Book Review

Thinking, Childhood and Time: Contemporary Perspectives on the Politics of Education.

Edited by Walter Omar Kohan and Barbara Weber
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As I sat to read this book and write a review of it, I planned to read the whole text quickly and then go back to a thorough and careful reading. After reading the first chapter, I changed my approach. I already had my pencil out, and the marginal notes had begun to grow. So, I reoriented my approach and read slowly and carefully. With that strategy in hand, I will start the review by first providing an overview of each of the two sections of this work.

In their Introduction, Kohn and Weber state that the book is an interdisciplinary and interparadigmatic exploration of children and childhood. Many anthologies are interdisciplinary; few are interparadigmatic. The authors' disciplines are many but easy to tick off: educationists, philosophers, political scientists, early childhood theorists, educational foundation experts, atelierista, and pedagogists. The paradigms within which these authors work include modernism, post-modernism, humanism, posthumanism, hermeneutics, and phenomenology. This mixture of disciplines and paradigms is, in part, what makes this work so engaging, informative, and challenging. To grasp this scholarly work's breadth and depth, the reader needs to be open to expanding their knowledge base, viewing information through new conceptual lenses, and rethinking once solidly held points of view.

The editors state that exploring the otherness of the child and childhood is their overall topic for the book. Citing Hannah Arendt's notion that "every child brings a new beginning into the world, we asked: how can educators be more responsive to the otherness that children and childhood offer?" Two ideas provide the overarching themes of *Thinking, Childhood, and Time.* First, childhood's otherness is to be affirmed and embraced rather than seen as disrupting adulthood's normative

development. Two, childhood needs to be recognized as a source of human natality.[1] In the introduction the authors wrote, "…this book focuses on how this paradigm shift in our understanding of children and childhood affects educational practices: how can we educate responsibility in the face of these core transformations regarding the way we think and relate to childhood?" (3).

Part One: Phenomenological Exploration of Time, Thinking, and Embodiment

Part One, "Phenomenological exploration of time, thinking, and embodiment," has six chapters. This section of the work, the child's view of time, is inspired by phenomenology. Each of the authors provides new insights that can potentially impact teaching and learning and offer a fresh look at the child and time. Part Two: Decolonial and Poststructuralist Perspectives on the Politics of Education is even more diverse than Part One. Decolonialism and Poststructuralism are related but different areas of study. The connectivity and disconnection of decolonialism and poststructuralism become evident when looking at child and childhood specifics.

Near the beginning of Chapter one, "**Childhood and the Genesis of Time**," James Mensch references St Paul's statement regarding our "putting away the things of childhood," including the child's sense of time as pre-numerical. "Can our earlier sense of time be so easily abandoned? Can this sense be ignored or denied in our educational practice? From a phenomenological perspective, this hardly seems possible. To do so would be to abandon a still functioning layer of selfhood" (11-12). Maintaining a layered sense of time and the layers of development more generally are explored in this chapter and in some of the chapters that follow.

The idea of layering of experiences, or our interpretation of experiences, Husserl calls genetic phenomenology. Genetic analysis "focuses on how the various elements, such as the apprehension of temporality determined perceptual data, their interpretation, and the resulting visual presence comes about" (11). It is the temporality of events that is Mensch's focus. Is there a parallel, Mensch asks, between event-time and clock-time? Mensch's examination of Husserl's idea of protention (anticipation of a future event) and retention (the remembering of a past event) by looking at how the child understands the world through reaching out and grasping an object of desire. The articulation of the role of anticipation, memory, and time, by exploring the young child's grasping activities, provides new insight for my understanding of 'genetic phenomenology.'

James Mensch connects this with our sense of time beginning in our earliest years, that is, that time is measure by an event: An event takes place, and then another event follows. "Time is determined by the order of events" (Mensch, 2020, 19). This understanding of time changes with the advent of school, wherein a clock determines time. But as Mensch states, this "event time" also stays with us throughout life; it is one of the layers of our understanding of time. As a current adult example, think about what has happened during the pandemic; we have lost the rhythm of our days, as we have lost the pattern of events. Thus, the loss of time events has to some degree changed how we

[1] Natality refers to belonging to a world characterized by plurality and is a politic in that each revolution is a new beginning.

know what time it is or what day it is, so we need to consult a calendar or check our watches more frequently.

