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**DEPENDENCY OF INTELLECTUALS: An examination of the book  
GENEALOGY OF CONTEMPORANEAN UNIVERSITY: Respecting the  
Enlightenment or Small-stories of Large-Narratives**

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**Abstract**

*The end of start of a millennium pushed as to think if a new world is possible. In foregoing, scholars would play a pivotal role in enhancing the understanding of new incoming events. However, the existent lack of interests for scientific investigation and perspective of scholars to be independent of politic power jeopardizes the course of human-kind in next years. Centered on current issues in education, the book of Aronson and Naishtat corresponds with a serious effort to mediate between the ideas and practical imbalances suffer day-to-day the university and education. Underpinned in the proposition that education and thinker should take distance of politic and market, the present review assesses point-by-point a diversity of perspective to construct a pluri-dimensional argument. Today more than ever, it is the time to reconsider the connection between our form of comprehending the world and our own morality.*

**Keywords:** Education issues; Morality; Intellectuals; dependency; Genealogy

**Introduction**

For some reason, the Social Science in general are in a moment of maturity where the book review constitutes as an valid and efficient instrument to debate, criticize and publish the findings of other scholars worldwide. It is unfortunate that this tool is in declination before the demands of market that emphasizes on book-review no larger than 1000 words. As a result of this, a major part of book-reviews became in trivial reports that says few or nothing about the focused project. Unless otherwise resolved, it is the time to reconsider the odds to make new more critical book reviews and for the occasion, there is no other better opportunity than the book authored by Perla Aronson and Francisco Naishtat respecting to the role played by education in modern universities throughout Argentina. Their work is structured on 9 chapters indexed in two main sections. The first refers to in the existent connection between the Genealogy of Contemporanean University and the Enlightenment while second one describes the different historical stages experienced the State University in Argentina. Based on commentaries no less any more than Richard Rorty and Richard Bernstein, the present insight book turns an interesting proposition that bridges two contrasting waves, the sociology of E. Durkheim with Max Weber. Simply because of time issues not all chapters will be debated in this review, but the most representative for our theme: the relationship between scholarship and politic powers.

**Towards the University of Uncertainty.**

The introductory chapter authored by professor Naishtat seems to be a romantic response to the advent of late-modernity and its demoralized effects as well as it points out the different logics of symbolic alienation. The university in the line of history has come across with different situations respecting to the ways of producing knowledge. This process is characterized by three independent stages: Das Bildung (education), specialization and hybridization.

In last two hundred years, the high-education has passed from an all-encompassed vocational training towards a high degree of specialization wherein the quest for novelty and emancipation predominates. Based on the Foucaultian paradigm that emphasizes on the convergence between bio-power, knowledge, and truth, Naishtat assumes that the universalization of education has been

evolved from the episteme of the struggle of strongest epitomized by the Darwinian thesis of species, to a much broader process of territorialization enrooted in the principle of Nationhood (Stage of specialization). To some extent, Naishtat made a complete historical review to focus his issue: the spirit of modern university has been molded on a dissociation of human faculties in regards to the vocation for what anyone has been called. As Weber put it, the scientificization of university comprises the following relevant points: a) the declination of humanitarian and universal knowledge, b) adoption of new forms of bureaucratic rules and ways of control, c) a full separation between the politic power and scholarship.

Ultimately, the stage of hybridization characterizes by the connection with other institutions. Whereas the University of Specialization refers to lack of all subjective judgment about events, the University of Hybridization looks the hegemony of knowledge in the interconnection with other social institutions such as commercial companies, Church, politicians etc. The scramble of strongest exponents is being replaced by is a belief of association with others. In this vein, one of major risks is associated to the progressive declination of autonomy of university from politicians; a deep-seated issue that merits to be empirically examined.

### **Social Education and Principle of specialization**

The second chapter of this interesting book is on charge of argentine sociologist Perla Aronson who argues that we are witness of an on-going declination in the interests of scholars for Scientific-research. Combining classical stances as Weber, Durkheim and Humboldt, Aronson considers that the current issues in education are of course determined by a much broader socio-historical context where the classical institutions are being substituted. Starting from the durkheimian conviction, the moral is conditioned by each society; Aronson suggests the late-capitalism is eroding the basis of trust and solidarity confining lay-people to private sphere. The excellence, a principle, that distinguished the university in past set the pace to a new idea related to commoditization of knowledge. However, as Durkheim insisted, education not only seems to be functional to status quo but also to the existent ways of production. In sharp contrast with Kant who considered an inner morality, Durkheim was certainly convinced the process of education is a form of indoctrination where social values are forcedly introduced converting people in citizens (workers).

As the previous argument given, Durkheim debates with Kant that education perpetuates the logic of labor to the extent of preceding the conflict before socialization (Durkheim, 1997) (Durkheim, 1999) (Korstanje, 2009). Far away of being represented in the spirit of each person, the morality is a social construction of society for surviving. The function of morality is related to regulating human's behavior in all spheres (Durkheim, 1997: 34). Therefore, needs of moral are conditioned by the economic needs of societies. These patterns are reproduced by means of custom and tradition. In the core of tradition lie two concepts: authority and regularity. Under this conjuncture, the discipline would play a pivotal role in extending the normality of events. The Durkheim's stance is a result of the philosophy of "French philosophes"; a wave that portrayed that morality stands beyond the authority of each subject.

The moral education is often associated to social values that are constructed, elaborated and disseminated through society by aristocracies. A belief of this caliber contrasts sharply with Kantian's thesis. One might realizes perhaps that Durkheim confuses morality with ethic which explains in part his discussion with Kant. Whereas the latter has never concerned respecting to morality but also ethic, the former misjudges the Kant's contribution to the study of ethics. For example, a "suicidal terrorists" might very well desist of perpetrating the attack until the last moment. The ethic seems to be internal structures that can or not be determined by society, but in all cases follows a proactive process of decisions (Aronson, 2008).

