First Afterword(s)

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There are enduring themes that run through Letiche's writing. *The Relevant PhD* (with G Lightfoot,2014); *Pedagogy Lives* (ed. with H Jansen ; *forthcoming 2015*); *L'art du sens dans les organisations* (eds. with J-L Moriceau, M-A Le Theule ; *forthcoming, 2015); Belief & Organization* (eds. with P Case & H Hopfl, 2012) ; and *Coherence in the Midst of Complexity: Advances in Social Complexity Theory* (with M. Lissack, 2012) all discuss pedagogy, politics and philosophy, within which emergence, ethics and aesthetics are recurring refrains. Latterly, having published more than enough articles to satisfy the university system of holding academics to account (of which he is a stern critic), he has turned to working on books where he has found more freedom to explore these ideas. Working with colleagues, on subjects that he felt mattered, was considerably more satisfying than striving to further the agendas of journal editors, enmeshed in that pitiless struggle for recognition, status and academic power. Now, having tasted the freedom of writing for meaning, Other and commitment, he has found his post-retirement return to academe at the University of Leicester (UK), not only a delight but also a major challenge. Solidarity with colleagues and the institution required re-entering the battlefield, delivering textual antagonistics and the ensuing articles. In this Afterword I reflect on Letiche's earlier articles and the positions he espoused in the early Twenty-First Century – those on his way to his later writings and *Demos.*

Letiche's articles all feature three singular characteristics whose imprint is almost a signature. First, they are replete with a generous, philosophically-informed humanism. This is not a naïve or prophetic humanism, but a humanism that might flourish in spite of all the horrors, darkness and slippery slopes of organizational lives. Secondly, Letiche evaluates every theory or position primarily according to its performativity and sincerity, abhorring bad faith or cynicism. He always poses the question, as does Deleuze, as to what are the consequences of a thought on people's lives. Third, he argues that organization systems or theory should always consider their effects on each individual as well as on society. Thus, encountering another face or gaze may not only question but destroy any well designed system; business ethics is not a set of rules but the reflexive construction of society, and all travel from one level to the other is haunted by the question of emergence.

Letiche's organization studies is concerned with the flesh of words, incarnated into everyday processes and work. People – be they leaders, managers or repairmen – use talk and speech to make things happen; they have communicative agency. Similarly, texts from academics have their own share of influence. Hugo Letiche (2004) laments that organizational studies do not focus deeper on the talk that presupposes agency and malleability that in turn transforms organizations, while also considering and the structure and permanence that endures. Either organization studies concentrates on talk and personal text, losing the organizational context; or it examines organizations as texts and structure, losing personal feelings, thoughts and

agency. For Letiche, talk alone cannot create organization's ordered sense of interaction. The text's constitutive power comes through shared assumptions of meaning, grounded in narrative or mythic conventions. As with Rancière, Letiche does not think that talk alone constitutes organization. Precision, control, accuracy, the rejection of error and the demand for generalization, are not all merely talked into existence. The "Adamic" myth (coined by Delumeau, 2000) claims that organizational order is natural, inevitable and originatory. Letiche believes that the constitutive action of talk is closer to that of Hermès, as described by M Serres (1983). Hermès is skilled at convincing and seducing; he is the god of invention, writing, communication, business, theft and of the arts and crafts. Enfleshed words, used with cunning intelligence, appeal in their rhetorical moves, are capable of using long detours and unexpected renascences, and have the possibility of setting people and organizations in motion. Language and order are not natural but artificial; their legitimacy is mythic rather than fundamental or inevitable.

Whether they write their texts in scientific or hermetic narratives, organization researchers use words in ways that confirm the dissymmetry and inherent inequality between the researchers and the researched. The researchers' sentences reflect their distant gaze, anonymous stance, emotional detachment and political disengagement. They never find themselves face-to-face with the people they study. The researcher sees, knows, abstracts and theorizes; the others are merely there to be experienced and reflected upon. Letiche (2012) advocates a shift in the distribution of the sensible. The researcher may try to be present and not distant. Researchers need to acknowledge the face of the Other. This changes everything: it means that we may no longer try to objectify or rationalize the other, not putting the researched's actions or thoughts into general categories, but remaining open and present to her/his singularity, uniqueness, specialness, plurality and the multiplicity of her/his motivations, acts, drives, circumstances and relations. One can learn such an ability, for example, by studying modern dance as a form of organization. Dance's performativity is never singular, rather it always acts in the in-between - in-between: choreographer(s), musicians, dancers, audiences and researchers. If this in-between is lost, so is the dance. Researchers are not held back in the same way and the strong 'I' of the researcher can try to dominate all the in-between-ness reducing all Others to the researcher 'I'. An over-bearing researcher 'I' will never encounter Other's face and will consequently miss the possibilities for demos.

