Subject's Recuperation in Education

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Abstract

The authors propose a pedagogy that considers a historical individual in all their reality, an education responsive to the situation of each student in the uniqueness of their existence. The educational action is always an ethical response to the demand of the other. Implies that I have acquired an obligation, a moral dependence which I cannot shed. Only when the educator becomes responsible for the other, responds to him in his situation, is concerned and takes care of him is one in condition to educate. That is why education cannot be understood nor given without ethics, without a responsible relationship with the educate. That is why when we put forward another model of education, we are demanding other ethical and anthropological assumptions as a starting point, those assumptions that explain man man with human face.

Keywords: *education; ethics; context-situation; otherness*

1. Introduction

The title of this study may at first sight seem "strange", accustomed as we are to letting the weight of the educational process rest on the teacher. But we are breaking a lance for "another education" which, rather than specifically imposing a way of viewing the world and humankind is through *response, listening and taking on the word of the other. It is taking on the other.* To accentuate the figure of the teacher is: a) to underline and prioritize one of the poles where the educational relationship is resolved; b) to empty the educational action of *ethical* content, for education comes only through recognition of the other as "somebody"; c) to "theme" the other and convert him into a subject or object of knowledge, susceptible to being treated and studied according to previously established objectives, forgetting the singular, irrepeatable nature of any human being which can only be understood in terms of singularity and exceptionality. "If we understand education as a controlled and controllable assessable process, the subject of the education would never appear as a distinct and incomparable person" (Bárcena and Mèlich, 2000, 77).

2. Educating is Responding to the Other's Question

To claim that to educate is *to respond to the other's question, to receive him and take charge of him* goes against all the preconceptions on which our discourse has been based and against our teaching practices, inspired by a paradigm indebted to idealist philosophy which has left aside (not to say ignored) the *historical* condition of the human being, the subject of education. It is, moreover, an attempt at "recovering" the subject of education, lost in a discourse and alien idealist praxes that have little to do with the real world of the classroom. After centuries of teaching discourse, the idea of questioning again the concept of education may smack of anachronism. Yet we have never ceased to pose this question, nor will we lay off formulating it as long as we are faced with an open and plural vision of humankind, as long as we understand that the human being is built upon contingency and uncertainty, amid the precariousness and provisional nature of knowledge, in a diversity of contexts and circumstances which are the framework of the life of every individual. At least we can state one essential characteristic common to all education: *Without a question, there can be no education; and there can be no education without a response for a specific, singular person who expresses himself from a likewise specific and singular circumstance or situation.* Education is a meeting between two, one who is seeking and one who is answering or offering, from his own experience, ethical models of behaviour and not just cognitive learning. Deep down, education is an *ethical event* (Bárcena and Mèlich, 2000) in which the learner is *recognized* and *accepted* in the singularity of his existence.

We are used to representing education as a one-way process: from the teacher to the student, from the educator to the learner. Yet the educational process runs in the opposite direction: it starts from the need (the question) of the student and continues under the guidance, help and company of the educator. The initiative is not in the hands of the teacher-educator, presenting certain contents of an established syllabus, but in the hands of the learner when he asks for *help and company* in his personal education; when, in his vulnerability and need, he asks the educator in the hope of receiving a welcoming response. In reality, the learner already in himself is the "question" for the educator. Educating, unlike teaching, is to *respond* to the question of the learner that stems from a specific need; it is to be attentive to respond to the aspirations of a specific individual who expresses himself according to situations, forms and languages that are likewise specific. "While the lecturer draws out a logical, informative discourse, the teacher does not so much speak as show and is, therefore, *inspiring, evocative, suggestive*" (Mèlich, 2010, 277). In education there is no universal language. It is always the language of *somebody,* trapped in "his" time and "his" space. If to educate is to *respond*, the response is not to be found in a faceless, environment-less individual, but in *someone.* Thus, education is more than the answer to the other's question, it is *responding to the other.* The other, whatever other, is always the question that begs an explanation, that concerns us, that erupts "violently" in our lives (Levinas, 1991), somebody who "throws" us and drags us out of the small sanctuary of our self and dumps us on the "other bank", in the radical dependence of the other. We cannot "shrug off" the other; he is the heavy burden that always accompanies us as luggage on our pilgrimage, when we decide to live ethically, i.e. in *responsibility.*

