



ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI



ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI GREECE

faculty of education

4th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CRITICAL EDUCATION

Critical Education in the Era of Crisis

June 23 - 26, 2014

Proceedings Volume 2

EDITED BY:

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Thessaloniki 2015

**IV INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CRITICAL
EDUCATION**
Critical Education in the Era of Crisis

Conference's Proceedings

Editors: George Grollios, Anastasios (Tassos) Liambas, Periklis Pavlidis

ISBN: 978-960-243-698-1

Full Reference

Grollios, G., Liambas, A. & Pavlidis, P. (2015). Proceedings of the IV International Conference on Critical Education "Critical Education in the Era of Crisis", pp. ff-gg, <http://www.eled.auth.gr/>, date of access mm/dd/yy.

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Introduction

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The Fourth International Conference on Critical Education was held in Thessaloniki on 23, 24, 25 and 26 June, 2014. In the call for papers, nine months earlier, we had pointed out that the international economic, social and political crisis of capitalism, in tandem with the dominant neoliberal-neoconservative policies, are redefining the role of education. Education is becoming less of a social right and more of a market commodity, while its democratic and critical potential is shrinking. Therefore, understanding the causes of the crisis, the specific forms it takes in different countries worldwide, and the multiple ways in which it affects education are important questions for those who do not limit their perspectives and action within the boundaries of neoliberal, neoconservative and technocratic dogmas. We had also emphasized that the critical education movement must reconsider its positions and practices in the light of the crisis as well as the paths that this crisis opens up for challenging and overthrowing capitalism.

The Fourth International Conference (the previous three had been successfully held in Athens and Ankara) was an important step in this direction, i.e. towards the development of a strong international critical education movement. It provided a platform for free, productive and democratic dialogue between politically active teachers and academics. Over 200 submissions were received from neighbouring countries, including Turkey, Italy, Poland, Germany, the UK and Russia, as well as distant countries, such as Chile, Brazil, the USA, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. The presentations covered a vast range of topics; education policy, movements in education, alternative teaching practices in schools, critical education theory, intercultural and anti-racist pedagogy, philosophy of education, curricula, methodology of educational research, higher education, women and education, new information and communication technologies in education, the relevance of art and drama in education, and the role of educational journals in the sociopolitical struggle in education were the focus of reflection, inquiry and discussion.

This paper introducing the proceedings of the conference edited in this volume does not intend to provide a detailed account of the dialogue that took place. Given that the elaboration and comparison of perspectives is one of the foundations of the critical education movement, we will attempt to survey in some depth three issues that are interconnected and constitute the object of many of the papers – questions which we consider of key importance in the present conjuncture: (a) the nature and implications of the crisis; (b) the response against the neoliberal-neoconservative assault on the part of critical education; and (c) the exploration of emancipatory perspectives in education. In this way, we believe that we contribute in a more meaningful and fruitful way to the deepening and broadening of the dialogue on the development of critical education, which will be resumed in the Fifth International Conference due to be held in Poland in June 2015.

The nature and implications of the crisis

The current economic crisis is not primarily a financial or a debt crisis or a crisis caused by insufficient demand or (allowing for a more simplistic interpretation) a corruption crisis. The primary cause of the crisis is the decline in the average rate of profit. According to the law of value, production in capitalism is based on the extraction of surplus value from labour power, i.e., an additional value to that required for its reproduction. Therefore, the (exploitative) labour-capital relation determines the circulation process of capital. A central problem of capital is that the modernization of the means of production increases the productivity of labor on the one hand, but on the other, reduces the value of labour power which, nevertheless, is what produces a surplus value relative to the fixed capital (physical infrastructures, raw materials etc.). This contradiction causes the downward trend in the average rate of profit. It is worth noting that, compared to the 1950s and 1960s, in the first five years of the 2000s, profit rates in the US were 33 percent lower, with an even greater decline in Germany and Japan. Secondary to the decline in the average rate of profit, (a) the capital is further centralized under the control of one of its sections in order to withstand the fall, (b) its other sections are devalued, (c) phenomena of over-accumulation are generated (which can also be attributed to the diminution of demand on the part of wage labourers due to either their converting into unemployed labour or wage reduction as a means to make up for the decline), (d) economic and geopolitical tensions between imperialist states are exacerbated, and (e) capital shifts to the financial sector (Roussis, 2012).

Neoliberal-neoconservative restructuring may then be understood primarily as the answer of powerful sections of capital to the capitalist crisis of the 1970s, the primary cause of which, like that of the current crisis, was the fall in the average rate of profit. Before that crisis, the majority of Western European and North American countries had lived through the so called ‘thirty glorious years’ (1945-1975), during which economic growth was coupled with the establishment of the welfare state. It was a combination which laid the material foundation for the social and political consensus that was required to ensure the people of these countries remained insulated from the influence of ideas then embodied by socialism in Eastern Europe and China. In the 1960s, however, the euphoria of postwar economic development was challenged by both social movements spreading over those countries and national liberation movements in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The sociopolitical challenge to capitalism at the closing of the thirty glorious years has served as a key argument used to strengthen and eventually impose the influence of neoliberalism in the politics of the dominant social classes. Large U.S. corporations and banks began to actively support neoliberal ideas in the mid-1970s, switching their financial backing to ideologically homologous think-tanks, institutes, magazines, newspapers, intellectuals, journalists and politicians (Peet, 2010). After the electoral dominance of Margaret Thatcher in Britain in 1979 and Ronald Reagan in the U.S. in 1980, the economic, social and political prescriptions of neoliberalism, having already been implemented by the military junta of Augusto Pinochet as a bloody experiment in Chile in the years after 1973, were propagated internationally. Their actualization in Europe was actively promoted, in different ways and to different degrees, not only by the conservative political forces, but also by the social democratic, the Euro-communist and the Green parties (Roth & Papadimitriou, 2013). Neoliberalism was not the product of the whim of some ‘sorcerer’s apprentices’, and did not prevail due to the subjectivity of a band of ‘political Frankensteins’, rather, “it is much more than this: it is an expression of capital’s structural need to respond to the fall in the average rate of profit by expanding in every sector and every field of endeavor” (Bogiopoulos, 2011, p. 75). As later admitted by Alan Budd, a key economic adviser to Thatcher, “the 1980s policies of attacking inflation by squeezing the economy and public spending were a cover to bash the workers” and so create an ‘industrial reserve army’, which would undermine the labour power and permit capitalists to increase their profits (Harvey, 2010).

It becomes evident, therefore, that although the crises are due primarily to internal contradictions of the capitalist mode of production and, more specifically, to the decline in the average rate of profit, the outcome of social and political conflicts plays an important role in their manifestation (in any conjunction), as briefly exposed in the above— every crisis is shaped by these conflicts and makes for fertile ground for new ones, first and foremost for the allocation of its consequences. We will then go on to discuss, also briefly, some aspects of the modern capitalist crisis which relate primarily to the distribution of its consequences across social classes and across countries, particularly in the European Union.

From the 1980s onwards, all kinds of inequality rose sharply, which was acknowledged even by the International Monetary Fund in 2007. The role of neoliberalism in the growth of inequality has been obvious and remains significant, as can be seen in the attack against all forms of labour protection, the retreat from progressive taxation, the continuous decline in the share of wages in the countries' Gross Domestic Products (GDP), the increase in the working time, the fierce exploitation of illegal immigrants, and the burgeoning profits. For example, in 1976 the wealthiest one percent in the U.S. received 9 percent of the GDP; in 2008, the same percentage of the wealthy population received 23.5 percent of the GDP (Kotzias, 2012; Negreponi-Delivani, 2010; Tsafogiannis, 2010).

Securitization, collateralized debt obligations (CDO) and credit default swaps (CDS), i.e., the so-called 'derivatives', have increased unduly. In 2009, the value of the CDSs amounted to \$636.4 trillion, over ten times the worth of the world's total annual economic activity, up from just \$100 trillion in 2000. By 2010 the value of all financial derivatives had soared to \$1,020 trillion, while global GDP was a mere \$62 trillion. Rampant financial speculation established a virtual paper economy of trading on stock and derivative exchanges, commodity exchanges and currency markets. Thus, the burst of the property bubble in the U.S. in 2007 had devastating consequences: the losses of U.S. companies reached \$14.5 trillion, 5.5 million people lost their jobs, each household lost an average of \$5,800, property value fell from \$13 trillion in 2006 to \$8.8 in 2008, while the pension saving and investment assets fell by \$1.2 trillion, resulting in the current crisis being compared to that of 1929. In fact, according to some analysts, the current crisis is deeper, since the decline in global production, particularly the industrial, is greater than that of the first phase of the Great Depression, reaching 42 percent, with the stock market losses amounting to 50

percent. Millions of workers have to face the consequences of the predominance of neoliberal dogmas, the continuous shrinking of the welfare and investment role of the state, the countless liberalizations and deregulations, while the real culprits are amply rewarded with vast subsidies. Thus, with the crisis well underway, those who own more than \$1 million in wealth (estimated at 11 million people) own \$42.7 trillion in assets, that is, 1/6,600 of the world's population hold almost one-tenth of the world's wealth (Antonopoulou, 2008; Vatikiotis, 2010; Vergopoulos, 2011; Kotzias, 2012; Melas, 2011; Papaconstantinou, 2013; Tolios, 2011).

The rise of financial capital has combined with the shift of production to Asia where multinational corporations set up industrial plants. Considerable amounts of European, American and Japanese industrial capital migrated to mainly Asian countries seeking cheap labour and favourable tax regimes. As is indicative of the economic growth in Asia, which was coupled with an increase in the unequal distribution of wealth, the number of millionaires has risen to three million, owning assets worth \$9.7 trillion, surpassing for the first time Europe's millionaires worth \$9.5 trillion. The majority of Western European and North American countries were converted into economies with swollen services and trade sectors (in the U.S.A. less than 50 percent of the population is engaged in the production of goods), structural unemployment and credit-based consumption. An exception to this rule is Germany, which, having cut labour cost, withstands international competition, producing more expensive but quality products and largely controlling the value of the euro in line with its own needs. Conversely, in many European countries, production is decreasing, since their products cannot compete against their high-quality German or cheaper Chinese counterparts. What's more, despite the fact that 86 percent of German surpluses comes from market trade within the Eurozone, Germany appears as a key supporter of austerity, preferring to hoard surpluses and imposing a mounting divergence rather than convergence in the old continent, and thus leading European economies to recession (Antonopoulou, 2008; Vergopoulos, 2011; Negrepointi-Delivani, 2011; Tsafogiannis, 2010).

In the context of the current economic crisis, the process of European integration has become a process of building a union of states under the leadership of Germany. By imposing the same goals to every member state, the Maastricht Treaty failed to lead to supranational convergence. By erecting into a doctrine disinflationary policy and falling interest rates, alongside the reduction of deficits and public debt, economic and

monetary unification implies a nominal, not a real, convergence of economies, given that the exchange rate stability in countries with different economic structures and varying competitiveness leads to real exchange rate variance. For the less internationally competitive sections of capital, the price for sustaining the unity of capital at the European level was austerity with no end in sight. Germany is currently not seeking to strengthen the cohesion of the European Union, but to boost its own economy slipping into a variation on old nationalism. Essentially, Germany's ruling class uses the crisis as a vehicle to rearrange the Union's geometry, and promote more decisively the notion of a multi-speed Europe (it should be remarked that crisis management mechanisms– the EMSF and the EFSF– do not work like the other European Union institutions based on the formal equality of all Member States, but under the rule of those who qualify for the highest credit rating). EU institutions confirm largely prejudged decisions made by the Franco-German axis, in which the primary role is played by Germany, which systematically imposes the basic principles of neoliberal orthodoxy. It seeks to ensure that the other Member States comply with its own economic and political choices, promoting the controlled credit rating downgrade of the deficit countries of the European periphery and threatening them with the specter of insolvency. Thereby, it presses hard on other EU countries to follow the path forged by its own ruling class, namely, to radically reduce wages and pensions, increase retirement age, degrade education and advance educational programs of skills acquisition (Kotzias, 2012, 2013; Negreponi-Delivani, 2011).

Alongside the process of transformation of the relations between EU countries as outlined above, democracy in their interior is increasingly waning. This is a general trend affecting the majority of Western European and North American countries during the period of neoliberal-neoconservative restructuring. Key features of this trend, accentuated by the current crisis, include (i) a dramatic reduction of civic participation in both central political processes – party and parliamentary– and those involving the exercise of collective rights (protest marches, strikes etc.); (ii) the exercise of politics by technocrats, communication specialists and managers; (iii) the weakening of the working class as an agent of social transformation leading to loss of rights and gains; (iv) the acceptance of neoliberalism as a one-way street by all the government parties; (v) the loss of the credibility of politics and its conversion into a managerial task; (vi) the substitution of civic commitment to social justice for identity

movements and non-governmental organizations; and (vii) the degradation of the concept of ‘general interest’ and the spread of corruption (Belandis, 2014).

The neoliberal-neoconservative assault and critical pedagogy¹

For three decades, all levels of education, from preschool to university, have been enmeshed in the neoliberal-neoconservative restructuring. Neoliberal policies have been implemented and a neoconservative value system has been built under the control and influence of the dominant sections of capitalist power, with a view to increasing the profitability of capital. Neoliberal-neoconservative policies have reinforced the class character of education, as they are turning it into a mere commodity, marketed on the basis of supply and demand, cost and benefit. Henceforth, everything associated with education, from its organization and functioning to its learning outcome, is measured in money terms.

The implications of the social function of the school in capitalism are clearly reflected in the academic profile of the weakest students, mainly of working-class origin. They are reflected either in the level of academic performance and the facets of the educational inequality they experience (school dropout, school failure, inconsistent attendance) or in the exclusive, self-evident choice on their part of low-status educational tracks (technical education, early vocational specialization) leading to low-paid and precarious jobs in the labour market.

Neoliberalism will no longer settle for converting learners into ‘human capital’, but now seeks to transform every aspect of personality into ‘fixed assets’. It attempts to subject the entire human existence to the dictates of the market, turning it into a commodity with exchange value. Today, the forces of capital do not merely focus on the exploitation of aspects of the labour power per se, but on the exploitation of the totality of an individual’s subjectivity. They aim at exploiting the ‘general intellect’, inherent in every person, which is made up of diffuse social knowledge (language, codes of conduct and symbolic systems) and subjective skills (communication, creativity, physical, intellectual and artistic expression, and sensuousity). Capital exploits every aspect of an individual’s personality; nothing happens outside of it, as it incorporates every existing relationship turning it into a commodity (Read, 2013). Hence, the production of neoliberal subjectivity is realized both within the sphere of

¹ In this section, in particular, we attempt a synthesis of the key positions and concerns presented in contributions by guest speakers at the conference.

production of goods and in the matrix of multiple social relations operating in the social and cultural sphere. Productive personality, as a corporate pawn, is molded by capital which, by means of its policies, interferes in the school and the family.

More specifically, looking closely into the daily life of school, we discover that neoliberal-neoconservative policies promote its corporatization, directly link it to market needs, cut public spending, and replace the project of equality with the pursuit of efficiency. They impose standardized measurements and national standards, management and accountability, guided by the triptych: excellence, success and discipline. They foster competition between institutions, along with competition and individualism among teachers and students. Thus, they widen the educational gap between the dominant and the subjugated and exploited social classes and strata, and naturalize educational inequalities. At the same time, they degrade teachers' work, as they establish the separation, in the school, of conception from execution, converting teachers into executive instruments and incriminating them for school failure.

Neoliberal-neoconservative policies in education are not simply an instrument for exercising power on the basis of the regulatory principles and the dogmas of the free market, which have been shown to contribute to social reproduction in favor of the dominant classes, and reinforce inequality, while simultaneously enhancing the role of school as an apparatus of disciplinary power and control. In particular, conservative teaching practices, quantified, reified and fragmented knowledge, technocratic curricula, the mechanization and automation of the educational process, and insistence on efficiency, one-dimensional and passive learning, the technology of competitive examinations, the instrumentalisation of competences, relations of authority and hierarchy, the rigidity of school rules and requirements, and, ultimately, the entire school culture, are traversed and reconfigured by the market logic. Neoliberal-neoconservative policies attempt to completely and thoroughly shape the personality of students and teachers, making them susceptible to the propaganda of the dominant social classes, whose main themes are: (a) possession of wealth is a matter of justice and meritocracy, and those who deserve it justly own it— this is expected to bring progress and development and, subsequently, control and ownership of public goods by private citizens arises as a necessity; and b) the wealth produced is expected to circulate from top to bottom, ensuring security, prosperity and opportunities for the middle and working classes.

In this way, education is reduced to a traded object, a process akin to banking, whereby knowledge is deposited into students. Stripped of its humanizing content, and stifling the development of a vibrant relationship with students, it identifies being with having. This is educational necrophilia aiming to educate people into the logic and values of the market. A school of that kind molds manageable individuals who are taught to be constantly on guard and under surveillance, dehumanized and devoid of subjectivity, obedient and in permanent readiness to respond to the needs and pressures of capital.

Critical educators need to stand up and take action, bearing in mind that the relations between education and society do not point to a mechanistic correlation; rather, they are dialectical, historical and contradictory. They, therefore, need to understand that the reproduction of social hierarchy through education and the shaping of the personality of students are not to be performed exclusively according to curriculum-specific standards, but entail conflict and resistance, and also to realize that education in capitalism cannot serve as a tool for radical sociopolitical transformation.

Drawing inspiration and principles from Paulo Freire's liberation pedagogy and the perspectives of critical pedagogy that build on the insights of the Marxist tradition, and without losing heart, critical educators need to struggle to preserve the free and public character of education, and advance holistic and humanistic contents that combine theoretical and practical learning; they should endeavor to establish or reinforce their connections with alternative educational networks; recognize the value of the experienced world of students coming from the oppressed and exploited social classes, understand its historical and social relevance and make use of it in their teaching, which, in turn, must inextricably interweave theoretical knowledge, knowledge of practice and critical understanding, and further encompass developing study strategies, ways of learning and thinking, and a critique of power. Critical educators act as guides for their students opening up horizons of knowledge, struggle and political empowerment.

As revolutionaries, critical educators need to be aware of the side they have chosen to take as organic intellectuals, the side of the working class. This can be actualized when, upon viewing their fundamental social interests as forming part of the strategic interests of wage labour, they struggle for its emancipation and the emancipation of society as a whole. When they turn to Marxian theory, they delve deeper into the materialist conception of history and help to highlight the radicalism of the labour

force and the role of education as a conscious and deliberate productive activity directed at developing human potential and building capacities through an understanding of class conflict. Thus, they take a substantial and decisive step toward challenging the dominant narrative about the end of history, and engaging in action to overthrow capitalism.

In the context of counter-hegemonic pedagogy, which they advocate, critical educators, as organic intellectuals of the oppressed and the exploited, humanize the pedagogical relationship and expose the normative discourse of the school embedded in the culture of the school apparatus, i.e., in school knowledge, pedagogical practices, behaviors, gestures, thoughts, explicit and implicit rules, customs, authorities, and the design of the school building, which establish relations of domination and obedience, competitive and individualistic relationships, educational inequality and exclusion. Thus, students are dialectically shaped as revolutionary subjects by critical educational intellectuals who help them build class consciousness through the development of awareness of their class position and of the dominant relations and ideas, and become aware of the diversity of conflicts in capitalist society and their manifestations in daily life, as well as the capacity to intervene and take action towards radically transforming social relations.

Critical educators intervene and take action in trade unions of education workers and working-class organizations, and make an impact on the lives of parents and students, focusing on the education of the oppressed and exploited classes both inside and outside schools and universities, in various spheres of social life and action. More specifically, critical educators struggle to counter the imposition of capitalist control, paternalistic and hierarchical relations and engage in ideological critique of practices that contribute to social reproduction. The all-round development of the students' potential, listening to their voices, as well as those of the teachers who defend their fundamental needs, is their prime concern. They also strengthen their ties with the communities to ensure the public provision of social goods, and the democratic running of the school with the participation of teachers, parents and students.

In search of emancipatory prospects for education

Under conditions of class division of human society and with the prevalence of relations of exploitation of wage labour by capital, the search for emancipatory perspectives on education is a key component of the reflection on the prospects and

aspects of an emancipated socialist society. In such a society, people will be able to appropriate their alienated power, to make the achievements of social work into collective wealth, and the free development of each person the precondition for the free development of all.

The great importance of education for the emancipation of humanity can only be revealed as a result of the abolition of capitalist and class relations of production, that is, only in a socialist society dominated by social ownership of the means of production and their collective management by workers. In other words, the significance of education for people's fundamental development, their creative potential and capacities, is closely associated with the abolition of existing property relations that reproduce workers' alienation, as well as with the process, the means and the result of their labour. Education acquires unprecedented significance for the transformation of society when workers, having integrated the productive forces of society, become the subjects of their management-direction.

This is precisely the utterly significant prospect in sight— the emancipation of labour. It is the radical change in the position and role of workers in the material production system, which makes imperative the need to develop and enhance their personality. It is a change that requires a radical upgrade of their training as a deliberate, methodically organized, systematic and progressive process of knowledge transmission and production, capacity building and cultivation of substantive aspects of personality. The need for a radical upgrading of education in a socialist society stems primarily from the fact that only highly developed and socially conscious workers can put under their collective control the productive forces that emerged in capitalist society as it entered the phase of industrial and now scientific-technical revolution. As Marx and Engels noted in their time, these forces are so powerful and complex that “only individuals that are developing in an all-around fashion can appropriate them, i.e., can turn them into free manifestations of their lives.” (Marx & Engels, 2000: 56).

In an emancipated society, therefore, education should involve the organic coupling of natural culture with the acquisition of fundamental knowledge about nature, technology and society, the cultivation of dialectical thinking, moral and aesthetic education, and the development of the philosophical aspect of consciousness. Today, productive activity is moving towards what Marx defined as people's tendency to withdraw from direct involvement in a production process that is based on their

natural-physical powers and the emergence of general intellect, i.e., the knowledge and intellectual capacity of workers as a key productive force (Marx, 1990). Hence, the ability of modern workers to take on the collective management of the productive forces of society will increasingly depend on the possession of scientific knowledge, both that pertaining to general scientific theories and that related to their technological applications.

Universal and widespread familiarity with modern technological advances is a prerequisite to understand the emancipatory possibilities as well as the challenges that underlie modern productive forces, and participate in their collective social management. But today, this familiarity has become far more theoretical in nature, than directly practical-empirical. As regards the importance of occupational education, in the sense of manual activity for young people aimed at building up and exercising practical skills, in conditions of growing intellectualization of labour, this inevitably takes on the form of diverse artisan-art education programs.

Therefore, the transformation of science into a direct productive force and the struggle for the emancipation of labour, through the conversion of workers to genuine managers of the productive forces and processes of society, calls for perceiving schooling of the future not as only a process of knowledge acquisition, but also of fundamental cognitive capacity building. This of course will have to run parallel with the education of the body, with physical education being perceived as physical culture, i.e., not only as practice of specific physical skills, but also as overall improvement of motor performance and psycho-physiological wellness, as cultivation of a consciously active, healthy lifestyle.

With respect to the intellectual aspect of education, the school of an emancipated society of the future, as can be perceived and advocated in the current circumstances, cannot but edify the next generation, moving from spontaneous, sensory, experiential knowledge to the scientific theoretical conception of the human world. Spontaneous-empirical knowledge of the world has prevailed throughout most of the historical development of humankind so far. It has provided a breeding ground for eminently superficial knowledge, trapped in the deceptive appearance of objects, which did not allow for a shift from the effort to adapt to one's surroundings to the struggle to radically transform them. However, the knowledge that is consistent with the prospect of workers developing into collective self-willed subjects of productive activity and social transformation necessarily involves a theoretical-dialectical conception of

objects, an understanding and conceptual representation of the essential interactions and contradictions which determine their genesis, formation, evolution and transition. It is important to stress that fostering dialectical-theoretical thinking requires the ability to understand the laws governing the cognitive activity itself, i.e., the ability to reflect on the ideas-concepts and their formation processes. Consequently, a dialectical teaching of accumulated knowledge, alongside the cultivation of the capacity of dialectical thinking itself, is closely related to self-reflection and the teaching of the genesis of knowledge, of the general progress of humanity. By this we mean the transition from the original, sensuously concrete, yet chaotic, foggy perception of the world, to the distinction between different objects and the analysis of their aspects, their individual relations, and subsequently, to the attempt to synthesize and conceptually represent the totality of the dialectical relations that underlie specific knowledge fields and determine their development.

A school that is aligned with a socialist society structured by relations of comradeship and solidarity cannot be solely confined to transmitting knowledge of the fundamental fields of the sciences of nature, technology and society. It should contribute decisively to the cultivation of consciousness, in the strict sense of the word, namely, the awareness of the self as a subject related to other persons-subjects. It is an awareness of the social ties with other people as a bond which, in the context of its historically objective determinants, requires intentional human action for its preservation and reinforcement. Awareness of the self as a subject entails cultivating the moral, aesthetic and philosophical forms of consciousness. In these forms of consciousness, people grapple with questions pertaining to the meaning, the purposes and the ideals of life. They become aware of their relations with other people, their social ties, as something for which they are responsible, as something that is determined not only by objective factors (by the general nature of the interaction between people and nature, the level of overall technological and cultural development, the dominant property relations), but also by their intentional action as subjects-bearers of consciousness.

The moral, aesthetic and philosophical forms of consciousness develop in every person by virtue of the entire range of social relations in which they engage directly or indirectly, through every process of assimilation of human traditions in the fields of ethics, aesthetics and philosophy. The school of an emancipated society can contribute to the cultivation of consciousness in the above forms, primarily by providing young people with particular social-moral experiences, being an organized

community based on the principles of comradeship and solidarity among its members, but also by teaching the humanities— art, literature and philosophy, which reflect the evolution of human self-awareness, the shift in the human perception of the meaning and the ideal of life throughout the history of humankind.

In the school of an emancipated society of the future, a crucial factor for the improvement of educational work, alongside that of ensuring the best material conditions for the education of young people, is certainly caring for the continuous and multifaceted development of educators' consciousness and personality, since learning, as a deliberate, systematic and progressive educational process, is necessarily linked with the role of teaching and teachers' work. Only educators who enjoy their work and grow within it (in moral, aesthetic and intellectual terms) can truly contribute to the development of students' personality.

Educators' work is extremely important because it is what allows students to experience everything that transcends everyday experience, all that is beyond the scope of their immediate perception. The necessity and importance of teaching lies in the fact that scientific theoretical knowledge, artistic traditions and styles, philosophical ideas, and, in general, accumulated human cultural achievements can be transmitted to the younger generations only through the organized and systematic pedagogical relation to the other. Moreover, the work of educators is indispensable because, through their own mental activity, during the teaching process and under their guidance, students are initiated in the analysis and critical examination of ideas, that is, they learn to think creatively. Educators really teach when they explore and create situations of intellectual challenge in which they engage students, when they foster motivation, educational goals, and cognitive interest among students, alongside broader life purposes and ideals. Therefore, let us not overlook the fact that educators teach not only with their minds but with their entire personality, with their moral principles, aesthetic standards, philosophical worldviews, life stance and ideals.

Certainly, if the most crucial aspect of thinking pertains to critically examining the human condition and exploring the possibilities and potential for its improvement and emancipation, then the prospect of educators rising to the occasion of their socially significant practice in the current circumstances is closely associated with their commitment to the cause of critical self-reflection and the theoretical-ideological and practical-political struggle for the emancipation of society and education.

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Class matter: Exploitation of vocational school students through apprenticeship training in Turkey

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Abstract

Class is a category which cause to some common behaviors, life styles and position of the people in society regarding to their conditions and positions in the relation of production and earning style. Some distinguished thinkers and many political and social activist can see the significance and center role of the class at their point of views and actions. Some thinkers see the class as a significant factor, put it (class) into their analysis but goes behind of the class to make visible some conditions, identities/status surrounded social and production relations. In this study, class is taken as a tight/strict/solid economical and social position which is not changeable in a short time, but it works with some other cultural capital issues together in educational setting. Mainly position in the relation of production and income level along with the cultural capital may influence the choice or guiding to the school selection or enrollment depending on the academic success which very much connected to the family income level of the students. In the study, main class based characteristics regarding vocational schools such as student preferences, enrollment process, studying conditions, and apprenticeship practice. Latest legal and financial interventions by government which make vocational schools as a part of the class based segregation also were reviewed.

Keywords: Class based tracking, education in Turkey, child labor, student apprenticeship, vocational schools.

Introduction

Class is a category which cause to some common behaviors, life styles and position of the people in society regarding to their conditions and positions in the relation of production and earning style. Marxist views take the class as conclusion of production relations and other positions are not dominant but subsidiary. Depending on the historical and economical conditions, other groups will be placed either one or

another part of the class: bourgeoisie or proletariat. Stinchcombe argues that sociology has only one independent variation; class (cited in Edgell, 1989: 3).

Some distinguished thinkers and many political and social activist can see the significance and center role of the class at their point of views and actions. Some of them do not care the class as a tight/clear issue but a structured way to make easy understanding social relation issue and also create a stronger intervention into the production relations they involved in.

Some thinkers see the class as a significant factor, put it (class) into their analysis but goes behind of the class to make visible some conditions, identities/status surrounded social and production relations (Among them, we can cite Paulo Freire, Michael W. Apple, Henry Giroux and Pierre Bourdieu, bell hooks, Ira Shor, Peter Mayo and some other critical pedagogues, neo-marxist, cultural workers, feminist and anarchist authors).

In this study, class is taken as a tight/strict/solid economical and social position which is not changeable in a short time, but it works with some other cultural capital issues together in educational setting. Mainly position in the relation of production and income level along with the cultural capital may influence the choice or guiding to the school selection or enrollment depending on the academic success which very much connected to the family income level of the students.

Historically, right for education is an issue of the struggle but also education is a part of hegemonic discourse to create convince (Antonio Gramsci) and the “ideological apparatus of the state” (Louise Althusser). From the industrial revolution, vocational and industrial education and training become of the part of the state education and take capitalist’s interest for the sake of the capital accumulation. At the first stage, cost of the training has been met by the state and there was a connection between the training and employment. After the 1960’s human capital theory re-vitalised the connection between education and employment alongside with educational expansion in the country and GNP level. But now, we see that we are at a different stage. Currently, separation of vocational and industrial education and general/academic education serve to different social and economic groups and it have had different purpose and instructional process for purpose and hide inequalities and class issues.

Education institutions are not placed at independent from political and economical aims of the ruling groups, power. According to these claims, education is a political activity as well as an economic activity. From Marx, combining teaching with

physical production is a central issue on politics of education. To create a whole human being, combining the intellectual labor/work and physical labor in one person, education also should be organized to develop the children and young citizens multi dimensionally/(holistic, comprehensive). Marxist perspective developed a sight into the education to allow the combining the learning and work. This was going to cause a more holistic human activity and working skills. We may see this perspective was applied in the polytechnic schools primarily in Russian October Revolution and French Revolution's "*Ecole polytechnique*" which is a very short experience comparing to Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (CCCP/USSR) case. Then, combining job and learning at school became a pustule of the socialist educational perspective. We may remind that Lenin and Krupskaya have given so much attention and effort on the issue (Krupskaya, 2013). This also affected the Turkish revolutionaries like Harun Karadeniz, a student leader and author of a book titled "Education is for production" (1975). Even, a legendary school model, *Village Institutes* which has been carried out between years 1940 - 1953, and used a comprehensive program which was taught art, craft, farm and academic issues all together. It was a kind of polytechnic. But, it was attacked by conservative and right wing politicians, with the critics which providing a communist training, or using child labor in school activities and daily life of the school.

It is interesting to me that critical educators did not much interested in the content of the education in schools regarding to work/vocation/employment but power relations, hegemony, ideology and hidden curriculum. Some critical authors like Samuel Bowles, Herbert Gintis, Glenn Rikowski, Henry Levin, Martin Carnoy have more attention to economical side of the schooling and student skills with the context of structural class analysis. Also, Gramsci should be remembered on the issue who advocates holistic approach into the education and critical to pure vocational/job education in schools. (Lombardi, 2000). He mentioned that, children of bourgeoisie were provided a general academic and managerial/entrepreneurial education but children of working class and from poor families can attain a vocational education which provides the skills to be semi-skilled paid workers and to obey. We also may cite Paulo Freire with his concepts such "meaningful thematic" "and "generative theme" issues are related with the life can be a starting point to discussion on education distinction/ difference between vocational and academic/general education.

When there is a connection between education and employment, even the tracking process may be acceptable for the poor and working class families, since they like their children can have a paid job in the era of precarious working which it is becoming a dominant working format. But in the public policy and development plans of less developed countries like Turkey, vocational and technical education presented as an education form for employment and also for higher education. The targeted ratio for vocational education in Turkey has been defined as 65 percent for years, but not reached to that level due to different obstacles such low level resource allocation even though industrial vocational schools' cost were higher than the other high schools and resistance against to these schools which relatively closed accessing to higher education.

After the 1980's alongside with the neoliberal policies and coup d'état, Turkish education system have been started to be transformed for harmony with global economic changes. In this journey, Turkey is not alone. From the Chile and Mexico to Greece and Argentina, people of these countries have faced the direct and indirect influences of neoliberal policies, by ideology, hegemony and in case excessive violence by the military actions-interventions (Keskin, 2003; Saad Filho and Johnston, 2005). Some developed countries also have new options into their education system to cause more segregated and discriminated children of poor, working class families, unemployed, peasant, immigrants and other disadvantaged groups, by commercialization of the public education (private university system with high priced huge cost in US, charter schools, voucher system). With these policies, a tracking system at secondary education level works for especially for children from families placed in low social and economic level (SEL). Actually, under the neoliberal policies, from kindergarten to university level education became a money matter and this take us to the class. To reproduction of the class we may need to go out of the school and also to come inside of the school. Willis (1977) inquired about, how reproduction occurs at school level. He starts his well known study (*Learning to Labor. How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs*) by saying:

The difficult thing to explain about how middle class kids get middle class jobs is why others let them. The difficult thing to explain about how working class kids get working class jobs is why they let themselves (p.1)

Another place to look to understanding reproduction regarding education is *tracking* which is happened both inside of schools related with the departments (branches) and

among schools such as vocational schools, academic schools, some specialized schools and private schools. The main educational tracks for the low paid jobs which employed low or semi-skilled workers are vocational schools in Turkey.

Aim of the study is to analysis of the vocational high schools' place and the meaning in the education system in the context of inequalities and the exploitation of the students while they are studying and accomplishing the apprenticeship period which is obligatory practices at vocational and technical high schools

Main Characteristics of Vocational Schools in Turkey.

In Turkey, from the welfare state time of capitalism, formal vocational education (vocational schooling) by public finance mainly remained/continued but added more strict conditions to continue at academic schooling for higher education and also private schools' amounts (numbers and capacity) have been raised.

Financial support by public budget to the vocational public schools as well as other public schools were decreased and schools have been forced to find a new financial options such as producing goods to market, renting facilities and collecting money from students' families. Some characteristics of the vocational schools remained and some were added. Such as:

- Specific for poor and disadvantaged families' children.
- Strengthen the gender roles of enrolled students.
- Specific to secondary areas of the economy, or "labor market".
- Closed/away for academic success and higher education.
- Create a secondary (low level) identity in the students.
- Employ child labor and exploitation regarding apprenticeship practice.
- Low level employment and rising unemployment rates along with low waged, unsecured, flexible works after graduation.

These arguments and their proofs can be found at many different legal regulation, statistics, media news, personal narrows and observations in general and some specific research. (Colley et al., 2003; Kayaalp, 2005; Kayır, Karaca and Yılmaz, 2005; Temur 2005; Bulut 2007; Özen 2008; Aksoy 2012a; Aksoy 2012b). We may expect some differences regarding countries, some periods and social formation as well as development level and historical experiences of the countries.

Unemployment rates in Turkey regarding education level show us a value of the education. But still we should go to more observe how this rates function in the life of

the different groups as the young, women, the poor, immigrants and villagers, educated, uneducated etc. We see that vocational education does not guarantee for a job (Table1). Continuously, this situation becoming worse for high school graduates and others, since society is atomizing and social institutions and public supports are being decreased. It is obvious that, unemployment rates or the numbers of unemployed are rising but the working conditions and working securities are becoming worse. In these conditions, child labor issue is one of the main problems in the world not only in Turkey. According to ILO, between 2004-2008 years, child labor level 5-14 years was decreased in the world. But, in the same period 15-17 years old children's numbers increased from 127 million to 129 million which 2 million added. The worst type of the child labor /working is 115 million and 15-17 years old group was raised from 52 million to 62 million. What we see is the struggle against to child labor is not successful and exploitation of the child labor is continuing with different styles (DISK -AR, April 2013). While child labor is a shame for the countries, a legal child labor field, continuing to grow; Vocational, technical, industrial High Schools in Turkey and the countries allow to apprenticeship in their elementary -secondary education levels.

Table1. Education and Unemployment Rates for 2012-2013 Years.

Education Level	Unemployment Rates 2012	Unemployment rates May 2013
Illiterate	3,9	5,3
Lower than high school	8,7	8,4
High school level	11,0	11,3
Vocational/technical high school	10,1	10,3
Higher education	10,1	8,7

Reference: Selected from TUIK [Statistics Institution of Turkey] Statistics. 2012, 2013, 2014.

Recent Regulations in Turkey regarding Vocational Education

Since the early 1970s, one of the main objectives of the education policies in Turkey is to develop vocational secondary education, based on plans associated with numerical targets and implementation of a higher schooling ratio compared to general secondary education (65% to 45%). Development plans reiterated the goal of raising sufficient numbers of “intermediate manpower” via secondary education institutions especially located in industrial areas as an objective of high priority. In a period, when the development paradigm was popular and the characteristics of social welfare state could be observed in employment process. It was accepted as a national policy to educate the young to be employed by industry by means of vocational and technical schools based on public financing. It was assumed that they can gain qualifications as desired by the industry and this may cause to higher employment levels.

In the educational system of Turkey, vocational and technical education had been provided beginning from secondary education level, and for certain occupational programs, from the middle schools, an earlier level of education. However, after the ‘uninterrupted education’ was introduced pursuant to Law No. 4306, occupational programs at middle school level were abolished and the vocational technical education in the formal education system was reconstructed: Various vocational-technical high schools and *imam hatip* high schools (religious, prayer education) in the secondary education level, and vocational schools for higher education.

The objective of professionalization of secondary education within the formal education system reflected in the non-formal education sphere as professionalization of “lifelong learning.” “Lifelong learning” was transformed from a social practice of improving and enriching one’s own life, to merely a training process in which individuals as “human capital” continue purchasing ‘education’ through out of school in order to be ready to meet the expectations of the market by which the “opportunities of participation” thereof in the reference frame of social and democratic ideals are excluded. Furthermore, while the “potential relation” between education and employment paved the way for introduction of a certain role of “lifelong learning” as a part of the national employment strategy, the employment decisions and labor conditions were left to the arbitrary discretion of the capital with by the post-1980 neoliberal deregulation approach that started especially with the January 24th decisions. In this period, on the one hand, there were developments regarding privatization, marketization, and commodification of other educational

levels and modes, and on the other hand, vocational education was subject to an extensive change from its organization to its contents. Dozens of projects, mainly funded by foreign countries were conducted (Özcan, 2010:78-91; Eğitim Sen 2005). It can be argued that the fact that all these projects, actually, served to a higher level global project, for example, global domination of neoliberalism was realized more clearly in comparatively recent years. Many education project at National level in Turkey like “Industrial Education Project” in 1984, “Industrial Schools Project” in 2004 and “Non-formal Education Project” in 1987, and “The Project to Develop National Education” in 1997 were financed by World Bank credits.

As a historical development, vocational secondary education in Turkey was included in the scope of compulsory education and the Law No. 6287 (Law on Amending the Primary Education Law and Other Laws), or popularly referred to as “4+4+4,” so called extended the compulsory education to 12 years. One of the basic components of this law, which provided that the compulsory education would be extended to 12 years and realized in three stages of four years each, was regulation of the structure and conduct of the vocational secondary education in favor of the capital circles (Aksoy, 2012b; Müftüoğlu, 2012). The significant changes this regulation included may be not in terms of the direction of the current practice pertaining to education, but they are much related with the qualification and access conditions of education as hidden agenda. In respect thereof, the law provided that the high school aged population might opt for non-formal education (open high school) along with formal education, and that by introduction of address-based school registration it served to concealment of who in fact were kept out of school. Moreover, taking into consideration the same in relation to the social structure, the law would not ensure a true improvement in the ratio of keeping out of school due to such reasons as apprenticeship, working on the street and in informal sector. Again, an article in the recent regulation abolished the legal provision which set numerical limits for vocational high school students’ participation in skills training practices in a workplace. In accordance therewith, the current legal provision (Paragraph 1, Article 18 of the Vocational Education Law No. 3308), which required that the number of students participating in a skills training practice could not exceed 10% of the number of personnel employed in the workplace, was abolished and the students were exposed to both the risk of spending inefficient training time at the enterprise (for instance. they are excluded from the true educational activities that matter for them)

and the child labor abuse “The article (Article 12) which removed the limitation on the number of vocational high school students enrolled in skill training by enterprises serves in that sense to “market satisfaction” (Aksoy 2012b:19).

Approximately 6 months after the aforementioned law, which provided a shift to ‘interrupted education’ and removed the limitation on the number of vocational high school students enrolled in skills training in enterprises, another provision included in the Regulation on Amending the Vocational Technical Education Regulation (RG-4/10/2012-28481) entered into force, which indirectly removed the enterprise size limit with a trick illegally in practice. Pursuant to the said provision (Article 16), which required further regulation and amended the first paragraph of Article 181 of the same regulation,

As for the enterprises employing less personnel than it is provided in the Law, whether such enterprises that upon written application declared they would conduct vocational training, qualify for vocational training provision, shall be examined by the enterprise selection commission. Vocational training can also be given in such enterprises deemed to be qualified by the commission.

Subsequent to ruling out the notion of education as a right and the purpose of education by safeguarding the holistic character of human development, new regulations have been introduced suggesting that each provision that might stand and serve as an obstacle between the market and school were to be removed by new rules. It can be seen that these regulations comply with the neoliberal policies towards removing all obstacle before the expansion of the market to social fields and with the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), the guiding text of such policies in education.

By means of the message conveyed to the society and especially the youth by vocational technical education and ideological propaganda regarding jobs, students “learn that rewards in the capitalist system are granted with respect to individual efforts and productivity at work and that social mobility is limited only with educational gains and efforts at school and work” (Levin, 1995:12-13 as cited by Ünal et al., 2005:139). Such a belief ensures that people internalize and accept their poverty and the state of being oppressed by convincing them that social inequalities arise from personal incompetency and insufficient efforts of individuals, but not from social formation, and currently capitalism. Another outcome thereof is that children of impoverished and middle class families strive for making a difference in the current

situation by showing more efforts and by purchasing education. Families try to help their children with qualifying for higher education by purchasing as much ‘education’ as possible (by providing formal education opportunity in private schools in case they can afford, or non-formal education in private teaching institutes or a variety of professional courses, foreign language courses etc.), which transform them into clients in the eyes of “the private schools” and “private teaching institutions market”. An analogous process is also underway for the young individuals who qualified for university or graduated from university. A similar mechanism operates upon graduation, by which they tend to use “social networks” that reflect the personal advantages and references, which can be provided by the family and close relations, for starting a job, or maintain their status as customers of trainings (for central exams such KPSS, YDS, LES etc.), which would increase their “employability” capacity in the market. In this loop, the “education” market expands and the skills that might be used by enterprises are financed by students or their families. Due to the fact that the students or graduates are forced to buy the skills that are considered to be helpful in finding a job, the meaning of education changes, in such a way that education can no longer be considered public service and thus commoditized. On the other hand, despite the fact that students or families tend to invest in complementary skills in order to improve the level of children’ education so as to meet the expectations of the market, neither the public sector, nor the private sector are compelled to employ the graduates for above skills, and that employment and promotion decisions are made arbitrarily mostly under influence of social networks and references. This is especially apparent in certain positions bearing in mind that small and middle scale workplaces are prevalent in Turkey (Aksoy, 2007: 1075). Each year, public employment opportunities are narrowed and that even the graduates of highly qualified education programs are left *the mercy of the invisible hand of the market* under the pressure of flexible working principles and contract labor, unless they have a strong social network (Karakul, 2012)

Renovation of capitalism operates also by transforming the constituents of education especially including the teachers and students along with structural rearrangement of education. Deskilling by ‘employing unskilled’ through further disintegration of skills continues, while the production process becomes technology-intense and production scale becomes global, where production is kept flexible (Ansal, 1995, 14 as cited in Ünal et al., 2005:147). Disintegration of work and deskilling process paves the way

for the fact that students attending to vocational technical secondary education encounter with a narrower and disintegrated education both at school and during the skills training in their last school year, and ‘used’ as “unskilled labor” by enterprises. Recently, despite some steps to reinforce the general educational content in vocational/technical secondary education institutes via optional courses, it seems there will not be a significant change in the required teacher employment and optional course selection opportunity, accordingly.

Financing Policies in Vocational Secondary Education

As from 1980, Turkey pursued to reduce the share of resources allocated for education from the public budget, while pursuing policies that urged household members to make more financial contribution in education (Akkuş, 2012, as cited in Aksoy 2012b:15) If the bridging character of vocational education at secondary education level as a mode of formal education in establishment of link to economic activities aims at diverging from ‘storing’ children of the poor throughout their educational years and acting as official institutions of child labor exploitation, then a different resource allocation and distribution policy will be needed. Despite the fact that vocational/technical education has been considered a high-cost field for many years, it is seen as with the resources allocated for general education that a very limited share of public resources has been allocated for vocational technical education compared to international standards: (Aksoy, 2012b: 19)

While the decrease in resources allocated for education due to neoliberal policies paved the way for increased family contribution in general educational institutions, the lack of financing in the vocational technical educational institutions, which are attended especially by the children of poor, is compensated by an intensive commercialization based on the works conducted by students for the market, market connection, and use of student labor during education for the purpose of production, as an obligatory process, in other mean child labor exploitation. Moreover ‘successful’ schools which earned a lot of money by producing the commodities as desired by the market are publicized in the media as success story (*Öğrenciler Okula* , 26.02.2012). It is understood that either the underfinanced vocational schools are expected to create sources by utilizing the labor of their students or the students act by submission and accept their position without objection.

Conclusion

Vocational high schools as secondary education institutes were transformed into structures that pursue meeting the unrealistic labor force requirement of the capital and thus producing an illusion of employment and secured its life by defining the meaning and value of education based on market dominance. However, flexible working and loss of security due to the change in production area and rearrangement of both the global, and national policies in favor of capital, prevent even the skilled labor to access long-term, full-time, and secure employment. In the neoliberal period, in which carrying out production in a partial, flexible, and unsecure process has become the basic model and public employment responsibility is abandoned, employment oriented secondary education institutions became to present only a “good intention” on preparation for employment.

The students of vocational secondary education institutes are deprived of alternatives in a chain of regulations, which pursue meeting the expectations of enterprises especially in skills training process and lead to child labor exploitation, in their last school year, when they supposed also to take the university entry examination. After the 4+4+4 Amendment one year younger students will go to work so called “skill training” in workplaces. One may argue that including a vocational aspect in formal secondary education curriculum would have positive contributions with respect to occupational choices and future business life of students. However, the vocational secondary school institutions with their programs and skills training arrangement at enterprises operate as organizations, which provide students with no other alternative than adopting the goal of becoming a part of “intermediary manpower” and expect students to enter into the efforts of creating a future “against themselves.” Students should not be obliged to a vocational secondary education program, which structures their labor against themselves and that they should be provided through entirely public education means, with the opportunity to receive a holistic, humane education which will support them to become intellectually advanced, political subjects, and true citizens. Otherwise the current policy and regulations will continue to demonstrate that “vocational high school is an issue of class.” An educational order, in which the students are directed to vocational secondary education schools based on the economic difficulties experienced by their families and centralized test results, means an educational order, which will raise the students against themselves. Until students begin to freely use their labor, the vocational high schools should be made a

part of learning or work intended for pedagogic purposes only. Furthermore, these programs must be excluded from the scope of compulsory formal education and made a part of “non-formal vocational education” as a public education space. Not the child students, but the adults should be their students/learner even they became apprentice in the enterprises after a holistic, emancipatory education.

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Note

The paper presented at IV. International Critical Education Conference, 22-26 June, 2014, Thessaloniki, Greece. Some part of the study were excerpted with revising from a study [Aksoy, H.H. (2013).Türkiye’de Mesleki Eğitimin Eleştirel Bir Analizi.[A Critical Analysis of Vocational Education in Turkey] *Mulkiye*. Vol 37 (2), 53-73] which one of the author’s former studies, in Turkish. Author owes to thank to colleagues Hakan Gürel and Prof. Guy Senese who help to translation and correction stages of the paper into English.

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Contesting the “Dictatorship of the Progressives”: Neo-Nazis challenging equality and human rights

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Abstract

The recent rise of neo-Nazi groups in Greece has brought into focus new debates on both “equality” and “human rights” as political ideology and societal project. Our research examines a current critique of these doctrines, as reflected in writings on a women’s neo-Nazi blog. Writings on this blog directly contest and challenge concepts of equality, human rights and democracy, arguing that these concepts have failed to benefit Greek women or to effectively address their real needs, problems and insecurities. Instead, these writings invoke a different normative order, one framed around one’s obligations to the “racial” group and gender roles/duties grounded in notions of natural law. At the same time, they redefine and adapt the language of rights, moving from individuals’ rights to “race-rights” – referring to the duties of (the members of) a perceived racial collectivity to take actions necessary to ensure the survival and development of the “race”.

What arguments, logic and evidence are employed in this debate on equality and human rights by neo-Nazis, and what role do notions of women/gender play in these arguments? What challenges does the neo-Nazi gender ideology, with its emphasis on binary gender complementarity and an explicit articulation of hierarchical frameworks of belonging and social organization, pose to proponents of equality and inherent human rights, who may take the ideological legitimacy of these notions for granted? We examine the challenges this critique of equality poses for institutions committed to promoting equal rights, a political project which however has only a

tenuous hold in Greece. We also ask what challenges the neo-Nazi gender model poses for feminist achievements during the last decades in Greece, especially when the status of these gains remains in question in both public and private spheres. As this case highlights interesting projects of ideological persuasion “for” and “against” equality at a critical moment of the debate in Greece, what are the pedagogical implications of these challenges for anti-Nazism political projects and practices in Greece today?

Keywords: neo-Nazism, equality, human rights, ideology, gender, feminism, Greece.

Introduction

This project examines neo-Nazi rhetoric on gender and education in internet writings addressing Greek women. The rising neo-Nazi party of Golden Dawn has initiated a special strategy towards women, establishing local women’s cells and circulating specific ideas on social issues on special internet spaces directed at women. This includes a women’s blog, named *Women’s Front - “Metopo Gynaikon”*, accompanied by an “*Ideological Library*” blog¹.

These blog writings argue that a “crisis of values” is the root of many problems in contemporary Greece. In particular, they criticize political projects of equality and human rights, saying these ideologies - imposed as what they call a “dictatorship of the progressives” - have not benefited women, but in fact made them more insecure. These writers identify failed education as one cause of this crisis, and work to help women resist current social norms by embracing alternative “healthy” values instead. We analyzed discourse in *Metopo Gynaikon* women’s blog posts to examine the following questions:

- What is this crisis of values, what are the “right” values that should replace them, who or what do they aim to protect, and what type of educational work does this blog call on neo-Nazi activists to engage in?

¹ <http://whitewomenfront.blogspot.gr> - This blog regularly published posts during the years 2007-2013. Among the authors of the blog are executive members of Golden Dawn and its Women’s Front, while other posts are signed with pseudonyms. ideology-studies.blogspot.gr - Public access to this blog has become restricted only to members since the beginning of 2014.

- Also, we examine questions around the notions of “choice” and “desire”: who is proposed as responsible (is it educators, family, the state?) for creating conditions ripe for women to make the right – or educated - choices and have the correct desire to fulfil particular roles?
- Finally, what type of intervention is permitted when women seem to be making the ‘wrong’ choices?

Even as neo-Nazism has gained significant ground in political and social life in Greece during recent years (e.g. Papaioannou 2013; Psarras 2012), neo-Nazi rhetoric on women - and beyond - has not yet received adequate systematic study and analysis. To shed light on these far right discourses in Greece, our project drew on critical discourse analysis to focus on the ways in which language is used to construct, support, and convince readers of arguments, exploring how power relations are constructed and presented in texts and how the content and structure of language support this (e.g. Wodak 1997; Lazar 2005; Jäger & Jäger 2007). Such analysis can help us better understand the political implications of neo-Nazi gender ideals, as well as important areas of overlap between neo-Nazi discourse and dominant discourses and practices in Greek society.

The “Crisis of Values”

A key theme is the blog writers’ criticism of currently dominant value systems, or the standards by which actions are judged as good or bad. Contemporary society is described darkly as founded on “*pseudo-values*” [1] that cause women to be “*carried away*” by “*the current of the era*” [1] from more meaningful – i.e. “*natural*” [1] – life roles. This crisis of values consists of several key elements - the listing of which is also used to construct categories of political opponents identified as responsible.

First, they argue that people today are oriented mainly by the pursuit of financial profit. This means putting personal gain before the good of the community, even concealing the unpleasant truth about their actions so they can continue to profit – for example, doctors conducting abortions, who they say “*conceal the criminality*” of the procedure “*for their own financial gain*” [6]. Today even “*solidarity is salaried*” [2], we read, as part of an industry managed by paid professional activists and NGOs.

Women, they argue, have become caught up in a fashionable, consumption-oriented “lifestyle”. Media and marketers are accused of having created an environment in which women are valued primarily on their physical appearance, and disoriented from

their “natural” priorities, in particular motherhood. The insecurity this is said to create for women is a key theme in the blog: judging women “*only for their abilities on the fashion catwalks*” creates “*a climate of insecurity for the woman who occupies herself with the care of her family and her children*” [1]. Advertising is said to have altered what are described as natural developmental stages, in contrast to the “*natural behaviours at every age*” [5] proposed by Golden Dawn. According to the blog, such advertising encourages girls to become sexualized at ever-younger ages, to the delight of corporations who are eager for more consumers of beauty products perceived as necessities of womanhood.

Feminists are here held responsible for women being increasingly drawn into consumerism, and their consequent feelings of insecurity. The blog writers offer “*all those feminists*” “*congratulations for having driven women to live in disorientation and psychic confusion, insecurity about their appearance and a constant, many times futile, hunt for a partner*” [1]. The blog authors argue that feminists are deeply complicit in creating this environment of insecurity for women, because they justify self-focused behaviour, encouraging a woman to follow her desires, no matter how frivolous or self-destructive, in the name of a kind of “self-fulfilment”.

Moreover, this alleged disorientation of women has led to the rise of what is called “*individualism: a new disease*” [21]. If every woman pursues her self-interest, “who will be left to look out for the larger good” of the community, as Klatch (1988: 683) puts it, expressing a recurring theme in far right debates on women’s roles. But the larger good of which community? For the writers of the blog, it is the racial community that women must come to realize they are part of and around which their decisions should be oriented.

Here the contemporary political and ideological projects of equality and human rights are presented as a central part to the “crisis of values”. According to the blog, instead of improving conditions for women, human rights and equality have left women more vulnerable and more dependent on men. How so? The writers describe an increasing danger of crime and physical violence for women which, they say, has changed the social landscape of Greek cities. They attribute this change specifically to the presence of immigrants who are described as having “*other mentalities and customs*” [3] and being innately predisposed to violence. The following passage illustrates how ideas of insecurity and fear are interwoven with ideas of inclusion and exclusion from

public and/or private space in a highly gendered discourse that directly targets human rights and equality rhetoric:

What are the equal rights that our accusers have managed to establish? [The right] for a woman not to be able to travel freely on the streets? Where is equality when you are forced to ask a man to help escort you home, when they rob or even rape you in your own house? Where is my right to take walks with my child in the park and public squares? But in which squares? In those full of third-worlders, full of women who sell themselves, or those where the drug trade rages? [1]

Moreover, for the blog writers, human rights are not only rejected as failing to benefit women, but also constructed as a kind of dangerous instrument in the hands of “*enemies of the nation*” [8]. Ironically, the writers complain, human rights advocates worry primarily about protecting the “human rights” of those groups constructed as dangerous to the Greek race and women – e.g. immigrants – not about punishing them for violence. As reflected in the passage cited above, they insist that talk about “equality” fails to mean anything for Greek women who cannot engage safely in the most basic “mothering” activities such as taking their child to the playground. Meanwhile, they complain, these same human rights groups show “complete indifference” to the problems they say “oppressed Greeks” are experiencing [8]. They complain that these concerns - whether women’s fear of violent street crime or what they say is the Greek race’s right to demographic survival - are not prioritized or even framed as rights by the human rights groups. Human rights supporters, “*our lovely progressives*”, are negatively described as “*anti-racists*”, “*democrats*”, “*internationalists*”, “*pacifists*”, “*supporters of multi-cultural society*”, “*believers in equality*”, “*religiously tolerant*”, “*universalists*” (the blog offers a glossary-like post explaining what each of these terms means in practice and why they are negative) and in the end “*slaves to foreign interests*” [8].

They also criticize equality rhetoric— explaining that social “levelling” (which they use in the metaphoric sense as destruction) in the name of equality and “democratic” relationships has eroded beneficial social norms, such as respect for authority figures like teachers and parents. The writers criticize what they see as increasing demands for long lists of “rights” without any interest in obligations, as individuals justify a range of self-centered desires under the trendy label of individual “rights”: “*the results [...] can be seen all over around us. Spoiled children, teenagers and adults, who only care about self-centered rights [...]*” [27]

The “Crisis of Values” as a direct result of bad education and wrong information

For the blog writers, the “crisis of values” is not accidental, but a direct result of bad education and the wrong information. It is important to note that their understanding of education involves not just schools, but multiple sites for the transmission of social values and norms, and the blog posts identify a diverse list of actors or ideologies responsible: feminists, mass media, leftists and Marxists, Islam, Jews, doctors, capitalists and other actors motivated by selfish economic interests. Some of these actors are also said to be implicated in the supposed decay of the institution of the family, a matter of deep concern to the blog writers. The family, they say, “*this first-class institution for the transmission of values, ideals and traditions to the youth is in deep crisis, to the delight, of course, of those who would dismantle Greek society*” [2]. The “biased” and “corrupt” mass media is singled out as particularly responsible for misleading Greek women. As noted above, the writers complain that many problems that “ordinary Greeks” struggle with are not framed as rights by the human rights groups; they say that one of these is the right of the public to know who is dangerous – as they put it, “*society should have the right to know from whom it needs to protect itself*” [7]. The writers argue the truth about violent tendencies of men of other races (and the risks this poses to women) is deliberately hidden by the media, since censorship restricts honest discussion of race, religion and their relationship to crime. Sometimes, they argue, even victims themselves don’t understand the real “truth” about their experiences. They cite as evidence the case of Katie Piper, a young British woman who was the victim of an acid attack by her ex-boyfriend. In this case, while she sees herself as being a victim of internet relationships, the authors find her misguided, since she was more accurately a “*victim of the intentional concealment (in the name of anti-racism)*” [7] of violent habits of men of certain backgrounds. For the writers, education on this issue is particularly urgent since the harm of mixed-race relationships occurs at two levels -personal and community-, and respecting rules against racial mixing protects both the safety of the individual woman and the existence of the racial community.

Countering bad education and wrong information with enlightenment and resistance

1. Towards a right kind of enlightenment

It is in this context of confusion and misinformation that the blog writers frame neo-Nazi work explicitly as “enlightenment” work, to spread awareness of the dangers of

the current era, and to re-direct public discourse in a way that nudges Greeks into the right developmental path of conformity with natural or racial rules. In this context, neo-Nazi educational work seeks to foster correct decision-making through: 1) a foundation of values, priorities, and “discipline” to orient decisions; and 2) access to what they characterize as more accurate information. The above-cited case of Katie Piper - showing women’s own failure to see or learn the right lesson from their victimization– reflects the difficulty of this enlightenment work. This challenge is explicitly recognized in an article on the official webpage of Golden Dawn:

We need a new enlightenment for the Greek people/nation. Via this webpage we try every day to transmit truth and reality, so those who read us can judge and decide as mature people. We don’t want your faith, but your critical eye and discipline which lead to knowledge, to [carry] us all towards victory and the liberation of our people from traitors and tyrants.²

This educational work also involves making clear which “true values” - whether this is gender roles or ideas of community - are in conformity with “natural law”. For example, they say the neo-Nazi vision reflects racial community based on “*bonds of blood*”– unlike contemporary society, which is based on bonds “*of money*” [2]. A primary focus is the need for Greeks to be reminded of what they see as a demographic threat – only the political party of Golden Dawn is said to “*recognize the enormous demographic problem, the fact that in a few years the Greek nation will be a minority*” [1] and the ensuing reproductive duty to the race. Education of women, as portrayed in neo-Nazi discourse, aims to help women understand the importance of white women’s motherhood; readers are reminded that they carry both the “*honor*” and “*debt*” [1] to ensure the biological continuity of the Greek race.

2) *Education as resistance against the “dictatorship of the progressives”*

It is important to emphasize that the neo-Nazi ideal of motherhood is portrayed as resistance to the dominant ideals of contemporary society. Golden Dawn women - “*strong and conscious of the nature of the female sex*” [1] – are presented as a model: these determined women use their power to ensure women fulfil their destiny of

²<http://www.xryshaygh.com/index.php/enimerosi/view/den-chreiazetai-mono-pisth-alla-peitharchia-kai-gnwsh> - Δεν χρειάζεται μόνο Πίστη, αλλά Πειθαρχία και Γνώση, 31/03/2014 (last accessed: August 16, 2014)

motherhood in service of the racial community. This reflects a key theme – education on values as part of a social movement of resistance.

In response to what the writers describe as insecurity caused by pressure to pursue a fashionable lifestyle, which undermines women’s confidence in motherhood as a valuable role, the blog authors call for a specific kind of women’s empowerment; empowering (their) women not to worry about the “wrong” ideas of “normal” that currently dominate, but to replace those with alternative norms and ideals to which to aspire - those suggested by Golden Dawn. Golden Dawn thus calls on “*all the Greek women who are tired of the hypocrisy and superficial pseudo-values to get to know Golden Dawn in person*”, to take action, to see and embrace “real” values: “*Something different in today’s decay, something True*” [1].

For the blog writers, education aims to prepare women to value a particular role of motherhood - while the individual woman is portrayed as the actor making the choice, they appear to assume that if women have proper knowledge and values, only one choice will emerge as the logical or natural one (and desires for other choices are merely the unfortunate result of lack of access to correct information). In this vision, the right to insist on other choices or desires that do not benefit the racial community is downplayed or nonexistent.

Conclusion

This case raises complicated questions around the rhetoric of choice and desire which need further analysis, and are linked to broader political debates and struggles:

- Who can be proposed as responsible – educators, family, the state – for creating conditions for women to make the “right” choices and have the desire to fulfill particular roles?
- Who can decide what a wrong choice is, and what types of intervention – whether educational, political or legal - is permitted when women are seen as desiring or making “wrong” choices?

These questions are especially salient when we note that it is not only neo-Nazis who claim the right to decide what is best for women - a wide variety of actors, including perhaps certain types of “progressive” projects, aim at saving groups of (perceived) victimized women through enlightenment, and even to restrict women from making the wrong decisions, or decisions about their life roles based on what are seen as the wrong values.

These blog writings also indicate that not all women are convinced that the ideologies of “human rights” or “equality” deserve a position of hegemony. *Women’s Front* writers offer counter-arguments directed at other women to persuade them that these ideologies can and should be contested. Thus, it is important for those who are engaged in advocacy projects “for” human rights to be aware of the counter-discourses in the debate.

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Seeking educational solutions in classic studies. The crisis as a challenge

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Abstract

The generalized crisis in globalized societies has caused discount on educational benefits and options resulting in a reduction at the quality of education. Most educational systems in the world are formed based on the economy and job placement. So, when the economy has been in crisis and unemployment is increased, one wonders how the educational system can work smoothly. However, answers to these questions can be found back in time by Piaget and Vygotsky, for instance, and the ancient sources of Plato and Aristotle . The substructure of the educational system in ancient Greece was based on maintaining a balance between education of body and spirit, respectively. Education was the criterion of prosperity and the ultimate goal identified with the happiness of man. Unlike the modern education of countries such as Greece , which is unable, for various reasons, to invest in education and support it, the past education was more stable . Today, due to the alibi of economic crisis we see schools and universities out of order, teachers dismissed and reduction of the scientific research in educational settings. What would happen if we create a base on democratic education and behavior? How interesting would the lesson be if derived from the free choice of subjects? How could we enrich the curriculum with art classes and sports?

Key words: Crisis, education, classic studies, ancient Greece.

Introduction

We were thinking the fact that education should be the criterion of prosperity and the ultimate goal that leads to the happiness of man. Comparing the present social

conditions to the ancient Greek past we can all notice that people who were not so informed about educational practices in the past, had a stable educational system. This is the reason that led us back to the ancient Greek history when the substructure of the educational system in ancient Athens was based on maintaining a balance between education of body and spirit, respectively. And we suddenly realize that at the same place where a strong educational culture was created, today there is a crisis, if not a chaos. The present educational system prepares students to enter the university and then find a job. So, as Ken Robinson (2001) states, in a few sentences, the modern school kills children's innate creative talents because it prioritises academic ability. The system neglects other intelligences and that results more in conformity rather than diversity of intelligences. From the other side, crisis is an always present phenomenon. Adopting an anthropological and historical approach to analyse the term "crisis" in education, one can see back to the ancient Greek past, Scylla and Charybdis, the sea monsters flanking a strait that forced ships to brave one side or the other, associated today with the expression, "between a rock and a hard place". This example symbolizes the difficulties a society can ever meet. And this is not the only example of how ancient myths and historical sources have got valuable elements to offer to our modern societies.

Adding the modern financial crisis that has been spread the past 4 years in Europe, in our everyday life, we need to look for possible solutions to the fundamental structure of a society: Education, through historical sources (Micheletti, 2012).

Why a historical analysis?

Following the anthropological model that supports the idea that in order to understand the present you need to see it through its historical depth, we start an "excavation" to the classic studies. The historical method, focuses on special social institutions in the background of the whole human history. August Comte, Herbert Spencer and Hobhouse have studied the main institutions of society in the background using this historical method presenting examples with value. Such examples explain the fact that present social events take a new shape in the light of a historical study which helps in understanding many new sides of the modern everyday culture. To understand any aspect in the study of any group, investigation in its past historical shape, becomes necessary (Bertaux, 1977).

Historical analysis is less a separate analytical framework or approach than it is an element that should be present in any analysis of popular culture. Observing and

analyzing changes over time is essential to understanding why a contemporary text is the way it is. We cannot understand our present without understanding our past. And we cannot fully imagine change without a sense of how our culture has changed over time. Our ability to understand the improvements in and the limits of current media representations of African Americans, for example, is greatly enhanced by viewing two documentaries that detail the history of African American representations in the mass media, *Ethnic Notions* and *Color Adjustment*.

It is also interesting to see the aspect of Gardner (2006), in the use of the historical method as a theoretical model to the analysis of social issues. He claims that it is a method that seeks to make sense of the past through the disciplined and systematic analysis of the 'traces' it leaves behind. Such traces may be of many different kinds, ranging from everyday ephemera, artifacts and visual images, to old buildings, archaeological sites or entire landscapes. The most widely used historical traces, however, are written documents, whether of public or private origin. Historical analysis is commonly used in social research as an introductory strategy for establishing a context or background against which a substantive contemporary study may be set.

As Castel (2001), states, a stronger conception of historical analysis sees it as a pervasive and necessary technique in its own right, without which no account of phenomena in the present may be properly understood. In this more substantial form, historical analysis is often combined with other methods to engage social research questions. History has the power to challenge dominant assumptions.

Moreover, the past has shown a great continuity in paradigms of crisis. As Armand D'Angour claims, that in the early 6th Century BC, the people of Athens were burdened with debt, social division and inequality, with poor farmers prepared to sell themselves into slavery just to feed their families. His doctrine was picked up by the biblical author of Ecclesiastes in the 3rd Century BC, whose phrase "There is nothing new under the sun" is repeated more than 20 times. Such paradigms lead us to think positively through wise sayings like the "Hold fast, my heart, you have endured worse suffering," of Odysseus who exhorts himself in Homer's *Odyssey*, from the 8th Century BC.

According to Comaroff (1985), these sayings are not only advisable but also reveal the theoretical and methodological frame of researching for well checked solutions retrieved from the past. As Socrates stated, "The unexamined life is not worth living

for a human being”. By cross-examining ordinary people, the philosopher aimed to get to the heart of complex questions such as "What is justice?" and "How should we live?" Often no clear answers emerged, but Socrates insisted that we keep on asking the questions. Consequently, one comes in front of a symbolization of over time frequent asked questions and social problems that need persistence to get solved.

In addition, the ancient Greeks were strongly aware of the power of opportunity - in Greek, *kairos*. Seizing the moment –in oratory, athletics, or battle - was admired and viewed as an indication of skill. Modern Greeks are often accused of acting on that motive of opportunity, until now and of course they settle their financial issues at the same way.

In response to, say, "Should Greece leave the euro?" the oracle might have responded: "Greece should abandon the euro if the euro has abandoned Greece," leaving proponents and opponents of "Grexit" to squabble over what exactly that meant. It must have been something like listening to modern economists. At least the oracle had the excuse of inhaling the smoke of laurel leaves.

If modern Greeks feel overwhelmed by today's financial problems, they might take some comfort from remembering the world-weary advice from their ancestor Pythagoras that "everything comes round again, so nothing is completely new". As Argyriadis (2011) states, among others, education is the key concept, through the ages, that offers composure and capacities to face every kind of crisis.

The ancient educational concept

The ancient Greek education was mainly democratic. “*Demokratia*” was ambiguous. It meant literally “people-power”. But who were the people to whom the power belonged? Was it all the people - the 'masses'? Or only some of the people - the duly qualified citizens? The Greek word *demos* could mean either. There is a theory that the word “*demokratia*” was coined by democracy's enemies, members of the rich and aristocratic elite who did not like being outvoted by the common herd, their social and economic inferiors. If this theory is right, democracy must originally have meant something like 'mob rule' or 'dictatorship of the proletariat'.

In *Democracy and Education*, Dewey argues that the primary ineluctable facts of the birth and death of each one of the constituent members in a social group determine the necessity of education. On one hand, there is the contrast between the immaturity of the new-born members of the group (its future sole representatives) and the maturity of the adult members who possess the knowledge and customs of the group. On the

other hand, there is the necessity that these immature members be not merely physically preserved in adequate numbers, but that they be initiated into the interests, purposes, information, skill, and practices of the mature members: otherwise the group will cease its characteristic life.

Dewey observes that even in a "savage" tribe, the achievements of adults are far beyond what the immature members would be capable of if left to themselves. With the growth of civilization, the gap between the original capacities of the immature and the standards and customs of the elders increases. Physical growing up and mastery of the bare necessities of subsistence will not suffice to reproduce the life of the group. Deliberate effort and the taking of thoughtful pains are required. Beings who are born not only unaware of, but quite indifferent to, the aims and habits of the social group have to be rendered cognizant of them and actively interested. According to Dewey, education, and education alone, spans the gap.

The goal of education in the Ancient Greek city-states was to prepare children for adult activities as citizens. Greece was divided in city-states and two of them developed a high level in education: Sparta and Athens. The nature of the city-states varied greatly, and this was also true of the education they considered appropriate. Both daily life and education were very different in Sparta and Athens or in the other ancient Greek city-states. The goal of education in Sparta, an authoritarian, military city-state, was to produce soldier-citizens. "The purpose of education was to produce a well-drilled, well-disciplined marching army. Spartans believed in a life of discipline, self-denial, and simplicity. Spartans were educated to be fierce warriors, Spartan military force was regarded as terrifying." Bennet, (2006: 135). On the other hand, the goal of education in Athens, a democratic city-state, was to produce citizens trained in the arts of both, peace and war. The way Athenians used to educate their children was more pneumatic. They were concentrated to the balance of mind and body exercise. They also tried to teach philosophy to them so as to make them wiser and capable of taking mature decisions. But, the main common characteristic of the educational systems in Athens and Sparta was the creation of a happy and independent society.