Researcher openness is paradoxical. To have a more egalitarian contact with the researched, the researcher has to achieve presence. But if the researcher thinks that they alone know how to be present, they lose the active openness that allows the other to come to present. Aiming for dialog or intimacy ruins presence. Presence can only function unaware, without guidelines, when it is unannounced and not preconceived. Relational performativity happens, but it cannot be commanded. Being in the in-between of related awareness requires a reflexive concern for an ethics of Otherness. A social studies that consists of protocols, research techniques and standardized methodology is closed to Otherness.

For Hugo Letiche (2009a), the dominant social scientific knowledge is not only contaminated, but hides a terrifying dark side. In much empirical examination of 'truth', researcher hegemony reigns via the imposition of a political truth regime that rules out all other possibilities, claims and forms of life. Science asserts the external, impersonal and lifeless; it restricts thoughts and behaviors. Singular, lived experience and authentic consciousness, are made irrelevant because they are not general, or generalisable. In the same vein, organization is grounded in the rejection of heterogeneity and multiplicity: "possibility is murdered, complexity is destroyed and diversity bridled" (p.67) Organization asserts its hegemony --- chaos is rejected; management is a necessity for the desired order. Some alternative, minor text (literature) is scapegoated --- and so a multitude of life-worlds is denied.

For thought to stay alive, it must not just repeat recognized theories or proven truths, but be experienced, questioned and doubted. Organization studies is rarely living thought; it is mostly dead, and carefully interred. For organizations to be kept livable, care and connectedness have to be fostered. Connection and mutual affectivity are key qualities of lived organizing and its thought. Affectivity entails the sensitivity to existence that makes experience, aliveness and consciousness possible; it is characterized by attunement and openness (Letiche, 2009b). It requires connection with the other's face, including the possibility to be affected; that is, to feel, appreciate, protest and embrace. And yet, to be able to write about people and organization, we assume that a separation between the knower and the known has to be kept. But from what sort of position can affectivity be comprehended? "If one reduces affectivity to rational analysis, one destroys its originatory unicity. If one claims that one can *know* affectivity, then one reduces affectivity to what the ego can master. And if one leaves affectivity just to be affectivity, it becomes an *aporia* one cannot grasp or explain." (p.297). One can acknowledge the *aporia*, and bet on affectivity and reflexivity, searching for a connected, caring and creative knowledge, as is sometimes seen in auto-, affective, or performance ethnography.

Experiencing self/other bonds in a form of sensitive, caring and reflexive relationality often calls for action (Letiche, 2006a). Affective writing induces performativity. The researcher may well feel the urge for action after having been confronted to by the other's vulnerability and fate (for example old age persons in a hospital, *idem.*). The reader, possibly touched by the unmediated, incarnate description of the condition of the researched, from shame, pride or regained confidence, may want to stand up and take action. Many actions may be induced; none are commanded. Letiche (*working paper*) nevertheless raises a difficult question: affectivity and sensitivity to others based an ethics of the dyad, sometimes of a triad; is this kind of face-to-face openness capable of grounding a community? Is there a place for a *we*?

Hugo Letiche and Lucie van Mens (2002) have emphasized how mainstream organization studies are always one-dimensional: of mastery and control, with the glorification of masculine discourses of competition, power and conquest. Their realm is that of texts and

representations, clearly separated from life and physical experience. But what happens if there is a breach, for example in the study of a theme such as prostitution? Contact with the physical and emotional experience they speak about becomes very problematic. Can the researcher really bear to listen to, or to be confronted by, the screams and tales from the field? When Letiche and van Mens listened to the participants in prostitution: whores, tricks, brothel owners, pimps and professionals; everything was doubled, in-between and confronting. Everyone had double identities, split and difficult to reconcile. Physicality, sexuality and arousal were constantly present and denied. Presentation of self and acts diverge, disappear and reappear. Much representation breaks down in the face of such physical experience; but texts, presentations and representations are everywhere. If organizational studies wants to deal with sex, life, death, bodies, physical pain, extreme violence and emotions; it will have to stutter, miss its targets and abandon its comfortable masculine representative voice of mastery. Letiche and van Mens argue for trying the feminine voice of Luce Irigaray, which identifies the feminine with multiplicity. "The feminine is plural, its 'self' is always somewhere 'in-between' body and consciousness – caught in an inability to ever be 'One'." (p. 171). If one would want to better know how texts reach the flesh, body and identities of others, you need to try to delve into the in-between space, doubled and connected, body and text, plural and multiple.

