics and science. Philosophy should therefore "explore how truths are established, how truths arise - in some worlds - and therefore also what is the basis for their existence" (Badiou 2009b, p. 9). For philosophy, and philosophy only, contain the resources to reveal and protect these truths. This implies that philosophy explores logical transformations; truths created in the situation.

<sup>2</sup> Despite his engagement with educational issues – such as his hyper-translation of Plato's Republic (Badiou, 2012a) – and also his claim that "the only education is an education by truths" (Badiou, 2004, p. 14), Badiou has never explicitly discussed the relation between philosophy and education (Bartlett, 2011; Heyer, 2010). Nevertheless, I here hope to reveal the ways in which his anti-philosophy may well inform a re-thinking of the aims and mission of philosophy of education in and for the present.

<sup>3</sup> Badiou extracts several axioms from mathematical set theory (Badiou 2009a). Like here, when he explains change in terms of the difference between a self-identifying being and an overriding, surprising or disturbing event. Badiou assumes that the unforeseen event is a separate entity (quantity) with distinctive categories and ways of understanding. The event is therefore an ontological "impossibility". Precisely, therefore, it may give rise to some "truth procedures" which may eventually produce change.

<sup>4</sup> Badiou's anti-philosophy must never be confused with Deleuze's philosophy of difference. Badiou believes philosophy must start in historical situations and events, while Deleuze focuses on the philosophy's use of concepts. Badiou accused Deleuze of being a "hidden transcendentalist". But he expresses deep admiration and respect for Deleuze's philosophical thinking: "Gilles Deleuze: creates, by using concepts, hitherto impossible connections. He weaved thinking like a piece of cloth - with folds and everything" (Badiou 2012b, p. 341).

<sup>5</sup> Badiou's concept of truth - or truth procedures, in plural - can best be understood in the light of what he considers as the mission of philosophy, which is to identify and highlight new insights or ways of understanding that can occur in and emerge from unforeseen, surprising or disturbing events. "Truth" therefore does not belong to philosophy, but rather to the worlds or practices that precedes philosophical analyses. The mission of philosophy is just to identify and reinforce, piece by piece, the truths that may emerge from a tangible event. To Badiou, "truths not only are, they occur" (Badiou 2009a, p. 42).

<sup>6</sup> Badiou's theory of truth differs from more conventional truth theories. It should for example be noted how Badiou emphasizes the inconsistent nature of the event and how he connects this inconsistency with an equally non-substantial concept of truth.

<sup>7</sup> It is here clear how Badiou's distinctive term "event" explains change. He states that "an event is a real change in the sense that the existence that is only volatile attributed to the site becomes maximum in such a way that this will be done in the next step independently of the site. We also say that the event makes the non-existent absolute" (Badiou 2009a, p. 585). To understand this quote it should be noted that his term "site" has a double meaning: On the one hand it can be translated as "tópos", a term used within rhetoric to indicate general ways of thinking. On the other hand, it can be translated as "space", a term used in mathematical set theory to indicate relationships between a collection of objects or amounts (Strand, 2017).

<sup>8</sup> In *Logic of Worlds* (2009a) he prefers to call them «truth procedures».

<sup>9</sup> In the preface to the English edition of *Ethics* (Badiou, 2001), Badiou comments on the recent turn in his philosophy and its implications for the further development and amendments of his key concepts: "conditions", "event", "subject" and "truth". These developments come to the fore in his more recent "Logic of Worlds" (2009a) – his second book on logic, following "Being and Event" (2005) – and in his "Second Manifesto for Philosophy" (2011). His conceptions of truths and Truth should therefore be read in light of these latest publications.

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