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Transitions

Edited by Tommaso Sgarro

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Editorial II

Governing Transitions

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The idea of transition is accompanied by the idea of fragility. Transition as a passage from one stage to another, narrates something not yet defined, determined; it narrates the becoming of something into something other than itself. The questioning of identity realizes fragility in the transitional dynamic, and this fragility marks the very meaning of humanity and its history, which never remain in itself, but is in constant movement. This is the reason a transition paradigm cannot be constructed; rather, it would be appropriate to seek a privileged vantage point from which to observe the “making” of transitional processes. If, to do this it was once necessary to destabilize the theoretical foundation, it is now essential to produce a direct field observation of a restless object that is difficult to grasp. Thus, to research transition is to never really grasp it where it is, because by the time one tries to describe it, it has already become something else.

Observing social changes, especially after the Covid-19 pandemic, has become particularly complicated. The hyper-digitalization of social changes has accelerated transitional processes, and this has developed a kind of ideology of transition, as if it does not deal with dynamics, but is the very goal of processes – elusive by their very nature – dedicated to continuous and indefinite transition. It is undeniable that this phenomenon has been reinforced by the communicative fluidity generated by the development of new communication technologies. If from the 6th century B.C.E., with Parmenides, Western culture began to see, the deep sense of the truth behind the real in the idea of permanence and stability, today, transition is seen as the real plot behind events. It is not a dialectical process but rather, it is a process of indolence of thought that brings the assumptions of post-modernity to saturation. Being has become “in transition”, constant,

continuous. While there is no doubt that post-modernity has had important merits in deconstructing the ideological systems that weighed heavily on the history of the 20th century, today, this lack of reference points risks limiting the scope of any hermeneutic discourse, which is already outdated in the instant it is proposed.

While one cannot return to the impetuous vision of truth and reality that underlies Western metaphysics, one cannot fail to become aware that a government of transition is required. Otherwise, the risk is the subsumption of an eternal aimless transition as an affirmation of ontological fragility, resulting in confusion between weak and fragile thinking. A definitive and in a negative sense, subversion of the limits that post-modernity itself had set. On the contrary, thought is always performative by its very nature, not merely describing but always constructing an approach to reality; its fragility is therefore the mere result of a socio-historical dynamic. Today, therefore, one cannot speak of transition in the singular. De-mythologizing and de-ideologizing does not mean taking the question backwards; on the contrary, it means trying to prevent it from ending up in the dead end of paradigms, of dialectics, of historicism as an end in itself. Let us try then to turn the tables by dealing with transitions in the plural. Let us try, from reality, to reconstruct thinking that defines social practices which bring the problem into focus by making its contours clearer. Let us not read transitions from the idea of transition, but by interrogating the subjectivities that are within transitional processes.

In this respect, pedagogical-experimental inquiry allows us to sketch out and propose a method in the field, avoiding simplistic theorizing. Governing transitions means educating about them; it does not mean governing processes in a technocratic and universalistic sense, but rather, it is about learning to be able to navigate the dizzying flow of current social transitions. The overlap between transitions and the speed of social processes is in fact the clearest signal of how the issue risks slipping into a futurism that is never tame in the human spirit, but always a dangerous harbinger of authoritarian drifts, an assumption of ideological risk. Governing transitions means instead constructing an autocratic discourse, which starts from the care of the self, of subjectivities, as a prerequisite for the care of the We, of the human being in its transition within its own community dimension before its social dimension. It is a matter of disabling possible new power devices, hidden behind a narrative of transition that degenerates into rhetoric. To do this requires, as Edgar Morin wrote: “striving to think well, making ourselves capable of elaborating and using strategies, and, finally, making our bets with all consciousness”. Some of these bets are addressed in the second volume of this issue of *Elementa in Transitions*.

PIERPAOLO LIMONE and MARIA GRAZIA SIMONE, in the essay *Specializing Online During the Pandemic: An Exploratory Survey on Support Teachers in the Initial Training Phase* take a close look at the new figure of the support teacher in the era of the Covid-19 pandemic; they also delve into the training needs and critical issues related to their initial training. The Italian law 107 of 2015 specifically defines the process of school inclusion of students with disabilities in Italy by redefining the role of support teachers. The two authors analyze data from an exploratory analysis of tests administered to participants in the fifth cycle of the TFA (Tirocinio Formativo Attivo) at the University of Foggia. In particular, the field analysis reveals the need to use technologies, factors accelerating transitional processes, as cultural mediators capable of affecting learning processes and refining teaching methods. In this sense, governing transitions means governing educational processes from the structural changes of digital pedagogy, one of the most evident effects of the post-pandemic phase.

FRANCESCA FINESTRONE, starts from the ancestral relationship that exists between music and education to analyze current trends that bring together the therapeutic and rehabilitative value of music within the sphere of digital transition and educational programming. In *Music: For a Sustainable Community and the Promotion of Well-being*, the prerequisites of the transition to special education are defined, which in the interaction of technology, music, and education build new and effective practices to help pupils with special educational needs. These move from recognizing the role of technology in a proactive sense and rejecting its simplistic demonization.

GENNARO BALZANO and VITO BALZANO reckon with the transitions of the world of work in the face of the digital work wagers developed during the pandemic phase. What emerges from the reconstruction of *Educating for Transitions in Work Contexts* is that the digitization of work processes was a process that was already in place and that the pandemic has only accelerated this. This would confirm the overlap between transition and the speed of socio-work transformation processes within a transitional dimension ideologically set by the current phase of reorganization of the liberalist economic system. Against this drift, an alternative form of “permanence”, understood as continuity of the educational process, is defined. This latter goes on to coincide with the entire lifetime of the human being, is not aimed at the mere production cycle, and allows a rethink of work as a tool and not as an end.

GIUSEPPINA MARIA PATRIZIA SURACE, on the other hand, addresses the transition par excellence, that of the phenomenon of migration, not in an

aseptic way but by delving into the specific case of unaccompanied minors in their personal transition to adulthood. What emerges is a narrative about “transitions in transition”, capable of addressing the issue of self-identity from personal experience. In *The Future We Want: The Transition to Adulthood of Unaccompanied Minors*, the development of the migrant person, as it intertwines with structural factors of a socio-political nature that interact and mark the transition to adulthood is reconstructed with a certain abundance of references and data.

Thus, training processes are not neutral, but they respond to inputs from socio-historical changes, modifying the way in which human beings think and deal with reality. The plural declension of transitional processes helps to understand their complexity, and their irreducibility to dialectical dynamics. Transition must be read within the rhetorical device of the precise phase that produces it. Transitions, on the other hand, speak of human beings and their passage through history. The recent Russian-Ukrainian crisis, shows that it is not over, that it is changing, in transition, and that, however, there is no single point of arrival, contrary to the belief of Francis Fukuyama (*The end of history and the last man*, 1992). Seriously considering transition as *transitions* is the approach that we have tried to bring into play in the pages of this issue of *Elementa*. As mentioned above, this is an outline, a starting point, without any claim to great detail or peremptoriness: one must always, however, start somewhere.

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