By contrast, if one wants to look at the kind of subject performed in the leadership literature, and examine the kind of text they construct of themselves, one has to abandon the in-between and its connectivity. When Hugo Letiche (2006b) listened to the discourse of Brian Bacon, director of the Oxford Leadership academy, the leader was depicted in an individualist omnipotent and heroic style. "The presentation tried to deny politics, collective social action and communitarian solutions; it glorified the business leader and that leader's non-democratic power. Ethics was coupled to a morality of individualism, wherein solidarity, shared identity and group values, were rubbished" (p.234). The paean to the glory of the man of exception; in fact, as a *Lieder* to the leader, forgets one element: organization. The very organization the leader is supposed to lead is abjected.

Letiche (2007) has acknowledged that performativity in communication and organization requires the productive and inevitable role of parasites. In perfect communication, the communication dyad is absorbed in total identification. No new meaning, no difference, will result. Only noise may bring unexpected newness, and any real possibility of connectedness and creation. Organizations exist by excluding alternatives. They focus on optimal processes that exclude noise and indetermination. They tend to rigidify, routinize and run on efficient communication, which is soon *doxa*. Closed on themselves, they are threatened by entropy. Only the existence of parasites is capable of introducing difference, change and a capacity to adapt. Organizational researchers, when they come close enough to organizations, act as parasites: they taint, irritate and influence them. Very rarely do researchers trigger the change they claim to intend to produce. They introduce noise, difference and a range of outside

inputs that inevitably alter the self-organizing processes, albeit in unseen and unplanned ways. Their performativity must not be underestimated. But it is a performativity that involves many layers of difference between the words or schemas produced and the actual effects.

We need to recognize that in our consumer society, which commodifies all actions and relations, that effects may be the reverse to what was intended: "protests become advertising; alternative behaviors get sold as life-styles; and ideas are lost in fashion" (Letiche, 2005, p.292). What is more, as Agemben (2005) has argued, through accepting governance by administration, whatever counter-ideas are proposed, will not change the triumph of a management lacking in principles and concepts, in its vacuous ideology. "Protesting against non-existent philosophical depth, or conceptual reflection, or political ideals, doesn't do any damage to the administration. Anger, revulsion and opposition are largely ineffective." (*Idem.*) Melancholy seems to be the only possibility remaining for critical scholars. And yet, melancholy might be nothing but a self-complacent pose, leading to passivity. But Benjamin points to the possibility of a more performative use of melancholy. That is, a melancholy leading to its reversal: labor, work and creativity. Benjamin would argue that imposing meaning is self-contradictory: *Ur*-meaning has its own performativity and imposes itself, even in present times. Should we advocate a subject-less performativity, or the constant search for new and reflexive, performative strategies?

These ideas run through many of Letiche's publications and were discussed in the experimental doctoral program that he created in Utrecht. He championed practitioner research and the idea that a professional doctorate could be creative, stimulating and intellectually rewarding. One only has to read the cases outlined in *The Relevant PhD* to see the rather remarkable proof of what was achieved. Studies of practice had the performative power to dislodge prejudices, reveal surprising connections and challenge the powers-that-be. In this book we have reflected upon diverse performative strategies of demos, knowing that for one brief moment Letiche turned the university into an experience of demos.

Second Afterword(s)