Education was very different in Sparta than it was in the other Greek city-states. In Athens, Corinth, Argos, Megara and in hundreds of other Greek city-states, the purpose of education was to produce good citizens. All citizens (remember, citizens were only men - women, children, and slaves were not citizens) were trained to be

good soldiers. But they were also trained in music, art, literature, and politics. In Sparta, the purpose of education was to produce good soldiers.

In Athens, for example, boys were taught at home until they were about six years old. Then boys went to school, where they learned to read and write. They learned to play a musical instrument, usually the flute or the lyre. They learned the poetry of Homer. They learned how to debate and how to give a persuasive speech. They studied science and math. After high school, they attended military school. Boys did not graduate from all the schooling they were required to take until they were about 20 years old. Girls did not go to school. They were taught at home by their mothers. But, if their mother could read and write, they taught their girls how to do the same, as well as teaching them how to cook and sew and run a household.

Education in Sparta was completely different. The purpose of education in Sparta was to produce and maintain a powerful army. Sparta boys entered military school when they were about six years old. They learned how to read and write, but those skills were not considered very important except for messages. Military school was tough on purpose. The boys were often hungry. They were often beaten. They slept away from home, in the barracks, with the men. If they cried, they were beaten by their own parents. They were taught how to steal and lie and get away with it. These skills could save their life someday. Nearly everything in the Spartan educational system was about war and battle.

Spartan girls also learned to be warriors. Their school was not as brutal, but all girls in ancient Sparta could wrestle and fist fight and handle a weapon. They were taught how to kill. The Spartans believed that strong women produced strong babies. Besides, the women might have to defend the city if the men were away at war. No great works of art came out of Sparta. But most of the other Greek city-states wanted Sparta on their side. They might be rough, but they had honor. They were great friends to have in times of war. But, for Athenians, war never brings happiness.

“Happiness,” the term that Aristotle uses to designate the highest human good, is the usual translation of the Greek eudemonia. Although it is impossible to abandon the English term at this stage of history, it should be borne in mind that what Aristotle means by eudemonia is something more like well-being.

In *Retrieving Aristotle in an Age of Crisis*, David Roochnik makes a lucid and powerful case that Aristotle offers a philosophical resource that even today can be of significant therapeutic value. Unlike the scientific revolutionaries of the seventeenth

century, he insisted that both ordinary language and sense-perception play essential roles in the acquisition of knowledge. Centuries before Husserl, Aristotle was a phenomenologist who demanded that a successful theory remain faithful to human experience. His philosophy can thus provide precisely what modern European rationalism now so painfully lacks: an understanding and appreciation of the world in which human beings actually make their homes and shape their everyday culture.

The term “Crisis”

The term *crisis* comes from the [Greek](#) κρίσις – *krisis*. It represents any situation that is, or is expected to lead to, an unstable and dangerous situation affecting an individual, group, community, or whole society.

As Argyriadis (2011) states, a crisis is deemed to be a negative change in the field of the everyday culture and at the same time it has got a general meaning. For instance, in mental health terms, a crisis refers not necessarily to a traumatic situation or event, but to a person’s reaction to an event. One person might be deeply affected by something that happened, while another individual suffers little or no ill effects, at similar conditions.

The history of Greece is full of crises either related to war or to economic and political reactions. In fact, during crises’ periods Greeks were always in panic but it is worth saying that they did cope with every situation well and they overcome their problems, quickly. This is very optimistic for the current financial crisis that has become a generalized phenomenon throughout Europe.

[Eric Hobsbawm](#) in his pair of 1954 articles entitled "The Crisis of the Seventeenth Century" published in *Past and Present*, and cemented by his contemporary, [Hugh Trevor-Roper](#), in a 1959 article entitled "The General Crisis of the Seventeenth Century" published in the same journal. Hobsbawm discussed an economic crisis in Europe; Trevor-Roper saw a wider crisis, "a crisis in the relations between society and the State".

Trevor-Roper argued that the middle years of the 17th century in Western Europe saw a widespread break-down in politics, economics and society caused by a complex series of demographic, religious, economic and political problems. In this “general crisis”, various events such as the [English Civil War](#), the [Fronde](#) in [France](#), the climax of the [Thirty Years War](#) in [Holy Roman Empire](#) and revolts against the [Spanish Crown](#) in [Portugal](#), [Naples](#) and [Catalonia](#) were all manifestations of the same problem.

Moreover, in the current Greek crisis (for both Greek and immigrant workers) a neo-fascist party has emerged, called Golden Dawn. They try to channel the fury of the Greek workers towards the immigrants, saying that they are the cause of unemployment and criminality. They have made numerous criminal attacks on immigrants (but also Greeks that stand against them), especially in the center of Athens.

Today, maybe the reason for all that phenomena is Neoliberalism as a capitalism with "the gloves off," and is largely unknown by the general public. Tylor agrees that today the term is mostly used as a general condemnation of economic liberalization policies and its advocates. This transformation to a neoliberal state transfers every responsibility from the state to the individual and such a situation is a great change for the masses recognized as crisis.

Why does this matter for the rest of Europe? The answer can be found in terms of its financial character. If Greece does not repay its creditors, a dangerous precedent will have been set. This may make investors increasingly nervous about the likelihood of other highly-indebted nations, such as Italy, or those with weak economies, such as Spain, repaying their debts or even staying inside the euro.

If investors stop buying bonds issued by other governments, then those governments in turn will not be able to repay their creditors - a potentially disastrous vicious circle. To combat this risk, European leaders have agreed a 700bn-euro firewall to protect the rest of the eurozone from a full-blown Greek default.

Moreover, if banks in the weaker eurozone countries that are already struggling to find enough capital are forced to write off even more loans they have made - something that becomes more likely if the eurozone economy falls deeper into recession - they will become weaker still, undermining confidence in the entire banking system.

Eurozone banks may then find it even hard to borrow, and therefore to lend, potentially sparking a second credit crunch, where bank lending effectively dries up, hurting the economy further.

This problem would be exacerbated by savers and investors taking money out of banks in vulnerable economies, such as Greece, Portugal and Spain, and moving it to banks in safer economies such as Germany or the Netherlands.

These potential scenarios would be made immeasurably worse if Greece were to leave the euro. The country would almost certainly reintroduce the drachma, which would

devalue dramatically and quickly, making it even harder for Greece to repay its debts, and setting an even worse precedent.

An interesting example of a political crisis model that is mainly supported from any social crisis is that of Thailand. What began as a currency crisis in Thailand, in 1997, developed into an economic and then a social crisis across the region and beyond. Within the ASEAN region, the financial crisis quickly translated into a drastic contraction in production and employment in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand, the four hardest-hit countries in the sub-region (Lee and Rhee 1999). The fall in real GDP in 1998 compared with 1997 ranged from 13.1 per cent in Indonesia to 0.6 per cent in the Philippines, while the rise in open unemployment rates was most conspicuous in Thailand (from 0.9 to 4.4 per cent).

The social impact of the 1997 financial crisis was evident in several ways (Lee, 1998). First, the sharp contraction in production reduced the demand for labour, which resulted in a reduction in real wage rates and an increase in unemployment. Second, a bout of high inflation during the crisis and its aftermath dented real household expenditure. Third, higher import prices as a result of real currency devaluation reduced the purchasing power of household income. Fourth, a substantial loss of property income (dividends, capital gains and rents) reduced total household income. In addition, the welfare of poor households further deteriorated as the respective Governments lowered spending on education, health care and other social services as a consequence of the economic downturn.

The social impact of the crisis was substantial and, more important, the impact on poverty was much more severe in some countries than others. One important reason is that workers displaced from the formal industrial sector were absorbed in agricultural and (informal) service employment. In other words, much of the adjustment took the form of lower real wages. In some counties, such as Indonesia and Philippines, it was pointed out that foreign migrant workers bore the greater brunt of the adjustment burden (World Bank 2000a).

Conclusion

Turning to allegories infused with one-eyed giants and other fantastical creatures to explain the Greek crisis, which threatens to morph into a financial crisis worldwide, seems like an indulgence at a time when the state, and ordinary citizens, can't pay their bills.

Greek myths are the cultural property of Europe, the West and the world, immortalized in high art as well as cartoons and movie depictions such as "Clash of the Titans." Greeks are rueful at how the legacy of their ancient statesmen and philosophers stacks up against their reduced circumstances. But mostly they don't cite old myths, possibly based on kernels of truth, that helped people make sense of chaotic times.

"They don't connect it. You never hear anything about myths, the rise of myths," Magnus Briem, an Athens-based documentary producer, said of Greek commentary on the crisis. He speculated that, "maybe it's too playful for them, to deal with something so serious."

But, this situation formed by the neoliberal state which maintains a distance between real and metaphysical conceptions of the everyday life. The perception of such an idea need education, a term that is in permanent European crisis.

So, having taken lesson from our past, we are obliged to reconsider that while global monitoring of progress describes the increasing availability of school, the international community must ensure that education accessibility, acceptability and adaptability are guaranteed through international and domestic legal frameworks, macroeconomic models and national budget allocations, as well as education policy and practice. It is time that governments around the world unite to finance a breakthrough in girls' education: tomorrow's children are in their hands, and, with them, the future of the world.

The right to an education that is free, quality and emancipating cannot be questioned or bargained with. It should light the path for a more sustainable, exponential and equitable development trajectory for women and girls, and for the planet. Yet in order to correct course, the international community must face the serious shortcomings of the past and current assault on women's rights perpetuated under the watch of governments around the world. By setting a collective goal to set right this historic wrong, governments around the world can make concrete steps to ensure that the persistent discrimination, abuse and fear girls face in and out of school is ended.

To conclude, let's remember Archimedes saying: "Finding the solution to a knotty problem requires hard thinking, but the answer often comes only when you switch off – and take a bath".

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Reclaiming History: Marx, education and class struggle¹

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Abstract:

This paper presents education in its widest revolutionary sense where its intent is rooted in the political objective of reclaiming history from capital for the purpose of human emancipation. It argues that such a revolutionary political education requires taking Marx on his own terms as a revolutionary educator and grounding the content of education for historical agency in the work of Marx. Furthermore, the paper argues that two issues of educational import flow from such a grounding. Firstly, the theoretical and methodological content of Marxian education is to draw from the 'guiding thread' of Marx's materialist view of history. Secondly, its pedagogy is to be informed by the task of producing the revolutionary subject. The two issues are shown to be intimately connected and, in their relation, express praxis. Through theoretically informed practice education is human capacity building for the active transformation of human history through class struggle whereby in the transformation of their circumstances class agents are also transformed. The paper concludes with the assertion that the implication to be drawn from these arguments is that revolutionary education can only be working class self-education and, as such, the concrete emergent expression of class struggle.

Keywords: Capital, capitalism, Marx, history, class struggle, education, revolution.

Firstly, I must say that I am humbled by the enormous privilege it is to be standing here in front of you – in front of so many radically committed educators from across

¹ The presentation draws from (explicitly in places) but extends the work contained in a chapter entitled 'Marx and Education: working with the revolutionary educator' to be published in Hill, D. & Griffiths, T. (eds.) (2015) *Critical Education, Critical Pedagogies, Marxist Education*.

the globe - and to have the opportunity to speak of important matters – matters of historical urgency and necessity. Each of us in our own contexts and own ways know and live this urgency daily. But it is in the recognition – our common recognition - of the necessity for root and branch change to the social order of things that brings us to realise the gravity of what the Hungarian Marxian intellectual István Mészáros (2008) so aptly describes as the ‘challenge and burden of our historical time’. For history has been taken from us. It has been stolen from humanity. The prescience of Marx’s vision in the Communist Manifesto is startling. That vision saw the bourgeoisie, through pain of its own extinction, chasing itself across the globe and, in doing so, remaking the world in its own image. This is where we are: it is the time we are in. We live it but it is not *our* history.

Let me be clear, when I say that ‘this is not our history’, I have two meanings in mind: one conservative and one revolutionary. The former I have already alluded to. We are fed it daily: in the constant assertions from the servants of capital (e.g. politicians, political chatterers, media controllers) that ‘There IS No Alternative’ and in the incessant proclamations of its academic high priests (in universities, ‘independent’ think-tanks etc) that we are at the end of history and the rule of capital is all there is (e.g. Fukuyama 1992). In short, we are to believe that history, as human making, is now futile. It is senseless to struggle because there is no more active becoming: we just are. We are human capital. Humanity capitalised.

But, in the full revolutionary sense, to know that ‘this is not our history’ is to grasp that this also is not our destiny. Here sits my point about reclaiming history. It is to know the limits of, and to push beyond, capital. And today, this *should* be as clear – perhaps even clearer – than at any point in the history of capital’s rule over humanity. But as Stuart Hall has remarked of the paralysing grip that capital has over commonsense: “it is easier to imagine the end of the world than to imagine the end of capitalism”. However, he continues: “We can now revise that and witness the attempt to imagine capitalism by way of imagining the end of the world”. Now we have a radical imagining! We have a vista that turns back on the human-less future projected by capital and shows us that the “problem to be solved is that of breaking out of the windless present ... back into real historical time, and a history made by human beings” (Hall 2004: 76). Marxian educator, the late Paula Allman called such radical imagining: ‘vision’. She insisted that, in the absence of vision, radical education praxis was impossible. But, most importantly, “any vision worth striving for must be

realistic rather than whimsical”. Not only was it to “be based on consideration and critiques of the past and present human condition” but also had to be “a vision ... derived from the real, the material world” (Allman 1999: 9).

I want to punctuate this presentation here with perhaps the kind of real material world examples that Allman might have had in mind. The first comes from a recent *New York Times* article (Keyi 2014):

Over the past few years, trips back to my home village, Huaihua Di, on the Lanxi River in Hunan Province, have been clouded by news of deaths – deaths of people I knew well. Some were still young, only in their 30s or 40s. When I returned to the village early last year, two people had just died, and a few other were dying.

My father conducted an informal survey last year of deaths in our village, which has about 1,000 people, to learn why they died and the ages of the deceased. After visiting every household over the course of two weeks, he and two village elders came up with these numbers: Over 10 years, there were 86 cases of cancer. Of these 65 resulted in death; the rest are terminally ill. Most of their cancers are of the digestive system. In addition, there were 261 cases of snail fever, a parasitic disease, that led to two deaths.

The Lanxi was dammed up years ago ... factories discharge tons of untreated industrial waste into the water every day. Animal waste from hundreds of livestock and fish farms is also discarded in the river. ... My hometown’s terminal illness and death of Lanxi River have been heartbreaking for me. ... I know the illness does not just affect my village and my river. The entire country is sick, and cancer has spread to every organ of this nation. In our society, profit and G.D.P count for more than anything else. A glittering façade is the new face of China. Behind it, well-off people emigrate, people in power send their families to countries with clean water ...

The following is a suicide note of a 50-year-old Greek woman to her husband. She jumped off a high wall in Crete:

You can use the 600 Euros that you will find on me to pay our health insurance. I paid the rent yesterday. I am sorry, my daughter, I could not take more suffering just to put a warm plate on the table - a bloody plate. Make sure that our daughter goes to college and never leave her alone. She should get the house that we have in the village. (Gounari 2014)

This is a human reality of the neoliberal plan of austerity for Greece: part of what Stuart Hall, Doreen Massey and Michael Rustin refer to as the “neoliberal offensive” where, if “Chile was the laboratory for the early phases [of its social experiment], Greece has become the laboratory for an even more fierce implementation” (2013: 12). Or perhaps we could consider an earlier ‘phase’ of capitalist development. Frederick Engels’ magisterial work on the *Condition of the English Working Class* provides ample empirical insight (Engels 2009 /1845). For example of the death of London woman Ann Galway in 1843 he records:

She had lived at No.5 White Lion Court, Bermondsey Street, London, with her husband and a nineteen-year-old son in a little room, in which neither had a bedstead nor any other furniture was to be seen. She lay dead beside her son on a heap of feathers which were scattered over her almost naked body, there being neither sheet nor coverlet. The feathers stuck so fast over the whole body that the physician could not examine the corpse until it was cleansed, and then found it starved and scarred from the bites of vermin. Part of the floor of the room was torn up, and the hole used by the family as a privy. (Engels 2009 /1845: 73)

Or his account of two boys who were brought before a police magistrate in January 1844:

... being in a starving condition, they had stolen and immediately devoured a half-cooked calf’s foot from a shop. The magistrate felt called upon to investigate the case further, and received the following details from the policeman: The mother of the two boys was the widow of an ex-soldier, afterwards policeman, and had had a very hard time since the death of her husband, to provide for her nine children. She lived at No. 2 Pool’s Place Quaker Court, Spitalfields, in the utmost poverty. When the policeman came to her, he found her with six of her children literally huddled together in a little back room, with no furniture but two old rush-bottomed chairs with the seats gone, a small table with two broken legs, a broken cup, and a small dish. On the hearth was scarcely a spark of fire, and in the corner lay as many old rags as would fill a woman’s apron, which served the whole family as a bed. For bed clothing they had only their scanty day clothing. The poor woman told him that she had been forced to sell her bedstead the year before to buy food. Her bedding she had pawned with the victualler for food. In short, everything had gone for food. (Engels 2009 /1845: 74)

These examples bring us to a point. Unlike what bourgeois historians might assert, these are not scattered scraps of history strewn, unrelated, across time and space. Neither are they are ‘externalities’ of capitalism. Rather they are the outcomes of the *internal* workings of capital and the consequences of class war. As the Hegelian Marx has taught us the *content* of capital (its inner logic) is to be distinguished from, but held in relation to, the various historical and contextual *forms* it takes.

I contend that is from this position that we are to understand the reclamation of history. Furthermore, as I hope it will become clear, it will be educators that have a central role to play in its realisation: in the active de-capitalisation of history I turn to Marx, himself a revolutionary educator, to inform this radical, urgent and necessary work of history.

MARX: THE REVOLUTIONARY EDUCATOR

To those who know the work of Marx it might seem strange to talk of him as an educator. He was certainly a philosopher, historian and revolutionary. But can he be described as an educator? For it is certainly the case that Marx wrote very little, directly, on education. Indeed, one has to trawl Marx’s voluminous works to find what might accurately be described as the occasional exploration of general educational themes and issues². However, I do not see an absence of a thorough treatment of education by Marx a debilitating barrier to the development of a coherent Marxian view of education. But in what does such coherence consist? On this matter Robin Small insists, correctly in my view, that it is less important to draw on what Marx specifically said *about* education than to get to work ‘putting to work’ his broad theories *for* radical and transformative educational praxis. In developing this idea in his most recent work, Small describes Marx-the-revolutionary as Marx-the-educator: “He challenges us to develop our capacity to think critically about our own society and, in particular, to look beneath the surface of [things] and find out what is really happening in ... social life. (Small 2014: 2)

² These include the free and universal education for children, the unification of education and material production, as well as education as revolutionary praxis. See for example Chapter 15 of Capital Volume 1 where Marx specifically discusses the impact of the Factory Acts on working-class children (Marx 1976 / 1867: 610 - 635); Section IV of his Critique of the Gotha Programme (Marx 1971 / 1875: 27 - 29); The Communist Manifesto (Marx and Engels 1966 / 1848); and The Civil War in France (Marx 1978 / 1871).

I believe Small's instincts here are both correct and instructive here. It is Karl Marx as the revolutionary educator that makes it possible to conceive of Marx, education and class struggle. It is an invitation to engage in a process – an unfinished project – that takes education as a necessary (but not sufficient) ingredient of revolutionary socialist strategy. Education, in the full sense of the word, is a liberating force that, in its unfinished nature, is an open process of self-reflexive engagement. In this way, we can say that the substance of Marxian education will not be located in the words of educational scriptures or the logic of elegant curriculum plans laid out over 150 years ago - such a *formal* approach to understanding Marx and education is both limited and limiting. Rather, my point is that Marxian education is to be built from an engagement with the *content* of Marx's work i.e. from the theoretical resources he provides to develop human and humanizing capacities to envision and actualize alternative post-capitalist futures. In other words, as long as humanity is ruled by the logic Capital³ then education can be nothing but, as Peter Hudis has succinctly put it, “the labour of thinking out *and working out* in everyday life an alternative to capitalism” (2013: 215).

To be clear, I position education as productive work i.e. radical labour. Education is a deliberate and conscious process directed to the building of human capacities to labour for socialist transformation. In drawing upon on the intellectual resources left by Marx the objective of education is the production of the ‘revolutionary subject’. Such radical labouring does not frame ‘production’ from the perspective of Capital but from that of Labour. It does not take ‘production’ in its narrow bourgeois *economic* sense. Rather, it is cast in a broader *historico-political* frame that fully appreciates the radical potential of Labour and the power of labour. What I advance is a form of socialist humanism that expresses the class agency of the proletariat (see

³ It is to be noted that I will use the term ‘Capital’ or ‘capital’ will be used in four different throughout this presentation. Firstly, as ‘Capital’ (i.e. with an upper-case ‘C’), it represents a political category expressing Capital as a class vis-à-vis Labour. Secondly, as ‘capital’ (i.e. with a lower-case ‘c’), it indicates an economic category i.e. a flow of value that can take various economic forms such as money, commodities, labour power and other means of production. Similarly, ‘labour’ refers to productive work (e.g. concrete labour) or the potential to work (i.e. labour power). Thirdly, when contained in the noun ‘capitalism’ it is taken to mean a historically specific social formation organised around the rule of Capital and the dominance of capital relations. Finally, when italicised as ‘*Capital*’ it refers to one or all of Marx’s volumes of *Das Kapital*.

Lebowitz 2006). John Freeman-Moir captures this well in what he describes as a ‘Marxian sense of education’ i.e. a “political education [that] can be understood as the process of consciously turning towards history in the course of participating in history” (2004: 555).

In this positioning Marxian education as revolutionary capacity-building work, I stress two related issues fundamental to Marxian praxis and its educational content. The first attends to a consideration of the materialist view of history as the core of Marx’s work. I will stress that historical materialism represents the very sinew of the Marx and education relation. Particular attention will be given to Marx’s economic works and the centrality of the labour theory of value in explicating the content of Marxian education. The second turns attention to the nature of the revolutionary subject. Here, the idea of human agency is brought to the fore in order to emphasise Marx’s idea of labour power as a human capacity. My point will be, following Marx, that labour power is a commodity of a special kind. Given its potential for consciousness and self-reflexive creativity it has the power, unlike other commodities, not only to fuel the furnaces of capitalism but also to burn them down. But the latter possibility can only be fully grasped from the vantage point of Labour i.e. from a perspective beyond Capital (Lebowitz 1992) that also, importantly, includes Marx’s internal critique of political economy in *Capital*.

To conclude I will bring these two central issues together by emphasising that education, by necessity and definition, is class struggle. For Capital, ‘education’ is about limiting horizons of possibility within its own vista and bringing closure to history. It expresses what could be called a pedagogy of hopelessness. For Labour – and humanity – education is about envisioning alternative possibilities and participating in the radical openness of history. It is expressed in a pedagogy of hope founded in the development of class-consciousness. From the perspective of Labour, education is political education where its *raison d’être* resides in bringing people to explore the nature and extent of their powers and, in this active doing, enabling them to not only discover but also pursue their class interests. To grasp the radical relation between Marx and education is to understand the revolutionary potential of doing history work i.e. of placing history in human hands.

GUIDING THREAD: MATERIALIST VIEW OF HISTORY

As Marx famously put it in his Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, the materialist view of history is the ‘guiding thread’ to all his work on

political economy (Marx 1966 / 1859: 503). Its theoretical centrality to Marxism was amplified by Engels who proclaimed that, along with the theory of surplus value, 'historical materialism' represented Marx's greatest scientific discovery (Engels 1970 / 1883).

If the scientific core of Marxist theory is the materialist view of history, then its prime concept is 'mode of production'. In providing an explanatory basis for fundamental societal change, mode of production is understood to consist in a combination of what Marx refers to as the forces of production and the relations of production. The famous passage from the *Preface* presents this with clarity:

In the social production of their existence, men inevitably enter into definite relations, which are independent of their will, namely relations of production appropriate to a given stage in the development of their material forces of production. The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, their real foundation, on which arises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness. At a certain stage of development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production. [...] From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an era of social revolution. (Marx 1970 / 1859: 20 - 21)

A striking feature of the *Preface* passage is the apparent absence of active human engagement in, and with, such change. For example, Marx refers to consciousness as nothing but a 'determined' product of 'social existence'. Do we see here a jettisoning of philosophy and, in its place, the insertion of a determinist science? But care needs to be taken with Marx's concepts – particularly, as in this instance, that of 'determination'. It should be noted that, as Marx makes explicit in *The German Ideology*, the 'real process of production' does not simply refer to material (or 'economic') production:

This conception of history thus relies on expounding the real process of production - starting from the material production of life itself - and comprehending the form of intercourse connected with and created by this mode of production, i.e., civil society in its various stages, as the basis of all history; describing it in its action as the state,

and also explaining how all the different theoretical products and forms of consciousness, religion, philosophy, morality, etc., etc., arise from it, and tracing the process of their formation from that basis; thus the whole thing can, of course, be depicted in its totality (and therefore, too, the reciprocal action of these various aspects on one another). (Marx and Engels 1976 / 1845 - 6: 61)

Here Marx makes clear that production consists in a totality determining *and* co-determining relations. We can take from this that Marx's idea of determination does not refer simply to all-powerful uni-linear forces but includes historically contingent and contextually emergent forces in the 'real process of production' (Banfield 2010). Furthermore, it is clear that humans produce not just material things but 'theoretical products' as well. This is a crucial point for theorising education. As the following section will develop further, if human agents were erased from history, then a Marxian conception of education, or any conception of education, would be impossible. In anticipation of that argument to come, it can be noted that writing humans out of history was neither Marx's intent nor is it a feature of his materialist view of history. But the fundamental point remains that in order for people to 'make history' they first must be able to live:

... life involves before everything else eating and drinking, housing, clothing and many other things. The first historical act is thus the production of the means to satisfy these needs, the production of material life itself. And indeed this is an historical act, a fundamental condition of all history, which today, as thousands of years ago, must daily and hourly be fulfilled merely in order to sustain human life. (Marx and Engels 1976 / 1845 - 6: 47)

The 'fundamental condition of all history' is production for human need. Whether the mode of production is capitalist, slave, feudal or other, this "*earthly* basis" (Marx and Engels 1976 / 1845 - 6: 48) is the first act of history. For Marx, the development of productive forces (which requires knowledge of both nature and how to change nature) necessarily occurs in particular relations of production (or forms of social cooperation). It is in the labour process that these forces and forms of social relations are brought together for the purpose of the production of use-values: "It is an

appropriation of what exists in nature for the requirements of man⁴. It is the universal condition for the metabolic interaction [*Stoffwechsel*] between man and nature, the everlasting nature-imposed condition of human existence” (Marx 1976 / 1867: 290).

To be clear, by referring to the ‘requirements of man’, Marx is operating at a high level of abstraction. In adopting a vantage point of the labour process in general, the panorama of all possible modes of production is brought into view. But Marx is aware that, in doing this, more concrete production relations are occluded. “The taste of porridge”, as Marx put it, “does not tell us who grew the oats, and ... does not reveal the conditions under which it takes place, whether it is happening under the slave owner’s brutal lash or the anxious eye of the capitalist” (Marx 1976 / 1867: 290 - 291). The way in which the means of production and labour power are brought together differentiates one mode of production from another. In class societies, direct producers are forced to labour for a non-producing minority where the former work to produce surplus value for the latter. As such, the basis of class societies is exploitation. How the extraction of a surplus from one class by another is achieved “distinguishes the various economic epochs of the social structure” (Marx 1978 / 1884: 120).

Exploitation is obvious in slave and feudal societies. The threat of physical violence is always as a possibility and is ever-present. However, things are – or, rather, *appear* - different in the day-to-day life under the capitalist mode of production. It seems that labour and capital come together in the market place as equals seeking to negotiate a ‘fair day’s work for a fair day’s pay’. This is not the case for the slave or the serf. The market is both a level playing field and an effective leveller where worker is ‘free’ to sell or withhold their power to labour power according to their wishes. Without any apparent physical threat or domination, no obvious force is involved compelling the worker to exchange their labour for a wage. But Marx makes it clear that this freedom carries a ‘double sense’. The wage labourer is “free from the old relations of clientship, bondage and servitude, and secondly free of all belongings and possession, and of every objective, material form of being, *free of all property*; dependent on the sale of [their] labour capacity or on begging, vagabondage and robbery as its only source of income” (1973 / 1857 - 8: 507).

⁴ ‘Man’ refers to ‘human being’.

Marx's point here is that, within the capitalist mode of production, exploitation is concealed and freedom comes to be expressed as a-historical atomised individualism. But this egoistic sense of freedom occludes the reality of the social nature of production upon which the possibility of capitalist accumulation rests. Here we have what Harvey (2014) describes as one of the 'fundamental contradictions' of capitalism: the tension of private appropriation and common wealth. To grasp this contradiction at its root it is useful to compare capitalist relations of production to those of feudal societies (see Engels 1947/1878). Under feudalism, the processes of production and appropriation were essentially governed by individualistic peasant-lord relations. They took place on communal land that peasants not only worked for their own survival but also required for their resistance to lordly power. However, with the emergence of capitalism, production is socialised (e.g. bringing worker under one factory roof in the case of industrial capitalism) while accumulation remains individualised (Wood 2002). Whereas the former reveals the necessity of cooperative interdependency, the gravity of the latter sinks sociability and demands that people confront each other as self-interested competitors.

As such, the 'freedom' - and the equally problematic appropriation of 'democracy' (Wood 1995) - so enthusiastically trumpeted by the defenders of capitalism is, pure and simply, ideology: a superficial (but never-the-less real) expression of deeper underlying contradictory social relations of production (see Larrain 1979). In *Capital*, Marx provides many concrete examples of the contradictory nature of capitalism. For example, in Part 8 of Volume I where he explicates his theory of primitive accumulation, Marx describes the 'clearings' made by the Duchess of Sutherland in the early 1800s for sheep pastures. It is instructive to quote at length:

This person, who had been well instructed in economics, resolved, when she succeeded to the headship of the clan, to undertake a radical economic cure, and to turn the whole country of Sutherland, the population of which had already been reduced to 15,000 by similar processes, into a sheep-walk. Between 1814 and 1820 these 15,000 inhabitants, about 3,000 families, were systematically hunted and rooted out. All their villages were destroyed and burnt, all their fields turned into pasturage. British soldiers enforced this mass of evictions, and came to blows with the inhabitants. One old woman was burnt to death in the flames of the hut she refused to leave. It was in this manner that this fine lady appropriated 794,000 acres of land which had belonged to the clan from time immemorial. She assigned to the expelled

inhabitants some 6,000 acres on the sea-shore – 2 acres per family. The 6,000 acres had lain until this time waste, and brought in no income to their owners, The Duchess, in the nobility of her heart actually went so far as to let these waste lands at an average rent of 2s. 6d. per acre to the clansmen, who for centuries had shed their blood for her family. (1976 / 1867: 891-2)

Such forms of dispossession have been central features of the generation of capital and vital to the history of capitalism (Wood 2002). We witness this in the violent global expansionism of colonial capitalism where “all nations, on pain of extinction, [are compelled] to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; ... to become bourgeois themselves” (Marx and Engels 1966 / 1848: 112). But, importantly, this continues to this day. Harvey, for example, theorises a ‘new imperialism’ characterised by ‘accumulation by dispossession’. This is what we know of today as neoliberalism where mechanisms of privatisation, financialisation, state redistribution policies along with the creation and manipulation of crises augment the appropriation of land and the enclosure of public commons (Harvey, 2003).

Noting the historical continuance of capitalism must alert us not to the coincidence of historical events or to the work of great individuals (as per the stories bourgeois history tell). Rather, it should draw attention to historical patterning and the necessity of identifying the enduring social mechanisms that have operated, for example, from times of nineteenth century land enclosures to the new methods of capital accumulation employed in neoliberal times. Marx provides the critical resources – or, more precisely, the resources for critique – to do this work. *Capital* is one such source. In this work he takes us to the very heart of Capital and its economic cell-form: the commodity.

Marx opens *Capital* Volume I with the sentence: “The wealth of societies in which the capitalist mode of production prevails appears as an immense collection of commodities” (1976 / 1867: 125). This is seductively straightforward – and so vividly obvious that we can imagine Marx was talking about the supermarket shelves or the shopping malls we know today. However, reading further through the early chapters of *Capital* we learn that there is much more to this opening line than first meets the eye. Firstly, the careful eye will note that Marx regularly uses the word ‘appear’ or phrases like ‘the appearance of things’. On these occasions he is drawing attention to the existence of what British critical realist Roy Bhaskar (1986, 1997, 1998) would refer to as deeper ontological strata exiting below and occluded by the mere

appearance of things (see Banfield 2003, 2010, 2013). It is in this way that we can grasp Marx's description of capitalism as a generalised system of commodity production where the products of labour typically take the appearance of commodities to be bought and sold on the market. From the vantage point of Capital, the potential of workers to labour is also a commodity to be exploited. To return to the motif of freedom so cherished by capitalists, this means that a worker is "free in the double sense that as a free individual he can dispose of his labour power as his own commodity, and that, on the other hand, he has no other commodity for sale, i.e. he is rid of them, he is free of all the objects needed for the realization [*Verwirklichung*] of his labour-power" (Marx 1976 / 1867: 272 - 273). In other words, capitalist relations of production presuppose the separation of direct producers from ownership of the means of production.

As a commodity, labour power has *exchange* value like any other commodity. Its *use* value "consists in the subsequent exercise of that power ... its real manifestation" (Marx 1976 / 1867: 277). According to the labour theory of value, not only is labour a source of the value of commodities but also the worker creates more value than the value of their labour power. The surplus value is profit for the capitalist. While, from the perspective of Capital, the reality appears as a 'fair day's work for a fair day's pay', from the vantage point of Labour surplus value is nothing but unpaid surplus labour. Superficially, "the sphere of circulation or commodity exchange", consisting in interactions between apparently free and equal commodity-owners posits "a very Eden of the innate rights of man ... the exclusive realm of Freedom, Equality, Property and Bentham" (Marx 1976 / 1867: 280). However, beyond "this noisy sphere, where everything takes place on the surface and in full view of everyone ... [rests] the hidden mode of production" (Marx 1976 / 1867: 279). It is here, in the deep structures of capitalist society, that exploitation is revealed:

When we leave this sphere of simple circulation or the exchange of commodities, which provides the 'free-trader *vulgaris*' with his views, his concepts and the standard by which he judges the society of capital and wage-labour, a certain change takes place ... He who was previously the money owner now strides out in front as a capitalist; the possessor of labour power follows as his worker. The one smirks self-importantly and is intent on business; the other is timid and holds back, like someone who has brought his own hide to market and now has nothing else to expect but – a tanning. (Marx 1976 / 1867: 280)

This reveals to us, in all the power of Marx's biting imagery, Labour from the view of Capital. These are the last words Marx offers before he takes the reader beyond Part 2 of *Capital* Volume I. From the 'noisy sphere of the market' to the 'hidden mode of production' the reader learns of the deep occluded realities generating the extraction of surplus value, the exploitation of labour and the drive for the incessant pursuit of capital accumulation. Throughout, the power of capital weighs down – almost deterministically - on labour. But it is to be recalled that *Capital* is one-sided. As Ernst Mandel notes in his introduction to the text, "Marx's fundamental aim was to lay bare the laws of motion which govern the origins, the rise, the development, the decline and the disappearance of a given form of economic organisation: the capitalist mode of production". Importantly, the purpose of *Capital* was not to discover universal economic 'laws' to serve the ends of prediction. *Capital* is "not 'pure' economic theory at all. For Marx, 'pure' economic theory, that is economic theory which abstracts from a specific social structure, is impossible" (Mandel 1976: 12). Rather, *Capital* offers an internal critique of capital that, in exposing the logic of bourgeois economics from within, can be used to overthrow bourgeois relations. This points to a move beyond both *Capital* and capital - and a turn to the power of labour (and, of course, Labour). In doing so, it exposes the tension between the human as commodity and the human as radical power. It also raises the fundamental ontological question of the nature of being human and the possibility of the revolutionary subject.

EDUCATION WORK: PRODUCING THE REVOLUTIONARY SUBJECT

I have already emphasised that education – in its full emancipatory sense – is revolutionary work. It is capacity building that both requires and produces human agents. As such, the ontological content of revolutionary education must be underpinned by a view of human nature. For Marxian education this must be a historically materialist one. In *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, Marx famously announced that it is human beings that "make their own history, but ... not ... as they please" (Marx 1966 / 1852: 398). Interestingly, we find in *Capital* – the pinnacle of Marx's 'mature' scientific work – the view of humans as active and historically situated agents being contrasted with, what Marx calls, the 'Robinsonades' of bourgeois thought. Marx reveals that in constructing their theories of society, bourgeois theoreticians like Adam Smith and David Ricardo were "fond of Robinson Crusoe stories" (1976 / 1867: 169) because they portrayed a view of 'Man

as the Natural Individual': "not arising historically, but posited by nature" (Marx 1973 / 1857 - 8: 83). If Robinson Crusoe was Daniel Defoe's character hero, then the imaginary idol of political economists was and remains the 'Natural Individual'. Thrown into competitive isolation with nature's vicissitudes, Bourgeois Man was constructed as the ideal: the image of 'Natural Man' finally released from the bonds of all previous social relations. In the preparatory notes he made for *Capital*, Marx put it this way:

In this society of free competition, the individual appears detached from the natural bonds etc. which in earlier historical periods make him the accessory of a definite and limited human conglomerate. Smith and Ricardo still stand with both feet on the shoulders of the eighteenth century prophets, in whose imaginations this eighteenth century individual ... appears as an ideal, whose existence they project into the past. (Marx 1973 / 1857 - 8: 83)

In contrast to Smith, Ricardo and their 'eighteenth century prophets', Marx's view of human beings is, in a vital sense, thoroughly social. For example, in his Sixth Thesis on Feuerbach, Marx described the "human essence [as] no abstraction inherent in each single individual. In reality, it is the ensemble of the social relations" (1966 / 1845: 14) that, Marx stresses, "conditions ... general social, political and intellectual life" (1966 / 1859: 20 - 21). We can take from this that 'social being' represents the historical dimension of Marx's theory of human nature. It is constituted by those observable features of human action and historical events that, as Mihailo Marović notes, provide "the empirical scientific ground for any sound theory of human nature" (1991: 243).

However, Marx recognised that taking exclusively historico-empirical route to social being risks arrival at historicist destinations that ultimately dispense with any meaningful conception of what it is to be human. He saw historicism tending to reductionism (e.g. biological, sociological or psychological), empiricism (where human nature is simply what is observed) and scientism (human beings consist in patterns of a-historical characteristics). Indeed, historicism for Marx risked the obliteration of *social* being.

In opposition to historicism, Marx took an Aristotelian route where human nature is seen as consisting in essential powers. But his path was also a realist one where powers are grasped in both their actuality and their potentiality (see Isaac 1988).

Understood as capacities, powers exist even if they are empirically absent. A power may not be observed or experienced but this does not deny its existence. Below the surface of actual appearance, it remains a force in its potentiality even when frustrated or dampened by co-determining and countervailing powers. Thus, from a realist view of power, human nature has metaphysical as well as historically specific dimensions. To Marx, human nature was simultaneously historical and trans-historical such that those "that would judge all human acts, movements, relations etc. ... would first have to deal with human nature in general, and then with human nature as modified in each historical epoch" (Marx 1976 / 1867: 759).

In dealing with 'human nature in general', Marx distinguished between 'natural being' and 'species being'. As natural beings, humans consist in natural world powers that they not only share with nature but also depend upon for their existence. Marx called this 'man's inorganic body':

... that is to say nature in so far as it is not the human body. Man lives from nature, i.e. nature is his body, and he must maintain a continuing dialogue with it if he is not to die. To say that man's physical and mental life is linked to nature simply means that nature is linked to itself for man is part of nature. (Marx 1975 / 1844: 328)

The concept of 'inorganic body' brings humans and nature into an internal relation. This is the basis of Marx's materialist commitment to naturalism (Banfield 2013). But Marx's philosophy of internal relations does not commit his naturalism to a search for first, or final, causes. For Marx, as Ollman argues, "it is the relations in which the so called first causes stand that ... require explanation" (1976: 28). As a realist about powers, Marx's explanations are ontologically deep, entailing a human-nature continuity. In providing an example of natural continuity, Marx refers to hunger, taking it as a real expression of an objective unsatisfied need:

Hunger is a natural *need*; it therefore requires a *nature* and an *object* outside itself in order to satisfy and still itself. Hunger is the acknowledged need of my body for an *object* which exists outside itself and which is indispensable to its integration and to the expression of its essential nature. (Marx 1975 / 1844: 390)

Importantly, human nature is not exhausted in 'natural needs' and 'inorganic nature'. It also consists in the powers, capacities and needs that all humans share i.e. species being powers that are qualitatively different from that of other creatures:

A spider conducts operations that resemble those of the weaver, and a bee would put many a human architect to shame by the construction of its honeycomb cells. But what distinguishes the worst architect from the best of bees is that the architect builds the cell in his mind before he constructs it in wax. At the end of every labour-process, a result emerges which had already been conceived by the worker at the beginning, hence already existed ideally. Man not only effects a change of form in the materials of nature; he also realizes [*verwirklicht*] his own purpose in those materials. And this is a purpose he is conscious of, it determines the mode of his activity with the rigidity of a law, and he must subordinate his will to it. This subordination is no mere momentary act. Apart from the exertion of the working organs, a purposeful will is required for the entire duration of the work. (Marx 1976 / 1867: 284)

According to Marx, human species powers rests in conscious, self-reflexive, and transformative practice where “Productive life is species life” such that, in the “practical creation of an *objective world*, the fashioning of *inorganic nature*, is proof that man is a conscious species-being” (1975 / 1844: 328; 328 - 329). In productive life, human beings not only transform their inorganic body but themselves: they “practically and theoretically” (Marx 1975 / 1844: 327) make their species. It is the coming together of practice and theory that Marx calls ‘praxis’. Human self-creation in history is praxis such that “all history is nothing but a continual transformation of human nature” (Marx 1995 / 1847: 160). It is in this sense that Marx is able to refer to human beings as both ‘universal’ and ‘free’ (see Marx 1975 / 1844: 327). Not only do humans embody universal capacities to (re)make their own species but they can also make their species the object of thought and action. According to Marx, “man reproduces himself not only intellectually, in his consciousness, but actively and actually, and he can therefore contemplate himself in a world he himself has created” (1975 / 1844: 329). In this way, Marx’s humanism is rooted in a tripartite of being: natural, species and social. Collier (1999) refers to this as an ontological ‘chain of being’ that stretches from non-human nature through to human socio-cultural realities. It expresses an inter-dependence of power relations where natural ‘laws’ (or, rather, ‘tendencies’) of being are basic in underpinning species-being on which social being in turn rests:

The species-being of individuals is ... always and everywhere an *antecedent condition* of their socio-cultural interaction and learning, of any *particular* social

structure into which they are born, and therefore of the reproduction or elaboration of all historical socio-cultural systems. (Creaven 2000: 45)

The ‘chain of being’ emphasises natural necessity but avoids reductionist humanism. It sees human nature resting in a realist ontology of natural necessity, an epistemology of stratified explanation, and an axiology of ethical naturalism (Bhaskar 1986). As Collier puts it, the power of human species being is that “ability to know and value things other than ourselves” (1999: 90). Or, in relation to praxis, it points to capacities not just to know one’s real needs and interests but the ability to judge, value and act upon them. Here, we are able to grasp Marx’s understanding of human beings as self-reflexive producers of nature and “the manifestation of a force of nature” (Marx 1971 / 1875: 11). This is the ‘sensuous activity of labour’ through which ... the creative human transformation of nature occurs. We mean by labour-power, or labour-capacity, the aggregate of those mental and physical capabilities existing in the physical form, the living personality, of a human being, capabilities which he sets in motion whenever he produces a use-value of any kind. (Marx 1976 / 1867: 270)

In this view of labour power beyond Capital, the sensuous activity of labour becomes a trans-historical category: a ‘nature in general’ capacity set in motion to produce use-value unconstrained by the compulsion to produce exchange-value. From this vantage point we can begin to conceive of the production of educational use-value. But care needs to be taken in doing so. At times Marx distinguishes between labour and praxis. Where the latter refers to conscious action, the former is sometimes used by Marx to describe “those first instinctive forms ... which remain on the animal level” (Marx 1976 / 1867: 283). The significance of this distinction becomes apparent when Marx talks of ‘alienation’ and ‘alienated labour’ where labour power takes the form of a commodity within capitalist relations of production. Capital, for Marx is “accumulated labour” (Marx 1975 / 1844: 287), or “dead labour, that, vampire-like, lives only by sucking living labour, and lives the more, the more labour it sucks” (1976 / 1867: 342). Entombed in commodities, capital is used to purchase living labour in order to accumulate greater amounts of dead labour. In the process of capital accumulation, the living labourer “must sell himself and his humanity” such that his “own labour increasingly confronts him as alien property” (Marx 1975 / 1844: 287; 285).

The externalization [*Entäußerung*] of the worker in his product means not only that his labour becomes an object, an *external* existence, but that it exists *outside him*, independently of him and alien to him, and begins to confront him as an autonomous power; that the life which he has bestowed on the object confronts him as hostile and alien. (Marx 1975 / 1844: 324)

Here the ‘young’ Marx refers to alienation as expressing a double designation. It evokes an imagery of the subservience of labour that would not be out of place in the pages of *Capital*. On one side of the designation, the reader is presented with the objectification of labour. Alienation occurs because the worker’s own universal nature – her power to labour – is appropriated by an external force. Her own nature becomes an alien thing. It

... appears apparent not only in the fact that the means of *my* life belong to *another* and that *my* desire is the inaccessible possession of *another*, but also in the fact that all things are *other* than themselves, that my activity is *other* than itself, and that finally - and this goes for the capitalist as well - an *inhuman* power rules over everything. (Marx 1975 / 1844: 366)

On the other side, the objectification of the products of labour is revealed. Direct producers are alienated from the products of their labour. No longer seeing themselves in their work they are denied their species life:

In tearing away the object of his production from man, estranged labor therefore tears away from him his *species-life*, his true species-objectivity, and transforms his advantage over animals into the disadvantage that his inorganic body, nature, is taken from him. (Marx 1975 / 1844: 329)

The struggle against alienation is a struggle for species life and the reclamation of human history for human ends. It is labour power activated as a species being capacity that makes such struggles both possible and necessary. Labour power is universal and always already possesses the potential for conscious, revolutionary action. It has, in other words, the capacity to turn its ‘living fire’ on the furnaces of capitalism. Understanding education as the production of revolutionary labour power is the fundamental message from Marx the educator. However, if education is revolutionary praxis, philosophy is not – and cannot be – the lordly legislator of that

praxis. It is to be recalled that Marx placed great emphasis on practice. After all, it is what the ‘young’ Marx saw as distinguishing his materialism from that of Feuerbach: The chief defect of all hitherto existing materialism (Feuerbach included) is that the thing, reality, sensuousness, is conceived only in the form of the *object or of contemplation*, but not as *sensuous human activity, practice*, not subjectively. (1966 / 1845: 13)

Philosophy can only be the conceptual underlabourer of revolution. In the end, “philosophers have only *interpreted* the world ... the point, however, is to change it” (Marx 1966 / 1845: 15). Consequently, the educator’s praxis, like that of the philosopher, is to

... confront the world not as doctrinaires with a new principle: “Here is the truth, kneel down before it!” We develop new principles to the world out of its own principles. We do not say to the world: “Stop fighting; your struggle is of no account. We want to shout the true slogans of the struggle at you.” We only show the world what it is fighting for, and consciousness is something that the world *must* acquire, like it or not. (Marx 1978 / 1843: 14 - 15)

CONCLUSION: EDUCATION AS CLASS STRUGGLE

I have presented education in its widest revolutionary sense. That is, its use value is found in the objective of human emancipation. The argument has been that in order to grasp the ‘Marx and education’ relation it is necessary to take Marx on his own terms as a revolutionary educator. Logically, this means that the content of Marxian education is to be grounded in the work of Marx. Furthermore, I suggested that two issues of educational import flow from such a grounding. Firstly, the theoretical and methodological content of Marxian education is to draw from the ‘guiding thread’ of Marx’s materialist view of history. Secondly, its pedagogy is to be informed by the task of producing the revolutionary subject. The two issues are intimately connected and, in their relation, express praxis.

In giving emphasis to what counts as the content of Marxian education brings attention to the pedagogical possibilities lying in Marx’s work. This may mean, for example, using the rich historical data gathered by both Marx and Engels as a pedagogical resource (see, for example: Engels 2009 / 1845; Marx 1966 / 1852, 1976 / 1867). Some of these possibilities have been raised already and, in bringing Marx to work for Marxian, recognises Marx as a social historian (Small 2005: 43 - 46). However, in emphasising content, concerns about specific educational forms are

sidelined. My intent has been not to underplay the importance of attending to educational forms but rather to open a critical vista to the contemporary practical relevance of the 'Marx and education' relation. Such a vista shows education to inhabit spaces other than formal institutions like schools and universities. These include: workplaces, community settings, pubs, parks, the streets and social media. In these contemporary times where schooling and higher education systems are increasing capitalised (and neoliberalised) such spaces are to be reclaimed as spaces of radical hope. To be clear, by evoking the idea of radical hope I am not conjuring some far-flung idealist utopia. This is real hope formed from the knowledge of the material reality of labour power as a 'special commodity' with the capacity to think and do otherwise. But, like any capacity, it has to be developed and nurtured. This is the job of radical educators. However, as a capacity, labour power is only potential. Given counteracting forces and hostile contexts, the power to think and do otherwise can remain unactualised.

Just as history gives no guarantees, the rise of Labour's class agency is not determined. But the point about labour power is that it is always there. It is the possibility of the emergence of a radical labour power that haunts Capital. The poor capitalists! Not only must they constantly fight keep ahead of their competitors in the endless race to accumulate but they must also work to contain the power of Labour. Who is to liberate the capitalist from their anxious existence? As a class they cannot do it themselves. They cannot conceive of a world outside the orbit of capital. It is not in their class interest to do so. This is why they have to believe in TINA and why they would have us all speak their mantra.

It was Gramsci who famously said that we all possess the capacity to be intellectuals (1971: 9). But there are no guarantees here. There is a difference between an intellectuals and academics, just as there is a world of difference between an educator and a teacher. Educators must be intellectuals. On this point Terry Eagleton (2004) puts it nicely in his description of post-colonial scholar Edward Said as the 'last Jewish intellectual'. He could have been speaking of Marx. It is worth considering at length:

Intellectuals are not only different from academics, but almost the opposite of them. Academics usually plough a narrow disciplinary patch, whereas intellectuals [...] roam ambitiously from one discipline to another. Academics are interested in ideas, whereas intellectuals seek to bring ideas to an entire culture. The word "intellectual"

is not a euphemism for "frightfully clever", but a kind of job description, like "waiter" or "chartered accountant". Anger and academia do not usually go together, except perhaps when it comes to low pay, whereas anger and intellectuals do. ...Intellectuals are not only different from academics, but almost the opposite of them. Academics usually plough a narrow disciplinary patch, whereas intellectuals ... roam ambitiously from one discipline to another.

It is clear: in bringing Marx and education together, education is revolutionary, human capacity building, practice. It is the active making of human history through class struggle whereby in the transformation of their circumstances class agents are also transformed. This is the insight that Marx the revolutionary educator offers us. Its impulse is to draw us to the fact that revolutionary education is, and can only be, working class self-education. Thus, the political task is "to rescue education from the influence of the ruling class" (Marx and Engels, 1966 / 1848). This will require, amongst other things, the political work of building broad based alliances amongst education workers and working class organisations. In the act of building, the materialist view of history and the revolutionary subject are to be kept squarely in sight.

Independent of class, it is possible to conceive of alternatives to capitalism. However, it is only Labour – because of its structural positioning vis-à-vis relations of production – that has the capacity to both envision and realise post-capitalist futures. This is an issue of structure and agency: understanding capacity as mutually derived from the structural power of class location and the agential power arising from not only knowledge of those powers but also knowledge of one's class interests. In his extensive study of agency and structure in social theory, Alex Callinicos aptly describes this as class struggle: "the process through which agents discover their interests by exploring the extent of their powers" (2004: 150).

Education is class struggle.

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The privatization of education in Turkey in the context of globalisation

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Abstract

This research aiming to bring up the matter of privatization of education in the context of globalization in Turkey is carried out in survey model. By analysing the documents, the increase in the numbers of private schools and the numbers of students in that schools and public education investments from January 24,1980 to that day were introduced. The privatization practises with the implementation of neoliberal policies were studied in that research.

Keywords: Privatization, Privatization of Education, Globalisation.

Introduction

The process of globalization has been affecting the education and schooling systems as in most of the domains of society. The influence of the neoliberal aspect of globalization on the education system becomes evident in the management and configuration of the current system within the framework of commerce and corporation logic by bringing the system into the compliance of free market. (Yıldız, 2008).

As in most countries, in Turkey, public education has been commercialized by abolishing the education as a basic human right and transformed into a meta which can be sold and bought. By being readapted in the direction of the profits of global capital, education has been restructured towards neoliberal policies in accordance with the benefits of international agents such as World Bank(WB), International Money Fund(IMF), World Trade Organisation (WTO), The General Agreement on Trade in Services(GATS).

Stand-by Agreement with IMF as a result of the decisions of the 24th November, 1980, adaptation credits of World Bank, structural adaptation programs and projects, OECD's regulatory state reports, UN's certificate of attendance and progress reports can be regarded among the means of privatisation in Turkey Liberalization policies in education has come into question with the structural adaptation programs carried out under the control of IMF and World Bank all around the world since the early 1980s. Since the early 1980s, such reforms have come into questions: firstly, reforms to determine the aim and content of education at all levels in the direction of markets; secondly reforms towards the finance of education and training and thirdly, reforms to reconstruct the role of education in social mobility and its politic and egalitarian function. All of these reforms were exerted in a packet program as structural adaptation programs (Carnoy, 1995). (Akt; Sayılan, 2010).

The concept of privatization in education brought about the commercialization and intertwining of education with the commerce. Hirtt (2007) states that Molnar clasiffies the commercialization in education in three categories. In the first category, there is selling of goods and services to schools. In the second category, there is selling of the goods and services inside the school. Suppliers of goods and services penetrate directly into and they interact with the consumers (students) directly. In the third and last category, the schools are sold. Privatization is completed with that last category and education institutions turn into enterprises or businesses. Actually, a market to meet the requirements of schools such as tables, desks, heating, etc spontaneously emerges. Today, this market is put into use to meet the requirements of schools such as computer, multimedia classes, cleaning, canteen, maintenance, etc (Yirci ve Kocabaş,2013).

Privatization in education includes less intervention and control of states in the field of education. It proposes penetration of private sector into education more. This role transformation brought by privatization diminishes the responsibilities of state and enables private sector and local authorities to have a more active role in deciding the issues of management, curriculum and finance (Kishan, 2008,114).

Education is one of the basic rights of human and it's a public service. Taking education into consideration as a basic human right and it's usage imposes a responsibility on the state. A democratic state is expected to fulfill this responsibility without making any discriminations on the issues such as race, religion, language, colour, sex, economic and social status. If the state doesn't fulfill this responsibility,

those who don't have enough opportunities can have difficulty in using this right or they can't use their rights. In that case, it's possible for existing inequalities in the society to deepen more. Financing education by the public and distributing it equally to whole society is possible with the sources of the public (Şahin, 2007).

Transformed radically all around the world, the public aspect of education has been attempted to be eliminated with the privatization practises . The privatization is being completed with the 4+4+4 system and the closure of special courses in Turkey.

The aim of this study is to bring up the matter of privatization in Turkey with the context of globalization. For this aim, answers to the following questions are sought:

1. How has the process of the investments to the education proceeded since the decisions of 24th January 1980?
2. How have the numbers of private schools and the numbers of students who are registered in those schools changed?

This research is a qualitative study in the survey model. Document analysis method, one of the methods of qualitative method, will be used . Document analysis involves the analysis of written materials including information about the phenomenon which is aimed to study

Findings and Comments

Table -1 : The numbers of private schools.

Education Year	Primary education & Junior High School	Secondary education	Vocational and technical high school	Total School
1999/2000	683	441	22	1.146
2000/2001	716	459	25	1.200
2001/2002	628	460	22	1.110
2002/2003	608	337	11	956
2003/2004	613	467	14	1.094
2004/2005	674	582	19	1.275
2005/2006	728	628	22	1.378
2006/2007	757	696	21	1.474
2007/2008	866	711	21	1.598
2008/2009	907	783	27	1.717

2009/2010	879		709	22	1.610
2010/2011	898		774	24	1.696
2011/2012	931		840	45	1.816
2012/2013	992	904	907	126	2.929
2013/2014	1071	972	1007	426	3.476

Source: Statistics of MEB

Once Table 1 is analysed, an increase in the number of private primary and secondary, high school and vocational high school is seen evidently. The number of private primary and secondary schools in 1999 was 683 but it showed a sharp increase in fifteen years and reached to 2043. (in 2012, the schools were divided as elementary and secondary) The number of private high schools was 441 but it reached to 1007 in 2014. When Table 1 is analysed, a huge increase in the numbers of vocational schools is seen. The number of private vocational high schools was 22 but it reached to 426 in 2014. One of the most important keystones of privatization practises in education has been the discontinuous education model with the 6287 numbered law (4+4+4 law) in 2012 and with that law, conservatism, an indispensable part of neoliberal policies, has been embedded into the education system and caused all schools to transform into institutions giving religious education. With that law, the number of private schools doubled. Once the law including transformation of special courses into the private schools with the closure of these special courses is implemented, these numbers are expected to increase more. The number of private schools was 1.146 in 1999 but it went up to 3.476 in 2014. The number of private schools was 1.816 but with the implementation of discontinuous education model in 2011, this number went up to 2.929 in 2012 and 3.476 in 2013-2014 education year indicating the fast privatization of education.

Education Year	Primary education & Junior High School Students	Secondary education School Students	Vocational and technical high school Students	Total Students
1999/2000	174.773	55.330	2.125	232.228

2000/2001	185.864	55.881	1.473	243.218	
2001/2002	171.454	73.189	1.095	245.738	
2002/2003	156.007	51.930	945	208.882	
2003/2004	160.888	69.299	1.164	231.351	
2004/2005	171.915	70.163	1.090	243.168	
2005/2006	189.090	75.693	977	265.760	
2006/2007	213.071	85.547	911	299.529	
2007/2008	226.187	92.827	1.015	320.029	
2008/2009	239.988	110.896	1.379	352.263	
2009/2010	251.967	116.619	1.603	370.189	
2010/2011	267.294	128.446	1.951	397.691	
2011/2012	286.972	133.816	4.348	425.136	
2012/2013	167.381	164.294	138.811	17.854	488.340
2013/2014	184.325	182.019	142.510	54.153	563.007

Table -2: The number of students in private schools. Kaynak: Statistics of MEB.

When we have a look at Table 2, the number of primary school students in private schools was 174. 773 in 1999 and it went up to 366.344 in 2014. The number of high school students in private schools was 55.330 in 1999 and it went up to,142.510 in 2014. The number of vocational high school students in private schools was 2.125 in 1999 and it went up to 354.153 in 2014. Total number of students reached from 232.228 in 1999 to 563.007 in 2014. Before the 4+4+4 discontinuous compulsory education law was implemented, the number of students in private schools was 425.136 and it went up to 563.007 with the implementation of 6287 numbered law which culminates the privatization of education.

Table 3. The ratio of investments budgets of Ministry of National Education to the Gross Domestic Product and Consolidated Budget

Yıl	Gayri Safi Yurtiçi Hasıla (TL) 2012=100	Konsolide Bütçe (TL) 2012=100	Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yatırım Bütçesi (TL)	Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yatırım Bütçesinin
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			2012=100	GSYH 'ya Oranı (%)	Bütçeye Konsolide Oranı (%)
1999	712.839.846.724	263.971.249.535	3.344.661.369	0,47	1,27
2000	746.340.007.510	296.730.469.190	2.693.141.553	0,36	0,91
2001	677.737.428.077	314.616.225.334	2.157.513.069	0,32	0,69
2002	729.281.208.675	316.809.248.126	2.272.024.376	0,31	0,72
2003	761.536.116.791	311.451.048.205	2.279.886.361	0,30	0,73
2004	817.007.215.887	297.719.841.128	1.791.173.529	0,22	0,60
2005	874.122.487.723	290.772.181.043	2.047.852.149	0,23	0,70
Gayri Safi Yurtiçi Hasıla		Merkezi Yönetim Bütçesi	Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yatırım Bütçesi	Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yatırım Bütçesinin	
				GSYH 'ya Oranı (%)	Bütçeye Konsolide Oranı (%)
2006	959.411.010.137	291.254.994.400	1.793.912.039	0,19	0,62
2007	1.291.220.327.573	313.913.841.211	1.529.594.944	0,12	0,49
2008	1.306.249.973.951	305.838.672.664	1.602.193.145	0,12	0,52
2009	1.293.079.528.360	355.955.593.672	2.102.277.728	0,16	0,59
2010	1.364.922.650.048	354.887.748.433	1.926.902.569	0,14	0,54
2011	1.385.642.300.899	337.986.245.951	2.080.638.622	0,15	0,62
2012	1.426.001.000.000	350.898.317.817	2.599.999.996	0,18	0,74

Source: * Income and Expenditure Budget Realizations (1924-1995),BÜMKO Sayı:1995/5 Ankara.

** Public Accounts Yearbook. Muhasebat Genel Müdürlüğü, Ankara, 2005.

*** Ministry of National Education Statistics 2011-2012. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı Yayınları, Ankara, 2012.

The ratio of investments budgets of Ministry of National Education to the Gross Domestic Product and Consolidated Budget can be ranked as one of the indicators of the magnitude of the expense on education. For this reason, the extent of development which education investments indicated are shown in Table 3. According to this, the investment budget of Ministry of National Education was 3.344.661.369 TL with 2012 fixed price in 1999; however it declined systematically between 2000 and 2009 and it increased a little in 2010,2011 and 2012. While the

ratio of investments budgets of Ministry of National Education in Consolidated Budget was % 1.27, it became % 0.91 in 2000. While this ratio was % 0.70 in 2005, it fell % 0.48 in 2007 and in following years it went up to % 0.74 in 2012. The ratio of investments budgets of Ministry of National Education in the Gross Domestic Product became % 0.12 (2007, 2008) at a minimal level and % 0.47 (1999) at most. It can be clearly seen that this ratio was more in 1999 and declining in following years, it became % 0.18 in 2012.

It is evident that the ratio of investments budgets of Ministry of National Education to the Gross Domestic Product and Consolidated Budget has been at it's least in the history of Turkish Republic since 1999. With the decisions of January 24, 1980 and implementation of neoliberal policies, it's clearly seen that the state is determined to turn the education over the corporations and private schools (Bayram, 2014).

Discussion

As a result of the implementation of education policies with the neoliberal economy policies, the investments of public education decreased; however special schools increased with the support of the public. Privatization practices have accelerated especially with the economy decisions on 4th January 1980. With the education and economy policies determined by international organizations, education and health have lost their public aspect and education's being a basic human right has been ignored. Qualitative education has been given to those who have money. Change tendencies which are observed in education can't be evaluated independently from the transformation process all around the world. It's necessary to specify that these tendencies which has materialized around the world simultaneously are the results of a structural process, in other words levels of the dynamics peculiar to capitalism. International organizations played the most important role in the transformation which post 1980 education policies created in education investments in Turkey.

The reason of decline in the education investments is the free market oriented and deliberative policies which have been pursued for ages and aim to commercialise and privatize education like other public services.

With the neoliberal education policies, education as a basic right, is eliminated and transformed into a meta which can be bought and sold. Both deteriorations in income distributions and the decline of public spending with these policies have been impairing the right of education. It also causes education to transform into a privilege

which only the rich can benefit. However, these privileges are causing the regeneration of existing inequalities in the society.

Education is the most basic human right which enables all people to improve themselves without discrimination; therefore to make all people benefit from the education is only possible with the understanding of public service. By featuring the public aspect of education, a qualitative education service should be offered in all levels of education.

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Crises experiences and educational processes in Greek and German contexts

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Abstract

In our study we seek for clues: inspired by different pedagogical theories we try to reflect on the EU crisis, how or to what extent it is experienced as an individual crisis and therefore might be a motive for transformative educational processes. Our paper is based on an exploratory study with teachers in Greece and Germany. For these interviews our leading presupposition was, that ‘the crisis’ represents an educational factor in pedagogical contexts. We attempt a comparative analysis focussed on German and Greek contexts, which is of particular interest in view of their antagonistic relationship. In the past few years one could notice in both countries an increase of prejudices on the one hand as well as an increasing variety of solidarity projects on the other hand.

Opening our lecture, we explain some fundamental concepts. This seems necessary insofar as the German term ‘Bildung’ involves – due to its specific history and idealization in German contexts - more or other than the English term ‘education’. Furthermore, the „Dialectic of Enlightenment” (Adorno & Horkheimer, 2010) at the latest made clear, that we need to understand ‘Bildung’ itself as dialectic. Therefore, the first part will concern some aspects of a critical theory of ‘Bildung’; we speak about the terms ‘Bildung’ - crisis – critique and their relation. Afterwards, we analyze and discuss the results of the interviews regarding to these theoretical approaches.

Keywords: critical theory of pedagogy and education, education as transformative processes, crises experiences, EU crisis, critique, solidarity, Germany, Greece.

I think that's the biggest problem we have now in education, that as a teacher you have no vision at all. The students have no vision and education without vision is like a balloon without air. That doesn't work. (teacher, Greece)

Theoretical approach

In the dominant discourse on the EU crisis, Greece and Germany appear as actors with particular characteristics – pointed: Greece as the prototype of a ‘receiving country’, Germany as the prototype of a ‘donor country’ (cf. Marvakis, 2012). However, talking about ‘*the* crisis’ is problematic; rather we have to deal with a *multiple* crisis (Billmann & Held, 2013) – economic crisis, crisis of democracy etc. (Salomon, 2012). Over the past years, the discussions in Germany have taken up the concept of post-democracy by Colin Crouch. It describes „a tendency towards erosion of democracy while maintaining its political form” (Salomon, 2012: 116). Crouch himself exemplifies post-democracy, as a model, while elections certainly exist and can change governments, public electoral debate is a tightly controlled spectacle, managed by rival teams of professionals expert in the techniques of persuasion, and considering a small range of issues selected by those teams. The mass of citizens plays a passive, quiescent, even apathetic part, responding only to the signals given them. Behind this spectacle of the electoral game, politics is really shaped in private by interaction between elected governments and elites that overwhelmingly represent business interests (Crouch, 2004: 4).

This theorem seems to be valid, but it has also been criticized for classifying the conflict between capitalism and democracy merely superficially (Salomon, 2012: 117); its reference point is not overcoming capitalism. Feminist perspectives furthermore criticize, that it ignores structural group-related exclusions. Regarding western civilisation, Birgit Rommelspacher coined the term dominance culture, which describes,

that our entire way of life, our self interpretations as well as our created images of the other, are composed in categories of domination and subordination. [...] Here, culture

is seen in a comprehensive sense as an ensemble of social practices and commonly shared meanings, which express the current constitution of society, in particular its economic and political structures and history. It determines everyone's behaviour, attitudes and emotions and thereby mediates between social and individual structures (Rommelspacher, 1995: 22).

Rommelspacher considers different forms of domination (e.g. capitalist and patriarchal domination, which can conflict and also support each other) as well as „processes of modernization of domination” (Rommelspacher, 1995: 23). The term dominance describes neither oppressive control (and thereby negates a rigid segregation between being absolutely powerful and absolutely powerless), nor does dominance represent power in terms of „anonymous structures of knowledge and power” (Rommelspacher, 1995: 24). Rather, „dominance is based on extensive approval [of the majority; BM] by mediating itself via social structures and internalized norms. Therefore it reproduces political, social and economic hierarchies in an inconspicuous way” (Rommelspacher, 1995: 26).

Referring to Crouch's theory and the critique, the following questions occurred from our pedagogical point of view:

Which impact has the diagnosis of an 'apathetic majority' for a critical pedagogy that is orientated on the primary value of autonomy? The described attitude of the majority is fundamentally contradictory to what constitutes civil society as a democratic one. The least common denominator of all concepts of democracy is put in question – how does a critical pedagogy deal with it? Inspired by feminist and postcolonial perspectives we furthermore ask, if this 'majority' exists at all and which positions and voices are again marginalized by focussing the 'majority'. Besides we have to ask: *if* the majority is apathetic and silent, then *why* is it silent? It could be supposed, that a so-called majority remains silent in order not to put its own privileges at risk – silence effectively means consent with the status quo (cf. Messerschmidt, 2009).

We tie in with the so called 'Kritische Bildungstheorie', a historical-materialist approach, which reflects Marx' historical materialism and the experience of National Socialism. ‚Kritische Bildungstheorie‘ could be translated as Critical theory of pedagogy and education and had been developed by Gernot Koneffke and Heinz-Joachim Heydorn since the 1960s. The analysis of the relation of bourgeois society, education and autonomy is based on the reconstruction of this society's history. “Education as a historical praxis” (Koneffke) and therefore *social* praxis gets visible

as constituted by autonomy, precisely: autonomy as an instrument of emancipation from feudal despotism. The concept of the autonomous citizen implies at the same moment a constraint, because „objective condition of the autonomous subject is the social reproduction under conditions of capital exploitation” (Koneffke, 1999: 304). Therefore ‘Kritische Bildungstheorie’ highlights an *immanent antagonism* of autonomy, which includes, that we cannot think of education and pedagogy in an illusionary way as liberated, which would obscure structural violence.

Critical education must not resign, but deliberate on the conditions of capitalist-bourgeois society, its inherent violence and pedagogy being involved in these conditions herself, which makes it necessary to consciously enable spaces for reflection, questioning and deliberation. Educational processes (‘Bildungsprozesse’) are about understanding social antagonisms – the discrepancy between ideal and reality; the discrepancy within the ideals (e.g. liberty can serve as legitimation for military interventions and war, eventually violence), the discrepancy of democracy and private property etc. and one’s own involvement in these discourses and structures. Referring to Marxist theory we have to regard ‘crisis’ as a modern structural category; the systemical logic of bourgeois-capitalist society therefore implies ‘crisis’ as a structural element (Behrens, 2012: 75-76). In the context of the ideological development of politics, nations, culture and state during the 19th century, collective identities of populations were established:

Society appeared as a consistent and safe environment. Then crises seemed to be concrete or pseudo-concrete as chaotic and fateful abnormalities or functional disorders of disparate social spheres – as economic crises, national crises or culture crises; as individual crises (see contemporary statements about ‘midlife crisis’) or crises of meaning in general as a loss or irritation of singular or collective patterns of identification (Behrens, 2012: 77).

The term crisis is also essential in pedagogy and describes in general the importance of overcoming crisis experiences. That is supposed to offer possibilities for the individual development and gaining autonomy (Hafeneger, 2012: 10-11.). This concept has been picked up by Hans-Christoph Koller. He interpretes education as a transformative process, in which crises experiences can induce a questioning of “established models of previous self perception and relation to the world” (Koller, 2012: 21). Therefore he understands education as a process of experiencing the

different, “from which an altered subject emerges” (*ibid.*, 19). Koller ties in with Waldenfels’ interpretation of ‘Bildung’ in context with experiencing the different. But according to Waldenfels, this different appears to us by eluding itself. We can only perceive the different, insofar it does not correspond the regular social and cultural interpretative models and “interferes with this order” (*ibid.*). This aspect points to a general (i.e. not individual) dimension of those constellations that induce transformative educational processes, and therefore relates to „social pre-conditions of assumed individual experience” (*ibid.*). Besides, experience has a ‘responsive structure’. This is why Koller regards transformative educational processes as *interactive* (cf. *ibid.*). He asks, how it could be possible to describe transformative processes, if characteristic patterns could be discovered and seeks after conducive as well as hindering conditions, which have an effect on the way of dealing with crisis experiences.