Traditionally, teachers have seen their task as that of an expert who must transmit his knowledge to the new generations. Instruction is the function with which most teachers have identified themselves. In this, they have centred their efforts in acquiring the scientific knowledge that they are to transmit and the techniques and strategies for their teaching. Other contents, such as moral values (tolerance, dialogue, solidarity, justice, liberty, etc.) and other functions (accompanying, listening and guiding the building process of each learner), which are part of the compulsory contents of the school curricular and the tasks of all teachers, have, in practice, nevertheless been absent in the classrooms. It has become accepted that moral contents are of little use in exercising a profession or that they are of little worth in getting a job. Despite the formal declarations contained in the Documents of Educational Administration, the real interest remains centred on the transmission of knowledge, the learning of knowledge and skills that enable future generations to gain their place in society through their work in a job. Educating in moral values would be left to other spheres or institutions.

There is also a view that considers the ethical character of education as "add-on" or quality complement, as a need that corresponds to today's society: "If the level of social and technological development presented by welfare societies is not accompanied by a progressive development of ethical skills among the persons comprising that society, the deficits and contradictions may dash the advances that modernity has undoubtedly supposed" (Martínez, 2001, 60). We agree with this statement, but nevertheless consider that the *ethical* nature of education does not come from "without", from its opportunity or from its beneficial effects for the individual and society. It is not merely that the educational act should tend towards a worthy aim, as the end of a process, in order that we can speak about education. Its axiological character is a constituent element that is essential in the educational action itself, running through it from the beginning to the end. *Without ethics, there is no education.*

While the strong *instrumental-utilitarist* bias in teaching is worrying, as is its abandonment to technological efficiency, (Romero, 2010), there is another aspect that needs to be taken into account: one detects a "decontextualization" of the subject one seeks to educate. Thus, the context, the socio-cultural reality in which he lives is unknown. At the outset it is supposed that all the students are equal, and so are their circumstances. In practice it is assumed that they all share the same aspirations, interests and difficulties, that the educational action takes place within *the same reality* for all. The starting point is an abstract, unreal subject who, it is supposed, we have to *educate.* And this "angelical" subject clearly does not exist. So, where is the educational action taking place?

In all educational processes there is the unavoidable question: *who is this student/educatee for me? What is my relation with him?* Without asking this *ethical* question the educational process cannot get underway, because without the creation of an ethical space in education, there is no education. This question may be answered with denial and indifference towards the other or with recognition and reception. In the first case, no educating is happening. In the second, the response is given from ethics, from responsibility. In the second response the pupil is seen and treated as *someone,* is recognised and received in the singularity of his existence. The educating act thus becomes a *response* to a question that proceeds from the other (the educatee) in a concrete situation. And each educatee formulates "his" questions from personal situations, which also demand singular responses. Otherwise, we would not be able to talk about *educating*, but about making the students conform to pre-established plans that are supposedly acceptable to them.

We have stated earlier that education is a response the question of "the other". But in education, the response always translates as the *reception of the other* (educatee), as the recognition of the other, in *taking on the other* (Ortega, 2004). It is not the action of the teaching expert, who focuses his activity on transmitting certain knowledge, while remaining apart or indifferent to the reality of the life of the educatee, his circumstances or context. It is the subject in *all that he is* who should be educated, not one part or aspect of him. Only when the educator becomes *responsible* for the other, responds to him in his situation, is concerned and takes care of him is one in condition to *educate*. That is why education cannot be understood nor given without ethics, without a *responsible* relationship with the educatee. That is why when we put forward another model of education, we are demanding other ethical and anthropological assumptions as a starting point, those assumptions that explain man not as a *being in himself and for himself*, but as a reality that is open to the other and *for* the other, whose fulfilment as a moral being lies not in one's autonomy, but in the dependence and "obedience" to the other, i.e. in the most radical heteronomy (Levinas, 1991). We propose an education that, for being more radical, lies "beyond" the pedagogy of "caring" of Noddings (2005).

