

2019

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The Incompleteness of Standards and the Potential for Deliberative Discourse

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ACADEMIC STANDARDS REPRESENT AN ANCHOR POINT within education today. The development of curriculum, lesson plans, formative and summative assessments, and government education policy circle around the high expectations and rigor of academic standards. Whether considered from the vantage point of college and career readiness or disciplinary content knowledge, academic standards provide a content that directs schooling, if not education. How we understand academic standards indicates a great deal about how we relate to and embody education. What occurs in school and individual classrooms is shaped by the relationship we form with academic standards.

In many cases, we are tempted to approach academic standards as objects of inquiry and implementation and not as subjects of intention in dialogue. It is common to see academic standards as an object of study or as a set of restraining requirements for the development of curricula, discrete lesson plans, and assessment instruments. The consequence of not considering academic standards as subjects of intention, defined by our purpose in relation to them, is serious. Approaching academic standards from an orientation that appreciates their role as contextual actors has significant potential to transform education, schooling, the development of curriculum, and classroom instructional practices. If we maintain a division between the products or objects of academic standards and our purpose in creating curricula and educative experiences within a schooling context, then the culture will develop immanently, in ways that are unpredictable (Hirschkop, 1989). If we take a phenomenological approach to our study of academic standards, we may develop a mode of discourse that will convey the normative, value-laden connection between the lessons, curriculum, and assessments, and the standards as intentional subjects.

As Greg Nielsen's (2002) analysis of Mikhail Bakhtin helps to demonstrate, the answerability (Bakhtin, 1993) of our action in relation to academic standards is potentially critical:

The accumulation of each individual act makes up my life history, my once-occurrent-life. "To be in life, to be actually, is to act, is to be unindifferent toward the once-occurrent-whole" (Bakhtin, 1993, p. 43). If I am indifferent toward the once-occurrent-whole, or if I am pretending to be someone I am not, then the fact of my uniqueness and answerability are severely jeopardized. In fact, if I ignore my active self and simply live the passive self

(the self who receives), I am by definition pretending. “I can try and prove my alibi in Being. I can pretend to be someone I am not. I can abdicate from my obligative (ought-to-be) uniqueness” (Bakhtin, 1993, p. 42). But pretending means to risk being chosen by someone else. Even a little pretending, we might say, influences the possibilities of action across one’s life history. (Nielsen, 2002, p. 36)

Teaching and curriculum development are particularly vulnerable once-occurrent-life positions. The roles of teacher and curriculum developer are intimately engaged in the transcultural space of education, impacting the answerability of others through the exercise of institutional power (Parkison, 2014, 2015a). It is the intent of this paper to expose the potential of academic standards, like the Common Core State Standards, to serve as carefully constructed public projects—public projects laden with ideological, ethical, aesthetic, and axiological values that can be engaged in a studious dialogue.

Dialogic Orientation to Academic Standards

Bakhtin’s theoretical contributions provide a critical methodology that connects authority, carnival, and knowledge in a manner that is useful to the analysis of academic standards. Authority (presented in the form of academic standards) and internally persuasive discourse (presented in the form of curriculum), and carnival (as embodied in the form of pedagogy), provide a horizon within which to develop a conceptual understanding and to reflect on applications in education, schooling, the development of curriculum, and classroom instructional practices. Approaching academic standards from a dialogical orientation has significant implications for the normative outcomes to be addressed and achieved. Bakhtin recognizes dialogue as composed of emotional-volitional, axiological perspectives that seek responses from other positions that can embody a space of shared, but not necessarily conflict-free, exchange. Dialogue, within this perspective, is a way of being rather than a technique or type of communication (Rule, 2011). Dialogue becomes creative embodiment, a generative presence, that actively engages and accompanies responses from diverse axiological positions (Nielsen, 2002).

Creating spaces in which the generative presence of these diverse axiological positions can emerge and be embodied in action is a collaborative, social enterprise. What is intriguing about the concept of generative presence is its temporal, as well as spatial, significance. Generative presence is relational—it is about being positioned in relation to multiple others and to multiple future potentialities. As we take a position, we embody a potentiality for ourselves and for others. It is this responsibility (Levinas, 1981), answerability (Bakhtin, 1990), or concerned thrown-ness (Heidegger, 1962) that has the power of generating, originating, producing, or reproducing possibilities. Our bearing, carriage, or air as a person within the eternally recurring moment of presence makes the difference. How we occupy a relationship determines its generativity. Our presence is an opportunity and choice every time.