Our sense of being-in-the-world shapes our selfhood. This being-in-the-world is shaped in part by a layered understanding of time.

> The different layers of our sense of self and time are not sealed off. Given this, we do not have to choose between them or reject one in favor of the other. All are present, in this co-presence makes possible the empathy that allows us to reach the child at the level he occupies (27).

This awareness of the layered nature of time is essential to our understanding of the child and childhood.

"**A Phenomenological Journey into the Human Condition of Education**" is the subtitle of Barbara Weber's chapter, "Child and time." Weber begins with Immanuel Kant's observation that time cannot seem for the outside and that space is conceptualized from inside of us. Weber divides her chapter into two primary sections: 1) the first explores time from Merleau-Ponty's approach to how children explore time. Merleau-Ponty understands time as a "field of presence" and "situational understanding." In this section Weber goes on to challenge the implicitly accepted perspective that childhood is something to be "expired."

Weber, following Merleau-Ponty, understands time as something that one "falls into" rather than something to be sensed. Falling into brings to mind a body, our body. Weber continues the discussion of how we (our embodied self) experience the world when she writes, "perception is always already turned towards the world, we make sense of things in our environment through the bodily relationships that we formed[2]" (33). Piaget's examination of a children's view provides a familiar background against which to then look at Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological perspective on time. As I understand it, Piaget imposed a metric understanding of time as he observed and experimented with children's understanding of it, rather than examining how the child might understand time as experienced. I think it is fair to say that Piaget took his adult experiences of time and then looked to see how a child might come, in stages, to match that adult understanding. Merleau-Ponty, on the other hand, argues that "Time does not exist for us, but it is consciousness that makes us experience our existence in time" (38).

In his critique of "Piaget's child," Merleau-Ponty argues that the child is not egocentric but rather that the young child and the world are one; therefore, the young child is not egocentric. The child lives in a world where the world and the self are one; that notion of the 'me' does not yet exist (38). The child's oneness experiences are illustrated by her experiencing the environment, including time, as being a part of her being—thus, time is now. This sense of time should not be discounted or undervalued but should be appreciated when seen in the child and re-experienced in us as adults.

[2] Mensch in the previous chapter writes about Husserl and makes similar connection between the body's importance to understanding in his discussion of the grasp.

Weber's chapter is rich in practical application and philosophical understanding, wherein we have an opportunity to see her as an observer of children and a consummate educator and philosopher.

'**Thinking Like a Girl: Scout as a Philosophic, Androgynous Child in *To Kill a Mockingbird***', as explored by Peter Costello in chapter three, provides a penetrating view of Scout's becoming. Costello affords a deeper and more nuanced look at this often read and seen story.[3] Costello follows an earlier scholar. Iris Maron Young's lead in "Throwing like a girl: a phenomenology of feminine body comportment motility and spatiality" by rejecting biological differences between the sexes as the sole and insufficient approach to explain differences in children's bodily experience (51). Instead, with Simone de Beauvoir and Merleau-Ponty, Young emphasizes the notion of the situation and works from childhood onward "to describe the modalities of feminine bodily existing existence for women situated in contemporary advanced, industrial, urban, and commercial society" (51, [Young 1980, 139-140]). What Costello adds to this understanding of the role of Scout's movements and thoughts is an insight into Scout's sense of herself as we vicariously see her moving invisibly around Maycomb.

In the novel, Scout's movements and thoughts are judged by the people around her, including the reader of the book, as someone who might become a 'girl.' The reader learns along with Scout how her experiences are regulated by the gaze of the characters in the novel (54). During the novel's course, Scout enacts her transformation through her vulnerability and uses the limits she discovers in Atticus' formulation as formulations of her experience. As Scout passes between and among the people of Macomb, she observes what they say and do. "… she thus assembles tools to help her explore her own experiences. She is even able to discover the limitations of her own family and to reflect on how her own emotions propel her beyond them" (58).

