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Otogogy, or Friendship, Teaching and the Ear of the Other

Abstract: On the basis of a reading of Jacques Derrida's reading of Nietzsche's *On the Future of our Educational Institutions*, this paper argues for an understanding of teaching in terms of what happens *in the ear of the other*. If it is the ear of the other that signs, as Derrida suggests, then, the paper argues, we need to think about teaching in terms of otogogy.

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Keywords: Deconstruction. Jacques Derrida. Friedrich Nietzsche. Literary Theory. Educational Theory. Cultural Theory.

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1. Teaching, Friendship, Responsibility.

> Efforts to determine the character of friendship and its entailment from the perspective of humanity itself would include individual human beings, persons in one-to-one relationships and in larger relational groups, such as families, local communities, societies, states, societies of nations, etc. The deconstructive perspective would highlight changed and changing contextual perspectives on issues and hold open to question and challenge all claims regarding universal ideals and principles and the evaluation criteria appropriate to them.[1]

[1] Tony O'Connor "O Friend, Where Art Thou?: Derridean Deconstruction and Friendship" in Patrick Crowley and Paul Hegarty, eds., *Formless: Ways In and Out of Form* (Oxford and Bern: Peter Lang, 2005), pp.39-51 (p.51).

It would also have to include teaching, a philosophical and historical understanding of the relationship between friendship and teaching, and a deconstructive analysis of the problematics of that relationship accompanied by the more "empiricist" approach envisaged by Tony O'Connor in his "O Friend, Where Art Thou?." It's a good question, my friend's question, since it immediately takes me back to the text in which I first began to realise quite how inextricably linked teaching and friendship were for those writers (philosophers, novelists, poets, political theorists) who emerged from the Age of Reason and found themselves in a post-revolutionary nineteenth-century. Friendship, by the way, would also need to include literature and the relationship between literature and philosophy. There is a kind of inevitable surplus force created by this kind of list, and this paper will attempt to exploit some part of that force in its focus on teaching and friendship.

The text I have just referred to is Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, a novel in which the need for friendship, the call for friendship, and the possibility or impossibility of friendship are central concerns. To emphasize this fact, Shelley added a passage, an echo of lines from Shakespeare's *Richard III*, in the 1831 edition of her novel. Walton and Frankenstein ("the stranger") are discussing their common desire to find a friend, and the latter states: "I agree with you … we are unfashioned creatures, but half made up, if one wiser, better, dearer than ourselves—such a friend ought to be—do not lend his aid to perfectionate our weak and faulty natures."[2] A friend is the other who teaches us to become that perfectionized unity we are capable of becoming. Without the friend, so Frankenstein's logic runs, and so the novel dramatically shows, we are half-creatures, or

[2] Mary Shelley *Frankenstein; Or, The Modern Prometheus*, in *The Novels and Selected Works of Mary Shelley*, 8 Vols., ed. Nora Crook, Vol. 1., p.187. The Shakespeare reference is to Richard's self-image in his first speech, *Richard III*, I.i. 20-21.

to employ the phrase used by her father, William Godwin, abortive men. These are ideas which have their origin in Aristotelean accounts of friendship, but they are peculiarly forceful in Montaigne's essay on the subject. In a rather famous and untranslatable passage, Montaigne says of his relationship with La Boëtie:

> Our souls were yoked together in such unity, and contemplated each other with so ardent affection, and with the same affection revealed each other to each other right down to the entrails, that not only did I know his mind as well as I knew my own but I would have entrusted myself to him with greater assurance than to myself.[3]

The friend perfectionizes, in the sense of an ontological redoubling memorably articulated in Montaigne's text, but also in the sense of acting as a teacher, an instructor beyond or outside of the malforming structures of power, hierarchy and force normally associated with the teaching scene. This is, at least, what the Rousseavian account of teaching attempts to establish in *Émile*, but in a staged, physically and verbally rhetorical manner which made Mary Shelley's father attack Rousseau for perverting the idea of a friendship based teaching. Godwin writes in *Political Justice*:

> There is an essential disparity between youth and age; and the parent or preceptor is perhaps always an old man to the pupil …. Rousseau has endeavoured to surmount this difficulty by the introduction of a fictitious equality. It is unnecessary perhaps to say more of his system upon the present occasion, than that it is a system of incessant hypocrisy and lying.[4]

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[3] Montaigne, "On affectionate relationships" in *The Complete Essays*, trans. M. A. Screech (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1991), pp.205-19 (p.213).
[4] *Political and Philosophical Writings of William Godwin*, 7 Vols, Gen. Ed. Mark Philp (London: William Pickering, 1993), Vol. 5., p.131.

The problem must be surmounted, according to Godwin, if we are to ever produce that truly rational mode of education which would in its turn help to establish a truly rational society. The dream of the Enlightenment depends upon the idea of a coincidence between friendship and teaching.