3. One Does not Educate in "No Man's Land"

From the perspective of phenomenology, the act of educating is shown to us as a *localated, contextualized,* event that would be unimaginable outside of time and space. It therefore seems a platitude, and hence unnecessary, to claim that one does not educate in "no man's land". Paradoxically, today it constitutes a novelty and a real challenge for educators and pedagogues. A mere glance at our works, browsing and reading our scientific papers, serves to show the schism that exists between our discourse and educational practice. The term "education" and the very act of educating has almost always been understood in idealistic approaches that are difficult to apply to the specific contexts in which any education process takes place (Coll, 2009). The discourse and praxis, the language and the action have been set in different, even opposing, areas. A pedagogical discourse has been constructed that is barely operative in orienting the educational action. It has been ignored that any written text, without its context, is a blank sheet bereft of meaning, incapable of interpreting or saying anything about reality. And in education, as in any other sphere of practical knowledge, a text cannot be understood without taking into account its "here and now". "There is a dialectic relation between context and education. A context boosts or slows down, it creates or it imposes limits, it excites or bores, it generates hope or despair" (González de Cardedal, 2004, 11), but it is never indifferent for educational action.

Influenced by idealist philosophy, the educational discourse has ignored the social-historical conditions of the educatees' lives. It is a "circumstance" that conditions and essentially constitutes them. Our very thought is a dialogue with circumstances. There is nothing that is totally unintelligible (Ortega y Gasset, 1973). Man is a *situational* being. "All that is given is always given *in a situation*" (Mèlich, 2010, 81). And outside *its* situation it is unintelligible. When we state that we have to educate the men and women of our time, we are at the same time stating that the task of *educating* is always performed within spatial-temporal coordinates, in which every individual expresses himself, thinks and lives. We affirm that every individual on arriving in this world inherits a *grammar,* i.e. a language kit, a set of symbols, signs, rites, values, norms and institutions that make up "his" cultural universe (Mèlich, 2010). And it is this grammar that enables us to approach and understand the human being. Education does not envisage the *universal* man, but the *concrete* individual who lives, feels and thinks in a space and time that are likewise concrete. "Because space and time are so decisive for the configuration of an individual and collective existence that has a human face, it would be necessary for all the agents involved in the processes of transmission, who operate within a determined society, to set themselves as a true task the authentic "pedagogy of time and space" (Duch, 2004, 173-74). In other words, it would be necessary to understand education as the baggage that allows man to *inhabit* his world and *humanly* construct his space and time. There is no *educational* discourse without time and space. Such affirmations, which are so obvious in our pedagogical discourse, have rarely received an operative response in our educational praxis.

Today a huge effort is required to *recover the subject of education as a historical, grammatical being,* away from any idealist influence that has led pedagogy to a loss of reality, reducing the "world" to what can be known, to its "logical" dimension, to a deformed vision of human reality. "All our culture is furrowed by these two attitudes: that which responds to the idealist and to the post-idealist script... The serious issue of these two unreal worlds is not that, in terms of "representations", they substitute the real world, but that these worlds set off various types of *practical activities*, that are equally foreign to reality, but which we use in an attempt to make up the world" (Mate, 1997, 132-133). In our research we have used tools that, supposedly, have enabled us to approach the *reality* of the human being. And with these tools we have sought "to account for" the integral formation of each individual. The history of

pedagogical research has a predominant trend that links it to man's idealist focus, forgetting that man is only understood in and from the "intricacy of life" in which, day by day, his existence is resolved.