However, the question is, what ‘dealing with’ means. As Anette Ohmke-Reinicke and Michael Weingarten emphasize, the mere experience of and dealing with crises is not necessarily attended by reflection of the experience and raising consciousness. Rather, they indicate *critique* as additional qualitative factor for enabling awareness and thoughtful praxis (cf. Ohme-Reinicke & Weingarten, 2012: 93). Referring to the early Critical Theory (Frankfurt School) they ask, why political-economic crises have not led to social emancipation rather than new forms of domination (cf. *ibid.*, 101). The empirical findings of the Critical Theory, that „critical orientation and emancipatorical consciousness correlate much more with education than with the social context of the acting subjects” (*ibid.*, 98) are currently considered as still relevant. Here education is not only related to institutional education (school, university) but to modes of reflection. Nonetheless, the possibility of developing a critical attitude and consciousness is also put into context of educational institutions and socialization (cf. *ibid.*, p. 104). In a society based on market and competition, socialization is characterized by assimilation and integration – constraints become effective not only in using direct e.g. obvious violence, but in educational and cultural institutions.

Methodical approach

In our perception of theory of science, educational processes as segment of social reality cannot be measured by quantitative-empirical methods, because social reality is also a social discursive construction. That is why we *try* to reconstruct and interpret

the non-identical of educational processes. We consider our research efforts as educational processes themselves, which means being sensitive regarding own irritations and staying open for remodeling our categories and presuppositions.

We base our study partly on methods of the Grounded Theory (cf. Breuer, 2010), especially on

- 1) a circular and process-oriented structure of data collection and data analysis,
- 2) a data analysis by coding and forming categories,
- 3) an interrelation of data collection, analysis and theory.

For our exploratory study we conducted qualitative semi structured interviews with eight teachers in Greece (L1-L4) and Germany (L5-L8). We consider teachers as experts because of their own education and their professional experience. Therefore they have the possibility to reflect the social conditions of educational processes and also attend and observe children and adolescents over long periods of time. The interviewed teachers were not merely addressed as experts, but as well as subjects involved in educational processes themselves. Their descriptions of practice with adolescents as well as their observations of the adolescents' educational processes have to be interpreted under consideration of their own crises experiences and educational processes.

To work out a narrow and detailed focus, we developed specific selection criteria with reference to our theoretical considerations.

1. Only those teachers were interviewed, who are in contact with adolescents, who are going to graduate from school. This seems relevant to us in view of the adolescents' future prospects in relation to their educational processes.
2. In Greece only teachers working in academic secondary schools (lykeio) were interviewed. In Germany two of the interviewees work at general education schools (Gymnasium), one interviewee works at a comprehensive school (Integrierte Gesamtschule) and one works at a vocational school (Berufsschule). Besides exploratory aspects, the differences are due to differing school systems in both countries. In Greece, a higher percentage graduates from general education schools (lykeio) than in Germany, where the school system is more differentiated.
3. We tried to find teachers for our interviews, whose pedagogical concepts reflect the social and economic contexts of educational processes.

4. To meet our study's socio-economic aspects, we tried to find interviewees in diverse communities, districts and neighborhoods of metropolitan areas with differing social structures.

Analysis and discussion

Collective crisis as individual crisis?

Our study started with the question, to what extent the multiple and collective EU-crisis could be also experienced individually and which educational processes are generated in the experience of the crisis and the process of dealing with it.

Both interview groups brought up – more or less explicitly – the issue of increasing nationalism, which they interpret not as triggered, but reinforced by the EU-crisis. A German teacher relates this current and more obvious nationalism to the contemporary German history. In Greek interviews a proliferation of violence is mentioned (but violence in school context does not appear predominantly as motivated by nationalistic violence).

Furthermore it results from the interviews, as obviously expected, that in Greece the crisis is experienced very intensely by individuals, whereas in Germany it is not that evident. In their first reactions the German interviewees did not describe being affected individually. Nonetheless on second thought they spoke about uncertainties and irritations. In this respect we could speak about crisis experiences, which challenge previous individual behaviour patterns, mindsets and attitudes:

I've got a notion that just now many teachers think: 'Well, we are quite fine, all that happens to others'. And that some of them even think, or that it is an implicit issue, that the Germans would pay for the crisis or the others' incompetence. And they speak in a way that is Pro-Merkel, so as to give the impression, that Angela Merkel leads or guides us properly through the crisis. By the way, I think that the EU-crisis promoted her reelection, well, that many people feel insecure or lose track, because from my point of view economics are the processes most difficult to understand. Resulting from this insecurity she was reelected (L7).

This statement could indicate, that the interviewee herself feels insecure, despite the fact that she suggested at first not to notice any effects on herself. Her comment: 'losing track of economic processes' might illustrate an unsettled mindset and therefore a crisis experience. Moreover it is remarkable, that the German interviewees discuss the crisis primarily as economic crisis without mentioning a crisis of democracy. On the one hand the focus on economics could be explained by referring

to Koneffke's statement, that private property is the centre of gravity in bourgeois society (Koneffke, 1999). On the other hand the democratic crisis appears indirectly: 'Losing track' of political events and decisions might reflect the uneasiness to be confronted with undemocratic procedures and changes that erode democracy. At the same time the teacher's statement includes the impression, that the erosion of democracy is little-noticed by the population or maybe even appreciated.

Here, we can return to our theoretical approach and Crouch's diagnosis, that „politics is really shaped in private by interaction between elected governments and elites” (Crouch, 2004, p. 4) and therefore is democratically illegitimate. However, these developments and antidemocratic tendencies can only take place based on acceptance by the majority. This refers to Rommelspacher's concept of dominance culture: That the crisis is predominantly not experienced in Germany and the discourse is affected by competitiveness and hierarchisation, points to a (relative) privilege (even though or because privilege are not necessarily conscious, but rather not reflected and seems natural).

A first comparison suggests the conclusion, that crisis experiences in Germany are more subtle and express themselves by unsettledness in thought. The Greek interviews show, that here the crisis is experienced much more existentially and obviously and can be specified:

Now there is the uncertainty that I don't know what will happen next. Chances are that I will be unemployed tomorrow. It's as simple as that. So something begins what I couldn't imagine. It begins and I'm slowly getting used to it – 'get used' not in terms of 'to accept - but that I'm prepared for it in my personal life (L1).

The phrase 'get used to, but not accept' includes an ambivalence: to have to adapt to transformations (quite negative ones), which cannot or hardly be influenced; to deal with it, impossible to elude, one must not hope idealistic for a lucky turn. At the same time, the phrase 'not to accept' indicates, that the interviewee seeks for or identifies resistance potentiality and possibilities of political participation; so she does not position herself as powerless. She points out the open outcome of the crisis.

This thought is of interest for pedagogical theory, because it refers to a deconstructive concept of the subject, wherein the subject appears as subjected, yet acting. As it reflects the relation of individual and society, it is of importance for socio-critical pedagogy.

Being affected, privilege, resistance and solidarity

From this perspective it is of interest, why and how educational processes arise, in which critical and emancipatory moments appear as well as solidarity and resistance. And do they appear despite or because of conditions of a dominance culture, that cannot be influenced *directly*?

From the interview material we extract the focus on solidarity, which is brought up explicitly in Greek interviews:

“It’s positive, that our treasure of words readopts the term solidarity, which we didn’t know anymore. We had forgotten it entirely” (L3).

This was remarked in the context of associations and interpretations of the term crisis and illustrates, that ‘crisis’ might be a motive for processes of solidarizing. As interviewee L1 speaks about the possibility to “play an active role in an oppositional movement”, solidarity might be regarded as possibility or condition of opposition.

In the German interviews, terms as solidarity or opposition occur only rarely. Rather these teachers speak about being affected or, precisely: being *not* affected. This could give the impression, that being affected *personally* was a sine qua non for a behaviour and attitude oriented on solidarity. But then the question is how to explain social movements e.g. the Occupy movement (mentioned by L5) and similar ones, which are based on solidarity. Why do students in Germany get involved, as a teacher mentions, even if they are not directly affected by the EU-crisis? What are their motives? And is an attitude of solidarity and resistance a condition or an effect of this dedication or both at the same time?

We cannot answer these questions, which arise from the teachers’ statements; rather they are a first outcome of our exploratory process.

How can pedagogy be rethought in terms of solidarity?

Speaking about educational processes as transformative events, we have to ask if the adjective ‘transformative’ inherently indicates a certain orientation. Does it presume an emancipatory process (e.g. social movements) or does it include negative transformations as well, such as the mentioned increasing nationalism and competition (of nations)? These questions require a dialectic term of education (as carefully worded in the ‘Kritische Bildungstheorie’). It points out, that education has always been confirming dominance and therefore it was a risk to exaggerate the emancipatory potentiality of education in an idealistic way. Pedagogy itself is involved in dominance culture, which makes it necessary to consciously enable spaces

for (self)questioning and reflection. At the same moment the *undetermined* outcome of educational processes is emphasized: This means, that despite structures of power and dominance ‘Kritische Bildungstheorie’ insists on the “agency of the subjects” in “responsibility for themselves and each other” (Messerschmidt, 2010: 135). Capitulating is not an option. Because the term of education is emphasized in an individualistic way – and therefore adaptable to neoliberal appropriations – the focus of a socio-critical education is put on education as a *social* process.

The concept of solidarity is incompatible with social exclusion and egoistical practices of certain groups. Rather solidarity is based on “the universal right to be different” (Bauman cited in Scherr, 2013: 265). Without this utopian moment the term loses its essential meaning and would merely be a label for tactical calculations. This is an important aspect concerning solidarity as mentioned explicitly or implicitly in some of the interviews. The concept of solidarity implies a counterpart, with whom one has a relationship – therefore an absolutely autonomous subject cannot be assumed when thinking about possibilities and conditions of solidarity. In consideration of a negative dialectic position and empirical verifiable appropriations of solidarity (for example by German and Greek neo-Nazis), the theory and praxis of solidarity have to be critically analyzed and discussed.

Educational processes could be seen as potentially emancipatory, insofar as they imply “the conscious knowledge of those processes that lead to deprivation of liberty” (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1985: 75). Following the ‘Dialectic of Enlightenment’, „social freedom is inseparable from enlightened thought” (Adorno & Horkheimer, 2010: XIII). Nevertheless enlightenment and education have to reflect their own regressive tendencies (cf. *ibid.*) – “enlightenment must examine itself” (*ibid.*, XV).

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Critical search and evaluation practices of Web information resources applied by senior students in the Department of Primary Education of AUTH for the design of alternative projects in teaching language

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Abstract

The aim of the present study is to examine the ways through which potential teachers search for and evaluate Web information resources, in order to design alternative teaching activities for the cultivation of linguistic literacy to primary education students, as part of their non-formal practice in visual/multimodal literacy. The research, in which 85 fourth year students of the Department of Primary Education at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki participated, was conducted in two phases, the pilot phase and the main phase. During the main phase, the students were engaged in activities concerning the presentation and discussions about credibility issues of information resources in general, and the application of specific evaluation criteria of their content and usefulness, in order to initiate a critical dialogue with the Web. Data collection was accomplished through structured non participant observation of Web information resources searching, selecting and evaluating practices, and the compilation of a questionnaire concerning the students' Web use. The results show that the students are based exclusively on search engines –mainly only on one – and select information resources without knowing almost anything about the political economy of the Web. As far as evaluation is concerned, the

students rely mainly upon the morphological and design elements of information resources rather than on elements about the origin and credibility of their content. These findings underline the necessity for applying critical literacy practices on the Web, so as future teachers they will be able to a) understand the concept, the structure, and the function of the Web into the current dominant economic and political context, b) develop critical web searching capabilities, c) realize the need to evaluate Web information resources and learn ways to approach them critically.

Keywords: information resources, World Wide Web (Web), critical literacy on the Web, political economy on the Web.

Introduction

In contemporary meta-industrial societies the Internet and the Web tend to become the basic channels for information, communication, interactivity and amusement, while the power of book and printed page as dominant spaces for the representation of meaning is questioned due to the rapid developments in the communication technologies and processes (Kress, 2003). Despite the fact that the Internet and the Web were not designed for children, nor were they designed to be used in educational settings (Kuiper & Volman, 2008), their use inside and outside school is rapidly increased and, therefore, they become basic elements of life and learning for young people (OECD, 2009). Research findings about Greece (Kokkevi, 2011), are consistent with those from other countries (Kokkevi, 2012) and document the continuous increase in their use by young people. Therefore, when asking to what extent the Web use can contribute to the pedagogy of literacy, the answer seems to be inextricably intertwined with the necessity of teaching first the prospective teachers to become dialectical readers of the Web and approach it critically¹, so then, they can familiarize their pupils with various ways of exploiting it. As a result, the capability of

¹ learn to think “*critiquely*” (a word coined by James Paul Gee), that is, not merely consume information but also “understand and critique systems of power and injustice in a world that [people] will see as simply economically inevitable” (Gee 2000, p.62).

evaluating the content credibility and usefulness of Web information resources², becomes a crucial element of literacy nowadays (Burbules & Callister, 2000).

Conceptual framework: From information literacy to critical literacy and the political economy of media

The Internet and mainly, the Web emergence as central channels of modern information settings, due to their instant accessibility to vast amount of information resources and their attractiveness because of their visual/multimodal character, has driven many governments throughout the world – including Greece (Jimoyiannis, 2011) – to adopt policies to support their use in education. Nevertheless, the use of the Web as a new learning tool requires new capabilities and attitudes that teachers and pupils should possess so as to be able to act effectively into the rapidly changing multimedia and information technological settings.

The term *information literacy* involves a set of capabilities which are related with the understanding of both the topic area and the kind of information required within this topic area, as well as with the knowledge of where and how to find this information. Therefore, a person can be considered as *information literate* when he/she is capable of examining his/her resources and distinguishing between facts and opinions, of comparing similar resources, of identifying competing interpretations, of knowing to what extent more information is needed and of organizing ideas and information in a logical way (Breivik & Senn, 1998; Grassian & Kaplowitz, 2009, as cited in Fabos, 2008).

According to this approach, information literacy operates within a given information environment providing a first step towards analyzing information. It is, however, fairly limited in terms of reaching a more thorough understanding of the broader context of information access, since it is not aimed at developing capabilities related to criticize the information environment itself and its relation to education, by posing questions such as, *Who has created these information resources and for what*

² "... *resources* ... are [one of] the basic ingredients of the Web [and] may be anything that can be linked to or spoken of; many resources are purely information, but others not. Furthermore, not all resources are on the Web, in that they may *be identifiable* from the Web, but may not be *retrievable* from it. Those resources which are essentially information, and which can therefore be rendered without abstraction and characterised completely in a message are called *information resources*" (Berners-Lee et al., 2006, p.8).

purposes? Thus, the Internet appears to be ideologically, politically and economically neutral, or in other words, the political, economic and social context within which the Internet is structured, is completely ignored.

On the other hand, the view of education as a political act, puts the extended concept of literacy into the foreground, and especially of *critical literacy*. According to this, texts are perceived as carriers of ideologies, namely they are perceived as containing a political perspective and positioning a certain place on the political spectrum (Lankshear & McLaren, 1993; Lewis, 2001). Critical literacy is aligned in many ways with the critical pedagogy approach and the work of Brazilian educator Paulo Freire (1984, 1970/1993), since, through the analysis of institutions such as schools, media, and family, it is aimed at revealing and deconstructing the power relations, thus helping the students to obtain social awareness and work towards the empowerment of ‘marginalized’ discourses and, by extension, of democracy.

The application of the critical literacy principles in the mass media (Sholle & Denski, 1993) – *critical media literacy* – has resulted in focusing interest in the exposure of ideology behind the media content, and in the understanding of the political and economic context of media as cultural institutions. Critical media literacy is, perhaps, a threat to the overall current political economy, in the sense that it is often driven by the desire to change the commercialized media system and the existing political system, which uses media and advertising in order to shape political perspective and maintain existing mechanisms of power (Fabos, 2008).

The political economy of contemporary media focuses on the understanding of how the economic and political context of a social system determines and dramatically affects the formation of this system (Mosco, 1996; McChesney, 1999; Bagdikian, 2004; Fabos, 2008), and, broadly speaking, it could be defined as “understanding social change and historical transformation” (Mosco, 1986:27, as cited in Fabos, 2008: 842). In this light, the information and communication media form a part of the economic system, in the sense that they ‘sell’ content of mass culture and are directly related to the policy making and, therefore, to the political interests. This means that media analysis refers, on the one hand, to their ownership status, that is, who controls the media – and, therefore, holds the power – and, on the other hand, to the ways the forces of communication market operate, which undoubtedly operate in terms of profit.

In light of the political economy of media, the Internet and the Web are not neutral, coming from nowhere, without belonging to anyone, but they are perceived as an environment where interests and power relations are growing between individuals, groups, organizations and companies, promoting an ideology which is to the interest of their creators/owners. Consequently, a set of issues related to access to information, that is, what kind of access or access to what information, content control, privatization of social discourse, and future of the Internet as an educational and democratic means, are being raised (Fabos, 2008). As a result, it is considered necessary to examine or, more precisely, to re-examine issues related to *what* constitutes content, *who* controls the content, *how much* the content costs, *how* that content can serve education (Burbules & Callister, 2000; Fabos, 2008).

Accordingly, teachers and pupils must have at their disposal a set of abilities that will enable them to ‘manage’ the issue of critical understanding – not only of the evaluation – of the total range of competing political ideas and of the ideological framework of the Internet and the Web. In other words, if our aim is to utilize the Web as an educational tool, then the need for the development of skills related to the evaluation of the Web as a whole and the understanding that all the ‘discourses’ are inherently ideological – that all ‘texts’, including the complex multimodal/multisemiotic resources of meaning on the Web, are built on political and economic foundations – is of particular importance in order for young people to be able to face the rapidly changing realities of their working lives, their public lives, and their private lives.

Research purpose and questions

The present study aims to empirically investigate the search and evaluation practices of Web information resources by students during the broader process of understanding and giving meaning to the world on their part as social actors. Specifically, this study attempts to answer two basic questions: (a) How do the senior students of a Primary Education Department, and, therefore, prospective teachers, search and locate Web information resources? (b) How do they evaluate the Web resources they identify in order to design alternative activities for teaching language and, by extension, for the cultivation of literacy to primary education students, in the context of their informal practice in visual/multimodal literacy? The ultimate aim was to investigate the existence or not of critical literacy practices,

that is, whether the students perceive the Web information as given or challenge it and try to see ‘behind the screen’, by posing questions such as:

- ✓ Why does this information exist/ what is its purpose?
- ✓ Whose interests does this information serve/undermine?
- ✓ How does Web searching function/ how does a website function?
- ✓ Could it work differently and how? (Baynham, 1995: 2).

Methodology

This study follows the ethnographic approach of the social sciences, particularly science education, while it is also a case study.

Participants

The participants in this study were eighty-five senior students of the Department of Primary Education at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, who during the 2014 spring semester were attending the compulsory elective module, *Multimodal discourse teaching practices*. Out of the total number of students, 77 were women and 8 men, aged 25 years, and only two are aged 26 to 30 years.

Data collection techniques

Research data were consisted of: (a) recording students’ practices when they seek and evaluate Web information resources, (b) questionnaires investigating students’ attitudes towards the Web which they were asked to complete individually, and (c) presentations of websites by the groups of students as well as the discussions that took place within and between groups and focused on web content credibility issues.

The recording of practices was conducted via structured observation. To avoid the risk of affecting the results, researchers were not involved in the observation (non-participant observation). Observers came from the students, were selected randomly and were two per group, in order to increase the validity by comparing two reports for each observation. However, the possibility of some degree of unusual behaviour because the participants knew that their practices were recorded, cannot be excluded. To mitigate this risk, the completion of an anonymous questionnaire at the end of the first workshop, was chosen.

The data processing was based on the framework suggested by Wolcott (1994) for the description, analysis and interpretation in qualitative research. According to this and in relation to the specific research questions, description sought to answer “what happens during searching and evaluating Web information resources”, analysis sought to answer “how the various search and evaluation practices of Web information

resources are interconnected”, while interpretation sought to answer “what do search and evaluation practices of Web information resources mean”.

Research design

The research was conducted in two phases; the pilot phase (December 2013), during which the data collection tools were designed and tested, and the main phase (March 2014). As far as the design of data collection tools (observation form, questionnaires) is concerned, the researchers took into account the international bibliography (Hirata & Hirata, 2010; Rains & Karmikel, 2009; Pariera, 2009; Wu & Tsai, 2005), but they focused mainly on attempting to examine empirically the search and evaluation practices of Web information resources in the light of critical literacy.

The main research was conducted in a computer lab during two three-hour workshops. The students worked in 19 groups of their own free will; each group consisted of 3 to 5 people.

Students were given a list of six sections from the Primary Education Language textbooks (4th, 5th and 6th grade). They could choose a subsection from any section they wished, and they were asked to design a teaching activity drawing Web information resources, with a choice of up to three resources.

One hour before the observation, the observers were given the form that they would complete and clarifications on it. Although the form contained the points of interest that the researchers wanted to examine, it was clearly asked from the observers to use the form as an auxiliary tool and to feel free to supplement whatever they considered worth recording. Thus, the researchers sought a balance between the imperious obligation to remain open to new evidence and the practical need to formulate a guide for observation, according to the research design.

During the second workshop, the researchers recorded points from the presentations of websites that the students’ groups had selected (one per group) and the discussion that followed. Then each student completed one anonymous questionnaire with four open questions concerning the website www.youtube.com. The choice of this site was not accidental, but arose from the fact that it was chosen by all groups for the design of teaching activities. The questions revolved around the description of YouTube, its purposes, its authors/creators and recommendations for improving YouTube.

The fact that the research was conducted in the context of a module workshop may have influenced students’ behaviour. However, the researchers believe that key

features relating to attitudes, perceptions and habits in searching and evaluating Web resources, were not significantly affected.

Results

The results presented below reveal first, students' attitudes towards the Web, secondly, their practices when searching Web information resources, thirdly, their practices when reading and evaluating these resources, and, fourthly, their critical evaluation of YouTube website.

Attitudes towards the Web

The processing of students' responses to the first questionnaire, shows that they were absolutely positively disposed towards the Web, since, as they claimed, they used it at least once daily for information and entertainment. Almost half of them stated that one third of their Web time spent on information and conversation concerning educational issues. The students believed (in order of popularity) that both primary education pupils and teachers can utilize the Web in order to (Figure 1):

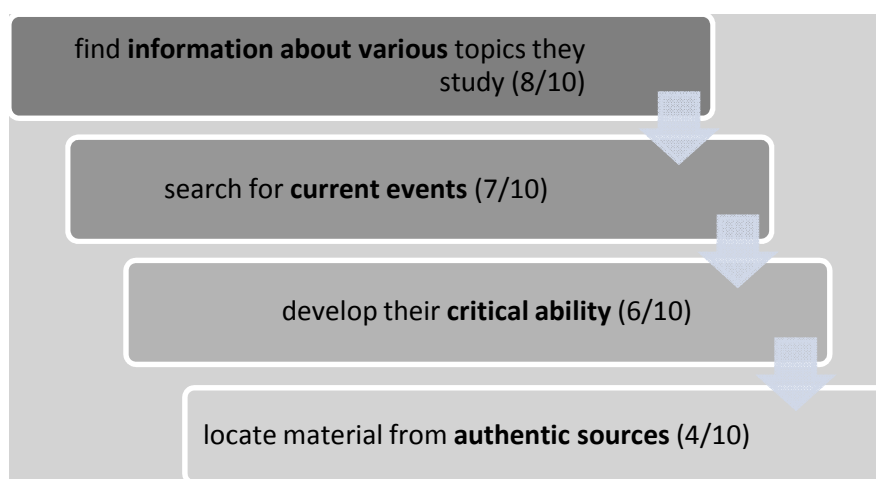


Figure 1: Summary of Web use purposes

The students stressed the lack of, or in some cases, even the absence of adequate technical infrastructure and/or human resources (e.g. ICT³ laboratory, equipment such as projector and/or interactive whiteboards, ICT personnel), in the schools where they were placed for their teaching practice. It should be noted, that these schools are mainly located in the central urban area of Thessaloniki and their pupil population consists largely of children with native language other than Greek. During discussions

³ Information and Communication Technologies

with the teaching personnel, the students reported that the teachers of these schools expressed reduced expectations –characteristically they said they would be happy if these children could read and write after completing primary education. This fact refers to earlier times and to the absolutely essentials of the classical concept of linguistic literacy. On the other hand, the students recognized the need to be able to find the right Web resources first and, then, to get their pupils to know ways to use the Web more effectively, since “*the Web is already something given in pupils' life outside the school*” and “*many children acquire negative experiences from their exposure on the Internet*”.

Web searching practices

Before we proceed to the presentation of the students' web searching practices, it is worth noting that, during the first workshop, all groups spent on average 38 minutes each to complete their task, that is to search and choose up to three Web information resources for the design of an educational activity.

From data analysis of the first questionnaire, it is evident that students considered it as ‘natural’ to obtain access to vast amounts of information through search engines, which they trusted as ‘unique gates’ to information resources, while they ignored the consequences of:

- the commercial nature of the most popular search engines,
- the ways through which search engines exploit the "free" user searches for their own purposes,
- the operation of search engines, and in particular the criteria according to which their lists of results are structured.

The recording of students' behavior when searching Web information resources for completing their work showed that the vast majority (97%) searched the Web through only *one* search engine, that of Google's company, while they did not use other search engines, because they even ignored their existence. Consequently, they were unable to compare between search engines both which resources these search engines have access to, and the ways in which the information resources appear in their list of results. When asked about the ways they use to locate information in the Web, the students replied in the most obvious for them way “*But, of course, we will google it*”.

Although all groups – except one – used only the simple search of the search engine of Google, one third of the respondents stated that they both know and usually or always utilize complex Web searching techniques.

Additionally, most teams *returned to the first page of results* and then chose something else every time they considered that the identified resource was not appropriate to their purposes. The initial page of the results of the search engine remained the sole guide for the students during the whole process, while many of them did not know (Figure 2):

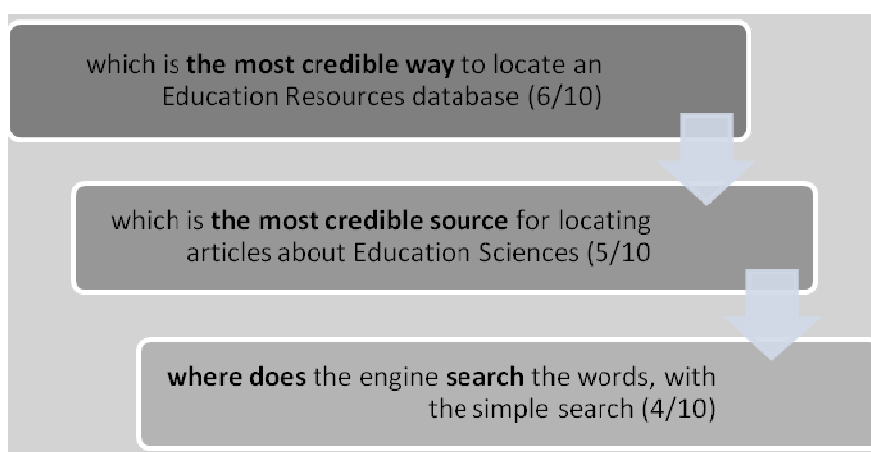


Figure 2: Summary of search practices due to inappropriateness of the initial Web information resources

Also, almost all students *did not know how to decode the address* of Web information resources (url), a practice of critical analysis that can reveal much about the purpose and the reason of existence of each resource. Characteristically, when the students were asked about the url of Google (www.google.com/www.google.gr), first they answered that com means community, and then, with a little help from researchers, commercial or company.

At the same time, the vast majority (94%) of the students considered their searches as successful, because “*I always find something relevant to what I'm looking for*”. Very few students (only 6%) felt that they failed in their search, because of the:

- *complexity of their topic* (e.g. bibliography about learning disabilities, Down, Rett, Williams syndromes),
- *way of their Web searching*.

Web reading and evaluating practices

When reading the Web, the students stated that they usually (Figure 3):

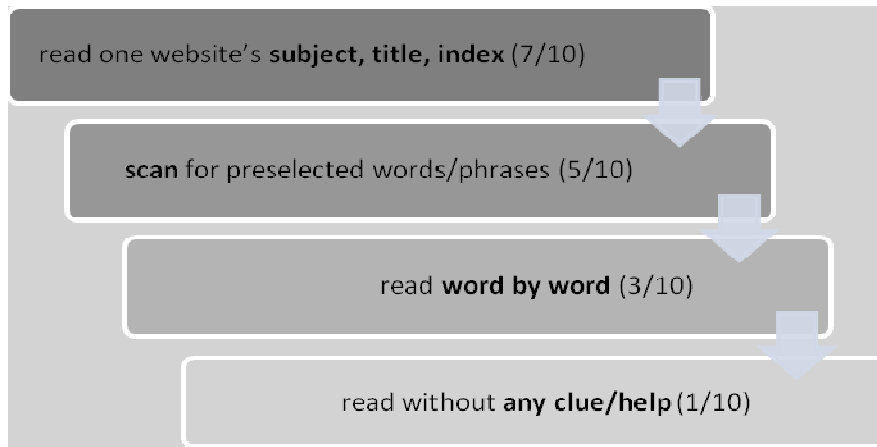


Figure 3: Summary of the Web reading practices

As regards the ways in which students evaluate Web information resources, they stated that they usually do so by (Figure 4):

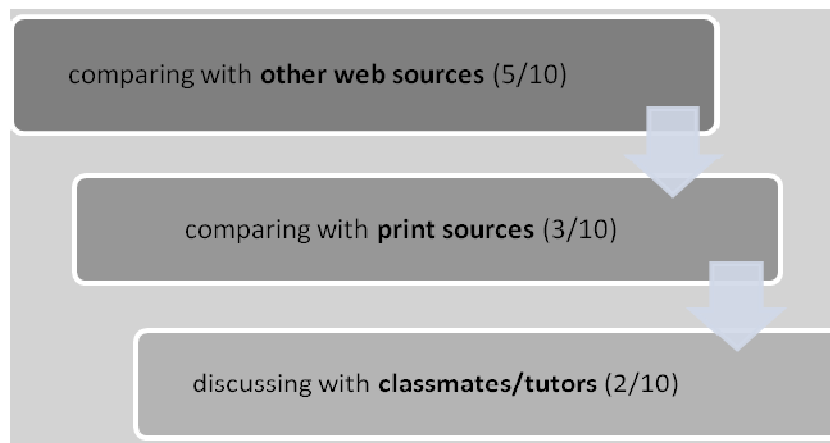


Figure 4: Summary of the evaluation practices of Web information resources

Of particular interest is that the students reported that they usually trust the information and, therefore, they do not make any kind of evaluation, when information comes from (Figure 5):

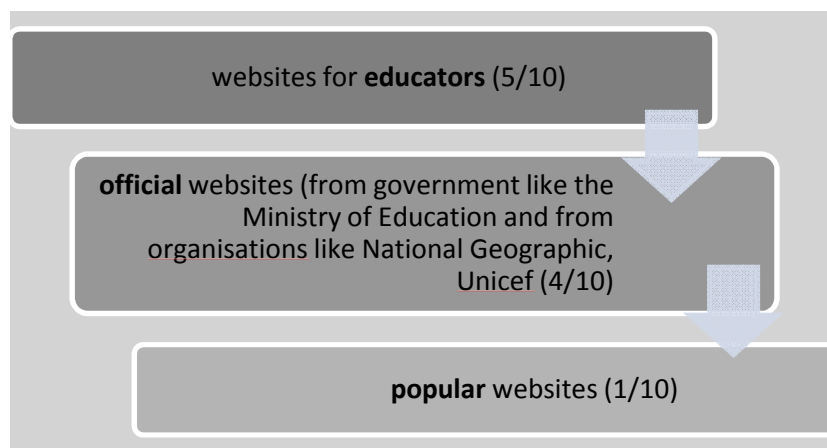


Figure 5: Summary of practices for evaluating reliability/validity of Web information resources

The students said that they evaluate as useful the Web information resources, if (Figure 6):

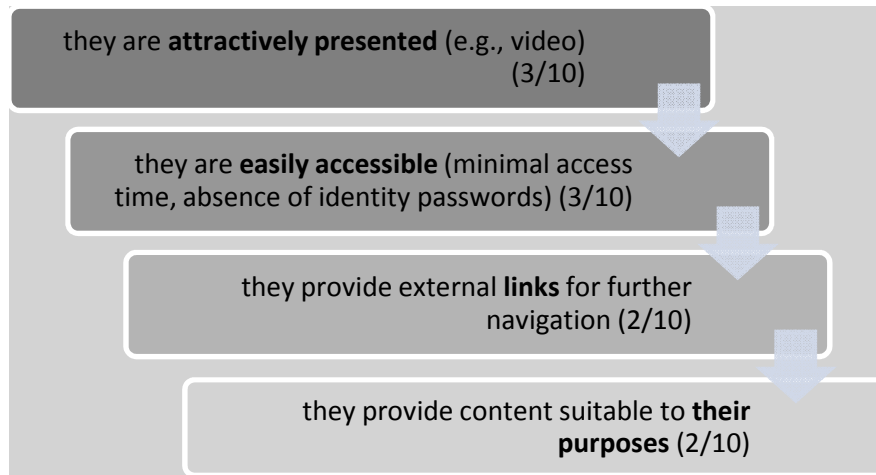


Figure 6: Summary of Web information resources' evaluation criteria

Only 1 in 5 students connected the Web information usefulness with issues such as:

- origin,
- language (Greek),
- the news/current events,
- multilateral/global awareness,
- the Google's blogger service,
- alignment with supported learning/teaching theories (e.g. “*When the information is matched with the learning theories and pedagogies that I support*”).

The case of YouTube

With respect to the first question, concerning the description of the site, it is worth noting that although description was requested, one third of the answers concerned its evaluation, which in its majority was positive. Indicative answers were phrases such as, “*It provides knowledge*”, “*We are informed of developments through vivid images, so it is highly reliable*”. This practice, most probably was due to the high popularity of the website since the students were likely not to sense the need to describe a website considered as granted and used by everyone.

As a consequence, during the categorization of the responses arose two major subcategories, the *description* and *evaluation*. Subcategory, *description* joined the answers which related, on their entirety, to the description/presentation of the site either as to its format or to its content, whereas subcategory, *evaluation* joined the answers which somehow characterized the site. From the data of figure 7, it is evident that there were very few participants who described the *format* of the website, while most of them focused on its *content*, speaking either about the *purpose* of it, or about the *multimodality/visualization* of the information provided, or about the *range* that it occupies. It is worth mentioning that *multimodality* and, especially, the existence of video, was highly appreciated by the students, because they believed that through the visualization, the information is converted to "more understandable and enjoyable for the children." With respect to the *range*, this referred both to the plethora of information, which was translated into a broad coverage of topics, and to the fact that the site can be updated by each user and it is addressed to each user. The range of the site was evaluated basically positively, since only one student noted that, "This website is unreliable as anyone can upload whatever he/she wants". Also, there were answers which, simply, were characterizing YouTube and they were not related neither to the format nor to the validity and reliability of it (e.g., "interesting", "useful", "entertaining", "amusing", "practical", "helpful/beneficial" and "[...] pleasant to use by children. The information provided is clear, understandable, enjoyable and easy to read [...] ").

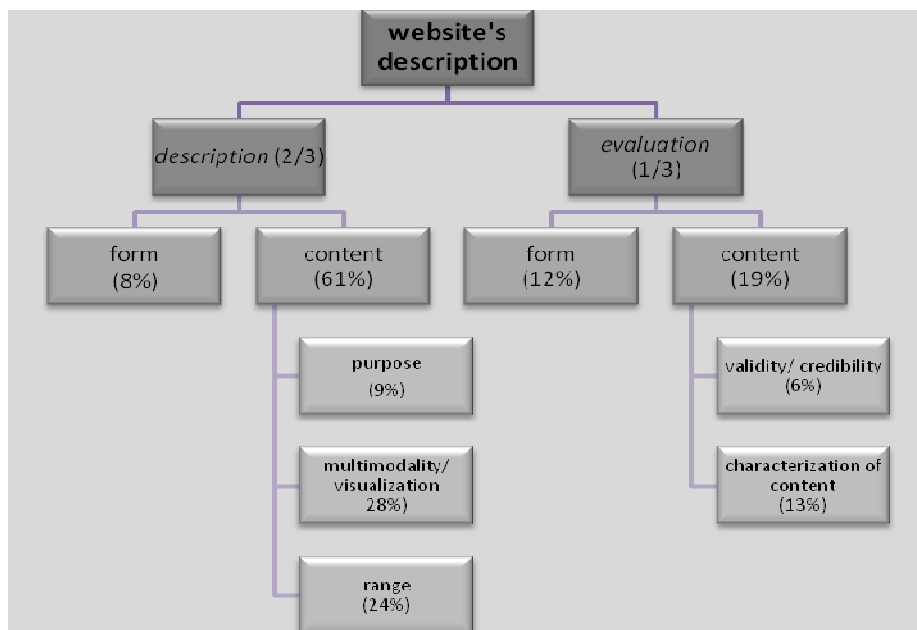


Figure 7: Summary of the responses related to the description of YouTube

With respect to the second question, which focused on the purpose for the creation of the specific website, the vast majority of students (4 to 5) believed that this was created for information/updating, entertainment/amusement, or communication/interaction (Figure 8). It is characteristic that almost none of the students sought documentation of information when using the website, ignoring that the information disseminated via this website is not always documented. Indicative of this students' attitude towards YouTube, was the answer according to which the site was created *“for users to share their knowledge, experiences and ideas”*.

Only one in five students stated that this website was created in order to promote interests. Characteristically it was noted: *“I think that the purpose of its creation is commercial and political and helps for promoting interests. Users, however, utilize youtube sometimes thoughtlessly, not knowing or ignoring the interests”*. In general, most students (4 to 5) did not realize the economic and political context of this platform, noting that, *“The site was originally created randomly”, “for the needs of all people”* and *“I do not think that it was created for a particular purpose because people upload the videos”*.

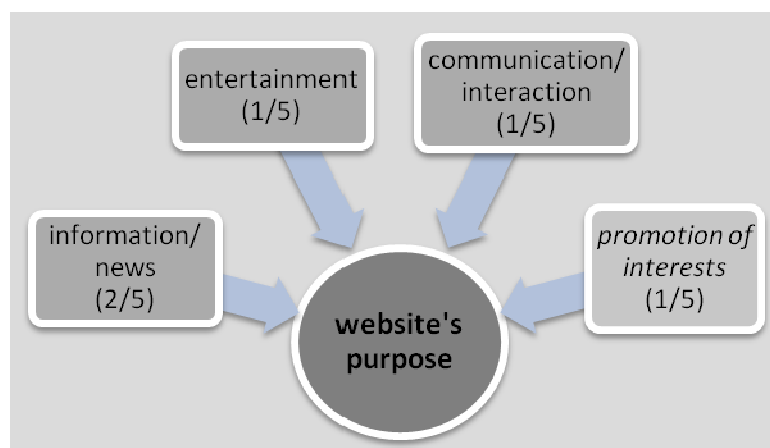


Figure 8: Summary of the responses related to the website purposes creation

As far as the third question is concerned, which was relevant to whether and why the participants would like to be one of the creators of YouTube, a large percentage of students' responses— such as, *“Anyone could be the creator of a website like this”*, *“Anyone can create his/her own channel and upload a video”*, *“Of course, because I deal a lot with this site”* – revealed that the students did not understand the

discrimination between the ‘provider’ and the ‘administrator’ of (the material of) the site. In particular, 4 out of 10 respondents/surveyed stated that they could be the creators of YouTube, arguing on the basis of: (a) the recognition of the value of the site (69%) and, therefore, adopting a positive attitude towards it (e.g., *“I could be one of the creators. The existence of youtube is particularly important for people of any age, any ethnicity and cultural background and any profession, offering a huge variety of all kinds of video presentation”*), (b) the fact that they already communicate material on the website (23%), (c) the critical evaluation that, in their opinion, the material uploaded on the website is subjected (5%) (e.g., *“[...] the videos uploaded are reliable and valid. Otherwise, the videos are downloaded and marked as inappropriate/unfit with respect to the particular topic or strange/odd”*), as well as on the basis of personal interests (3%) (e.g., *“It is the best, perhaps the only way to earn money”*). In contrast, 6 out of 10 answered that they could not be the creators of the site due to lack of technical knowledge (39%) or self-confidence (19%), competing ideologies (19%), lack of interest (17%), or economic burden (4%). It is worth focusing mainly on answers about ideology, in the sense that answers like these reveal nuggets of critical literacy. However, unfortunately, only ~~the~~ 19% of the respondents who stated that they could not be themselves the creators of the site gave answers of this kind. Indicatively only two of them mentioned: *“No, since .com (company)”* and *“[...] I consider that the particular site is supported by ‘important’ businessmen in order to promote any ads and videos they wish”*.

Finally, with respect to the fourth question, through which the students were invited to make their suggestions/recommendations about the improvement of YouTube, only 1 in 10 said that he/she would not make any adjustment/change/modification to the site, arguing/justifying that *“I think that (the site) does not need any improvement”*. Nevertheless, 9 out of 10 suggested interesting improvements to the site, from which, however, only a small percentage (22%) was related to education. In particular, the improvements proposed, by order of preference, can be summarized on the following:

- *Creating filters of (54%):*
 - Validation/reliability (e.g., *“The material uploaded on the website to be checked with more consciousness – on the part of whom uploads this material – and to be presented more clearly why and who uploads it”*).
 - Protection [e.g., *“Videos with obscene, violent, offensive content should not be displayed, especially when you visit the site without your choice and rights*

must be protected, because some people upload videos with persons who are not aware of this fact and they are exposed”.]

- Search/better categorization of content (e.g., *“Specific categories for easy finding information must be established”*).

- *Education (22%)* (e.g., *“I would recommend more videos with educational content and teachers' comments”, “The videos addressed to educators so that they can be used as educational material, should be controlled by an administrator who will judge the free distribution or not of this material at schools” and “To become more suitable for children”*).

- Create an exclusively education Web channel

- consolidation of content

- ✓ In general

- ✓ In Greek

- *Block* (and not limitation through filters, as indicated in the first category) obscene, violent or offensive content (8%).

- *Reduce commercialization through advertising* (5%).

- *Administration of comments to improve and enrich the material* (4%).

- *Place more information* (3%).

- *Technical issues* (3%).

To summarize, although prospective teachers seemed to appear a very positive attitude towards the particular site, which is demonstrated through their answers to the first three questions, the plethora and the kind of the proposals presented in the last question showed that they expect from YouTube to be converted to a completely different site in terms of the purpose, form and content.

Discussion

From the preceding qualitative analysis of data, it is clear that the students' attitude towards the Web is generally positive. The arising question, however, is as to whether this positive attitude, is an attitude that criticizes the Web, as well.

Search engines are the primary/unique tool with which students navigate and access the Web content. In particular, only one search engine, the search engine of Google company, seems inextricably connected with the students' Web searching practices. This almost complete connectedness is also recorded by another research, in which students are unable to provide specific answers when asked about where they learned

about Google, and characteristically say “*I feel like Google was just, was always there*” (Olsen & Diekema, 2012: 5).

The students used the search engine of Google company even when they knew from the beginning which site they would visit, and did not write directly its address or did not consult a thematic index or portal. It could be argued that it is not necessary, nor easy to memorize addresses of websites and that in our personal devices we may use our own address book of websites, something that is not the case in shared devices. The students, however, justified their clear preference in the search engine of Google company, because it is “*easy, fast and always gives some results*”, and at this point there was unanimity, so we can assume that this is their dominant way to search the Web. Comfort and digital visibility become decisive factors in the modern landscape of information (Rowlands & Fieldhouse, 2007). But these two factors are ‘earned’ for users primarily through a commercial environment, about which they have no knowledge neither about its purpose and methods of operation, nor about its evolution and the fact that is dominated by companies with priorities other than the original ones.

The data is consistent with corresponding reports of the last fifteen years. In the U.S.A., periodic polls show that the use of search engines is one of the most popular activities online. In 2002, 52% of adults had used search engines, and a decade later, in 2012, this percentage rose to 73%. At the same time, the frequency of use of search engines was also increased dramatically. In addition, users are satisfied more than ever on the quality of their search results and show a high degree of trust in the capabilities of search engines (<http://www.pewinternet.org/2012/03/09/search-engine-use-2012/>). Especially for students, the use of search engines is recorded as their dominant strategy when searching for information, already since 2005 (Griffiths & Brophy, 2005).

This apparent replacement of libraries and information centres, which are mostly public institutions, with search engines of mainly commercial corporations, as meeting places with information resources, raises serious questions about the use of the Web in education. The students of today are the so-called ‘*Internet generation*’, or, ‘*Google generation*’ –those born since the early 1990s, and have not known a world without the immediate availability of online digital information (Tapscott, 2009). They are based almost exclusively on Google in order to find information, and this practice determines how they face and interact with the content of information

resources. On the other hand, the production of the Web content by ordinary users, not only by publishers and official bodies, grows at unprecedented speed via blogs, wikis, personal websites etc. As it is characteristically noted, "library-sponsored content is shrinking in relative terms and it will become more difficult to find as users land where the search engines take them, not where librarians think they "ought" to land" (Rowlands et al., 2008, p.14). In the past we used to say that "a book is a window to the world", now it is time to begin to wonder whether a company, especially a multinational one like Google, is the sole window to the world of the Web and what impact has its almost monopolistic position into the current information flow particularly with regards to education (Fabos, 2008).

The students think that they know complex search techniques, because they use more than one word when searching. But even this is done in a non-structured way, because the students do not elaborate from the beginning, the concepts and topics for which they seek information. Exactly because they can instantly locate some resources related to their purpose, but not necessarily the best ones, the students do not progress in reflection on the character of these results or on their searching process itself in order to proceed to some changes in the search strategy. For example, the groups who searched resources for the unit with the title "*Indigenous Peoples*", put the full text of the section title – without quotation marks, because they did not know their function – in the simple search bar of Google, hit enter, and began to scan the first page of results. Alternative strategies – except for the use of quotation marks – would be to add the type of source they were seeking (e.g., 'educational material'), to use synonyms (e.g., natives), after first clarify the search terms, etc. As it is shown in other studies too (Head & Eisenberg, 2009), there is a strong need for students to understand the framework within which they seek resources, notably the conceptual definition of their subject and the corresponding terminology, so then they can perform more targeted searches.

The complete dependence on results list of Google is deteriorated by the fact that students choose to look further, usually the resources in the first positions of the list by reading their description there. But this list of results is structured according to commercial criteria, and the students must learn that the range of resources has nothing to do with their quality, even with their popularity. Instead, the display order of results - especially in the first few pages – is subject to changes based on

commercial and financial criteria, and reflects the prevailing discourses and forces within a given economic-political system (Fabos, 2004).

On the other hand, the prevailing sense that through a single environment, I can search everything, obscures the various resources of information (books, articles, studies, theses, teaching materials) and thus leads to a leveling homogenization. However, the diversity of resources is closely connected with both the process and the content of the information, and especially with the purposes it serves. The observation made clear that the students don't know about the ways information is being generated, organized and disseminated nowadays. Any attempt to make them more critical towards the information resources they find in the Web, should first clarify to them the information flow itself with regards to current information technology developments. The UNISIST model of a World Science Information System and its proposed revision offers a good starting point towards the study of different forces and agents that are involving in the information production, organization and dissemination (UNISIST, 1971; Søndergaard, Andersen & Hjørland, 2003).

The students' Web searching presents the characteristics of behaviour through which resources that contain enough information, but not necessarily the best available ones are instantly selected (just enough information is good enough). No group exhausted all available time (60 minutes), although the researchers informed the students from the beginning that they even could overcome this time, if they considered it necessary. Previous studies (Johnson, Griffiths, & Hartley, 2001) also show that the levels of satisfaction with the search engine use are associated more with efficiency, and that users often prefer practices that demand the minimum of effort and time. This perhaps indicates that the time and effort required on the user part, are valued as more important than the relevance of the resources which are found. Although the challenge is to search the Web rationally, which means that we should be able to judge clearly why we make certain choices, this do not appear to be involved in students' searching. As documented in other studies too, the students are generally satisfied with the results of their searches in the Web, and evaluate their web searching abilities high. In the meantime, however, a significant mismatch between their ratings and the actual quality of their work is recorded (Buschman & Warner, 2005). Both the observation and the recording when the students presented websites, showed that the percentage of those who read and understand information such as subject, title, index of a site, that is information about the structure of a website that reveals its content and

purpose, is actually much smaller than it is stated by the students themselves. Instead, scanning to locate preselected words or phrases appears to be the main reading practice, both when reading the results of a search, and when reading in a website. Still, we pay a price for the sacrifice of depth, when we scan extensively, instead of reading intensively (Birkerts, 1994).

The students evaluate the Web information resources mainly by comparing them with other resources in the Web. Still, this comparison is based almost entirely on morphological and design elements. The students do not crosscheck and validate the information presented with the intention to question its reliability and even more, the emergence of different ideologies that this information possesses. Students, for example, choose multisemiotic/multimodal information resources –especially video, on the basis of the age of their audience (the young children) and of their teaching objectives.

✓ They do not compare how the same topic is presented in various websites *based on the identity and purpose of website creators*. (No group searched deliberately the identity of website creators/ providers/ sponsors etc.)

✓ They do not question the *extent of information processing* (primary/ secondary/tertiary resources of information).

On the other hand, discussions with experts, concern only a small percentage of information evaluation. These findings support the need to increase cooperation with teachers and information professionals in assessing the Web information resources, so that the students by being aware of the range of different views and the variety of different perspectives to be able to construct their own meaning during the learning process (Head & Eisenberg, 2009).

In almost no case, the students concern about who creates the information and which are his/her purposes. Instead, the students assume as given the information accuracy and validity, when this information is posted:

✓ In educators' blogs. Still, they do not investigate further details about author's identity, they assume he/she is a teacher from the context. Also, they do not seek information about the setting in which the proposed activity takes place, its outcomes to pupils' learning process, etc.

✓ In the official website of the Greek Ministry of Education. All groups trust this website and choose to navigate the Web via its links. Yet, they do not realize that the

way the information is presented there and whether or not there are links in specific points and to specific resources, reflect the official educational policy.

✓ In websites of organizations such as Unicef, National Geographic, etc. Here, the students assume that “*information is reliable, because the agencies are reliable*” and they do not investigate the operational context of these organizations and their history, purposes and policies.

Absence to investigate the website creator/sponsor and its aims, means that the students choose information for their work based not on name, status and purpose (commercial, public, educational, etc.) of website creators, but on morphological elements (mostly images and videos) that can serve their goal as educators to engage children's interest. Characteristically in the case of www.youtube.com, even when they were asked about its goals, no one sought, nor read the section “About YouTube” in the official website⁴. The students seem unable to realize the extent to which the author shapes the meaning and the messages mainly in the visual communication modes (e.g., by silencing alternatives, by posing filtered or implied views, by focusing on specific ideas, etc.).

The students' decision-making seems to endorse the theory of bounded rationality and the use of a simplifying mechanism by which we choose results that we consider sufficiently good according to our purposes, but not necessarily the optimal ones (Simon, 1976). The overwhelming majority of the students arrive in sufficiently good results, "sacrificing" the best, however. Almost all groups tend to scan fast and usually, to judge from the information given in the list of the results only those that appeared in the first few positions, before deciding whether or not to perform new searches, or "look further" a resource by clicking on its link. Not a single group has examined in detail all results even from the first page. Such behaviour agrees with similar behaviour of pupils (Bilal, 1998). One can conclude that this is the most applicable practice when searching the Web, where we have to manage prohibitively huge amounts of information. However, if with our actions, we focus only on what the search engine is proposing to us on the top of a list, then it is necessary to realize

⁴ "Founded in February 2005, YouTube allows billions of people to discover, watch and share originally-created videos. YouTube provides a forum for people to connect, inform, and inspire others across the globe and acts as a distribution platform for original content creators and advertisers large and small" (<http://www.youtube.com/yt/about/>).

that the issue of access has a significant impact on our information. Through which channels and how this access takes place and what sort of information resources concerns, these are important questions that deserve to be conceptualized by the prospective teachers, if we really want to exploit the potential of the Web in education (Burbules & Calister, 2000).

The sense that the access to the Web is easy and given, hinders critical reflection and questioning not only the nature of this access itself, but also the way in which the Web itself is constructed and operates. The ease of access and the immediate availability of an abundance of resources, conceals the fact that the really useful information becomes increasingly more difficult identifiable, just because of the way information is organized - or rather disorganized, on the Web. With the hypertext / hypermedia, resources in various formats (text, image, sound, movement) are linked together and allow non-linear reading and the creation of various reading paths on the part of users, surpassing the limitations of print media. Thus, both the creation and dissemination of complex information resources are facilitated, and it becomes possible to access them according to the order, quantity and form that the users choose each time (Landow, 1992). Hypermedia technology is a reality, but it is important to know that it can release its potential under certain conditions. How educational are the hypermedia through which the students and the pupils navigate, who decides what, how and when to read in a rich information environment, such as the Web? (Charney, 2001)

In practice, hypermedia technology has exceeded the scientific and educational communities. Each resource in the Web can be linked and is connected with other resources via hyperlinks in an endless way. Such links associate any item with any other item for any reason that happens to occur to whoever is making the link, without limitations of older systems of classification and authority systems. Thus, the user navigates directly from one resource to another, provided that there is a link between them, and has immediate access to a vast network of information that all is equally accessible and at the same level. As Dreyfus (2009: 11) states:

The whole of the Web lies only a few links away from any page, ... hyperlinks have not been introduced because they are more useful for retrieving relevant information than the old systematic ordering. Rather, they are the natural way to use the speed and processing power of computers to relate a vast amount of information without needing to understand it or impose any authoritarian or even generally accepted structure on it.

But, when everything can be linked to everything else without regard for purpose or meaning, the vast size of the Web and the arbitrariness of the links made it extremely difficult for people desiring specific information to find the information they seek.

Although information retrieval techniques are constantly being improved through the proliferation of the algorithms of search engines, we have to remember and make clear to the students that this is done into the context of a commercialized environment and mainly for the benefit of the dominant economic and political forces. There is no doubt that in the Web we can quickly locate and select **chunks** of information. This is the analog that a consumer experiences in a shopping centre, the sense that we can directly satisfy all our consumption needs, selecting products and services. The fragmentation of information in the Web increases its decontextualization and its use as a consumer product. It is a questionable issue whether the students are able to distinguish which elements are rumours, or even information disseminated deliberately with the aim to hurt. It is vital to search for and question the origin of any web information resource, but not with a purpose to establish the one and single truth, because there is no neutral information. Instead, the information always reflects its economic and social origin, and the prevailing decontextualization in the Web obscures exactly the political economy of information. As Burbules & Callister (2000: 4) note,

information is always cooked (as opposed to raw): it is always selected, filtered, interpreted, and extracted from a background set of assumptions that are implicit (rarely explicit) in the information "itself. This does not make the information false, or worthless; but it is in no way "given", even for the most widely accepted and obvious of "facts".

Perhaps the most important, especially for educators, is to start realizing the long-term consequences that the Web use bears on how we conceptualize, seek, evaluate and use information. The speed of access, the fragmentation and the decontextualization of Web information, reinforce a strong tendency towards shallow, horizontal, "flicking" behaviour in digital environments. Users of all ages prefer quick information in the form of easily digested chunks, rather than full text, and the findings of the present study confirm it once more. It is questionable whether the use of Web information enhances our exposure to alternative ideas and opinions, thus expanding the awareness of our social world, or conversely, we are limited to silence the prevailing views of the dominant ideology. As it is characteristically noted, "all of us are

information consumers now" and "society is dumping down" (Rowlands et al, 2008, Naughton, 2008). But who really benefits from this development and what are its consequences for education, if the main educational objective is to expose learners to a variety of opinions and ideas, not only to record events?

In conclusion, results of this research may concern the general population of senior teacher education students in Greece, who are interested in exploiting the Web information resources in the teaching process. Still, issues related to prospective teachers' Web searching behaviours and critical understanding of the ideological framework within which the Web is structured, need further research. The fact that the students were particularly interested in learning alternative ways to access and use the Web resources is very optimistic. Perhaps it is time to design and implement instructional interventions aimed at clarifying questions about the nature of the Web access and the channels through which we acquire this access, in order to deconstruct critically the 'open' and 'free' access to the Web, and to understand the function of the Web as a whole, and ultimately, the very nature of the information itself (Fabos, 2004, 2008). Expanding the notion of literacy from Freire's "reading the word, reading the world" to reading the Web, reading the world, or at least part of it, and starting to uncover the various layers of Web information, seems a meaningful challenge of education nowadays.

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Legal education, its limits and possibilities. Notes on Critique and the Example of Turkey

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Abstract

Legal studies have been ignored by theoretical studies aiming at social emancipation due to law's superstructural nature. This paper seeks to analyze this nature deeper, both from the system theoretical perspective of Niklas Luhmann, as a refined legal theory and from the Marxist critique of bourgeois legal theories so as to determine the possible limits of a structural coupling of law and education. Next, it points out to the close connection between neo liberal pressure on law faculties and the qualitative change it leads to in lawyer's labor. Juxtaposing the outcome of these two quests, the paper argues that a critical intervention in teaching of law and especially legal theory, would serve to mobilize the lawyers to act against their "duty" to stabilize normative expectations. The paper concludes with the example of two lawyers as system's enemies, to back its argument up.

Keywords: Law, systems theory, Marxist legal theory, critical education, lawyer's labor.

Introduction

To start with the subject matter, one must admit that law is not one of the favorite subjects of Marxist studies. If it is not totally ignored, it is paved away and put on a waiting list, classified as a "technical issue" for an uncertain future. It is indeed a technical issue if you are not a liberal that believes in the oracle of *ubi societas ubi ius*. And furthermore, once the basic argument about law's historical meaning is put forth, there is not really too much material left to build a theory upon: It is –roughly– an instrument that the bourgeoisie uses to strengthen its position as the ruling class. And therefore legal education serves this purpose and nothing more.

This paper argues that when it is carefully inspected it could be seen that even within these historical and logical limits, legal education might serve for social emancipation.

There are certain issues to elaborate on to back this argument up. I will start with the self-observation and presentation of legal system and continue with its ideological image from a Marxist point of view. From there, I will move on the structural coupling field of law and education from a systems theoretical perspective and concentrate on the impacts of the neo-liberal turn in that field. And finally, I will try to define a framework for a critical legal education along with its possible consequences.

Law's Story

Leaving aside the endless discussions that change form but lack consistent meaning in legal theory, the most comprehensive and systemic analysis of law since Hegel is that of Niklas Luhmann's. But as a systems theorist, Luhmann understands law only in the complex set of relationships vis-à-vis the whole system, that is the society¹ "A complex society cannot be described other than by a complex theory, even if one cannot achieve a strictly corresponding complexity. Nor can society's law be assessed any other way" (Luhmann 2004: 67).

Therefore to understand law's own story better, the whole theory must be placed in a nutshell.

Using the framework of systems theory, Luhmann borrows the concept of *autopoiesis* (Maturana & Varela, 1980, p. xvii) from biology and adapts the theory to social systems. According to this theory, society is a grand system that accommodates many subsystems that evolve together and structurally couple with each other when necessary, without losing their function for the society. Being one of these systems, law differentiates between legal and illegal – here the laws of form of Spencer-Brown contributes to the theory- leaving no space for a quasi-legal act, due to the "prohibition of denial of distribution of justice" principal formed in the 18th century. For if there is a gray area, then there is the possibility that the judge cannot decide.

The content of law's binary code (the "program" of the code) is filled with statutes, court verdicts and other legal material and the legal system operates wherever there is a communication that could be declared legal/ illegal according to these codes

¹ Note that Luhmann's two volume *magnum opus* has the title *The Gesellschaft der Gesellschaft* (The Society of the Society)

(Luhmann 1995: 67). This means that the borders of the system cannot be clearly defined. Furthermore, law continuously adapts to its environment (Luhmann 1995: 240). But because it is an autopoietic system, it repeatedly recreates itself from its own parts and during this continuous adaptation movement; its systemic function remains unchanged. Among many other subsystems, the specific function of law is stabilizing normative expectations, that is the expectations about ought to be done. Put in a simpler way, law reduces the complexity of the world for the “legal subject” and normatively regulates contingency (Luhmann 1995: 132).

This very function is fulfilled with law’s basic actions of regulating behavior and solving conflicts. The prohibition of denial of distribution of justice mentioned above, creates a legal paradox which can be formulated as the obligation to decide even if it is undecidable (Luhmann 1990: 467). Consequently, it turns out that the courts are not only the appliers of law but they have to “create” solutions. In other words, when there is no law, they have to say what law is. The means of this creation is of course in close contact with other systems such as politics and economics, but in the final analysis, the paradox leaves a relatively autonomous space for law as a social system, recreating itself from its own parts.

A Critique of Law’s Story

The above described approach would have been the most refined theory to discuss upon in a satisfying legal theory class- it looks rational and convincing and at its center, it meets the reality of our everyday lives framed with train schedules and rental contracts and credit cards. And at the pathological extremes, it reaches to the penal courts and prisons and the system looks as if it has been functioning since the starting of time. Actually Luhmann himself declares that “law is an endless story” (Luhmann 1995: 179). And this is also the point a very brief critique based on political economy may take its start.

First of all, within this “gapless”, being is only one of the subsystems; law does not have a distinguishing character as many lawyers would have claimed in their purely legal construction. This position is in a weird parallel with that of Marx, who places law in the same category as morals and politics without any privileges (Marx, 2011a: 191). But the problem with the categorization of the systems theory is that according to this theory, there is no central system in the complex set of relations of the subsystems. This naturally leaves no space for a correct understanding of base and

superstructural relationship. Therefore law's best ever story might only serve us as a theory on superstructure with a few necessary interventions.

Second, being endless according to systems thought, the legal system has no history but follows an evolutionary line during its adaptation to the environment. This is a second parallelism with Marxist theory, according to which law, has no history of its own (Chkhikvadze, 1969: 189). But again, the line of thought is different. According to Luhmann, during this evolution process, understanding of private property and widespreading of script have equal significance.

Consequently, even though Luhmann considers law as a part of the whole system and tells the story from the observers perspective, from a second order observation (observing the observer) it is possible to see that he himself has a superstructural and even "legal" perspective of society, interpreting the system in concern as on the equal footing with economics and ahistorical. And this takes us to the beginning point of my analysis. "Just as we cannot judge an individual just according to what he says about himself" (Marx 2011b: 39) or as we cannot trust law's self-told story, we cannot trust a story of law written from a positively legal perspective.

There is no doubt that the bourgeois legal theory was not as refined as the one analyzed above when Marx left his legal studies, accusing them of being "useless" (Marx, 1837). Having had a look at possibly the least theory to attribute immanent values to the system, we still can see that there are gaps that cannot be filled without a historical materialistic approach.

Uselessness that Marx attributed to the legal studies, however, might be a link to continue. To negate young Marx, I must say the legal studies are not useless, at least not for all. And to prove this point, we must move on to another understanding of law not ignoring its specific character as a superstructural system but adding a base-structural point of view to the previous observer's.

Ideology and Law

No matter how refined and detailed it is, law's self-portrait is destined to be defective for it lacks a historical materialistic and dialectical perspective that is far different from the structural coupling.

The reflection of economic relations as legal principles is necessarily also a topsy turvy one: it happens without the person who is acting being conscious of it; the jurist imagines he is operating with *a priori* principles, whereas they are really only economic reflexes; so everything is upside down. And it seems to me obvious that this

inversion, which, so long as it remains unrecognised, forms what we call *ideological conception*, reacts in its turn upon the economic basis and may, within certain limits, modify it. The basis of the law of inheritance – assuming that the stages reached in the development of the family are equal – is an economic one. But it would be difficult to prove, for instance, that the absolute liberty of the testator in England and the severe restrictions imposed upon him in France are only due in every detail to economic causes. Both react back, however, on the economic sphere to a very considerable extent, because they influence the division of property. (Engels , 1890).

This paragraph constituting the core of the issue, Engels's well known letter to Conrad Schmidt, declares that law cannot be described as a mere product of base structure but it also is a system that one way or other modifies it. Therefore, and keeping in mind the abstract categories law creates out of its own concrete norms (and courts, prisons etc.) and also its own categories, it is indeed a “relatively” autonomous system and this notion juxtaposes systems theory with Marxism- albeit it does not suffice for a full grasp.

In his “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses” , in line with the above stated points of critique against legal narrative, Louis Althusser starts his analysis of law with the fact that capitalist bourgeois law aims at regulating and punishing economic practices (Althusser, 2003, p. 65) and refers to law as the most solid ideological state apparatus. According to him, law not only reproduces capitalist production relations but it provides their working directly and as a result, it is both a repressive and an ideological apparatus.(Althusser, 2003: 69).

But when you dissect law and its relationship with other superstructural bodies, you see that law can neither be fully understood nor will it be useful if it is only taken as an ideological “apparatus”. It has to be understood together with its own universe, that is the bourgeois legal theory. This problem was diagnosed by a Soviet lawyer, Evgeny Pashukanis, approximately 30 years earlier than Althusser. Not underestimating its relationship with ideology, Pashukanis diagnoses two aspects of legal system

1) Modern law can only exist in commodity exchange conditions and it can only reach its relative autonomy in a capitalist system. Its fundamentals are marked by the private law that regulates commodity relations. In other words, as private property atomizes people, it also dialectically brings them together in the same system (Pashukanis, 2002: 69-81).

2) “Legal subject” could only be created within capitalist society and with a definition of a man in possession of something (Pashukanis, 2002: 68). In other words, to put it more sophisticated, “to be” is not the category law creates its existence on, it is based on “to have”. Hegel himself starts the Philosophy of right, abstracting a right category out of property. (Hegel, 2004: 62-70) Within Hegel’s understanding, a possible discussion about the legal subject in connection with legal object is meticulously omitted.

Moving from that point to considering this a matter of private law and trying to open a fresh area for public law with its constitutional foundations and human rights protection mechanisms, does not help to maintain a consistent theory either. Simply because, with its rhetoric of rights, equality and justice et cetera, public law creates an veil of ignorance, (here I am deliberately manipulating a Rawlsian concept) for the “citizens” to prevent them from seeing the process of law’s making. And therefore, taking into account Pashukanis’ warning about not everything is ideological within law (Pashukanis, 2002: 75) we come face to face with another phenomenon: law can turn into an ideology itself. It is possible to observe this phenomenon in the modern democratic states with little trouble. A certain belief that law might be the only rational opportunity for the rational subjects to live together, especially in heterogeneous societies might “in severe cases” lead to what we call “legal fetishism”.

Legal Education

Having taken two major steps to understand law both from inside and outside, let us now borrow a systems theoretical concept once again and analyze the structural coupling of law and education.

As in all coupling areas, the relevant systems must have co-evolved without intruding into each other’s functional borders. We have already determined that function of the legal system is *stabilizing normative expectations of legal subjects*. As for education, the specific function of this system is to change people in the direction of definite goals. To quote Luhmann himself: “Speaking about education one primarily thinks about intentional activities that try to develop a person’s abilities and foster his/her ability for social communion” (Luhmann, 1997: 15)

The mentioned abilities for the legal system therefore must be in connection with the function of this system. As a consequence, law students’ abilities are developed so as

to stabilize the normative expectations of the social communion in concern. And this is why I think legal education is the process of producing the systems guardians.

Traditional Legal Education in Continental Europe

The best-ever description for traditional European legal education was perhaps made by Franz Kafka, : “Chewing the saw dust that had already been chewed on before by thousands of people before” (Kafka, 1919) Kafka himself was a doctor of law educated in Prussia and his hatred for his studies can be observed in his *der Prozess*, when interpreted as a realist comedy².

Law, indeed is one of the most conservative areas of higher education in Europe, that can perhaps be compared only to theology . If the point is to *stabilize* (the normative expectations), education of the appliers of law naturally requires a certain conservatism. Therefore it must not be a surprising fact that legal education has not changed its method excessively since Irnerius who discovered a lost volume of *Digesta* in a church library in Toscana and started to teach Roman law to his over a thousand students that came from western Europe. (That was 12th century, a period which is considered as the Renaissance of the Roman Law) The basic structure of this method is learning a set of abstract normative statements to put them together with concrete facts of life to solve problems which corresponds to the conflict resolution function of law (Kantorowicz, 1938: 33).

Leaving the method aside, the subject matter depends on the system of the country (the system theoretical explanation of codes and the programs might serve well here to clarify). The continental system rests more or less on the valid norms in different branches of law with immense codifications. Therefore, these norms and their judicial interpretations constitute the body of legal education and the positive law courses are supported by practical courses and or tutorials about application. In traditional Prussian law faculties, legal theory/philosophy of law based on the sources of law doctrine, value problem and argumentation plays a major role. Theoretically reproducing law’s own story and therefore ideological structure of legal system, it is the most “refined” area of law where you can talk about normative concepts like rights and justice without any reference to facts.

Finally, let me note that for its scientific category, law is one of the hermeneutical sciences and therefore it requires a certain talent and understanding of language which

² When not, it looks like a gloomy existentialist story, as it did to Lukacs.

needs to be supported by faculty education. But although it was a very important part of classical legal education initially (Artz, 2007: 242) this aspect of law has been ignored for long time³

Turkey and Neo Liberal Turn

The reforms in the Turkish education system under the influence of western academics started in the last centuries of the Ottoman Republic (Özcan, 2003: 125-131) but it wouldn't be wrong to state that the basic structure of the state universities was formed in the early years of the Republic. And because the legal regulations of the Republic were adopted through a process of reception from Europe (the new Civil Code [1926] for example was the reception of the Swiss code whereas the Criminal Code [1926] as that of Italy), legal education in Turkey progressed in parallel with European law faculties. Furthermore, ten years after the foundation of the Republic, due to the rise of fascism in Germany, a number of very reputable leftist and/or Jewish professors fled from Germany to Turkey. Some of these scholars were working in the field of law⁴ and they did not only help to formulate further legislation but also reshaped the law faculties. As a result, the curriculum of the law faculties in Turkey progressed more or less similar to their equivalents in Europe.

As the neo liberal regulation policies first struck the higher education area, European legal scholars, as the guardians of *status quo*, thought that it would surpass their borders. But as we have observed in the implementation of Bologna criteria, even the curriculum of the faculties have drastically changed despite immense objections especially from Germany (Krings, 2005). First of all, the traditional one year courses were split and courses were modularized to comply with the Bologna objective of unifying the higher education outcome. And more importantly the fundamentals of Prussian system were destroyed, by putting the emphasis not on the global theory learning but on practical expertise.

This transformation in the European system destabilized Turkish higher education system even though the country is not a member of the European Union. The courses were split, simplified, tailored so as to fit credit requirements and some courses were cancelled, being found unnecessary. This is still a great threat to the theoretical

³ For one of the most powerful critical interpretation on the value of the "Rechtswissenschaft" (Jurisprudence, the Science of Law) see Julius von Kirchmann (Kirchmann: 1848). Kirschnann claims that even as a normative science, law has very minor importance.

⁴ Andreas B. Schwartz, Richard Honig, Ernst Hirsch and Karl Strupp were not only experts in their fields of positive law but they also taught modern jurisprudence and philosophy of law (Özcan: p. 155)

courses, for sure. But the greatest impact was –leaving aside the worsening of working conditions and insecurity for academic staff- as the consequence of an all-turca interpretation of neo-liberal “democratization” policies, raising of the student quotas of admission to law faculties. Just to give a quick example, approximately 1.250 students are admitted to Istanbul University Law Faculty every year (OSYM, 2014). What’s worse is that by the time this paper was written, there were around 70 law faculties in the country, including state universities and so-called foundation universities. Furthermore, to clinch the process, a draft law on higher education is on its way and in case it is adopted, this number shall grow with the introduction of totally private universities.

Lawyer’s Labor

As the Bologna process trims the “elite” and heavily loaded Prussian system, the number of the students admitted to law faculties grow. But - considering that the vast majority of law graduates in Turkey choose to be lawyers - city Bars of Turkey are under more pressure of internship candidates in direct proportion. And this is actually a labor issue.