Hugo Letiche

De- and re-territorialization are hotly disputed concepts through which Rancière can be read. Dissensus is supposed to de-territorialize the dominant political and power regime/episteme but 'Le partage du sensible' ('the partition of sensibility') offers regimes/epistemes that are intended to (re-)territorialize existence. Rancière is much more a (post-)structuralist than I and most of the authors in this collection. As I have discussed, his semiotics points to four basic epistemes of text and understanding: Platonic, Aristotelian, Modernist and Emergent. Rancière champions a politics of speaking out for oneself. Critics like Spivak (1996) have

criticized this strategy, claiming that the poor, colonialized, and downtrodden masses of this world are 'subaltern' and voiceless. The model of claiming one's place via asserting one's voice is, the neo-colonial theorists claim, a strategy of privilege. Rancière is also criticized from a (Deleuze and Guattari, 2013) position of the politics of affect. Dissensus seems to assume that freedom is a matter of recognizable, communicable, cognitive statements, policies and actions. Politics in Rancière is implicitly linear and rational. But perhaps freedom is identified with openness to affect --- that is to pathic transference, feeling, supposition and communication. Rancière seems to assume that intellectual politics are ontic --- that is, about shared being and becoming. But one can argue that politics are more about pathic vitality --- that is, our (lack of) vitality. Are contemporary economics more about the distribution of added-value (the economic materialist position) or the distribution of angst in a society obsessed by job-insecurity, unemployment and declines in status (the critical phenomenological position). Obviously one does not have to choose between the ontic and pathic analyses --- I am not embracing simple dualism here; but the two positions do lead to very different texts. The first assumes that politics are fundamentally about discursive matters and the second that they are essentially about non-discursive ones. A critique grounded in the contemporary affective appreciation of being-in-the-world; looks very different from one based on economic and political exploitation and the power relations they produce. Rancière emphasizes the latter: his social analysis, making use of concepts like the 'police' and of 'dissensus', centers on an analysis of power. In his historical writings, he acknowledges the subjective state(s) of the working class and in his art theory he stresses perceptual paradigms, but he seems very ambivalent about existential politics. Rancière is more concrete than abstract. At best, 'Le partage du sensible' will lead to a diversion of the narration in play; that is, to a new form of self-recognition embracing more justice or fairness than what already existed.

Deleuze's (1986) nomadology comes much closer to a politics of affective change. He sought after re-territorialization; that is, the finding or establishing of places of groundedness, identity and signification. De-territorialized contemporary societies are places of anti-subjectification and de-humanization. Their disenchanted shopping malls, conformist codes of worker conduct and crushing neo-liberal symbolic order, destroy lived territory replacing it with hyper-real fabulations. We are left with a prosperity that produces economic crises, technological advances that pollute and destroy the environment, and a culture with no place for individuality, unicity or the self. Re-territorialization demands existential self-awareness --- the ability to be where one is. Deleuze infamously refused to travel; it would seem that the person's hold on his (or her) territory is so fragile that unnecessary moving about is foolhardy. Being-here and the ideas (or consciousness) that can recognize one's being here (somewhere) is in Deleuze's eyes very hard to achieve. Affective reflexivity requires an openness and semiotic ability that is very hard to build and/or preserve. Not to mention the being-with Other and awareness thereof that is required to achieve a political or social ethics of any import.

Emergence is crucial here. The Deleuzians see affect as an emergent quality, far from equilibrium, capable of causing social/political bifurcations of great significance. And Rancière's politics centers on the potential emergent power of outsiders --- that is, the perspective that is excluded, drowned out and not acknowledged has a fundamental value of truth for Rancière. The antithesis is posited to contain affective liberatory qualities. This antithesis emerges in proclamation, social conflict and in the outsider's voice, all of which are emergent. Thus for both Deleuze and Rancière, emancipation is processual, emergent and circumstantial.

The comparison between Rancière and Deleuze could, of course, go on for pages and pages. *Demos* was largely framed in Rancière's terms because he explicitly developed an analysis of how pedagogy, politics and philosophy are required to fit together in any reflexively engaged, contemporary intellectual position. Though Rancière personally does not seem to have been concerned with practicing the integration that he demands, he does make a powerful case for it. Since his lecturing career did not seem to not have manifested alternative pedagogy or political activism, that left a crucial space for many of the writers in this volume to occupy. But the choice for Rancière was pragmatic. His triad is necessary, but how he filled it in, is not. Rancière set our agenda, but we felt free to make our own appointments. The writers in this volume, each their own way and in their own context, have sought to display a philosophical politics with pedagogical intent. And we are grateful to Rancière for putting us firmly on that path. But our varying commitments are also indebted to Foucault, Deleuze, post-colonial studies, post-phenomenology, etcetera. What brought us together, and holds this book together, is our explicit commitment to recognizing that our politics needs to be philosophically informed, and pedagogically realized in our lecturing and writing.

Lastly, I am, needless to say, honored that my colleagues chose this *festschrift,* and my work, as a territorialization for making their assertions and displaying their lines of thought.

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