This is where the work of Derrida can help us as thinkers, philosophers, theorists and teachers. Derrida's work allows us to contemplate and even live an approach to ethics and to knowledge which recognizes the unattainable nature of universalist ideas (concerning justice, responsibility, hospitality) without giving up on them. Enlightenment ideas of justice, responsibility and hospitality are, to employ a phrase Derrida often uses in his later work, *impossibly possible*, they are ideas which can never be fully and finally established, founded, authorized, and yet they are the ideas we should face towards, that we cannot do without.[5] So, instead of taking sides in a move which is already compromised by its assumption that there are clear and stable sides to be taken, we preserve and defend the Enlightenment by asking questions of it, and we preserve and defend teaching by asking questions of it; questions which, currently, are illegitimate in an academic environment in which transparency and calculability are the law. I have always admired and loved my friend's, Tony O'Connor's, teaching, having seen its results time and time again in the thought and the behaviour of the students who have received it as a gift. Yet Tony O'Connor, my friend, is leaving the academic teaching environment at a moment in which the dominant force is a linguistic and an economic performativity: *teaching must be calculable*; *teaching must be transparent*; *teaching must*

[5] See, for instance, Derrida's *The Gift of Death*, trans. David Wills (Chicago and London: The Chicago University Press, 1996), *Of Hospitality*, trans. Rachel Bowlby (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2000), *On Cosmopolitabism and Forgiveness*, trans. Mark Dooley and Michael Hughes (London and New York: Routledge, 2002).

be productive; *teaching must be responsible*; *teaching must be evaluatable, auditable*; *teaching must be visible, its methods reproducible and shareable*. All these demands on teaching might sound reasonable, until we register the fact that they come to us by way of the performative, by way of legalistic demands, and as a consequence implicitly, and increasingly explicitly, put a bar on what my friend and I might call philosophical thinking on teaching. A techno-bureaucratic statement of the current performative culture might demand that teaching must be calculable; a philosophical question might be to ask whether teaching concerns or does not concern bildung, and if it does whether it could ever, logically, rationally, anticipate (in advance) its own effects. Techno-bureaucratic agencies, however, are quite capable of demanding that teaching include bildung and be calculable. Philosophy and teaching, at that point, find themselves eased out of the picture, sidelined as non-economic luxuries, part of the expendable, side issue of reason and thought, where thought is defined as that mental process which does not already know, in advance, its own outcome, its own products.

But is it responsible, in this performative environment of transparency, where everything must be visible, calculable and productive, simply to return to the questions such a transparent ideology conceals? To stock-pile the questions and aporias, the contradictions and incompatibilities? As if, in the name of a reason to come, one were building an arsenal of weapons not yet available for use? I want here to honour my friend's teaching, its contents and its effects. Friendship involves telepathy, so says Montaigne. I would venture to say then, speaking for Tony, that the answer is no, that responsibility, responsible teaching, must involve something more. There are, after all, students in front of us, people whose futures we as teachers will effect one way or

another. I think Tony would argue that responsibility cannot simply be posited in the to-come, and I think Derrida would and indeed did say the same thing. The link I have been remembering, in the name of my friend, between teaching and friendship is the marker of this unavoidable responsibility, since friendship (whether or not it is possible in its Enlightenment senses) would have to be extended towards the student, the students, offered as a gift, without reserve and without calculation (or at least without the calculable) for teaching to occur. The government of Ireland, for example, like other European governments, has decided, for the sake of the idea (dream?) of a "Knowledge Economy," to double its postgraduate student numbers in the next five years. Responsible teaching, a teaching which philosophically questioned its own possibility, and yet did not defer the necessity of friendship (the gift of friendship as a continued act of teaching) will have to find a way in such a deeply irrational scenario (there is to be no enlargement of academic teaching and research posts, just a doubling in the number of those trained for such posts).

2. Otogogy

Derrida, in "Otobiographies: The Teaching of Nietzsche and the Politics of the Proper Name," remarks on having too little time. The rhythm he employs is fast paced, the pace of a spoken address. Derrida evokes and utilizes a certain freedom—he cites in this context "academic freedom," he says "I repeat: a-ca-dem-ic free-dom—you can take it or leave it" (*O*, p.4). This freedom is the academic freedom of the philosopher who could say more, who could fill in the gaps between and within his aphorisms, who could make

the connections between the texts discussed and all the countless other texts which could connect to those discussed. The academic freedom of the philosopher who is speaking to the ears of the other and wants those ears to be small ones, capable of registering differences.