Lawyer’s labor within Marxist understanding is surely unproductive and traditional lawyers are the typical examples of agents of the bourgeoisie (Tonak & Savran 1999) But lawyer’s labor has been changing form since early 1980s. A study on this type of labor in the scale of Istanbul (Akbas, 2011) shows that the more than half of the lawyers in Istanbul are not working in their own working place but are employed by other lawyers , that is to say they are wage earners. This fact alone would not be sufficient to declare that lawyers are the new members of working class, but taking the above mentioned artistic aspect of law into consideration, we can easily compare their situation to that of the participants of petit bourgeois atelier as Sennett (2013: 218-226) described. But the story is not over yet. There are also a growing number of law offices that are not owned by lawyers. The employers in these offices are only capital owners who have enterprises is in “law business”. This process proves that the quantitative change in the legal field leads to a qualitative change in the labor of employees turning it into a sort of an ordinary office work. With the increasing number of law graduates, the process of a legal case is crumbled and the fresh graduates are literally doing the bits and pieces of, that is to say the work of secretaries or office boys.

To sum it up, we can see that the simplifying and therefore shortening of legal education to satisfy the neoliberal interest, along with the growing number of law students directly changes the price of the labor force. And you don't need to be a fortuneteller to foresee the catastrophic future after the introduction of private universities.

Critical Education under These Circumstances?

In the current times the power of critique is reduced to dust, being “critical” in a most conservative field like law is harder than ever. However, there is a strong critical movement especially in the Anglo-American legal field, the roots of which go back to the 60s and even all the way back the legal realism in the dawn of the 20th century. The Critical Legal Studies movement – in a nutshell- suggests that law is not a solution for the social injustice and because it is nothing but the judicial process, the judicial verdicts must be analyzed to understand law's real relationship with social injustice. With a concrete understanding of law's ideological character, it leads to different approaches like critical race theory, feminist studies in law etc. (Hunt, 1986) But being a “legal” theory, to make up to the destruction the legal system causes in the society, the CLS does not offer more than educational purposes for social emancipation.

What I mean by “critical” in legal education is not based on the critique of existing legal systems or the problems there of, either; which is also very common in the law faculties. For apart from not being very effective, there is also a logical trap in this one. It has already been mentioned that law as a system has the function of stabilizing normative expectations, But normative expectations have a very unique character: There are immune to disappointment. Let me give an example from the Turkish Criminal Code:

ARTICLE 141-(1) Any person who takes other's movable property from its place without the consent of the owner to derive benefit for himself or third parties is punished with imprisonment from one year to three years.

Despite the linguistic form of its wording, “Any person... ‘is’ punished”, does not correspond to a fact, but is a normative statement. The simple subtext suggests that” the thieves ought to be imprisoned”. And therefore, the *fact* that a thief was not put into prison would not falsify the proposition and it does not destroy this *normative* expectation. As a result, if a critique is limited only to the bad court verdicts about

thieves, or that the thieves are not caught, it would have no meaning in terms of a real criticism. Therefore a facing a critique about the functioning of the system, the students will be more determined to rescue the system rather than criticize it mainly because of their association mechanisms.

A real critique in this case, should question larceny itself and the offences against property as a category. And to develop such a critique, a teacher cannot only stay in the field of law. She should dissect law and analyze its relationship with property ownership and therefore talk about base- superstructural relationships and the dialectical nature of law which requires sound knowledge on logic, philosophy, history and political economy. And only this kind of a critique, would serve the emancipatory cause by creating the system's enemy out of its guardian.

Consequences & Possibilities

Now let us sum it all up...The legal system, serving as an ideology for the bourgeoisie, does not contain any immanent values for the working class. And in an era when the guardians of this system are in a proletarianization process, it would be a wise attempt to intervene in the education of the lawyers. In the field of structural coupling area of law and education, there is enough room to criticize and radicalize the potential labor power. And as it is not valuable *an sich*, law would serve as a valuable tool.

For those who would doubt this perspective, out of ethical concerns, let me remind the long centuries of rights struggles which were not based on a naïve belief in rights rhetoric of bourgeois legal theory. And to support this point of view, as law itself is a “practical category”, it may be helpful to turn to Lenin. Being a law graduate himself, Lenin did not think law was that “useless”. On the contrary, just as he was totally aware of the dangers of and mad at “legal fetishism”, he was also mad at the other side of the coin, what he called the “fetishist denial of legality”. Someone has to do the dirty work and staying morally clean, finding law not worth being involved is by no means acceptable, he thought (Pashukanis, 1925)

“But it was necessary to know how to do this work in a certain type of situation, and put aside the kind of revolutionary fastidiousness which acknowledged only the dramatic methods of struggle.” (Pashukanis, 1925).

As for his last remark, I must say that I do not agree with Lenin. Actually law is dramatic, too. Let me give two brief examples to conclude.

Jacques Vergès, the great lawyer of Carlos the Jackal and Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine passed away last year . He was called the devil's or terror's

advocate and considered a very dangerous man for the world system, not because of defending its enemies but for defending the system's own weapons. Being a conscious communist Vergès, did not only defend left wing organizations, guerillas or symbolical characters like Milošević, he was also the lawyer of Klaus Barbie, the Nazi war criminal. But why? He simply explained this as playing its own game against the system. To reveal the jaws of the system, its hypocrisy by proving that the pioneers are just pioneers. As for the legal *values*, he himself said that he had absolutely no belief in justice and that a good trial was nothing but a good Shakespearean drama (Sandberg & Follath, 2008).

And second example is a from a Turkish lawyer, Selçuk Kozağaçlı, the head of Progressive Lawyers Association , who was accused of being a member of an extra parliamentary organization, People's Front. The lawyer wrote a 160 pages defense, teaching legal theory to the court:

“You talk about Rule of law and that you respect it very much. It is actually your totem made of halva. You eat it when you wish to.”⁵

There is perhaps no more powerful way to explain the limits of legal fetishism. And as it comes directly from practice, it has direct effect on the understanding of legal system and revealing the underlying complexities. With its highly refined rhetorics, Kozağaçlı's defense was based on a strategy developed by Vergès, called *rupture defense* (Vergès, 2012), which is based on not defending oneself as an accused but challenging the system who accuses him/her. Simply put: judging the judges. Raising up one's consciousness up to this level can only be maintained by critical thought, which can also be taught in law faculties.

As for the last words to sum it all up, I suggest that a critical educational approach, leading to a change in perspective, might serve to build a new consciousness for the law student as a future wage earner category in the market. And this must be considered as a reason to focus on legal studies not as a part of superstructure but as a contributor of a more complex mutual relationship as in the letter Engels wrote to Schmidt.

⁵ The video of Kozağaçlı's defense (unfortunately only in Turkish) can be found under: http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x1nb3g9_selcuk-kozagacli-savunma-1_school

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Critic thinking in the curricular reform of the basic education in Albania

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Abstract

Based on the analyses OECD (Blondal, Field, Girouard, 2002) on human capital investment in education, it should also be emphasized the role played by the curriculum of basic Education in human development.

The problem that arises in the educational curriculum is: In the present day era of the society of knowledge, where the breath of neoliberalism is dominant, which leads towards the fading of the public powers and an autonomy of private actors, which is the kind of individual that the school should cultivate?

The philosophic basis of the founding of contemporary curriculum is the interest for the cultivation of the critic and creative thinking of the individual under the didactic aspect of constructivism and social interaction. According to the UNESCO, in the framework of the drawing of the policy of the Curricula in developed countries, the essential abilities which the education should develop in the individual are four:

- To teach the individual how to learn (i.e. how to obtain the instruments of understanding of the world)*
- How to act in order to be productive*
- How to be a participant and to cooperate with the others*
- How to exist (ability which comes as a result of the three above mentioned abilities)*

In this context, in my article I shall refer to the role that the development of the critic thinking in the curriculum of the basic Education in Albania, has, positively in the field of learning “Albanian language and Literature”. The critic thinking constitutes one of the main competences of education of the individual in our schools, which are not a product of the answer to the question “What kind of people we produce for the society”, but “What we can do that our children might become what they want to become for the future.” Thus, one of the major aims of school is the stimulation of the critic thinking, in order that they think in a reasonable and reflective way, where the most important thing is not the finding of the information, but the

evaluation and selection, being productive in the solving of the subject problems according to the learning situations, in order to cultivate an individual capable to take everyday decisions and an individual who cooperates in a functional way with the surrounding world.

Keywords: critical thinking, curricular reform, kompetences, the fields of learning, transfer of learning, products of critic thinking.

Introduction

The fast and tearing change which is happening in the contemporary society presents a discouraging challenge for those who prepare the children for the twenty-first century.

Nowadays we cannot envision the kinds of works that the children who finish the secondary school, high school and university and later when they begin their work, will make. Starting from the work in the factories, health institutions, we can envision with difficulty what people can do with their works.

In USA the saying goes that in the new century we have entered over 25% of kinds of works that the people make today will not exist, and those works that exist nowadays and that will continue in the beginnings of the coming century, will be quite different. Quite different knowledge and reasoning will be demanded benefiting the world of the future.

Philips (1992) has reported that the majority of those that we know that they will be excluded for ten years or less, before they become inappropriate or obsolete. Comparability with this extraordinary production of information is the technological “explosion” in the spread of information. The direct information that we are able to teach our children is only a small part of the content in every field and only a part of the information that they need to know in life.

The more the societies struggle with the temporary state towards an economy of market and a social democratic order, a central question that the teachers should make is:

In what way can we prepare the students better for the democratic life and the economic efficiency in the twenty-first century?

The content of learning is important, but perhaps it is not the most important in learning. The essential duty for the students is to learn how to learn in a fruitful way and to think in a critic way. They should be able to view the information and the ideas in an independent way; to act in accordance with this view and, this way, the information can be beneficial. They should be able to analyze the new ideas from different points of view, to make judgments on the truth and the value, by defining the general value of the ideas, based on their own needs and intentions.

Curricular reform of basic education in Albania

One of the problems layed in psychology has to do with the issue whether the school should focus their attention on the process or the content, on the abilities for solving the problems or the basic knowledge, on the abilities of thinking or on the concrete academic knowledge. By (Perkins, Jay 7 Tishman, 1993) the creation of the spirit of research and critic thinking in class, the respect for reasoning and creativity, as well as an atmosphere where it is expected from the students to understand and learn in accordance with Vygotsky's theory about learning through directed processes. The culture of the class can give us lessons about thinking, by offering models of correct thinking, giving us instructions of DPD for the processes of thinking and by motivating us to practice these processes in intercommunion with the others. ⁱ

ⁱⁱThe last decade, the educational systems undertook or they are vitalizing radical reforms. Theoretical and methodological frameworks for the treatment of curriculum now harmonize four columns: 1) the logic of competences; 2) referring to socio-constructivism; 3) stress on the situation of learning, and 4) concentration on the student [C. Braslavsky, 2001; Ph. Jonnaert, 2010].

- The problem of the present curriculum of basic education in Albania

The curricula of basic education in Albania are inclined towards the development of learning during the whole life and they enable the integration based on abilities. They aim at making the students capable to learn in an independent way and to fit to the world of work which is becoming more dynamic and more complex.

The inter-curricular faculties are an important part of the aims and objectives of the levels of education, subjects' programmes, expectations from learning, and methodologies of teaching and

evaluation of learning. The inter-curricular faculties are a very important factor of the curricular integration. The present curriculum of basic education in Albania does not determine in a clear way the inter-curricular faculties which all the subjects should aim, because the curriculum is not led by the document of the curricular frame.

In a part of present subjects' programmes of the first classes and ninth classes is aimed the development of capacities of critic and creative thinking, but there are other capabilities such as that of communication, use of Math, solving the problem situation, working in group and use of TIK or social capabilities.ⁱⁱⁱ

In the existing curriculum, especially in some subject programmes and in the manuals for teachers, it is written for these capabilities, but in fact they are not transformed into leitmotifs of written curriculum and the applied curriculum in school.

The present curriculum of basic has not clearly organized and does not set the expected results of learning for the inter-curricular subjects. One of the improvements which will be made to the new curriculum is also the identification of such subjects and their involvement in all the fields of learning and the subject.

- The curricular reform in Albania, achievements and challenges for the improvement of the school.

In the context of our needs and capacities for a stable development, the MASH^{iv} is applying the National Strategy of Pre-university Education 2009-2013, which is supported by the Programme "Quality and Equality in Education" (P-CBA)

The first reform which aims more directly at the creation of the new culture of learning is developed by altering, perfecting and relating the components of three fundamental fields:^v

- Students as the center of learning
- The curriculum of education
- The system of the insurance of the quality

Is the consolidation of the model of learning with the student in the center, oriented towards the critic thinking and with an organized content based on the subject fields.

The understanding that all the students are capable of learning according to their own capacities and that they should be evaluated as the most important beings, sets the student in the center. This does not mean at all the lessening of the importance of the teacher's role; on the contrary, the teachers will play an important role and they should enjoy a higher status.

The drawing of the new curriculum should be based on the researches that offer a deeper view on the way how the human beings learn, as how this learning can be transformed into learning the whole life, in order to prepare them as individuals and as members of the free market. The academic and professional material is aiming at the development of the students, by equilibrating the competences, critic thinking, moral values and social responsibilities.

Today the contemporary systems reflect in the curriculum the integrating approaches, which allow building of the competences which relates the school with real life, where the subject integration is focused on the major issues, the inter-subject learning transcends the limits of the instructional subjects and curricular offers for the students are diverse.

As a consequence, the weight with the instructional time is equilibrated, conditions for holistic learning (where the effect of the whole is bigger than the effect of the sum of component parts) are provided, and that which the students learn during the lesson with everyday life is better related: training of the individual for a better qualitative life, the development of the society and economy, by developing the competences of human resources in the level that the democratic society and the work market demands.

The competences of learning

The competences are defined as wide abilities to apply the knowledge, skills, attitudes, routines, values and emotions in an independent, practical and meaningful way.

Knowledge: is the wholeness of facts, principles and information which are possessed. Building of the competences by the subjects, in every level of the educational system, constitutes the key challenge of our curricular reform, their major objective. ^{vi}The EU Commission, in the year 2007, emphasized:

If in the focus is the development of a wide circle of key competences for learning during the whole life, then the disciplinary knowledge should be seen more as a first step which, alone, is not enough to respond to the needs of the students in the modern society.

According to Ph. Jonnert (2009), Dwan of the curricular chair of UNESCO, '*The competence is a result of complete training of a situation y the side of the person, or the group of people, in a determined context, a training which is based on the previous experiences, sources and actions*'. Therefore, he suggests, the programmes of study, more than counting the 'pseudo-competences' or objectives, should describe the situations of learning and useful elements for their full treatment.

- The analysis of the products of the reform

Preparing the students for life and work in the future demands that the curriculum should enable the children and youngsters to gain some basic abilities in order that they develop to become managers of their own selves, critic and creative thinkers, independent, capable of solving problems, active participants in group and good communicators. According to Karameta, the Conference organized by the Institute of the Development of Education on December the 16th 2013, opened a new horizon on the new initiative for the curricular reform of the pre-university education and the school as a community center. The discussions on the new socio -constructive approach set the main points for that which is to follow. The minister Lindita Nikolla, stressed that the education which has in its foundation learning during the whole life, demand the reforming of the curriculum, which should have the competences in its own base. PISA determines the *European Competences for the 21st Century as follows:*^{vii}

- Communicating competence in native language
- Communicating competence in foreign languages
- Cultural awareness and expressions
- Initiative and argumentation
- Social competences and competences related with the quality of the citizen
- Meta-cognitive competences

- Digital competences
- Math competences and competences in science and technology.

^{viii}On the basis of this approach the curricular frame and other curricular documents such as the standards of learning and achievements and subject programmes will be seen. The initiatives for the school as a community center will stimulate and support the forming of the fundamental interpersonal, intercultural, social and civil competences of the undertaking and abilities for transforming the ideas into actions, intercultural understanding etc.

^{ix}In different countries of the world, also including the developed ones, the majority of the people do not know how to think in a critic way. The main reason why the people have lost the art of critic thinking stands in the way how the school functions. Our school is a product-answer to the question: “*What kind of people we produce for the society?*”, instead of: “*What we can do for the youngsters to become the people they want to become?*”. As long as the educational curriculum is a straitlaced by stimulating the reproductive thinking, word for word, the more it is distances itself from the basic objective for which it is founded: the education.

According to Pisa, the axis of the curricular education in the present society should be the cultivation of the individual with the following qualities:^x

To master a sufficient entirety of knowledge from all the sciences.

To develop attitudes and conclusions which create the democratic civilian.

To master the integrating expressions and abilities needed in the society of the 21st century, such as:

- Creativity
- Critic thinking and reflective administration of knowledge.
- Theoretical thinking and abilities of the transformation of theory in practice.
- Abilities and expressions of analysis and planning.
- Readiness and abilities for collective activity and exchange of information.

- Abilities in solving the problems, readiness in looking for alternative knowledge and in the development of alternative theories as well as the expressions of interpersonal communication.
- Skills and maturity in the use of digital technology.
- Empathy and skills of interpersonal communication.

The competences of thinking “Critic Thinker”

^{xi}Historically, the critic thinking has been necessary, but, nowadays it takes a vital importance. The major reason is related to the fact that, in the modern world of technology of information the most important thing is not the finding of information, but its evaluation and selection in a way for the individual to judge for the world and the information presented to him. The ability of the critic and creative thinking is not innate, but it could be learned, stimulated and developed over time.

There is no doubt that the knowledge about facts is important. However the idea that there is a background of knowledge to prepare the students in an every- day way for their future, becomes less convincing the more the rates of the change of the society are increased.

The difficulty of the description of such a fund of knowledge comes from the fact that from 100% of knowledge that we possess today only 10-15% of them are valuable in the 20-25 coming years.

The main issue of the study PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) is that what is important for the citizen to know and do, more positively evaluates the space in which the 15 year old students have mastered knowledge and skills which are essential for their full integration in contemporary societies.

^{xii}The study PISA, which is concentrated generally in reading, math, science and solving of problems, does not simply specify how able are the students to reproduce that which they have learned, but it also analyses how well they can draw conclusions from those they have learned and how able are they to apply this knowledge in non - familiar environments, inside and outside the school, therefore, in other words, how to transfer their knowledge into the problems of

everyday life. In this sense, the present modern societies reward the individuals not only for what they know but also for that that can do with what they know.

^{xiii}For didactic reasons of thinking of the highest level it can be divided into three kinds:

- The critic thinking,
- Solution of the problems,
- The creative thinking

According to^{xiv} the reviewed classification of the objectives Bloom by L. Anderson & D. Krathwohl, the levels of thinking are as follows:

Skills of the high level of thinking

Estimation

Synthesis

Analysis

Application

Understanding

Knowledge

Skills of the high level of thinking

I create

I estimate

I analyze

I apply

I understand

I remember

Critic and creative thinking

Skills of the low level of thinking

- Critic thinking

Skills of the low level of thinking

^{xv}The term critic thinking comprises a wide range of cognitive and mental skills and expressions which are necessary for:

- Effective determination, analysis and estimation of arguments
- Discovery and overcoming of obstacles and prejudices
- Forming and presenting the convincing arguments supporting the conclusions

- Taking logic decisions related with the beliefs or actions

^{xvi}The critic thinking is a result; it is a point in the process of thinking by the means of which every person thinks in a critic way as a natural way of interaction with the ideas and information, it is an active process which is demanded to be developed intentionally or occurs by chance, which in a sustainable way makes the student control the information and this way he can face a crisis, can include, adjust or share the information. For example Braun (1989) argues that the abilities for learning, separated by intentions and duties of the real world, provide the students with the opportunity to perform well an objective test, but they are incapable to apply these skills in new situations.

The fruitful and long-term learning, which can be applied in new situations, is an issue in which the information and the ideas mastered have a meaning. This happens in the best way when the students participate actively in learning, enter deeply inside it synthesize and produce the information by themselves (Anderson et.al, 1985).

The learning of the students is widened when they use an entirety of strategies for thinking. It is the use of these strategies, the experiences meaningful learning, which the students make their efforts in the process of learning. (Palinskar and Braun, 1989).

Critic learning and thinking when the students are able to apply the new learning in real tasks (Resnik 1987).

Learning is widened when it is built on previous knowledge and experiences, thus, the students are given the opportunity to relate what they know with the new information which will be learned (Roth 1990).

The critic thinking and learning occurs when the teachers think and estimate the changes of the ideas and experiences.

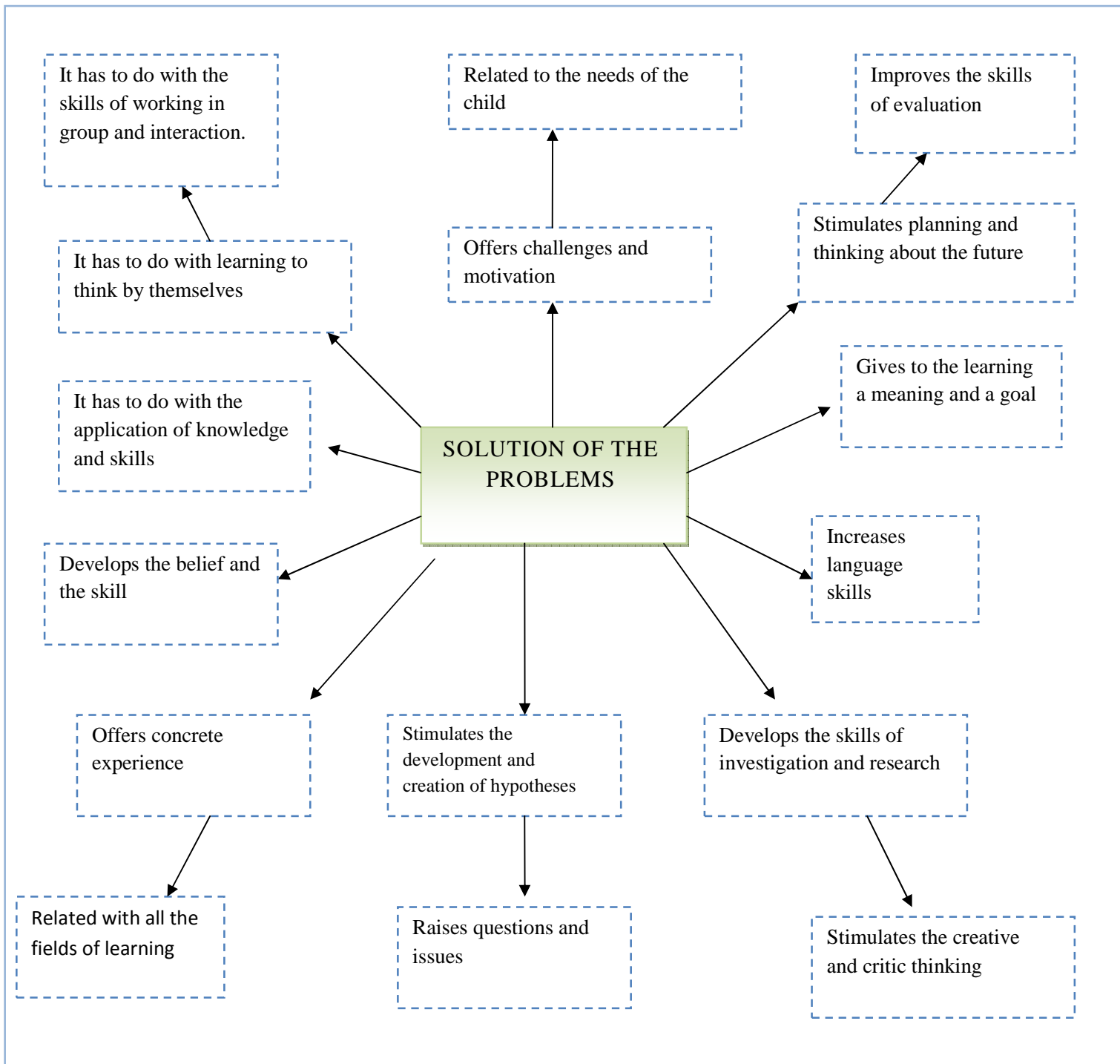
The problematic thinking

As a constituent part or category of thinking through the development of critic and creative thinking is also thinking through problematic thinking.

The problematic thinking is a regular analytical process which means the use of the known to discover the unknown. The advantage of the learning of knowledge via solving the problem is a very productive and interactive learning aiming at the development of the critic and creative thinking in students.

The solution of the problems is thinking in action and it can be compared with two other kinds of thinking: creative thinking (divergent) and critic thinking (analytic). These three kinds of thinking are closely combined with each-other. The creative and critic thinking are in essence, forms of analyzing thinking which can consist of forms of researching for the sake of researching or that can be applied for an intention in the solution of the problems.

The capability of the child to apply his own thinking in the solution of the problem will be the key of the success of this child in life. There are a lot of immediate benefits that can be reached from the preparing the children to solve the problems. The activities of the solution of the problems stimulate and develop the skills of thinking and reasoning. The activities of the solution of the problems not only that they increase the knowledge, skills and attitudes, but they also give the grown-ups or the teachers the opportunity to observe the way how the children solve the problems, how they communicate and how they learn. There is no better way to see whether the child has understood a process or information, than to see whether he is able to use those he has understood in the solution of the problems.



The transfer of learning through the critic thinking

The approach and elaboration of knowledge in an independent, effective and responsible way is very important for learning, but also for taking decisions and for solving problems with full awareness. Taking in consideration the complexity of the present-day society and economy, based on knowledge, the management of knowledge has become an essential competence for the 21st century.

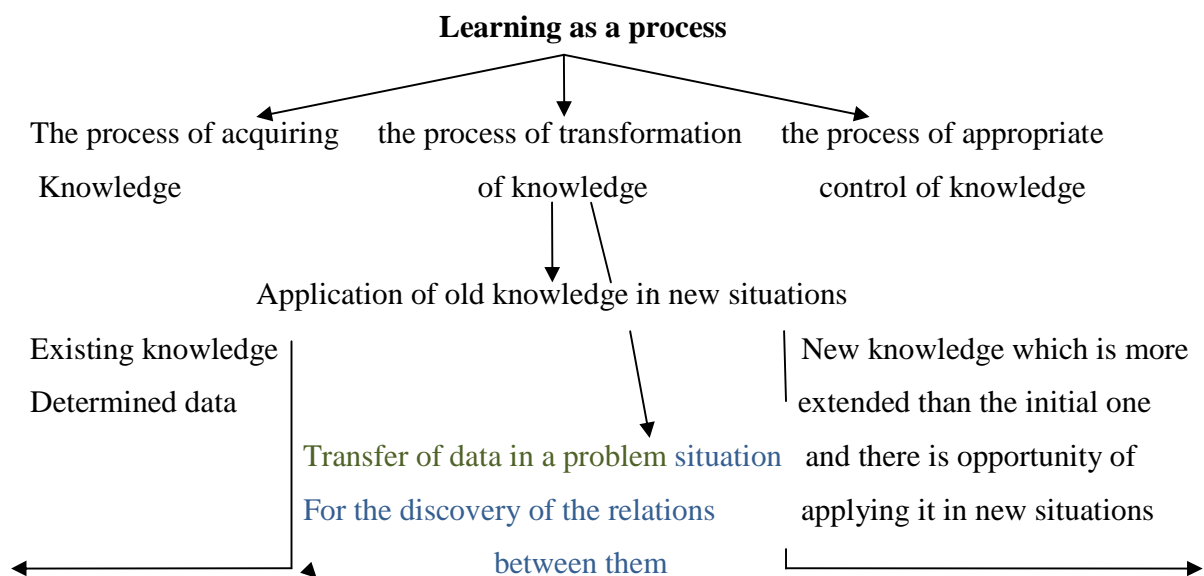
The development of the skills of thinking in the present day education and that of the future aims towards the deep thinking, a skill which is acquired through the development of learning according to the hierarchy of cognitive taxonomy of Bloom towards the highest spheres of thinking, critical, creative thinking and the solution of the problems. The question which rises:

How can we be assured that the students will use what they learn even when the circumstances change or in their future?

For this I shall refer to two important concepts which realize the process of learning according to the socio-cognitive direction, the transfer of learning and the development of the critic thinking.

The cognitive point of view views the learning as expansion and transforming of knowledge which meanwhile we master and not like a simple script of the associations in the unwritten pages of our brain (Greeno, Collins & Resnick, 1996). Instead of passive influence by the environmental events, people take their decisions in an active way. They practice, dedicate attention, ignore, reflect and make many other choices during the way towards reaching their objectives. The old cognitive points of view put the stress at the acquirement of knowledge, but the newest approaches put tgheir stress at building the knowledge (Anderson, Reder, & Simon, 1996).

According to the cognitivist points of view on buiding up the knowledge, the newest model of the process of learning is presented as follows.



(Μπασέτας 2002: 299-305) (Ράπτης, 2007: 125-126)^{xvii}

^{xviii} Bruner refers to two kinds of transfer of learning, specific transfer of learning (transfer of low way), which is the applying of specific skills in situations similar to those on which they were built, and non-specific transfer (transfer of high way) which is the applying of acquired knowledge in situation not similar to those which the were initially built. This provides the essence of the whole process of learning and education

Low way transfer	High way transfer (preparing for the lessons of the future)
Automatic transfer of practiced knowledge	The aware application of abstract knowledge in a new situation Productive use of cognitive tools and motivation
Diversity of conditions and circumstances	Aware concentration in the abstraction of a principle, idea or procedure which can be used in many situations
	Learning in very powerful environments where teaching is closely combined with learning

The key of transfer of high way stands at the aware abstraction of a principle, idea, strategy or procedure which is not related with a special problem or situation, but it can be applied in a great number of cases to lead learning and the solution of future problems. For example, the studies for the use of Math in everyday life show that people do not always use the math procedures learned at school to solve their practice problems at home or their shops. This happens because learning is circumstantial i.e. learning occurs in specific situations.

How can the teachers be assured that the students will be able to use what they learn even when the circumstances change?

First of all, the question what should be learned should be made. No doubt that learning the basic skills, such as reading, math, cooperation, speaking will be transformed into other situations,

because these skills are necessary to work later in different situations of life. Everything that happens later in our lives depends on the positive transfer of these basic skills in new situations.

Secondly, the teachers should be aware for the future that expects their students, as individuals but also as a group. What will the society ask from them when they grow up? For this reason, the general transfer of principles, attitudes, strategies of learning, motivation and solution of problems will be of the same importance for the students the same as the specific transfer of basic skills.

How can the teachers help?

Firstly, the students should develop the basic skills through repetition in automated skills.

For the transfer in the highest levels, the students in the beginning should learn to understand. They will have more opportunities to transfer their knowledge in new situations if they are involved in an active way in the instructional process.

The students should be stimulated to create abstractions which they will apply them later, therefore they should know that the transfer of learning is important.

They should learn to create strong and deep relations between new knowledge and the existing knowledge they have acquired earlier, by relating them closely with the experiences of everyday life.

^{xix} **Activities and products of critic and creative thinking**

The estimation

The student takes decisions after a deep process of critic reflection and estimation (control, hypotheses, critics, experiments, judgment, testing, discovery, monitoring)

The actions he performs: can you justify your decision, judgment or your behavior? (judges, praises, proves, predicts, estimates, reviews, testifies, determines, shows why, compares, protects, selects, measures, comes to a conclusion, debates, reasons, recommends, puts aside, investigates, argues, decides, criticizes, ranks, etc)

Products of work: (debate, panel, report, estimation, investigation, decision conclusion, convincing speech)

Creating

The student creates new ideas and information by using that what he has learned previously.

Actions: (composes, gathers, organizes, invents, draws, predicts, devices, proposes, builds, plans, prepares, develops, creates, imagines, produces, formulates, and improves)

Products: history, project, plan, media product, newspaper, announcement, painting, movie, etc.

Below I refer to a literary-diary writing through which I present the development of thinking of the student in the high levels and the transfer of learning in these levels.

^{xx} **“Christopher Colombes” From the diary of Christopher Colombes and from the diary of Fra Bartolome De las Casas”**

Activities and products: estimate the actions of Colombes (the used method: discussion, debate)

In the level of estimation opens a debate with the whole class related with the question: Was Colombes with his attitude he showed in the first days in the New World, responsible for the later maltreatment of the Indians? The students will give their positive or negative answer by giving their arguments supporting it.

Answers of the groups

Group 1 (yes)

Group 2 (no)

Arguments “pro”

Colombes took people captive, grudgingly.

Colombes said that the Indians would make good slaves.

These are actions of oppression.

Therefore Colombes is guilty for persecution.

Arguments “con”

He was not that bad as he seemed. He took them not as property but to send them to his place as visitors or to convert them in Christianity.

He did not say literally ‘slaves’, the passage is not clear – it might have simply expressed their admiration for the mildness of these people.

They would have been oppressive actions if they would have been performed with intentional ill will, but here it does not happen this way. C. made some imprudent actions with the Indians, but he did not perform any clear action of persecution.

Colombes is not guilty for persecution, because he did not perform intentional actions of persecution.

Colombes made some imprudent actions with the Indians, but he did not perform any clear action of persecution.

Creative thinking: Activities and products (essay with subject from the hour where the connection between standards of engagement to the special populations and races in the 15th century and in our century)

The teacher can ask from the students to write an essay where some of the issues raised in this discussion to be connected with another context, for example the cases of racism, or any other context of oppression and exploiting.

Conclusions

^{xxi}Hauard Gardner, founder of the Theory of Multiple Intelligences, declares:

Everywhere in the world I find an astonishing context: this is the belief that the quality of educational system of a nation will be one of the main determinants, perhaps one the most main determinants of the coming century and in continuance. Jack Delors declares that there is no long- term stable economic development without a system of qualitative education. ^{xxii}According to the ascertainments at PISA of OECD about the results of education, they mention one of the highest rates of the functional illiteracy in both Europe and Central Asia. Albanian students

achieved very weak results in the programme of PISA in literature, math and natural sciences. To these we add the report published by the World Bank, in 2006, where it is assessed that “the educational results of Albania are weak, especially when they are measured against the needs of work market and compared to the achievements of other countries in the region, with which the working forces of Albania will compete. [...]”.The consequence? The economists of the World Bank in front of this reality declare that, today, the economy of Albania risks the collapse seriously, as a result of the absence of human resources capable of work; because such illiterates remain indeed jobless and not integrated in social life.

In this context, the development of the critical-creative-problem solving thinking as one of the key integrating competences constitutes one of the main parameters of the increase of the curricular quality with the aim of shaping the new individual of the 21st century, capable to respond to the challenges of the society of knowledge.

The critic thinking constitutes one of the key European abilities and expressions, which permeates the whole educational and instructive process, becomes an integrating part of thinking in all the other kinds of learning, integral, interactive, global, learning, learning with projects, etc.

Critic-creative thinking and learning prevent the use of old methods and they are feasible to be applied in all the subjects and cycles of schooling. This kind of thinking and learning frees the students from the mechanical reproduction and creates for them the necessary spaces to make the self evaluation of their work and achievements, in order to determine their defects and weak points and where the attention should be concentrated in the future. Some of the curricular obstacles of the integration of critic thinking with life and work, relevant proposals:

The preferable epistemological approach in the Albanian curriculum is behaviorism. Its influence has gestated and inspired the methodologies of the preparation of the curriculum in the western countries and it has produced that what is called with the name Pedagogy with Objectives (PMO). PMO follows the principle according to which the lesson is “structured” in function of acquisition of the operational objectives which are measurable in quantity through tests. Its main merit, without doubt, is the fact that the students can learn to “do” something beyond the simple acquirement of knowledge and facts. But knowledge outside the contexts by which the school

texts are filled, should be stressed and overvalued. But, by stressing and overvaluing the knowledge outside the contexts, with which the school texts are filled, PMO makes the teacher concentrate on their transmission and the students imbibe them through repetitions. Time has proved that the 'stimulating-counteracting-reinforcing' system gained success only for a small part of the school population, which manages to develop the mental processes from the elaboration of the subject, but in the greatest part of the school population learning turned to be a "real hell".

Overvaluation of this approach y MASH devalues, at least, the aims of the reform for the curricular integration, which is a key precondition for building the competences. It is in the nature of PMO, with the fragmentation in portions and linear ranking of the subject knowledge (subject after subject), that which does not allow the functional integration, thus, the connection of school with real life. That is why today the contemporary systems reflect in the curriculum integrating approaches which allow the competences to be built thus by alienating shift from 'homo sapiens' (the man that knows) to 'homo Faber' (the man who knows how to act).

For this, according to Karameta we need that education which equips the students with competences, which allow them to get oriented and adapt themselves in every situation and to build new attitudes towards the learning of life. Such an education is seen today as the first step we take when we want to escape from the strong disciplinary character, traditionally conceived as the foundation of that which is learned at school. For this reason, according to the National Strategy of Pre-University education 2009-2013, the phase of which is supported by the Programme "Quality and quality in Education" (P-CBA), the selected model fused within it will be the spaces that will take in consideration the demands of the content of knowledge students' demands, social problems and the preparation of students for their solution.

It is mainly the ways of the treatment of the curricular content they which constitute the new basis of learning in the era of information: The consolidation of the model having in its center the student oriented towards the critic thinking and organized according to the fields of learning. The students will be stimulated not towards the mechanic memory, but towards thinking, reaction, researching to learn processes that can use in many subjects also in the future.

Building of the competences from the subjects, in every level of the educational system, constitutes the key challenge of the Albanian curricular reform, their major objective. The EU Commission, in the year 2007, stressed: *'If in the focus is the development of a wide range of key competences for learning during the whole life, then the disciplinary knowledge should be seen more as a first step which, alone, is not enough to respond to the needs of the students in the modern society'*, what brought the European Frame of the key competences for learning during the whole life. The model of OECD, fulfilled with the competence to think, it is being applied for years in the New Zealand, which personifies the concepts of the Anglophone school of the curriculum. Also Quebec/Canada – which refer to the Francophone school – is applying since from the beginning of the decade, from the socio-constructivist point of view, the curriculum based on competences.

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Educational spaces in times of post-industrialisation and EU-2-Enlargement ^[1]

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Abstract

Over recent years, research has shown how centralised ways of decision-making and organisation in education have shifted towards more decentralised forms. The former nation state has lost some of its power and new actors have taken the stage: on the one hand, inter- and supranational organisations, on the other hand city governments, non-governmental institutions and a wide network of actors, among them the civil society and the new media have gained influence within the context of education policy development. The article focuses on an examination of educational spaces in two different post-industrialised regions – the metropolitan region of Leicester in the UK and the metropolitan region of Rhine-Ruhr in Germany, in order to discuss different forms of urban governance in the context of the EU-2-enlargement and the migration of the Roma, the largest European minority. It examines the ways both regions deal with similar societal phenomena by implementing completely different educational settings, spaces and policies. The article presents work in progress and is part of my PhD-project, funded by Hans-Böckler-Foundation. It therefore outlines the research idea as well as some preliminary results and explores the reasons why educational spaces and cultures as well as the current education policies need to be further researched and problematised on a local and regional level rather than on a national level.

Keywords: EU2-enlargement, globalisation, post-industrialisation, migration, social spaces, educational culture, urban governance.

Introduction

An on-going and intensified debate related to the accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the European Union in general and to newcomers being identified as ‘Roma’ in particular can be currently observed. In fact, these kinds of migratory movements

form part of a whole complex issue, namely global migration [2]. Since the beginning of the existence of the first empires like Mesopotamian or the ancient Rome and Byzantium migration has formed an essential part of the process of urbanisation. Since then, multiple migration routes and pathways have been established and have built up our cities. Today, “[i]nternational migration represents one of the most obvious contemporary manifestations of globalization.” (Betts, 2011). Nowadays, one in 35 people are an international migrant; this means that 3% of world’s population is on the move, which in turn is equivalent to the whole of the Brazilian population. Furthermore, just a small part of migration takes place in the EU-countries in contrast to the global south (GCIM 2005: 83). Therefore one can say that migration and mobility are the most common phenomena in constructing today’s societies (Krase 2011). Surprisingly, mobility movements are commonly accompanied by debates on public security and integration. Often this excluding and stigmatising public discourse leads to different forms of implicit and even explicit exclusion and stigmatization, especially of vulnerable persons such as ‘minority’ groups (New 2012; Teasley 2004). In fact, this kind of discourse finally co-constitutes the Roma as largest minority in Europe that represents the most disadvantaged and socially, economically, politically excluded one (Themelis 2009: 262; O’Higgins, Brüggemann 2014). Single institutions such as schools play an important role in the process of exclusion of persons, groups and societies from valuable goods and services. They are embedded in this public discourse on migration as well as in a wider network of local and regional institutions, stakeholders and the city’s governments.

This article develops the idea that the local level plays a central role in building up rather inclusive educational spaces for all or exclusive spaces just for a few. ‘Educational spaces’ are understood in a relational not in a Euclidean way: According to this idea ‘space’ is not an unchanging variable but it is produced historically and interactively (Brooks et al 2012). Motivated by the current debate on migration from Bulgaria and Romania, my ethnographic case study focuses on educational settings and spaces in which new arrivals go about their everyday life, make friends and learn new habits and languages. The study, conducted in two post-industrialised areas, one in Germany (Rhine-Ruhr metropolitan region) and the other in the United Kingdom (metropolitan region of Leicester), analyses local educational cultures in an increasingly globalised and urbanised world. Interviews and participant observation have been conducted with newcomers from Bulgaria and Romania, teachers and

social workers in five German schools and one British school. The study is framed by social constructivist theories that regard systems as human-made and - on these grounds – alterable (see, for example Berger & Luckmann 1966; Strauss & Corbin 1990; Clarke 2005). In this article some findings of my ethnographic case study are developed. One of my central questions delves into the way schools are confronting the current migration movement from Bulgaria and Romania. In terms of the normative premise of inclusion, I seek to investigate how schools and their local city governments include the newcomers from Bulgaria and Romania. More specifically, I am interested in exploring how this is done in their day-to-day practices. This article uses the concept of ‘Educational governance’ to argue that educational spaces are no longer solely nationally governed but above all globally, internationally and locally at the same time (Amos et al 2010).

Firstly, I will briefly outline my theoretical framework and perspective. Secondly, I will introduce the research design of my project. Thirdly, I will share some of my own findings contextualised in a complex interrelation which combines different levels of action, culture and investigation. These levels include: selected fragments of the newcomers’ everyday life, the hegemonic public discourse on the current mobility phenomenon and selected educational settings in two different regions. Finally, I will point to tendencies of educational governance that could be found in the two investigated regions. Based on this outline, I will draw some conclusions from the analysis and explore some critical thoughts and questions with regard to educational inclusion in times of EU-2 enlargement and post-industrialisation. In this way, I hope to contribute to new perspectives on the future organisation and development of (more) inclusive schools and educational cultures.

Schools in an urbanised and mobile society

A look at the current immigration movement from Bulgaria and Romania to countries such as Germany and the UK shows that the current phenomenon is not new. It is embedded in a larger history of internationalisation and globalization. City communities and the public sector, among them educational institutions and schools, have to deal with the migration movement as a whole – beginning with including the poor and low-qualified to the high-skilled workers and their families; in order to prevent social exclusion and growing social divide policy makers and educational experts have a choice between the following:

- They can try to oppress and homogenize the appearing and growing diversity of the cities and the citizens.

- Or they can create social climate and social structures within the city's institutions and deal with this diversity in a fair and equitable way

The three concepts that I wish to introduce are important because cities and the institutions are the places where social change continuously takes place. Here, a social experiment is underway and can be explored:

1. *EU-2-enlargment*. The current migration movement from Bulgaria and Romania to other European countries has to be seen in the context of EU-enlargement, the accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the EU and therefore as a very common phenomenon: the replacement of national borders with one Schengen area to which all EU-member states belong and where citizens can move legally from one place to another to improve their living conditions. Central and western European countries in particular – among them the UK and Germany - profit from a cheap labor force in their own National health system as well as in the fields of housing, construction and services. The EU is based on four basic economic principles: free movement- of goods, capital, persons (freedom of movement) and services. This includes the freedom of Bulgarian and Romanian citizens to circulate freely within the EU since 2007 and being fully integrated into national working markets of Germany and the UK since 2014.

2. *Urbanised society*. As schools are embedded institutions within a wider educational system and societal context they form part of today's urbanised society. This urbanised society is a concept developed by urban sociologists such as Saskia Sassen (2007) and Christine Chin (2013). They state that urban societies are based on mobility, and therefore also on migration. Furthermore, they argue that the meaning of the nation state has been replaced today by the *Global Cities* as new governance centers, where social, cultural and economic capital is condensed. Urban sociologists postulate an on-going shift from former centralised governments towards today's decentralised forms of urban governance. At the same time they recognise that the fading power of the nation state produces a *paradox of the national*: single actors behave increasingly nation-state-like. This paradox also takes place in public institutions such as city governments and schools when 'race' and 'ethnicity' become decision-leading factors within institutional cultures, e.g. when they combine segregatory housing and schooling politics (Frankenberg 2013) [3], when they

implement the hegemonic public discourse on migration into everyday school culture and when they segregate students by 'ethno-natio-cultural' features, citizenship and socio-economic status in extra-integration classes with low-quality learning conditions.

3. *Post-industrialisation*. In this context, inner cities represent an interesting and dense research field for analyzing an on-going social experiment where on the one hand social change, super-diversity and super-mobility (Vertovec 2010; Crese/Blackledge 2010) can be observed through everyday practices; and on the other hand different forms of dealing with them become visible. Doug Saunders (2011) calls these places *Arrival Cities* which are part of the inner cities of nearly every post-industrialised metropolitan region. Here, people open small businesses and shops, find cheap flats because rents are low, a fact which attracts new arrivals from all over the world. According to Lefèbvre (1972) these places can be analysed as paradoxical expressions of the urbanised society: They are isotopic (localised-materialised) and heterotopic (translocalised-referencialising) at the same time (Lefèbvre 1972: 182 f.).

These Arrival Cities represent the starting point of my investigation. Next, I will briefly outline how my study was conducted. As already mentioned, it looks at two different regions, both situated in de-industrialised areas. One area lies in the West of Germany, the Rhine-Ruhr metropolitan region (mrRR) and the other one lies in the United Kingdom, in the region of Leicester (mrL). The focused schools and their districts in both regions are characterised by a complex pattern of people entering but also leaving where national minorities form the majority. One of my key questions centres on how newcomers are welcomed in the institution. My key question is: What is going on in the institution with respect to the newcomers with Romanian / Bulgarian citizenship, Roma- or non-Roma? For my study three levels of analysis are relevant with the assumption that the global is reflected in the local and vice versa:

- *Level A*. Everyday life: This level is dedicated to the perspectives and the needs of the people taking part in the situation (teachers, heads of the schools, social workers, neighbours, shopkeepers, newcomers, students, parents).

- *Level B*. The urban region as framework or meta-context. Of interest are on-going processes such as globalisation and internationalisation in the district and the surroundings and the discourses on it.

- *Level C*. The educational cultures and spaces. Here, I am interested in the structures of educational spaces, curriculum contents, lessons, programmes. My key

question is: What is going on in the institution in relation to the newcomers, Roma- or non-Roma? Here, I am interested in the structures of educational spaces, curriculum contents, lessons, programmes.

The investigated regions each represent one case: In Germany, five schools in two cities were investigated (Case I: mrRR). Each city has approximately 500.000 inhabitants. In the UK, one school in a city of approximately 440.000 inhabitants was examined (Case II: mmL).

	Schools as single institutions	Interviews with teachers, head teachers, social workers, parents, students, neighbors, shopkeepers	fieldnotes through participant observations (classroom, schoolyard, district)	documentary analysis (policy papers on mobility, inclusion/integration of schools, regional and local actors)
CASE I: City A mrRR	1 Primary School 1 Secondary School [,Hauptschule ']	10	2	5 + x
CASE I: City B mrRR	1 Primary School 2 Secondary Schools [,Hauptschule ' and ,Gesamtschule']	15	3	5 + x

CASE II: City C	1	Secondary	7	1	3 + x
mrL		School			
Total	6		32	6	13 + x

Table I. Sample of the study.

As already indicated, my study is based on qualitative methods of inquiry which include document analysis, participant observation and individual interviews with newcomers as well as staff from each investigated school (see Table 1). The inquiry period lasted about one year (from May 2012 till March 2013). During this time several field protocols and 32 interviews were conducted. Additionally, several local documents, such as school programs, educational policies and leaflets have been analysed.

Everyday life, meta-governance and two forms of educational governance

In the following I will present, analyse and discuss selected examples of each level of investigation. The aim is to show how differently the two cases of mrRR and mrL deal with a similar situation in times of post-industrialisation and EU2-enlargement. The paper will end with tiny extracts of the educational cultures and spaces that represent two different forms of educational governance.

Level A: Everyday life of the newcomers

Through conversations with the newcomers as well as with the neighbours, it can be readily discerned that the living conditions, the motives, the needs and even the perspectives of the people are very human and quite common. For this paper, I selected two narratives from newcomers living in the Rhine-Ruhr-Area to illustrate this situation. The narratives form part of a manifold wealth of collected data.

Example I: Act of Citizenship - families and individuals use their rights as EU-citizens to move...

I met Flora and Janina, two 17 year old students in a Hauptschule/ Secondary School in Germany. Both are attending an extra-class for new arrivals. They are cousins and at the same time best friends. Both are from the city Schumen in Bulgaria.

Janina: My grandmother and my grandfather are the only ones at present who have remained in Bulgaria.

K.C.: And besides them, what about your aunts, uncles? Do they all live here [in
 mrRR]?

Janina: Yes, definitely. My cousin and everyone live here.

K.C.: Well, what do your parents do? [...]

Janina: My mother works in a Turkish restaurant and my father is a bus driver. K.C.:
 Oh, he is a bus driver? Does he work here? Janina: Yes.

Flora: And my mother, she is at home. My father is the only one working.

K.C.: Can you tell me what he does?

Flora: Yes. He is a foreman. He paints. // K.C.: Oh, a painter then[...]?// Flora: Yes!

K.C.: Since when have your parents been living in Germany?

Janina: We have been living here for two years. [...]

Flora: My father came first. He has been living here for five years. [...] We came here
 later, with my mother.

(Interview 18: two 17-year old students from Bulgaria)

From the quoted extract, it is clear that with the enlargement of the EU almost the entire family decided to move to the Rhine-Ruhr region. Obviously, their move to this region coincides with the huge demand for (cheap) mostly manual labour including bus drivers, painters or in the service sector. As sociologist Saskia Sassen (2007) notes, these people form part of an internationalised and globalised working class often with deregulated standards for work safety and health protection. The grandparents of Flora and Janina are the only ones to have remained in Bulgaria. The rest of the family moved to improve their living conditions.

This passage of the interview was selected to illustrate this action of moving from one place to another as a very common act of citizenship: families and individuals use their rights as new EU-Citizens to move and choose their preferred place of residence. At the same time the people accept high risks in terms of their own living conditions. This act coincides with Isin's (2013) definition of an act of citizenship "as [...] moment in which a subject asserts a right or entitlement to a livable life when no such prior authorization exists, when no clear convention is in place." (Isin 2013: 25) By moving from one place to another migrants are making claims to citizenship as a basic right and simultaneously they reject further injustices such as low-income, low living standards and inequalities within the EU. Hannah Arendt has already formulated one of the most basic acts of citizenship "The right to claim rights" (Arendt). As new EU-citizens, people from Bulgaria and Romania, whether Roma or Non-Roma, do not only claim their rights as a political act of citizenship but simply make use of it. In

terms of the debate on the current migration movement my research shows “that rights are not always already existing entitlements; they are extensions or assertions of claims and counter-claims.” (Isin 2013: 25) This point will be expanded in a more detailed way in the next level through an analysis of the hegemonic discourse on so called ‘poverty migration’.

Example II: Articulation of Needs - safety

One afternoon, following my observation session in a primary school in the Rhine-Ruhr-area, I interviewed Manuela, a mother of three children. She is originally from Romania, but at the age of 18 she and her husband moved to Latin America to work there as a salesperson and fruit picker respectively. Later, Manuela moved together with her family to Spain to work there as a translator but with the outbreak of the economic and financial crisis in 2008, they were forced to move again. Manuela’s family came to the Rhine-Ruhr-area, where her husband sells magazines. However the money earned is not enough to pay the bills. When asked about her actual perspectives and concerns, highest on Manuela’s list is the need for more safety. She contrasts the situation in Germany with that in Spain where children were not allowed to leave the school ground.

I would like my children to feel safer. In Spain children were not allowed to leave the school grounds. This was good. But here, everything is open. The children might simply run onto the street or they might be picked up by somebody or somebody might simply step into the school grounds. All in all, I would like my children to feel safer at school.

(Interview 3: Manuela, born in Romania, worked in Latin America and Spain. With the outbreak of the financial crisis she and her family moved to Germany, mrRR)

Manuela’s concerns represent those commonly shared by parents: She wants her children to be safe at school and fears that somebody might harm them. By articulating her need for more safety Manuela represents a voice of the civil society. Her needs are in contrast with the state and city’s institutions which at the moment do not have the capacity to satisfy her needs. this articulation therefore formulates a vague request to public schools. According to Hall (2000), articulation shows a connection between society – how it is currently structured by power – and society - how it might be transformed in future. Therefore, articulation is also an important step towards political participation. Paradoxically, Manuela’s feelings in terms of more safety are not only in contrast to the institutions but also with the hegemonic public

discourse on ‘poverty migration’ which declares newcomers as ‘dangerous’ and ‘suspects’ of public order and security.

To sum up the level of everyday life as discussed above, the narratives actually speak for themselves: They strongly contrast the hegemonic public discourse on the current migration route as I will show in the following level.

Level B: Meta-Governance: Hegemonic Public Discourse – Implementation – Effects – Discontinuities

Since the accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the EU in 2007 new regulatory, non-governmental elements and new forms of urban governance were installed to regulate the migratory pathways, replacing former national and physical borders through new forms of urban governance. These forms of governance often divide the city’s community and the current immigration movement from Bulgaria and Romania that actually represents the whole populations’ average, into different fractions of people. This fragmentation has a certain impact on social cohesion in the cities, the neighbourhoods and also on the everyday life within the single institutions. By making new forms of injustices visible, civil society – among them people of colour, migrants, newcomers, minorities – interrupts the hegemonic public discourse, at least momentarily.

Constitution and implementation of the hegemonic public discourse

The public discourse has a structuring impact on the urbanized society. More specifically, city inhabitants who are recognised as ‘migrants’ – although they might have been born in the UK or Germany – are being fragmented into different groups and classes, e.g. because of their skin colour they might be identified as ‘the other’ and might be disadvantaged through ethnic segregation in different segments of society such as housing, schooling, health etc. Finally, the hegemonic public discourse and its interrelated politics segregate the city’s inhabitants in different fractions from those with fully open access to social goods and resources to those with completely closed access.

1. *Discursively welcomed.* The first group of inhabitants is ‘welcomed and invisible’. Those who are expected to contribute to the NGP, highly skilled or skilled workers are treated as EU-citizens.
2. *Discursively suspected.* The second group consists of inhabitants seen as ‘suspected migrants’. This group moves or wants to move to western EU-countries to improve their living conditions. Some are even persecuted in their home countries.

Many of these people belong to a national minority such as the Roma in their home country. These migrants are suspected of living off governmental benefit transfers. Although these people have the right to live and move within the EU, they are treated as illegals. The following quotations cited from the former German interior minister and the recently voted UKIP party in the UK, whose public speeches tend to criminalise the newcomers.

Quotation 1:

“One must easily have a closer look at the places and one has to be brave enough to send back the EU-citizens who abuse the right of free movement.”

(*Source:* Quote from Hans-Peter Friedrich, former German interior minister Magazine Focus, www.focus.de; 20.06.2013; translated by K.C.)

Quotation 2:

These are anxious and troubled times. As crisis follows crisis, our politicians do nothing in the face of dangers rearing up all around us. Taxes and Government debt rise. Energy and transport costs soar. The NHS and state education strain under a population increase of 4 million since 2001. Another wave of uncontrolled immigration comes from the EU (this time Bulgaria and Romania). Yet political class tells us the EU is good for the UK.

(*Source:* Quote from UKIP’s homepage - the Eurosceptic, right-wing populist political party in the United Kingdom; 28.05.2014)

On these grounds, mass media, politicians and powerful organisations play an important part in the constitution and implementation of a hegemonic public discourse. This discourse confines the ‘visual poors’ appearing in the Arrival Cities as to beggars and homeless people and brands them as a high risk for public order and the security of the whole society. By doing so, the people themselves not only become more and more vulnerable and at risk; but the whole city community tends to be stigmatised, as I will show below.

Effects on social cohesion and discontinuities of the hegemonic public discourse

Whereas the migration regimes before the enlargement of the EU with Bulgaria and Romania regulated mobility physically through national borders, territory and passport controls, since 2007 there has been a shift in the migration regime from government to governance. A wider network of single actors has become part of the regulation of migration: Discriminatory public discourse, often initialized through political representatives, has become a regulatory part of the municipal governments and the single institutions, including the educational system: my research shows that

is sufficient to hold a Bulgarian or Romanian citizenship to be racially scrutinized and to appear as a dangerous suspect. The following quote is part of an interview with a trainee doctor who has been working in the UK for years:

Trainee doctor Felicia Buruiana first realised the newspaper headlines warning of a tide of Romanian beggars and benefit cheats were starting to intrude on her day-to-day life when patients began taking a keen interest in her background. At first the 37-year-old got ‘funny looks’ when she told them she was Romanian because she ‘didn’t look like a gypsy’. Then, as the political and media rhetoric around Romanian and Bulgarian immigration to the UK grew more toxic, patients’ attitudes began to harden. ‘There was this certain reaction,’ says Buruiana over a coffee at the end of her shift at her new hospital in Hertfordshire. ‘People would tut or pull a face when I said I was Romanian. In the end it was happening all the time and it made things very difficult. I was going home thinking: this is so disappointing, so sad, so tiring. This is not the UK I had got to know.’

(Source: Quote from a trainee doctor from Romania living in the UK; www.theguardian.com; 28.05.2014)

Felicia describes the effects that the generalizing implementation of the hegemonic discourse has had on her daily routine. It shows how Felicia shifted from the group of *invisible and welcomed migrants* to the group of *suspected migrants* as described above.

The effect of the new urban discourse on migration as a “problem and a challenge” had such an impact that racism and discrimination shifted from single minorities such as the Roma, to newcomers with Romanian or Bulgarian citizenship as well as to those who had been living and working in Western European countries for years. Among them are refugees, people of color as well as other social and national minorities. In short, many people have now become ‘suspicious’ and marked as ‘dangerous suspects’ by the public discourse.

This development can be situated in a larger context of policy-making on issues connected to globalisation and internationalisation through which a segregating migration regime is increasingly becoming an inherent part of the everyday life within the city’s institutions. It can be noted that the generalising effects of the meta-discourse have been extended to many city communities within many EU-countries. The whole social atmosphere of living together has thus been weakened. This ultimately endangers the social cohesion of a whole city community.

In the picture shown below, one can see a broad cross-section of people protesting against social injustice and racial discrimination of Romanian, Bulgarian, Polish,

other Central and East Europeans, Black, Muslim and Roma. The cross-section formed by 5.000 people living in the city calls for migrants' and inhabitants' recognition as equal citizens.



Picture 1. UN Anti-Racism Day Rally at Trafalgar Square, 22 March 2014

Source: www.aarbd.org (28.05.2014)

According to Foucault [2006: 187-194 (1961)], this action could be read as discontinuity of the hegemonic public discourse on migration that defines migration as abnormal and irregular and that constructs the occident in contrast to an imagined oriental 'other'. The protest criticises the division between 'migrant' and 'non-migrant' subjects through which migrants are being objectified as 'problem and challenge'. It calls on the city's authorities to treat all city members equal. By doing so, the protest works as a kind of 'background noise' that interrupts the 'noisy' and dominant hegemonic public discourse on migration and represents another regime of knowledge. From our analysis in this section, the following conclusion can be drawn: Although the noise produced by the hegemonic public discourse creates a powerful migration regime which may appear continuous and monotonous it is not fully stable and not naturally given.

Level C: Two Forms of Educational Governance

The next section of the article discusses the educational settings themselves. From my analysis two completely different forms of educational governance could be identified in terms of the management of migration-based mobility. Whereas the German case segregates newcomers into special settings, the UK case includes newcomers directly into mainstream lessons. After presenting some of the central features of these two cases, I will introduce one scene for each case out of my field research as an illustration of the local educational culture.

The case of mrRR: educational governance through exclusion

Despite the growing increase in inclusive commitments at an international and supranational level, such as the introduction of the European Union's Discrimination Directive (1975), the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the 'Decade of Roma Inclusion' (2005-2015), just to name a few, many of the migrant youngsters are exposed to segregated educational spaces, similar to 'integration classes' that have a long tradition in Germany [4].

In the mrRR we find a situation where the institutional settings go hand in hand with the hegemonic public discourse on immigration: The structure of the educational spaces is based on the on-going public debate on integration where newcomers are mostly forbidden to talk in one of their first languages like Romanesque, Turkish, and Bulgarian etc. Newcomers from Bulgaria, Romania - Roma or non-Roma - from Angola, Greece, Spain, Portugal, Somalia, Iraq, Iran or Syria are being segregated in low-quality educational settings in schools with a low prestige. In such extra-classes,

- newcomers from different countries are confined to a single group with a wide range of ages and levels of performance
- the newcomers remain in these segregated spaces up to two years
- they are being educated by teachers who sometimes do not even hold a University degree
- the quality of lessons significantly differs from the mainstream-curriculum: e.g. they receive fewer lessons and are taught fewer subjects
- in this extra-space, newcomers are treated unequal and as citizens without equal rights
- on many occasions children are offered a school place for a trial period because they are suspected of not attending school regularly.
- one of the investigated cities without sufficient school places puts about 200 pupils on a waiting list for up to two years

Scene I: Racism spreads through the whole school community

The following selected scene, which takes place in a staff room of a primary school, clearly illustrates that newcomers are seen as an 'overwhelming and problematic challenge' not only by the teachers of the 'extra-classes' but also by the mainstream teachers.

Statement of a mainstream teacher in the staff room:

When a teacher realises that Ms E. and I are talking about the immigration process from South-East-Europe [...] she interrupts us, pointing out the following :

- Our Social Systems are being ruined by THEM!
- They have to learn German!
- After three years of living here, many aren't able to speak German!
- Some do not even know simple words such as ,dog'!
- And the only one who has to put up with the problem is me: At the moment I have to teach three of them: One child from Afghanistan and two from Bulgaria!
- I simply had to say this! (...)

(Source BP3: Scene in the staff room of a primary school)

This primary school teacher unashamedly expresses her racist attitude towards the newcomers at the school. She also sees school as part of a society, that she defines as national territory with a mono-linguistic and culturally homogeneous population. Obviously, her perspective strongly ignores many of the on-going social changes within society. Taking this illustration into account, one can say that the tendency to segregate newcomers into extra-classes is, food for institutional racism and inequality'. Consequently, the educational institutions grant those who are seen as poor and chanceless, restricted access to mainstream institutions and desirable resources. Furthermore, nearly all structural and cultural reforms in terms of accountability, autonomy and new public management have been neglected within these educational spaces.

The case of mrL: educational governance through inclusion

A different picture is provided by the research case in the UK: Here, the hegemonic public discourse on immigration does not play such a dominant role in the institutional settings of education. Instead, the institutional and municipal understanding of inclusion follows the broad definition espoused by the UN- or the EU-organisations. Educational structures and cultures have been profoundly reformed with regard to inclusion and diversity. Accordingly, newcomers are included into the mainstream classes from day one. Newcomers are not treated as 'foreigners' with restricted citizen rights but as common and equal students. Additionally, an inclusion team is responsible for special educational requirements. This inclusion team helps ALL students and supports them according to their actual needs. The inclusion team has its own multi-functional building-complex, where students can be sent by teachers if they need help. Members of the inclusion team can also attend the regular lessons, if teachers or students need additional support. Extra-classes or an extra-curriculum for newcomers do not exist, except for extra-support lessons in EAL.

Whereas educational cultures in Germany are designed as ghettos, the investigated school in Britain pursues a strategy that promotes an educational culture beyond ethnic lines. Instead, they have built up egalitarian day-to-day routines that include newcomers- Roma- or non-Roma, British or Non-British citizens. Educational spaces are designed as flexible and relational configurations. In this context, institutional settings are fully open to all newcomers, irrespective of their ethnic, national or socioeconomic background.

Scene II: Newcomers as pupils and citizens

From the sample of the British case, the following scene illustrates the inclusive educational space there. Janis is a linguist, secondary teacher and she is part of the inclusion team. She is specifically responsible for the needs of the newcomers and for English as an additional language.

When Janis notices that the [new arrival] students have difficulties following the lesson, she intervenes by re-explaining the information taught by the regular teacher. The regular teacher explains terms such as ‚stopping distance‘ and wants the class to analyse information in a table, e.g. ‚How long was Peter’s reaction time in seconds?‘ The students have to extract certain numbers out of their tables in front of them. Janis asks the regular teacher if she might interrupt the class for a while. The teacher allows her to explain through visual aids the reaction time on the board to the students: [...]

(Source BP5: Scene in one mainstream-Math lesson in a secondary school; the mainstream-lesson is supported by Jannis who works in the inclusion team as EAL-teacher)

In this scene Janis assists a regular class including five newcomers, among them two students from Romania. The lesson was prepared by a regular teacher. Janis supports the newcomers by interrupting the stream of words of the regular teacher and illustrating some information in alternative ways on the board by linking the knowledge of the students with the prepared knowledge of the regular teacher.

Conclusion

Bearing in mind the early stage of my research, the papers’ intention was to give some insight into current educational cultures that govern migratory pathways. The analysis clearly shows that educational spaces differ quite a lot regionally. They may be fully open to some students and restricted or even completely closed to others. In this article I explored some critical insights with regard to educational inclusion in times of EU-2 enlargement and post-industrialisation. To summarise the results, case I (mrRR) could be described as a re-nationalising, segregating educational governance

system where newcomers are seen as dangerous and as ‘migrants’. In contrast to this, case II (mrL) could be identified as a post-nationalising, inclusive educational governance system where newcomers are seen as citizens and students (see Figure I).

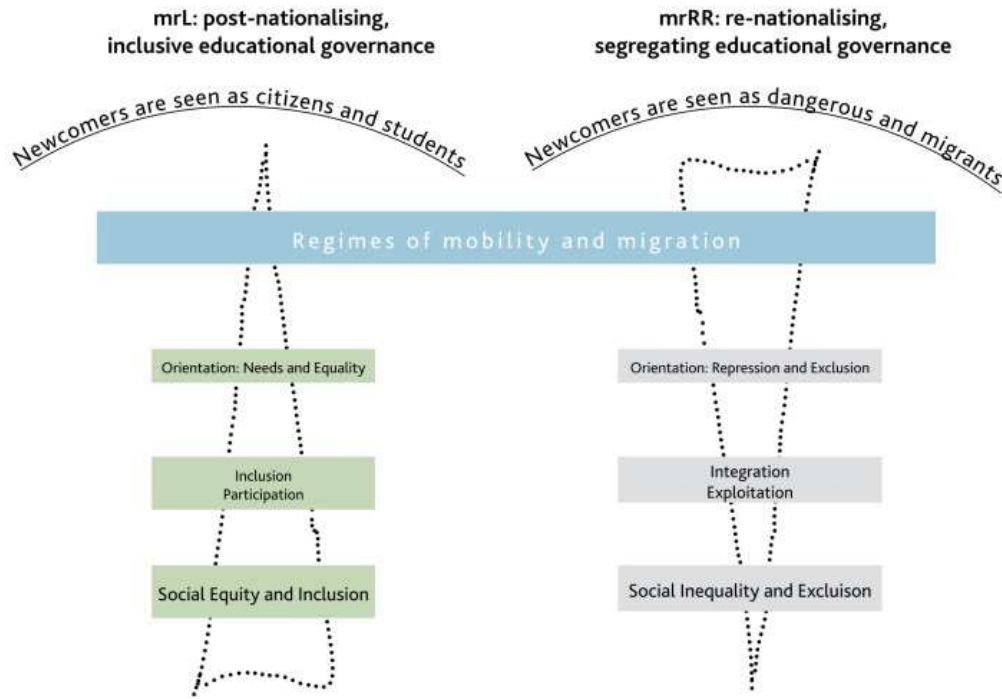


Figure I. Two different faces of ‘educational governance’.

A further observation is that local actors seem to be caught in a contradictory situation: They transform the educational systems of many places in Europe. These changes are guided by the premise that all children have the right to an education that promotes personal development and that allows them access to different social spaces such as the employment market. But as we have seen here, simultaneously, educational experts have re-constructed specialised school structures and learning environments in an extensive way, especially in the mrRR. That is why individualisation and integration often become formulas for new exclusion and disintegration processes that prevent (migrant or identified as ‘migrant’) students from equal access to valuable social goods. The case of mrRR has particularly illustrated that the extra-spaces form part of a wider governance system that manages certain mobility and migration phenomena in a specialised way.

What these case examples also clearly highlight is that educational governance is first and foremost a question of local governance. Institutional settings – whether inclusive or exclusive - are designed, above all, locally and regionally. To design educational spaces more inclusively the city itself has to be taken into account as an ongoing social experiment. The challenge does not lie in the migrants or the neighborhoods to change but it lies in the institutions as well as in the cities themselves. Here, policy-makers – among them educational experts, the civil society and politicians – are responsible for creating and governing educational settings in the midst of diversity. To conclude, the way these experts manage the cities' diversity dictates whether inclusion or exclusion is incorporated in education – a qualified education for all or just for a few.

Notes

[1] This article draws on research in progress of an ethnographic PhD-project that explores in- and exclusive structures and processes in the educational system as part of a wider governance system taking into account the current immigration movement from Bulgaria and Romania.

[2] Global migrants find themselves in a wide range of social situations. Individual circumstances and living conditions depend on a diverse set of personal and societal contexts. Betts et al (2011) name, for example, low-skilled and high-skilled labour migration, irregular migration, international travel, lifestyle migration, environmental migration, displacement and flight.

[3] Frankenberg (2013) analyses the reciprocal interdependence between residential segregation and school segregation through segregation indices in the largest metropolitan areas from 2000. The author gives evidence that school places are often distributed in accordance to bureaucratic district boundaries which divide students by 'ethnic' and 'racial' lines.

[4] In the 1960s, integration classes were introduced to educate the children of 'Gastarbeiter' at many places, among them Rhine-Ruhr area, in Germany. Programmes were based upon the assumption that most foreign children would remain in Germany for only a short time, eventually returning back to their home countries. It follows that newcomers were taught segregated according to citizenship in their first languages such as Turkish, Portuguese, Greek and Italian to enable them to go back to their home countries later. However, the concept of extra-classes

changed when politicians became aware of the fact that the ‘Gastarbeiter’ had settled in Germany. But while further new arrivals from a diverse range of countries continued to immigrate to Germany the extra classes were not abolished nor were bilingual programmes initiated throughout Germany. Instead, with the start of an extensive discourse on assimilation and integration in the 1980s the only thing that changed was that newcomers were predominantly taught in the German language and a ‘culturalised programme’ became part of the extra-curriculum to study what it is like to become ‘German’ (Auernheimer 2006; Gomolla & Radtke 2009).

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End of the critical education or Aristotelian phronesis, Marxian praxis and dialectics

In memory of Alexis and Berkin¹

Engin Delice

Abstract:

“Criticism” is an immanent attitude in philosophy. Yet, “criticism” as a way of doing philosophy belongs to the Enlightenment. Enlightenment criticism continues to determine intellectual developments through Positivism and Marxism as two strong theoretical positions. However, there exists the following essential difference. Positivism generates the knowledge that supports the development of capitalism. On the other hand, Marxism generates the knowledge of class criticism that is the negation of capitalism. Whatever the content of the opposition is, bourgeois culture transforms the criticisms again and again towards its needs in a “constructivist” synthesis. Modernism is a practice that realizes itself through the collage of Positivism and Pragmatism. In this collage, “truth” is not a knowledge level related to being, but rather the production knowledge of the object of “demand”. The ideal social role of reason is to “adapt”. Critical Pedagogy that comes forward as an attempt to correct the faults in this fake ontology is just another example of “adaptation” with bourgeois culture. “Criticism” always remains as bourgeois enlightenment, unless it is complemented with class criticism, i.e. “revolutionary” attitude. Fake ontology that is designed in accordance with bourgeois needs can be overcome by class ontology. Epistemology of the program that enables this “overcoming” is represented by the term praxis. In praxis the act is primary; concept only secondarily set the form of the act. Act, is the realization of consciousness in the face of its object. The act that occurs between reality and concept, also realizes an ethical attitude. In this regard, praxis also constitutes an ethical content. This ethical content of praxis is termed by Aristotelian phronesis. “Phronesis” includes the unity of knowledge of the experience, prediction, and act concepts since the relation

¹ When Alexandros Grigoropoulos (6 December 2008, Athens) and Berkin Elvan (11 March 2014, Istanbul) were bought killed by the police at age of 15 they were fighting for our future.

between “*phronesis*” and “*praxis*” is a dialectical one. At the same time it is the consciousness of responsibility towards life.