How does Costello illustrate Scout's becoming a girl, becoming a self, become manifest? He does this by showing how she interacts with four important women (Calpurnia, Miss Maudie, Miss Rachel, and Aunt Alexandra). Scout becomes who she is in the process of becoming through what she calls experiments, or what philosophers call thought experiments. These *Gedankenexperiments* enable observations that potentially lead to change and growth. Scout used these experiments intentionally, but whether used knowingly or not, these thought experiments are vital parts of human development for many young people.

In the last paragraph of this chapter, Costello states one reason teachers might wish to read *To kill a Mockingbird* and why this type of analysis might work in other texts.

> The successful classroom text will, perhaps like the novel, *To kill a mockingbird*, so irritate or promote identification that those children who read and discuss it will discover something new. They will discover themselves always already in process with it, always already taking up the next text as a partner, moving towards its quarters, dancing with it, singing with it, bringing it home to a new place (72).

[3] To *kill a mockingbird 40th Anniversary Addition* has been widely read (1999) and often watched (1972) and a Broadway play (2018).

"**Listening, Phronein, and the First Principles of Happiness**" by Pablo Muruzábal Lamberti begins by examining the pedagogical meaning of *phronein*. His essay is built around an understanding of the role of attic drama.[4] Socrates, among others, praised Greek theatre and the power of the spoken word. Lamberti seeks to reclaim the space of the spoken word as he explores the meaning of phronein—"to be a particular disposition of the mind"—and how that disposition is essential to expanding rational thinking into the area of listening and practical wisdom. Sophocles and *Antigone* have an instructive role in the articulation of the practice of listening.

This examination leads him to Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and Erasmus. Put in present-day wording, what philosophy teaches, is learning from attitudes of mind and experiences of others, with the added benefit of running no risk of personal harm. Kreon's inability to listen becomes a central theme of Lamberti's article. *Antigone* and *To kill a Mockingbird* play different and symbiotic roles in the "good life. Lamberti uses *Antigone* as an excellent vehicle for philosophically engaging with specfic issues, learning to listen to others as a part of this learning process, which may prevent one from thinking too quickly about complex situations and avoiding thinking dogmatically or thinking without listening (89). Like Scout's experiments in *To kill a Mockingbird*, *Antigone* provides a philosophical voyage of self-discovery.

In "**Thinking and the Play of Being**" by Michael Bonnett (Chapter 5), Paulo Freire's concept of "conscientization" is given recognition. Adding to that perspective, Bonnett makes a case for a metaphysical standpoint in addition to an epistemological one. Metaphysics, as Bonnett sees it, is a type of deeply embedded culture. It frames our outlook and way of relating to all around us and conditions us to the extent that this metaphysical structure profoundly affects our ability to think differently, to question cultural structures in any radical way (93).

Bonnett's argument is organized around three points. First, the anthropocene names the world's current status; human activity is responsible for the world' geological and climate level. Second, it is highly questionable whether our current ways of thinking, which led us into the situation, can lead us out of our condition. Third, we need to find a replacement way of thinking, which instills within us a different relationship with the cosmos and the natural world (94).

The "play of being" is Bonnett's replacement for our current way of thinking. To oversimplify, the "play of being" is to attend sufficiently to the world around us, particularly the natural world, to be in the moment, to become a part of the unfolding of this moment.

Bonnett's last heading of his chapter is entitled poetic thinking. Eric Fromm in *To have or To Be* captures this move from our current thinking to the "play of being" in this poem by Goethe.

I walked in the wood
All by myself,
To see nothing
That was in my mind.

[4] Attic drama, the phrase, if not the concept, is new to me – though based on an article published in 1898, not to the rest of the world (Haigh, 1898).

I saw in the shade
A little flower stand,
Bright like a star,
Like beautiful eyes.

I wanted to pluck it,
But it said sweetly,
Is it to wilt,
That I must be broken?

