

Pedagogical Discourse and the Vanishing of an Ethical-Political Meaning of Education

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Presenting the Problem

As from the late 1970s, Europe witnessed an intense political effort aimed at renewing pedagogical procedures and educational objectives in its educational systems. In an essay dating from 1979, Claude Lefort attempted to analyze the political sense of this ‘modernizing’ reform and, in a skeptic tone, warned us of an apparent paradox by stating that

“what is noteworthy in such a time as ours, in which we have never talked so much about the social needs of education, in which we have never given so much importance to the phenomenon of education, in which political powers have never been so concerned with the issue, is that the **ethical-political idea of education has vanished**”. (Lefort 1999, p. 219 – translation ours, emphasis added).

Thirty years on, the ‘pedagogical modernization’ previously announced seems to have dominated the educational discourse at a global scale. Brazil, following the example of dozens of countries, incorporated its jargon into normative documents, among them the National Curriculum Parameters and Directives, and its procedures and concepts into policies for assessing academic achievement. Rhetoric on the supposed economic needs of a ‘high-quality’ educational system was consolidated and became a recurring theme in the media, electoral campaigns, and discourse of those in power. Simultaneously, classical republican discourse, characterized by the ideal of a school education focused on the cultivation of ethical principles connected to *public virtues*, started to sound as something increasingly distant or anachronistic.

The search for understanding the historical and social determinations of this transformation usually leads us to factors within the educational field, such as deficiencies in teacher training, and the technicality of the curriculum and of contemporary public policies. Such aspects may indeed have a great impact on the way we attribute sense to the educational practices and ideals, but they do not account for the complexity of the phenomenon we are dealing with. Therefore, it is not convenient to nurture the naïve expectation that the vanishing of the ethical-political meaning of education could be stopped by carrying out simple reforms of teacher training directives or policies for reinserting and valuing the ‘humanities’ in the school curriculum. After all, this seems to confirm such vanishing rather than explain its genesis or indicate its social and historical determinants...

In these reflections, we shall attempt to understand the decline of the political sense of school education in light of a phenomenon from outside the pedagogical field but whose consequences can be felt in it. We shall examine the impact of the ever-growing and continuous blurring of the frontiers between the public and private spheres of contemporary life on education. What we will attempt to demonstrate is that, as the value and the quality of education are conceived based on its alleged economic impact on a person's private life, its ethical-political meaning, that is, its public sense, is lost. Thus, educational objectives identified with the diffusion and cultivation of *public virtues* – such as solidarity, equality and tolerance – will then occupy a secondary place in relation to the development of *individual competencies and skills* or to what has accurately been conventionally called *human capital*.

In order to present a deeper analysis of this thesis, we shall examine the historic-conceptual genesis of the notions of 'public' and 'private'. We will subsequently show their dilution in consumer society and assess their impact on the field of education.

The Public, the Private and Consumer Society

Pointing out the existence of what seems to be a growing tension between the public and private spheres, as well as their frontiers and characteristics, has become commonplace. There are discourses that denounce, in an apprehensive tone, a decline or even a possible disappearance of the public sphere as a result of the growing 'privatization' of all spheres of life in our society. In a distinct ideological viewpoint, an uncontrollable inefficiency of the 'public sector' as compared to the 'agility of private initiative' is indicated. These two recurring examples are enough to suggest that, for a long time now, the 'public' *versus* 'private' dichotomy has not been restricted to academic disputes. On the contrary, it seems to inhabit our daily discursive universe.

It is very likely that, in their common usage, our references are sufficiently clear to serve the most immediate purposes of communication – inform, persuade, or express an opinion. However, it is not difficult to realize that the terms of such dichotomy are polysemic – each one of them alone and in relation to each other. By simply putting forth more accurate questions, this apparent clarity fades out. It is not uncommon, for instance, for the adjective *public* to be directly and exclusively identified as that which is established or maintained by the State, such as a 'public school' or a 'public hospital'. But do the foundation and financing of an institution by the State guarantee its 'public nature'? Must a bank that has been founded and is maintained by the State be considered a 'public institution'? Or would it be only a company or organization that follows the patterns of what is private, albeit publicly funded? If so, would it be possible for an institution that, with regard to its ownership is a 'public asset' but with regard to its functioning, product or access is a 'private organization' to exist? Is 'state-run' always the same as 'public' or, on the contrary, may the interest of the State be in opposition to the 'public interest'?