I am a student (whenever I find the time) of Derrida, and I train my ears as well as I can to his texts and addresses. But I feel almost hysterical about my relation to the network his reading of Nietzsche opens up. These connections take us into the Nietzschean corpus, of course; but they take us, or at least me, or could take me, into Wagnerian opera, into Schiller's philosophy and dramatic works (in particular *The Robbers*), into the texts signed by Hegel, and via a political murder of another dramatist, perpetrated in 1819, they lead us, or at least me, eventually (and this is where I start to really get a little bit hysterical) to Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park* and its possible relation to the revolutionary, anarcho-feminism of Emma Goldman, who famously said (rather like and yet rather unlike an Austen heroine): "If I can't dance I don't want to be part of your revolution."[6] This spiralling series of improbable intertextual and political connections, which could place Hegel, Schiller and Wagner next to Jane Austen, Elizabeth Inchbald (and maybe even Mary Shelley), is not something I am going to be able to talk about here: but not because I am a philosopher confident enough not to fill in

[6] . "Choreographies," in *The Ear of the* Other, opp. cit., p.163. The Austen link concerns the political assassination, discussed in Lecture V of Nietzsche's text on educational institutions, of August von Kotzebue by a member of the Burschenschaft, a student movement which began as a revolutionary force for German unification. As Michael W. Grenke states: "As a result of this [the banning of the organisation in 1819 after Kotzebue's murder] the Burschenschaft became a secret society and grew more radical. The students went so far as to attack the police headquarters in Frankfurt in 1832. In the second half of the century the nature of the Burschenschaft changed, and it turned into a union of social clubs of nationalistic and anti-Semitic character." See Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Future of Our Educational Institutions*, trans. Michael W. Grenke, Indiana: St. Augustine's Press, 2004, pp.114-5. Kotzebue, of course, wrote *Lover's Vows*, a play translated by Elizabeth Inchbald and the play which is performed in the "theatricals" of Austen's *Mansfield Park*.

the gaps. Put me down, in fact, as a teacher on the verge of an hysterical abyss. That's nearer to the truth (of me, at least).

What I want to talk about is otogogy, a neologism of my own making which I do not intend to expressly defined (you will hear it or you will not), and I want to do so by looking a bit more closely and a bit more slowly than Derrida does (recognising, of course, that such a slowness is not available to me) at Nietzsche's *On the Future of our Educational Institutions*.[7] Derrida's "Otobiographies" text concerns the legacy of Nietzsche's texts and Nietzsche's name; it concerns how Nietzsche's name inherits from the future to which it calls. It is about how autobiography ultimately becomes biography, that is how the text by the author on himself, the text which ventures (puts forth) the author's name, must ultimately come to mean what it means because it is read and signed (given meaning) by those who read it (rather than by the author him-or-herself). The essay is also about how the worst returns in the future, in place of the future. The essay is about this and about how Nietzsche already knows it. Nietzsche writes: "I know my fate . . . . One day my name will be associated with the memory of something monstrous." (*O*, p.31) Even though the real monster for Nietzsche is society, the culture machine, the "hypocritical hound" which "whispers in your ear through his educational systems, which are actually acroustic and acroamatic devices" which make "your ears grow larger" until you turn into long-eared asses—even though there is a whole critique of the "culture machine" in Nietzsche's text(s), it remains the fact, as Derrida states, that "[t]here is nothing contingent about the fact that the only political regimen to have *effectively* brandished his [F.N 's] name as a major and official banner was Nazi." (*O*, p.31) It

[7] . Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Future of Our Educational Institutions*, trans. Michael W. Grenke, Indiana: St. Augustine's Press, 2004. Hereafter cited as FEI.

remains a fact that Nietzsche, at least Derrida's Nietzsche, knew this, knew and argued that, to quote Derrida's reading, "all post-Hegelian texts have this potential to go in two ways—left or right—including, by implication, his own texts—there is no guarantee—there is only a destination of the text—to the ear of the other—the post-Hegelian other." (*O*, p.32) As Derrida says: "it's the ear of the other that signs." (*O*, p.51) There is no guarantee. No calculability in one's texts and, by implication, one's teaching. It can always, potentially, end up resembling what Derrida calls the "poisoned milk which has . . . gotten mixed up in advance with the worst of our times." (*O*, p.7)

It is Nietzsche's 1872 text, an unfinished series of public lectures, with which I want to go a bit more slowly, in full knowledge that I probably cannot. *On the Future of our Educational Institutions* is full of monsters and full of ears. It is the text in which Hitler saw confirmation of his own ideologies in Nietzsche's references to a "gross Führer" (someone we—we students and teachers—need, according to Nietzsche). It is a text against the modernizing university and secondary school (the German Gymnasium) and in particular the democratizing tendencies of *extension* and *diminution*. For *extension* we could substitute democratization, but we could also substitute massification; for *diminution* we could substitute service to the state (whether that be understood in a Kantian sense or in a contemporary techno-scientific, performative sense). I am trying, in what I say here, to register the fact that Nietzsche's text is uncanny and disturbing, if we listen to it closely. It is a text which seems to speak against our basic political ideas and ideals, and yet in which we cannot help but see the voice of something that looks like friendship. I will return to this.