This exactly is the point, Weber decides to avoid in his study of education. Unlike Durkheim, Weber remains reluctant to the advance of industrialization and capitalism. He argues that the progressive professionalization in educative institutions is a motive of concern. Based on the paradigm of domination, education works as a mechanism aimed at reinforcing the authority. In addition, Weber recognizes that education may change but does not determine the moral essence of subjects.

As the previous argument given, legitimacy tarnishes the criticism of mind. This means that intellectuals should seek independency of politics. As Aronson put it, University is a Temple not an oracle. The posture of Aronson intends to resolve the current problems in education. Her approach is complemented by Ignacio Mazzola who focuses on the current university crisis not only in Argentina but also world-wide. Our sociologist defines crisis as “any real or perennial danger to subject’s integrity that triggers its abilities to succumb or overcome the obstacles. Educative systems are constituted in basis of solidarity and integration with the end of reproducing previous material ways of production.

This process above-described consolidates two types of elements: non-normative which means to material means that usher people to education such as infrastructure, salaries or teachers, and normative that is no other thing than all rules, mandatory norms that makes educative system proficient. As previously mentioned, Mazzola argues that *Das Bildung* (a term originally coined by Mendelssohn) is a way of integrating the human maturity enrooted in culture with Enlightenment (*Aufklärung*). In other words, flourishing of a society only can be feasible whether ethic is combined with knowledge.

Under this context, problems in education can be explained by a fragmentation of normative-structures which crystallize a wider dissociation between instrumentality and morality. Taking his cue from Lyotard, Mazzola dwells on the theory of post-modernity. As a consequence of industrial and technological changes, post-modern societies altered their form of knowing affecting not only the manner as how this information is socialized but also the current forms of understanding environment. The learning transforms in a mean in such instead of the goal. The obsessive search for knowing further at any cost produces an inversely-correlative lack of interests for education syllabus. The performance of researchers and scholars looks to be subject to an over-load of information that does not permit to have a clear diagnosis of events (Mazzola, 2008). Per Mazzola, the transmission of knowledge is orchestrated by means of what the scientific discourse allows and re-place the quality of what people learns according to their proximity with political power. Paradoxically, one might speculate at the time existent quality of research is enhanced, its validity and objectivity declines.

Most certainly, Mazzolla considers that in modernity the discourse of experts nourished all-encompassed narrative while in late-modernity the knowledge is atomized to the extent of being understandable. Scholarship also is certainly fragmented in thousand of disoriented parts who surrender before-to political status quo. The lack of coherence that shows normative and non-normative elements leads us into a quandary hard to solve. There is a tendency in scholars to compound their own closed corporate-body hosted in universities generating a gap with populace. Admiration and legitimacy these bodies represent are valorized by politicians. This creates a liaison of dependency of scholars because they need material assistance for upkeep of their infrastructures. Under this troubling point, it is more than illustrative the answer of Richard Bernstein and Richard Rorty who rival in their opinion. The latter considers that university can be compared in analogy with Church. Both should give assistance to the parishioners’ necessities and adjust them to the times. This implies a conceptual connection also between scholars and politicians.

In fact, the universities in underdeveloped or developed countries are different to riches or developed countries while their relationship with State varies on culture. For that reason, it is not worthwhile if the State monopolizes the knowledge's production unless the university is defeated by the logic of market. What Rorty sustains, is that the major risks of public education is the advent of market and not the role of politicians. Rather, Bernstein suggests that the role of State in the process of knowledge-yielding provokes an unexpected counter-effect diminishing the autonomy of scholarship and a decadency of scientific-research. The role of university is the training of minds and develops their abilities for contributing to well-being of societies and humankind at all.

Whether the politicians manipulate education, one runs the risk to see how States protect interests of few aristocracies instead of whole population. Under this view, education would play a role of alienation mediating between what can be said and what should be banned. It is important not to loose the sight of independency of scholars of political powers no matter the time or culture. These remarks are validated by the brilliant work of Marin Unzue who tracked upon the evolution of University of Buenos Aires from its inception up to date. Unzue accepts that the wisdom should be considered as a construction of State to legitimate its practices. The discipline and education corresponds similarly-guided forms of alienation (Unzue, 2008). Sociologically speaking this demonstrate how vague can be the debate regarding the supposed independency of thinkers.

### **Conclusion**

By precluding that the dependency of scholars from political power can be possible, we strongly believe this is problem of this utopian-book. For readers to have this clearer other excellent works of international scholars as Veblen, Berger or Diez suggests that scholars are based on economic logic of production and order of soil and they replicate the interests of aristocracies simply because they are involuntarily part of status-quo (Veblen, 1974) (Diez, 2001) (Berger, 1989). Whatever the case may be, it can be said that economy and hoarders of surplus predispose in closed circles of aristocracies that recur to education for enhancing their power. Universities can be contrasted with the logic of medieval warriors of Middle-age respecting to the following relevant elements: classist logic of appropriation based on moral judge of what is good and evil, reputation and honor as form of revitalizing the exclusion of others and the compulsory needs of social recognition by whole society.

To here, we have repeatedly summarized and addressed the main contributions and limitations of the book entitled *Genealogy of Contemporanean University*, a well-edited text that combines papers of different argentine scholars but all structured under a similar concern: the progressive declination in high-education quality and dependency of thinker from politic power. To some extent, this project is aimed at triggering the debate of much-deep seated issues which should be continued.

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