Perhaps the immediate association between 'public' and state property, as well as between 'private' and private property, is one of the most usual ways to define the terms of the dichotomy. But it is rather problematic, for there are common assets that are neither public nor private property but are undebatably classified as 'public assets', as is the case

of a nation's language. The Portuguese language – as well as the Tupi language – is not, strictly speaking, anyone's property, though it is a *common symbolic and public asset*. These initial remarks were simply aimed at drawing attention to the fact that the use of the concepts of 'public' and 'private', though relatively common, may induce inaccuracies and ambiguities due to the plurality of meanings that we usually attribute to them.

Thus, even if we are not aiming for an essential and ahistorical meaning of these terms, their appropriate understanding requires, in my view, a reference to the original sense of the political experience that coined them. Not because we must – or should – go back to it, not even for a cult of nostalgia, but because of the conviction that certain concepts bring along a fundamental meaning of the political experiences that generated them and, thus, their disclosure may, as they reveal the meanings they hold, incite a reflection about the sense of certain contemporary problems concerning them.

Let us start with a brief explanation on the genesis of the notion of a *public sphere* such as it was first constituted in Classical Antiquity. Arendt points out that life in the polis denoted a very special form of political organization which was freely chosen and could not be taken as a simple prolongation of family and private life or as a survival strategy of a gregarious being:

„The human capacity for political organization is not only different from but stands in direct opposition to that natural association whose center is the home (*oikia*) and the family. The rise of the city-state meant that man received 'besides his private life a sort of second life, his *bios politikos*. Now every citizen belongs to two orders of existence; and there is a sharp distinction in his life between what is his own (*idion*) and what is communal (*koinon*).“ (Arendt 1998, p. 24) – emphasis in the original).

Thus, the private sphere, attached to the household and the family, was a level of existence at which one prioritarily attempted to secure the *necessities of life*, guarantee personal survival and ensure the continuity of the species. It was, then, the sphere of *necessity and concealment; protection and maintenance* of life; safeguarding of self-interests (*idion* refers to what is proper to an individual or specific group, origin of the word *idiom* and of the term *idiotés* which, for ancient Greeks, referred to those who were concerned only with themselves or with what was exclusively theirs). For this reason, according to the classical thought, the existence at this level was not truly 'human' but rather characterized by an effort towards the survival of another specimen. It was, therefore, analogous to the efforts of other forms of animal life.

This level of existence – that of the efforts towards maintenance of life, characteristic of the private sphere – is maintained by *labor*¹, that is, by the set of activities whose product is consumed in the life cycle itself. Cooking, for example, is characteristic of *labor* since the purpose of its product – the meal – is meant to be consumed in the effort towards the maintenance of the individual life and species' survival.

The public sphere, in turn, stems from the constitution of a *common world*, not in the sense of a vital and natural collective space, but of an artifice proper to humans, which

¹ “Labor is the activity which corresponds to the biological process of the human body, whose spontaneous growth, metabolism and eventual decay are bound to the vital necessities produced and fed into the life process by labor.” Hannah Arendt 1998, p. 7.

joins us together with other men and their works. It is not about a simple gregarious effort to provide forms of collective subsistence (which may take place in the private realm of a family, for example), but about the possibility of creating a common and shared symbolic and material universe. Thus, it is not a mere continuation of the private sphere. The *bios politikós* (the polis's, or the City's, way of life) is a new sphere of existence that gathers free citizens around what is common to them – a public space – and creates a shared reality (*koinon*, as opposed to *idion*). Whilst the sphere of privacy is that of concealment, of the mysteries and safeguarding of life, the public sphere is this *common world* in which all may be seen and heard in their existential uniqueness:

“The term ‘public’ signifies the world itself, in so far as it is common to all of us and distinguished from our privately owned place in it. This world, however, is not identical with the earth or with nature, as the limits space for the movement of men and the general condition of organic life. It is related, rather, to the human artifact, the fabrication of human hands, as well as to affairs which GO on among those Who inhabit the man-made world together.” (Arendt 1998, p. 52 – emphasis added).