Nietzsche's text, against these modern trends of *extension* and *diminution*, argues for the "truly German" tendencies of *narrowing* and *concentration*. The text of the lectures, that is to say, is against a modern democratizing tendency in German educational institutions, a tendency which is part of the modern, post-Kantian university's raison d'etre, its production of enlightened citizens for the state. Nietzsche's argument therefore involves a wholesale critique of the modern idea of academic freedom: the academic freedom of the teacher and the academic freedom of the student. Academic freedom concerns our ears and our hands, as well as our mouths, Nietzsche argues. In the fifth lecture, Nietzsche's old, grey-haired philosopher (of whom more in a moment) imagines a hypothetical conversation with a foreigner about the "university only as an educational institution [Bildungsanstalt]." (*FEI*, p.106) The foreigner asks: "how is the student connected with the university with you?" And the old, grey-haired philosopher states: "through the ear." Yes, repeats the old, grey-haired philosopher, "Only through the ear." He explains:

> The student listens. When he speaks, when he sees, when he walks, when he is sociable, when he practices the arts, in short, when he lives, he is independent, i.e. not dependent on the educational institution.[8] Very frequently the student immediately writes something as he hears it. These are the moments in which he hangs on the umbilical cord of the university. He can chose what he wants to hear,

[8] Grenke notes that what he gives as "independent" here, *selbständig* "means more literally, 'self-standing,'" and that what he gives as "not dependent on" *Unabhängig* "is often translated as 'independent.' More literally, it means 'not hanging from'." (*FEI*, p.106)

> he does not need to believe what he hears, he can close his ears if he does not like to hear. This is the "acroamatic"[9] method of teaching. (ibid)

We could come back to that tantalising word "acroamatic" later, perhaps. Nietzsche goes on to describe how the teacher, separated from the students by a "monstrous gap," speaks whatever he wants to the students. So that the scene of modern Gymnasium teaching, becomes that of

> One speaking mouth and very many ears with half as many writing hands—that is the external academic apparatus, that is the educational [culture – bildung] machine of the university in action. (*FEI*, pp.106)

This is the "acroamatic" "mouth to ear" scene of modern "academic freedom," which ultimately leaves the student able to open or close his ears at will. This is the vision of education against which the old, grey-haired philosopher speaks. *On the Future of Our Educational Institutions* is cast in a fictional, operatic, one might almost say Wagernian form (Wagner was in the audience for the second lecture). The text has an introduction and a preface. In the latter Nietzsche dedicates his text to the few "calm readers," a "few human beings," "not swept up in the dizzying haste of our rolling age," readers (only a few) who "still have time" to contemplate "our education," who "still have time" to practice the "*meditatio generis futuri*" ("contemplation of the genus of the future") and who have "still not unlearned how to think while he [the few readers will be male] reads;

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[9] "Acroama," "Acroamata": "1580. from *Gk.* Anything heard, f. hear. 1. A rhetorical declamation (as opp. to an argument); 2. *Anc. Phil.* Oral teaching heard only by the initiated; *esoteric* as opp. to *exoteric* doctrines. Hence: Acroamatic adj. orally communicated; esoteric; secret . . . . Aristotle's lectures to the initiated on the esoteric parts of his philosophy. (OED)

he still understands how to read the secret between the lines." (*FEI*, p.19)[10] The plot itself, the thing between which we have to read, involves two young students (one of whom is Nietzsche) who, five year's previously, dedicated their lives to founding a "small union of a few comrades, with the intention to find for our productive inclinations in art and literature a firm and obligatory organization." (*FEI*, p.23) This plan involves submitting to the other comrades, each month, a "product of our own, whether it be a poem or an essay or an architectural project or a musical production" and allowing the others to submit "with unlimited openness, a friendly critique." The two young students have come back to Rolandseck on the Rhine to celebrate in "a thankful, indeed ceremonious, feeling" this initial founding "inspiration." In shooting their pistols they disturb the old, grey-haired philosopher, his dog and a "somewhat younger man" who accompanies him. The old man is furious, since he says that the shooting of their pistols represents "a true assassination attempt against philosophy." (*FEI*, p.28) The old man is, it turns out, waiting for his "old friend," one of "our first philosophers" and the young students have disturbed his preparatory thoughts. The old, grey-haired philosopher's student companion fears, indeed, given his fury at their noise and presence, that "for the first time he would be hindered from philosophizing by a philosopher." (*FEI*, p.31) All the two students, as young students, want, like any young men awake to their potential greatness, is "to be without a future, to be nothing other than stretched out good-for-nothings comfortable on the threshold of the present," however Nietzsche's student (the student that is "Nietzsche") realizes that there may indeed be something to be gained by

[10] Of course, as Derrida makes clear, the addresses or lectures were not published in Nietzsche's time. Whenever they have subsequently been published they have been so against Nietzsche's express prohibition.

listening to the old philosopher's conversation with his younger companion (*FEI*, pp.33-4).