Key Words: Critical Pedagogy, Revolutionary Pedagogy, Phronesis, Praxis, Dialectics

In philosophy, there have been a critical sceptic attitude and a dialectical view since Heraclitus. The distinction between metaphysical dialectic that bases philosophical knowledge upon the principle of phenomenon and materialist dialectic that searching the knowledge in phenomena’s connections can clearly be seen in the way philosophy is transferred to our lives. That the criticism destructs the class ontology and transforms into the philosophy of praxis to save humans from alienation is declared in Marx’s expression of “changing the world” in his *Theses on Feuerbach*. Praxis that transforms life is also an ethical attitude. Aristotelian concept *phronesis* that includes both virtue and the union of knowledge provides ground for both ethical and political action. Classical Greek education has laid the aim of acquiring *phronesis* for *praxis* in the very basis of education. Yet, the history of education has neglected the practical ideal of wisdom that is *phronesis*, for the right action.

I

Leaving what is humane, that is the dialogue, in Socratic dialectics results in two negative consequences: (1) Truth is a collective discovery and (2) what makes one happy and virtuous is the knowledge of the truth. Neglecting the union of epistemological and ethical categories in intellectual development also results in the loss of ground in political education (or the image of “philosopher statesman”). This change coincides with the period when the individual is lost and the power becomes absolute. While teacher-centered Latin Education system replaces Dialogue-centered Greek education, political authority (power’s understanding of value) replaces epistemological truth. Method of education changes from Greek dialectics where the enlightenment is achieved together with the teacher to Latin rhetoric where pre-determined truth is imposed on the learner by the teacher. The criterion for the enlightenment becomes the power, not the wisdom and that the authority of making law or limiting life belongs to the state confirms this. The ideology of every age and religious acceptance continue to carry out this second model of education in various forms.

II

Governments seem to have been persuaded into viewing education as a concept of market and employment since the idea of school and industry union is presented as a development plan. In this plan, school education is not a public service but rather a service for the industry. Since the criterion of righteousness is the industry itself, the concept of “rationality” gains a new meaning in respect to “profit”, “benefit” and “efficiency”. When the criterion of employment determines the criterion of “success”, individuals will be responsible for their failures. In this respect, the project of school-employment union involves a rationalism that holds the individual responsible for unemployment and poverty. As Rubenson (2009:416) emphasized, the emphasis placed on “learning” instead of “education” puts the responsibility on the individual holding them responsible for “failures” in the job market. As Ball also stated (2007:186), in education one heads for obtaining skills and profit strategies, not freeing oneself while science and knowledge become a tool. Development programs are the strategies of positivism for directing the poverty, which produce mass control through the feeling of failure. Mass wisdom that is torn between the “positive” products of cultural industry that reconcile the individual to the capitalism and strategies of poverty loses its potential of criticism.

III

Marx’s criticism showing the conflict between capitalist exploitation and bourgeoisie’s understanding of freedom and justice is a dialectical analysis; “because it regards every historically developed form as being in a fluid state, in motion, and therefore grasps its transient aspect as well; and because it does not let itself be impressed by anything, being in its very essence critical and revolutionary” (Marx, 1982). Therefore, the first condition is to determine the position of the criticism: (1) Does the criticism mean making up the deficiencies of the one that is not determined and developing it? Or (2) Does it mean negating and destructing the conflicts of the one that is determined by showing? Clearly, a decision has to be made between the criticism that produces prescriptions “for tranquillizing the bourgeois mind” (Marx, 1982) and the one that ruins the contradictory structure. It should not be forgotten that if the education aims criticism it is political.²

“Criticism” is an immanent attitude in philosophy. Yet, “criticism” as a way of doing philosophy belongs to the Enlightenment. Enlightenment criticism continues to

² See for unity of the concept of “education”, “criticism”, and “politics”: Giroux, 2007: 26-30.

determine intellectual developments through Positivism and Marxism as two strong theoretical positions. However, there exists the following essential difference. Positivism generates the knowledge that supports the development of capitalism.³ On the other hand, Marxism generates the knowledge of class criticism that is the negation of capitalism. Whatever the content of the opposition is, bourgeois culture transforms the criticisms again and again towards its needs in a “constructivist” synthesis. Modernism is a conversion that realizes itself through the collage of Positivism and Pragmatism. In this collage, “truth” is not a knowledge level related to being, but rather the production knowledge of the object of “demand”. In here the ideal social role of reason is to “adapt”. Critical pedagogy that comes forward as an attempt to correct the faults in this fake ontology is just another example of “adaptation” with bourgeois culture. “Criticism” always remains as bourgeois enlightenment, unless it is complemented with class criticism, i.e. “revolutionary” attitude. Fake ontology that is designed in accordance with bourgeois needs can be overcome by class criticism. In so far as such a critique represents a class, it can only represent the class whose historical task is the overthrow of the capitalist mode of production and the final abolition of all classes- the proletariat (Marx, 1982).

Social phenomena are not plain truths, but rather complex structures that function according to the principle of mutual interaction. The criticism that reveals how social status reflects on the consciousness also creates an awareness of transforming the social status. In this respect, two basic attitudes of criticism work: (1) *Analytic criticism*: is the one that forms the knowledge and exists in two examples of practice. (1a) *Immanent criticism*: is the one that sees the method of development of the principle. (1b) *Transcendent criticism*: is the one that sees the relationship that the phenomenon involving the principle establishes with other phenomena. (2) *Revolutionary criticism*: is the one that is the process of negating the principle in the field of phenomenon and transforming the connections of phenomenon which is the attitude seen as praxis. The bond between the already given and possible is the dialectic leap of criticism in theory and the praxis in action.

IV

Praxis expresses action in opposition to (*poiēsis* –production) or (*pathos* – passivity). Aristotle uses the term *praxis* for (1) the “human actions” (*prakseis*) that do not form

³ See for the relationship of knowledge and power: Fischman and McLaren: 2005:425-446.

any other product or do not have any other goal apart from itself and for knowledge (2) that researches “the action itself” (*praxis*) and “knowing how to act” (*Nicomachean Ethics*, 1140b 6).⁴ In terms of knowledge, *praxis* is the “ethical” and “political” “knowledge of activity” (*praktike*) (*Nicomachean Ethics*, I, 1904a-b).

In Marx’s philosophy the term has a fairly different meaning. In *1844 Manuscripts*, *praxis* in opposition to “alienated labour” (Marx, 1988; 80-81) represents human’s self-action. “The objective development of human essence” occurs through “the humanized nature” (Marx, 1988: 108-9); that is, while transforming for himself, he transforms too. In *Theses on Feuerbach* (1998) this self-action is expressed as “the changing of the world”. As Marx mentioned in the 3rd Thesis, the overlapping of “change of the circumstances” and “change of the human” can only be grasped if “revolutionist is understood in a practical way.” After Marx, this reasoning was developed as the philosophy of the perception of reality and its transformation, especially by the first generation of Marxists.

Epistemology of the program that enables this “overcoming” is represented by the term *praxis*. In *praxis* the act is primary; concept only secondarily set the form of the act. Act, is the realization of consciousness in the face of its object. The act that occurs between reality and concept, also realizes an ethical attitude. In this regard, *praxis* also constitutes an ethical content. This ethical content of *praxis* is termed by Aristotelian *phronesis*; since the relation between “*phronesis*” and “*praxis*” is a dialectical one.

V

Sophists develop the term *phronesis* in the context of democracy education. Sophist education involves the usage of practical knowledge in political matters. This approach is developed and kept in Academia. Since Plato, education has been regarded as “developing the mind” (*The Republic*: 504c) and a process of gaining knowledge. The question of what this process creates in individuals reveals the paradoxical structure of education. If education is a process of gaining knowledge concerning (1) the existence and (2) the value of humans, then it is a process of having people to acquire an ethical attitude rather than an epistemological job. This quality is a legacy of Antique Greek Philosophy. Plato describes education as the art of turning the power of knowing inherent in humans into “good” (*The Republic*: 518c-

⁴ In this respect “*praxis*” is not a “*poesis*” (an activity that creates a work apart from itself); *praxis* represents the main activity which doesn’t have a purpose except from the activity itself.

d), which emphasizes the ethical function of education. Because those who reach the truth, that is “good”, are wise since they have reached both epistemological and ethical truth. This wisdom is also political since it involves the responsibility of saving the man in the cave. Aristotle, too, assumes that education enhances one’s ability of reason. Yet in *Politics*, he is interested in the political results of this, where he establishes a bond between educated person, true citizen and true law. For him, “the best man and the best constitution” have the same qualities. Therefore, education turns one into a political citizen while it makes one knowledgeable and virtuous. One whose will is educated through knowledge and experience acquires the skill of sound thinking. Aristotle, like Plato (*The Republic*: 505a), names the habit of action based on “sound judgment” as *phronesis* (practical wisdom). *Phronesis* involves not only knowing how to reach a goal, but also taking action while considering the goals of a good life. Ethos that develops through experience reinforces one’s responsible and political side. As the relationship between virtue and happiness indicates in *Nicomachean Ethics*, ethical and political consistency is also happiness based on *phronesis*. Wisdom involves ethical determination forming the basis for political determination; the death of Socrates cannot be explained in another way.

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Cooperative learning in primary school mathematics: identifying teachers' and children's interactions for creating classroom communities

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Abstract

Mathematics education offers specific opportunities for cooperative learning and communication, the importance of which as tools in the process of teaching mathematics is widely recognized. The aim of the present study was to look at the practices that a primary school teacher establishes in order to make children communicate in the mathematics classroom. Data were collected through: a) classroom observations made during teaching sessions that were mainly group-based and during sessions that emphasized whole-class activities directed by the teacher and b) semi-structured interview conducted with the teacher on the basis of questions developed from the classroom observations regarding the use of communication in mathematics teaching. Results revealed a high level of the participant's preference for both working in groups in mathematics and promoting children's communication. Children's communication was promoted by teacher questioning and children's continuous challenge of the mathematical content and the product. Implications for professional development of teachers in respect to the use of cooperative learning and communication in mathematics are discussed.

Keywords: cooperative learning, communication, primary school mathematics, classroom communities.

Literature Review

Recent reforms in mathematics education within western education systems strongly support the development of children's conceptual understanding in mathematics and

consider the classroom as a community of practice (Walshaw & Anthony, 2008) in which children are actively engaged with mathematics and its meaning. The pedagogical intent is that all children in such a learning community have opportunities to engage in productive mathematical discourse (Manoucheri & St John, 2006). Communication can be seen as one of the active mediators in achieving this intent. In fact, communication with peers and teachers who are more knowledgeable can develop processes that allow learners to ‘move beyond what would be easy for them to grasp on their own’ (Truxaw, Gorgievski & DeFranco, 2008, p.58). NCTM (2000), early recognizing the great role of communication in the process of mathematics teaching and learning, stated that ‘Instructional programs for pre-kindergarten through grade 12 should enable students to... communicate their mathematical thinking coherently and clearly to peers, teachers and others’ (NCTM, 2000Q 60), and considered communication as one of the process standards for children both to acquire mathematics content knowledge and develop mathematical thinking. Although this emphasis upon communication in mathematics classroom is mainly regarded worthwhile, its application may not always be easy.

Empirical studies on communication and its forms in mathematics have mainly been conducted in secondary education (e.g., Piccolo, Harbaugh, Carter, Capraro & Capraro, 2008) or early childhood education (e.g., Jung & Reifel, 2011). These studies looked at either the effects of communication on children’s mathematical development and achievement (e.g., Pimm, 1987) or teachers’ role in supporting children’s communication when doing mathematics (e.g., Walshaw & Anthony, 2008). Results from both directions acknowledge the benefits of communication and its difficulties in working it out in the mathematics classroom.

From the part of the children, sharing and discussing ideas is a desirable process as they want to learn in a ‘togetherness’ environment (Boaler, 2008). Apart from the academic outcomes that group or cooperative work reveals in students’ learning, such as improving cognitive performance (Ding, Li, Piccolo & Kulm, 2007) and making mathematics meaningful to children (Zack & Graves, 2002), cooperative work in mathematics raises students’ self-confidence (Sample, 2009), gives spaces for students for thinking by themselves (Hammonds, 2006), mediates mathematics anxiety (Geist, 2010) and motivates children’s connection with profound, deep and thoughtful learning processing (O’Connell & O’Connor, 2007). Children are supported to communicate mathematically so that the learning of mathematics is

considered as both an individual constructive process and a social process (Cobb, 1995).

Teachers take a significant role in ensuring that all children understand and implement roles, such as listening, asking, answering and critically assessing (Hunter & Anthony, 2011), that promote the development of mathematical communication in the classroom. Participation in mathematical discussions calls for particular pedagogical practices to be used by teachers, as well; these practices are related to active listening, reflecting and responding carefully to the ideas of others (McCrone, 2005). From the point of view of teaching methods in mathematics, positive effects may be expected when group work takes place. For example, the idea of 'mathematics for all', which was proposed by Freudenthal (1991), referred to special designed assignments which appeal to different levels of cognition and experiences and offer students the possibility to verbalize their thoughts and apply their strengths in the search for solutions. However, the use of group work and cooperative learning is again found quite difficult: whereas pre-service teachers have difficulty in applying cooperative learning in teaching mathematics, experienced teachers have a repertoire of easily accessible strategies and pedagogical content knowledge (Nilssen, Gudmundsdottir & Wangsmo-Cappelen, 1995).

Mathematics education offers specific opportunities for cooperative learning and communication. It is the content of mathematics that allows for specific models of cooperative learning in order to accommodate individual differences between students. For example, Miyakawa (2006) showed that creative mathematical thinking could be cultivated through an open-ended approach because open-ended problems offer students opportunities to communicate their ideas with each other and discuss their problem-solving methods. The interactions among the students and the teacher in the open approach help students improve their mathematical thinking and understanding. In fact, students' and teachers' communication skills are developed when doing mathematics and mathematical problems are designed in such a way that solutions can be reached along different routes and at different levels. Significant effort has been made in recent decades to depart from a focus on the individual in which teachers and students simply use communication to express their private knowledge or thinking. Maheux and Roth (2014), for example, taking an enactivist perspective, raise the issue of relationality in student-teacher communication: they focus on how students actually do mathematics, replacing questions of knowledge

with concern for mathematical doing alone. In accordance to the socio-constructivist frame, individual children construct their understanding through talk, social interaction and shared meaning (Worthington & Carruthers, 2003).

The aim of the present exploratory case study was to look at the practices that a primary school teacher establishes in order to make children communicate in the mathematics classroom. The main research question referred to the way this teacher conceptualizes the use of communication during mathematics instruction on the basis of critical pedagogy practice, according to which new knowledge is developed through constructive dialogue (Giroux, 2006).

Methodology

Participant. The participant was a teacher who works in a public primary school, located in the centre of a big-sized city in Northern Greece. Ms Stella (pseudonym) is a 15th-year teacher in her mid-40s who received her Bachelor degree in Education and recently earned her Master's degree. She often teaches Years 5 and 6 and at the time of the study she was teaching Year 5. She was selected due to her great interest in mathematics education and children's work in groups.

Data collection. For the purpose of the present study, data were collected through classroom observations and semi-structured interview over a period of 4 weeks.

Observations were made during teaching sessions that were mainly group-based and during sessions that emphasized whole-class activities directed by the teacher. These looked at children's interactions and participation in mathematical discussions and focused on teacher's contribution to their students' mathematical communication.

The interview conducted with the teacher was based on questions developed from the classroom observations regarding the use of communication in mathematics teaching in order to gain information on her level of preference for both working in groups in mathematics and promoting children's communication.

Results

Classroom observations revealed that Ms Stella's used child-centered activities that encouraged children's communication and focused attention on children's learning processes rather than on their correct or incorrect answers. She affirmed the importance of mathematical activities that were relevant to children's everyday experience and made sense for them: word problems from children's familiar situations were included in a meaningful way. This was the reason she often used games in her teaching or implemented well-known characters (e.g., the Minions) in

the problems posed to children. She wanted to be certain that *'children have a comfortable learning atmosphere that will enable them to engage in the problem's solution'*. Such an atmosphere makes children feel safe in expressing their ideas to others and minimizes their mathematics anxiety. She is aware that children engage better in communication during mathematics lessons when they work in groups rather than on their own. Additionally, she believes that children's participation and talk is considerably more frequent and of better quality leading to effective solutions when *'children select themselves their partners to work with'* rather than when the teacher makes such a decision. This makes children also *'feel responsible for their choice ...try their best and ... openly talk about their ideas'*. Her conception of creating a 'safe' learning environment is in line with Geist's (2010) argument about mediation of mathematics anxiety and cooperative learning in mathematics.

The spoken articulation of children's mathematical understanding is of high educational value. Ms Stella explains its importance for several reasons: when children talk in mathematics lessons

'they have the benefits of hearing a range of views and improving their own understanding, [...] developing their mathematics vocabulary, hearing their own view and meta-cognitively realizing that their thinking is headed in the right direction... These are great benefits that cannot be accomplished when working alone'.

Having children discuss conjectures and explain their thinking brings misconceptions to the forefront and helps children address misunderstandings. They learn how to use talk for thinking cooperatively and also improve their individual reasoning skills. These findings are consistent with the Vygotskian claim that the experience of talking with others makes children 'internalize' exploratory talk and has a positive effect on their reasoning.

Clearly evident was the role the participant teacher had in shifting her children towards greater use of argumentation and justification through questions that encouraged them to engage in the mathematics discussion. She often used open-ended questions of the type *'why do you think that?'* and *'how is this?'* that offered students opportunities to express their ideas and comment on issues that arise in lessons. These questions first provoked children's reasoning and secondly allowed the discussion to continue. The teacher was seen to listen to children's responses irrespectively of whether these were right or wrong often providing reflective responses (e.g., *'I see you feel trapped by this problem'*). She explains that this reflective technique is

appropriate to the circumstances that *'a child hasn't revealed her thoughts due to her uncertainty for mathematics'* and advocates that communication in the mathematics classroom contributes not only to children's development in learning mathematics but also to strengthening their positive attitudes towards mathematics. Frequent and specific feedback was also used to help children refine and enhance their problem solving strategies.

Careful listening to children may be helpful to teachers in gaining more information that ultimately can lead to effective communication for both children and teachers. Ms Stella supports the view that listening to children's talk helps her realize *'if something isn't grasped by children and needs more work'* as well as the weaknesses in her own teaching. This latter will make her a *'better teacher'* as she *'continuously looks for ways to revise'* her mathematics lessons. This dual role of communication is in line with findings from Jung and Reifel's (2011) study with kindergarten children revealing that listening to what younger or older children say can be inspiring.

Ms Stella also recognizes that she experienced difficulties in working with mathematics textbooks and planning mathematics lessons on the basis of cooperative work and children's talk. Mathematics textbooks, in Greece, are approved by the Greek Education Ministry and are distributed free of charge to all students in public and private schools. Classroom observations revealed that most activities taken from textbooks were done individually without any communication between children. Ms Stella explains that this is the case mostly because individual learning is easier to plan and carry out compared to cooperative learning and also because this is what mathematics textbooks mainly provide as the most preferred approach in the mathematics classroom. Even when she negotiates between activities from the textbooks and discussion, she has to cope with parents who *'control children's learning'* and believe that *'mathematics is about getting the right answer'*. For this reason, she keeps parents informed about *'how and what their children are learning in mathematics'* including description of the mathematics content as well as of the emphasis she puts on children's communication and talk. The meetings she organizes with parents are an easy way to *'tackle problems at an early stage'* and are also crucial to achieving *'parent's confidence in classroom communication'*.

A more directive approach –with less reflective interactions– was observed, however, when she organized whole-class activities in order to address drill and practice of basic skills that required doing calculations. As Ms Stella explained, children's

communication when doing calculations with algorithms is impossible. Children need *'to individually memorize the algorithms through repetitive practice'* and learn them as *'that's the way it is'*. Even in this case where Ms Stella was seen less interactive, she encouraged children to talk (*'Tell me what you are doing'*). When dealing with problems, though, where students search for different solutions working on the mathematical concepts, Ms Stella believes that cooperation and group work are necessary. She openly presents her opposition to the emphasis put by the Greek mathematics curriculum on procedural rather than conceptual knowledge and the role of communication in the latter. She adds that mental computation development is a great priority for her for many reasons, one of which is that it *'provides substantial scope'* for children's communication.

Discussion

Findings from the present study may reveal at least three important implications for mathematics education. First, providing children with opportunities to talk about mathematics through cooperative learning activities has tremendous benefits for both children and teachers. Children learn to communicate effectively in mathematics and develop conceptually based patterns of mathematics learning. They also develop the belief that they as individuals are responsible for understanding and sharing mathematics (Manoucheri & St John, 2006) and become active and responsible participants in the classroom community. Communication allows teachers to refine their own instructional strategies for the advantage of children's mathematical development. There are dynamic and reciprocal interactions between teachers' teaching and children's learning, rather than inequitable teaching and learning. This dual role of communication raised supports Jung and Reifel's (2011) findings and the aim of transforming children's and teachers' interest in mathematics is potentially achieved.

A second implication is that identifying the communication processes in mathematics learning and supporting these processes shows us that a lot of work needs to be done with teachers in the classroom. There is great need to assist teachers in incorporating a variety of learning styles, real world connections and group work. Teacher questioning techniques to spark children's thinking (O'Connell & O'Connor, 2007) and teacher modeling to illustrate ways to express mathematical ideas need to be developed. Communication will then be used as a tool in children's mathematics learning. For Ms Stella, mathematics teaching was not simply presentation of subject

matter knowledge; she tried to make content explicit and at the same time her students challenged both that content and themselves as producers of mathematical knowledge. Current and future teachers should seek out the methods to promote communication in primary school mathematics classrooms and embrace them profoundly.

Third, in a learning environment that depends heavily on group discourse and allows for rich communication, mutuality and equality are developed. When teachers initiate meaningful discourse within their classrooms, mathematics instruction may evolve into a more democratic and collaborative form of learning (Piccolo et al., 2008). Promoting interactive mathematical talk is challenging for teachers and their students, particularly because they may not have previously experienced teaching and learning in cooperative work. The implications for professional development of teachers in respect to the use of communication in mathematics need to be further explored. This kind of research will contribute to the practical aim of raising teachers' awareness of, and ability to use, communication in the mathematics classroom.

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The concept of culture as the ideological foundation of intercultural education

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Abstract

In the Educational Studies, the concept of intercultural education, despite its popularity and its long-standing presence in the international literature, has often been found to be largely vague, with diverse meanings. Apart from the theoretical retractions, intercultural education is guided by principles and objectives which are more or less considered as a locus communis (equality of opportunity, equality of people, solidarity, respect for diversity, democratization of education, etc.). Additionally, intercultural education is often elevated to an idealistic, humanitarian basis which has appeared in the History of pedagogical ideas since the early 20th century. In our point of view, the differentiation of intercultural education in relation to other pedagogical approaches lies upon the choice of the concept of culture as its theoretical foundation and especially in the emergence of culture as a privileged field for the study and elimination of educational inequality. Based on the above, in this paper we shall attempt to clarify the content of intercultural education through a critical examination of the dominant theoretical assumptions made concerning culture and multiculturalism in the pedagogical literature. We shall also endeavor to explore the changes that have occurred during the recent decades in the fields of political, economic and social sciences, which gradually or totally shifted the analysis from sociological and economic explanations/factors towards cultural ones, through the widespread use of multiculturalism as a thematic in order to group and grapple with educational issues. Finally, we shall try to evaluate both the need for establishing intercultural education as a distinct type of education, and the particular contribution of the ideas of multiculturalism to the feedback and the development of open theoretical and practical issues of Educational Studies.

Keywords: culture, intercultural education, multiculturalism.

The establishment of intercultural education/pedagogy as a distinct type of education constitutes in our opinion one of the indicators of the “cultural shift” taking place within the social sciences ever since the 80s. An attribute of this cultural shift is a gradual displacement of sociological, economic and political analysis of social reality in favor of purely cultural explanations

What acted as the catalyst for the cultural shift in the social sciences, over the past three decades, is the very restructuring of the economy on a global scale, and the subsequent crisis of society, social theory as well as science in total. During this period, the industrial production has migrated to the Developing countries where it was possible to exploit cheap labor, while in the West, due to the prevalence of the scientific and technological revolution, the production was automated so that the content of labor seems to be having more and more a cultural, symbolic and communicative form. Consequently this aesthetics view of reality results in emphasizing on the signifier and the symbolic, i.e. the cultural (Alexiou, 2007).

At the same time, the intensified international economic competition has led to large human-geographic rearrangements and to the dissolution of the existing social structure. “The subversion of the common points of reference, which used to form both the feeling of “belonging” (from a social point of view) and the corresponding social integration of the individual” (Filiat, 2001: 498), is linked with the popularity of the postmodern thesis among social scientists, which underestimates class position as a determinant of human culture, in favor of other factors. The new socialites being but carriers of a particular lifestyle and aesthetics (sub-culture), and in the absence of a communication factor, are presented as detached from one-another, eventually forming what is described as a multicultural state according to the postmodern conception.

The above mentioned approach ignores the fact that migration flows, to which the evolution of multicultural societies mainly attributed, constitute flows of labor. In other words they are “flows of people, who meet the demand for an inexpensive labor force in destination countries. A pool of workers whose labor power, as a commodity, is generally suited to specific (non-creative, strenuous, unhealthy) activities” (Pavlidis, 2006: 190). As Thanasis Alexiou (1998: 79) notes, “the different groupings formed on the basis of race, culture or ethnicity are essentially and in practice different forms of wage-labor”. In capitalist societies, the division of material interests is such that it has led to the mutual isolation of people so that their interconnection

can be achieved principally through the identification of similarity between isolated people. We must therefore bear in mind that the emphasis given on the particular cultural characteristics by marginalized and oppressed racial groups, functions as a link that fosters the collegiality and solidarity of its members in their struggle for better living conditions in an unfamiliar, stressful and competitive environment. They are therefore "cultures of defensive solidarity" whose role, as Terry Eagleton underlines (2003: 63) , is "to compensate for the crisis of identity, the isolation and the anxiety, intertwined with the uprooting of men and women from their traditional attachments".

It should be noted at this point that that the identification of people with those cultural characteristics that unify them, by isolating them from the rest of the population has a double and contradictory effect. On the one hand it enables them to demand better living conditions as a sub-group of the total working population, and on the other it is at the same time used by the state to segment labor power and allocate it into unequal jobs as well as to create mechanisms of formal and informal social control, so as to launch differential approaches for various "cultural" groups such as intercultural education.

Intercultural education and multiculturalism are not only etymologically linked to the concept of culture but also draw their very theoretical foundation on it. Thus, research on these academic topics presupposes the clarification of the concept of culture, so as to be able to check these concepts with the reality itself.

The approach that we have chosen to help us comprehend the concept of culture is inscribed in the materialist conception of history by K. Marx, an element of which is the materialist, mediated "reduction" of all the spheres of social life and the corresponding perception of the structure of the society to the economic base of society. Nonetheless, not in any case should we be thought to be implying that the historical-social reality is perceived in the same uniform way by individuals. In contrast, the direct data of the senses are not transferred in a reflecting manner to the conscience but are subjected to intellectual processing so as to acquire a conceptual content. As Vasilis Filias (2001: 120) notes "without these signification contents, there would not exist any conscious human action, but rather a mere instinctual reaction, therefore human civilization would not exist either." However, we believe that when we speak of culture, more complex concepts are required so as to address the various fields of consciousness developed within itself. If the various forms of consciousness

(religious beliefs, artistic expressions, worldviews, etc.) are not considered in their specific historicity, in conjunction with the respective relations of production that shape them, there is a high risk of slipping towards essentialist or extremely relativistic interpretations of cultural differences. In order to avoid the above mentioned risk we think that no civilization can be evaluated and understood by leaving the economic factor out.

Despite differences in conceptual contents, culture as the embodiment of the common social -laboring- creative human nature, suggests a basic similarity of the human psyche and human intellectuality. Moreover,

had the foundational common ideological essence of all human beings not been a common point of reference, it would be completely impossible to comprehend the "types" of people who stood under different historical-social conditions and developed cultural elements and traditions alien to our own (Filiás, 2001: 96).

Therefore, every cultural creation potentially addresses the whole mankind (Pavlidis, 2006).

Taking the above mentioned theoretical framework under consideration, we have grouped the dominant perceptions on culture in the literature concerning intercultural education in the following manner:

The first category involves the perception that emphasizes on the symbolic content of cultures and declares their equality, to the extent that different cultures correspond to different places and times. According to this perception, cultural diversity is a type of wealth that has to be preserved. This perception is unable to answer how the different types of culture (as systems of relations) aid individuals with diverse perceptions about work, family, lifestyles to be functional and to successfully orient themselves into new environments, when they are found together inside the new national or international stratification, as developed by the inclusion of new population groups and waves of migration (Alexiou, 2007).

The practical issues that arising from the above reasoning seem to be overlooked by the adherents of the equivalence of cultures, who erroneously attribute social conflict between carriers of different cultures either to lack of information on "alien" cultures or to their devaluation due to stereotypes. In no case does this mean that the a-synchrony and the differences in cultural traditions in general are legitimized to be used as an alibi for the devaluation, marginalization and oppression of people. We do believe though that declaring the equivalence of different types of culture is in no way

adequate by itself to guarantee equal treatment. Especially when this declaration of cultural equivalence is disconnected from trying to ensure the terms that underwrite the: “free access of all people in the most advanced accomplishments (material and intellectual) of the global civilization, so as to be able to actively participate in the making of global human history” (Pavlidis, 2006: 194)

The second perception of culture rejects the existence of discrete national cultures based on the objective characteristics of a people and thus refers to cultural identities (religious, linguistic, national, ethnic) which reflect more closely the cultural image of a multicultural society. Within the latter perception of culture, prioritizing the different cultural forms is out of the question for as long as they remain functional within a specific temporal and spatial framework. The technical evaluation of cultures is also out of the question, since they constitute, besides other things, different systems of values. However, when the carriers of different cultural identities are invited to coexist within the same state, then arises the problem of their harmonious cooperation, at least in the public sphere, since the fragmentation of the national society into distinct ethnic or religious communities raises the risk of social instability. That is why the formation of a single collective identity around commonly acceptable political criteria -stemming from the ideology of classical liberalism- is being suggested. This collective identity will be expressed in the public sphere and will harmoniously coexist with the diverse cultural identities of individuals or groups according to their membership in minority collectives, which in turn will be expressed exclusively in the private sphere. Of course, while it is recognized that the adoption of specific political meritocratic criteria for the development of the dominant culture is a political choice, it is being silenced that these criteria stem not from the result of political consensus, but rather from the hegemony of the dominant social order. It could be said that for classical liberal ideology cultural diversity is part of the private sphere, since it recognizes the right of the members of a national society to individual cultural expression, but it devalues the demand of its public expression.

The third approach correlates cultural evolution with the level of development of the productive forces and the economy in each society. Different cultures are not conceived only as different systems of principles and values, but also as a specific formations which reflect the different developmental dynamics of a society, mainly in the economic and technological fields. By extension under the globalized economic competition, the possibility of cultural self-determination presupposes economic and

technological progress. Consequently, the demand for cultural pluralism emerges as a form of resistance against the homogenizing tendencies of the workings of the global economic forces.

In our view, the belief that technological and economic development are by themselves sufficient to upgrade or converge culture, ignores the fact that changes in the economic base do not necessarily lead to an automatic and radical transformation of the cultural sphere. Also, by not investigating the relationship between the type of economic and technological development and the characteristics of the culture that it creates from a qualitative perspective, this approach equates technical with cultural superiority.

In conclusion, we would say that the definitions and value judgments regarding culture, in the literature relevant to intercultural education, do not depict the complexity of the bidirectional relationship between culture and material conditions of production at its full extent. Therefore, the content of cultural constructs (symbols, meanings, values, etc.) is either partially illuminated leaving aside an in-depth analysis of the characteristics of the socio-economic formation that led to their development (for example even in the cases when it is recognized that culture helps people orient themselves in a particular environment, the specific characteristics of this environment are not identified), or some light is shed on aspects of the material base (technological, financial, etc.) of the production of cultural formations taking for granted that they automatically and mechanistically lead to cultural changes. Note that the latter concept of culture cannot explain the existence -within the modern technologically and economically developed societies- of oppressed and marginalized ethno-racial groups, which are "carriers of cultural traditions (religious beliefs, moral principles, customs, lifestyle) that correspond to historically outdated socio-economic formations"(Pavlidis, 2006: 193). The descriptions of culture are for the most part limited to a simple reference to, often simply sequential mentioning of various factors (language, religion, value code, traditions, symbols, etc.) without considering culture as a whole, as an organic whole compiled from and decomposed into individual fields, without culture constituting a mere sum of them. As a result of the epidermal approach to culture in pedagogical literature the pronouncements about the meaning of multiculturalism remain vague.

The invocation of the multicultural character of modern societies as a precondition for the theoretical foundation of the intercultural education clashes on a fundamental

contradiction: i.e. on the fact that cultural diversity in itself is not a novel phenomenon at a national and a global level in order to justify the extensive involvement the issues of multiculturalism lately. The above contradiction, when not explicitly recognized by the rapporteurs of intercultural education, derives by their contradictory pronouncements regarding the multicultural nature of societies. Hence the existence of multiple linguistic expressions in a national space, for example, is incorrectly identified with the existence of multi-cultural systems within itself (multiculturalism) or, sticking to the same example, a culture is considered as unified and homogeneous ignoring any linguistic variations and deviations that are enclosed in it (monoculturalism). Therefore, multiculturalism is sometimes perceived as an unprecedented social phenomenon which is attributed to migration flows, while others as a phenomenon historically linked to the era of the establishment of each nation, which can only be perceived today due to ideological-political or ethical reasons. On the basis of our view on civilization the concepts of multiculturalism and monoculturalism are two sides of the same coin as they result from the identification of the partial (forms of social consciousness) with the general-universal (culture) level and vice versa.

From the examination of the perceptions about multiculturalism in the pedagogical literature we conclude that the agents that requisite the multicultural view of modern societies are mainly of economic, ideological or moral rather than cultural nature. At a first glance this appears to be a paradox. Nonetheless, these agents are not only directly linked to the distribution of political and economic power, but also with the human-geographic rearrangements, as well as the changes in the content of liberal bourgeois ideology (democracy, pluralism, human rights, etc.). We believe that the concept of multiculturalism refers to actual social, economic, political and cultural changes. In our judgment, though, as will be shown below, the tendency to reduce current problems and to transfer the solution in the sphere of culture is, methodologically, descriptively and interpretatively inadequate, if not obscuring the actual causes and ways of overcoming social conflicts and contradictions.

The multiple interpretations that the concept of multiculturalism is open to, which stem at a great extent from the fluidity of definitions of culture and civilization, seem to be used to serve both conservative (nationalist, fundamentalist) and progressive ideological goals, both within and outside the national state. Thus, within the national territory, the request for the recognition of cultural difference becomes a starting point

for equal treatment and hence equal participation of actors in goods, services and resources, while the claim of non-deductibility of cultures becomes a politically correct excuse for legitimizing the ghettoization (exclusion) of minority populations by the advocates of cultural purity (differential racism)¹. Correspondingly, outside of the nation state, the ideology of multiculturalism seeks to surpass the national (nationalist) barriers so as to achieve transnational economic and political cooperation, while at the same time it ensures the "national" vital space in conditions of global economic competition and cultural imperialism, thus reviving nationalisms. At this point, we must stand in the European Union project which had a decisive role in the adoption of multicultural rhetoric by the Member States. As George Grollios (2004, pp.146-147) notes, in the reports of the EU institutions:

The idea of respecting diversity rooted in national cultures is not convincing, from a theoretical and practical point of view, because: a) it eliminates internal differences of national cultures by considering them as /uniform and b) because the concept of a European identity is based on a reality (that of the EU), which does not consider the cultures of nations outside its geographical limits as equivalent, even when they have historically been developed in the womb of the Western world (e.g. USA, Central and Eastern Europe, the more the cultures of other nations). Contrary to the declarations, in theory, and the corresponding political rhetoric about the tolerance of diversity, there also exists the European reality of the intensification of racial discrimination, often promoted by the Member States' governments, in the fertile soil of the growth of social inequalities.

The joint adoption of multiculturalism as a field of renegotiation of social issues, by both conservative and progressive circles, gives rise to the first concerns regarding potential solutions to contemporary social problems on the basis of fuzzy multicultural rhetoric.

The second concern relates, in our view, to the finding that representatives of different ideological and political currents converge, without any significant differences, towards adopting the multicultural idea. Our research, proves that multicultural discourse is far from innovative, since it can be regarded as a restatement of ideas that date back to classical liberal thought or its modern post-interminations/reinterminations (e.g. Taylor, 1994). The novelty lies in the enrichment of liberal

¹ For an extensive presentation of the concept of "differential racism" or "neo-racism" see Balibar (Balibar & Wallerstein, 2010)

phrasings with references to the cultural diversity. In other words, the novelty is the "cultural starting point" for re-negotiation of old and new social problems. Thus, next to the principle of pluralism of ideas, the pluralism of cultures is accrued, equality of citizens is joined with gender cultures, democratic participation in decision-making is combined with the democratic participation of various cultural groups to decisions that concern them etc.

For example, in the public multicultural discourse the principle of cultural pluralism is commonly accepted. The idea of pluralism is certainly not new but rather has its roots in the European Enlightenment, which confirms that the popularity of multiculturalism in recent decades signals the revival of liberal ideas in cultural terms. The preference towards cultural diversity is not something reprehensible, but it becomes problematic to the extent that pluralism becomes a panacea. As Terry Eagleton observes: "Those who regard plurality as a value in itself are pure formalists, and have obviously not noticed the astonishingly imaginative variety of forms which, say, racism can assume." (2003: 15).

Of course, setting the acceptance of liberal values and principles (rule of law, pluralism, human rights, etc.) as a precondition for the recognition of cultural minority group suggests the superiority of liberal cultural traditions in relation to non-liberal.

The prevalence of multiculturalism within the social sciences at the expense of alternative interpretations-descriptions of social reality given, inter alia, by Russell Jacoby, the shortcomings of the modern intelligentsia. He argues that:

Multiculturalism also plugs a gaping intellectual hole. Stripped of a radical idiom, robbed of a Utopian hope, liberals and leftists retreat in the name of progress to celebrate diversity. With few ideas on how a future should be shaped, they embrace all ideas. Pluralism becomes the catch-all, the alpha and omega of political thinking. Dressed up as multiculturalism, it has become the opium of disillusioned intellectuals, the ideology of an era without an ideology [...] The ideas of multiculturalism, cultural pluralism and diversity turn sacrosanct. [...] They not only suggest a politics, but often replace politics. However, even with adjectives like radical or transformative attached, what politics do they designate? Apart from the wish to include more voices in the curriculum or different faces at the office, no vision drives multiculturalism.. But even with the addition of adjectives radical or transformative, determine what policy? Apart from the desire to include more voices in curricula or different persons

in the office, a vision does not lead to multiculturalism. [...] The goal of including more people in the established society may be laudable, but hardly seems radical. The rise of multiculturalism correlates with the decline of Utopia, an index of the exhaustion of political thinking. (1999: 32-33)

From the above mentioned approaches of culture two variations of intercultural education can be derived, in relation to other teaching patterns concerning the relationship between education and culture:

The first regards the interpretation of educational inequalities as well as the attempt to eliminate them through culture. Intercultural education is highlighted as a pedagogical approach specialized on educating ethno-cultural groups which exhibit high rates of school failure because of their (linguistic, religious, cultural) divergence from the dominant culture. Therefore, it appears as a distinct pedagogical practice, whose application depends upon the presence of ethno-cultural minorities in a district or a school unit. It should however be noted that, contrary to the focus of social research up to now on the class character of culture and education, intercultural education treats school as a class-neutral space of coexistence of various cultural groups, often overlooking the existing internal differences (linguistic, religious, class) within the same cultural group. Under the light of multiculturalism school performance disconnects from social differences since the latter are coded as ethno-cultural and are proclaimed to be the dominant tool of understanding school failure.

The second variation concerns the way in which the perceptions of the student population in total about culture in general are being shaped. Monocultural education is considered obsolete in the new multicultural reality, as it traps people within a single culture and poses the risk of developing arrogant, or even racist, attitudes towards other cultures. Therefore, the aim of intercultural education is to familiarize people with alternative cultural standards so as to be able to challenge the elements of their own culture, to free themselves from the limited cultural perspective and to respect the divergent cultural expressions. The special role of intercultural education in multicultural reality as Periklis Pavlidis (2006: 186) observes:

[is] to function as a means of familiarizing the youth with the different, culturally codified cultural perceptions about well-being and thus to meet the liberal demand for a pluralist environment which includes a wide range of (sometimes conflicting) examples of a virtuous life, so that individuals are able to differentiate or even challenge their commitment to standards with which they were originally nurtured.

This concept that lies at the very core of intercultural education suggests that one's own culture is a system with absolute rational consistency, a set of spontaneous habits so ingrained, almost naturalized, that individuals are not able to submit any criticism. This variation overlooks the fact that within each culture the means of criticizing it are inherent. Cultures are not prisons. As Terry Eagleton (2003: 62) aptly notes:

but there are many different, contradictory strands to a culture, some of which allow us to be critical of others. [...]It is good news that we cannot entirely escape our culture - for if we could, we would not be able to submit it to critical judgment.

Finally, while intercultural education claims to be the pedagogy of emancipation from the sterile adherence to cultural traditions, at the same time it is an expression of the self-worth cultures by both partitioning and idealizing them. The proclamation of multiculturalism both as a stake and as value per se, on the one hand indicates an "ecological" approach to culture and on the other it fortifies the perception of non-deductibility of cultures, despite declarations of the contrary. In this manner, it contributes to "the maintenance of cultural traditions, inherited from past social relations, with the risk of ultimately leading to the entrapment in worldviews and ways of life, that make their carriers extremely vulnerable to the destructive tendencies of the modern world". (Pavlidis, 2006: 193)

Intercultural education / pedagogy raises afresh the question of pedagogical treatment of difference in education. Given that the interest of intercultural pedagogy focuses primarily on the management (acceptance, rejection or transformation) of the different cultural identities in school, we have spotted the following approaches concerning the management of cultural diversity in the context of formal education:

The first approach is inscribed in the liberal conception, in a broad sense, characteristic of which is "the belief that education (culture), through appropriate coding, transmission and spreading can ensure correction of any wrongdoings in a society, thus achieving the progressive evolution of humanity" (Pavlidis, 2006: 191).

Within the liberal ideology two conflicting forms of identification can be recognized: the classical liberal egalitarian recognition of sole individuals which transcends the differences in class, race and gender and the specific recognition of cultural particularity of individuals or groups, which is dictated by the contemporary multicultural environment². Classical liberalism recognizes that individuals carry

² See Taylor's essay on multiculturalism and "The politics of recognition" (Taylor, 1994).

various cultural heritages, but it is considered that these heritages have no place in education as it is feared that the official recognition of cultural differences by national educational systems will mean the elimination of meritocracy and of the efficiency / performance principle in education should they lead to specific educational measures. Nonetheless, as Paulo Freire mentions “it is not possible, trying to overcome certain cultural heritages that are repeated from one generation to another and sometimes seem obsolete, that we stop taking into account their existence ”(2006: 213).³ Should this happen, teaching will be conducted without any social reference, disregarding the fact that the specific characteristics that make up the cultural specificity come forth “only if the terms of self-realization of the individual are not met or if the person is discriminated against because of race, sex, etc. -thus occurs a differentiation of the biotic potential of the individual” (Alexiou, 1998: 71). The exclusion of the cultural heritage of students from the public sphere of school means as far as educational practice is concerned, that

the importance of the teachers’ awareness about the material world in which their students live, the culture in which the language, syntax, semantics and pronunciation work, is being degraded. And so is the awareness about the space where the specific habits preferences, fears, desires are formed, and which may not be easily accepted by the world of the teacher”(Freire, 2006: 217)⁴.

The second approach is based on the equality of cultures and demands the representation of all cultural expressions in education as of equal educational value. This approach identifies with the postmodern notion that rejects the subsumption of the individual in broader characteristics as "totalitarian" and recognizes diversity as a value by itself. We believe that the respect teachers have to give to the identities of their students, a great part of which is developed by the social class they belong to, in no way does it mean that the teacher should adapt to them. Respecting and recognizing them is fundamental preconditions for any effort for change, because we should not forget that "the beliefs, customs, lifestyle, the 'voices' of the marginalized and oppressed are not always of emancipatory character", since often “against the racist ideas and attitudes of the dominant group, the ethno-racial minorities and the oppressed oppose equally racist ideas and attitudes”(Pavlidis, 2006: 193). Multiculturalism in education, seen as pluralistic acceptance of cultures, translates

³ Own translation from the Greek transcript.

⁴ Own translation from the Greek transcript.

into a conformist inability to choose from ideas, values and attitudes. It marks the resignation from criticism and from the efforts to transform the material and intellectual world through the uncritical acceptance of everything.

In light of this understanding of culture we observe that the intercultural education proposals do not derive from an in-depth examination of global culture, but are mainly founded on the concept of cultural identity, which of course is formed to a greater or lesser extent by different types of culture without identifying itself with any of them. Hence, we often come across the explanation that culture is a concept broader than ethnic, national, linguistic or religious identities without this clarification being accompanied by the answer to the question of what culture is. Accordingly the interest in intercultural pedagogy focuses primarily on the management (acceptance, rejection or transformation) of different cultural identities in school and in their relationship with the alleged collective national identity - even with a modernized interpretation of the term "national" – rather than on the exploration of the broader relationship of education with global cultural production.

In pedagogical literature five approaches of cultural difference are usually cited, starting from the assimilative and moving up to the intercultural approach. The implicit assumption there, is that the educational management of cultural differences progresses linearly through many phases and improvements reaching gradually towards "perfection", in other words towards intercultural education. Consequently, under the umbrella of intercultural education cohabit the most contradictory conceptions of education, thus confirming the common admission that the scientific debate on intercultural education develops in the absence of an intercultural theory with universal validity.

The attempt to implement intercultural theory on the act of teaching raises even more complex issues. In the present paper we have identified intercultural education theories that emphasize the symbolic content of the culture (values, attitudes, symbols, systems of meaning) and invoke the principle of equality between cultures, namely the attitude of an assessment of evaluative neutrality towards various cultural constructs. According to the above analysis, cultural diversity is a privilege and wealth, therefore every culture should be represented equally in the curriculum irrespectively of the presence of pupils from different cultural backgrounds in the classroom, since intercultural education is addressed to the entire student population. Some of the practical educational issues / questions raised by the connection of the

principles of interculturalism with the curriculum are the following: Which cultures or which elements of cultures worldwide in total will be embedded in the school program under the constraints of the school time? How will teaching be carried out so that the contact with different cultures will not be fragmented and folkloric (e.g. contact with different cuisines and musical traditions) which is something supporters of the equivalence of cultures themselves believe should be avoided? Will cultural traditions with fundamentalist content be embedded in the curriculum in the name of the self-worth of difference? These questions are still open issues for intercultural education.

The principles and objectives of intercultural education give rise to reasonable questions not only about the need to establish intercultural education as a distinct type of education, but also about the particular contribution of pedagogical ideas inscribed into it for the feedback as well as the further development of the research upon open theoretical and practical issues of pedagogy (Dafermakis & Pavlidis, 2006). Our skepticism is supported by statements made by the adherents of multicultural education in order to defend it versus conservative reviews. For example James Banks (1986: 229) emphasizes that:

Multicultural education does not envision new goals for schools, but rather asks schools to expand their concepts of political and cultural democracy to include large groups of students who have historically denied opportunities to realize fully American democratic values and ideals. It is for these reasons that I believe that educators who wish to change the schools so that they will better promote educational equality should opt for reformist approaches, such as those known to the multicultural education, and reject the radical proposals for restructuring of American society and schools.

In conclusion, we find that the theoretical establishment of intercultural education is an ongoing process which, in our view, is unlikely to be successful to the extent that: a) pedagogical research fails to capture the internal connection of different cultures, the unity inside cultural diversity of human creativity, thus failing or refusing to adopt a clear stance towards the issues of culture and multiculturalism and b) the scientific circles are dominated by a linear perception regarding the evolution of approaches to cultural difference. As a result "any weaknesses or failures identified the relevant recommendations and practices are attributed to "bad influences" of previous models leaving the "true" interculturalism "clean" from any criticism" (Katsikas & Politou,

1999: 58). In our opinion, the education of multiculturalism should not be expected to provide successful recommendations for the management of diversity, to the extent that it is not specified in which diversity we refer to, what is the effect of socio-economic conditions in the genesis and preservation of the differences and what should the pedagogical treatment be of the cases of different that denies any difference.

In societies where there is a segregation of material interests, people seek either their interconnection through similarity or their distinction through their external dissimilarity. We believe that the interconnection of people through their difference presupposes the unity of material interests and the liberation of people from alienating relationships). In the current socio-economic conditions, an education consistent with the project of social emancipation, an education of reason, dialectical thinking, which enables the individual to exceed the daily experiential understanding of the world and to realize with clarity the contradictory nature of social relations and the prospects that derive from it, is the education that remains a challenge since the emancipation of people from the alienating relations can no longer be considered as a purely educational or cultural matter.

Finally, one should recall that the rejection of the difference through its superficial cover-up and its uncritical acceptance by its passive contemplation constitute attitudes towards an issue that has preoccupied the Educational Sciences long before intercultural education came forth as a distinctive example of speech. In the early 20th century, A.S. Makarenko (1977) wrote that:

No matter how unified the human appears before us, in the most broad and abstract sense of the word, nonetheless she/he is a very diverse material for education, which is why the 'product' that we produce will be diverse as well [...] The greater peril is the fear of this complexity and diversity. This fear may manifest itself in two forms: the first is the tendency to cut off all their hair with the same machine, and put them into a standard mold, educate few human types. The second form of fear lies in the passive monitoring of each individual, the hopeless attempt to cope with the huge mass of those being educated, caring individually for each person. This is hypertrophy of the "individual" process (p.12⁵).

⁵ Own translation from the Greek transcript.

The core of the above indicative concern, is reproduced in the relevant to intercultural education literature except that in the present, due to the cultural shift of social sciences, the differences are codified as purely "cultural". It seems that the social sciences are becoming increasingly ahistorical in such a way that “problems and ideas once examined fall out of sight and out of mind only to resurface later as novel and new. If anything the process seems to be intensifying; society remembers less and less faster and faster.” (Jacoby, 1997: 25).

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Conceptions or misconceptions? The Greek ICT rationale through teachers' perceptions of and discussions about ICT in primary school

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Abstract

This study is concerned with the process of examining and discussing the rationale of ICT integration into the Greek primary education curriculum. For achieving this purpose, the relevant education policy terrain is considered and teachers' conceptions and perspectives towards ICT are investigated through an analysis of teachers' archived postings published in self-generated online discussion forums. The findings of the study illustrate a confusing, ambiguous and depressing picture of ICT integration in schools and identify a variety of disparities in between the official recommendations for the delivery of the ICT curriculum, teachers' conceptualizations of ICT and their practices. The findings are discussed in relation to the fragmented, emergent and facile character of education policy and reform and a number of pertinent factors are considered, associated with the educational paradigm of the country. The main and most significant conclusion is that the ICT rationale prevailing over the Greek story of ICT integration and implementation in primary schools cannot be determined. It appears to be a peculiar amalgam of contradictory, obscure and sometimes conflicting positions and actions. The significant absence of genuine pedagogical insight along with the powerful political, social and economic forces driving education appear to represent the building blocks upon which the country's rationale for ICT is continuously shaped and reshaped, serving each time a number of individual, sectional and governmental interests and needs.

Keywords: ICT literacy, ICT rationale, education policy, teachers, online communities

The Education Policy Background

Should ICTs be introduced into schools and, if so, for what purposes? Who actually needs ICTs in primary schools and why? While questions of historical significance may seem outdated, their groundbreaking impact on what we teach and what we learn today is rather an issue of contemporary relevance.

In the past 35 years many hundreds of books, articles, position papers, national documents and research reports have been published promoting and embracing different sets of reasons justifying the use of ICTs in education. The range of rationales or paradigms that have been proposed may remind us ICT-specific classifications, such as the one provided by David Hawkrige in the 1990s (Hawkrige, et al, 1990; Hawkrige, 1990a; Hawkrige, 1990b)). According to it, the most common justifications usually offered for ICT inclusion in schools are as follows:

The Social rationale: Computers are pervading society. They are likely to be important everywhere and schools should prepare students for their future roles in society. Thus, schools should prepare students to deal with computers by offering computer awareness courses. In such courses students obtain general knowledge about the principles on which computers work, acquire familiarity with their use and do some elementary programming.

The Vocational rationale: Computers are vital to our economy and important in the market place. Since computers may take students to successful money-making and wealth-creating careers, schools should prepare them for their future jobs by offering 'computer science' or 'computer studies' courses. In such courses, students should learn to operate and control computers by being taught programming and acquire vocational skills by using application programs.

The Pedagogic rationale: Use of computers may enrich the existing curriculum and improve its delivery. It can extend traditional ways of presenting information and offer new opportunities through techniques possible only with computers. Thus, schools should use computers as educational tools across the curriculum in order to enhance the processes of teaching and learning in a variety, if not all, of schools subjects.

The Catalytic rationale: Computers may be seen as catalysts, enabling schools to be changed for the better by improving efficiency of teaching, administration and management. Their use may help education move away from rigid curricula, rote

learning and teacher-centered lessons, may encourage collaborative learning and enable learners to take responsibility for their own learning. Thus, schools should use the right kind of software, such as LOGO, micro worlds, word-processing, computer conferencing and the like to enable teachers and learners to change.

Based on a study of developing countries, Hawkrige's highly quoted and widely recognized rationales for computer use as well as the criticisms he offered for each one of them seem to be quite relevant even today. As he anticipated, policy decisions with respect to ICT introduction in schools will be actually dependent upon country finances and the rationale chosen and implemented by each country will most probably be the affordable one. Despite its questionable roots which might be found in liberal thinking as well as in the interests and the profits of multinational companies and IT manufacturers who foresaw in widespread computer acceptance the opening of a vast market, the social rationale appears to be the least expensive, followed by the market oriented one, alias the vocational rationale. Both require the introduction of low to medium cost technology into secondary schools and suitably trained teachers. Even though obsolescence of technological equipment, continuous updating of course content and lack of well trained programming teachers may be issues of concern for the promoters of a vocational rationale, on the other end of the scale, proponents of both the pedagogic and the catalytic rationales should be prepared to face a far larger bill. Irrespective of which one is chosen, the idealistic pedagogic or the utopian catalytic, ICTs will be used as powerful educational tools pervading the primary and secondary school curriculum with the aim, either to improve it and extend it or to 'revolutionize' it. In either case, the dark realities of costs become soon realized as the continuous needs of raising enormous funds for purchasing or manufacturing appropriate hardware, for designing and developing culturally and educationally responsive software, for producing adequate educational resources, for delivering suitable training to a huge number of teachers and for periodical updating and maintenance of both resources and equipment, are recognized.

Despite the fact that 25 years have passed since the above foresights, financial affordance continues, due to the rapid pace of technological advancements, to be a dominant driver influencing ICT policy priorities in education. However, another equally influential force as to which rationale a country will support, - often negotiated through and associated with the role of cost -, is the marketing policy of globally influential IT companies and industries, selling the 'digital promise' to

children, parents, teachers and schools. The proclamations of a recurring ‘digital revolution’, which keeps on reappearing every time a new ‘promising’ technology enters the educational market, may be directly related to the immense size of this market (Selwyn, 2014; Winner, 2011). According to a recent estimate made by Jim Shelton, the acting deputy secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, education represents a \$5 to \$6 trillion global marketplace (Shapiro, 2013), alias an attractive terrain for the involvement of private sector interests into public education matters.

Among the powerful forces that are in effect, when a country’s educational policy with respect to ICT is decided and implemented, the educational paradigm characterizing the country’s education system needs to be included. Curriculum orientation, curriculum content and tradition, education discourse and practice, policy decision making structures and administrative norms, patterns of social and cultural values, habits, and ethos, may be some of the key attributes shaping a country’s educational paradigm. Without a doubt the attempt to define and elaborate on a variety of educational paradigms is not within the focus of this paper, but widely accepted curriculum models and classification schemes, such as those offered by Michael Schiro (1978) and Herbert Kliebard (1986) could be of value in the present analysis and may serve as points of reference. In this context and with respect to ICT integration, a country following predominantly a “humanist” or “scholar academic” tradition will interpret and implement a different version of the social rationale, compared to another with an educational paradigm strived primarily towards “social efficiency”. Thus, a country’s dominant rationale of ICT adoption may ‘sound’ the same or ‘look’ similar with that of another. Yet, this similarity is usually in rhetorical terms. In the reality of educational practice, ideology, curriculum, established structures, traditions and general rules act as filters, which ‘translate’ and transform a chosen ICT rationale. The process becomes even more complicated when key-players, alias the teachers, get involved into shaping and re-shaping the proposed ICT rationale. As the main responsible for the implementation and delivery of a chosen policy towards ICT, teachers act as secondary filters, adjusting and modifying it through their personal and professional lenses, which usually project their ideologies, attitudes, pedagogical beliefs, professional competence and occupational status, self-efficacy and job satisfaction.

Clearly then, rationales may be helpful in identifying the initial intentions of policy makers for the role they propose to attribute to ICT in the curriculum. In order to

grasp and understand the realities of ICT policy implementation into teaching practice and discourse, one necessarily needs a country-specific research analysis. On the other hand and as regards contemporary tendencies, all four rationales may be currently recognized in the ICT-related policies of countries and governments. The social rationale seems to be prominent in lower secondary education, while an emphasis on the vocational rationale is evident in general upper secondary and vocational education. Primary education policies appear to highlight the adoption of a pedagogical rationale and in the visionary rhetoric of policy makers, the idea that ICT -if it is used appropriately- can revolutionize education (i.e. the catalytic rationale), has been widely and internationally endorsed (Voogt, 2008; OECD, 2005; Eurydice, 2004; 2011; UNESCO, 2012).

The education policy background portrayed may be described as the foundation stone upon which the broad purpose of the study presented in this paper was formed. This purpose is concerned with the process of examining and discussing the rationale of ICT integration into the Greek primary school curriculum. A typical course of action towards achieving this purpose would be to conduct an extensive content analysis of national official documents, research reports and government position papers concerned with ICT adoption and implementation. Yet, such a process would necessarily illustrate a part of the Greek story about ICT. To obtain a clearer and multi-dimensional illustration of the story, a different course of action would be required, i.e. one that could enable the perspectives of other powerful actors to be presented. Bearing in mind the central role that teachers have in formulating the realistic ICT story scenario, it was decided that their perspectives should be included in the study. As such, the process of exploring the rationale of ICT integration into the Greek primary school curriculum was broadened by investigating in service teachers' conceptualizations of ICT literacy and by drawing comparisons in between ICT teachers' perceptions, contemporary educational policy directions and teacher union tendencies. Nevertheless, before getting into the process of explaining the study's design and its results, a descriptive analysis of the Greek educational context with respect to ICT integration appears to be necessary.

The Greek educational context

The education system of Greece has been repeatedly portrayed as 'centralized', 'bureaucratic' and 'authoritarian' (Kazamias, 1990; Ifanti, 2000; Chrysos, 2000; Kontogiannopoulou-Polydorides, 1996). Nearly all education policy matters are

concentrated in the hands of the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, and the prevailing educational paradigm seems to follow a ‘humanist’ and ‘encyclopedic’ tradition (McLean, 1990; Kynigos, 2001). Some of the main attributes of the education system that appear to justify such characterizations may be summarized as follows:

- Public education is a basic mission of the state. It is financed by the state budget and is provided free of charge at all levels. Educational budget, teacher recruitment, teacher education and training, curriculum provision, school management and administration are centrally managed by the Ministry of Education (OECD, 2011).
- Curriculum is national, compulsory and uniform. It is designed, formulated and controlled by the Institute of Educational Policy (former Pedagogical Institute) and the Ministry of Education. Curriculum is more like a syllabus, as subject matter and number of hours put into each content area are described in detail (Eurydice, 2003; Ifanti, 2000; Pigiaki, 1999).
- The subjects taught are common and obligatory for all students in the most part of primary and secondary education. There is a single suite of compulsory textbooks for each subject approved by the Institute of Educational Policy and the Ministry. Each textbook suite contains the topics and lessons to be taught, the questions to be posed and problems to be solved by the pupils, as well as assessment and evaluation sheets. Textbooks cover a great deal of subject matter and their content is very much ‘academic’, a simplified version of university content knowledge. As such, the teaching environment is dominated by a reproductive, knowledge transmission-oriented philosophy and the teachers’ anxiety to cover the textbook material (Eurydice, 2003; Vosniadou and Kollias, 2001; Kynigos, 2001; Papagueli-Vouliouris, 1999).
- To qualify as a primary teacher, a BEd degree is required by a university department of education. To become a secondary teacher or a subject specialist teacher, a first degree in a relevant field of specialization is sufficient granted by a corresponding university department and no preparatory pedagogical education is required. Teacher recruitment is based on a written competitive examination for vacant posts. Teachers, who succeed in the exams, are employed by the Ministry, they have a civil servant status and their duties and responsibilities, inspection and

evaluation are specified by relevant state legislation (Eurydice, 2001; Chrysos, 2000; Pigiaki, 1999).

- Educational reforms in Greece have been described as short-lived, limited, abortive, emergent, fragmented and inadequate, influenced by the political priorities of each successive government. There is lack of evidence-based policy making and lack of educational policy continuity. The reform measures taken in the last 30 years did not challenge the “humanitarian” and “scholar academic” nature of the Greek school. Most of the reforms could be characterized as patchy and sketchy, aimed at isolated aspects of the educational establishment, without being accompanied by a consistent, goal-driven and wisely thought plan commonly supported by political parties (Zambeta, 2002; Kontogiannopoulou-Polydorides, 1996; Chrysos, 2000; Vosniadou and Kollias, 2001; Ifanti, 2000; 2007; Flouris and Pasias, 2003; Persianis, 1998; OECD, 2011).

Within this context, it is realistic to suggest that the rationale proposed and implemented for the introduction of ICT into the school curriculum could not remain unaffected. Following a mixture of the Social and Vocational rationale and under the pressure of EU recommendations, the official policy initially adopted with respect to ICT was the establishment of a new subject, called ‘Informatics’. This new subject (Kontogiannopoulou et al, 1996) was progressively introduced in the curriculum of Technical and Vocational schools (1985) in the form of a new specialization, in Lower Secondary schools (1992), as a compulsory subject and in Upper Secondary Schools (1998) as an elective subject and a specialization. The content of ‘Informatics’ as a secondary school subject, despite its variations during the past years, was and still is focused mainly on computer hardware and software familiarization, the use of general purpose applications, and the learning of programming languages.

As regards Primary education, the initiation of ICT into the school curriculum dates back to 1997 (Piliouras, et al, 2010; MoE, 1994; PI, 1997; 2003), yet it appears to be a project still in progress directly associated with the establishment and evolution of “All day” schools (schools operating with an extended timetable in which new afternoon activities and subjects, such as drama, foreign languages, ICT, sports and music are added to the compulsory curriculum and taught by subject specialist teachers). The history of ICT introduction into “All day” primary schools is

summarized in table 1 and illustrates the employment of a fragmented and inconsistent policy towards ICT matters.

1996-1997	28 pilot “all day” primary schools are established. Among other subjects “Introduction to Computer Science” is initiated and a general framework for the introduction of CS into primary education is developed. The subject is to be taught by either computing teachers or primary /secondary teachers with an Med on ICT
2001	The “Interdisciplinary framework for programs of Study” is established recommending that Computer Science is integrated into the process of teaching and learning of all primary school subjects.
2002-2003	Within the afternoon program of “all day” primary schools, the subject “Computer Science” is formally introduced.
2003-2004	The subject “Computer Science” is renamed to “New Technologies in Education”. It continued to be taught with this new title to “all day” primary schools until 2009-2010.
2010	The subject acquires the title “Technologies of Information and Communication”, yet it is clearly stated that “the subject is going to be temporarily taught by computing professionals alone”. At the same time, 800 Primary Schools are included in the pilot phase of the “Reformed Educational Program” and in these schools the ICT subject is taught for 2 h/w in the morning session.
2011	Schools operating with the “Reformed Educational Program” become 961 and the time dedicated to the teaching of ICT is reduced to 1 h/w for Years 1 and 2.
2012	Establishment of computing teacher posts in Primary Education. 480 of these posts are established for Computer Science teachers
2013	Schools with “Reformed Educational Program” become 1.282. Following a commitment of the Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies for the reduction in civil servants, 1,799 teachers of Technical and Vocational Education are put into suspension and the Ministry of Education transfers 3,495 computing teachers from secondary to primary education with temporary placement.

Table 1: History of ICT introduction into Primary Education

Currently, there are approximately 3.900 ‘All Day’ public primary schools in the country which could be divided into 2 to 3 main different types. In the typical ‘all day’ school, the subject “Technologies of Information and Communication” is a supplementary afternoon activity, which may be offered to students on the basis of the availability of a Computing teacher. In ‘all day’ schools operating under the “Reformed Educational Program” (EAEP) (MoE, 2010) the same subject is compulsory for all primary grades and it may be taught in the morning session of

courses by a CS teacher. In other types of ‘all day’ schools (experimental, private, intercultural, minority, priority education zones, etc) the ICT course, if and whenever is offered, may take different forms depending on the school’s operational structures. In spite of this rather chaotic context, the primary school subject “Technologies of Information and Communication” according to relevant legislation is currently taught throughout the country by computing teachers, most of them being software engineers and computer science professionals with high quality university qualifications, but with little – if any- education on pedagogy and the primary school context (Fessakis & Karakiza, 2011; Raptis, 2012; 2013). Many of these teachers have been transferred from secondary to temporary primary school posts through a rather extortionary and questionable process on the summer of 2013. Since then, no permanent posts have been created for these teachers, despite the Ministry’s initial promises (Terpeni et al, 2014). As a result, computing teachers all over the country are currently working under a status of insecurity and agony for the future of their jobs. This is even more exacerbated by the fact that according to the 2010 official recommendations the subject “Technologies of Information and Communication’ (TIC) is *temporarily* taught by Computing professionals, as the number of adequately trained primary teachers is still very low, alias an assertion that leaves open the prospect of permanent primary teachers delivering the subject in the near future.

An additional destabilizing factor derives from the inconsistency of the education policy and rhetoric with respect to ICT integration into primary schools which seems to take a position in between the “holistic” and “pragmatic” approaches |1|. Since the establishment of the “Interdisciplinary framework for programs of Study” in 2001 (PI, 2003), primary school teachers are strongly advised and expected to use computers within the context of all school subjects with the aim to enhance the processes of teaching and learning. For achieving this purpose a significant number of primary teachers throughout the country have been officially trained and obtained accreditation in basic ICT skills and the pedagogical use of ICT tools (Teacher training in ICT – Levels A and B). In contrast to this and at about the same time, a new primary ICT subject is introduced, computing teachers are recruited and a new curriculum framework is initiated. According to the latest curriculum edition (Jimoyiannis, 2011; MoE, 2011; 2010; Piliouras et al, 2010; Nikolaidis, 2013) the content of the revised ‘TIC’ subject is explicitly differentiated from notions of computer science, defines ICT and ICT literacy and aims at developing students’

digital competences (knowledge, skills and attitudes related to ICT) and at enhancing student's learning capabilities through the use of ICT tools. Yet, since 2010 primary teachers are not perceived as adequately qualified to teach such a subject, irrespectively of their qualifications in ICT (DOE, 2010). As regards its contents, students from grade 1 to 4 are expected to gain familiarity with digital technology, to use drawing, word processing, presentation, concept mapping tools and other simple applications and to communicate using a variety of internet services. In grades 5 and 6, primary students are expected to use spreadsheets, to learn about text, image, sound and video processing, to program using a Logo-like environment, to acquire information seeking, processing and evaluation skills and to create multimedia presentations. As regards curriculum delivery (Piliouras et al, 2010; Jimoyiannis, 2011), it is clearly and unambiguously recommended that the teaching and learning activities supporting the TIC subject should be drawn from the context of the whole primary programme of studies, they should be based on progressive and learner-centered teaching approaches and that in many cases they should take the form of small, medium and large scale research and development projects. For this purpose the cooperation in between primary teachers and computing teachers in the process of devising context-rich and pedagogically sound activities is strongly advised and recommended. On the other hand, the TIC subject differs significantly from all other primary school subjects in that its delivery is not supported by a uniform and compulsory textbook. To this day, there is little officially recommended teaching and learning material and no student textbook, a fact that creates a number of challenges and a number of opportunities for computing teachers, who eventually are called to implement it in accordance with their personal, professional and pedagogical dispositions.

The research design

As it has been already mentioned, the present paper aims at illustrating a pragmatic picture of ICT integration into the Greek primary school curriculum through an investigation of in service computing teachers' perceptions and perspectives towards ICT literacy as a stand-alone subject being taught in primary school. But, how could such perceptions and perspectives be acquired? With respect to ICT teachers' conceptualizations, an analysis of teachers' archived postings published in self-generated online discussion forums managed and maintained by voluntary communities of teachers was conducted. Drawing upon recent research concerned

with voluntary online communities (Hur and Brush, 2009; Hur et al, 2012; Porter and Ispa, 2012), it was hypothesized, that since participants usually fulfill specific needs and have the option of posting anonymously, they may express their beliefs, opinions, concerns, feelings and ideas more openly, honestly and in greater depth and length than they would in response to traditional data collection methods, such as interviews or questionnaires. According to relevant literature (Jones and Preece, 2006; Duncan-Howell, 2010; Hur and Brush, 2009), online communities of practitioners, which develop organically and are informal, open to anyone, less rigidly managed, with roughly defined purposes may be quite long-lived and successful in many ways. They can provide fruitful information about the challenges professionals face on a daily basis and may be considered as meaningful sources of professional learning and development since the reasons for teacher participation in such communities appear to be regarded not only with knowledge sharing, but also with emotional sharing, exploring ideas, combating teacher isolation and experiencing a sense of camaraderie. Following this line of reasoning, the research questions that guided the study were formulated as follows:

- What are the topics of interest that teachers discuss with respect to the “Technologies of Information and Communication” primary subject and in the context of self-generated online communities?
- What are teachers’ conceptions of ICT in education and their perceptions of the Greek curriculum for ICT in primary school?
- How teachers’ topics of discussion and ICT literacy perceptions and conceptualizations may be related to recent educational policy decisions, teacher union position papers and teacher association reports?

To achieve the exploratory aim of the study and provide in depth responses to research questions focused not only to “what” but also to “how” and “why”, content analysis was used for the analysis of postings and a case study methodology was adopted for the selection of online communities.

Sampling and case selection: Following an extensive and exhaustive search for online teacher discussion forums, a list with all the educational portals providing a forum service was devised. In turn, a number of criteria addressing the research questions of the study were developed and used for the selection of the most

appropriate cases of teacher forums. In particular the criteria developed were the following:

- *Member and participant identity:* The community should be mainly constituted by in service primary and secondary education teachers.
- *Community ownership:* The community should have been developed, organized and managed on a voluntary basis by members of the community.
- *Community participation:* Participation should be voluntary and self-willing.
- *Membership size:* The community should be of noteworthy size, alias it should have a significant number of registered members.
- *Activity level:* The community should be active and “alive” in terms of interaction for more than four years.
- *Topic Discussion:* The community should have at least one topic of discussion related to the teaching and learning of ICT literacy.
- *Terms of use:* The postings could be freely accessed by any user or visitor and could be used for research purposes.