Thus, the public sphere is composed of human artifact, built through *work* (*poiesis*)². Well, if *labor* is characterized by the production of goods which will be immediately consumed in one's own cycle of subsistence, *work* aims to produce goods which will remain beyond their immediate use. Whilst cooking may be an example of labor, fabricating the pan is an example of work, for its product is an artifact that remains in the world and bestows its durability on it. That is why the common world

„... transcends our life-span into the past and future alike; it was there before we came and Will outlast our brief sojourn in it. It is what we have in common not only with those who live with us, but also with those Who were here before and with those who will come after us. But such a common world can survive the coming and going of the generations only to the extent that it appears in public. It is the publicity of the public realm which can absorb and make shine through the centuries whatever men may want to save from natural ruin of time.“ (Arendt 1998, p. 55).

If *labor* perpetuates the *life cycle*, meeting human needs; *work* seeks *permanence in the world*, revealing its creativity. But the durability of this artifact depends not only upon the existence of fabricated things but also on the public acknowledgement of its belonging to a common world. A cathedral, a monument or a table can only come to exist because human fabrication extracts the rock or wood from the cycle of nature – which generated and would consume them – and gives them a new use and a *common and shared meaning*. If a table and a cathedral are not recognized as productions of this common world, they become wood and rock once again, reintegrating the consumption cycle of

2 It is important to emphasize that Arendt uses the term *work* as an equivalent of the Greek term *poiesis*, which indicated the action of fabricating, producing craftworks, either of a material or of an intellectual nature, such as *poetry*. Similarly, the term *action* aims to translate the Greek term *práxis* – to act, carry out, fulfill to an end – used in the fields of ethics and politics. Thus, whilst in *poiesis* the created object and its maker are distinct and separable, in *práxis* they are not, for action reveals who the agent is.

nature and life. That is why Arendt considers the worldliest objects as works of art: they long for a transcendence that will only exist if they are publicly recognized as such. And they will only be so if they are not mistaken for consumption or daily use objects.

But the public world is also where men, free from the need of struggling for life (*labor*), may gather for, together, creating and managing, through their acts and words, the *bios politikós*, that is, the public and political dimension of their existence; action (*práxis*). That is the third dimension of human existence, not focused on life maintenance or production of objects, but on the constitution of a network of human relations. If the product of *labor* is *something to be consumed* in the necessity of maintaining life, and that of work is *something that belongs to the world*, then the fruit of *action* is *history*. Or, better put, the stories about acts and words through which men, in the uniqueness of their existence, show *who* they are.

Action is, then, the dimension in which we may experience *freedom as a political phenomenon*, that is, experience the historical ability of breaking free from the automatism of social reproduction and create a novelty. If the public space were simply a wider association of the private, we would remain in the realm of *necessity*, without the experience of jointly creating a *world common* to all. Thus, for Aristotle, the *common good* is the regulating principle of the State's (polis) action, according to which one must *act* in search of a *common interest*.

As we may see, the distinction between these dimensions of existence (the particular and private, and the common and public; that of provision of necessities and those of creation and free management of the world) was not fruit of a theoretical concept but a reflex of the experience of life in the polis, this peculiar organization of Antiquity which etymologically marks our concept of *politics*. In the polis, being a slave, for example, designated less an economic condition than a political status of *privation*. The slave was forbidden to participate in the public sphere and was consequently deprived of the possibility of revealing *who he was*; of founding and managing autonomous political bodies through his acts and words in conjunction with other free and equal citizens. Being a slave meant, therefore, being *deprived* of freedom as experience of political action.

Well, this existential experience of a dichotomy is what sustains the necessity of both poles – the private and the public – as well as their division into different and complementary stances, which seem to gradually dim in the modern world.³ Some aspects of this growing lack of distinction are very familiar to us and can be immediately identified. Issues and experiences that were traditionally preserved within the private realm are increasingly more exposed. Examples of such issues are pain, love, and death, which, since they enclose the mysteries of existence, should be protected from public light. The consequence is, then, that on one hand the electronic media and the press transform the private lives of celebrities into a common and public subject, and on the other hand, what was, in principle, supposed to be a common and public subject – such as politics and art – is progressively taken as a personal option, a 'matter of taste; and there is no accounting for taste'.

³ The expression modern world is used here in the strict sense given to it by Arendt, referring to the way of life that marks the western experience in the 20th century, for the 'modern era' of the 17th and 18th centuries is also marked by the attempt of establishing a distinction between the public and private spheres.