They listen silently to the old man's advice to his younger companion. This latter is a man who has given up a teaching career in disgust. In fact, it's the younger companion who has the most to say in the first lecture. Repeating on demand the philosopher's "cardinal principle" concerning education, "how unbelievably small the number of really educated ones finally is and can be in general" (p.34), it is the younger companion who presents a critique of the current educational trends of extension and diminution. By the end of the first lecture, then, the old philosopher has warmed somewhat to his companion, whom he initially criticized for lacking the courage needed for philosophy. He agrees with his description of the current educational institutions in Germany, interrupting at one point in agreement: "The most general education is just barbarism." (*FEI*, p.38) It is the old man who, prompted by this companion, begins in the second lecture a sustained critique of the current Gymnasium system; a critique which rests on the manner in which German youth have been barbarously emancipated from a strict education in the German classics. This is a betrayal, he argues, of the most fundamental aspect of education, the "*one* healthy and natural starting point" of education, which is "the artistic, serious, and rigorous habituation in the use of the mother tongue." (*FEI*, p.54) The age is an age of journalism. The mother tongue is taught as if it were a dead language, as if it were the object of philologists, whereas the true task of the educator is to bring "the ones little gifted" into "a holy terror [Schreck] before the language, the gifted ones into a noble inspiration for the same." (*FEI*, p.45)

Lecture three deepens this argument, the old man insisting that the only thing that will bring back to the masses a genuine culture (bildung) is an educational system which serves to inspire a few heroes of the mother tongue: “Thus education of the mass cannot be our goal: rather education of the individual, selected human beings equipped for great and lasting works.” (*FEI*, p.66) The masses are, in fact, metaphorically identical to the mother tongue, in that the educational task of the masses is to give birth to men of genius, who “burst forth out of the unconscious of the people, which have their motherly vocation [Bestimmung] in the begetting of genius and then in the proper education [Erziehung] and cultivation [Pflege] of the same”; the genius should be “ripened and nourished in the mother’s lap of the culture of a people.” (*FEI*, p.67) The current educational institutions, the Gymnasium and the university, serve the state; whereas educational institutions which genuinely give birth to culture, which form culture, serve the masses and the mother tongue by breeding out of them men of genius.

At the beginning of the fourth lecture the young students, enthused by hearing a philosophy not intended for them, leap up to thank the philosopher, who has completely forgotten their presence. The students startle the philosopher, the companion and the philosopher’s dog, who bites the student who is not Nietzsche. The students, however, are insistent that the philosopher stay to speak to them more and wait for the arrival of his philosophical friend. Indeed, both of the young students and the old man’s companion are now hanging on his words, having been brought by his philosophy of authentic education to an abyss: “we seemed not only to have missed the great danger but to have run to meet it.” (*FEI*, p.86) As the companion and the young students are suggesting that men of genius can be left to develop themselves, the old philosopher gets very cross and gives a

very bad-tempered response, arguing that it is the German people itself who have murdered the great German artists (Winkleman, Lessing, Goethe, Schiller). In fact the philosopher's anger momentarily seems to bring him down to his listeners' level—it is figured as a kind of bridge between "shy deference" and the philosopher's authoritative word: "We felt much less shame to have brought forth such foolish arguments than a certain restitution of our personality: precisely after the heated and, for us, unflattering address we believed ourselves closer to the philosopher, indeed we felt situated more personally." (*FEI*, p.94) This levelling does not last, however, and the philosopher is soon back in the ascendancy.

At the beginning of lecture five, they hear the sounds of the philosopher's friend (one of "our first philosophers") travelling towards them on the lake. The old man asks the students to fire their pistols in rhythm to the song emanating from the friend's boat, but they misfire, shoot unrhythmically, and it turns out that the friend is arriving with a bunch of students, friends of the young students who have already so inconvenienced the philosopher. This sends him into a rage—he is, you might notice, constantly getting angry, speaking in the heat of anger—and this anger is hardly appeased when the students and the companion ask the philosopher to now speak about the university, adding that surely it can be said that the Gymnasium at least fits some young men to embark on an independent course of study. That they have not been listening carefully enough is obvious here; and it is here that we get the philosopher's long discourse on the university as a place of ears and mouths and scribbling hands: an education (culture) machine for the service of the state. The Gymnasium gives no guidance to the young student, academic freedom turns out to be isolation: "Free!" the philosopher says, mockingly:

"Test this freedom you knowers of human beings!" (*FEI*, p.108) Instead of an education (bildung – formation, cultural formation) the young student of the Gymnasium and the University is left bewildered by "the unendurable burden of standing alone." (*FEI*, p.112)