Calling for the *historical, situational* nature of the human being brings with it several demands on education: a) one cannot educate if one does not know the situation and moment (context) in which the educatee is living; b) one cannot educate in "no man's land", making an abstraction of the singular characteristics of each educatee, seeking to create a universally valid education (Ortega, 2009). Any educational act necessarily takes place in "a here and now". It always takes place in the context of *one* tradition, in *one* culture. There is no zero point where we can stand. We are perforce trapped by "our" time and "our" space. If a deed is not something that has occurred outside all context, but is necessarily an *interpreted* deed, so the human being is a deed or an *event* that needs to be interpreted and read in *its* context in order for something to be said about him. We are irremediably context, *situation,* and only when we convert "our" situation into indispensable content of our educational action will be in condition to *educate*. "I am convinced", writes Duch (2004, 160), "that pedagogues and anthropologists should act as therapists of the *human* space and time".

What is our context? As pedagogues and educators we are not the most appropriate to describe the socio-economic and cultural context in which life unfolds in our developed part of the world, and which necessarily affects education processes. Yet it is not venturing too much to say that in western society as a whole there are characteristics that define and identify it. One of these characteristics is the growing lack of standards in which our personal and social relationships develop, or to put it another way, the loss of references which guarantee socialization and education in those patterns of conduct, traditions and values that are considered as fundamental not only for the continuity of the model of society but also for the internalising of ethical life models. We are suffering a serious crisis of "transmissions". We have not yet found the suitable means to transmit to young generations the keys of interpreting the events that have shaped our personal and collective history. Nobody today doubts that there has been a schism in the great principles that for many years and many generations were the backbone of individual social life, that erstwhile valid foundations have ceased to have any sense as points of reference in the lives of individuals and social groups and have become mere options that very often have but a small influence on the social and cultural issues of our times (Duch, 1997). With the disappearance of these shared fundamental beliefs it is very difficult to find a new general basis of orientation that constitutes the meeting point for living together socially. We are stranded in "no man's land". The old criteria have lost their original capacity to orientate while the new ones have yet to gain strength enough to give individuals and social groups the possibility of guiding themselves and finding their position in the social network. Habermas (2002, 54) hits the nail on the head when talking about the situation of man in today's "rationalised" society: "As science and technology penetrate the institutional spheres of society, thus transforming the very institutions, the old legitimations begin to fall apart. The secularization and falling apart of the world views, with the accompanying loss it implies in capacity to direct the action, are the other face of the growing rationality of the social action".

This social scenario forces us to introduce the "situation" in the educational action and to assume, in practice, not only the psycho-biological reality of the educatee, but also all his socio-historical reality. We are biography, history narrated or related from successive experiences that have, over time, shaped our multiple identity. We are what we have "lived through", and the life of humans is not something given by nature but, in contrast, a permanent task, a "doing", as Ortega y Gasset so nicely puts it. The many experiences we have gone through have made up *one* way, from several possible ones, of our situating ourselves in the world, a particular way of existing. To assume that complex polyhedral reality means: a) that all educational action is necessarily singular and irrepeatable, just as is the reality of each subject and the singularity of his existence; b) that the educational action is always risky and uncertain because the knowledge we have of the human being is likewise uncertain, provisional and partial, never definitive or total; c) assuming in practice that in education   there is never *one single* language, but plural ones, multiple ones and therefore ambiguous ones; d) taking into account the social context as a starting point of educational action, since there is no individual that can be understood or that lives outside *his* context; e) admitting the precariousness and limitations of both the pedagogical discourse and the educational practice that have for so long rested on supposed scientific knowledge. "What is the purpose of research into teaching practice if we cannot measure and assess the effect of the teaching on the object itself of the exercise of the profession, i.e. on school learning?", ask Larose, Grenon, Bourque and Bédart (2011, 98). After so many years of educational research, how many educational processes find their rational, appropriate and sufficient explanation in our pedagogical findings? To respond to this worrying question would set the educational discourse and practice in the sphere of harsh reality, removed from all idealism; it would set us off on the path of answers that are always provisional, uncertain and precarious, up against the challenges of individuals who are conditioned by time and the new demands of an ever changing society. We