On the basis of the aforementioned criteria, an examination of the existing forums has taken place, leading to the initial identification of seven communities. However, four of them had very few members and participants and another one was not particularly active. As a result, the research was focused on the remaining two, which seemed to meet all identified criteria. The two communities included in the study were “The Hangout of Computer Science Teachers” and “The Community of Teachers”. The general characteristics of the two communities selected are illustrated on Table 2.

Community main characteristics (till June 2014)	“The Hangout of Computer Science Teachers”	“The Community of Teachers”
Date of Inception	2003	2005
Membership Size	4,912 members	23,402 members
Total Number of postings	64,430 postings	753,434 postings
Total Number of themes opened for discussion	4,828 topics	13,707 topics
Active Participants	Computer Science teachers in primary and secondary schools (mostly anonymous)	Primary and Secondary education teachers (all anonymous)
Technology	Structured forum	Structured forum

Main Purpose	Online discussion, sharing of thoughts, ideas and resources about ICT and computer science in schools	Online discussion, educational resource exchange and sharing of teaching materials and ideas about all primary and secondary school subjects
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Table 2: Characteristics of the communities selected

The Community of Teachers: The forum was developed in December 2005 by a few in-service teachers and its founder is a Computer Science teacher. The main focus of the community is the exchange of information and announcements, sharing of resources and teaching ideas as well as online discussion for any kind of educational matter pertaining to primary and secondary education. As of June 2014, the community had 23,402 registered members. According to the information available on its site, 13 people on average become registered each day and the average number of every day postings is 253. Since the beginning of its operation (till end of June 2014) 753,434 postings have been made and 13,707 themes have been opened for discussion categorised into seven different areas of interest. Almost all members participating in the discussion topics were using pseudonyms, 2/3 of them were female –reflecting the national ratio of male to female teachers (Stylianidou et al, 2004)- and participant characteristics varied widely covering all sorts and types of teaching jobs in primary and secondary education. Apart from regular in service teachers teaching a variety of school subjects, the community included special education teachers, substitute teachers, hourly paid teachers, teachers of technical and vocational education, private sector teachers and administrators, as well as teacher trainers.

The Hangout of Computer Science Teachers: The community was established in 2003 as the official forum of the Pan-Hellenic Association of Computer Science Teachers (P.E.KA.P), but since the end of 2011 it has turned into a forum managed voluntarily by a small number of teachers. As of June 2014, the community had 4,912 members. The main focus of the community is online discussion, sharing of thoughts, ideas and opinions about computer science in education. Since its inception (till the end of June 2014) 64,430 postings have been made and 4,828 themes have been opened for discussion arranged in five main categories. A few members identified themselves with their name and surname but the majority of participants are anonymous and use pseudonyms. Participant characteristics do not vary, as most of them are either

appointed teachers or hourly paid teachers of computer science in primary, secondary or vocational education.

The study results: Discussion topics of interest

The initial step towards the identification of teachers' discussion topics was to collect all threaded discussions pertaining to ICT and primary school matters from both online community spaces. The criteria used in the selection process were the thread title and the content of the postings. As such all topic titles consisting of words or phrases relevant to 'ICT', 'computing', 'informatics in the primary school', 'digital school', or similar were included in the selection process. Indeed, 85 topics were identified in both communities containing 4,341 postings. This actually represented a very small percentage of the total number of postings (0,53% of total messages) and discussion threads (0,45% of total threads) in the communities studied revealing that the issues concerned with ICT integration and implementation into primary school were neither on the top nor in the middle of the list of teachers' interests. In fact, topics concerned with ICT in the primary school setting could not be considered as favorite or famous subjects of discussion.

On the other hand, some of the postings' contents were found to be peripheral to the aim of the study and as a result they were excluded from the analysis. The final number of postings selected for further analysis was reduced to 3,940 categorized in 69 threads. In turn, the contents of the 69 threaded discussions were read and studied irrespective of their title or set topic with the aim to identify general domains or themes of interest. Thus, threaded discussion was used as the main unit of analysis and each thread was assigned to a domain of discussion which emerged after multiple readings of the postings comprising the thread. The discussion domains that were identified through this process were as follows:

(a) **Employment and Recruitment:** The threaded discussions included in this domain were concerned with computing teachers' recruitment into primary school posts. Teachers were giving advice, explained and provided information about administrative and bureaucratic matters, such as teacher transfers, secondments and appointments, teaching timetable supplements, as well as temporary placements. However, a major concern that dominated most of the discussions in this domain, sometimes in a rather heated and stressful climate, pertained to the creation of structural vacancies (i.e. permanent tenured teaching posts) for computing teachers in primary education and the ways in which these posts could be insisted on the

Ministry, through teacher unions and federations. The following samples of postings' quotations may illustrate this:

“Surely our foremost demand is the creation of structural vacant post in primary education, as well as to ensure that we are the ones who teach the subject (we should not forget this). But there are other important issues, because if we relinquish from our dues by ourselves, the outcome would not be good”

“My viewpoint is that the Ministry wishes to transfer all those redundant to primary education and not to create new vacancies”

“Something else that worries me is the future of CS in primary. It is burred and vague. What happens if in two years the ministry decides the CS in primary has failed? They will tells us thank you very much for your company and farewell. Will we be able to transfer again to secondary if there are structural vacancies available?”

(b) **Computer Science (CS) teacher appropriateness:** Themes included in this domain reveal concerns about the role of computing teachers in primary schools. Evident in the threaded discussions is the anxiety, the stress and the need of computing teachers to explain, justify and defend their placement in primary education. “Who is the most suitable teacher for the primary TIC subject? Is it the primary school teacher or the computing specialist?” On the basis of such questions, teachers' occasionally flaming discussions, seemed to bring forth fixed and long-lived problems of the Greek education policy arena, such as the multi-level, fragmented and centrally controlled teacher recruitment pathways, the tendency to counteract towards secondary teacher over-supply by transferring subject-specialists to primary education, the lack of secondary teachers' pedagogical knowledge and skills and the 'encyclopedic' and humanistic nature of the curriculum.

“What exactly do you suggest? Is it for teachers become computer scientists having attended seminars of the ECDL type and to teach children Facebook and Farmville? Or is it rational for children to learn informatics from the ultimate knowledgeable individuals of the particular science?”

“Regarding questions of whether we should teach computer use, we should not be arrogant. We are not university professors to teach only algorithms, data structures, object oriented programming, artificial intelligence, digital signal processing, etc. The use of computers is also our subject of teaching as long as it is not the only one”

(c) **Teaching ideas and resources:** The discussions included in this domain were concerned with the processes of teaching and learning in the primary school context.

Teachers exchanged links to educational materials, discussed teaching ideas and approaches and shared experiences. Some of the most posted concerns were related to classroom management and discipline issues, the management of different ability groups, difficulties in teaching theoretical aspects of computing, the lack of textbooks for ICT and the lack of official educational resources.

“In the upper grades, I believe that it would be useful to teach a simple introduction to the concept of logic and inference”

“To the 1st graders if you raise your voice they cringe. Be patient they will come to terms. Let them know who the boss in class is”

“The teacher sometimes gives them a piece of text to type and other times he lets them browse the internet. He always sits and plays on the Internet for two consecutive hours and he does his other businesses”

(d) **ICT infrastructure:** The threads comprising this domain referred to the technological conditions of teaching and learning in primary education. Teachers’ concerns about the lack of appropriate hardware and software, the aging and obsolete equipment, the security, health and copyright issues raised by the use of ICT in a school setting may be seen as the main topics of discussion. Among others interesting and highly posted topics were concerned with the pupil/computer ratio, the regulations under which a school computer lab should operate and whether the computer lab maintenance was included in their roles and responsibilities.

“The curriculum cannot be implemented! It is utopian! It is badly written and it is directed to students with previous knowledge and skills... Above all how can you implement it without a single wire? The good thing is that today I spoke to the parents’ association and will transform together an old stockroom into a computer lab. Until we find machines we will build the classroom. Until then theory....”

“I’m fed up to respond that it is not my job to repair and maintain computers and I do not do it. I think the PLHNETS are responsible for this kind of job. Basically, give them a Windows manual and wish them good reading and good luck. If you were a civil engineer, would you paint the school and fix the plumbing???

Basically, pretend you are thick-headed and that you know nothing of it...”

(e) **ICT curriculum:** Teachers’ threaded discussions in this domain are concerned with the content of the TIC primary curriculum. Critical viewpoints are expressed regarded with the nature and the subject matter to be taught in primary school children as well as the process and the people involved in its development.

Suggestions are put forth about the changes that need to be done in terms of its emphasis and orientation. A number of teachers comment on the contents that they would like this curriculum to include and explain the importance and necessity of these contents.

“The curriculum is not binding, but recommended and ancillary of what we could teach. We can deviate as much as we wish, especially with this curriculum that is full of inaccuracies, teaching mistakes and non-epistemic”

“The subject is called ICT, whether we like it or not. If we don’t teach ICT they will reply to us, that others could teach it ... because it is the ministry’s judgement that ICT should be taught in primary education, with whatever this may include”.

(f) **Various threads:** The discussion threads comprising this domain are many, yet short in terms of size. They are referring to requests for technical or administrative assistance, announcements of all types, invitations, notices, media releases, polls and others.

The number of threaded discussions included in each domain of discussion together with details about the number of postings comprising the domain and the number of participants are illustrated on Table 3.

Domain of Discussion	“The Hangout of Computer Science Teachers”			“The Community of Teachers”		
	Number of Postings	Number of participants	Number of threads	Number of Postings	Number of participants	Number of threads
Employment & Recruitment	367 (38%)	157	10	1479 (49,7%)	326	4
CS Teacher Appropriateness	171 (18%)	48	4	870 (29%)	267	6
Teaching ideas & resources	174 (18%)	77	8	307 (10%)	151	9
ICT infrastructure	117 (12%)	48	4	122 (4%)	48	3
ICT curriculum	30 (3%)	19	2	168 (5,6%)	54	4
Various others threads	107 (11%)	82	6	28 (0,94%)	25	9
Totals	966 postings in 34 topics (1,49% of total posts in community space)			2974 postings in 35 topics (0,39% of total posts in community space)		
Grant Total	3940 postings in 69 topics					

Table 3: Teachers’ Discussion topics of interest

The domain with the largest number of postings in both online communities concerned teachers' employment and recruitment status. Regarding the domains with the second, the third and the fourth highest number of postings, these seem to differ slightly in between the communities studied. These differences may be related to the synthesis of the participants of the two communities. As such, participants in the computer science community seem to discuss more issues of teaching ideas, resource exchanging and ICT school infrastructure and to reply more often to requests of technical assistance compared to the participants of the broader teacher community. Nevertheless, in both communities employment status and computing teacher appropriateness appear to represent equally favoured domains of interest, while the content of the curriculum for ICT seems to be one of the least posted themes of discussion. Apparently, both quantitative and qualitative aspects of the postings collected appear to support the idea that computing teachers are significantly interested in being appointed in primary education. In the context of this prospect they also seem very much interested in defending and safeguarding their suitability as the most appropriate teachers for the delivery of the ICT primary subject. In contrast, discussions about the content of the TIC curriculum and the processes of teaching and learning ICT as a stand-alone subject are much less favoured and restricted to a limited number of participants. Despite the fact that the lack of a compulsory textbook and official curriculum resources could have acted as a main motivating factor in the development of discussion threads concerned with the design and implementation of teaching and learning activities addressing curriculum aims, this did not happen. Even the threads referring to the domain of teaching ideas and resources appear to be somehow informative, excessively concentrated on a variety of social and technical aspects of the teaching and learning process, or focused on the lack of resources and equipment. The alignment of curriculum goals and content with particular activity suggestions in most threads is either vaguely discussed, or not addressed at all. So where does this lead to?

Teachers' perceptions of ICT and the implementation of the TIC Curriculum

In search for a clarification and an explanation of the issues raised by the teachers' discussion topics of interest, all postings directly or indirectly referring to a definition of ICT literacy, the content of the ICT curriculum and its pragmatic implementation into the primary classroom were identified and collected for further analysis.

Irrespective of the initial domain of interest in which they were included, all relevant 430 postings were de-contextualized for the purposes of analysis.

Perceptions of ICT: The main and most significant finding with almost universal acceptance concerned teachers' conceptualization of ICT literacy. In the great majority of the postings collected (>95%), ICT was approached as an oversimplified tool literacy, essentially focused on the use of computers and the use of a variety of generic applications with subject matter similar to ECDL. As a result, it was perceived as irrelevant to Computer Science, which represented most participant teachers' professional specialization.

“The use of computers should not in any case be confused with Computer Science... We are the first ones to give a fight for the differentiation of Computer Science from computer use”

“ICT is a teacher aid and their development requires pedagogical knowledge which we do not have. Computer Science is our specialization and if they want it in primary education, they should get it as it is and as it stands... Our job is to teach computer science. The rest that are needed by society, belong to the work of others“

“Computers are for Computer Science, what the telescopes are in Astronomy”

“This is exactly the problem in Greece. In middle secondary schools we lose lots of time on skills and not on algorithmic problem solving. This is where the misunderstanding starts. When the children have associated computer science with a programme of study like ECDL, then they believe that using Word they've learned Computer Science”

“I have nothing against nurses or cleaners or anybody. Simply everyone should be working on his/her specialization. What is taught in primary school and especially in the lower grades has nothing to do with our specialization. We have to understand this and to make it understood to others. Computer Science is one thing and computer use is another. The latter can be dealt by a primary teacher, and even better from a computer science specialist. And if anyone supports the idea that through this arguments many of our colleagues will find a job, he is mistaken. They will get us for Upper Secondary and they will put us there (in primary schools)”.

“I insist that the use of computers is not a subject falling into our specialty, wherever this is taught inside and outside of school”

Unavoidably, this downgrading perception of ICT literacy is reflected in teachers' opinions and judgements about the primary TIC subject. Even though discussions

about the content of the ICT curriculum were limited and restricted to a small number of participants, teachers' postings illustrate a clear and common viewpoint about it. The latter is heavily concerned with the use of computer applications, while its curriculum is troublesome and needs to be revised in order to include important and significant aspects of computing, such as programming and algorithms, data structures and information management, computing systems architecture, data coding, modelling, robotics and data mining.

"I have many objections against the curriculum of primary schools... The curriculum is excessively oriented towards 'computer use' and I think that all the other issues espoused in it (organization and structure of ideas, presentation of ideas, etc) are only 'side effects' of its disposition to revolve around computer use"

"The programme of studies has infinite problems, it is more ICT rather than computer science, it does not take into consideration the realistic difficulties that we encounter with infrastructure..."

"(Regarding 5th and 6th grade) I would like more programming (i.e binary code, image transmission and representation, text compression, searching and sorting algorithms, etc)"

"I agree that we should be very cautious as to whether the curriculum was developed by 'scientists' and whether it was well thought or written in an evening. Let's not take it as a gospel, we are scientists as well and we can criticize it"

"A curriculum that would have been developed by many scientists, who are real practitioners teaching in secondary schools, I would absolutely respect it and I would accept to be evaluated on it. This ridicule that they have sent us, that was probably made by an advisor-university teacher (future troika evaluator) without getting involved in it, (which was developed) by putting students to work for it, this amateur piece of work, I do not respect it at all".

Perceptions of the ICT teacher: Within the context of the aforementioned perspectives and conceptualizations and given the opposition of many teachers towards the ICT curriculum content, opinions regarded with the most suitable teacher for the delivery of the ICT subject vary. The majority of the relevant postings collected (approximately 80% of the postings) appear to advocate that the computer science professional is the ideal teacher for the subject. Despite the fact that this position appears contradictory to teachers' general disagreement with the 'computer

use' orientation of the curriculum and its disposition towards 'low level' skills' acquisition, the arguments that they use in order to support their thesis may be summarized as follows: (a) Primary school teachers are not adequately qualified for teaching properly and scientifically the subject, (b) Most primary teachers are not interested in teaching the subject anyway due to technological phobia and/or the inevitable increase of their teaching duties and working schedule, and (3) If we leave the subject to teachers, then many of us will be eventually unemployed, because we are in excessive supply in secondary schools.

"This is not their (primary teachers) subject, it is the subject of others. They do not have the ability to teach it because they do not have the necessary knowledge. I personally value younger primary teachers, because they understand this difference and do not aspire to teach the subject of ICT themselves"

"When I asked a primary teacher in the all day school that I have been working whether he could teach computer science he replied: "Are you serious? We are shivering only with the idea of touching the machines, in case something bad happens" ... the majority of teachers do not want to put another headache on top of their heads"

"No matter how well trained a primary teacher is, he cannot teach computer science better than a computer science teacher. That's the reality. Similarly, he cannot teach music better than a music teacher, arts better than an art teacher and drama better than a drama teacher"

"I'm sorry if have made you unhappy but I think that I'm writing the truth. If CS leaves from upper secondary and CS begins from 5th grade and on, then many of us with permanent posts will have no role and no subject to teach in education. Do you know what are the dangers and the risks in this?"

However, a number of participants seem to disagree with these positions. The synthesis of this small group is not clear, as some of them present themselves as parents or primary school teachers. Yet, a significant number appears to come from the pool of secondary computing teachers with permanent tenured posts. The main position of this group is that since ICT is not equivalent to computer science and considering that the subject taught in primary education is ICT and not computer science, primary teachers are the most suitable to deliver it. The arguments that are put forth for the advocacy of this thesis may be summarized as follows: (a) Primary teachers are better prepared for teaching children of primary school age range and we

are not pedagogically qualified, and (b) It is rather ‘humiliating’ for a computer science professional to teach simplistic use of computers.

“It is a shame, colleagues to get down to Primary school...It is like we have lowered our guns and go for being nurses ...I do not know how this might sound, but I feel ashamed to teach painting and drawing in 1st grade children and to walk like a nurse with a laptop from classroom to classroom. I haven’t studied this and I haven’t been appointed for this. If we do not react I do not know where they will put us eventually”

“I personally believe that computer science teachers have no relation to primary education. We are not trained for something like that. Just like mathematics and science teachers. I believe that primary education is for the primary teachers. The student has a different relationship with his teacher in primary and a different with the secondary school teacher... Because of unemployment everyone makes an effort to be appointed in public education by any means. This is logical but it is a price that should not be paid by children at the end of the day”

“I will express again a former position that till 4th grade, a child is not in position to accept any other teacher apart from the primary school teacher, regardless of which subject we are speaking off, computer science, arts, physical education or anything. It is difficult for the child to adapt to the different requirements of every teacher, anxiety increases and the outcomes are decline in attainment and an increased fear for school.”

“Speaking firstly as a parent and secondly as a computer scientist I do not want CS at school till 4th grade in order for anyone to get a civil servant post. I do not care if he /she is a teacher, a colleague, the minister, the prime minister, or God himself... I’m sorry but I’m very much disappointed by the prevailing conditions. I have the impression that we put first our personal and sectional (corporate) needs and secondly the common good of education”

Practical implementation of the TIC subject: The aforementioned perceptions and positions are necessarily reflected on the everyday teaching and learning practices of computer science teachers. Since the great majority find the established ICT curriculum defective, heavily strived towards the use of plain computer applications, a significant number of teachers do not actually follow it. Apparently, a multicolour and multilevel mosaic of school practices emerges from the analysis of relevant teachers’ postings, illustrating a sort of teacher typology. In particular, the types of teaching practices identified are summarized in the following three categories:

(a) **The computer science perspective:** The practices included in this category are predominantly oriented towards the acquisition of programming skills, the development of a simple understanding of algorithms and the acquirement of knowledge about the computing environment (hardware, software, network systems). Sometimes, through the use of simple and game-like programming tools many teachers appear to endorse such a perspective in the teaching and learning activities of grades 4, 5 and 6. However, there are some who support and implement it with younger children. The profile of teachers following the CS rationale seems to refer to a computer professional who feels disappointed by the existing conditions in primary education. His or her highly scientific status is not appreciated by other practitioners, yet she fosters an intrinsic love for computer science which she strongly believes it should be transmitted to children.

“I teach only BYOB from the beginning till the end. And I have managed to make a 3rd grader design a packman game. There is nothing else in primary school except BYOB. They learn to write, to program, to make presentations, to play music and when they want to play, I say create a game and they do create it... and I have the Internet cut off”

“Yes, binary code can be taught in 3rd graders, as long as you do not say “children today we are going to learn about binary code”. But if you say, “children I have a bowl with 1 candy, one with 2 candies, one with 4 candies and one with 8 candies, now who can get me 7 candies, without taking them out of the bowl”, then here you are.

“Parent posting: I ask my 9 year old whether he likes informatics and he told me that the last lesson was in Chinese, no one understood anything. I take his notebook and I read... “In the output of the system the result that we see, may not be correct. To correct errors we need to get back to input again. The way of going back is called feedback. The Central processing Unit is responsible for processing information errors”. .. Then I ask my 7 year old what she has understood so far and she tells me that “the computer has a tower... just like Rapunzel”

(b) **The civil service perspective:** The teaching and learning approaches comprising this category attempt to address those entailed in the established national curriculum for ICT. The best practices falling in this type, illustrate teachers’ efforts to teach the use of various computer applications by relating it to drill and practice exercises of primary school subjects and to collaborate with primary teachers on the

development of some project work. However, many of the activities proposed are oriented towards the operation and handling of applications per se. Thus, they are either de-contextualized (e.g. Practicing typing skills) or not placed within a meaningful context (e.g. perform multiplication exercises in Excel), while some teachers in the absence of an official textbook seem to use either the ECDL e-Kids books and syllabi, or the secondary school textbooks. Teachers following this perspective feel that they are obliged and required to teach computer use due to their civil servant status. Some of them do appreciate the acquisition of ICT skills in primary education. Yet, others find themselves closer to the CS perspective, which they try to incorporate in the upper primary grades. In spite of their preference and possibly due to fear or insecurity they make an effort not to deviate significantly from teaching 'computer use', which they perceive as the main and ultimate rationale underlying the established subject curriculum.

“In 1st grade put them to draw, choose a theme that they like and at the end tell them that you will all vote for the best drawing. In 2nd grade put them to write their spelling will all punctuation marks. Some may finish very quickly so let these colour the spelling words”

“I have observed that very few follow this programme. As a result when every year they send us in a different school we have to start from the beginning. One year I find myself in a school that all grades have been using word and the other year I may come across a 3rd grade that has done only programming”

“The trainer told us that the curriculum is clearly a computer science one and that we should not deviate from it. Anything else apart from its implementation is against the law. She told us that teachers do not want this, because it would be easy afterwards to make this subject their own and throw us out of primary education...She also told us that there is great discontent in the ministry, because for many years most cs teachers do not perform their job properly and that is the reason for dropping us slowly but steadily out of education and keep on talking about cross curricular teaching of computer science. Attention, colleagues, we should implement the curriculum, otherwise we will be transformed into primary teachers' assistants”

“Colleagues please do not use the secondary school software in primary schools as it stands. This specific software follows the secondary school textbook and is necessary for the course. I have faced a lot of problems in secondary school because some teachers did not follow the curriculum for their grade, i.e students have learned

already to programme with Scratch on 2nd grade, while programming with Logo is placed on the 8th grade”.

(c) **The educational gaming perspective:** Practices included in this category may be perceived as predominantly playful, following a “Let the children play” motto. The best ones are oriented towards the acquisition of simple computer operating skills and the enrichment of knowledge and skills in a variety of school subjects. In this context, teaching practices are exclusively based on the use of famous suites containing interactive educational gaming applications, such as RAMkid and Kidepedia. Nevertheless, there are also practices oriented towards entertainment alone. In such instances, students are usually playing online games (e.g. use of sites like www.miniclip.com and www.friv.com) or fiddling about with content and context free web browsing (e.g. listening to music, watching videos, etc). By all means, the role of the teacher in the practices of this category is limited to that of a guardian or carer, as the need for intervention is minimal and there are no requirements for preparing educational material or lesson plans. Many of the teachers following this perspective seem to feel tired, bored and frustrated by the lack of resources and the ‘all day’ school environment. Some of them come from the pool of hourly-paid teachers and thus they feel underpaid and disappointed, with no real prospect in being permanently employed.

“In reality this is my programme of studies as well! I like that you suggest to use ramkid from 8 to 15 (famous minigames, some with an educational perspective). I have developed the page www.miniplay.gr and they have gone crazy with playing Scooby doo!

“I have been notified that the school advisor recommended that we should announce one day per month in which parents could come to get informed about the progress of their children in all day school. Listen to what they thought of! It’s like asking the parking boy if your car has been improved within the hours that it remained moored in the parking place waiting for you to finish your work!”

“I remember the first year that I was anxious to prepare the content for the children and to teach them significant staff. Afterwards computer science posts have been closed and I lost my motivation.. I became old as well and now the all day school has obtained a new meaning... Ramkid, internet and individual practice of the students with the computer. I do not need to intervene anywhere. If the school has enough computers I browse together with them (just like this minute. In 7 minutes we are

dismissed). If not (this is why this year I have bought a smart phone).. time passes happily by listening to sport broadcasts

There is no doubt that the above mentioned categories of teaching practice could not be generalized to the whole population of subject specialists delivering the Greek primary curriculum for ICT. Moreover, the types of teaching practice identified are not exclusive, in the sense that there are teachers who experiment with combinations of different types of teaching and learning activities. However, what the aforementioned categorization offers to the discussion of the Greek story for ICT, is the identification of certain tendencies in the practical implementation of the ICT primary curriculum. These tendencies did not sprout by themselves, like weeds. In essence, they may be perceived as the unavoidable outcomes of certain ‘seeding’ policies.

Discussion of results

Evident in the quotations above and the contents of hundreds of other teacher postings are the feelings of discontent, exhaustion, withdrawal, incompetence, angst, insecurity and fear for the future. Apparently, computing teachers’ feelings and worries are quite reasonable and justifiable. They represent the harvest of a number of equivocal, inconsistent and facile policies that appear to create chaos and controversy and to bring forth the most conservative and unimaginative ideas about teaching, learning and education itself. A description of such policies in comparison to the study’s results seems to be necessary.

Among others, teachers’ overwhelming concerns about their employment status appear to reflect the attractiveness of the teaching profession in Greece and the attributes of the ICT sector in the country. Teaching in Greece has always been considered as a profession with a high degree of security due to its civil servant status and the “career-based” model of public service. Set salary structures, automatic promotion and tenure, good overall working conditions and a reduced teaching time schedule are some of its advantages (Stylianidou et al, 2004; OECD, 2011; 2014). These factors coupled with wide access to a teaching qualification (a first degree in a discipline is sufficient to qualify as a subject specialist teacher) and with high unemployment in the private sector have created a great surplus of qualified teachers. This is even more exacerbated in the case of ICT professionals due to the availability of multiple pathways leading to a first degree in ICT (EPY, 2006) and to the small size of the ICT sector in Greece. The contribution of the ICT sector to GDP is

estimated at 4% and it is constituted by approximately 1.900 small and medium size firms employing around 100.000 employees altogether (OfIS, 2007; SEV, 2013). Moreover, around the mid 80's (Law 1566/85), the ministry has enabled secondary teachers of Physical Education, Arts, Music and Foreign Languages to teach in primary education. This policy initiative which has been steadily broadened in the past 25 years and progressively extended to other subject specializations through the establishment of 'All Day' schools, has cleared the way for the appointment of computer science professionals in primary schools. Without a doubt, this prospect of employment has fuelled a considerable increase in the attractiveness of a teaching career in primary education, a fact that is actually reflected in CS teachers' discussions. Apparently, the process of infusing subject specialist teachers to primary education has been commonly perceived as an economically efficient measure which could minimize the surplus of qualified teachers on the one hand, without creating new teaching posts on the other (Stylianidou et al, 2004; OECD, 2011). Yet, in effect it has eventually changed the landscape of primary education, if not education as a whole, and it continues to change it, without realization of its consequences for teachers, parents, and foremost the students themselves. This practice was again implemented in a wide scale in the summer of 2013, when all of a sudden, the education authorities of the country decide to exclude Computer Science from the upper secondary education, creating a significant number of redundant computing teachers. These teachers were 'obliged' to transfer from secondary to primary education, while approximately 2,000 of them were put into suspension, awaiting new placement. And the story will probably be continued, as the new Minister of Education intends just a year after the decision of the previous Minister to bring back 'Computer Science' in upper secondary schools and introduce new significant changes in Primary education (BHMA, 2014a; BHMA, 2014b). Thus, Greek teachers' worries have actually become a part of their everyday reality. By all means, the austerity measures imposed in the context of economic crisis (OECD, 2011) and the convulsive policy actions taken by the Ministry, may lead to a further significant reduction in the numbers of "who knows which this time" teachers; and that is necessarily reflected in computing teachers' discussions, which mirror their insecurity, their nervousness and their fear for the future.

Within this distressing and unstable context, computing teachers appear to take sometimes a defensive position and other times an aggressive stance. In their struggle

to protect their posts, they need to justify their role in primary education and in order to do this sometimes appear to condemn primary teachers for their lack of subject specific knowledge, other times to argue against ICT and to promote a computer science perspective, as the most appropriate one for primary education. Arguably, such positions appear to reflect again the ambivalent nature of the policies followed with respect to ICT. As it has been already mentioned, the tendency of the implemented policies to take a position within the social and pedagogical rationales does not enable practitioners to grasp a clear, cohesive and understandable direction for the ICT policy of the country. On the one hand and for a considerable period of time enormous investment is being devoted to a number of actions and initiatives endorsing a cross curricular perspective in the use of ICT. On the other hand and within the same time frame, ICT takes gradually the form of a separate, stand alone primary subject, which is to be taught by computing teachers following a curriculum that promotes the acquisition of ICT literacy skills and is rather demanding in terms of the pedagogical approaches needed for its delivery. This latter curriculum framework has admittedly put computing teachers into a rather unsettling position. Subject specialist teachers' lack of pedagogical knowledge and skills, their unfamiliarity with the primary education context and their lack of primary teaching experience, may be seen as sufficient reasons justifying the formidable challenges and the tremendous restraints they face in the process of implementing the new programme of studies. For this implementation process has to be accomplished with a cross-curricular rationale, without an official textbook, with limited technological and educational resources, with a vague status of employment and an equally ambiguous description of their roles and responsibilities (Tziafetas et al, 2011; Fessakis and Karakiza, 2010, Koustourakis and Panagiotakopoulos, 2010; 2008). Under these conditions, it seems rational for some to feel alienated, bored, frustrated or renounced and to turn into a leisurely conception of primary teaching, which obviously represents a form of ineffective teaching, having consequences in a variety of levels. It is also expected from some others to implement the ICT curriculum through a repertoire of sometimes meaningless and dull practices, yet these at least try to fulfil the commitments of their role. It is finally reasonable for others to transfer the encyclopaedic logic and the humanist tradition of secondary education into the primary school context and to resort to the teaching of rigorous and authentic computer science, since this is what they are familiar with and this is the way in which they were taught as students

(Clark, 1988; Clark & Peterson, 1986). Being themselves the 'end results' of an 'academically' oriented system which perceives school content knowledge as a simplified version of university content knowledge, and bearing in mind that their subject expertise has been sufficient for being appointed in secondary education, it appears sensible to perceive pedagogy as inferior to subject knowledge expertise and to identify it not as an episteme, but as a training experience that is welcome, but not absolutely necessary in the teaching profession.

On the other hand and with respect to the former analysis it needs to be mentioned that the problems identified in terms of the operational, technical and pedagogical problems of ICT delivery have already been illustrated in studies concerned with the overall establishment of 'all-day' schools. In these studies (Androulakis et al, 2006; Konstantinou, 2007; Grollios and Liambas, 2012), apart from the lack of resources and appropriate equipment, which appear to influence the quality of the programme of studies, notable is a main finding concerned with specialist teachers' lack of pedagogical knowledge and preparation. According to primary teachers' views, specialist teachers 'implement things' that are not aligned with the primary curriculum, cannot manage disciplinary issues, they are not aware of primary school subjects and students' needs and they teach with a secondary school perspective (Grollios and Liambas, 2012). On the other hand, a considerable percentage of primary teachers feel that ICT should be taught by primary teachers and not IT specialists (Grollios and Liambas, 2012), they feel confident to deliver the subject themselves (Mpratitsis et al, 2012) and think that ICT should be introduced into the official and national programme of studies of all primary schools through a cross curricular perspective and not as simplistic computer operation, which is what computing professionals actually teach (Kokkinaki, 2010). These viewpoints about the delivery of the primary curriculum for ICT appear to be endorsed by the Hellenic Union of Primary teachers (DOE, 2010) which supports the idea that confident primary teachers should be allowed to teach ICT, in case they wish, that ICT should be taught on the basis of students' needs and interests and that subject specialists should have certified pedagogical preparation before they get recruited into a primary teaching post.

Additionally, a small number of previous studies based on Greek computing teachers' beliefs and perceptions seem to find results similar to the ones identified in this study. According to these, many teachers appear to feel insecure, insufficient and

inadequately trained for fulfilling their role in primary education (Papageorgakis et al, 2011; Tziafetas et al, 2013). They perceive the ICT programme of studies as generalized and vague and they feel confused regarding the orientation and the demands of the curriculum, the dimensions of their role and the characteristics of effective teaching (Tziafetas et al, 2013; Vaggelatos, et al, 2011). As a result, their teaching approaches may be described as traditional and teacher centred (Fessakis and Karakiza, 2010; Papageorgakis et al, 2011; Tziafetas, 2013; Kordaki, 2013), technocentric, or oriented towards educational gaming approaches by using sometimes excessively the official MoE educational applications (Tziafetas et al, 2013). Many are not familiar and do not feel comfortable with progressive teaching formats (Fessakis and Karakiza, 2010; Kordaki, 2013), a fact that usually forces them to resort to a 'secondary school' style of teaching. They do not seem to take students into account when planning their courses and disagree with the necessity of promoting students' needs (Fessakis and Karakiza, 2010; Tziafetas et al, 2011). Their practices from time to time appear to contradict their viewpoints on pedagogical approaches. On the one hand, they value the cross-curricular and interdisciplinary approach towards ICT teaching, but on the other they do not cooperate with primary teachers and feel quite sufficient to deliver it by themselves (Tziafetas et al, 2011). Furthermore and in alignment with the results of this study, sometimes they express viewpoints opposing to the official national recommendations for ICT, and other times their positions express a need for vocational consolidation (Kordaki and Komis, 2000). In any case, most try to associate primary subject teaching to computation processes and computational thinking (Tziafetas, 2013; Kordaki, 2013). The explanations provided, similarly to this study are related to the ambiguous nature of ICT integration which creates confusion, to the lack of teachers' pedagogical preparation and to teachers previous professional experience and educational background.

Nevertheless, distorted and downgrading notions of both pedagogy and ICT literacy may not be exclusively related to teachers' educational background and professional experience. Widely known computer science associations seem to endorse the implementation of a computer science perspective towards primary education, which essentially fuels and influences computing teachers' perceptions and conceptualizations of ICT. The following extracts, coming from broadly publicized

position papers of associations with a national recognition, are quite illustrative of this perspective:

“Computer Science does not coincide with ICT. It is not about the use of a computer, the use of a piece of software or “learning about the computer”. It is an autonomous science and its didactical dimensions are not restricted to higher and secondary education. Within this context it includes use of computers and technologies for developing mental activity, logic and algorithmic thought in children, through collaborative educational activities...Computer Science literacy should be supported by well trained Computer Science teachers. In addition the cross-curricular dimension of Computer Science and ICT should be supported by well trained specialist subject teachers as well as primary teachers” (Panhellenic Association of Computer Science Teachers, 2010)

“Computer Science Education should acquire a realistic value in the context of primary education. The effective introduction of Computer Science in primary education should not be restricted to the development of digitally literate students. It should contribute to the development of a basic framework of knowledge and the appropriate preparation of students, which is necessary for Computer Science Education taught in the upper levels of education...This duty should not be left to unauthorized, unqualified or semi-qualified individuals, who have no scientific competence in Computer Science“ (Association of Hellenic Computer Science professionals, 2010)

Positions, such the ones above, may be perceived as reflections of some sort of guild mentality or corporatist logic, through which computing teachers’ interests in being permanently recruited in education are protected and secured. On the other hand, they seem to deviate from current policy recommendations, they appear to create a ground for competition and may significantly affect teachers’ practices in schools. Without a doubt, the tendency of such associations to act as syndicates rather than as educational communities and to formulate an almost dogmatic and totalitarian rhetoric leaves no space for reasonableness and educational insight and eventually affects teachers by turning them into crippled professionals, who are not in position to engage in any genuine pedagogy (Pigiaki, 1999:64). Indeed, some of the outcomes of infusing and promoting a computer science rationale for primary education and of underplaying ICT literacy and pedagogy instead of supporting computing teachers’ pedagogical and methodological improvement in the delivery of the established ICT curriculum may

be traced back in the previous sections of this paper. The end products of such outcomes may be traced in a number of OECD and European reports (EU, 2013; EU, 2012; Balanskat, 2009; OECD, 2005), which present a dark picture of ICT use in Greek primary education, and in which: (a) students in Greek primary and secondary schools have very low confidence in the operational use of ICT and in the ability to use the Internet safely and responsibly, (b) professional development in ICT is characterized as patchy and (c) Greece with Latvia are placed in a (red) cluster separate from all other European countries, representing statistical outliers with generally below average scores in almost all indicators of ICT use.

Summary and concluding remarks

The purpose of this study was concerned with the process of examining and discussing the rationale of ICT integration into the Greek primary school curriculum through an investigation of the relevant education policy terrain and of computing teachers' perceptions, as these may be identified in related archived postings published in community discussion forums. The results of the study illustrated a confusing, ambiguous and depressing picture of ICT integration in schools and identified a variety of disparities in between the official recommendations for the delivery of the ICT curriculum and teachers' practices. According to the official policy of educational authorities, the initial introduction of ICT in Greek primary education followed a 'holistic' model, alias a rationale supporting the cross-curricular delivery of 'computer science' skills and knowledge. Yet, since 2010 the initial 'holistic' approach was transformed into a 'realistic' or 'pragmatic' one. 'Computer science' was to be treated as both a subject in its own right and a cross-curricular area. In line with this change of course, the 'old computer science' curriculum is reformed and renamed into "Programme of studies for ICT" and a new subject is established with the title "Technologies of Information and Communication" that is to be taught by computing teachers (Piliouras et al, 2010). This ambiguous and obscure language, in which 'ICT' and 'computer science' are used interchangeably and with inverted meanings, seems to characterize the rhetoric of official reports and creates confusion. This confusion can be clearly illustrated in the following extracts referring to ICT in primary education and which derive from two country reports sent to the same organization with a year's difference:

“In primary and secondary schools ICT is taught as a separate subject, and at primary is also included within technology as a subject, and is a general tool for other subjects/or as a tool for specific tasks in other subjects” (EU, 2012)

“In primary education, there is no dedicated educational time allocated for the introduction of ICT within the national curriculum for informatics, but ICT is expected to be incorporated into other school subjects. ICT will be integrated gradually through the computer curriculum subject that is taught once a week by specialist IT teachers” (Nikolaidis, 2013) European Schoolnet

Despite the puzzling and bewildering jargon used in national documents and reports, it appears that the goals and contents of the reformed ICT curriculum support a mixture of the social and pedagogical rationales, in Hawkrige’s terminology. Nevertheless, the majority of computing teachers perceive it differently. ICT is considered as equivalent to the acquisition of simplistic computer operational skills and is identified as a subject alien, significantly inferior and irrelevant to computer science which is teachers’ specialization. Therefore, the ICT curriculum is conceived as defective, requiring significant revision in order to include more of ‘computer science’. As a consequence, many computing teachers appear not to follow the curriculum recommendations and their practices are widely varied, ranging from practices implementing a computing perspective to practices that may be considered as ‘recreational’.

On the other hand, it is notable that teachers’ discussions about the nature of ICT as well as the ICT curriculum and its implementation are restricted to a few threads and to a limited number of participants. Teachers’ most interesting and favourable discussions are regarded firstly with matters related to their employment in primary posts and secondly with issues pertaining to their suitability in teaching the primary ICT subject. A major concern dominating their discussions is the establishment of permanent tenured posts in primary education by the Ministry and the ways in which these posts could be necessitated. Around this major concern the rhetoric developed is extensive. Evident in the discussions analysed is the need of computing teachers to defend their placement in primary education and prove it rightful, a finding probably associated with both teachers’ and computing associations’ requests for more computer science in the primary curriculum. The fulfilment of such requests would certainly ensure the desirable posts and make computing professionals feel significantly more secure, with no other competitors in the terrain.

A number of factors have been found relevant to the creation of this gloomy picture associated with computing teachers' professional and educational background, the non-constructive role of computing associations, the pedagogically demanding nature of the ICT curriculum in comparison to their lack of pedagogical preparation, as well as a variety of shortcomings in infrastructure, educational resources and organizational aspects. Yet, the role of education policy and administration in the creation of the above deficiencies is crucial and needs to be considered. At the end of the day, teachers do not decide on matters of national curriculum, teacher selection and placement to schools. In a system of education, where teacher recruitment is centrally controlled and impersonal, based on a limited list of initial certified qualifications alone (in which teacher pedagogical preparation is not included), and teacher appointment is largely equated with lifelong and tenured employment, teachers put their greatest effort on safeguarding their permanent entry to the profession and some may not have sufficient incentives to improve their skills and practice while in-service. In such systems, the process of adjusting teacher numbers according to realistic school needs and curriculum changes becomes extremely difficult and cases of ineffective teaching cannot be adequately addressed, having long term consequences for the whole school community (OECD, 2011). Besides, confusing rhetoric and inconsistent policies create misunderstandings and ambivalence, which are then echoed in teachers' perceptions of ICT and their practices. After all, the decision of recruiting non-pedagogically qualified personnel for doing the job of a highly skilled education practitioner, who has a sophisticated perception of the subject matter taught in all primary grades, who understands deeply and has practiced the implementation of a number of progressive teaching approaches and who can create learning experiences in which ICT related concepts, skills and attitudes are meaningfully and authentically developed, was a -"dangerous" and "risky" (Raptis, 2012; 2013) as has been characterized - decision taken by central education authorities; not by teachers or their associations.

Under those circumstances, it seems natural for someone to ask: "So, where is the pedagogy in all of this?" The Greek story of primary ICT integration, as this is narrated through the findings of this study, acts like a mirror, on which a severe lack of pedagogical thought and educational insight is projected. Due to this lack, it seems almost impossible to identify with any degree of clarity the ICT rationale followed in the country, as this is continuously reshaped on three main fronts: (a) at country level,

by central education authorities and on the basis of the priorities of each successive government with whatever balancing political and economical games these priorities may entail, (b) at sectional level, by professional associations and on the basis of sectional-serving interests, which may not be entirely educational, but also political and economical, and (c) at school level, by computing teachers and on the basis of their personal and professional lenses, which may project their individual dispositions, priorities and interests, principles and philosophies, occupational status, self-competence and job satisfaction. Within this spectrum, the Greek narrative of primary ICT integration enables us to conceive in a small scale the unsurpassed problems in education administration and management, in curriculum development and implementation and in policy decision making structures and norms. The deeply political, social and economic origins of these problems and the absence of sophisticated pedagogical thought in almost all matters of education, have lead to the development of a system rigid, anachronistic, sterile and foremost ill equipped to serve the needs and the aspirations of our children.

Note

[1] The terms ‘technocentric’, ‘holistic’ and ‘pragmatic’ are extensively used within the Greek context alone. They were developed by Makrakis and Kontogiannopoulou-Polydorides (1995) and refer to the introduction of computer use in education as a stand-alone subject (technocentric approach), across the curriculum (holistic approach) and as both a subject and a cross curricular area (pragmatic or mixed approach).

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Youth and labour market(s) in Europe: ‘opportunities’ or just ‘risks’? – Findings from the European Social Survey

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Abstract

Many critics argue that one core dimension of the European Union (EU) ‘Lisbon Strategy’ (2000) is ‘more flexibility and openness to the labour market in teaching/learning’ and not ‘strengthening human resources’ at the educational institutions by ‘promoting a favourable professional environment’. Amidst the global financial crisis and the increasing ‘downsizing’ of the Welfare State, we would like to examine how young adults perceive their current situation and their future educational and occupational prospects within this framework of opportunities?

*Using comparative data on measurement(s) of subjective well-being and job security, experiences of unemployment and work-life balance, from Round 5 (2010-11) of the cross-sectional **European Social Survey**, we will try to highlight patterns on how European youth (generally defined as people between 18 and 24 years of age) perceive their working situation and future job prospects, in times of supposedly big investment in ‘human-capital formation’. Variables such as highest level of education completed, gender, ethnic or religious group, parental education and occupation are also taken account in order to control for significant ‘personal’ and ‘external’ influences. Special attention is paid on the role that various European-wide initiatives on educational restructuring presumably play in preparing young people for the ‘labour market’, and how realistic can be today –in times of diminishing educational and occupational expectations— the rhetoric of the so-called ‘Knowledge Society’ and ‘Life-long Learning’ (LLL).*

Keywords: Life-long Learning, European Union, European Social Survey, employment, young adults.

Introduction

In March 2000, the Lisbon European Council set out the goal for the European Union (henceforth EU) of becoming ‘*the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion*’, a goal which was reaffirmed, the following year, at the Stockholm European Council. The strategy for this purpose entailed such elements as: the *adaptation* of education and training to offer tailored learning opportunities to individual citizens, the promotion of *employability*, the creation of an *information* society for all, and the fostering of *mobility* (CEC, 2001: 6).

The basic objectives of this overall strategy of lifelong learning are (CEC, 2003b:3):

- The provision of basic knowledge and skills for all, at the level of basic school education [...] so that the school acts as a foundation for lifelong learning.
- The modernization of university education [...] through developing closer links between education and production and fostering entrepreneurship.
- [...] The provision of a range of opportunities for young people, the encouragement of individualised learning [...] and the promotion of high quality and flexibility in the training provided.

Using comparative data on *measurement(s) of subjective well-being and job security, experiences of unemployment and work-life balance*, from Round 5 (2010-11) of the cross-sectional **European Social Survey**, we will try to highlight patterns on how European youth (generally defined as people between 18 and 24 years of age) perceive their *working life, their working situation, their future job prospects*, and *the degree of work-family balance*, in times of supposedly big investment in ‘human-capital formation’. More specifically, we will try to *describe* – and when the data permit to *infer* – how the ‘Life-long Learning’ (LLL) rhetoric is perceived by the European young adults *within their working environments*.

Definition of ‘youth’

‘Youth’ is best understood as a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood’s independence and awareness of our interdependence as members of a community. Youth is a more fluid category than a fixed age-group. However, age is the easiest way to define this group, particularly in relation to education and employment. Therefore “youth” is often indicated as a person between the age where s/he may leave compulsory education, and the age at which he/she finds his/her first employment. This latter age limit has been increasing, as higher levels of

unemployment and the cost of setting up an independent household puts many young people into a prolonged period of dependency (EUROSTAT, 2012, esp. chapters 2 & 6).

According to EUROSTAT (May 2014) the population of young people aged 18-24 (nearly 43 million in the EU-27, in 2009) can be divided into four broad categories as regards their situation concerning education and labour status¹:

- In 2009, in the EU-27, 16.4 million young persons aged 18-24 were exclusively in education, accounting for 39 % of the age class.
- Those who were only in employment (for at least 1 hour a week) numbered 12.2 million (29 % of the age class 18-24).
- Around 7 million of the 18-24-year-olds (16.5 %) are studying and working at the same time. Some students work in conjunction with their education (e.g. as apprentices or trainees), others do it to gain experience, to fund their studies or simply to earn money.
- Another almost 7 million (16 %) have left education and are without employment. A little more than a half of them are *unemployed* and the rest are *economically inactive*. The last two groups are associated with those young people called NEETs (i.e. young persons who are 'Not in Education, Employment, or Training').

LLL structures in EU countries

The majority of the European countries are implementing a range of measures that are expected to improve *higher education participation rates and attainment levels*. These measures are often closely related and their impact is mutually reinforcing. In higher education, they are also often linked to structural changes and improvements in other dimensions of education.

Recent initiatives in the EU countries often focus on strengthening the engagement of employers with the learning process in order to incorporate a *practical dimension into higher education*. Efforts are being made to involve employers actively both in the development of study programmes, so that they include practical market-relevant skills, and in the provision of these study programmes. In an effort to boost the labour market relevance of higher education qualifications, several countries report that they

¹See http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Young_people_-_education_and_employment_patterns. Note that education includes formal and non-formal education.

have been reforming the higher education sector. For example the *Czech Republic* ‘concentrates on enhancing the status of undergraduate education and supports on-the-job oriented Bachelor's degree programmes. Shorter, more practically-oriented training that rapidly transfers sufficient basic skills in particular areas will be piloted’. (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2013: 42).

Some countries identified the *short-cycle, two-year tertiary qualifications*, focused on areas where a skills shortage exists, as being particularly effective in improving the link between education and labour market needs (CEC, 2012).

Additionally, EU countries have put in place a number of large-scale initiatives, confirming the urgent need to tackle *youth unemployment through education and training*. Most commonly, countries have adopted policy measures in three main fields of action: increasing work experience opportunities, addressing skills mismatches and upgrading young people's skills. In nearly half of all countries, these issues are addressed through comprehensive policy initiatives for youth employment.

Taking into account the expressed will of the European governments that ‘adult learning and lifelong learning strategies should play a key role in the policies for competitiveness and employability, social inclusion and active citizenship’, the Council has established a benchmark for *adult participation in lifelong learning* and adopted a resolution on a renewed agenda for adult learning. The benchmark objective is that, by 2020, 15 % of European adults (age 25-64) should be participating in lifelong learning activities².

One of the basic measures to increase the overall participation of adults in lifelong learning is *removing barriers to participation*. In order to do this, many Member States support new modes of delivering learning content such as *distance learning*, *evening courses* and education tailored to the needs and circumstances of the individual. Moreover, learners are offered alternative, more *flexible pathways to achieve higher education qualifications*. Additionally, *financial incentives* are important to raise adult participation in lifelong learning. Countries report different incentives for encouraging individuals and companies to participate in lifelong learning. Nineteen Member States have loan schemes, while other financial incentives such as *training vouchers* for further training and re-training, the *reimbursement of*

ⁱⁱ See Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European Cooperation in education and training.

enrolment fees and an *entitlement for workers* to have the right to request time away from work to train, are reported. (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice 2013, chapter 4).

Criticism against the European LLL strategy

As it evident from the official EU texts, but also from the examples given above, quite often, as the key-point of the LLL discourse –in conjunction with respective changes in the dominant mode of production-- is perceived the increasing cultivation of the idea of ‘personal responsibility’ for any future ‘investment’ that a person may wish to make in order to improve her/his negotiating power in a highly competitive labour market. In the new models of lifelong learning, some critics argue that an overarching emphasis is given to a very simplistic version of the ‘human-capital’ theory (Selwyn & Gorard, 1999; Rees et al., 2000). Individuals – and not ‘citizens’ – are being seduced to ‘invest’ in their future well-being, by accumulating ‘credits’, ‘learning units’, ‘training certificates’, ‘diplomas’ and many other ‘trading tools’, which, in turn, will have to present to their prospective employers. ‘Flexibility’, ‘adaptability’ and ‘openness to the labour market’ in teaching/learning are the main driving forces in the quest – for the EU— to becoming ‘the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world’ (Lisbon Declaration).

The bulk of the official documents stress the ‘employability’, ‘flexibility’ and ‘adaptability’ of the (rather vaguely defined) ‘national workforce’ (CEC 2003a,b, 2005). Very few references are made to what a former Commissioner for Education & Culture envisaged of the role of Education and Training (V. Reding, ‘Preface’ in CEDEFOP- EURYDICE, 2001): that it is ‘not merely necessary to sustain employability of wage-earners and their ability to adapt to labour market requirements’, but a mechanism for the promotion of ‘active citizenship and strengthening social cohesion’. Thus, it is argued that what is abandoned is the original humanist concept of ‘lifelong education’ promoted by UNESCO in the 1970s, as propounded by the ‘Faure report’ (Borg and Mayo, 2005; Schuetze, 2006). As Borg and Mayo (2005) put it, ‘the neo-liberal set of guidelines, contained in the *Memorandum* [on LLL] serves to heighten the member countries’ and candidate countries’ competitiveness, in a scenario characterised by the intensification of globalisation’ (p. 218).

What is usually brought forward is an invariably social, economic, as well as technological, *determinism*. It is widely proclaimed that promoting life-long learning

opportunities, especially through the use of ICTs, is the only means of overcoming existing barriers to participation, particularly barriers of ‘time, space and pace’. As some critics stressed, the whole discursive basis of lifelong learning rhetoric remains ‘ostensibly white, middle-class, Euro-centric (in alphabet and language-use at least), male artefacts, [...and] many of the technologies that will form the backbone of on-line adult learning (in particular the Internet) are not necessarily likely to be dominant or familiar technology with working class, older, female and some learners from local ethnic minorities’ (Selwyn and Gorard, 1999: 3; see also Holderness, 1998; Selwyn, 2002; Spender, 1997).

Another line of argument points at the *limited character of knowledge and skills* acquired through some LLL programmes. It is argued that, putting into practice all the gains from participating in these programmes –which supposedly equip the learner with ‘soft skills’, applicable to a wide range of working settings— is not an easy task, since an employee is usually restricted within the confines of a specific job description, and his/her skills cannot easily be transferred outside the firm’s boundaries, nor are they formally recognised. On the contrary, as research evidence on informal learning in various developed countries showed, ‘the levels of informal practical knowledge attained in the workplace and in everyday life by even the least formally educated people have been both very extensive and generally unrecognized or discounted in public debate and job hiring policies.’ (Livingstone, 1999: 171; also in Brown, Lauder & Ashton, 2010).

The European Labour-market – Effects of the economic crisis

During the last six years, *work intensity* (the effort required and the time pressures of work) has risen in all regions of Europe. The rise in work intensity has been clearly linked to the experience of economic crisis. Employees have been more likely to report higher levels of work intensity if their organisation had recently experienced financial difficulties; there have been staff reductions in the workplace; or their own jobs had become less secure (Gallie, 2013).

There is no evidence that the economic crisis led employers to change the structure of the workforce by increasing the proportion of workers in less secure temporary jobs (although the proportion of part-time workers did increase in most countries). The rise in job insecurity was felt equally among permanent employees as well as part-time and temporary workers (Lyberaki, 2012; Gallie, 2013).

Opportunities for training declined in many countries. The odds of receiving training were 20 per cent lower in 2010/11 compared with 2004/05, even taking account of other possible changes in the workforce and workplaces (ESS, 2012: 7). The most significant declines were in eastern Europe, followed by Ireland. In contrast there was no decline in training in the Nordic countries whilst Germany and Belgium actually saw increased provision. Countries with stronger regulations for protecting people's jobs –leading to longer-term relationships between employers and their workforce – were more likely to maintain training provision (Gallie, 2013).

Experience of *work-family conflict* among married and cohabiting couples increased in most countries. A number of changes in working conditions contributed to the change, including an increase in working unsocial hours; an increase in working overtime, and at short notice; and the growth in job insecurity. The pressure imposed by work on family life was generally higher in countries experiencing a greater rise in unemployment (Gallie, 2013).

The Data Set(s)

It was in the 1990s that the European Science Foundation first identified the need for a new regular and rigorous Europe-wide survey to chart changes in social values throughout Europe. By 2001, the European Commission had been joined by 21 national research councils and ministries throughout Europe to jointly fund the first round of the ambitious European Social Survey (ESS).

The survey measures the attitudes, beliefs and behaviour patterns of diverse populations in more than thirty nations. The main aims of the ESS are (<http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/about/index.html>):

- to chart stability and change in social structure, conditions and attitudes in Europe and to interpret how Europe's social, political and moral fabric is changing
- to achieve and spread higher standards of rigour in cross-national research in the social sciences, including for example, questionnaire design and pre-testing, sampling, data collection, reduction of bias and the reliability of questions
- to introduce soundly-based indicators of national progress, based on citizens' perceptions and judgements of key aspects of their societies
- to undertake and facilitate the training of European social researchers in comparative quantitative measurement and analysis
- to improve the visibility and outreach of data on social change among academics, policy makers and the wider public

Since 2002, the survey has been fielded every two years and over time a detailed research infrastructure has flourished. All EU Member States, apart from Malta have participated in the ESS, as have nine other countries outside the EU (Albania, Kosovo, Iceland, Israel, Norway, Russia, Switzerland, Turkey and Ukraine). There have been so far *six (6) rounds* of the ESS: 2002-03 up to 2012-13. Highly user-friendly, it offers data users the options of conducting simple analyses on-line, and of downloading all or parts of the dataset for more detailed or complex analyses. A web-based training tutorial, 'ESS EduNet', is also available to aid the less experienced user. There are no restrictions on access.

Unfortunately, questions concerning either the *measurement(s) of subjective well-being*, or the *labour-market position of individuals* and their *perceptions and feelings* about it (e.g. *work satisfaction, job security, work-life balance, work-family conflict*, etc.) were not included in the first four rounds of the ESS (not even the most recent one, that is the 6th round), contributing that way to a lack of comparative picture of these phenomena across time. Nevertheless, the rotating **module G** of the **5th round of the ESS** provides a rich data source for the working-life experiences of the European citizens, especially the younger ones. The responses to the ESS main-questionnaire questions that capture the aforementioned variables were coded into a hierarchical order, on a four-, five-, six- and seven-point scale, and ranged from either 'All of the time' to 'At no time', or from 'Agree strongly' to 'Disagree strongly', or from 'Not at all true' to 'Very true' etc. (for details see below). We must draw attention to the fact that the nature of the majority of variables produced by the dataset (that is of the questions included in the main questionnaire) is *categorical*, so the emerging data cannot be easily reordered or recoded in order to deduce distinct sub-categories, which would allow complex inferential analyses.

Research questions

Keeping in mind the socio-economic environment across Europe (referred to above), and especially the fact (evident from recent international statistical sources) that younger generations are more vulnerable than older ones in the increasingly volatile European labour market (s), we set some major research questions, which are of a rather *exploratory* nature, given that that the ESS data-set contains information that is not easily manipulated for producing inferential statistics. Our aim has been the exploration of general *discrepancies* and/or *similarities* among young adults, across Europe, within the particular time-frame of the economic crisis. More specifically, we

tried to highlight general patterns of attitudes of the young adults towards their labour-market situation, and provide as much as reliable and valid answers as possible to the following questions:

1. Are there any differences between ‘younger’ and ‘older’ generations as far as their working life experiences (impact of the recession on households and work, feelings of job (in)security and/or wellbeing, experiences of unemployment and work-life balance arrangements) are concerned?
2. Are those differences (if exist) limited only to certain countries, or is it a European-wide phenomenon?
3. Are those *national differences* (if any) independent from other types of differences (especially *gender* and *family* ones, such as *parental education* and *occupation* and *family income*)? If yes, in what ways they are connected to each other?
4. Are there differences between people (younger or not) with different *ethnic identity* or *religious* background, regarding the same issues?

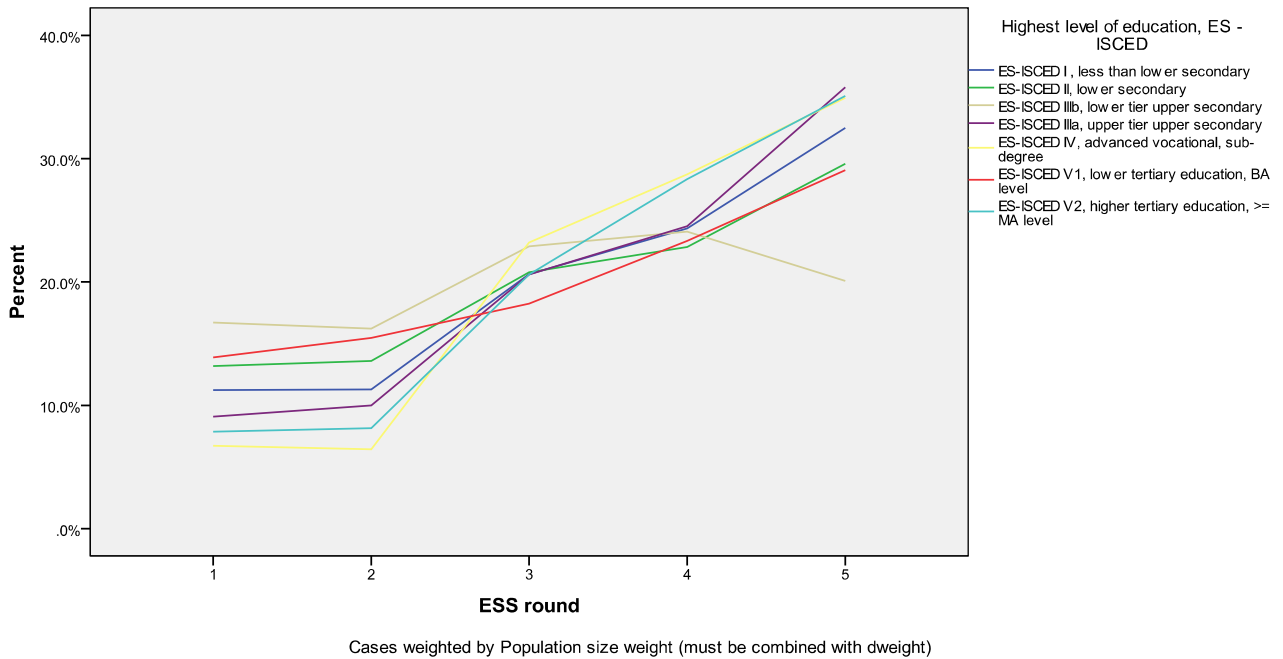
Results

Time trends in Educational qualifications

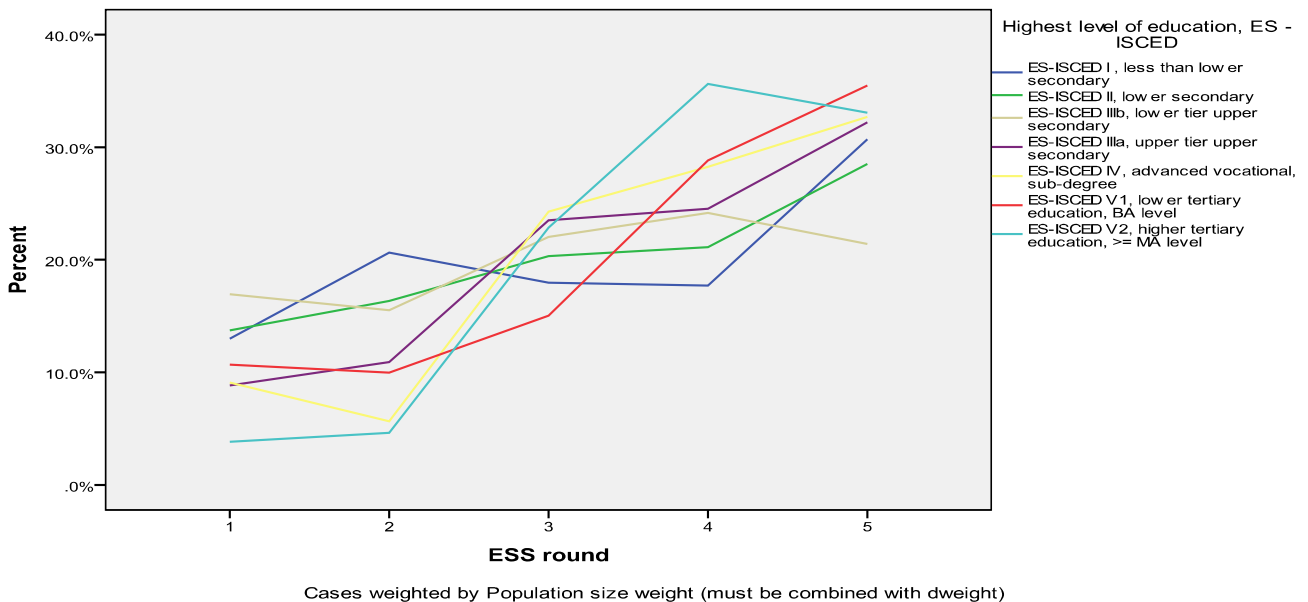
Using information from our data-set (i.e. the first five rounds of the ESS) , it becomes evident (see the Graphs below), that the European population, and indeed the younger generations have become more ‘educated’ across time. **Graph 1** depicts the time-trends of the general population (15+), while **Graph 2** represents the time-trends for the younger generations (18-24 years of age). Both trends are markedly upwards, which are again increasing for all the educational groups, with the unexpected exception of the ISCED V2 group, which represents the ‘higher tertiary education’, that is the qualifications obtained at and over the MA level (i.e. 3+ years of higher studies). That might correspond to a decrease in the number of students following studies beyond the bachelor’s level, due to financial hardship that hit public higher-education systems after the introduction of austerity measures across many European countries (Gallie, 2013; Eurostat, 2012, 2013; OECD, 2013).

Of course the above trends show considerable variations between countries. For example, there are countries that show a decrease in the number of holders of ‘lower-level’ qualifications (e.g. less than lower-secondary education) and an increase in the number of holders of ‘upper-level’ qualifications (e.g. lower-tertiary or higher-tertiary education, that is holders of a bachelor’s degree or a Master’s degree or even a Ph.D.).

Graph 1: Time-trends in highest level of education completed by the ESS successive samples (all respondents)



Graph 2: Time-trends in highest level of education completed by the ESS successive samples (18-24 year olds)



Findings from the Round-five module on the impact of the recession on households

Descriptive statistics

When we examine the rotating **module G** of the **5th round of the ESS**, and more specifically the responses of younger generations (18-24 years of age; N= app. 5,000)

to questions concerning their *general feelings*, mixed results emerge (see also **Table 1**):

- To the questions ‘*Have [you] felt cheerful and in good spirits last 2 weeks?*’, a 5.5% stated that they felt in ‘good spirit’ in very few occasions or not at all (categories ‘Some of the time’ and ‘At no time’), in comparison with a 13.4% of the general population.
- To the questions ‘*Have [you] felt calm and relaxed last 2 weeks?*’, a 10% of the respondents stated that they felt ‘calm and relaxed’ only occasionally or not at all (categories ‘Some of the time’ and ‘At no time’), in comparison with a 15% of the general population.
- To the questions ‘*Have [you] felt active and vigorous last 2 weeks?*’, an 8% of the respondents stated that they felt ‘active and vigorous’ only occasionally or not at all (categories ‘Some of the time’ and ‘At no time’), in comparison with a 17% of the general population.

Table 1: General feelings of well-being for European young adults in the last three years (2008-2010) / ‘*Has the respondent felt...*’

	<i>cheerful and in good spirits in the last 2 weeks</i>		<i>calm and relaxed in the last 2 weeks</i>		<i>active and vigorous in the last 2 weeks</i>	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
<i>All of the time</i>	799	15.9	633	12.6	903	17.9
<i>Most of the time</i>	2625	52.2	2083	41.4	2048	40.7
<i>More than half of the time</i>	978	19.4	1157	23.0	1129	22.4
<i>Less than half of the time</i>	353	7.0	649	12.9	533	10.6

<i>Some of the time</i>	242	4.8	419	8.3	345	6.9
<i>At no time</i>	35	.7	88	1.7	74	1.5
Total	5032	100.0	5029	100.0	5032	100.0

Additionally, a very high proportion of youngsters expressed a very stereotypical views on the *gender division of the labour market*. More specifically, a notable 38.7% of the respondents (as compared to a 54% of the total sample) ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘simply agreed’ with the statement that ‘*A woman should be prepared to cut down on her paid work for the sake of her family*’, with a 24.5% being undecided. Another 16.8% of the youngsters (as compared to a 28% of the total sample) ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘simply agreed’ with the statement that ‘*When jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than women*’, with another 15.4% being unsure about their views (more on this later).

A proportion ranging from 36% to 25% of the youngsters (as compared to 40% to 30% of the total sample) stated that their *financial situation* had somewhat got worsened in the last three years (before the survey), and had to either substantially cut spending, or rely on withdrawing money from their deposits in order to cover living expenses. The proportion of those who expressed extreme financial difficulties (i.e. who chose category 6: ‘a great deal’) was 12.6% for the first, 8.7% for the second question and 12.5% for the third question (see also **Table 2** below):

Table 2: Financial deterioration of European young adults in the last three years (2008-2010) / ‘*To what extent had the respondent...*’

	<i>to manage on lower household income last 3 years</i>		<i>to draw on savings/debt to cover ordinary living expenses last 3 years</i>		<i>to cut back on holidays or household equipment last 3 years</i>	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
<i>Not at all</i>	1259	26.9	1950	42.0	1693	36.1

1	490	10.5	584	12.6	488	10.4
2	485	10.4	429	9.2	453	9.7
3	745	15.9	523	11.3	542	11.6
4	608	13.0	434	9.3	488	10.4
5	501	10.7	324	7.0	439	9.4
<i>A great deal</i>	592	12.6	402	8.7	585	12.5
Total	4680	100.0	4646	100.0	4688	100.0

The results are mixed when we examine *individual countries*, with the more ‘dynamic’ ones (economically and technologically) showing a lower degree of financial stringency in comparison to the ‘less dynamic’, although the general picture is not differentiated in a considerable way.

An almost 41.5% revealed that ‘several times a month’, or ‘once a week’, or ‘several times a week’, or ‘every day’, they have to work at *nights or evenings*, and a further 35% to work overtime at *short notice* (the corresponding figures for the total sample are 38.5% and 34%). Moreover, a 46% stated that they are called on to work on *weekends* ‘several times a month’, or ‘every week’ (the corresponding figure for the total sample is 37%).

Table 3: Working conditions of European young adults in the last three years – Time schedules (2008-2010) / ‘Work involve ...’

	<i>working evenings/nights, how often?</i>		<i>having to work overtime at short notice, how often?</i>	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
<i>Never</i>	654	44.1	558	38.0
<i>Less than once a month</i>	139	9.4	233	15.9
<i>Once a month</i>	74	5.0	160	10.9

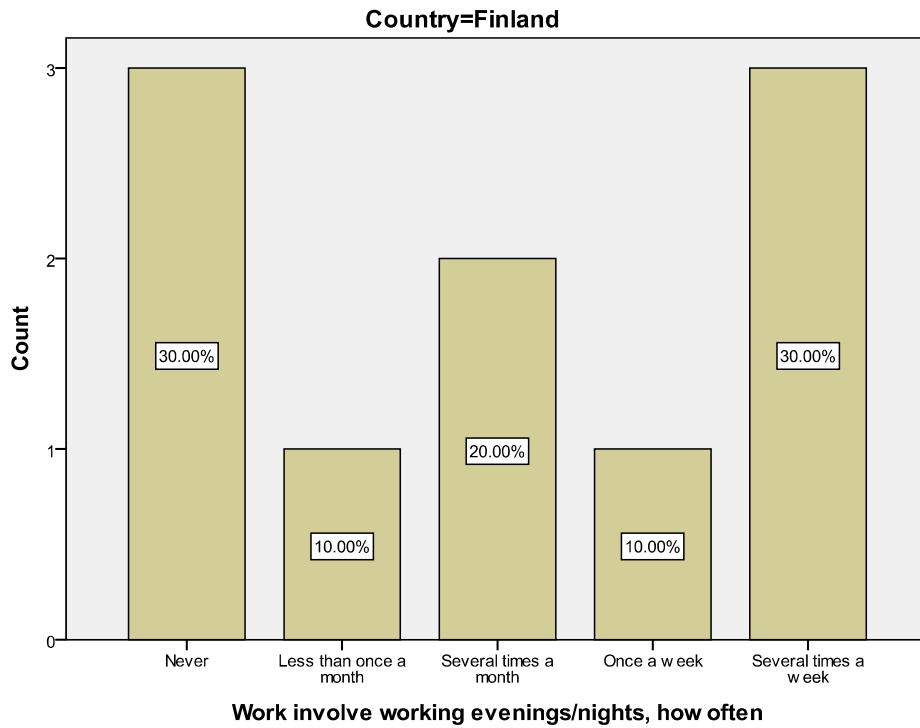
<i>Several times a month</i>	225	15.2	223	15.2
<i>Once a week</i>	82	5.5	96	6.5
<i>Several times a week</i>	237	16.0	162	11.0
<i>Every day</i>	71	4.8	36	2.5
Total	1482	100.0	1468	100.0

Table 4: Working conditions of European young adults in the last three years – Time schedules (2008-2010) / ‘Work involve ...’