This is not a new idea within education. We have considered the relationships involved in education as the central concern throughout the history and philosophy of education. Teaching and learning, curriculum development, instructional efficacy, and policy are all viewed within a system of relationships among and between significant stakeholders. As we find ourselves in a place and time, in relation to others, including academic standards, we bring commitments with us. How we relate to those commitments—political, social, cultural, and economic—determines the power and

freedom we have in that context. Prioritizing specific and exclusive commitments, making them ideologically constraining, reduces our generative presence to one of reproduction. If we have not considered the relationships these commitments generate, then we are making a choice to continue a state of being for ourselves and for the potentialities available to others.

Consideration of the generative presence of dialogue is about drawing attention to the possible meanings and relationships that are often in dispute and to the idea that these disputes cannot be resolved by simply deciding for others to learn and embody the same commitments. Academic standards, when conceived as objects of inquiry and implementation, become static commitments. Our commitments can inhibit or prohibit the generative presence of dialogue that would allow for the emergence of otherwise foreclosed positions—positions that have the potential to bring about enhanced possibilities for education, schooling, the development of curriculum, and classroom instructional practices. Such foreclosings are easy to recognize in cases of obvious conflict (testing, charters, vouchers, etc.), but in cases where conflicts are found in relationships in which power and commitments operate through dominating discourses and refuse to respond, answer, or be concerned with the presence of others, we become stagnant and restrict our shared human potential. When academic standards are approached as objects of inquiry and implementation, the threat to the generative presence of dialogue is significant.

Cosmic Terror as a Frame for Discourse

Bakhtin views the world as in a permanent state of becoming, continually constituted within a dialogue between human beings, as well as between human and non-human forces. The process of becoming is one of co-creation characterized by struggle between humans and “other” forces beyond our control. The event of struggle is both ontologically significant, as the way we are constituted as human beings, and ethical in the way we ought to be (Rule, 2011). Our relationship with the other is not guaranteed nor certain; it is an ethical and moral task, a space of struggle, and a site that requires constant effort, attention, and renewal.

Emphasizing the imminence of relationships within the educative context, there is value in inquiring into the potential of what Martin Buber (1970) called “supra-contradictory relations” to generate a public space that is always in a state of becoming. From this perspective, it becomes evident that public space emerges within dialogue. In a dialogue about academic standards, we create a supra-contradictory relation that enables a space for education. This interactive generation of a public space is embodied in study (Agamben, 2000, 2007). Hannah Arendt adds support to this construction of public space by emphasizing the necessity of an “in-between” or a “common project.” An “in-between” is made up of a set of common issues that must be approached by multiple, authentic individuals without abdicating their identity so that those who are brought into dialogue see sameness in diversity (Arendt, 1958). The “in-between” is the role of academic standards. This dialogical encounter forms the common project to be accomplished within education. Academic standards, as a subject acting within the network of participants, perform the role of the in-between not as an end in themselves but as a means of engaging in the generative dialogue that embodies a public space.

Bakhtin (1991, 2008) presents the concept of “cosmic terror,” which stresses the radical asymmetry of the struggle between humans and the other within this generative dialogue embodied in public spaces. Cosmic terror plays a key role for Bakhtin in the instrumentalization of fear of change that lives in each event or experience. This fear is also the contextual factor that effectively

limits or marginalizes discourse. Within education, we are faced with the critical dilemma of protecting the newness, or innocence, of childhood, while also preparing future actors within public and social spaces (Arendt, 1958, 1954; Elshtain, 1995). Understanding cosmic terror helps to clarify the obstacles and challenges that need to be engaged in order to jump toward meaningful, embodied, and generative discourse.

How we relate to the world, according to Bakhtin, is through a process of co-creativity, which he calls “authoring” or “co-authoring.” This process binds us to the other in a Janus-like manner; we are never ourselves with the other, as we are constituted by it (Bakhtin, 1993, p. 2). Bakhtin’s theory of self is characterized as a transredient (passing across or beyond; objective) relation in which diverse individual orientations interact. For each Self, there is a normative construction embodied in action. Bakhtin asserts that human awareness needs to be stretched beyond immediate experiences and surroundings in order for the Self to comprehend its situatedness. Situatedness, our temporal and spacial presence, is critical because of the impact of place on subjecthood. Subjecthood refers to the individual’s sense of self and that sense’s impact on the individual’s autonomy and agency. Where an individual stands in relation to their peers, colleagues, and those in positions of authority and power impacts the view the individual has of the world. Both dimensions of contextual identity (sense of place and interpersonal politics) establish this positionality.