have been the victims of a "vain aspiration to be able to achieve a pedagogical engineering that gives a serious statute to the knowledge of education and that saves each teacher from having to invent it" (Gimeno, 2008: 135). We have placed our trust in processes that plan and control teaching as if they were algorithms that structure and determine it. We have trusted too much in the legitimating strength of the supposedly "objective" assessment practices (Gimeno, 2008). Nobody with the least intelligence can be convinced that a valid solution has been found, be it in the form of a paradigm, a pedagogical resource, a method or organization to the ever more complex and varied problems that education poses.

Yet despite that dense uncertainty that envelops education it is possible in these same circumstances to *educate*. It is possible to help young generations to acquire the necessary baggage and skills to decipher and interpret the reality of their environment, to read events and find the keys to interpret their own existence; it is possible to help the "newcomers" to find their place in the world, in "their" world, which is always in need of new contributions. Perhaps, in this interpretative labour, we, the educators, will find today our most important function, for education is never translated as a petrified interpretation of human existence. Otherwise, it fosters reinterpretation in a new context, "of new human traditions that always relate to the present, to its challenges, uncertainties and interests" (Duch, 2004, 179). Educating is helping a specific *somebody* to travel along a road that starts somewhere, that comes from some place, and that leads to some destination as its aim and journey's end; it is to help "read" events from the plurality that may be possible; it is to help to fit the "newcomers" in the world, to illuminate a new birth in which the world ceaselessly renews itself (Arendt, 1996). This journey of education is unique and irrepeatable for each individual, because each lives and interprets the situation or context in a singular and unique manner. Unlike science or systematic philosophy which is directed towards man as universal and abstract, education is directed to each specific individual in the singularity of *one* human life. So we have to be prudent in extrapolating conclusions in our pedagogical research.

We should always bear in mind that the function of the educator is to accompany, to direct and to guide, but not to supplant the educatee, nor impose any particular way of thinking or living. Education is *constructing, building*, and to raise the building that is to be what one plans to be in "one's" life is a task in which the participation of the subject himself is irreplaceable. Education prepares for life and for living ethically, i.e., within *responsibility*. The action of the educator is always an *ethical* response, a respectful offering*, a *testimony* to way of life based on the experience of an ethical lifestyle. This initiation into an ethical life*, which is what education is, always comes from the hand of the other, from being accompanied by the other, from the ethical testimony of the other.

4. Education is in Itself an Ethical Action

*"*There is no education without ethics. What distinguishes education from indoctrination is that the former has an unavoidable ethical component" (Mèlich, 2002, 51). One cannot talk of educational activity if its aim is not to meet objectives that are in themselves *worthy*, ethically assumable by all. An education that waives values, in its desire to be "neutral" or "objective"*, is not only impossible and undesirable. It is a contradiction in terms. All education is sustained by the implicit assumption that something is worth being taught and learnt. Any educational action inevitably transmits certain preferences, attitudes and values. Ethics is just there, it forms part of our baggage as humans. Neither can educating be divorced from "serving" ethics. "Educating is a moral task, and to seek refuge in teaching merely instructive content has been shown, in the end, to be a naïve aim. The very decision to transmit some contents rather than others is a moral issue if they are considered useful for "improving" the students" (Bolívar, 1998, 48). When we claim the inevitability of the values in education we are rejecting the posture of those who uphold that there is no defence for any axiological or regulating criteria in education. Were it so, education would fade into a type of fuzzy relation in which nobody sought anything from anybody. "Only from a hypocritical attitude, or from the comfort of the writer in his ivory tower, could one argue for an absence of regulatory criteria that would imply that poverty and submission have the same value as quality of life and freedom, claiming, perhaps, that these concepts represent western values and cannot therefore be of proven general validity" (Gil and Jover, 2008, 237-238).