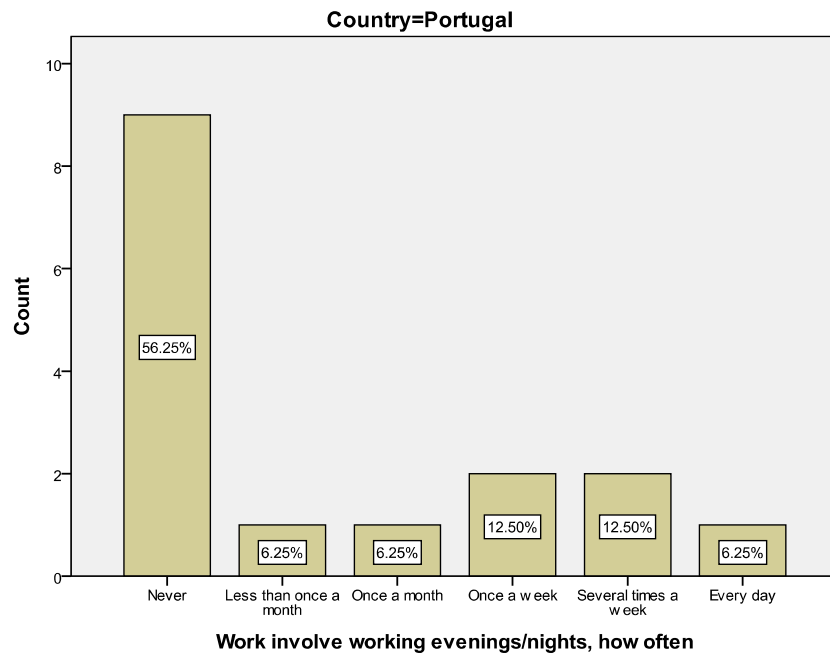
<i>working at weekends, how often?</i>		
	Frequency	Percent
<i>Never</i>	477	32.1
<i>Less than once a month</i>	169	11.4
<i>Once a month</i>	160	10.8
<i>Several times a month</i>	423	28.5
<i>Every week</i>	257	17.3
Total	1486	100.0

Here too individual country variations do exist, but in a rather surprising way. For example countries with a more integrated approach to the ‘school-work’ link (e.g. Germany) and/or a rather long tradition to adult education structures and opportunities for LLL (e.g. Finland), show a rather intense working schedule for young adults, such as working *more at nights or evenings* and *working overtime at short notice*, in comparison to countries with the supposedly ‘weaker’ ties between their education and their labour-market systems. Here we provide graphs about Finland and Portugal.

Graph 3: Working conditions of European young adults in the last three years – Time schedules (2008-2010) [Finland]



Graph 4: Working conditions of European young adults in the last three years – Time schedules (2008-2010) [Portugal]



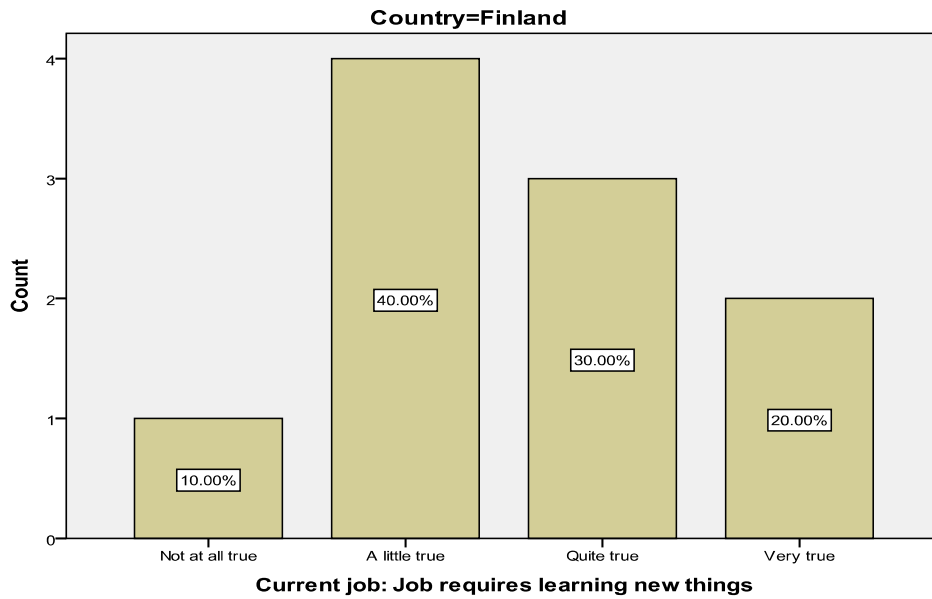
A 37.5% stated that there is ‘little’ or ‘no *variety*’ in the work they are currently performing. Additionally, a 38% claimed that their current job ‘*does not require learning new things*’ (categories ‘not at all true’ or ‘little true’), undermining the claim made by national and European authorities about the potentials and opportunities of the ‘Learning Society’ and the ‘Information Age’ (Castells, 1996; CEC, 2003, 2005). Overall the youngsters’ view about their current employment is a rather demeaning one. To the question how true is the statement ‘*My wage or salary depends on the amount of effort I put into my work*’, the vast majority of the respondents (a staggering 70.8%) replied that this is either ‘not at all true’ or ‘little true’.

Table 5: Working conditions of European young adults in the last three years – Job quality (2008-2010)

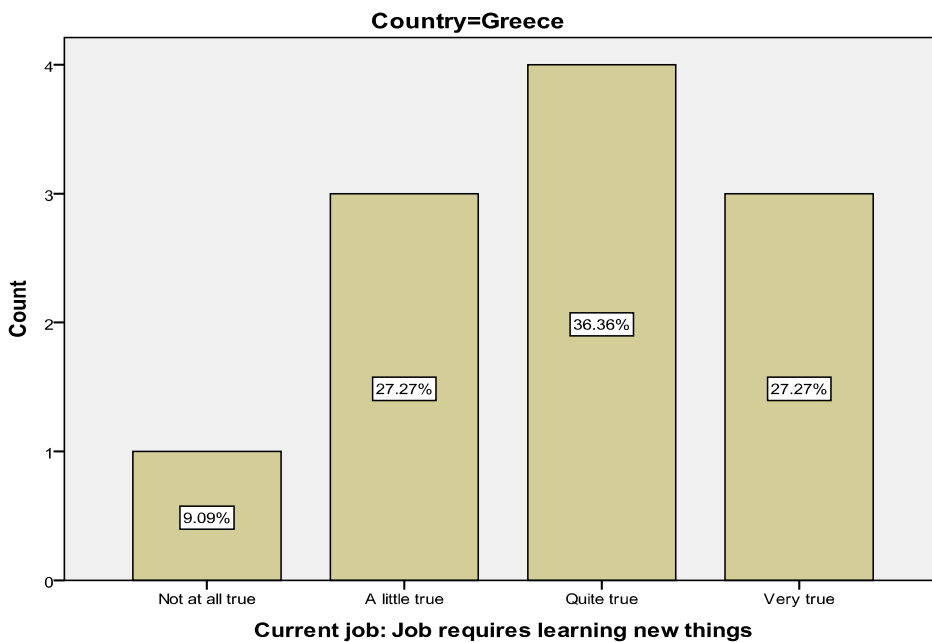
	<i>Current job: There is a lot of variety in my work</i>		<i>Current job: Job requires learning new things</i>		<i>Current job: Wage/salary depends on effort put into work</i>	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
<i>Not at all true</i>	181	13.0	194	14.0	659	47.4
<i>A little true</i>	410	29.5	399	28.7	297	21.4
<i>Quite true</i>	452	32.5	427	30.7	254	18.3
<i>Very true</i>	349	25.1	370	26.6	179	12.9
Total	1392	100.0	1390	100.0	1389	100.0

The results for individual countries are differentiated, but the general trends are pretty much the same. Surprisingly again, there are few occasions when countries (i.e. the young adult respondents in this survey) with a more integrated approach to the ‘school-work’ link and a very sophisticated structures and opportunities for LLL (e.g. Germany or Finland), express disappointment and negative view concerning, for example, the ‘variety’ in their current job, or the opportunities for ‘learning new things’ by performing their work, in comparison to countries with the supposedly ‘weaker’ ties between their education and their labour-market systems. Here we provide some graphs comparing Finland with Greece, and Germany with Greece.

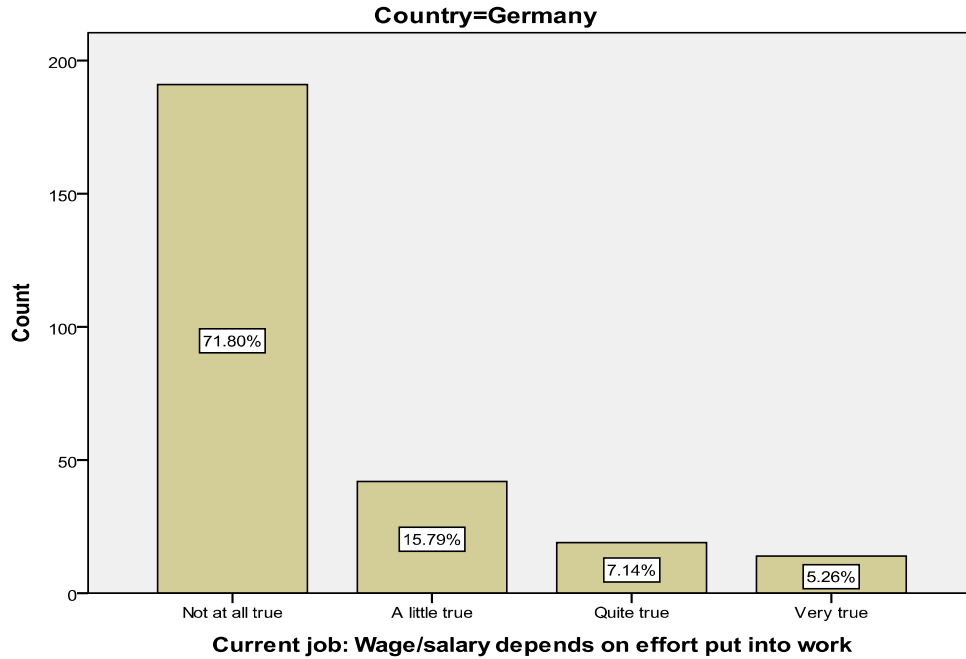
Graph 5: Working conditions of European young adults in the last three years – Job quality (2008-2010) [Finland]



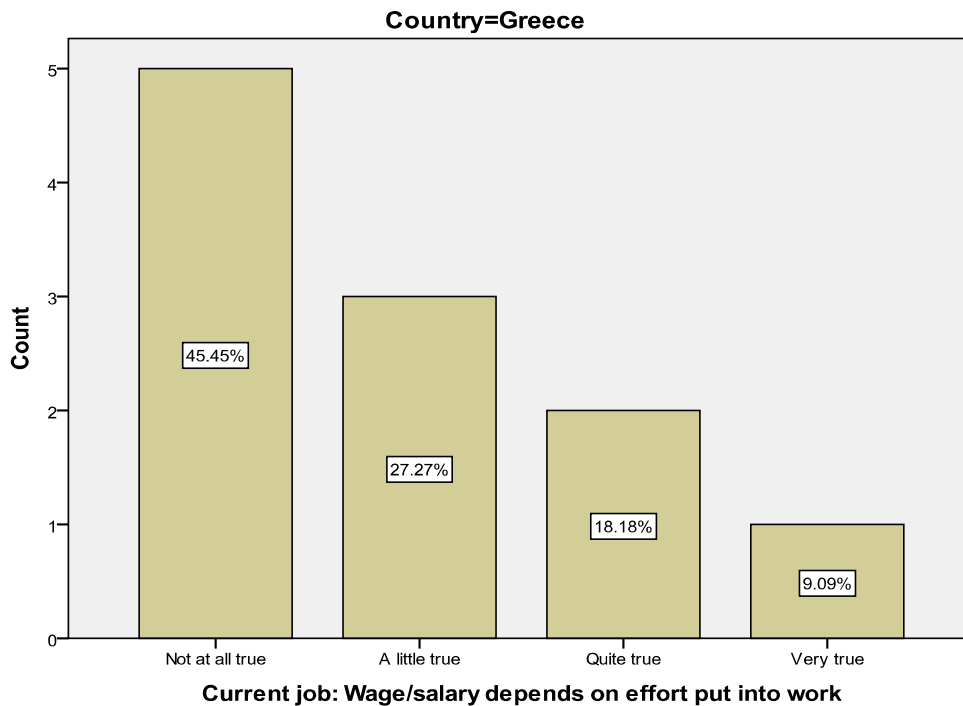
Graph 6: Working conditions of European young adults in the last three years – Job quality (2008-2010) [Greece]



Graph 7: Working conditions of European young adults in the last three years – Job effort (2008-2010) [Germany]



Graph 8: Working conditions of European young adults in the last three years – Job effort (2008-2010) [Greece]



A small but notable proportion of the respondents (20%) claimed that their job exposes them to health and/or *safety risks*. To the question ‘*Is your current job secure*’ more than a third (36.3%) chose either the ‘not at all true’ or the ‘a little true’ choices. This is also true for all age-groups of the total ESS inter-country sample

(35%). This reveals, on one hand, that a lot of European working adults feel insecure and threatened by the current crisis; at the same time, we see that this feeling is the same for the younger as well as for the older ages, implying a widespread sense of insecurity in the active European population. A 35% admit that in their current job there is ‘*never enough time to get everything done in job*’, something that stresses the tension experiences by the youngsters in order to survive in an increasingly competitive labour market (the corresponding figure for the total sample is almost similar, at 38%).

Table 6: Working conditions of European young adults in the last three years – Job safety & security (2008-2010)

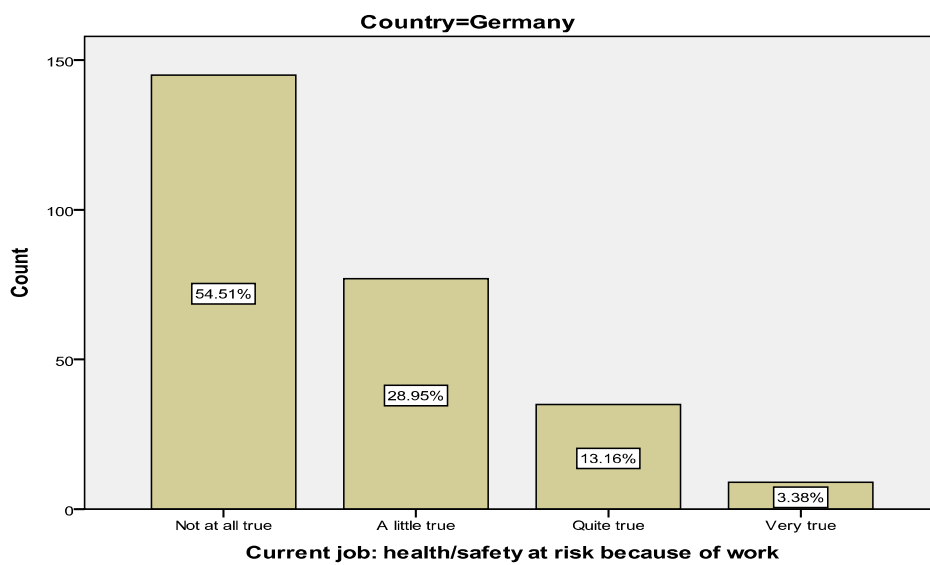
	<i>Current job: health/safety at risk because of work</i>		<i>Current job: Job is secure</i>	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
<i>Not at all true</i>	679	49.0	233	17.4
<i>A little true</i>	411	29.6	325	24.3
<i>Quite true</i>	192	13.8	427	31.9
<i>Very true</i>	105	7.6	352	26.3
Total	1387	100.0	1337	100.0

Table 7: Working conditions of European young adults in the last three years – Job convenience (2008-2010)

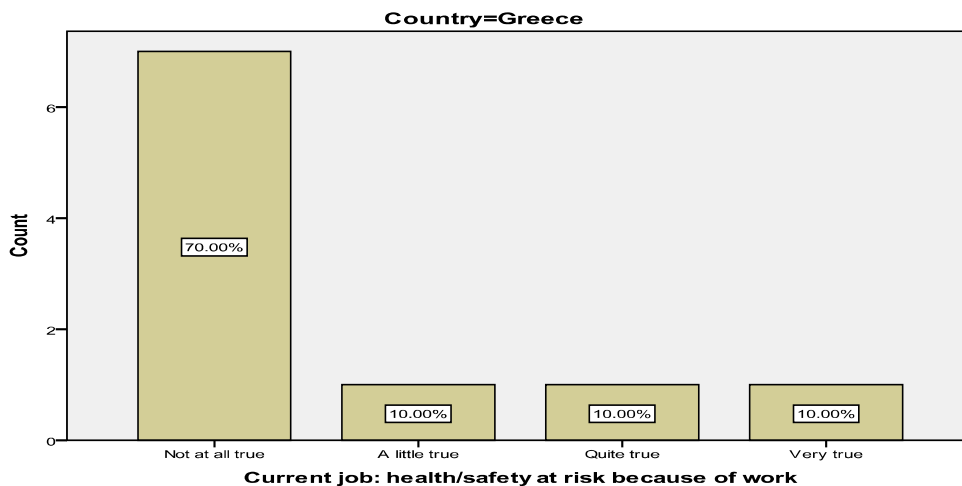
<i>Current job: Never enough time to get everything done in job</i>		
	Frequency	Percent
<i>Agree strongly</i>	89	6.4
<i>Agree</i>	298	21.4
<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	341	24.5
<i>Disagree</i>	540	38.8
<i>Disagree strongly</i>	123	8.8
Total	1391	100.0

As far as country differences are concerned, countries which had been hardest hit by the recession (until the middle of 2011), showed –as expected– a more pessimistic view about their job quality in terms of health/safety risks, and about the ‘security’ of their current position. We herein present some characteristic graphs concerning Germany and Greece.

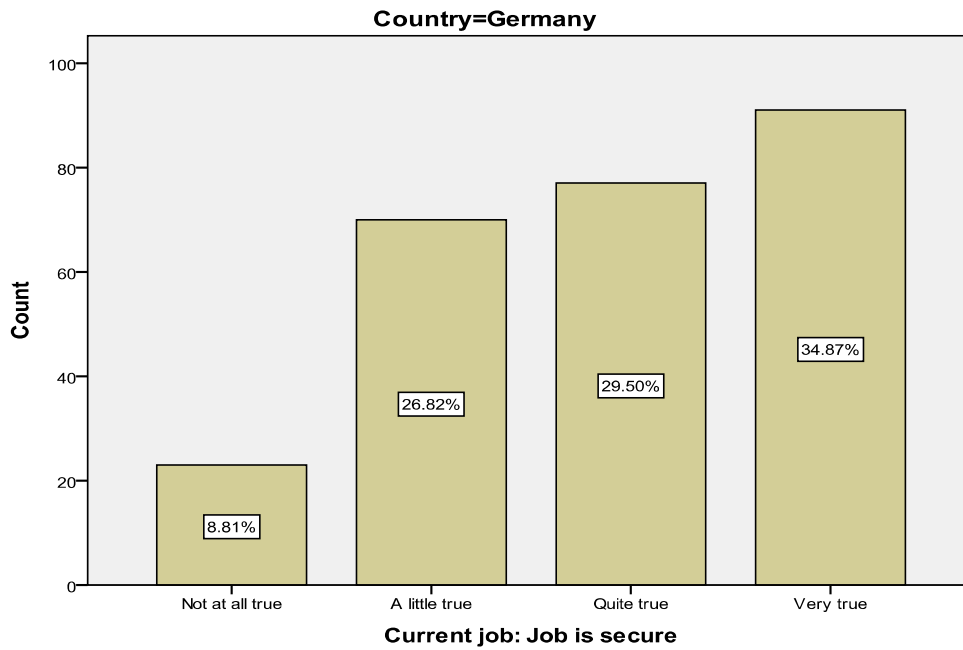
Graph 8: Working conditions of European young adults in the last three years –Job safety (2008-2010) [Germany]



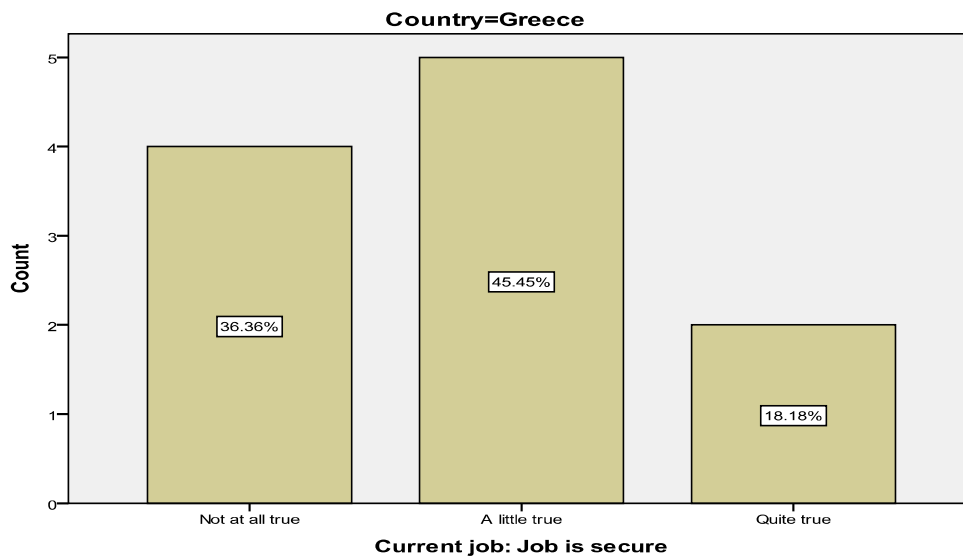
Graph 9: Working conditions of European young adults in the last three years –Job safety (2008-2010) [Greece]



Graph 10: Working conditions of European young adults in the last three years –Job security (2008-2010) [Germany]



Graph 11: Working conditions of European young adults in the last three years –Job security (2008-2010) [Greece]



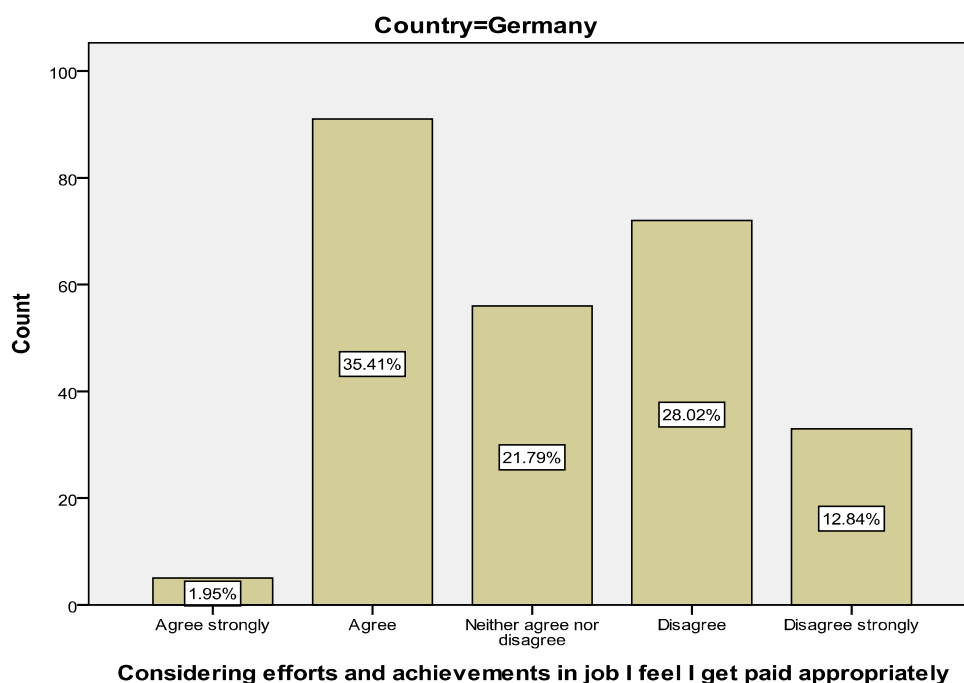
Moreover, a 33.7% of the respondents expressed their *dissatisfaction* (either ‘simple’ or ‘strong’) with the *monetary rewards* (salaries/wages) they get after all the effort and achievements of their work. The corresponding number for the total sample (all age-groups) is 44.7%.

Table 8: Working conditions of European young adults in the last three years – Satisfaction with monetary rewards (2008-2010)

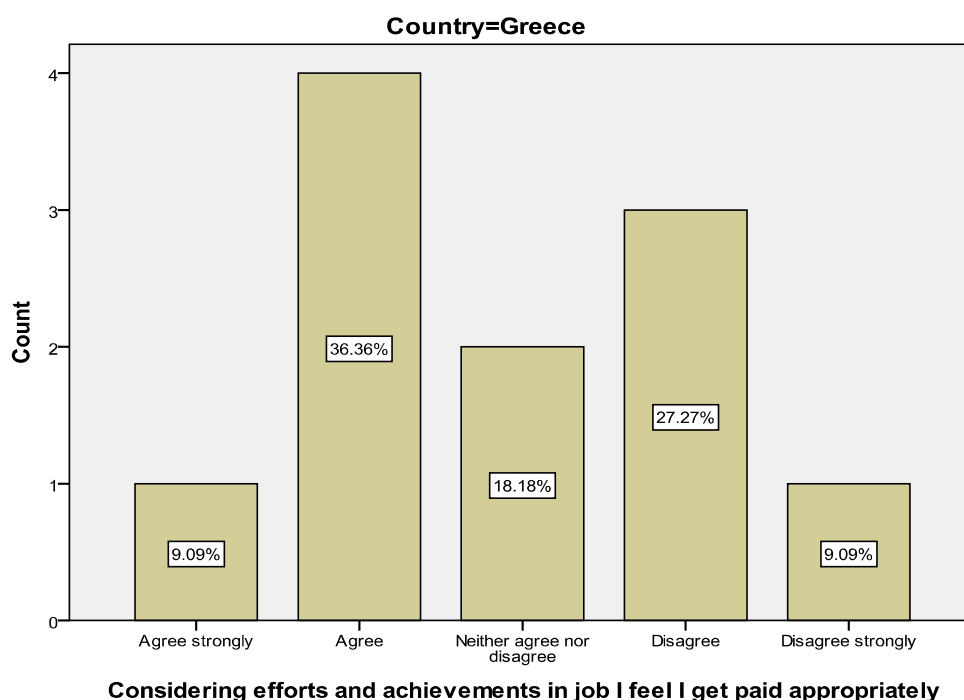
<i>Considering efforts and achievements in job, I feel I get paid appropriately</i>		
	Frequency	Percent
<i>Agree strongly</i>	81	5.9
<i>Agree</i>	499	36.5
<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	326	23.9
<i>Disagree</i>	358	26.2
<i>Disagree strongly</i>	102	7.5
Total	1366	100.0

The picture is equally grim whether we look at the more or the least prosperous countries of Europe. The example of Germany and Greece below are revealing.

Graph 12: Working conditions of European young adults in the last three years — Satisfaction with monetary rewards (2008-2010) [Germany]



Graph 13: Working conditions of European young adults in the last three years — Satisfaction with monetary rewards (2008-2010) [Greece]



Additionally, a 24% stated that they are ‘often’ or ‘always’ *‘too tired after work to enjoy things that they like to do at home’* (the corresponding figure for the total sample is almost similar, at 26%). Related to the above are the answers to the question *‘how often do you feel that job prevents you from giving time to partner/family’*. Here a 30% of the respondents replied ‘often’ or ‘always’ (the corresponding figure for the total sample is almost similar, at 27%).

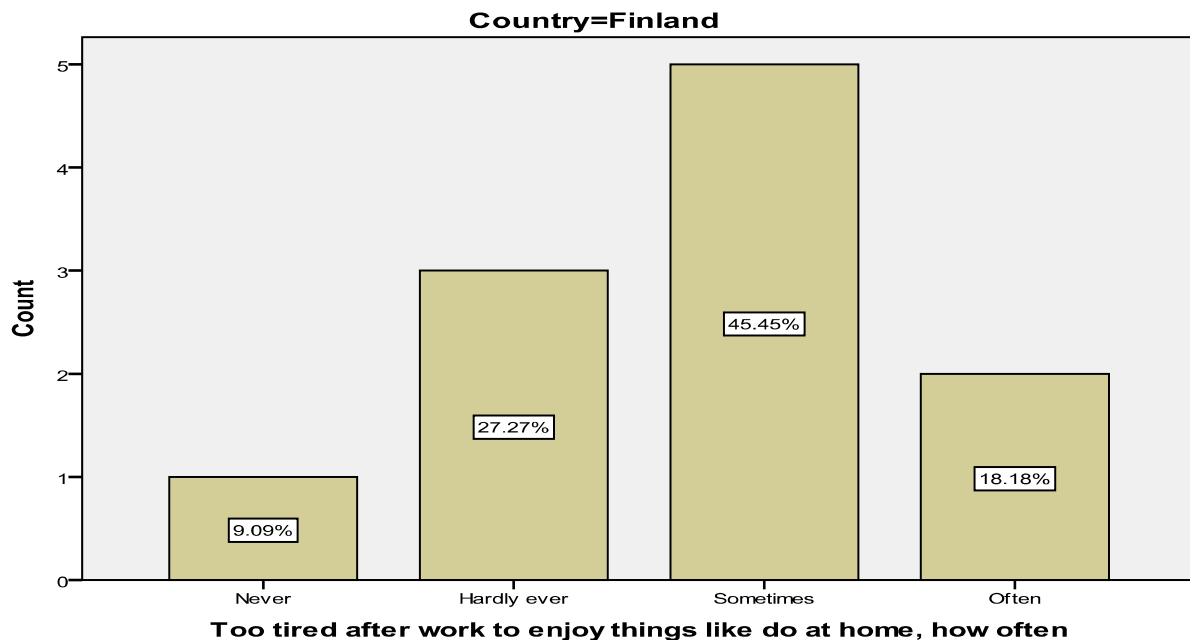
Table 9: Working conditions of European young adults in the last three years – Work-family balance (2008-2010)

<i>Too tired after work to enjoy things like do at home, how often?</i>			<i>Job prevents you from giving time to partner/family, how often?</i>		
	Frequency	Percent		Frequency	Percent
<i>Never</i>	215	14.4	<i>Never</i>	287	19.8
<i>Hardly ever</i>	316	21.2	<i>Hardly ever</i>	344	23.7

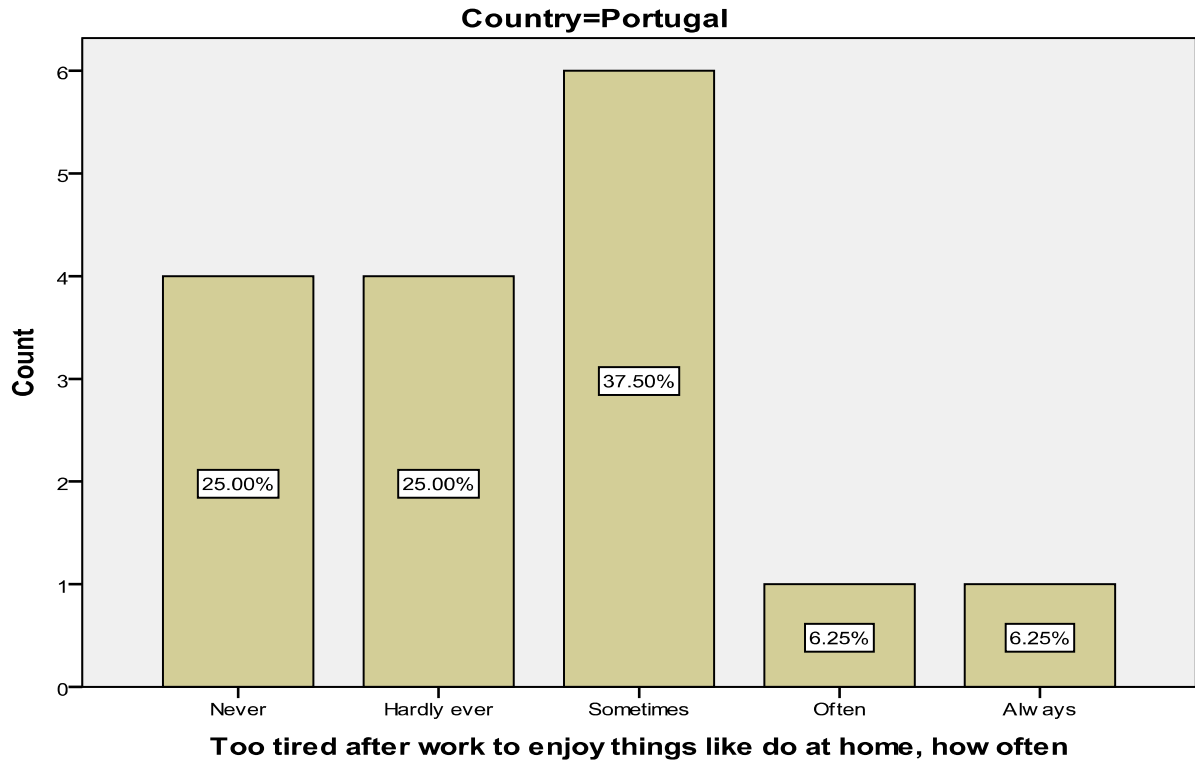
<i>Sometimes</i>	593	39.8	<i>Sometimes</i>	383	26.4
<i>Often</i>	285	19.1	<i>Often</i>	198	13.7
<i>Always</i>	80	5.4	<i>Always</i>	39	2.7
Total	1489	100.0	<i>Don't have partner/family</i>	199	13.7
			Total	1450	100.0

The findings from individual countries show that even in countries least affected by the economic downturn of the recent years, young people express feelings of work fatigue and lack of time for more enjoy full things like spending more time with other family members (e.g. Finland). The proportion of those responses is quite often bigger than that of countries with poorer economic performance and grimmer development prospects (like Portugal).

Graph 14: Working conditions of European young adults in the last three years – Work-family balance (2008-2010) [Finland]



Graph 15: Working conditions of European young adults in the last three years – Work-family balance (2008-2010) [Portugal]



A 23% declared that they are *not satisfied with their work* (i.e. in a continuum from 0 [‘Extremely dissatisfied’] to 10 [‘Extremely satisfied’], those falling in the categories 0-5). The corresponding figure for the total sample is almost similar, at 16.5%, showing that way no difference between the specific age-group and the total active population.

Table 10: Working conditions of European young adults in the last three years – Satisfaction with main job (2008-2010)

<i>How satisfied are you in your main job?</i>			
	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
<i>Extremely dissatisfied</i>	16	1.1	1.1
1	10	.7	1.7
2	29	2.0	3.7
3	43	2.9	6.6
4	61	4.1	10.7

5	184	12.4	23.1
6	166	11.2	34.3
7	247	16.6	50.9
8	339	22.8	73.7
9	212	14.3	88.0
<i>Extremely satisfied</i>	179	12.0	100.0
Total	1486	100.0	

Related to the above is the fact that almost half of young adults of our sample (an impressive 47.3%) see their *work in a rather demeaning way*, by replying that someone applying for their job would ‘*not need education beyond compulsory*’ (the corresponding figure of the total sample is 30%).

Table 11: Working conditions of European young adults in the last three years – Level of education required for current job (2008-2010)

<i>Would someone applying for your job need education beyond compulsory?</i>		
	Frequency	Percent
<i>Yes</i>	714	52.7
<i>No</i>	640	47.3
Total	1354	100.0

Finally, a 29% of the respondents thought that there are *no opportunities for advancement* in their current job (20% simply ‘disagree’, and 9% ‘strongly disagree’).

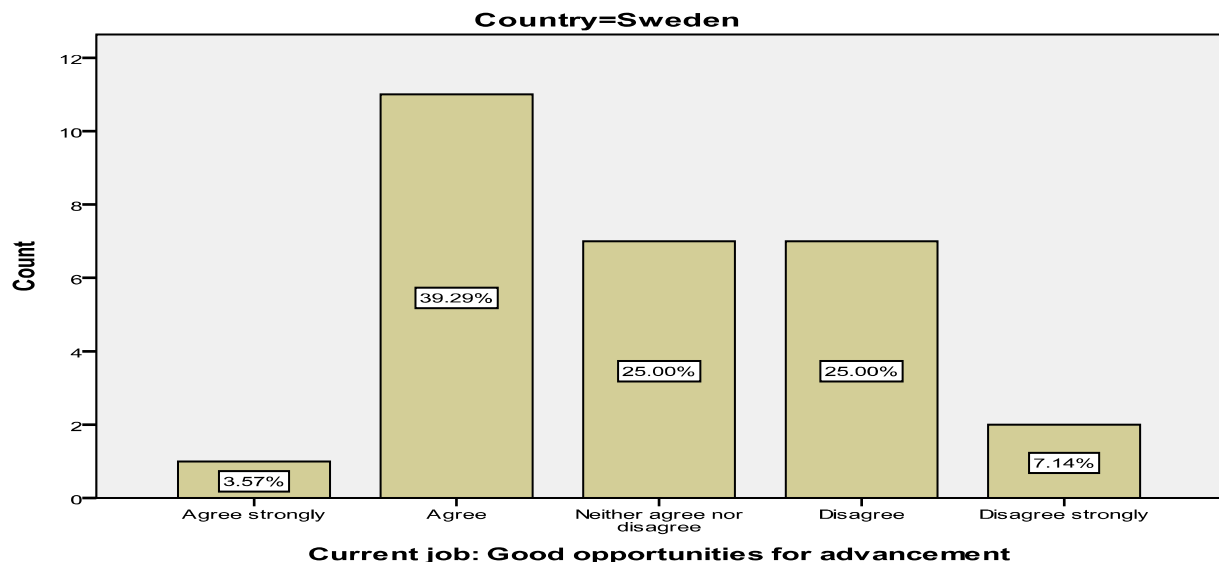
Table 12: Working conditions of European young adults in the last three years – Opportunities for advancement (2008-2010)

<i>Current job: Good opportunities for advancement</i>		
	Frequency	Percent

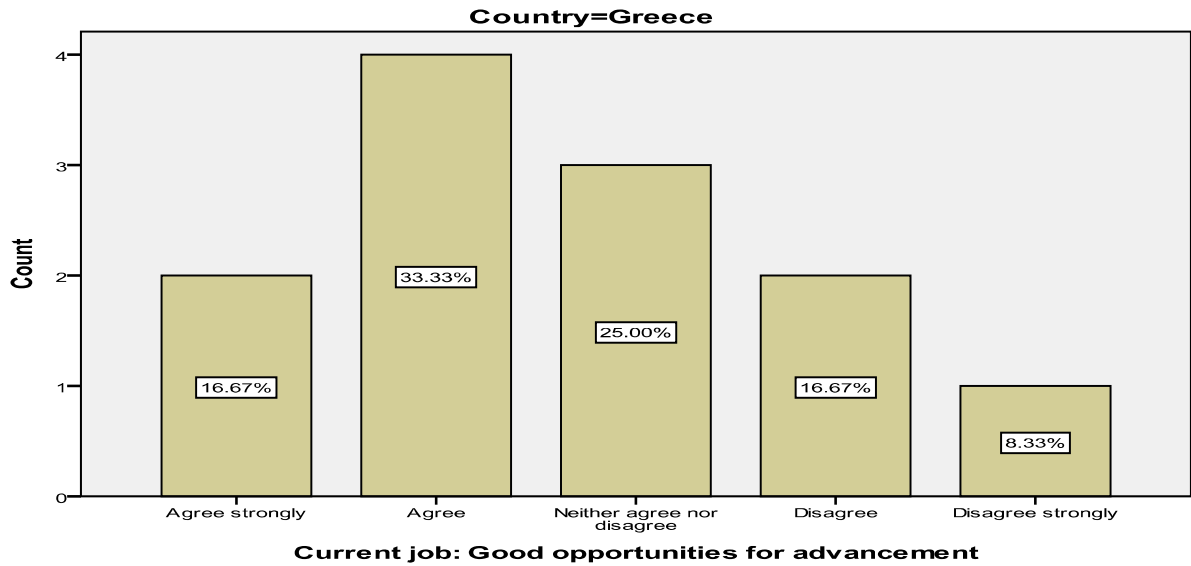
<i>Agree strongly</i>	118	8.7
<i>Agree</i>	475	34.9
<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	375	27.6
<i>Disagree</i>	272	20.0
<i>Disagree strongly</i>	121	8.9
Total	1361	100.0

The results for individual countries are differentiated, but the general trends are pretty much the same. Surprisingly again, there are few countries with sophisticated structures and indisputably more opportunities for LLL (e.g. Finland or Sweden), when young adults express a rather more pessimistic view concerning their future ‘opportunities for advancement’ in their current job, in comparison to youngsters in countries with supposedly less LLL institutions. Here we provide some graphs about Sweden on one hand, and Greece and Portugal on the other.

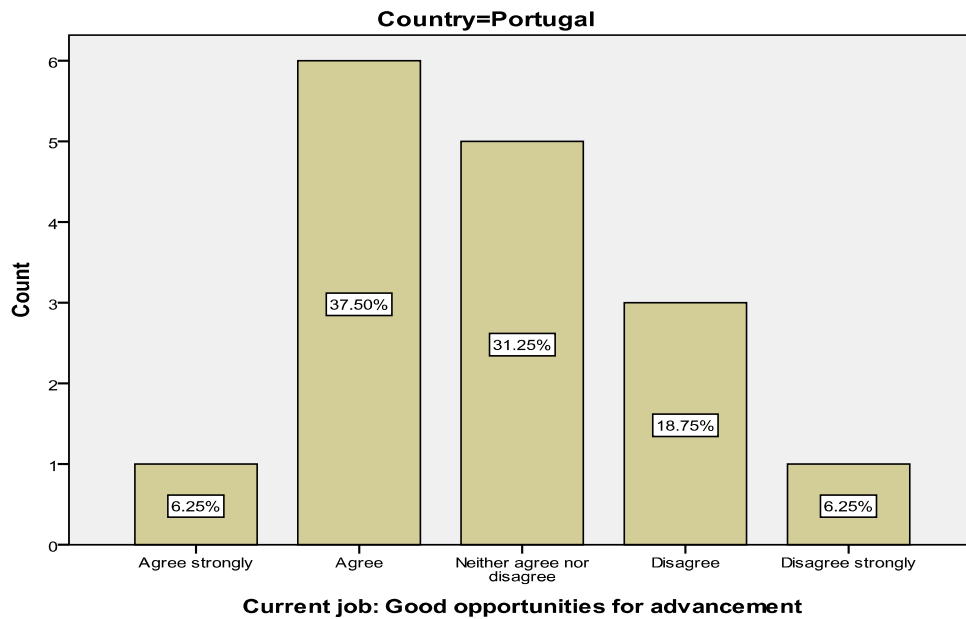
Graph 15: Working conditions of European young adults in the last three years – Opportunities for advancement (2008-2010) [Sweden]



Graph 16: Working conditions of European young adults in the last three years – Opportunities for advancement (2008-2010) [Greece]



Graph 17: Working conditions of European young adults in the last three years – Opportunities for advancement (2008-2010) [Portugal]



Inferential statistics

Although this is not the paper’s primary objective, we proceeded with a co-examination of the *dependent* variables (that is those that show the working-life experience and the work-family balance of young Europeans) with a number of *independent* variable which might affect, or differentiate the sample’s responses. The aim was to highlight any pattern of differentiation among the respondents of our (that is the ESS) sample.

First of all, we tried to correlate the variable *age of the respondent* to the dependent variables. As it also became evident from the descriptive statistics above, there is no (statistically) significant correlation between ‘age’ and any one of the dependent variables (even when we ran a bivariate correlation analysis, the coefficients were either non-significant, or extremely small to be taken into account).

Secondly, we ran t-tests in order to highlight any *gender differences* in the (subjective) *evaluation of job quality, job security, financial conditions, experiences of employment and unemployment and work-life balance*. **Table 13** below shows the results. As we can see, *female respondents express more negative feelings* about the present situation. They also seem to *experience more drastic cuts in spending* (either for current living expenses or leisure time) and *savings*. Additionally, they express a *more negative picture of their working environment* (working conditions, quality of work), although the male respondents report more often the psycho-bodily fatigue caused by the excessive demands of the new working environments. However, the differences are not big and quite often not statistically significant, implying this way a homogenous picture of the new working environments.

Table 13: Gender and aspects of work-life balance of young people (18-24 year-old) in Europe (Independent Samples Test / population weights applied)

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-test	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
<i>Have felt cheerful and in good spirits last 2 weeks</i>	Male	2419	2.34	1.068	-.204	5154	.838
	Female	2737	2.35	1.013			
<i>Have felt calm and relaxed last 2 weeks</i>	Male	2417	2.56	1.163	-7.473	5144	.000
	Female	2729	2.82	1.266			
<i>Have felt active and vigorous last 2 weeks</i>	Male	2423	2.43	1.156	-6.008	5153	.000
	Female	2732	2.63	1.222			
<i>To what extent had to manage on lower household income last 3 years</i>	Male	2271	2.48	2.086	-1.730	4849	.084
	Female	2580	2.59	2.107			

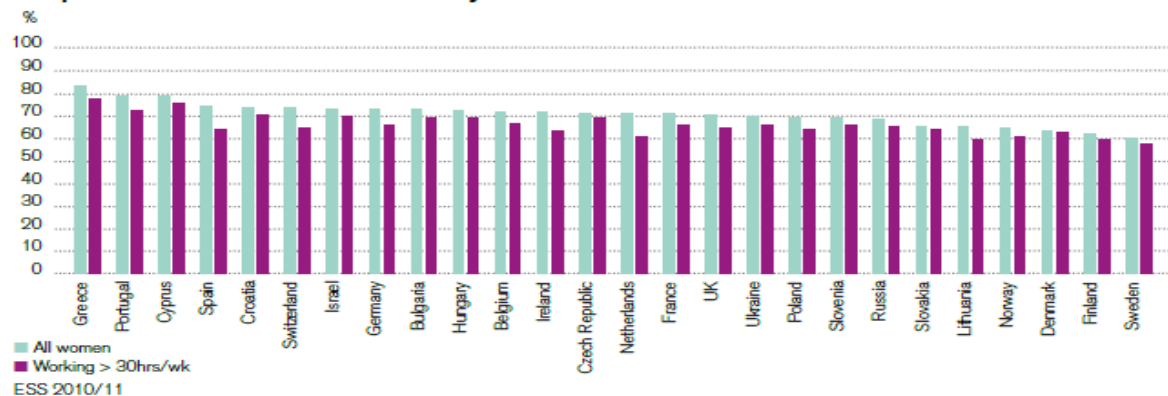
<i>To what extent had to draw on savings/debt to cover ordinary living expenses last 3 years</i>	Male	2284	1.77	2.050	-1.951	4845	.051
	Female	2563	1.89	2.044			
<i>To what extent had to cut back on holidays or household equipment last 3 years</i>	Male	2288	2.18	2.180	-3.893	4848	.000
	Female	2562	2.43	2.208			
<i>Work involve working evenings/nights, how often</i>	Male	941	3.04	2.036	3.786	1790	.000
	Female	850	2.67	2.144			
<i>Work involve having to work overtime at short notice, how often</i>	Male	921	3.06	1.918	3.606	1760	.000
	Female	840	2.73	1.925			
<i>Work involve working at weekends, how often</i>	Male	942	2.93	1.555	-1.458	1794	.145
	Female	854	3.04	1.564			
<i>Current job: Variety in work</i>	Male	861	2.69	.979	2.426	1690	.015
	Female	832	2.57	.961			
<i>Current job: Job requires learning new things</i>	Male	854	2.75	.970	2.753	1684	.006
	Female	832	2.62	1.039			
<i>Current job: Wage/salary depends on effort put into work</i>	Male	861	2.20	1.170	5.243	1691	.000
	Female	832	1.91	1.076			
<i>Current job: health/safety at risk because of work</i>	Male	856	2.11	1.083	11.848	1685	.000
	Female	832	1.56	.809			
<i>Current job: Job is secure</i>	Male	826	2.69	.997	1.410	1629	.159
	Female	805	2.62	1.024			
<i>Current job: Job requires work very hard</i>	Male	861	2.29	.942	-1.801	1691	.072
	Female	832	2.37	.932			
<i>Current job: Never enough time to get everything done in job</i>	Male	859	3.27	1.071	.945	1689	.345
	Female	832	3.22	1.143			

<i>Current job: Good opportunities for advancement</i>	Male	843	2.82	1.104	-2.473	1655	.014
	Female	815	2.96	1.130			
<i>Too tired after work to enjoy things like do at home, how often</i>	Male	943	2.80	1.044	-3.767	1804	.000
	Female	863	2.99	1.122			
<i>Job prevents you from giving time to partner/family, how often</i>	Male	904	3.16	1.660	-1.237	1742	.216
	Female	840	3.26	1.642			

Numbers in bold denote a statistically significant result

The findings agree with the invariably *negative picture of female employment in Europe*, despite the ‘gender mainstreaming’ policies and strategies in place from a long time ago. The Graph below (ESS, 2012: 9), which shows the share of housework done by women living with a male partner, for all women aged 20 to 64 (light green bars) and just for women working more than 30 hours a week (purple bars), reveals that even women in full-time paid work are responsible, on average, for around two-thirds of the total time heterosexual couples spend on housework.

Proportion of housework done by women



ESS 2010/11

Note: Figures calculated for women aged 20-64 who live with their male partner

Scott, J. and Plagnol, A.C. (2012) 'Work-family conflict and well-being in Northern Europe' in Scott, J., Dex, S. and Plagnol, A.C. (eds.) *Gendered Lives: Gender Inequalities in Production and Reproduction*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar

Graph 18: Unequal family burdens among men and women

We also tested our sample of young people for any (statistically significant) differences between *'natives' and 'foreigners'*, by running an independent-samples t-test, where we held as 'grouping variable' the question C26 of the Main ESS Questionnaire, which asks for the 'citizenship status' of the respondent (*'Are you a citizen of [country]?'*). Moreover, we tested our sample for any (statistically significant) differences between *the various religious groups*, by running a One-way ANOVA, where we held as differentiating 'factor' the question C20 of the Main ESS Questionnaire. This question asks respondents who stated in the previous question that they 'belonged to a particular religion or denomination', which religion was that. Both tests found no statistically significant differences.

In order to discern any correlation that the *educational level* of each respondent (measured by the UNESCO's ISCED levels) might have with the various aspects of the 'Work-Family-Wellbeing' triangle, we ran a non-parametric correlational analysis (Spearman's rho), which showed either no statistically significant results or the coefficients were too small (less than 0.2). The same is true when we included in the analysis the (scale) variable *'years of education completed'*. In other words, contrary to expectations that better working conditions would be experienced by the more educated people, our results show that there is *a conspicuous agreement of the working youngsters about the labour-market situation, no matter what their educational credentials might be*.

No statistically significant results were produced when we estimated the correlation coefficients between the 'Work-Family-Wellbeing' variables and the *parental educational and occupational levels*, that is, either the educational level (according to the UNESCO ISCED taxonomy) completed by each of the respondent's parents, or their occupational category (according to the ISCO88 taxonomy).

Discussion

The picture sketched by the findings of the ESS is quite worrying about the future of the so-called 'Knowledge Society' and the soundness of the LLL rhetoric. European youth (indeed the entire adult population, as we have seen), despite the fact they are more educated than ever (judged by the qualifications they have in comparison to past generations, and the availability of LLL structures in Europe), they face enormous obstacles in fulfilling their aspirations for better work conditions, satisfactory financial rewards, more optimistic future prospects and better work-family balance.

More specifically, a *very sizable* proportion of young working adults:

- work long hours, weekends and night-shifts, always under constant pressure to improve their ‘performance’.
- have seen their salaries/wages slashed, and they had to count on savings and/or borrowing in order to preserve their life style.
- believe that they are paid quite below what they deserve –according to their qualifications and efforts.
- perform tasks that usually lack any sense of creativity or even variety.
- see their work in a rather demeaning way, since they don’t like it, while almost half of them agree that someone applying for their job *would not* need education beyond compulsory!
- suffer from work fatigue and are afraid of side-effects that their job might have on their health.
- lose precious leisure time and time they would wish to devote to their families.

The ESS findings confirm the known statement made by B. Bernstein (1970), that ‘education cannot compensate for society’. Despite the official rhetoric arguing that the EU’s ‘Lisbon Strategy’ –with its emphasis on ‘multiple educational and training paths’, its stress on ‘more flexibility and openness to the labour market in teaching/learning’, and its promotion of LLL structures— is ‘strengthening human resources’, the picture sketched by the European young adults is rather disappointing³. What we see to be taking place is a notable and unprecedented *degradation of labour relations*, in both the public and the private sectors, in the name of ‘economic competitiveness’. Acute financial and economic crises have a direct adverse impact on labour market indicators (unemployment, participation rates, types of jobs and working conditions), poverty (financial deprivation) and social services. They also have indirect effects via budget retrenchment (leading to more unpaid work to service increasing social needs), credit squeeze (leading to a drain in the liquidity of the family business) and mounting pressures on the economics of the family. It is well established that adverse economic conditions accumulate substantial costs on the weaker and more disadvantaged groups in the society. Are youngsters (18-24 year olds), as a broad category, fit into this bleak picture?

³ Of course, the inclusion of a corresponding module in future ESS surveys would provide a better picture about the time-trends of the issues at hand.

We saw that their negative views for the labour market, and their own working conditions *do not differ significantly* from the older age-groups. Although they show a more optimistic outlook of the future (answers about their general ‘feelings’ and psychological balance), they experience a more strenuous situation concerning *status, time & monetary* aspects of their employment.

Finally, we should also stress the *gender dimension* of the economic crisis, which is highlighted by the findings of the ESS. Following the results of our data analysis, a series of important questions come forward, with the most important being whether it is possible to claim gender equality and opportunities in an environment of a general decline of social conquests for men and women, and an increase of insecurity. What is the meaning of talking about LLL opportunities and reconciliation of work and family life when jobs are lost in the thousands and the welfare state shrinks? At the same time, one could wonder why the *gender dimension* is absent from virtually all the policy plans of the EU till 2020, and is limited only to ‘vague statements and wishful thinking’ (Villa and Smith, 2010 cited in Gasouka, 2012, p. 49). Governments and social partners are largely responsible for perpetuating situations that are unfair not only to women, but also hinder social progress. The equal participation of women in higher education, of course, is not enough. As Sianou-Kyrgiou points out (2012, p. 125), ‘[T]here is a pressing need for re-evaluation of policies on gender equality in higher education and particularly in the labour market, which will take into account issues such as *social class, ethnic, cultural* and other *status differences* within gender groups’ .

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From deconstruction to reconstruction: Critical pedagogies, critical education, Marxist education

Dave Hill

Abstract

In this paper I attempt to set out key characteristics of Marxist analysis, and develop a critique of social democracy and of revisionist Marxism, contrasting them with revolutionary Marxism in theory and in practice. I then relate this to education, and set out what I consider are four key aspects of Marxist Critical Pedagogy and Education: Curriculum, Pedagogies, How students are organised, and the Control and Funding of Education. I conclude by setting out revolutionary tasks of Marxist Educators.

Keywords: Marxism, Class War, Capitalism, Critical Education, Revisionist Marxism, Revolutionary Marxism.

What Is a Marxist Analysis?

Capitalism and Class- the Capital- Labour Relation

There are many Marxisms, both at a political level and at a theoretical level, historically and today, in different locations. All draw on the work of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, in particular their *Communist Manifesto* (Marx and Engels, 1848/1977). It is startlingly powerful and relevant today in its analysis of capitalism. Capitalism, as analyzed and criticized by Marxists, is the systematic exploitation of the labor power of the working class(es), with the capitalists appropriating the surplus value created by the labor of the working class(es). This is the relationship between Capital and Labour - the Capital - Labour Relation.

Capitalist economy and society is one in which there is an ongoing system of class conflict, of class war, with each of the two (major) classes of society—capitalists (called the *bourgeoisie* by Marx and Engels) and workers (called the *proletariat* by Marx and Engels)—engaged in struggle over increasing the proportion of surplus value (the value left when raw materials, rents, and wages/salaries have been paid) that should go into capitalists' pockets as profits, or into workers' pockets as wages,

and, as welfare benefits- the social wage. The social wage comprises publicly funded education, publicly funded health services, and publicly funded welfare benefits such as old-age pensions, disability, unemployment, maternity, and other welfare benefits, such as subsidized travel and subsidized rents for private house renting.

In broad terms, there are two classes in capitalism—the capitalist class, the 1%, the bosses, the rulers of the universe as exemplified in films such as *Wall Street*, *The Wolf of Wall Street*, *Metropolis*, and *Blade Runner*, who own and/or control the means of production, distribution and exchange- banks and leading financial institutions. These control the economy and the media and the major political parties. In the US for example, both major parties, Republicans and Democrats, are overwhelmingly funded by Big Business (Fraser & Gertsle, 2005; Sefla, 2012). The other class is the working class, the 99%, unskilled workers, skilled workers, supervisory managerial and professional workers (such as teachers, lecturers). What each of these “strata” or groups within the (broadly defined) working class have in common is that they all must sell their labor power to capitalists, or to organizations and apparatuses in the capitalist state, in order to subsist.

It needs pointing out that the relationship between these two classes is essentially antagonistic, there is, under capitalism, a continuous ‘class war’, a continuous antagonistic relationship between the exploiting class and the exploited class. In the words of *The Communist Manifesto*, ‘society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other: Bourgeoisie and Proletariat’ (Marx and Engels, 1960/1848, p. 109).

There are ‘class compromises’, there are periods of relative class balance, and there is certainly non-stop propaganda by media and state apparatuses controlled by capitalists to assert that ‘class is dead’, that talk of class and class conflict is old-fashioned, that ‘we are all in this together’, and that classes, rather than being antagonistic, work more or less harmoniously together. It is the state apparatuses that not only keep the working class, this workforce, trained and fit to work—schools, universities, and health services — but also they attempt to keep the working class in a state of ‘ideological acquiescence’, to believe that with regard to how society, the economy and politics are ordered, ‘there is no alternative’.

Marxists agree with radical democrats, liberals, and even some conservatives that in the post–Second World War period of the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s, what the French call ‘les *trentes glorieuses*’ ‘(the Glorious Thirty’ years of 1945-75) there was pretty

much a system of class balance. That is to say, the organizations of the working class(es), such as trade unions, were in a strong enough position vis-à-vis the capitalist class—the employers and the governments they control—to win pay rises, employee and trade union rights, and some welfare benefits.

Class War from Above

Commentators from across the political spectrum are also in agreement that in a vigorous ‘class war from above’ (Dorling, 2014; Harvey, 2005; Hill, 2003, 2004, 2013a, b, c ; Malott, Hill, & Banfield, 2013) since the economic crisis of the mid-1970s (‘the oil crisis’), the capitalist class has been remarkably successful in wresting back from the working class a greater and greater share of public wealth, of the share of national income and wealth, across much of the capitalist world.

Neoliberal economics, the Chicago school of monetarists, and neoliberal governments, preeminently those of Margaret Thatcher in the UK and of Ronald Reagan in the US, proved to be simply the first neoliberal governments, smashing trade unions, cutting welfare benefits, and privatizing public services. Under neoliberal governments, the rich have got immensely richer, the poor poorer, and what in the US are called “hardworking middle-class families” have suffered absolute immiseration, absolute poverty, pauperisation. They have been hard hit, with worsened and worsening pay, working conditions, and trade union rights and protections, and a degraded public sector provision/withdrawal and limitation of benefits. Immiseration is characterized not just by poorer wages/ salaries and benefits, but also by degraded public and social services - closed libraries and youth centres, untended parks and gardens, increased charges for entry to leisure facilities and public transport, for example (Hill, 2013a, b, c).

Some conservatives, laughing all the way to the top of the heap, argue that inequality is not only natural but also desirable, since it fuels envy, competition, hard work, and, they argue, increased wealth that will trickle down to the rest of society. This is the Ayn Rand ideology, which can be termed by some Marxists as economic fascism, and is similar to that of Friedrich Hayek, Margaret Thatcher’s guru, in the belief in the very small state as liberating humanness and humanity. However, it is widely apparent in this Hayekian dystopia that wealth has not trickled down; it has funneled up (Dorling, 2014; Picketty, 2014). This is because of the pro-rich and anti-worker policies of right-of-center and right-wing anti-equality governments such as the Republicans and the (slightly less right-wing) Democrats in the US. It is similar

across the globe—such as the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats in the UK, the AKP in Turkey, New Democracy in Greece—right-wing and center-right governments everywhere carrying out neoliberal economic, social and education policies. And, in a development that is new since the 1970s, political parties and governments that were *traditionally* labor, social democratic, or left-of-center governments that in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s had seen it as their duty to redistribute some wealth and power from the top to the bottom of society have *also* subscribed to neoliberal restructuring of economies, resulting in increasing inequalities within most of the economies of the world.

For example under all Labour Party governments in the UK since the second world war until Tony Blair became Prime Minister in 1997 (governments of 1945-51, 1964-70, 1974-1979) government policies- social democratic, redistributionist policies- succeeded in making the UK a more equal society. However under the Tony Blair 'New Labour' government of 1997-2007 and that of Gordon Brown (2007-2010) social inequality increased (Eaton, 2013).

Socialist governments, such as those of Cuba, Venezuela and Bolivia, which have not gone so far along the neoliberal road, have not seen these increasing inequalities—these see their role as to make societies more equal, with Cuba and Venezuela having established free health care and free education as public rights (for Venezuela, see Bremner, 2011, and Motta and Cole, 2013, 2014) rather than as commodities to be bought and sold on the stock exchange or Wall Street, though both have capitulated to some neoliberal pressures.

Conservative critics of the increasingly apartheid-like, socially segregated societies, including some of the mega-wealthy such as Joseph Stiglitz and Warren Buffet, look to the dangers of social instability and revolt, and to the fact that if the workers (whether 'middle class' or 'working class') are paid less and less, then there is less and less money in circulation to buy the goods that capitalists sell—so there is, in economic terms, a crisis of over accumulation, with billionaires and trillionaires sitting on vast amounts of reserves with nowhere productive to invest in, apart from inflating various “bubbles” such as stock markets, housing, and commodity markets.

In contrast to neoliberal ideology (see Hill, 2013a; Saad-Filho, 2011; Giroux, 2004, 2008) and neoconservative ideology (liberal democratic and social democratic analysis is that capitalism works fine, or can work fine; it just needs some reforms, some improvements. For example: more regulation of banks post-2008.

Social democrat parties, whether in their former social democratic or their current neoliberal incarnations, such as the Labour Party in Britain, Australia, and social democratic parties in Scandinavia and Germany, and 'socialist' parties in France, Spain, Portugal, do not want to replace capitalism, they just want to manage it better. They cite the much more equal economies and societies of north-west Europe, such as Sweden and Finland, for example, and of Western Europe in general, up till the 1970s, and argue that societies become more equal, and happy, with more regulation - over, for example health and medicine standards, food standards, health and safety standards, environmental and ecological protection. The book, *The Spirit Level*, by Wilkinson and Pickett, 2010, offers very powerful evidence to support this, with the most equal societies such as the Scandinavian countries, and Taiwan and Japan, with their concern for communities rather than focusing spectacularly on individuals and individualism, have far less homicide, rape, psychosis, violence and social ills than the most unequal large, rich societies such as the USA and the UK. The book shows that each of eleven different social and health problems are notably worse in the more unequal countries- physical health, mental health, drug abuse, education, rates of imprisonment, social mobility, obesity, trust and community life, child well-being, teenage pregnancies, violence.

Capitalist Immorality, Oppression - and Exploitation

Where Marxists disagree with other critics of these widened social and economic inequalities is the Marxist analysis that capitalism has periodic crises—of over-accumulation for example, a crisis of profitability for capital, a declining rate of profit—and that in times of crisis (such as the recession of the 1930s, the so-called oil crisis of the 1970s, and the bankers' crisis since 2008), the capitalist class will always try to tear back from the hands of the workers the benefits and living standards they had won in more profitable times.

That is to say, in times of economic crisis, of recession, even labor and social democratic governments dance to the tune of national and transnational capitalists and start cutting the real value of wages/salaries and social benefits. That is, *it is the poor who pay for the crisis*- whether under conservative, centre, or (neoliberalised) social democratic/ labour governments.

For Marxists, capitalism is not just immoral, it is not just a case of oppression. It is that capitalism is based on economic *exploitation*. Exploitation is fundamental to the process of value augmentation by which capitalism works, capitalists' profits are

ultimately derived from the exploitation of the worker, *capitalists* make their profit by *exploiting* the surplus labour time of workers. While there is a substantial literature on whether Marx was using 'exploitation' in a 'moral' or a non-moral' sense or both (Wood, 2004, pp. 241-253) capitalism's driving force, for Marx, is absolutely indifferent to morality, whether social, environmental or any other sort. As Marx noted, in Capital vol. 1, 'in money matters sentiment is out of place (Marx, 1867/1999, Ch.10, Section 1). Since exploitation is the essence of capitalism, it can be seen that capitalism cannot really be reformed once and for all time. It is clear that while the consequences of capital might be deemed immoral, its driving force is indifferent to morality or politics. *Capitalists* make their profit by *exploiting* the surplus labor time of workers. That is the essence of the Capital-Labour relation.

Critics of Marxism suggest that, according to scientific socialism, Marxists believe in economic determinism, that it is inevitable that capitalism will be overtaken, surpassed, replaced by socialism and then by communism. However, most Marxists and socialists (the terms are slightly different and used differently in different situations) point to the need for agency for action, for the need for Marxist militants and activists to work to develop class consciousness, or, to use Freire's term, *conscientization* (Freire, 1970), or to use Gramsci's term 'good sense' as opposed to 'common sense' (Gramsci, 1971; Harman, 2005) and to develop strong political organizations to fight for major social and economic, revolutionary, change. For Marxists today, socialism and communism are not inevitable. For Rosa Luxemburg, the future is socialism or barbarism (Luxemburg, 1918/1971; Luxemburg, 2013). And that socialism has to be fought for.

Capitalism is undoubtedly, for Marxists, immoral (Blackledge, 2010). Workers die far earlier than bankers and CEOs and 'royal' families, workers, especially the unskilled and semi-skilled manual strata of the working class have unhealthier lives, and have inferior education and health and retirement services than 'the rich' (and, indeed, than professional workers) . And within the working class, professional and managerial strata lead longer and healthier lives in general, than the poorer and the manual strata. Furthermore, capitalism deliberately encourages division within the working class (with capitalist and politicians media whipping up hatred and division between black and white, men and women, LGBT and straight, immigrant and non-immigrant, public sector employees and private sector employees). Indeed, Marxists see Fascism

and Nazism in 1920s, 1930s and 1940s Europe, and some examples of contemporary extreme nationalism and xenophobia since then (as with the Nazi 'Golden Dawn party being elected to the Greek parliament in 2012 and to the European Parliament in 2014) as a throw of the dice by capitalists desperate to 'stop the red menace', to stop communism (Gluckstein, 1999). Elsewhere, capitalist classes and media give substantial support to nationalist, anti-immigration, right-wing parties such as UKIP, the United Kingdom Independence Party, which topped the poll in the UK the 2014 European Parliament elections).

But, to repeat, where Marxist analysis of economic, social, human rights, and education policy differs from other critiques, even of radical-left democrats like Henry Giroux, is that Marxists prioritize class analysis, and go beyond critique, go beyond deconstruction, into reconstruction, developing proposals for a fundamental change in society and economy, a socialist economy. And they move beyond proposal into activism.

Marxism in Practice

I want now to spend a few paragraphs on Marxism in practice. Prior to and since the McCarthyite witch hunts of suspected communists and communist sympathizers in the 1950s in the US, Marxism has not had good press. It was deliberately associated by capitalist media and politicians with the Stalinist dictatorship in gulag prison camps. And not only by the capitalist media, but by populations and national/ ethnic minorities and populations in general in various Soviet controlled states, fearful even of whispering any dissent in case it led to deportation, imprisonment, death.

Yet, just as with capitalist states, with states claiming to be Marxist or socialist, there are democratic examples and there are authoritarian, dictatorial, even totalitarian examples. Democratic Marxist governments range from Venezuela, which, despite the protestations of the very right-wing *Fox News*, repeatedly has free and democratic elections and repeatedly returns Marxist governments (first under Chavez, now, 2014, under Maduro), to the one-party communist state of Cuba (which has the highest standards of education and health care in Central and South America). It is worth adding here that Marx said that the emancipation of the working class could only be the act *of* the working class. That basic tenet, for most Marxists today, indicates that totalitarian regimes cannot be called Marxist in the true sense. This is a Trotskyist analysis, as expounded in the writing of Tony Cliff with his thesis that the Soviet

Union was not a workers' state but a state capitalist society. Similarly, Ernest Mandel critiqued the Soviet system and its authoritarian party form (e.g. Post, und.).

Wherever a people has elected a Marxist government, a government seeking to replace or very considerably control and nationalize capitalism, then the US has *sent in the Marines*. The US has bombed 29 separate countries since 1945 (Blum, 2014) and encouraged military dictatorships in various countries— in the process killing or supporting the killing at various times since 1945 of not just a cumulative total of millions of Indonesians, Guatemalans, Nicaraguans, Chileans, Argentineans, Brazilians, and Yugoslavs, but also many thousands of US working-class young men and women.

In terms of ways of having collective, or public, control and management of a Communist economy, there are again a variety of models. These include the workers' control of the former Yugoslavia, where assemblies of the workers in an industrial or commercial enterprise would decide on the pay levels of various types of jobs, would interview and appoint managers, would decide how to allocate profits between reinvestment, salaries, benefits, and community facilities. Other versions of collective ownership are versions of workers' control, from the Mondragon cooperative of the Basque country in Spain, where workers completely own and manage an enterprise, to the *fábricas recuperadas* (recovered factories) movement in Argentine (flowing the 2001 economic crisis) to occupied factories in Greece following the `austerity of the troika), to the monolithic national-level state control in the Soviet states, to the varieties of local collectives such as those practiced by the Zapatistas in Mexico in their autonomous zone.

Current developments in Marxist political and theoretical analysis- and in terms of political party organization- have learned, in some cases, from the minuses of former communist states and economies as well as from the pluses (longer, healthier, more solidaristic, less selfish, less unequal lives). Thus, in many countries, the old-style top-down, tightly controlled, vertically organized parties, with a powerful central leadership, and often small memberships, are, gradually, learning to amalgamate and work with the more horizontal and nonhierarchical developments of the Occupy movement, of the Movement of the Squares, of the global reactions and resistances to the widening inequalities and increasingly authoritarian there-is-no-alternative

policies of big-business-supported governments and their riot police, tasers, tear gas, and bullets.

Critical Pedagogies, Critical Education, Marxism and Class and Reforms

I now want to try to apply Marxist analysis to the field of education.

To analyse the difference and the similarities between critical pedagogies, critical education and Marxist education, it is useful to ask the following two questions: *What does formal education do at present?* This is an analytical empirical question. The second question is: *What should formal education do?* This is a normative question, a question of values, the answers to which are value-laden, ideologically based.

There are a variety of answers and combinations of answers.

1. To get jobs?/ vocational education? (economic purpose of education) (*neoliberal ideology*)
2. To become socialised acceptingly into a structurally/ hierarchically differentiated class society and economy? (*conservative ideology*)
3. To develop all one's potential, like a flower opening? (liberal-progressive/ child-centred ideology) (*liberal-progressive ideology*)
4. To work for social justice, for a better (capitalist) society, meritocratic, with reforms and anti-discrimination policy (*social-democratic ideology and reformist / revisionist Marxism*)
5. To challenge/ critique/seek to replace existing capitalist society and its inequalities e.g. via critical pedagogy, via revolutionary critical pedagogy, via 'communist' education and to work for economic as well as social justice (radical/ socialist/ Marxist ideology)- where the Role of Marxist Educators/ Education Workers? to supplant Capitalist Economic and Social Relations- to replace capitalism *not just to manage it more fairly*

Revolutionary Marxism and Revisionist Marxism

So we can see, from points 4 and 5 above, that a major difference between reformism/ social democracy/ Left social democracy on the one hand, and revolutionary Marxism on the other is that Reformists call for Incremental change (e.g. for 'social justice', for anti-racism, for anti-sexism, for positive discrimination policies on behalf of the poor or of the working class in general) whereas revolutionary Marxists call for revolutionary change, to change from Capitalist to a post-capitalist, socialist economy, society, education.