I took it out
With all its roots
Carried it to the garden
At the pretty house.

And planted it again,
In a quiet place,
Now it sprouts.
And blossoms forth.

(Goethe cited in Fromm 1976).

Annalisa Caputo's chapter, "**Philosophia Ludens for Children: A Proposal to Play and Think**," ends Part One. Caputo argues that there are two images of childhood. 1) childhood is something to be outgrown, something to be left behind, or 2) childhood is lost innocence, lost creative spirit that we might wish to, but cannot, reclaim. This dichotomy leads to different answers to the question of children's philosophy. The first view leads to the idea that P4C is impossible, while the second leads to the belief that only children can do philosophy. The resolution to the either-or dilemma is found in Walter Kohn's statement, "Cuándo se empieza a pensar con otrzs," which I roughly translate as "Begin to think with the other" (106). I have clumsily stated my version of this idea as "to think with other people's ideas."

The idea of thinking with the other as it relates to this chapter has two applications: 1) when working with children, their otherness is to be '*thought with*' not '*thought to,*' and 2) children can relate to people in books as well as to other children or adults. Philosophers, living or dead, in-person or in books, are included. Caputo writes that thinking with otherness is part of an Italian educational tradition that values the teaching of philosophy as an academic subject.

The overall goal and approach to this teaching and learning style are to use the methods of engaging children in ideas that originated within the history of philosophy and examining them with hermeneutics' tools. "Because philosophy is also a search for answers. Together. In dialogue. Where inevitably the first dialogue is with the thinkers who came before us, and therefore, with the history of philosophy" (110). To underscore that premise, Caputo states that any philosophical discussion with children or young people starts with the statement of a philosopher's ideas or what she or he was working to understand. In making this point, she emphasizes the value of books in her discussion of

the "magic box." The magic box' is a teaching tool for philosophical discussions. It contains many things, including palettes, colors, masks, sheets of paper, etc.). But before taking any other tools out of the box … we always pull books out of the box. Yes, books" (110).

With that background, which is only partially developed in this review, Caputo goes beyond the rigid Lipmanian root to articulate some new experiments and research. At one point, Caputo describes some critical element of the training of philosophers or graduate philosophy students in a teaching philosophy with children.

> In our first workshop, our *mentors were* Gadamer (and his ontological game theory) and Aristotle (and his idea of metaphysics as work with questions: which starts from what is the closest, and reach the highest and most complex issues). In the second workshop, we were guided by the philosophers of difference: particularly Levinas and Derrida. In the third workshop, on the theme of the untimely, our guide was undoubtedly Nietzsche, but also the romantic cities of Plato, Campanella, and Thomas Moore (111).

This paragraph is perhaps an exemplar of the challenges and the possibilities of engaging children with philosophical ideas in a new application of Lipman's work.

Caputo's essay ends Part One. Like all the other chapters of this section, her chapter is jammed with new ideas and perspectives that will engage readers. I hope this summary will pull the reader deeper into this chapter and this section of *Thinking, Children, and Time.* Seven chapters await the reader as we embark on Part Two: Decolonial and Poststructuralist Perspectives on the Politics of Education.

Part Two: Decolonial and Poststructuralist Perspectives on the Politics of Education

David Kennedy's chapter introduces Part Two of *Thinking, Childhood, and Time*. It is entitled "**Becoming Child: Wild Being and the Post-Human**." Kennedy's opening sentence continues the book's overarching theme, 'What do children teach adults" (119). The below quote is an example of how children teach adults**;** if we attend to children's experiences, we learn what we fail to see in ourselves.

> In what follows, I want to explore the lived temporal experience of embodiment of *infantia* in the interest of locating the transitional zone between the virtual and the actual that is the space of becoming other, and which paradoxically, is also the space of self-actualization, or singularity (119).

Kennedy develops his examination of three understandings of time to create a space for a hermeneutic exploration of becoming. The analysis of identity and singularity appears to be at the intersection of time and infinity. To set up this intersection, Kennedy looks closely at three meanings of time: Aion, Chronos, and Kairos. Aion is Einstein's "Now" and is associated with Heraclitus' view of childhood and play (120-121). To play is to experience now.

