

The Necessary Conditions for Encountering the Humanities

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Abstract

By referring to the thoughts of Jose Ortega y **Gasset** (concerning the meaning of philosophy), Jacques **Derrida** (pertaining to the description of Education) and **Paulo Freire** (in relation to the classification of Education), this paper briefly examines the problem represented in its title in three concise but interconnected sections. Its goal is to help generate a more sufficient, though not necessarily complete or definitive, examination of this important problem. To do this, I draw from Ortega y **Gasset** in the first section of this paper to explore the most significant characteristics of the idea of philosophy as ‘discontent’. I argue that having an existential conception of philosophy instead of the epistemological or ontological ones could be considered the first condition for the possibility of encountering the Humanities. I conclude that the first condition for encountering the Humanities is to move the philosophy forward from as it is to as it must be. The second section of this paper draws from Derrida to explore the most important characteristics of the essence of education and his conception of the ethics of responsibility in education. I argue, with the help of Cahen, that the Derridian deconstruction moves the whole bundle of questions on the subject of education, concerning encountering the Humanities and in relation to philosophical teaching, from the plane of techniques and methods to a level which is profoundly concerned with the ethical, and with the destination of life, history and humanity. The last section of this paper articulates the third and the final conditions, based on **Freire’s** Pedagogy of the Oppressed and Pedagogy of Hope. I argue that, according to Freire, whereas the banking concept of education eschews dialogue, participatory education considers dialogue essential to the act of cognition which discloses reality. Banking education treats students as objects of assistance; participatory education makes them critical thinkers.

Keywords: encountering the humanities, philosophy as discontent, ethics of responsibility, banking education versus participatory education

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