For Bakhtin, action is embodied in the expression of the I-for-myself, I-for-the-other, and other-for-me conceptualizations of our situatedness that we each develop as emotional-volitional, axiological orientations (Nielsen, 2002, p. 38). Michael Holquist (2002) helps to clarify the role of subjecthood when he identifies the speaking subject as the site of meaning:

Bakhtin translates Dostoevsky’s dictum that the heart of man is a battleground between good and evil into the proposition that the mind of man is a theater in which the war between the centripetal impulses of cognition and the centrifugal forces of the world is fought out. I can make sense of the world only by reducing the number of meanings—which are potentially infinite—to a restricted set. (p. 47)

Though involved in historically and socially situated contexts, we are unique, each of us being the product of different kinds of co-constitutions. This difference, but simultaneous intra-relation, is what Bakhtin calls dialogue—a struggle we become involved in when we encounter another person or force, which in turn has been affected by others (Bakhtin, 1993). It is a mutual transformation we cannot escape from, a continuous struggle with new concepts formed by the multitude of negotiations that make up and evoke our cosmic terror. This engagement is educative—it opens space for future engagement and continued struggles.

For Bakhtin, dealing with cosmic terror implies a re-evaluation of our relationship with the world. For teachers within this frame, it would mean a re-evaluation of our relationship with academic standards. Bakhtin contrasts two different kinds of relationships: small and great but abstract. The small register of experiences includes the “secure and stable little world of the family, where nothing is foreign, or accidental or incomprehensible” (Bakhtin, 2008, p. 232). For teachers, this small register relationship is experienced in the planning and implementation of lessons aligned to individual standards or indicators designed for our specific classroom and students. The work of our relationship to standards is completed in each lesson. This register represents a narrow, close at hand, experience of life, an illusion of permanence and stability erected against the imagination of a large and abstract world. The great but abstract register is experienced within the

set of academic standards and the aligned standardized tests that hold teachers accountable within this relationship. The horizon of the great but abstract register is a broad vista that draws us out of the comfortable close at hand into the cosmic.

There are two common temptations and potentially negative outcomes in these registers for those involved in educational pursuits. The first comprises a withdrawal from the greater world through nursing or cultivating an unrealistic imagination of life. Education is seen as a series of isolated events that accumulate. The absence of these events gets translated as a deficit—either on the part of the learner or on the part of the teacher. Such a state leaves the teacher vulnerable to shock and surprise when the deficit-laden, other-for-me is present in the learning setting. The second danger follows from this, in that the teacher makes themselves susceptible to forces that promise to maintain or return stability by remediating the deficit. Bakhtin observed that, to the person who inhabits small experiences, there is one cognizer (everything else is an object of cognition), one who is living and unclosed (everything else is unresponsively dead and closed), and one who speaks (everything else is unresponsively silent). In Bakhtin’s view of great but abstract experiences, everything is alive and speaks.

The Case of the Common Core State Standards

Withdrawal from the great but abstract world does not have a liberating or protective effect but, instead, makes one more manageable and controllable. Where loss of stability is equated with loss of meaning, there is a will to give over control. Academic standards and high stakes accountability or standardized assessment systems gesture towards an “official culture” by creating the illusion of maintaining control, and this official culture gains power by nourishing a desire for an unchanging environment. Indicating the role of official culture (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 336), Bakhtin demonstrates how power is achieved and maintained by addressing our desire for an unchanging environment or context, a focus on the close at hand and small experiences. This is the role that academic standards, when treated as objects, perform. We can see this in the move to Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the standardized testing that accompanies them (Parkison, 2015a, 2015b). In a review of the development of CCSS by LaVenia, Cohen-Vogel, and Lang (2015), the adoption of CCSS is linked to policy termination, a policy that effectively ends dialogue and provides a stable small experience set of guidelines for states and schools. Bakhtin finds that human awareness needs to stretch further than one’s immediate surroundings in order to understand one’s situatedness. While the shortsighted view of small experience only allows us to see the immediate destruction and personal loss and the great but abstract experiences make us desire a potentially unrealistic conception of meaning, Bakhtin’s alternative contextualizes our relationship to everything else.