Chronos is the Greek word for time, but Kennedy argues that chronos is not just linear, clock time. Chronos is also the unfolding of the cycles of birth and death, the seasons (cause and effect, planting and harvesting, etc.). "It is chronos itself that equips us, that builds the structure of awareness whereby we escape it" (22).

Kairos is an interruption of clock time, whereas chronos is usually translated as an opportunity or fulfillment of time. It is a moment that appears out of nothing, almost a rebirth in that it is as that time that one is entirely in the moment[5]. The concept of becoming child intensifies the evolutionary implications, which recognizes childhood as a form of life wherein the child is an interlocutor, corresponding to changing cultural institutions and education institutions (125). Childhood is time at the juncture of all beginnings (127). We hold conflicting themes of symmetry and a mathematical perfection of time while simultaneously hoping, fearing, a desire to become the other (127-128). But the seeking of space between self and the other, time and eternity, is our hope for becoming.

In his chapter, "**Paulo Freire and the Childhood of a Philosophical and Educational life,"** Walter Omar Kohan begins by exploring philosophy and friendship. Citing Giuseppe Ferraro, Kohan first points to the idea that philosophy can be interpreted as a love of wisdom, or friendship of wisdom, and as the wisdom of friendship (131). As philosophy and friendship are connected, so too are philosophy and education. Philosophy and education are based on a shared concern about the world. When a friend and her interlocutor engage the world together, the dialogue is fluent; when there is no friendship, no philosophical or educational conversation is possible (132).

Paulo Freire, Kohan argues, is an educational philosopher in a precise sense. It was not his philosophical ideas per se that was most significant. Still, his life was a path of philosophical questioning that led to the liberation of himself and others. Living a philosophical life is living an educational life, and that living is what would liberate others from oppression (133).

Freire's mission was to give voice to the oppressed and hear their voices and hear them as "other" and different and perhaps resonant with his voice. To give "voice" to another is to allow them to speak and to be heard. All persons need to be given voice.[6] Freire's voice and the voices that resonated with it have been heard throughout the world. Freire's lived philosophy was so influential that it has led the current pollical establishment in Brazil to purge "the ideology of Paulo Freire from Brazilian education" (134).

Freire's vision of childhood was a central tenant of his life path. Freire taught that play and curiosity should be experienced all through life, a vision, which according to Kohan, he practiced. However, the willingness to be childlike has not found fruitful ground in the current Brazilian

[5] While Kennedy does not make this comparison, it appears to me to be similar to the idea of the Sabbath, that is, to life as though at the end of time. "The Sabbath symbolizes a state of complete harmony between man and nature, between man and man. By networking – it is to say, by not participating in the process of nature and social change – man is free from the chains of nature and from the chains of time, although only for one day a week" (Fromm, 1951, 245).

[6] A similar voice can be heard in the writings of Carol Gilligan, especially *In a different voice* (1982), *Joining the resistance* (2011) and *Why does patriarchy persist* (Gilligan and Snider, 2018).

establishment; it has flowered in other places. Yet, Kohan and Freire encourage us as educators and philosophers to continue to be childlike, to live "as if' a philosophical life path were possible.

"**Democratic Child's Play: Natality, Responsible Education, and Decolonial Praxis**" is the title of Chapter Nine. Toby Rollo writes from the perspective of a political scientist. Rollo continues the theme of characterizing the traditional view of childhood as "the absence of full capacities of reason and speech as well as learning through play and creative experiment" (145). Rollo, however, poses a different view: childhood is not a phase to be gradually grown out of but is instead a mode of being and potential we possess throughout life. Secondly, liberal democratic politics means more than reasoned speech. It can also be demeaning and embody ineffective play in creative environments, or what Rollo refers to as "inactive agency" (146). With these two points in mind, Rollo set the stage for exploring the decolonization of childhood. Decolonization, in Rollo's view, begins when we recognize that play and creative experimentation are embodied experiences and ought to be acknowledged as modes of political agency in a democratic society (146).