There is, however, another dimension of such blurring of frontiers which is less noticeable but whose consequences may be even deeper: the fact that the activity connected to the private and necessity realm par excellence, *labor* – and the consumption that characterizes it in the struggle for the life cycle – progressively gains space and visibility in the public world, spanning the spheres of *work* and *action*. A new sphere, neither exactly public nor private, is then formed. That is what Arendt has called the *social sphere*, characterized by the public organization of the vital process itself:

„Society is the form in which the fact of mutual dependence for the sake of life and nothing else assumes public significance and where the activities connected with sheer survival are permitted to appear in public.“ (Arendt 1998, p. 46).

Thus, we could add, *political action*, the most characteristic feature of the public sphere, is forced out of it and becomes, at best, a mere supporting element for the success of private life.

This way, the activities concerning labor – whose target is the search for survival and the product to be consumed during that search – increasingly gain importance in the modern world and transform it into a space for the activities of life maintenance and consumption to take place. The colloquial expression ‘to earn a living’, when used as a synonym of ‘working’, makes evident that we conceive our productive activity as a way to perpetuate the cycle of life, the struggle for survival – or as a way to generate the opulence of consumption – and nothing else. It is not, therefore, a way to *create something* whose permanence will integrate it into the durability of the common world – and will also indirectly integrate us. It is, above all, a way to secure our own lives and our family wellbeing, the supreme goods of ‘social’ order.

Let us consider, as another example, the spatial arrangement of our cities. They are ever less conceived and used as a common location for the citizens to gather, that is, as a stage for action. On the contrary, their streets are projected for the circulation of goods and commodities; for the displacement of passers-by who leave the intimate sphere of their homes to reach the private sphere of production or distribution of commodities, often in their own vehicles. And the gathering place is not the public square, but the shopping mall, devised to shelter the differentiation amongst consumers rather than the equality amongst citizens.

In a social organization of this nature – a consumer society in a market of obsolescence – the notion of a *common world* that transcends individual existence, both in the past and in the future, obviously fades away. The world ceases to be a common artifice shared by different generations to be, as other elements, *consumed* in the present time. It is not a contemporary way of denying the world in favor of a search for spiritual transcendence, like the seclusion of a monk or a hermit:

”... abstention from worldly things is by no means the only conclusion we can draw from the conviction that the human artifice, a product of mortal hands, is as mortal as its makers. This, on the contrary, may also intensify the enjoyment and consumption of the things of the world, all manners of intercourse in which the world

is not primarily understood to be the *koinon*, that which is common to all. Only the existence of a public realm and the world's subsequent transformation into a community of things which gathers men together and relates them to each other depends entirely on permanence. If the world is to contain a public space, it cannot be erected for one generation and planned for the living only; it must transcend the life-span of mortal men." (Arendt 1989, p. 55).

Thus, in a consumer society based on the obsolescence of objects, ideas and relations, what men have in common is not a world of shared meanings, practices and values, but the fugacity of their private interests. Hence, in this order, the regulating principle of the State is not the notion of the search for a *common good*, as in Aristotle, but rather the competent management of conflicting personal or private interests – which means the submission of *political action to labor*.

Some of the political consequences of such transformation have been widely explored and criticized. Our interest, however, is to expose the profound repercussions of this way of life with regard to the conceptions of the public and social senses of educational preparation.

Education: From the Public Sense to the Value of Human Capital

We have started these notes by putting forward the hypothesis of a decline of the ethical-political meaning of education. Let us, then, once again shift our attention to the specificities of the impact of this crisis, which was originally of a political nature, on the field of school education. In order to do that, we will resume some of the issues subjacent to the aforementioned paradox: what would this *ethical-political sense* that marked the humanistic ideal of education be? How did its progressive disappearance take place? How could it coexist with the profusion of discourses highlighting education's value and need?

In an essay analyzing the repercussions of the crisis of the modern world on education, Arendt presents a conceptual perspective whose roots date back to the humanistic ideals of education, developed throughout the Renaissance and incorporated by Enlightenment thinkers and educators. Her analysis is based on the realization that the birth of every human being presents a twofold dimension: *birth* and *natality*, for the child is simultaneously a new being to *life* and brings something new to the *world*. *Birth* is the way in which life (the biophysical dimension of existence) is renewed and perpetuates itself. *Natality*, on the other hand, indicates that every human being, in addition to being new to life, brings something *new* into an already existing *world*, composed of a complex set of historical traditions and material and symbolic accomplishments to which we attribute use, value and meaning.