Confronted with a depersonalized and technocratic small experience schooling system governed by a totalizing system of academic standards, testing, and accountability, teachers face an oppressive system that does not encourage authenticity. Authenticity and dialogue free from monologic ideological narratives like the CCSS depend upon intentional and empowered participation in the dialogical processes of curriculum development and instructional decision-making. The relational nature of learning and the classroom require a teacher who is engaged, has made meaning of, and has ownership of the content, processes, and products of the curriculum (Parkison, 2015a). The dialogical relationship between teacher and student is one founded upon an intersection of authentic identities or relational horizons—not roles put on by actors within an

institution. By controlling the horizon within which classroom relationships develop, the depersonalized and technocratic schooling system has effectively denied authenticity and dialogue a place within this system.

The politics of academic standards, in particular the CCSS and their related assessments, represents the hegemonic assertion of power over the voice of teachers within the education discourse (LaVenía, Cohen-Vogel, & Lang, 2015; Parkison, 2015a, 2015b). This hegemonic assertion is also seen in the form of scripted lessons and out-of-the-box curriculum. There is nothing dramatically new in this assertion (Apple, 2006; Giroux, 2012; Popkewitz, 1997; Taylor, 1999). What a focus on dialogue offers to education involves the call to politically engaged participation, by intimately involved stakeholders—teachers, students, parents, and local communities in generative, public dialogue.

Interpreting Bakhtin to bring his work into the context of curriculum, instruction, and the immediacy of schooling, he seems to steer between two visions of this struggle for politically engaged participation; while clearly tying meaning and creative agency to human consciousness, he opens up at least the represented world of academic standards to the productiveness of matter. These academic standards as objects become “attracted into life’s orbit; they become living participants in the events of life. They take part in the plot and are not contrasted with its actions as mere ‘background’ for them” (Bakhtin, 2008, p. 209). Academic standards cease to be background and act. This view of CCSS would highlight their other-for-me role in a transgredient dialogue. In the world of schooling, standards would appear to be active participants in a manner similar to the way materiality is presented as objectively valid. The motivation for Bakhtin, and one shared within this analysis, is not necessarily to demonstrate material agency, but to show the relationship between our visions and representations of the world, and materiality in general, and our capacity for action and creative imagination—two abilities that are essential for challenging monologic or closed narratives. Interpreting academic standards as embodied through a transgredient relation opens the space of dialogue. Recognizing academic standards as subjective actors, embodied, normative, and value-laden, makes them a co-author with the potential to transform education, schooling, the development of curriculum, and classroom instructional practices.

To engage with the prevailing rift between academic standards and text of schooling in the imagination, embodiment—as a composite of curriculum and pedagogy—emerges as a vital feature analogous to Bakhtian dialogue. In its materiality, our bodily set-up prevents us from perceiving ourselves and instead forces us to remain directed towards the Other (past and future), but its distinct material and temporal dimensions turn the “given” world into a world that we need to respond to ourselves. This imagination of body-world relationship could be compared to Emmanuel Levinas’s (1981) notion of embodiment, in which to have a body means to be unable to escape the need to respond. Bakhtin emphasizes that the body negotiates word and world. The organic nature of the living body could further be regarded as the material expression of unfinalizability—of continuous openness to transformation and becoming. In terms of schooling, the struggle between material academic standards and embodied curriculum and pedagogy, enacted publicly by teachers and students, is inescapable and characterized by continuous openness to transformation and becoming: embodied in the expression of the I-for-myself, I-for-the-other, and other-for-me conceptualizations (Nielsen, 2002, p. 38).

At first glance, the conditions of this transformation between academic standards, curriculum, and pedagogy seem to entail a set of academic standards that is not an equal partner in dialogue: it lacks consciousness and, therefore, cannot create context (Bakhtin, 2008, p. 351).

In Bakhtin's writings on Francois Rabelais (Bakhtin, 1984), he seems to offer the possibility of a different significance for the Other, nonhuman set of academic standards; the other-for-me is too vast and incomprehensible as a totality for teachers and students to be in equal exchange.