Play and experimentation are two critical modes that allow forward movement without the destruction of earlier being, thinking, and doing. Rollo adopts Jerome Bruner's (1966) concepts of enactive (embodiment), iconic (imagistic,) and symbolic (linguistic) as ways of characterizing change. These changes he calls the layers, rather than stages, of development.[7] Notably, the enactive mode does not disappear but continues to inform the child's thinking and actions. The enactive mode becomes a part of the iconic layer. Eventually, both the enactive and iconic layers become integrated with the symbolic layer. All layers can interact with one another, but one layer may also be more dominant than other layers.

Rollo goes on to ask: How should a liberal and democratic tradition approach agency? What is essential for this discussion is that agency is exercised by saying, representation, and action. Liberalism and democracy are not equivalent. Liberalism is most concerned with the rational pursuit of the self-interest of the individual. Concerning agency in democratic practice, "we exercise in their political demand so long as it is a form of persuasion rather than in coercion and is enacted under conditions of equality in reciprocity rather than hierarchy in unilateral command" (148-149).

According to Hannah Arendt[8], political activity is manifested in speech; therefore, one-third of the population, namely children, is excluded from political participation. This privileging of speech is one element that allows for colonialism. As a counterargument to Arendt, Rollo suggests that the problem stems from the exclusion of children's voice. Rollo indicates that the model of democratic parenting might show a way forward to counteract the one-sidedness of excluding children. If children can persuade parents, and vice versa, an opening is provided for children's voices. The democratic parenting paradigm may be a model for the decolonization of the many stifled or underdeveloped voices. "Education must be rethought to exclude a developmental paradigm that presupposes literacy and other forms of competency that are unavailable to some with intellectual disabilities" (157).

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[7] This approach, while not opposed to Piaget's developmental theory, is more consistent with Lev Vygotsky and Kieran Egan.

[8] It is important to note that Rollo credits much of the thinking in this essay to have originated in the writings of Ardent.

Karen Murris's chapter "**Posthuman Child: De(con)structuring Western Notions of Child Agency**" **b**uilds on her book *The Posthuman Child: Educational Transformation through Philosophy with Picturebooks* (2016) as well as her other works in this area. She argues in this essay that the "[p]osthuman child is an opportunity to make a quantum leap, rather than trying to catch up with the West or leapfrogging development" (163).

> The figuration of posthuman child as natureculture phenomenon relocates agency from inside the body to relational mutual agency, from thinking contained in a mind (or brain) to thinking in movement, from individualized actions to 'messy' entanglement in worldly relations and invites all to be fully present in the thick 'now-time' [Barad 2-17] (163).

She further argues for rethinking chronological time and the processes that have led to racial differentiation that underlies our modern understanding of child, and which are used to justify the child as savage and intellectually and emotionally primitive.

De(con)struction involves the radical thinking of intentionality and agency celebrated in Western thought. Defection is a form of de(con)structure that includes integrating quantum theory with an intra-action of poststructuralism. This methodology provides for a queer reading[9] of agency, time and the child by which variables of age, gender, and class, are seen as an individual person's properties. Citing Barad (2017), Murris states that posthumanism does not mean "after" or "following" human but rather it is a condition, a critical attitude, and an ambivalent and ambiguous internal relation to modernity. In Lyotard's phrasing, the posthuman is "an inability to put one's faith in a grand narrative." Within this matrix, a different sense of time operates, a now-time.

The application of de(con)constructionist methods afford an ontological, epistemological, and ethical problematizing of agency within a child-centered education (174). The de(con)constructionist methodology presented in this chapter helps to create a space for in which "postdevelopmental perspectives on child/hood do not separate nature ontologically form culture" (175).