Thus, the birth of a female cat, as well as that of a 'female' human being, is a phenomenon of *life* as both start participating in the struggle for individual survival and cyclic continuity of their species. However, the 'female' human being is simultaneously born to a world of symbolic and material artificialities: she will receive a *woman's* name (chosen from many from the different religious, ethnic or aesthetic traditions of a

linguistic community), will be dressed like a *woman* (according to the symbols of a specific culture: veils, dresses, feminine adornments), will learn gestures and attitudes that will make her *become a woman*, which means sharing cultural symbols of feminine identity. A 'female cat' is born as such, while a 'female human being' will have to constitute herself as a *woman*, for she is both new to *life* and brings something new to the *world*.

Education is, then, the act of *sheltering and initiating the youngsters into the world*, making them able to dominate, appreciate and transform the cultural traditions that form a common and public symbolic heritage. If it were an exclusively material inheritance, its heirs would immediately take possession of it, bearing in mind the legal procedures. However, since it is one with shared social meaning and symbolic character, the only way to access and take possession of it is through learning. We may instantly inherit a painting or a house, but not the understanding of what it represents and the means to build it, which will have to be learned. And it is the educator's role to try to teach this.

Sheltering the newcomers in the world presupposes, therefore, a twofold and paradoxical commitment on the part of teachers. On one hand, it is their duty to look after the durability of this common world of symbolic heritages in which they shelter and initiate their students. On the other hand, they must make sure the newcomers will become aware of this public heritage and integrate, enjoy and, above all, renew it, since it righteously belongs to them but can only be accessed through education. As Arendt has clearly summarized:

“Education is the point at which we decide whether we love the world enough to assume responsibility for it and by the same token save it from the ruin which, except for renewal, except for the coming of the new and the Young, would be inevitable. And education, too, is where we decide whether we Love our children enough not to expel them from our world and leave them to their own devices, nor to strike from their hands their chance of undertaking something new, something unforeseen by us, but to prepare them in advance for the task of renewing a common world.” (Arendt 2006, p. 193).

Loving the world, the fact to which Arendt refers, does not imply its uncritical acceptance but, first, the constitution of a belonging and identity relation, capable of adding ballast to individual human existence's futility and briefness, in relation both to the past and to the future. That is the reason why the disappearance of the public sphere and of the common world, with its heritages and historical accomplishments, may pose a serious threat.

„We are in danger of forgetting, and such oblivion – quite apart from the contents themselves that could be lost – would mean that, humanly speaking, we would deprive ourselves of one dimension, the dimension of depth in human existence. For memory and depth are the same, or rather, depth cannot be reached by man except through remembrance.“ (Arendt 2006, p. 94).

Education is, from this perspective, a link between the *common and public world* and the newcomers that arrive to it by means of *natality*. In this sense, teaching and learning are justified not preponderantly by their functional character or immediate use, but by their *formative* power. Well, it is exactly this sort of public commitment – to the world and to the newcomers – that is prone to vanishing in the ‘pedagogic modernization’ of contemporary discourse. In this type of discourse, education tends to be conceived as a private investment, which explains, for example, the connection we make between quality of education and access to elitist higher education institutions and an individual’s or a nation’s economic success. As illustration only, let us take an influent example of such pedagogical thinking that, at the same time, highlights the need for education and dims its political and public meaning.

In the late 1990s, French economist J. Delors, Chair of UNESCO’s International Commission on Education for the 21st Century, published the report ‘Learning: The Treasure Within’. Translated to many different languages, its aspirations are ambitious: to convey ‘**the** conception of a new school for the next millennium’ (emphasis added) and provide ‘clues and important recommendations for the delineation of a new pedagogical concept for the 21st century’ (Cf. Delors 2001). It is very unlikely that any other recent publication in the field of education has had comparable repercussion.^{4]} Its broad diffusion and outstanding influence on public policies are, nevertheless, not due to the originality of its theses or the deepness of its perspective.