We must take into consideration the importance of cosmic terror, the fear of the immeasurable, the infinitely powerful. The starry sky, the gigantic material masses of the mountains, the sea, the cosmic upheavals, elemental catastrophes—these constitute the terror that pervades ancient mythologies, philosophies, the systems of images, and language itself with its semantics. (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 335)

A characteristic of human-nature dialogue in Bakhtin is that both parties, while involved in a process of co-authoring, should also be considered adversaries; to act and to be involved in dialogue does not mean there are no asymmetric power relations or desires of actors to win or triumph over one another (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 282).

I have asserted in other places that teachers' refusal to accommodate a dialogical materiality with academic standards stems from a significant degree of experience of material processes as not only dehumanizing and inhuman, open and messy, but as over-actively co-authoring of human lives, without teachers having any control over this inhuman authorship (Parkison, 2014, 2015a). Conscious dialogue with and about the academic standards, on the other hand, would imply not so much an anthropomorphic animation of the academic standards or the levelling of the human and inhuman, but a dealing with the shock of difference resulting from being open to it. Rather than envisioning this dialogue with the academic standards leading to more humanized and ethical curriculum and pedagogy, this use of Bakhtin challenges us to affirm and overcome the shock of the perceived distance and meaninglessness of the academic standards for ourselves. The key question within Bakhtin's challenge is the need to negotiate the vulnerability of those who seek to disconnect from the academic standards or those who seek to stabilize the academic standards, thus, gaining a false sense of permanence or mastery: our alibi in Being, our abdication from our individual obligative (ought-to-be) uniqueness (LaVenía, Cohen-Vogel, & Lang, 2015). To refuse to engage, through a denial of the subject-hood of the standards either through blind rejection or objectification as permanent and settled, is to capitulate.

The empowerment of teachers that would result from a reconceptualization of the discursive processes that are embodied within and that should inform curriculum development has significant transformative potential for education and the schooling experience. A dialogically reconfigured forum would have the capacity to achieve a worthwhile democratic discourse resulting in a "fusion of horizons" between the need for responsive and inclusive curricula and the political push for standardization. Given the potential transformative impact of a dialogically reconfigured generative discourse embodied in a public space to enhance the prospects for the emergence of creative new solutions to educational issues, such a dialogical reappropriation, is needed to ensure the re-empowerment of teachers and as a process for revitalizing the schooling experience in our pluralistic, multicultural, and dynamic society.

How do teachers and curriculum developers relate to the actual curriculum implemented in the classroom? According to Bakhtin, we come to know phenomenon like implemented curriculum through a process of co-creativity, which he calls "authoring" or "co-authoring." The absence of separation, of distance and a zone of contact, are utilized within education in a different way than in other phenomenal arenas. In place of our often tedious, contentious, and inclusion oriented development of responsive curriculum, we are offered a surrogate. This surrogate comes

coded as “evidence-based,” “rigorous,” or “focused on college and career readiness.” We can implement this replacement curriculum that is identified with research, with standards, and with best practices simply by reading the script and distributing the worksheets. It follows that teachers and curriculum developers might substitute our own lives and axiological yet-to-be responsive curricula for an obsessive reading of standards, or pre-packaged and marketed out-of-the-box curricula. This substitution is equally framed within a small experience and misses the opportunity to participate in a generative, public dialogue.

There is a temptation to reject CCSS and the standards movement altogether in favor of an unqualified celebration of the everyday, small experiences—a gesture often associated with a move toward democracy or inclusion. Such celebrations have only a tangential relation to Bakhtin’s theory of dialogue and arguably none at all to democracy. Like a novel in Bakhtin’s framework, educational experience, cognition, and practice determine the curriculum, which indicates that curriculum is meant to do more than reproduce the intentions and images already available in everyday life. Such a perspective reduces education to a matter of reproduction of scripts and roles, disconnecting it from the needs for accurate knowledge of social forms. Learning becomes reactive to set stimuli, rather than responsive to lived experience. The emphasis on curriculum experimentation leads in a different direction, towards a conception of education as a collective, public learning process, dependent on cognition as much as on open expression. The comprehension of complex, modern societies requires knowledge of a sophisticated, even standardized, kind. If the great but abstract experiences of public life appear impersonal, the prerequisite of education and the task of the curriculum is to find some way to connect these processes to the kind of choice and decision already present in the narratives of private and social life (Agamben, 2007; Arendt, 1958; Bakhtin, 1993, 2008).