Derrida writes, paraphrasing the argument of this section of the text (which, in many ways, is the argument of the whole text): "The whole misfortune of today's students can be explained by the fact that they have not found a Führer. They remain *führerlos*, without a leader." (*O*, p.28) This is the part of the text, in other words, in which the infamous references to the need for a gross Führer occur. I would, however, add something to Derrida's comments. There are two sides to the misfortune, or tragedy, of "today's students." One side is, indeed, being *führerlos*; but the other side, is being isolated, bewildered, burdened, lost. I say these are two sides, I separate them, since it is here, in the section of the text in which come the most direct call for a gross Führer, that we also get the most humane, the most touching, the most affective and pathos-driven, the most teacherly speech from that cross, irritated, irascible, contrary, apparently flawed, friendless, or at least lingering (friend-lingering) grey-haired, old philosopher. This is the moment, in other words, when the constantly erupting anger of the old, grey-haired philosopher displays what? What word do we give to this pathos-filled speech?: sensibility? parental concern? fatherly outrage? maternal care? What would we call—and how do we hear—this anger for the lost student?

I am going to have to quote a section of this long speech, knowing that in quoting it I am incapable of neutrally conveying it from the page to you—something is added, something goes astray, destinations are missed, others never thought of are hit. Reading this passage of Nietzsche aloud or in silence is a form of tele-communication, a form of

tele-pathy, perhaps—for your ears only! I am sorry that I cannot authentically quote this passage in German and let it be understood directly to you and me. There are forms of translation and telepathy involved in such quoting which are beyond the control of you and me.

> …. for that time, in which he is apparently the single free man in clerk's and servants' reality, he pays for that grandiose illusion of freedom through ever-renewing torments and doubts. He feels that he cannot lead himself, he cannot help himself: then he dives poor in hopes into the daily world and into daily work: the *most trivial* activity envelops him, his members sink into flabbiness. Suddenly he again rouses himself: he still feels the power, not waned, that enabled him to hold himself aloft. Pride and noble resolution form [bilden] and grow in him. It terrifies him to sink so early into the narrow, petty moderation of a speciality, and now he grasps after supports and pillars in order not to be dragged along in that course. In vain! These supports give way; for he had made a mistake and held tight to brittle reeds. In an empty and disconsolate mood he sees his plans go up in smoke: his condition is abominable and undignified: he alternates between overexcited activity and melancholic enervation. Then he is tired, lazy, fearful of work, terrified in the face of everything great, and hating himself. He dissects [zergliedert] his capacities and thinks he is looking into a hollow or chaotically filled space. Then again he plunges from the heights of the dream[ed] (sic) of self-knowledge into an ironic skepticism. He strips his struggle of its importance and feels himself ready for any zeal, albeit low use [Nützlichkeit]. He now seeks his consolation in hasty, incessant action in order to hide from himself under it. And

> thus his helplessness and the lack of a leader toward culture [Bildung] drives him from one form of existence into another: doubt, upswing, life's necessity, hope, despair, everything throws him to and fro, as a sign, that all the stars above him according to which he could pilot his ship are extinguished. (*FEI*, pp.111-2)

Do you recognise this student? Is this scenario recognizable to you? I am not interested in the master's voice, in the "magisterial voice." So I will say— without hiding anything— that I see myself in this picture. That is me, there, in the picture! Driven this way and that way, with no foundation, with no steady, guiding principle, method or, dare I say it (me a university lecturer!), bildung. A formless thing, elevating my work, only then to see it as nothing, striving after a voice and a vision, only to plummet into a sea of texts I feel I will never master or even assimilate. I also see my students in that passage. My post-graduate students, certainly. Most definitely. But also my best (and what does that mean?) undergraduate students. The ones that show themselves from within the mass (massified) ranks. And show themselves, usually, almost invariably, because they are lost, awakened to something they cannot live with and now cannot live without. Those students who show themselves to me for what? for guidance? for leadership? for the resolution through me of *führerlos*? Me? Students who often seem to want me to say *this is it*, say, *deconstruction is it*, say *be a deconstructionist*, or say *be a Marxist, or a psychoanalytical literary critic*, or *this kind of feminist*, or *that kind*, say *be a historicist*, or *a formalist*. Students who seem to want me to guide them, to lead them, the ones who have somehow (is it through me?) learnt the difference between Erziehung and Bildung (and don't seem

to notice that I cannot even pronounce one of them properly!)[11] So, imagine my reading, you may well be able to hear it, it may be entirely lost on you, when the old, grey-haired philosopher goes on, in his anger, thus:

> Oh the miserable guilty-innocents . . . . For they lack something, each of them must have come up against this. They lack a true educational institution that could give them goals, masters, methods, models, fellows and from whose interior the powerful and elevating breath of the true German spirit would stream toward them. Thus they starve in the wilderness; thus they degenerate into enemies of that spirit which at bottom is intimately related to them; thus they pile up guilt upon guilt more heavily than any other generation ever has piled up, soiling the pure, desecrating the holy, pre-canonizing the false and the phoney. In them you may come to consciousness about the educational power of our universities and lay before yourselves in all seriousness the question: What do you promote in them? (*FEI*, p.114)

What do you promote in them? The old, grey-haired philosopher finishes this speech by returning to the true "German spirit" which the teacher should promote in those few who are capable of rising out of the mother tongue and the maternal womb of the people. But that is monstrous to us. That is the beginning of the monstrosity which Nietzsche somehow knew would attach itself, someday, to his name. So the question remains for us, at least for me, given that I see myself and my students in this scene and

[11] . Grenke writes: "Erziehung means most literally a 'drawing out,' and it is related to midwifing; in typical usage it applies to earlier education, and could be translated as 'rearing.' Bildung means most literally 'formation,' and it is connected to having an image [Bild] or form. Sorting out the different meanings of these terms is one of the major tasks that faces the reader of these lectures." p.viii

in these words, in this state of *führerlos*, given that I see my teaching here: What do you (I) promote in them?

There was supposed to be a sixth and maybe even a seventh lecture to complete *The Future of Our Educational Institutions*, but they never came to be. Nietzsche never wrote them. Like the philosophical friend, the final lectures did not arrive. Nietzsche's text finishes (without being complete) with the imminent arrival of the philosophical friend, although potentially spoilt by his being in the company of students. Well, that is going a bit fast. The philosopher moves, in the speech I have just been focusing on, into a description of the post-Napoleonic youth movement, the Burschenschaft, an educational, cultural movement which learnt its principle lessons for "the purest moral powers" on the field of battle rather than the Gymnasium and the University. He goes quickly over the history of the students of the Burschenschaft who learnt "on the slaughtering field" of battle what they couldn't learn in today's educational institutions: "that one needs great leaders, and that all education begins with obedience." He goes over, quickly, the history of those students, who fought in the name of Schiller, who, taken from them too early, "could have been a leader, a master, an organiser" for those students "and whom . . . now missed [him] with such heart-felt rage." Those students who, in that desire for a leader, learnt on the battle field, committed the instinctive and "short-sighted," overly angry, overly enraged "bloody deed[s], in the murder of Kotzebue." A deed which demonstrated their tragic situation: "the doom of those portentous students: they did not find the leader that they needed." (*FEI*, p.117)

But there is one more thing, if we are going slowly, or trying to, before the end and the friend's imminent (non) arrival. It comes in the way of a similie, a musical figure

of an orchestra—peopled with "shrivelled, good-natured" musicians, not much too look at really, a rather unpromising, motley crew—until the great conductor beats them into glorious music. That is the end, apart from the fact that we wait for the friend, one of "our first philosophers." At the end, having been instructed by a philosopher that we need a leader, we wait with that philosopher on the arrival of the friend. In fact, we wait the arrival of friends, since the arriving philosopher is accompanied by students. Are we waiting for a philosopher who will also be a leader? Or a friend who will turn out simply to be another philosopher reiterating the call for a leader? Or a divided, inorganic group of friends who will prove that in number there are no friends?[12] Does the friend's apparent alliance with the arriving students suggest that he is in fact an enemy? If he is an enemy rather than a friend to the old philosopher will he turn out to be a friend to the students? And if so how? Is not the philosopher, despite his bad temper, a friend to those students who he has awakened to a desire for a genuine German education and culture? Or is he not, rather, in doing that, their enemy? What, in the context of teaching, of Erziehung and Bildung, is the difference between a friend and a leader and an enemy? So many questions, so many acroamatic questions ringing in our ears.

But that is not the end, not for me anyway. Nor is it the end for Derrida, nor, I telepathically imagine, for my philosopher friend, Tony O'Connor. Derrida ends "Otobiographies" with a warning. "The temptation is strong for all of us," he writes, "to recognize ourselves on the program of this staged scene or in the pieces of this musical score." (*O*, p.38) Perhaps I was going too fast all along and should have reminded myself of this temptation earlier. But that is not all. Derrida does not end with this temptation.

[12] The issue of number (the number of friends that possible, the issue of calculation in the sense of numbering and friendship) is how Derrida's analysis of friendship begins. See Jacques Derrida, *The Politics of Friendship*, trans. George Collins (London: Verso, 1997).