Yet the ethical proposals are very diverse and also lead to widely differing goals, while inevitably conditioning the action strategies employed. Perhaps the question that we should ask ourselves is: What ethics should be present in the educational discourse? Or, more specifically: What ethics should inspire our educational actions here and now? The answer to these questions is neither rhetorical nor indifferent. The moral paradigm which we choose for our education takes us, perforce, towards a certain building of the person, and towards a certain way of being present in society (Ortega, 2004). Any educational discourse comes "from somewhere" and is going "towards somewhere". It

takes form in the specific responses to the current challenges of human beings. Not all types of ethics use the same language, nor do they have the same content or even the same purposes. In this work we opt for a *material* (non formal) ethics and morality, which finds the basic core or support for education in the moral feeling of *receiving the other,* in *solidarity in compassion*. It is not the Kantian based idealist ethics that seeks to justify and drive the moral behaviour of individuals on the basis of the obligatory nature of some universal, abstract principles that are alien to any context or subjective consideration of the individual, to any affection or feeling that might jeopardize the objectiveness and universality of those principles (Ortega, 2006).

It is in the Frankfurt School philosophers (Horkheimer and Adorno) and in Levinas where we find a clear proposal of moral *material* that has as its content real experiences from the lives of human beings in the circumstances that have befallen them; circumstances which, for Horkheimer and Adorno, are inextricably linked to the limit experience of the Holocaust. A brief reading of these authors reveals that moral is: a) resisting wrong; b) compassion for the other's suffering; c) commitment to justice; d) memory of the victims. "There is no room in the false life for the just life" (Adorno, 2004, 44). With these hard words does Adorno denounce the hypocrisy of a society that seeks to attain a morally worthy level of life in complicity with those structures of domination that strangle freedom and the very possibility of living. To resist "what must not be" is not only to resist the historical suffering of innocent people but to resist a whole way of exploitation and humiliation which has made the Enlightenment a totalitarian system like no other system (Horkheimer and Adorno, 1994). The work *Dialéctica negativa* (Adorno, 1975) is a harsh criticism of the moral idealist discourse that rather than offering a base for the construction of a just society is, instead, its product and serves to legitimate it. Uncovering the historical wrong, resisting the domination of the weaker ones are functions inherent to moral. It is its raison d'être; resisting the propaganda of occultation that prevents knowledge of the suffering it provokes is an unpostponable task of moral whose aim is "for injustice not to have the last word" (Horkheimer, 2000).

When we state that education is inseparable from moral sentiment we are not defending any type of moral irrationalism. The moral response in the human being is not an emotional reaction that is blind to reasoning (Ortega, 2006). We uphold that "in the origins of this moral there is not reason, but feeling, "pathos", the yearning for justice to put an end to the suffering of those deprived of the happiness which is their right; there is the urgency for solidarity with the unfortunate. Within this moral we do not have the reason that inclines us to act according to our duty, but neither is it an irrational feeling. It is a *complaint* in the conscience for the *recognition* of others in concrete circumstances" (Ortega, 2006, 513). Suppressing the mediation of reason will lead to a decisionism that is given over to domination mechanisms. When we sympathise, when we *take on the other,* we are not moved by any abstract reason of the dignity of human nature, but by a feeling that is "loaded with reason", that to attempt to justify it with arguments from idealist moral would be an insult for all those who have been offended and denied dignity. Why do the exploited need to justify their right to be treated as people? Rather it is the exploiters who must argue or give explanations of their conduct against the rights of others. It is not moral feeling but the immoral reality that needs a "rational" foundation (Horkheimer, 2002).