Cristina Delgado Vintimilla writes Chapter Eleven, "**Rational Openings for the Otherwise: Thinking Community as what is not …**" presenting the views of a pedagogista. A pedagogista is a concept developed with a Reggio Emilio tradition. It is devoted to thinking about pedagogical possibilities, working with teachers to improve their abilities and students' learning outcomes. What does it mean to create a life with others in an educational context? (178). This question is closely connected with the issue of how to define an educational community. Uncovering the meanings of relations, making common, and pedagogical thought in early childhood education is the task she sets for herself (180). Community of/within education is hoped for, a desire for an elusive entity. Part of the reason that community is elusive is that "*the very act of defining a community is what prevents it from becoming*" (182).

[9] Queering is to not give a fixed, stable or referential context but it is the ethical -political practice of radical questioning of identities and barriers.

> Something happens when we attempt to bestow substance on community or even when we speak about it, in efforts to define or clarify what community (or relations) "really" mean. It is as if such efforts would always fail. To the pedagogical imaginaries of communities, this failing might induce greater frustration, a sense of failure, disappointment, or even paralysis. .... As soon as community becomes an object of definition, its definition fails. ... This is the very impasse at the heart of defining community (182-183).

Vintimilla writes that many of her students don't see an "impasse to the idea that community is always changing."[10] As a counterpoint, she states, "the root of community refers to a nothings-of-substance, of its deficit or constitutive absence" (184).

Is community an undefinable dichotomy, that is, singularity (otherness) or commons (likeness)? As I have struggled to wrap my mind around this essay, I kept thinking about Albert Camus's short story, *Jonas or the Artist at Work* (1957). The story ends with a dying artist, Jonas, who completes a final canvas after long isolation. It is a mostly blank canvas with one word in the middle. The word can be read as solitary or solidary; another translation says the terms are independent or interdependent.

While this reference to the Camus short story may not aid the reader looking for a summary of the chapter, Camus's short story has been running through my head since I read Vintimilla's chapter. I have concluded that the problem of seeing/grasping a concept and defining it are intrinsically related, and the oneness and togetherness are linked in similar way that community and individuality are connected, that is, community and the individual are not opposites but are united in their difference.

Iris Berger and Adrienne Argent wrote the penultimate chapter, "**Life as a Pedagogical Concep**t." The authors experiment as they jointly construct a concept of life in and outside of a classroom as the experience/lesson unfolds in two narratives as children work/play with blocks. Their narrative explorations bring together ideas from practice, philosophy, anthropology, place, artist, friends, children, and materials[11] and the kibitz with colleagues and co-researchers. Among their colleagues, the authors work with an atelierista[12] and a pedagogista.

The reader may need to reorient herself about early childhood education and maybe education more generally to fully grasp what Iris Berger and Adrienne Argent have served up to us. This reorientation was also necessary for the reviewer. Suppose you are not familiar with the Reggio Emelia school in Italy or the approach as it has been implemented worldwide. It may help in understanding

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[10] A variety of similar discussion on the nature of a 'community' within communities of inquiry has been much discussed in NACCI and ICPIC papers and meetings.

[11] In both Chapter Ten and Eleven, the authors draw on methods and approaches adapted from the Regio Amelia approach to education.

[12] An atelierista is a studio teacher that welcomes children's ideas and ongoing projects. She or he is a sort of "artist-in-residence" with a goal of aiding children as they figure out and explore many different ways to do things through art expression.

this chapter to view one or more videos or immerse oneself in some films[13], books[14], and materials from this tradition.

This chapter presents two looks at life as a pedagogical concept. Essential to understanding life as a pedagogical concept is understanding the difference between extensive concepts and intensive concepts. "Extensive concepts act as labels or as something that has already been legitimated as such; whereas intensive concepts emerge as an event, a force – a newness – they require us to do *something*" (196).

Berger and Argent present any conceptual/practical reorientation that affords experimentation with the notion of life as a pedagogical concept (198). They present to the reader two vignettes entitled "Tracing the life – line of wooden blocks -1" and "Tracing the life – line of wooden blocks – 2." The two narratives are the backdrop for four conceptual/practical movements. These movements afford a vehicle for a pedagogy in early childhood education that moves (1) from observation to living, (2) from intention to attention, (3) from othering to togethering, and (4) from discovering to creating (196).