He ends with the other who does not enter into this scene. Not the friend, but rather woman: "woman, if I have read correctly," he says, "never appears at any point along the umbilical cord, either to study or to teach . . . . No woman or trace of woman." He adds: "And I do not make this remark in order to benefit from that supplement of seduction which today enters into all courtships or courtrooms. This vulgar procedure is part of what I propose to call 'gynegogy.'" What does he mean? He is going very quickly here. He adds one more, small paragraph:

> No woman or trace of woman, if I have read correctly – save the mother, that's understood. But this is part of the system. The mother is the faceless figure of a *figurant*, an extra. She gives rise to all the figures by losing herself in the background of the scene like an anonymous persona. Everything comes back to her, beginning with life; everything addresses and destines itself to her. She survives on the condition of remaining at bottom. (*O*, p.38)

And that is it, that is the end. Very quickly, at the very end, woman and the Mother come in only to be lost to figuration. A similar thing happens in the text of a friend of mine. In Nicholas Royle's "Literature, teaching, psychoanalysis," chapter three of his *The Uncanny*, a chapter in which Royle refers to Nietzsche's text, the one I have been speaking about here, and says that Derrida wants to substitute the disgust which he (Derrida) says "controls everything" in Nietzsche's text with pleasure. Maybe I have been saying anger controls everything in Nietzsche's text. Maybe not. This is all too quick. Royle associates this pleasure with sexual difference: "If there is pleasure in teaching, it would have to do with a different thinking of 'man' and 'woman' alike." He adds:

> Pleasure, one is tempted to suppose, is here linked to the possibilities of what he [Derrida] elsewhere calls "a choreographic text with polysexual signatures," an experience of teaching, of the voice and of the ear, that
>
> > perhaps goes beyond known or coded marks, beyond the grammar and spelling . . . of sexuality . . . beyond the binary difference that governs the decorum of all codes, beyond the opposition feminine/masculine, beyond bisexuality as well, beyond homosexuality and heterosexuality which come to the same thing.[13]

He adds one more quotation from Derrida's "Choreographies": "I would like to believe in the masses, this interminable number of blended voices, this mobile of non-identified sexual marks whose choreography can carry, divide, multiply the body of each 'individual', whether he be classified as 'man' or 'woman' according to the criteria of uasage." (*U*, p.67) And then he is on to *Spectres of Marx* and back to the uncanny and ghosts. It all happens, again, rather quickly. Brilliantly, but quickly. Brilliantly and quickly.

Time is one of the reasons it happens: this quickness, this speed, and this "No woman or trace of woman." Time is one of the reasons. The feminine, the possibility of the feminine, gets lost because of the quickness of time, because we go so quickly that we lose her, lose sight of her. The feminine I am here associating with the surprising pathos and concern for the student, the student who has learnt to desire culture and then cannot find it, in the old, grey-haired philosopher, who is and is not me, and perhaps is and is not my friend, Tony O'Connor. The rhetoric of transparency and performativity are so quick

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[13] . Nicholas Royle, *The Uncanny*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003, p.66. Hereafter cited as U.

that they demand we see the end before we even begin. That rhetoric demands that we explain what our students will learn from our teaching before we have even met those students and before we have begun to teach them. Teaching must occur so quickly, in other words, that friendship, even if it is rhetorically and juridically demanded, finds no space to enter the scene of teaching. I am associating friendship in teaching with the appearance of the feminine. Am I going too fast in that, my friend? Possibly. But I need some ground upon which to responsibly response to my current students, and I need it quick. They get lost so quickly. In the modernizing epoch of transparency, everything of value seems to get lost in the blink of an eye. So I try to go as slow as I can, in this situation of high velocity. It is something, the need for care, attention, rigour, and above all reading (which is always slow if it is reading), that my friend, Tony O'Connor, has taught many, many people to understand and practice. So I end by returning to Jane Austen and the father-figure in her *Mansfield Park*. All Austen's novels are, of course, concerned with friendship and teaching, but they are now frequently read through a prevailing post-colonial critical discourse which I believe too quickly translates all her father-figures into unsympathetic, economically corrupted and corrupting patriarchs.[14] That is far too quick, I know. Speed in these things is unfair and unjust. But in the last chapter, I would assert, the cold, disciplinarian father, the patriarch, Sir Thomas Bertram, is transfigured. Something has happened to Sir Bertram by novel's end, something to do with friendship, teaching and the masculine position of the head of the house, the leader of the family. Can you hear it? Does it enter your ears? And if it does, what is it worth?

[14] This reading is still most thoroughly articulated in Edward Said's "Jane Austen and Empire" in *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Knopf, 1993).

Fanny was indeed the daughter that he wanted. His charitable kindness had been rearing a prime comfort for himself. His liberality had a rich payment, and the general goodness of his intentions by her, deserved it. He might have made her childhood happier; but it had been an error of judgement only which had given him the appearance of harshness, and deprived him of her early love; and now, on really knowing each other, their mutual attachment became very strong. After settling her at Thornton Lacey with every kind attention to her comfort, the object of almost every day was to see her there, or to get her away from it.[15]

[15] Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park*, ed. Claudia L. Johnson (New York and London: W. W. Norton, 1998), p.320.