We propose a *pedagogy of otherness* that translates as a *sympathetic attitude* and as a response that *receives the specific person* that the other is, whose support is no longer the idealist moral of discursive ethics that contemplates abstract, nontemporal individuals, but the ethics of otherness and of hospitality (Ortega and Mínguez, 1999), the "ethics that has a face, the ethics of the orphan and of the widow". In the happy expression of E. Levinas; ethics is sympathy, i.e., the ethics of *taking on the other.* This focus of ethics and of moral brings with it the "deconstruction" of the modern subject and the construction of a subjectivity which is not defined as a relation of the self with itself, but as a relation *with* the other, as a response *to* the other and *from* the questioning other, to the point of arriving at a "radical decentralising of the possessive standpoint of "my" rights or "our" rights and the substitution of these by the perspective of the "other's" rights (Bello, 2004, 105). Within this ethics, the subject only becomes a moral subject to the extent that his identity is broken and transformed; it bursts in the presence of the other. In this act of decentralisation of the very self, the subject becomes *responsible for the other*, that is, moral subject. We become moral subjects not through any exercise of autonomy, but in the dependence of the other, when we respond for him, when we *take him on* from the most radical hegemony (Levinas, 1991).

There is another, little treated, aspect of education which makes it an essentially moral action: its amamnetic dimension. We are not responsible only for those we coincide with, or for the "newcomers", or for those yet to come. We are in debt with those who went before us, with all those who made possible the experience of justice and freedom, of solidarity and tolerance, which today allow us to be humans. We are responsible for that legacy and for what remains to be done if their lives are not to have been in vain. "Our life has something outstanding that prevents us from settling down once and for all, something outstanding that went before us and demands us to constantly

resituate and relocate" (Mèlich, 2010, 120). The "presence" of the other and our responsibility towards him should lead us to ask ourselves about the "absences" of those no longer here, in those who are still alive, in those where the imprint survives, that context without which it is impossible to unravel the present. The memory are those holes that allow absence be present (Mate, 2011, 195). An ethics of compassion, at the same time as it shapes spaces of *cordiality,* does justice to the "absent ones"; it recovers the *memory* so that the past does not die forgotten. An ethics of compassion is not an ethics of the past, the present or the future but of *time,* of the tension between the past, the present and the future. The relation of compassion is not only established with contemporaries, but with the forerunners. An *ethics* has a lot to do with how we behave with the "absence" of our predecessors who are still present among us. The pedagogical discourse and even more so our educational praxis have turned their backs on or have tried to erase our immediate past. They have still not found a space to do to justice to the sufferings of so many victims who succumbed in the face of barbarity. Instead, what has come in is a practice of pedagogy and education centred on the search for an "equilibrium and social harmony" that shies away from any experience of wrong. There has been an attempt to wipe out our "awkward" past and to throw ourselves into an emancipation that draws a blind over the authority of those who suffer (Metz, 1996). Pedagogy and education that do not place their *telos* in cancelling out the wrong are reduced to just one more function of the social workings, to a legitimation of the social "order". "Only the *memory* of all the victims can enable us to recover moral dignity, to do justice to them and to build the future" (Ortega, 2006, 521). Ignore the suffering of the victims is to condemn the speech to lies (Mate, 2011) and pedagogical practice in a simple manipulation. Only it is possible to educate from the truth.

5. Conclusions

In all educational processes it is indispensable to pay attention to the specific circumstances of each individual who clamours to be attended to and listened to in "his" situation, in the specific experience of his life and so be educated in "his" project of personal construction. Take seriously the other, a singular being, before us, and that is a novelty for the world (Bárcena, 2012, 42).Teachers must change their teaching culture, a new language and a new education philosophy are demanded (Ortega and Romero, 2010) that invert the priorities and roles of the teaching agents, that place the teacher in a new scenario and in an "ethical situation" in which the student is no longer an element of "knowledge and control" so that they can become a necessary interlocutor in the *learner's* self-building process. But attending to the reality of each specific individual means incorporating a new language and new contents in education. It means serious consideration of the inevitable *historical* condition of the human being and it means making education an *ethical event* of receiving and recognising the other. Only a pedagogy of otherness, in the *ethics of compassion* is capable of *taking responsibility* for the other.

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