On the contrary, its content, rather trivial, is marked by vague expressions that are more like slogans in which the persuasive power of rhetorical formulas seems to replace reflexive effort. Let us take the well-known ‘four pillars of education for the 21st century’ as an example: *learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together* and *learning to be*. In spite of the semantic anemia of these expressions, they are presented as consensual educational directives in an infinity of documents of dozens of countries, including Brazil. Thus, its strength seems to stem from the ability it has of synthesizing an increasingly adopted perspective regarding what should be conceived as the *value* of education in our society. And it is in this sense that the report interests us, as the stamp of a program that attempts to imprint an economic-utilitarian perspective on education.

It states, for instance, that ‘international comparisons highlight the importance of **human capital** and, therefore, of educational investment for productivity’ (Delors 2001, p. 71 – emphasis added). Thus, the greatest ideal to be pursued by education is not that of participation and renovation of a *common and public world*, but that of developing *competencies* and *skills* for production in a consumer society.

Clearly enough, we are not advocating an educational system disconnected from the necessities of life. The worrying aspect of the consensus surrounding this conception of education is that, according to it, one of the realms of human activity – *labor* and its products, whose destination is consumption in the life cycle – ends up dominating the spheres of *work* and *action*. Thus, production for consumption spans throughout the spheres of *artifact* creation, whose fruits confer durability on the world, and *action* as exercise of political freedom.

4 According to data of the search engine Google Scholar, the report is cited in almost 20,000 articles!

Note that this supremacy of labor, productivity and consumption in the educational targets does not imply an immediate abandonment of the rhetoric about the education of the ‘citizen’. It does not necessarily result in the disappearance of disciplines and knowledge contents taken as part of the humanistic conception of education, such as literature, art or philosophy either. It means, above all, that even these ideals and knowledge contents acquire a different role – a supporting one – in the supremacy of labor, market and consumption.

In the case of the humanistic conception – until recently the source and starting point of the republican ideals of education – disciplines and school knowledge were not isolated from the ideal of educating so as to shape up a certain character in accordance with cultural and political excellence (in short, what the Greeks called *Paidéia*) and, as Lefort emphasizes, was conceived from a historical perspective of political action. The men of the Renaissance saw themselves as *heirs of Antiquity* and, in this *historical dimension*, searched for their spiritual and political food:

“Culture, then, takes place in the form of a dialogue. A dialogue with the dead, but with the dead who, from the moment they are drawn to speak, are more alive than the surrounding beings [...] they are immortal and communicate their immortality to those that turn to them here and now.” (Lefort 1999, p. 212, translation ours).

Therefore, knowledge of the deeds and words of the men of Antiquity was the food for political action ‘here and now’. Hence the notion that knowledge contained, within itself, the ethical, political and aesthetic dimensions, and its search would not be justified as a *means* for something extrinsic to it.

Well, if we now refer to a *knowledge society*, we have to acknowledge that this is a different perspective, even if at times we resort to the same terms. Contents started to be conceived *as means for the constitution of competencies and values and not as objectives of education in itself* (according to the text of the *Parâmetros Curriculares Nacionais (PCN): ensino médio* [Brazilian National Curriculum Parameters: Secondary Education], 2002, p.87). It is not about banning certain contents but linking their sense to the development of certain psychological characteristics and cognitive skills that are taken as necessary by consumer society:

“What the masterminds and managers of that model of education did not know about was the need – **now made explicit in view of the production system itself** – that technological societies have that individuals acquire a general education, including in its literary and humanistic dimension (...)” (PCN: ensino médio, 2002, p. 327 – translation ours, emphasis added).

Thus, the replacement of the public and political *sense* of education with its market *value* takes place. What would be the initiation into a public cultural heritage – such as philosophy or poetry – comes to be conceived as a transmission of a *private cultural capital*, whose *value* may be measured based on its impacts on other dimensions of existence, usually connected to production and consumption of new commodities.

Current school experience undergoes, then, a process that, according to Arendt, was characteristic of the relation of modern society with *cultural objects*, more specifically with works of art: they cease to be cult objects, endowed with a public sense, to be conceived as objects endowed with a *value* of distinction. They thus become a *circulating medium with which one purchases a higher position in society or acquires a higher self-esteem. In this process, cultural values come to be treated as any other value, becoming what values have always been, exchange values, and, when they pass from hand to hand, they depreciate as old currencies* (cf. Arendt 1978). That is, they lose the faculty that was originally peculiar to them: educating free and active citizens.

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