The stated goal of this chapter is "to open a new perspective on what it is to be alive" for young children and the adults who are "alive" with them. Not only do Berger and Argent accomplish their goal, but also managed to enriched the life of this reviewer. Essential to this enrichment was the quality of the two phenomenological vignettes. These vignettes were so well written that when I started to write about his chapter, I had to reflect for a moment as to whether I read stories or if I had seen a film of them.

Chapter Thirteen, "**Nature, Culture, and Education**," is written by Juliana Mercon. While some of us may be living in the *Anthropocene* (the current geological age dominated by human activity that conditions climate and environment); Mercon argues that our period might be called the *Capitalocene.* The Capitalocene is a world dominated or closely intertwined with an intersection of political, economic, environmental, and cultural entities that create crises (Enrique Leff, 2004). As Mercon develops her argument, she follows a Foucauldian genealogical approach, wherein the emergence of values and social identities morph into genuine power relationships (210).

She presents her anarcheological exercise for the invention of other times in a four-step sequence. Mercon, citing Kelley (2014), defines anarcheology as a "non-history of thought"—this reviewer might characterize it as a thought history of what might have been. Step one in this non-history of thought is to assume universals do not exist. "De not admit the *a priori* of existing things. ... Question, for instance, notions of' 'nature' and 'culture'" (211).

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[13] I have chosen one short film as a way to provide a minimal information to understand the Reggio Emelia program https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fYx_aGs-DjU

[14] This books provides a more comprehensive look at how the Reggio Emilia approach works – Edwards, C.P., Gandini, L. and Forman, G.E. eds., 1998. *The hundred languages of children: The Reggio Emilia approach-advanced reflections*. Greenwood Publishing Group and Wurm, J., 2005. *Working in the Reggio way: A beginner's guide for American teachers*. Redleaf Press.

> Tampa (1994) argues that when we ask how humans perceive nature, we presume both that nature is objective in that humanity is one. Nevertheless, not only are notions of nature and humanity highly variable cultural constructs, but they are also inexistent in many societies. What power relationships would thus sustain the view according to which there is only one nature in one humanity (212).

This move takes us to step two. Mercon asks us to question the dichotomy of nature/culture. He also asks the reader to denaturalize and culturize nature. The third step is to naturalize culture, reintegrate humans into non-human communities, and times of affinities and *potentia*. Naturalist culture allows a necessity of interconnection and the generation of novel entities (213).

In understanding what allows for interconnectivity, Spinoza's comparison between the camel and the packhorse is instructive. Spinoza argues that what makes the camel and the packhorse related is how each is affected and how they are affected; that is, the significant aspect is their relational and dynamic nature more so than any supposed interiority or physicality (214). If one takes this perspective, one can be led to three possible leaps. First, it is possible to look at the world through our feeling and attitude's, thereby imagining the formation of a society not reduced to human and other animals. Second, imaging thinking among and across species, affording a more complex power relationship, and a broader expression of politics is possible. Third, creating an ecopolitical experience allows us to include different intra- and inter-specific societies whose traditions in norms would enable us to think of them as cultures (213).

The fourth and final step is to invent an ecopolitical education that cultivates a body of thinking. Mercon's chapter is a re-thinking nature, culture, and education. As such, it has provided this reviewer with an understanding of the journey the editors and authors have taken as they explored the many avenues and venues of *Thinking, Childhood, and Time*.

Chapter Thirteen ends *Thinking, Childhood and Time: Contemporary Perspectives on the Politics of Education.* I found this work complex, compelling, and occasionally frustrating. On the one hand, I would have liked to know more about how it was put together because there were many implicit thematic connections throughout the book, yet none of the authors cited, referred back, or made explicit connections with one another. While there is some value in allowing the reader to draw connections (this reader, for example, found it a valuable activity); I suspect it might also be a frustrating experience.

A closing chapter by the editors would have also been valuable for this reviewer, and I think for many readers. On the other hand, the time spent contemplating, making connections, and seeking application to the brilliant ideas presented in *Thinking, childhood, and Time* was time well spent.

This work will be read and taught for years to come.

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