Bakhtin raises the central issue of the relationship between discourse and power. Any sociopolitical project of centralization and hegemony like CCSS has always and everywhere to position itself against the ever-present decentralizing forces of the near at hand. Carnival is the concept Bakhtin presents to address these decentralizing forces in so far as they are expressed in intentional, parodic representations across a range of signifying practices. Parallel to this opposition of carnival to official culture is another opposition between whole, national cultures, which are presented as complete, achieving a coherence branded as common sense, and those local cultures that are no longer isolated and secured from global influences. The contending forces seem to be starkly polarized and to operate in abstraction from the institutional sites in which the complex relations of discourse and power are actually negotiated. Schools and education are caught in the middle of this struggle—hence, the focused impact of cosmic terror.

Implications for Education

In carnival, official culture and normal life are suspended, including the hierarchical distances between people produced by associations, institutions, traditions, standards, and the society. What Bakhtin calls a “frank” exchange occurs, or an exchange governed by internally persuasive discourse that is outside any propriety and convention. Carnival places academic standards, like all factors of official culture, in suspension, essentially freeing academic standards from their objective role and providing a forum in which they become co-author of the educational experience. Academic standards in carnival promote an in-between that creates the space of the generative presence of all stakeholders. Education, like carnival, should not be standardized. In

carnival, authority is decrowned, we engage in the laughing side of things, separate from cosmic terror, and there is a profound and collective engagement with alternative approaches and objectives of education. The monolithic concepts embodied in CCSS are viewed as death (Parkison, 2014). As such, carnival should not be viewed as moments of complete disorganization but much more as epistemology—one where we sensuously interact with truth from many angles. We do not ignore academic standards, nor do we place them on a shelf, in a script, or a box. This type of foreclosure is a denial of the space for generative presence. The role of commitments to academic standards is significant. Our view of the importance and priority of relationships with academic standards orient us differently if we want to occupy a point or moment, or alternatively if our goal is to generate a space for humanity. We interact with them as co-author and subjects in the educational context.

Hannah Arendt (1958) captures the implications of the idea of generative presence in her introduction to *The Human Condition*:

To these preoccupations and perplexities, this book does not offer an answer. Such answers are given every day, and they are matters of practical politics, subject to the agreement of many; they can never lie in theoretical considerations or the opinion of one person, as though we dealt here with problems for which only one solution is possible. What I propose in the following is a reconsideration of the human condition from the vantage point of our newest experiences and our most recent fears. This, obviously, is a matter of thought, and thoughtlessness—the heedless recklessness or hopeless confusion or complacent repetition of “truths” which have become trivial and empty—seems to me among the outstanding characteristics of our time. What I propose, therefore, is very simple: it is nothing more than to think what we are doing. (p. 5)

As we think what we are doing, we collaboratively open the space of generative presence. Working to disclose rather than foreclose the potentiality of educative experience would seem a worthy goal. Avoiding the delusion of “a solution” or “truth” remains the challenge, recognizing in the process that the project and the end are linked. In education, in pedagogy, in policy, we must think what we are doing.

Prioritizing the relationships that open the space of generative presence mediates the possibility of foreclosure. Entering a discussion, conversation, or testimony with the development of relationships with academic standards as a priority changes the encounter. Our condition as human, as full participants in humanity, presents us each with a choice at every moment and in every place to be present. We can occupy that space in a manner that is generative of potentiality and opportunity for ourselves and others or in a manner that forecloses those opportunities. We can build walls around our commitments and be carefree and secure for a while, but what kind of isolated slave to our commitments will we become (Makiguchi, 1989)?

Whichever direction we take with countering the standardization of education, Bakhtin alerts us to the necessity of taking into account that materiality and meaning are closely entwined and that the relation between the two can be interpreted for different ends. Curriculum should not be the bearer of a particular political content; it should be a means of imagining the truth that no rule is absolute. Its only politics is the insistence on the necessity of politics, of dialogical struggle, of power as struggle. To understand the radicalism of applying Bakhtinian thinking is to have seen that, in his concepts, the border of the sociopolitical has always already been crossed.

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