There are vigorous debates between Revolutionary Marxists and Revisionist/Reformist Marxists. For example, there is considerable Marxist analysis of the relationships between social class and education, by British Revolutionary Marxists such as Dave Hill, Mike Cole and Glenn Rikowski and, in the USA, by Peter McLaren since the mid 1990s (e.g. McLaren, 2005; McLaren and Farahmandpur, 2005), by Ramin Farahmandpur (2004, 2008) and by analysis in the journal "Red Critique", by Mas'ud Zavazardeh, Teresa Ebert, Deborah Kelsh, e.g. Kelsh, 2010), and by a new generation of US Marxists such as Curry Malott (2011, 2014), and by Australian Marxists such as Grant Banfield (e.g. 2011). Whether all of these would prefer to be called 'Orthodox Marxists' or 'Revolutionary Marxists', their analysis is that capitalism needs to be replaced by socialism- a revolutionary change.

These perspectives are criticised as economicist, reductionist, deterministic, 'vulgar Marxism', as 'dogmatic' (MGrew, 2011, p.31) by reformist Marxists, revisionist Marxists such as Ken Saltman, (2010, 2011) and Ken McGrew (2011), and Michael W. Apple, for example in his (2006) "Review Essay: Rhetoric and reality in critical educational studies in the United States", in the *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, Vol.27 No.5 (November), pp.679-687, and in his (2005) "Audit cultures, commodification, and class and race strategies in education", *Policy Futures in Education*, 3 (4), pp. 379-399.

The Revolutionary Marxist response to Revisionist Socialism/ left Social Democracy is that 'revisionist socialist' or 'left liberal' analyses such as those by Michael W. Apple, Jean Anyon *take the focus off of the capitalist class and put it elsewhere* (such as on issues of 'race', or gender- in themselves *declassed* concepts) (see Banfield, 2011; Kelsh and Hill, 2006; Malott, 2011, 2014) all in the *Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies*), furthermore, 'in doing so serve to block the working class from developing class consciousness' (Kelsh and Hill, 2006). This Revolutionary Marxist analysis, recognises that the working class, and its different strata, is/are 'raced' and gendered, but that in objective terms, the primary structuration of society is that of social class defined by the capital-labour relation, the exploitation of the surplus value created by the labour power of the working class, that class which sells its labour.

In relation to political analysis and programme and organization that flows from such a class analysis of society, classical and revolutionary Marxists welcome social democratic and liberal reforms, but do not get blinded by a minimum, reform

programme. Marx and Engels in *The Communist Manifesto* proclaim that we need to 'fight for the attainment of the immediate aims, for the enforcement of the momentary interests of the working class; but in the movement of the present, they also represent and take care of the future of the movement (Marx and Engels, 1977 [1847], p. 62). And, in any case, reforms are not necessarily simply part of what Trotsky termed a "minimum programme" realizable in the here and now of capitalist conditions and quiescent within them. Reforms can, to refer to Trotsky's analysis, be in the nature of a kind of 'transitional' demand: a reform whose implementation would breach the framework of the current bourgeois order' (Trotsky, 1938 see also Hill, 2012c).).

Critical Pedagogy/ the Critical Pedagogues

In relation to this discussion, where sit the various critical pedagogues?

Paolo Freire argued any curriculum which ignores racism, sexism, the exploitation of workers, and other forms of oppression at the same time supports the status quo. (Heaney, 1995). For Freire, critical educators attempt to develop 'conscientization', a process through which learners develop critical consciousness- becoming (more) aware of oppression, and of becoming a *subject* rather than an *object* of politics, of history. Through becoming conscious of becoming a subject in common with other oppressed subjects, this leads to becoming part of a process of changing the world. This is a very different concept of the teacher than 'teacher as technician', delivering someone else's curriculum, as a de-theorised technician. It is also different from Gramsci's concept of *the traditional intellectual*. There is nothing to disagree with here, for Marxists. As far as Freire and Freirean critical educators go with such quotes. But I do have some comradely dissatisfaction with and critique of some critical pedagogy and some critical pedagogues, which causes me to align many as revisionists/ reformists. Many indeed, such as Henry Giroux, would indeed self describe as not Marxist but as radical democrat.

In making this critique I really do want to emphasise my admiration for the vibrancy and power of the deconstructive work and impact of writers like Michael Apple and Henry Giroux, for example, their impact- in uncovering, analyzing, excoriating capitalism, neoliberal capitalism and their impacts on schooling and society is justifiably widely admired and impactful, indeed, globally admired and developed. And to reverse my critique below, that there can be no (use for) deconstruction without reconstruction, so there can be no reconstruction without deconstruction. However, my concern and critique is that, while strong on radical critique of capitalist

society,

1. Some Critical Pedagogy is too focused on deconstruction, with little focus on reconstruction
2. There is, often, little Marxist class analysis, an under-emphasis on class, other than on what is described as 'urban education
3. Democratic participative pedagogy can become liberal- progressive uncriticality and uncritical acceptance of multivocality
4. There is little concern by some writings on critical pedagogy with addressing issues beyond pedagogical relationships, the curriculum and the hidden curriculum and social justice. For example there is often a lack of addressing issues such as teacher/ school-worker/ union issues, issues of the macro- meso- and micro-organisaton of schooling, wider political issues of the funding and organization of education. There is sometimes an over-emphasis on pedagogy and under-emphasis on wider structuring of education. Many non- revolutionary Marxists do not fail in this respect, for example the work of Michael Apple, Jean Anyon (e.g. 2005), most certainly do, powerfully address these issues. But, other than with Peter McLaren's 'revolutionary critical pedagogy', (McLaren 2009, 2010) there is no focus on socialist transformation of capitalist society.
5. Much critical pedagogy is too USA/ Freire- centric, ignoring what a million of more communist, Marxist, socialist teachers, trade union and workers' independent education have been doing for 150 years throughout the world. In the journal that I founded and chief edit, the *Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies*, there is a deliberate attempt to go beyond BANA (Britain, Australasia, North America) in searching for and publishing writers, experiences and analyses.

However- and I really do want to emphasise this- and repeat the point I made above, this critique I am making here is a *comradely* critique. The writing of very many critical pedagogues and non-Marxist critical educators, is often hugely powerful writing, impelling and inspiring tens of thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands, of teachers, educators, students, to work for racial, sexual, class justice . And, the extant conditions, the current balance of class forces and of ideologies and of consciousnesses, vary across time and space. And critical pedagogy, just as, in the political domain, left social democracy, radical democracy, is where thousands of radical/ left-liberal, socialist teachers/ professors in the USA are!

Four Questions: Pedagogy, Curriculum, Organisation of Students/ School kids, Ownership and Control of Schools and Universities

In schools, colleges, and universities, many radical and Marxist critical educators try to affect four aspects of learning and teaching, asking questions about (at least) four aspects (see Hill, 2012a, 2012b). These questions are common to many types of radical educator, not simply Marxists.

Pedagogy

Critical educators question the teacher-centered *pedagogy*, the pattern of teaching and learning relationships and interaction, and try to use democratic participative pedagogy, which breaks down patterns of domination and submission and listens to children's, students', and local communities' voices—but not uncritically. This is no uncritical, postmodernist, or liberal acceptance of polyvocality. Critical Marxist educators engage in critique that frames educational experiences within the conditions of capitalism and its current neoliberal form. Critical Marxist educators also attempt to utilize different types of pedagogy in teaching, to engage in nonhierarchical, democratic, participative teaching and research, while by virtue of their role in actually teaching, may maintain an authoritative stance where appropriate. Such approaches are rooted in social constructivist Vygotskian understandings of learning and are also aimed both at producing co-learning, by teachers as well as taught, and at overtly welcoming and valuing more cultures than are commonly valued in a transmission mode of teaching. Vygotsky, as a Marxist, was inspired by Marx's *dialectic* in that he rejected top-down and bottom-up accounts of the learning process—these unidirectional models originate in class-based societal relations, which Marxists reject.

Of course critiques of over dominant teacher-centered pedagogy are not restricted to Marxist educators. They are also made by liberal-progressive, child/student-centered educators and by some conservative educators, concerned about teaching effectiveness and preparation for the workplace.

But critical education is about far more than pedagogy. Indeed, it takes place outside schools and universities as well as inside (Hill, 2012c, 2013b), as the rise of alternatives to the English university indicates (Canaan, Hill, & Maisuria, 2013; Hill, 2013b). There is educational resistance outside the state-controlled education structures, in connection with the teach-ins at “tent cities,” a free-university

movement, and through oppositional media and cultural workers, as well as within social movement, trade union, community, and student groups.

Curriculum

A second question Marxist and other critical educators can and should ask is about the *curriculum*—who selected the content and how rigid is it, as well as who gets which curriculum? Even where the curriculum is very tightly controlled, even where it is very rigidly prescribed, there are, as Gramsci taught us, always spaces, spaces of variable size, for us to infiltrate, to use, to colonize. For example, this can be seen in the teaching schools, prisons, youth clubs, universities, and vocational colleges and in “tent cities,” teach-ins and teach-outs, and emergent alternatives.

Marxist educators, indeed critical educators in general, can, with students, look at the curriculum and ask, “Who do you think wrote this?” “Who do you think decided on including this in the curriculum?” “What do you/we think should be in the curriculum that is currently absent?” “Why do you think it is absent?” “Who do you think benefits and who loses from this curriculum?” “What is the ideology behind this book/task/lesson/curriculum piece?” These questions can be asked with 10-year-olds, 16-year-olds, 40- or 70-year-olds.

However limited the spaces are, within a school, university, or educational site, within a curriculum, we can always find some possibility to question and to encourage the children/students to do this as well so that they are, in effect, developing an awareness of what can be called “ideology critique” (Kelsh & Hill, 2006). And then we can suggest, and seek from students, an alternative, perhaps even if only for five minutes in a lesson/session. We can question existing versions of history. We can ask, “Is there a different version or view of the past, the present, or the future?” So, looking at the work of Marxist and communist teachers and critical educators, we can affect the content of curriculum, or, if that is, at any particular time/space, almost impossible, we can seek to develop ideology critique, an understanding of the capital–labor relation, of capitalism and its relationship to education systems, of ideological and repressive state apparatuses, and of how schools and universities are shaped and controlled into producing politically and ideologically quiescent and hierarchically organized and rewarded labor power. Where Marxist educators and revolutionary critical educators (McLaren, 2005; McLaren & Jaramillo, 2010) differ from more social democratic and liberal critical educators is in the emphasis placed on resistance

and socialist transformation (Hill and Griffiths, 2015; Kelsh & Hill, 2006; Skordoulis & Hill, 2012).

How School Students/ School kids are Organised in Schools

A third question in education that critical and Marxist educators can and should ask is about *organization of the students*. How should children of different social class, gender, and ethnic backgrounds and different sexual orientations be organized within classrooms, within institutions such as schools and universities, and within national education systems? Are some groups, such as girls, such as specific ethnic minorities, such as the poorer sections of the working class, in fact systematically labeled, segregated, divided, demeaned? In some countries, virtually all children go to the same *type* of school. But children tend to go to schools where their own class predominates. There is also a question of how the education system inculcates a differentiated sense of class awareness in working-, middle-, and ruling-class students. And it tries to keep the working class as a working class that is obedient, subservient, individualistic, interested in only, or primarily, themselves, not in collectivity, not in community. Marxist and other egalitarian educators clearly prefer and work for what in Britain is called “comprehensive” schools, and in India, for example, is called “the common school.” But then, even where this happens (as in Finland, where there are only a single handful of private schools, where students up to the age of 16 are taught in common/comprehensive schools in “mixed-ability” classes), there are internal informal mechanisms, the hidden curriculum of differentiation (“raced,” “gendered,” and “sexually oriented” expectations and responses to different cultural capitals) (Hill, 2009; Reay, 2006).

Control and Funding

A fourth question Marxist and other critical educators ask is about *ownership and control of schools* (and, indeed, universities). Who should own, control, and govern schools, further education (vocational) colleges, and universities? Of course we cannot change the law at a stroke, but we can lead a movement that at some stage—in 2 years’ time, 10 years’ time, 20 years’ time—the ownership and governance of schools can be changed, made democratic and secular, and can attempt to be egalitarian. Instead of, as in some countries, schools, colleges, and universities being run by a religious state, by transnational corporations (Ball, 2012), or by religious organizations themselves, by “for-profit” private companies, by companies that are in theory and public discourse “not-for-profit” (but that reward handsomely their

executives and their friends), or schools that are run and governed by rich businessmen or women. Marxist educators (and others, of course) believe that schools, colleges, and universities should be run democratically, with education workers and students, as well as elected representatives of local communities, having powers in and over those education institutions, within a secular, democratic national framework. Explicit in this is the assertion that education is a public good and a public right that should not be distorted and corrupted by private ownership—there should be no private schools, colleges, or universities. (For an attempt to address these various aspects of education in developing a socialist policy for education, see Hill, 2010; Hill and Boxley, 2007.)

Marxist Educators

What is specifically Marxist about answers to these four questions is that while Marxists work for and willingly embrace reforms such as are implicit in the above, we are committed to three forms of analysis and action, that radical liberals, or radical democrats, or non-Marxist feminists, or non-Marxist antiracists or non-Marxist Queer activists are not.

What defines Marxists is firstly our belief that *reforms are not sustainable under capitalism and that therefore what is needed is a revolution to replace, to get rid of, the capitalist economic system* with its capitalist economic relations of production and its capitalist social relations of production—the ownership by capitalists of the wealth and the power in society. Revolutions can be violent (ruling classes do not often give up their power peacefully), or it might, possibly, be through the ballot box, or a combination of the two. The ballot box alone cannot bring about revolution because state institutions in capitalism are not democratic. A congress or parliament or president or prime minister has limited power over these institutions. An elected socialist government would not be able to bring about much change that went against the interests of the capitalist class because the military, judiciary, police, and corporate hierarchy are not democratic. The national (and transnational) capitalist class uses state violence to stop socialist, revolutionary change. But a socialist revolution is necessary so that there comes *into power* (not just *into government*) an egalitarian, socialist economic, political, and education system.

The second point is the salience of class analysis as compared with other forms of structural oppression and discrimination and inequality. Marxists, Marxist feminists, Marxist antiracists, and Marxist Queer theorists stand together with social

movements, anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-homophobic and civil rights campaigners. But they go further, into economic rights. And further than that, into the recognition that full economic rights cannot be achieved under a capitalist economic system, but only under a socialist or democratic Marxist system.

The third point of difference between Marxist and non-Marxist radicals is that in order to replace capitalism, *Marxists have to work to organize for that revolutionary movement*, for that action, through political parties, social movements, workforces, trade unions. And, furthermore, it is only the organized working class (Black-White; male-female; straight-LGBT) that can organize to and succeed in replacing the capitalist system. These are the major points of difference between Marxists and other radical liberals and leftists, such as separatist feminists and separatist black nationalists.

Educate, Agitate, Organize

The task of democratic Marxist/ Socialist teachers

1. to expose and organise and teach against the actual violence by the capitalist class and state against the ('raced' and gendered) working class
2. to expose the ways in which they perpetuate and reproduce their power, that of their class, through the ideological and repressive apparatuses of the state (such as the media, the schooling, further education and university systems)
3. in particular the way they do this through demeaning and deriding the 'cultural capital' and knowledges of the ('raced' and gendered) working class through what Pierre Bourdieu termed 'cultural arbitrary' and 'symbolic violence' – the way working class kids are largely taught they are worthless and upper class kids are taught they will control and inherit the earth, and some middle class kids are taught how to manage it for them (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977).
4. argue for, propagate, organise, agitate for and implement democratic egalitarian change and policy, for a socialist society and against, and replacing, capitalist society. (Hill, 2009)

Marxists seek to serve and advance the interests of the working class. We, as teachers, as educators, are working class too; we sell our labor power to capitalists and to the apparatuses of the capitalist state, such as schools and universities. We have to consistently and courageously challenge the dominant ideology, the hegemony of the ruling class, the bourgeoisie, the capitalist class. We are in a battle for dominance of our ideas; there are "culture wars" between different ways of looking at/interpreting

the world. We have to contest the currently hegemonic control of ideas by the capitalist state, schools, media, and their allies in the religions.

But the situation we face is not just a war of ideas, an ideological war; it is also a class war, where the social and economic conditions and well-being of the working class are threatened and undermined by the ruling class and its capitalist state (Campagna, 2013). David Blacker (2013) goes even further and argues that contemporary and future capitalist onslaughts will result in deaths for “superfluous” workers and sections of the nonworking industrial reserve army (such as elderly people, e.g., the 13,000 extra deaths of old people in the winter months in the UK due to lack of affordable heating). If we sit and do nothing, if their ideas are not contested, then capitalism will continue to rule, to demean, to divide, to impoverish us and the planet. At certain times in history, and in certain locations, the disjunction—the gap, the difference—between the material conditions of workers’ existence on the one hand, our daily lived experience, and, on the other hand, what the newspapers and the media and the imam and the priest and the rabbi say/preach, that gap becomes so stark, so obvious, that workers’ subjective consciousness changes. This is particularly likely when workers with more advanced revolutionary consciousness succeed in bringing about a widespread and more evenly distributed consciousness among the class as a whole, where there is intense class polarisation, as in Greece, the European country worst affected by immiseration/ austerity capitalism.

At this moment—now—in some countries in the world, the gap between the “official” ideology that “we are all in it together” and that “there is no alternative” (to austerity), or, in schools and universities faced by commodification and managerialism and (pre)-privatization—that gap becomes so large that the ruling party, and the ruling capitalist class, and capitalism itself, loses legitimacy. And so, as in Greece now, and in Portugal, in Spain, in Turkey, the USA, Poland and Brazil, and in other countries such as Britain, we Marxists are necessary. Necessary in leading and developing changes in consciousness, a change in class consciousness, and in playing a leading role in organizing for the replacement of capitalism.

Acknowledgments

This is to thank Grant Banfield, Deborah Kelsh, Alpesh Maisuria, Curry Malott and Helen Raduntz for their comments on drafts of this paper. Responsibility, e.g for errors or interpretation, remain mine.

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Comparative analysis of C.R. Rogers' and L.S. Vygotsky's theories on education and the development of personality

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Abstract

Two major figures of the early 20th century psychology, C.R. Rogers and L.S. Vygotsky are to be studied in parallel in this paper. The two psychologists were interested, among others, in pedagogy; and, although both endeavoured to reform traditional education of the previous centuries, they moved toward totally opposite directions. C.R. Rogers stated that the development of personality occurs due to the self-actualising tendency, which is inherent in every person and suppressed by social norms. On the other hand, L.S. Vygotsky viewed personality development as the outcome of social interaction. Thus, the educational models that can be created on the basis of these two contradictory theories of personality development are themselves differentiated and apply to different educational contexts.

Keywords: L. Vygotsky, C. Rogers, personality development.

In this paper the theories of Lev Vygotsky and Carl Rogers on education and the development of personality are studied in parallel.

Carl Rogers formulated the person-centred theory on the early 20th century and he continued to develop it for decades; starting from psychology and therapy, he gradually expanded it to education and philosophy. The most important concept of his theory is that of self-actualising tendency. According to C. Rogers, every human being is born with an inherent tendency to develop as a person. Self-actualising tendency is by definition a positive tendency and also the motive of personality development.

In the person-centred theory, man is thought of as a positively orientated being, restricted by a society that seems to oppress his inherent tendency towards development. However, C. Rogers does not refer to human beings as perfect creatures corrupted by society; he discovers potentially ruinous instincts and defensive

tendencies that co-exist with self-actualising tendency and can be brought into action by social factors, leading to negative feelings and behaviour. In this sense, the person-centred theory of C. Rogers is similar to that of S. Freud, as both explain the development of personality by means of inherent human characteristics, be them positive or negative.

Having applied the person-centred approach in therapy (client-centred therapy), C. Rogers puts forward its pedagogical form, student-centred education, which was influenced, among others, by the ideas of J. Dewey and W. Kilpatrick, the latter having been one of C. Rogers' teachers during his student years.

In student-centred education, the teacher is placed in the role of the "facilitator" of learning. The student is the one to whom the main responsibility for learning is consciously given, by a teacher who himself (or herself) is there to learn (Rogers, 1984; Cosmopoulos & Mouladoudis, 2003; Pagés, 1986).

Besides all this and besides his initial claim for the abolition of schools, C. Rogers does not, finally, support the total abolition of schools and of the teaching profession. To the problem of the oppression of students, he suggests a new educational approach, that is, person-centred learning, based on his person-centred therapy. School, in this case, is a place where young people are encouraged to learn how to discover knowledge, and how to change themselves and adapt, in accordance with their own experiences. In such a context, the teacher departs from his traditional role and becomes a facilitator of learning, a person who provides sources of knowledge and creates an environment that favours autonomous learning, so that students can set and achieve educational goals that they set by themselves (Rogers, 1984; Cosmopoulos & Mouladoudis, 2003; Pagés, 1986).

Lev Vygotsky lived at the early 20th century. He studied human development, emphasising the development of higher mental functions and the way they are interrelated in each developmental period. His developmental theory is as well a theory for education (Bruner, 1987), as his purpose was to propose a new theoretical system that would lead to educational reform (Chaiklin, 2003; Dafermos & Pavlidis, 2006; Moll, 1990).

In L. Vygotsky's theory two important notions can be distinguished: the "basic law of development" and the "zone of proximal development".

According to the basic law of development, every function appears initially "outside" the human being, in his or her environment, and then becomes a mental function of

the person (Vygotsky, 1997). The child comes in contact with the function in its fully developed form through his or her social contacts and gradually internalises it (Vygotsky, 1935). Though this does not apply to all cases, we can conclude that a child can develop his or her mental functions only at the extent that they are developed in his or her environment.

The second important notion in L. Vygotsky's theory is that of the zone of proximal development. That is, the distance between the current developmental level of the child and the level that he or she is about to conquer, and L. Vygotsky points out that development is an outcome of learning, of social interaction (Vygotsky, 1988). The zone of proximal development is not – as it is frequently assumed – a 'teaching recipe' or technique, but an important part of a much wider theory of development (See Dafermos & Pavlidis, 2006; Moll, 1990) and as such it should be used when designing educational applications.

Both L. Vygotsky and C. Rogers desired to reform traditional education and their critique was based on the ideas of Progressive Education. However, they formed their pedagogical theories in different ways.

Though C. Rogers developed his theory by the time L. Vygotsky was already dead, the person-centered theory can be methodologically classified as former of cultural-historical psychology, as it is part of the wider movement of Free Education, to which L. Vygotsky opposed, just like he did to traditional education. It is also important to remember that C. Rogers had no access to L. Vygotsky's work so as to consider his findings.

The main difference between the two theories lies in the understanding of the relationship between teaching and learning. C. Rogers viewed them as inherently opposite procedures, that is, a 'learning, not teaching' view. We should note here that, as C. Rogers aimed to reform traditional education, he referred only to traditional teaching, and that is a very narrow sense of the word teaching, different from the sense this word has nowadays. In any case, such a contrast presupposes the dominance of either teaching or learning, of either the teacher or the student, and makes the equality between the two a contradiction in terms.

On the contrary, L. Vygotsky viewed teaching and learning as parts of one and the same procedure. In this view, it is impossible to upgrade the one without simultaneously upgrading the other. In this case, the subject of education is neither the

teacher nor the student or a group of students, but the society of teachers and students as a whole (Dafermos, 2002).

As a consequence, the teacher-facilitator of learning is almost absent from the learning process –he or she is, however, always there to provide learning sources offer help to the students– while the type of teacher L. Vygotsky proposes has a more active role in taking decisions about the process of learning.

The two psychologists share a critique of the students' passivity in traditional education. There, students were viewed as empty bottles to be filled with ready-made knowledge and even more, with the kind of knowledge that is only useful for school success; both C. Rogers and L. Vygotsky wished to transform the student to an active learner.

C. Rogers supports the kind of active learning that takes the form of totally, or almost totally autonomous learning. Thus, the student of the person-centred school can choose what to learn and how to learn it, based on his or her own preferences, and evaluate his or her own achievements. Among the sources of knowledge available to the student is the teacher-facilitator of learning, who also helps the student evaluate his or her success (Rogers, 1984).

L. Vygotsky approaches the contradictions of such an educational system (Vygotsky, 1988). The total autonomy of the student is viewed in his theory as restraining him or her inside the narrow sphere of his or her own direct experience (Vygotsky, 1988). As L. Vygotsky did not oppose learning to teaching, he insisted on the importance of teaching as the offer of stimulants that pushes the student's development to a higher level.

Both L. Vygotsky and C. Rogers dismiss the authoritarian type of teacher of traditional education, a teacher who just transmits official knowledge. However, the explanations of this position of the teacher, as well as the suggestions about its change are fundamentally different in the two theories.

As far as person-centred education is considered, the despotism of the teacher is connected to his or her desire for power, a desire that shows one's insufficient development as a person. C. Rogers suggests the formation of teachers who are capable to function as facilitators of learning (Rogers, 1984). The teacher-facilitator disclaims all power, and takes the responsibility of offering to the students as many sources of knowledge as he or she can, as well as helping the students to organise and evaluate their learning whenever needed.

For L. Vygotsky, on the other hand, the teacher possesses a fundamental role in the educational process. The teacher is the person who is responsible to discover the zone of proximal development of the students and to lead them to develop all the functions and abilities that are located inside it. This is not an authoritative kind of leading; the vygotskyan teacher designs teaching by taking into account what the children need, promoting their personality development. He or she is the one who constantly brings students in contact with new and more complex knowledge, so as to develop their potential to the maximum.

In designing educational practices based on cultural-historical psychology, the main goal is to promote the development of mental functions that are located within the zone of proximal development. These functions can only be developed through team work, as their development requires social interaction. Student-centred education supports learning in groups in order to achieve higher school achievement too. However, in a theory that views personality development as a process of the individual only, such as the person-centred theory, student groups can only be used as a means of individual development.

Although at first sight L. Vygotsky's theory seems to set exactly the same goal, we should note that, according to cultural-historical psychology, social interaction is itself upgraded through cooperative learning; and –what is most important– it is the *only* way to personality development. In such a theory, where man is by definition a social being, the border between the personal and the social is shuttered and cooperation cannot be examined by means of ends and means.

Regarding the students' individual work there are obvious differences between the theories of C. Rogers and L. Vygotsky. As C. Rogers supports the total autonomy of the student, he considers individual work as a sign of independence. According to L. Vygotsky, on the other hand, the students' individual achievements indicate which functions are already mature, where the starting point of the zone of proximal development rests. He stresses that an educational system orientated towards functions that are already mature, that is, a system where students participate only as individuals, has nothing to offer, as it is orientated towards the child's past, instead of his or her future (Vygotsky, 1988). Thus, far from falsifying the educational results, cooperation is the way to an education focused on the future development of pupils.

The differences between the educational practices stemming from cultural-historical psychology and those stemming from person-centred theory are grounded on the

philosophical differences between the different, and often opposing, ideas C. Rogers and L. Vygotsky had, regarding the nature of knowledge and reality.

C. Rogers supported the subjective character of experience and reality. For him, the only secure source of knowledge is individual experience; “opening to the experience” is the main characteristic of an authentic person, and the only kind of education that can contribute to the development of such a person is one that repels any kind of ready-made knowledge and encourages every student to discover his or her own reality and system of values through his or her own individual experience (Rogers, 2006).

L. Vygotsky on the other side, believed in the existence of one and objective reality to be discovered. Deep knowledge of such a reality cannot take place in the narrow context of everyday experience; it is only possible at the level of abstract concepts, where one’s thinking is capable of moving between the particular and the general. As a consequence, any educational approach based on cultural-historical psychology inevitably includes the teaching of concepts that surpass the direct perception of the world and mirror the accumulated knowledge and experience of mankind.

In conclusion, let us point out some thoughts about everyday educational practice based on the theory of L. Vygotsky; because any educational theory can only be valid at the extent that it explains and ameliorates teaching and learning.

In a vygotskian approach, group-learning is placed in a different context, as it is the way to personality development and does not just aim to acquiring social skills and skills related to one’s future profession, like most contemporary group-learning projects do. At the same time, in L. Vygotsky’s approach, group-learning is not an educational panacea. Individual work is also important, as it helps the teacher define the student’s zone of proximal development.

Moreover, as it is necessary for a child’s thinking to come in contact with abstract concepts in order to develop, teachers should be encouraged to use scientific terminology in classroom. However, this is not the case, as terminology is banned from school textbooks for young children. As a consequence, the children are deprived of any contact with the fully developed form of thinking, that is, abstract thinking, so as to internalise it.

Finally, as L. Vygotsky pointed out, teaching and learning are parts of one and the same process. In this view, we can presume that all recent so-called “student-centred”

practices that include the emiseration of teachers are certain to fail. Only when teachers and students are recognised as equally important can education be successful.

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Transformation of higher education and the future of universities in Turkey

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Abstract

In recent years, education, health and social security has been drawn into the capitalist relations of production in Turkey as well as in the rest of the world. The transformation of education in general and higher education in particular is not a new phenomenon; it has been a part of the restructuring process after the 1970s to recover from the crisis of capitalist economy. With the increasing internationalization of the capitalist economy and the intensification of competition, "efficiency" and "effectiveness" came to the fore as the required qualities for the national economies and the problem was defined as the need for a qualified human capital. In this context, the functions of higher education are predominantly restricted to producing skilled labour-power, creating "knowledge economy" and providing "lifelong learning". Universities have been designed as providers of these services. Important steps have been taken towards commercialisation and commodification of higher education and knowledge in Turkey since the 1980s such as the introduction of tuition fees in the State universities and the foundation of non-public universities in 1982, increasing cooperation between the capital and the universities as a result of under-funding of public universities, and becoming a party to the Bologna Declaration in 2001. In this respect, the Bologna Process has become one of the means to increase the co-operation between the higher education and the capital.

During this period main policy proposals which were presented in several reports and papers on the transformation of higher education published by the Turkish

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Industry and Business Association (TÜSİAD) adopted by different governments. In 2012, the Higher Education Council drafted a new higher education law that was in line with those policy proposals. Even though the higher education system and universities have been opened to the market relations before, the new draft of higher education law indicates the beginning of another stage in this process.

An intense nation-wide discussion on the draft has been carried out by various actors in 2012 and 2013. The draft that shapes the relationship between the State and universities has not been enacted yet but some of the planned changes have already been put into practice. Hence, in this paper, we aim to critically discuss and evaluate the course of transformation of higher education has taken in Turkey and we will also reflect on the possible implications of the proposed legislation for the higher education system.

Keywords: Higher education, commodification, Turkey.

Introduction

In this paper we aim to give a critical account of the processes and the practices of commercialisation and commodification of higher education in Turkey. First we will discuss this transformation, mechanisms and forms of commercialisation of higher education in general. Then we will try to draw a picture of the structure of the Turkish higher education system by giving some figures about it. After that we are going to give a historical account of the ways and processes in which Turkish higher education system has been transformed since the 1980s. Then we are going to analyse the proposed changes in higher education system and the principles these changes are based on and lastly we will discuss the possible consequences of these for the future of higher education in Turkey.

An overview of the transformation of higher education

In the last three decades, education, health and social security have been increasingly drawn into the capitalist relations of production. The higher education has been one of the areas that went into “crisis” as the result of pressures created by neoliberalism, the financial crisis and global capitalism. Higher education institutions have been forced to transform in accordance with the needs and interests of the capital. The emergence of the knowledge economy, the Bologna Process in Europe, budget cuts, state abandonment of its policies of support to public education have been the main driving

forces of this transformation. Under these pressures, higher education policies, programmes and practices have been increasingly shaped by the political and economic needs of the capital . Higher education has become firmly integrated into neoliberal discourses of global competitiveness, performativity, accountability, efficiency, effectiveness and flexibility. We also see the emergence of an emphasis on measured outputs which include strategic planning, performance indicators, quality assurance measures, and academic audits. As a result of the severe cuts in public expenditure, higher education institutions have been forced to develop links with industry and business in a series of new partnerships. In many countries, user fees have been introduced with an escalating rate and the number of private universities has been increasing all around the world. There have been also changes in employment regime amongst the university employees towards more flexible, part-time, insecure forms of employment.

So as a result of these changes universities are becoming more like private corporations. When we look at the various practices that are employed by and introduced in the universities we can identify three different forms and processes in the commercialization and commodification of higher education:

1) Knowledge itself is turned into a commodity and universities as the places of knowledge production are considered as the engines of “knowledge economy” which emphasizes the changing significance of intellectual capital for the economic growth and development. It is considered that this new economy has highlighted the general importance of symbolic, immaterial and digital goods and services, flexibility and lifelong learning for economic and cultural development and resulted in new labour markets with a demand for higher analytic skills.

2) Public universities have started to be run like companies. They have been forced to create their own income by privatizing various services they provide, by introducing school fees, by selling out course works and modules, by expanding their ties with the capital. They have been adopting the notions and discourses of new public management such as accountability, efficiency, flexibility and performance.

3) In countries where the legal regulations do not allow the establishment of private universities, a new market or a new market space is created for private universities by changing legislation and this space is rapidly filled by international education companies like Laureate Education Inc. (Arslan and Odman 2011; Sotiris, 2012).

Education has never been completely independent of the capital and the capitalist relations. In fact, the expansion of education to all parts of society in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was in line with the needs of capital under the circumstances of that period (Apple, 2006; Rikowski, 2011). Schools, contribute to the reproduction of the capitalist system by endowing the workforce with necessary skills. It also, reproduces the privileges by preserving the form and the content of the dominant culture and by defining it as legitimate knowledge that needed to be transmitted (Apple, 2006: 85). However, on the other hand, schools and universities are not a simple ideological apparatus or means of making profit but they are also the spaces of emancipation. In other words schools and universities are areas of conflict and resistance which enable teachers, students and parents transform themselves (Özsoy, 2012: 47). As Sotiris (2012) emphasises today, in times of commodification of education and knowledge, universities and classrooms are areas of struggle, especially considering their role in social, political and ideological reproduction. Thus, education and higher education are the spaces where critical thinking can thrive (Callinicos, 2006).

Historical development of transformation of Turkish higher education system

The process of transformation of higher education in Turkey started in the 1980s and since then important steps have been taken towards the commercialisation and commodification of higher education and knowledge such as the introduction of tuition fees in the public universities and the beginning of the foundation of non-public universities in 1982, increasing cooperation between the capital and the universities as a result of under-funding of public universities, and becoming a party to the Bologna Declaration in 2001. In this respect, the Bologna Process has become one of the means to increase the co-operation between the higher education and the capital.

The first major changes towards the commercialisation of higher education was introduced by the Higher Education Law passed on November 4, 1981 (Law number: 2547) after the military coup September 12, 1980. By this law the Higher Education Council [Yüksek Öğretim Kurumu (YÖK)] was established and all higher education institutions were tied to this new highly centralized and authoritarian body. As a result of this restructuring movement, the expansion of higher education throughout the country was accelerated; access to higher education was centralised by the introduction of a central university entrance exam. Moreover, student contribution

fees at public universities were introduced, and non-profit foundations were allowed to establish “private” higher education institutions. Since then, both public and foundation universities³ have been controlled and supervised by the Council of Higher Education (Mızıkacı, 2006).

The number of higher education institutions in Turkey increased very rapidly especially since 2006. While between 1933 and 2005, in seventy three years, 93 universities (68 public and 25 foundation) were founded, since 2006, in only eight years, 82 new universities (36 public and 46 foundation) were established. As of 2014 there are 175 higher education institutions in Turkey, of which 104 are public and 71 are foundation universities. Even though the number of public institutions is still higher than the private ones, the increase rate of foundation universities since 2006 indicates that in the near future they will outnumber the public universities. The change in the number of the newly established public and private universities shows the increasing privatisation of higher education.

Table 1: Number of Public and Private Universities in Turkey (1933-2014)

Year	Public	Foundation	Total
1933	1	-	1
1982	27	-	27
1990	51	2	53
2006	68	25	93
2014	104	71	175

Source: (Çetinsaya, 2014).

Despite the increasing rate of non-public higher education institutions in the whole system, the number of students enrolled in these institutions does not show the same increase. In the 2013-2014 academic year the total number of students who were enrolled in a higher education institution (excluding open university and evening classes) were 2,206,304 of whom 1,865,000 were attending public higher education institutions and only 334,053 were enrolled in a non-public institution (Çetinsaya, 2014). Thus, while the private universities consist of about 40% of all higher

³ Foundations universities in Turkey are non-profit establishments according to the Higher Education law but in practice they are profit seeking institutions so functioning as private universities. In this paper we are going to call them foundation universities in order to distinguish them from actual private universities that government is planning to pass with new higher education draft law.

education institutions, the portion of private sector in total higher education enrolment was only 15.1%. In other words, public institutions are still holding a much larger share of the student enrolment.

The discrepancy existing between the numbers of potential degree candidates and the actual number of student placements in an academic programme has been great since the 1980s. While in 1980 there were about 467,000 students who applied for a place in a higher education institution, only 42,000 of them got a place. In 2003, only 554,316 of 1,593,831 exam-takers were enrolled in a higher education programme. In 2013, the number of students who applied for a place increased to 1,923,033 and the number of students who got a place was 877,784. It shows that there are about one million people who could not be placed in any higher education institution last year (Çetinsaya, 2014). In general, during the last ten years, only about one-third of the candidates have been placed in a university programme, leaving two-thirds without a place. As indicated by Mızıkacı (2006) with a growing young population Turkey is challenged by the future problems of access and participation in higher education. The population of 18 to 22 year-olds who are expected to demand higher education was more than six million in 2013. This increasing demand for higher education will create further pressure for the system and new problems regarding access and quality of education.

The quality of education is closely related to the number of academic staff. In parallel with the increase in the number of higher education institutions, the number of academic staff has also increased. There were about 21,000 of them in 1980, now there are over 133,000 academic staff working at the Turkish universities. However, the increase rate in the number of academic staff could not reach to the increase rate in the number of students.

All these figures show us that there is a huge market for higher education in Turkey which makes it very attractive for the international education sector. But the current legislation does not allow profit-making private and foreign private universities to be established.

While the number of universities and students went through the roof, we do not see the same level of increase in public spending on higher education. Public expenditure on higher education from total government expenditure was 2.55 % in 2002 and it was 3.77% in 2014 and from total national income it was 0.89% and 0.97 % respectively. As the various reports prepared by the higher education council say there

is a problem of public financing of higher education. Considering the quantitative growth of higher education in Turkey, the increase in public expenditure is far from being enough. Neo-liberal and neo-conservative policies emphasize education's economic role and cost efficiency that led governments to cut funding for public higher education along with most public services (Rhodes and Slauther, 2004: 38).

The expansion of higher education system and changing economic and political conditions also brought about changes in the structure of the Higher Education Council over the years. These changes have increasingly withdrawn higher education into capitalist social relations. Since the 1990s, the reform attempts in higher education have been intensified. "Obligation to comply with the increasing competition on a global scale", is presented as an important justification for a new higher education law and for the amendments of the articles of the Constitution related to higher education.

The Bologna Process has been an important instrument in the neoliberal transformation of higher education in Turkey since its accession in 2001. Since the signing of the Bologna Declaration, there have been a number of structural changes made in the Turkish higher education system. These changes included the introduction of quality assurance processes and accreditation mechanisms and the introduction of ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) that aims to standardize courses according to 'learning outcomes' and 'workload'.

During this period main policy proposals which were presented in several reports and papers on the transformation of higher education published by the Turkish Industry and Business Association (TÜSİAD) adopted by different governments (TÜSİAD, 1994, 2006, 2008). In 2012, the Higher Education Council drafted a new higher education law that was in line with those policy proposals. Even though the higher education system and universities have been opened to the market relations before, the new draft of higher education law indicates the beginning of another stage in this process.

Table 2: Policy Papers on Transformation of Higher Education

2006	Higher Education Strategy in Turkey (YÖK, 2006).
2010	Restructuring of Higher Education: Bologna Process in 66 Questions (YÖK, 2010).

February 3, 2011	Restructuring of Higher Education (YÖK, 2011).
September 14, 2012	A text entitled "Towards to a new higher education law" (YÖK, 2012a).
November 5, 2012	Draft Law on Higher Education (YÖK, 2012b).
January 12, 2013	A proposal of draft law on new higher education" submitted to the Ministry of Education by adding a draft of provision in Constitutional Amendments related to higher education (YÖK, 2013).
May, 2014	The president of YÖK Gökhan Çetinsaya has published a report titled "Growth, Quality, Internationalization-Turkey A Road map for Higher Education (Çetinsaya, 2014).
June 11, 2014	Draft law regarding the establishment of Directorate of Health Institutes, and the amendments to Certain Laws and Decrees submitted to Parliament.
June 27, 2014	For Quality in Higher Education (YÖK, 2014).

Source: <http://www.yok.gov.tr/>, <http://www2.tbmm.gov.tr/d24/1/1-0937.pdf>

Projections for the future of higher education with the proposed “New Law” in Turkey

Hence, in the rest of this paper, we aim to critically discuss and evaluate the course of transformation of higher education took place in Turkey and we will also reflect on the possible implications of the proposed legislation for the higher education system.

An intense nation-wide discussion on the draft has been carried out by various actors in 2012 and 2013. The draft that shapes the relationship between the State and universities has not been enacted yet but some of the planned changes have already been put into practice.

In all these texts the restructuring is based on five basic principles with reference to the text on “Restructuring of Higher Education” released on 3 February 2011 by the Council of Higher Education. These five basic principles are: (1) "Variety" (2) "Institutional autonomy and accountability" (3) "Performance evaluation and competition" (4) "Financial flexibility and Multi-source revenue structure" (5) "Quality assurance".

1) According to "Variety" or Differentiation principle, while some institutions will concentrate in basic sciences, others will specialize in applied research; some universities will concentrate on training and others in "community service". It also requires differentiations in decision-making mechanisms and/or management systems so it aims to divide universities into different categories such as state university, foundation university, private university, and international university. With the specialization of universities in different areas such as research, training and public service; some universities will become vocational schools, some of them research companies and the others under the name of "social service" will become schools serving for needs of capital.

If the intended changes take place, foundation universities will be transformed to actual private universities. In addition to the private universities, the proposed law also will make the establishment of "foreign universities" possible. It means opening up higher education area to international capital besides domestic capital. As a result, on the one hand state universities will become like businesses, on the other hand domestic and foreign capital will establish the "joint stock company" universities.

Another 'variety' mechanism which has already begun in some universities is distance education which functions as another revenue stream for the universities. It is related with the other principle of "Financial flexibility and Multi-source revenue structure".

2) With the principle of institutional autonomy, transparency and accountability, it is aimed to open universities to national and international quality auditing companies besides YÖK. In fact what is proposed is not going to achieve institutional autonomy, on the contrary it will lead to direct intervention of the government and the capital on universities. YÖK, in its,2011 document, states that "with the introduction of institutional autonomy higher education institutions will be able to define their own policies and priorities including financial matters in line with their own interests" (YÖK, 2011). YÖK intends financial autonomy with the concept of institutional autonomy.

3) The lack of "performance evaluation and competition" is described as one of the most important problems of higher education by the policy papers mentioned above. It is argued that "for a competitive environment it is necessary to develop a management model which puts an emphasis on performance" (YÖK, 2011). In all these policy papers academic achievement is reduced to collecting "points", and "academic achievement points" are proposed as criteria for evaluating performance

which will ensure to create competition between academicians. Moreover these “academic achievement points” will become an advantage in the race for promotions and permanent positions.

4) "Financial flexibility and multi-source revenue structure" as a new funding model is intended be developed in higher education. It is stated that “universities have to create their own revenues under the strain of cuts in public funds” (YÖK, 2011; Çetinsaya, 2014). With the proposed regulations, universities will be able to diversify their financial resources in “new ways”. In order to diversify their financial resources, universities will encourage their graduates and the highest tax payers within their region to make donations to the university and they will have to seek international projects to generate income. According to policy makers, diversifying financial resources is not sufficient in itself, so the proposal also introduces flexibility in the use of financial resources. As stated by Rhodes and Slaughter (2004), if the proposed law is passed, it will bring “a fundamental change in the interconnections between states, their higher education institutions and private-sector organizations” resulting with a change in policy making and academic decisions in the direction of income generation. These proposed changes will lead to the establishment of “entrepreneurial university”⁴.

5) "Quality assurance" principle requires universities to be audited by national and international quality accreditation organizations. According to YÖK (2011), “auditing and accreditation are important factors in the creation of a competitive environment” and it is argued that it will contribute to the improvement of quality. Moreover, the draft law expands YÖK’s powers in controlling and auditing of universities. With its new powers YÖK will not only be managing “input” control but also “process” and “output” control. As an institution of the military regime, YÖK was established as a powerful, authoritarian and centralized body over the Turkish universities and with its authorities it has been disciplining them since then. It seems that the draft law will turn it into a more powerful and authoritarian institution.

So there has been an effort to transform the universities into commercial businesses and to create a legal basis for this for a long time. This means academic work will primarily be done for the market, students will turn into consumers and exploitation of

⁴ See for entrepreneurial university Sotiris, 2012.

university employees, academics and administrative staff in flexible working conditions will become legal.

Management and Control of the University

According to the regulations which will be brought about by the new draft law, large and well-established⁵ state universities will be managed by a board of trustees called the "university council". Members of the board of trustees will include the top tax payer of the city and the graduates who make the biggest donation to the university. The duties of the board of trustees will be to choose the vice chancellor and deans of faculties, to determine the curriculum, performance programs, and to make decisions about investment programs, the wages of employees and students' tuition fees, etc. In other words, universities will become more directly controlled by capital. Consequently the universities will start acting like the R&D departments of private companies. The university management will prioritize needs of the capital when deciding about which academic research is relevant, which departments are more profitable, which skills are necessary for the industry.

In this process the role of the academic staff, administrative staff and students role will be reduced to executing the decisions taken by the board of trustees. They will be excluded from academic and operational decision making processes. In this entrepreneurial higher education system "academic community" is almost totally ignored (EğitimSen 2012).

The proposed draft law on higher education has not been passed yet, but the first example of the board of trustees in a public university has recently been introduced by a special article in a new "sack law" regarding the establishment of the Directorate of Health Institutes and Health Sciences University⁶. "Torba yasa" or "Sack law" is a term commonly used to describe a package of amendments to unrelated laws that are collected together for the purpose of fast-tracking legislative changes.

Flexible Employment

⁵ Draft law calls these universities as "institutionalized universities" which refer to the oldest universities in the big cities. The newly established universities which will directly be managed by YOK are called as "un-institutionalized universities" in the draft law.

⁶ Draft law regarding the establishment of Directorate of Health Institutes, and the amendments to Certain Laws and Decrees. <http://www2.tbmm.gov.tr/d24/1/1-0937.pdf>

In Turkey efforts to generalize flexible forms of employment have been made in the last thirty years, but especially in the last decade it has accelerated in public services such as education and health. Even though implementation of flexible forms of employment has already begun in public sector, there is still a lack of legal basis for this form of employment. The amendments in the Civil Servants Law (No. 657) will lead to corrosion in job security which will also influence higher education employees. The final outcome of this regulation will be the elimination of job security for civil servants and the introduction of performance-based compensation. According to the new personnel policy and amendments to Law No. 657, public services will be mostly carried out by the contracted employees (Kayar, 2012). The precarious and flexible work will become the main form of employment in universities.

Forms of flexible and part-time employment for the research and teaching staff under contracts of different duration are common place practices and an increasing number of higher education employees work in precarious conditions in the world (Pavlidis, 2014:146). Introduction of flexible employment is an important part of the transformation in higher education. Fear of dismissal is directly related to the academic freedom and developing scientific work. The standardization of university education in connection with its commercialisation and the wide spread of flexible/precarious forms of employment undermine the autonomy of the academic staff (Pavlidis, 2014:144). Flexible forms of work will primarily influence the younger academic staff. In 2013, more than one hundred research and teaching assistants were fired from the Istanbul Technical University. This is dramatic because of the number of people who were influenced but it happens quite regularly in other universities as well.

Conclusion

If the complete restructuring of higher education through proposed legislation succeeds, what we will have is a commodified higher education system, a stratified system which will offer different types of education to different social classes. The commodification of knowledge is not new, but with the enactment of the draft only information with commercial value will be produced and universities will work mainly for the market. In the draft, the creation of the curriculum is expected to be made in accordance with global need for competition. This, results with a focus in academic research on commercially viable areas and the closures of departments such as mathematics, philosophy, anthropology which are accepted as not creating enough

revenue. Similar processes are also experienced in countries such as Spain, Greece and France⁷.

The commercialisation of university is not as a simple process of privatisation, but it is a complex and uneven process of internalisation and pre-inscription of the realities of capitalist production and a subsumption of education to the imperatives of capitalist accumulation (Sotiris, 2012). But as we mentioned above education is also an area of conflict, resistance and struggle. Although, the capitalist relations of production have become dominant in scientific research and education, universities are still leading sites for the opposition to capitalist system.

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⁷For examples of Spain, England and Greece see the papers presented at the conference entitled “Transformation of University and Rising Struggle” on February 22th, 2013 in Ankara. <http://www.egitimsen.org.t>. For the example of France, see Onay (2012).

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Theatre of the Oppressed as a tool of educational and social intervention: the case of Forum Theatre

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Abstract

The paper is structured in two parts: first, it presents Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed (T.O.), a technique of educational and social intervention. In the paper, T.O. is presented in relation to Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed. Seeking to find new solutions and alternatives to economical, social, political, educational crisis, the approach of T.O. and Pedagogy of the Oppressed. can constitute a vivid proposal today. T.O. is a method that more and more people use today, because it connects within the philosophy and perspectives of critical pedagogy and provides ingenious proposals. The paper focuses on the presentation and the analysis of a particular T.O. technique: Forum Theatre (F.T.) which is chosen for its central role and complete form; According to F.T. philosophy, Theatre is a rehearsal for revolution, as dramatic action trains people for real action and empowerment. In the second part, after analyzing the F.T. technique, different experiences, applications and adaptations of it are presented in different contexts of Formal and Non-Formal Education. The paper ends with a critical analysis of strengths, difficulties and key points that should be carefully attended in F.T.

Keywords: Theatre of the Oppressed, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Forum Theatre, critical consciousness, empowerment.

We are all actors: being a citizen is not living in society, it is changing it (Boal, 2009). We must all do theatre, to discover who we are and find out who we could become (Boal, 2006: 62).

Augusto Boal, the Brazilian theatre director, theatre educator, writer, playwright and politician was the founder of *Theatre of the Oppressed*. T.O. is a theoretical form and

an aesthetic method based on a set of exercises and dramatic techniques, which is originally used in radical popular education movements and has been implemented in various communities around the world.

Its aim is to use theatre as a tool for understanding and finding alternatives to social, interpersonal and individual problems. In T.O. Boal develops a theatrical method based on Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, a book which is considered one of the foundational texts of the critical pedagogy movement.

Freire-Boal

Both methods, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and T.O., were born in the same period and country, that is 1960s Brazil; by two Brazilian men, Freire and Boal, two friends, men in exile and collaborators in the ALFIN project in Peru.^[1]²

The two Brazilian thinkers have several points and influences in common: their methodology is originally based on problem-posing education as a humanist and liberating praxis. Their methods were based on questioning and on critical perception of reality. They both believe in the dialogue, the democratization of education and culture and the critical reading of the society. Their aim is the development of critical consciousness and empowerment for every citizen and a fundamental social change towards a world of social justice, equality and freedom. Philosophically, they are both influenced by Existentialism, Phenomenology and Marxism.^[3] The biggest resemblance between Freire and Boal is deeply rooted in the conviction they shared and made them struggle for all their lives: the cause of the oppressed. For them, the "oppressed people" are not "marginals" who live "outside" society. They have always been "inside"—inside the structure which made them "beings for others". The solution is not to "integrate" them into the structure of oppression, but to transform that structure so that they can become "beings for themselves" (Freire, 2002:74).

Freire's methods were a revolt against the elitist "top-down" approach to education. He was opposed to the banking concept of education and he advocated critical

[1] The ALFIN project was a movement which sought to use a range of languages including "artistic languages" to eradicate illiteracy and to cultivate consciousness-raising to people (Boal, 2000: 120-126).

[3] A very detailed study about the points of connection between the thinking, work and methodology of Freire and Boal can be found in Baraúna & Motos, (2009).

awareness and consciousness for his students which would result from their intervention in the world as transformers of that world. In the same point, Boal stated that citizen is not the one who lives in society, but the one that transforms it. He also believed that people have an obligation to invent another world because they know that another world is possible. For this reason, in his theatre method, he seeks to transform audiences into active participants in the theatrical experience. Inspired by Freire's belief that everyone can teach everyone, Boal proposes political and social intervention through theatre. Boal argues that traditional theatre is oppressive since spectators usually do not get a chance to express themselves, as they delegate power to the dramatic character to act and think for themselves. What he suggests is the liberated spectator, who intervenes in the dramatic action and trains himself for real action. In his method Boal seeks to transform spectators into "spect-actors" (Boal, 2000).

Theatre of the Oppressed

Theatre of the Oppressed, an aesthetic method structured on a set of exercises and dramatic techniques, is a collective "freedom" tool based on autonomous awareness of people who struggle for collective research of solutions in order to change the world. The whole procedure of T.O. can be systematized in four stages: The first stage is "Knowing the body", the second is "Making the body expressive, the third is "Theatre as language" and the fourth is "Theatre as discourse". The two first stages are preparatory, centering around the work of the participants with their own bodies. The third stage, "Theatre as language", focuses on the transition from passivity to action and it is divided in three stages, depending on the different degree of direct participation of the spectator in the performance. The first degree is "Simultaneous Dramaturgy", where the spectator intervenes without necessitating his physical presence on stage but he offers oral solutions, corrects the actions and gives instructions to the actors. The second degree is "Image Theatre", where the spectator has to participate more directly by expressing his opinion, without speaking, but using only the bodies of the other participants and "sculpting" with them a group of statues, in a way that his ideas and feelings are evident (Boal, 2000, p.135). The last degree is "Forum Theatre" (F.T.) in which the participant has to intervene decisively in the dramatic action and change it. The focus of this paper is to present and analyse this particular T.O. technique: the F.T. which is chosen for its central role and complete form.

Forum Theatre

Forum Theatre is a technique that helps people present and share their everyday problems and reality. It is always based on the participants' experiences and ideas, it focuses on the empowerment of the participants by inciting them to take part into action and to ask for social change. The themes of F.T. come from the participants, their needs, experiences, ideas and difficulties. As Freire states "the starting point for organizing the program content of education or political action must be the present, existential, concrete situation, reflecting the aspirations of the people" (Freire, 2002, p.95). Educators should never provide the people with themes which have little or nothing to do with their own preoccupations, doubts, hopes and fears. At this point Freire introduces the generative themes, which originate from the people and – through investigation, liberating praxis and critical understanding– return to them.

During a F.T. performance, participants' voices are heard; its main aim is to change the people –who are "spectators" and passive beings in the theatrical phenomenon– into subjects, actors and transformers of the dramatic action (Boal, 2000: 122). More specifically, the spectator assumes the protagonistic role, changes the dramatic action, tries out solutions and asks for changes. So, the liberated "spect-actor" is launched into action which might be fictional but it is still an action. In other words, theatre is a rehearsal for revolution, as dramatic action trains people for real action and empowerment.

In particular, Boal explains that F.T. is a sort of fight or game where there are rules. The procedure is as follows: the Joker, the role who acts between audience and performers and is not attached to a single party –just like the Joker in a pack of cards– informs the spectators about the F.T.'s rules and the performance.^[4] Then there is a short skit to be performed concerning a social or political problem.^[5] The performance is developed up to the point when the main problem arises and needs a

[4] The Joker figure is, in various different contexts and combinations, the director, referee, facilitator and workshop leader in F.T. More information about the important but difficult role of the Joker is given in the second part of this article.

[5] In early forms of forum theatre in Latin America the participants were asked to tell a story containing a political or social problem of difficult solution (Boal, 2000: 139). Some years later, in Europe, where forum theatre is done as performance, the story-text is based on the theatre group (Boal, 2002: 241-243).

solution. The original solutions proposed by the protagonist must contain at the very least one political or social 'error' which will be analyzed during the forum session. Then the actors stop the performance and the spect-actors are asked, by the Joker, if they agree with the solutions advanced by the protagonist. At least one member of the audience will disagree. At this point the Joker explains that the same skit will be performed once again, exactly as it was the first time. But this time any participant in the audience has the chance to raise his hand, stop the skit, assume the protagonist role and change the dramatic action by trying out solutions in order to liberate the protagonist. All he has to do is shout 'stop' and refer to the Joker, who is the mediator. The actors must immediately stop where they are and take the scene at the point where the participant will indicate (by a phrase; or movement) in order to bring about a better solution. The displaced actor steps aside, but remains ready to resume action when the participant considers his own intervention to be finished. The rest of the actors have to face the newly created situation, responding instantly to all the possibilities that it may present (Boal, 2000: 139 & Boal, 2002: 242-243).

F.T. can be applied in different forms. When it is done as a *technique* or as a workshop, it gives the opportunity to a community or people who are disempowered to create a play about their reality, to invent a story which contains a political or social problem and concerns them, to demand recognition and organize themselves for the changes they feel that are necessary. F.T. can be also done as a theatre performance. Both forms, as a workshop technique or as a theatre performance, help people identify moments of oppression of their lives or moments in their lives, in which they had felt powerless. Oppressed people use it as a tool in order to understand where each person stands in the power structures he lives in or as a rehearsal to take the first step in changing those structures.

Through F.T., the participants are empowered and they explore a sociopolitical critique of the reality they are living, a reality they perceive differently in such a way that they are trying to reach the real consciousness of the world (Freire, 2002: 115 & Boal, 2000: 122). Seeking to find new solutions and alternatives to all kinds of injustice, violence and structural inequalities that the economic, social, political and educational crisis has revived, the technique of forum theatre can constitute a vivid proposal today. F.T. is a method that more and more people use nowadays, because it connects within the philosophy and perspectives of critical pedagogy and provides

ingenious proposals. It constitutes one of the most well-known and important techniques which is used in the field of Drama/Theatre in Education.

In the second part that follows, the article focuses on Drama/Theatre in Education field and through educational examples and theatre experiences seeks to present the forms of F.T. that can be applied.

Alternatives and experiences of Forum Theatre

In this part of the paper the focus is to present F.T. in practice through specific forms and examples. When F.T. becomes an action, it has to answer and adapt to different realities, experiences and problems. For this reason, there are different forms of F.T. The differences concern the structure, the objectives or the target population (the participants). Some of the alternative forms of F.T. that are described below are not considered as F.T. in the strict sense, but that they are included in the article as their philosophy is very close to F.T. as well as their aims and structure.

As mentioned before, F.T, apart from being applied as a performance, in which a group of actors performs a theatre play in front of an audience (spect-actors), it can also be used as an educational technique aiming at the processes of group dynamics. This last form can be applied during a workshop or in a classroom; there are no spectators, only participants and there is no aim of a performance. Augusto Boal refers to these two forms of F.T. as follows:

Before coming to Europe, I had done a lot of Forum Theatre in a number of Latin American countries, but always in ‘workshop’ situations, never as a ‘performances. Here in Europe, at the time of writing, I have already done several Forum Theatre sessions as performances (Boal, 2002: 241).

In the following paragraphs specific examples of F.T. are given in order to present, explain and analyse different forms of it. All the examples are divided into two categories: F.T. as a performance in front of spectators and F.T. as a technique for group dynamics with no spectators.

A. Forum Theatre as a Performance in front of the spectators

In this category there are included F.T. performances which are played in front of an audience. These performances involve theatre actors, directors and a specific written play, which might be the result of a creative team-work process by the “oppressed” people being involved or it might derive from an artistic-educational idea of a theatre company.

In some countries like U.K. or U.S.A. it is possible to find theatre companies which present performances of F.T. for common public. People can go to these performances and participate as if they were going to a mainstream theatre performance. It is true that in most of these F.T. performances the play refers to a social or political problem, which is important for all the people (actors and audience) to be discussed but not necessary concern them or give them problems in their everyday life.

Often, there are some theatre companies or troupes that use F.T. performances as a tool for social intervention in order to make a real and positive difference to the society and to those living in its margins. There is a possibility that within theatre process these troupes can involve people who are marginalized, who are considered to be “oppressed”, wish to share their personal experiences and through liberal theatre action try out social changes. There is also a second possibility that special theatre troupes create F.T. performances which are addressed to special local communities or groups who face common social problems. Certainly, the above-mentioned possibilities can be combined, so for example marginalized people can create F.T. performances for a special local community.

At this point, it is important to see specific examples of theatre companies and troupes all over the world. One company that is considered to be the UK's leading one applying the T.O. methodology is Cardboard Citizens, a company that has been making life-changing theatre with and for homeless people for 24 years. All these years, “The Forum Theatre Tour” project has offered a rare opportunity for excluded audiences to access great theatre. The shows, which change annually and are performed by “actors” who have experience of homelessness, present recognizable themes of homelessness, family relationships, employment and health which effect many marginalized people.^[6]

In the U.S.A. the Theatre of the Oppressed NYC company works with local communities including homeless, immigrants, prisoners, and youth to establish "**popular theatre troupes**" all over New York City. These ensembles create interactive plays of F.T. inspired by real life struggles, in order to engage people in theatrical problem solving and incite transformative action. An example of the

[6] Further information is available at <http://cardboardcitizens.org.uk> [Accessed: 31 October 2014]

company's F.T. performance is "It Could Happen to You" by the Jan Hus Homeless Theatre Troupe and Theatre of the Oppressed NYC. [7]

In some countries F.T. performances are used as theatre for development or as community theatre. In that case, F.T. performances are one way of helping people in the developing world to come to terms with their environment and onus of improving their lot culturally, educationally, politically, economically and socially (Kamlongera, 2005). An example constitutes the work of the Indian theatre company "Jana Sanskriti". [8] Formed in 1985 in West Bengal, it is one of the longest and the largest surviving T.O. institutions of the world. The company believes in the strength and efficacy of theatre as a tool not only of communication but also of empowerment. Today, under the banner of the "Jana Sanskriti" company there are 30 theatre troupes that are active. Each of these troupes consists of men and women from agricultural worker families that play F.T. performances regularly in and around their villages. Sanjoy Ganguly, founder and artistic director of "Jana Sanskriti" company, in his book "Forum Theatre and Democracy in India", he shares his unique perspective on the work of the company. There, he explains in which ways T.O. techniques can be used as an effective tool for generating collective social action; he describes how the local participants are involved in the theatre work, which help them understand better the dynamics of their oppressions and recognize themselves as agents of change (Ganguly, 2010).

Furthermore, F.T. performances are created for special local communities or for people of similar interests, needs and experiences. These constitute efforts that are supported by educational or social institutions such as schools, prisons, orphanages, cultural centres. In these cases F.T. is considered a social-educational intervention, has a clear and well-developed educational plan (goal, structure, interventions, feedback information) which accompanies the F.T. performance, and presents a continuity as well as an evaluation.

An interesting example of F.T. as an educational project can be found in Portugal, in the programme "Rights & Challenges" ("Direitos & Desafios"). It is a programme

[7] The play *It Could Happen to You* by the Jan Hus Homeless Theatre Troupe and Theatre of the Oppressed NYC is available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vi1HfSiMxCU> [Accessed: 31 October 2014]

[8] Further information for the theatre company "Jana Sanskriti" is available at <http://www.janasanskriti.org/index.html>

sponsored by the Municipality of Santa Maria da Feira in Portugal and was realized in 2006 by the “Association for the Pleasure of Living” (“Associação pelo Prazer de Viver”). The programme was dedicated to the phenomenon of Domestic Violence. Part of a larger and multi-professional programme was a F.T. performance, which was used as an educational tool in order to prevent domestic violence among youth and adolescents. More specifically, the F.T. performance was presented to all the third grade classes of the high schools that took part in the project. Two actors and a theatre facilitator-psychologist were involved in each F.T. performance, which was played for each class separately. In general terms, according to the evaluation of the programme, F.T. was considered to be an important educational tool in order to introduce the students to the theme of the domestic violence, to act as a preventive action and to help students attain strategies and mechanisms for social empowerment. The adolescents had also evaluated very positively the experience of F.T., arguing that the dramatic action helped them unfold hidden experiences, look for changing solutions and empower themselves.^[9]

At this point, after having described some experiences where F.T, in its established form, is used as a performance, some alternatives theatre examples are going to be presented, where the technique is -in a way- differentiated depending on the special aims, the people’s needs or the context.

In some cases a F.T. performance can be somehow altered and leave no space for the audience to participate. More specifically, sometimes a local community living in the margins of the society, “oppressed” people who face everyday problems and difficulties –such as culture and social discrimination, unemployment, school failure– decide to create a F.T. performance in order to express, analyze and share with the broader society their hard reality, but also to try out all the on-going dramatic interventions which would liberate them. This means that every suggested intervention that is tried out on stage after the skit is totally rehearsed and directed in advance by the people who participate in the performance. It constitutes a “prepared” F.T. There is no dramatic participation of the public. The external audience is there only to see the performance and not to participate.

Two reasonable questions that might arise are:

[9] All analytic evaluation and conclusions are available at <http://www.direitosedesafios.com/files/espacotrevo-rel-prev-viol-domes-cont-escolar.pdf>

Is this kind of performance a Forum Theatre?" "Is this kind of Forum Theatre interesting? First of all, even though it is "prepared", Forum Theatre that does not involve any external audience participation still keeps the most fundamental Forum Theatre's structure that is a protagonist being oppressed by an antagonist-oppressor in a political or social conflict. Whatsoever, there are two major principles that, according to Boal, cannot be altered but remain fixed and unchanged: spect-actors are the protagonists of the dramatic action and these spect-actors prepare themselves to be the protagonists of their own life (Boal, 2002: 270).

F.T. offers them the opportunity to take action over individual problems, situations in which they felt oppressed. This action might be fictional but it is still an action. Through the dramatic process, people analyze and understand their reality, connect their situation of oppression to the social laws and ask for a world transformation. F.T. constitutes a tool of empowerment for marginalized people, who, most of the times, do not feel ready or safe to improvise in front of an unknown audience.

One example of a "prepared" F.T. performance is the case of the 3rd Multicultural Primary School of Menemeni in Thessaloniki. The school is situated in Dendopotamos, an industrial, highly polluted and unprivileged region of Thessaloniki, with high unemployment rate, low income and large number of immigrants, refugees and Rom people. In 2008 the school's population was divided as follows: 87% Rom students, 6-7% Albanians and Pontians and the rest percentage Greek students. The number of students who experienced school failure and drop out of school early or children who never gain access to public education was high. (Blue Swadener, Tressou & Mitakidou, 2001: 191). Some of the factors for this exclusion from education were language and cultural differences and social exclusion and marginalization of minorities. Such problems and needs were discussed theatrically in a "prepared" F.T. performance which was performed by the students at the Museum of Byzantine Culture of Thessaloniki. As children did not feel safe or ready to improvise in front of a public audience, there was no audience's participation.^[10] Through the dramatic process, the specific students developed decision making and

[10] Further information about the "prepared" F.T. performance is available at Katsaridou, M (2014) *Η Θεατροπαιδαγωγική Μέθοδος: Μια πρόταση για τη διδασκαλία της λογοτεχνίας σε διαπολιτισμική τάξη*, Θεσσαλονίκη: Σταμούλη, 333-396 (Katsaridou, M. (2014) *The Theatre in Education Method, An approach for teaching literature in a multicultural class*. Thessalonik: Stamouli, 333-396).

social action skills that were needed to identify problems in society, to acquire knowledge related to their homes, community cultures and languages, to develop respect for their own and the other's cultural heritage, to identify and clarify their values, and to take thoughtful individual or collective civic action.^[11]

Another alternative form to be discussed is Simultaneous Dramaturgy in relation to F.T. Simultaneous Dramaturgy is a technique that Boal had developed before F.T. and remains of very little use. In Boal's T.O. method, Simultaneous Dramaturgy constitutes the first stage of "Theatre as language", while the second degree is "Image Theatre" and the last and more completed is "Forum Theatre". Some of the most attractive and interesting elements of F.T. are still embryonic in the technique of Simultaneous Dramaturgy, but the entire philosophy of F.T. is already there. On the other hand, this technique is structured in a more simple way and this is why, in some cases, it is easier and more convenient to be used.

Augusto Boal defines Simultaneous Dramaturgy as "*the first invitation made to the spectator to intervene without necessitating his physical presence on the stage*" (Boal, 2000, p.132). More specifically, here the actors perform a short scene of ten-twenty minutes which has been narrated by a local resident. If the person who proposed the story is present in the audience, the performance gains in theatricality. The actors may improvise with the aid of a script prepared beforehand, as they may also compose the scene directly. The actors develop the scene up to the point when the main problem arises and needs a solution. Then the actors stop the performance and ask the audience to offer solutions. They improvise immediately all the suggested solutions and the audience has the right to intervene and correct the actions or the words of the actors. On the other hand, the actors, have to strictly comply with the suggested instruction of the audience. In other words, the audience "writes" the work and the actors perform it simultaneously. Thus, the audience's thoughts are discussed theatrically on stage with the help of the actors. In this way, the audience intervenes without necessitating its physical appearance on the "stage". (Boal, 2000: 132). In Simultaneous Dramaturgy, people do not feel the risk of the embarrassment or the fear of exposing themselves, as it might happen in F.T. or Image Theatre, but they participate in comfort and safety.

[11] According to Banks' views Transformative citizenship education is based on the above skills and values. (Banks, 2004: 314)

It should be mentioned that Simultaneous Dramaturgy can also be used as a warm up introduction in a F.T. performance. Besides, Boal argues that the element of warming up the audience before F.T. is fundamental for the spect-actors involvement (Boal, 2002, p.264). In any case, involving the audience into a creative dialogue with the actors before the theatre skit is necessary to happen, as it can help the spect-actors' active participation in the F.T.'s interventions.

One example of a theatre company that uses Simultaneous Dramaturgy is the Interactive Themba Theatre Company. The organisation started in 2002, as a project aimed at addressing the HIV/Aids pandemic in two suburbs of Alexandra Park and Soweto in Johannesburg. The company now is involved in interventions related to HIV/Aids education and devised with the actor-educators a unique interactive theatre methodology that uses a range of interactive theatre techniques including Simultaneous Dramaturgy. [12]

The next alternative form to be discussed is Image Theatre and F.T. inside the dramaturgy. It is of high interest when these two techniques are applied in the dramaturgy of a theatre play, which aims to provoke the audience's ideas, beliefs and critic views on social or political themes. During the dramaturgy of a theatre play inspired by social issues, time is provided to the audience to participate and to make suggestions and interventions. More specifically, the dramatic action of the play freezes at a point of a social or political conflict; right after, the actors create a "Still-Image" portraying this conflict. Then, an actor-mediator asks the audience to help the protagonist and propose solutions to the problem. All the suggested solutions are realized by the actors, who create still images following the audience's instructions. The dialogue and dynamic developed through the above-mentioned process are part of Boal's Image Theatre methodology.[13] In this case, as well as in the previous one, it is easier for the spectators to get involved, express their ideas and views and propose solutions for social change. This form can also be used as a warm up introduction, in order to help the audience get involved more directly in the F.T. performance that follows.

[12] A detailed study of that project is available at themba.org.za/uploads/user_uploads/Remo_Chipatiso_Thesis_3.pdf

[13] A very detailed study of Image Theatre can be found in Motos, 2010, Barauna & Motos, 2009, p.157-172 and Boal, 2002: 174-217.

One example worthy to be mentioned was the production “Reflections... *of educator*” (“Reflejos... *de educador*”), directed by Koldobika Vío, which took place in 2001, during the Third National Conference of Social Educator/XV World Congress AIEJI in Barcelona. During the congress, a group of social educators, seeking to open a discussion with other colleagues and provoke them to be critical with their professional role inside the society, created a theatre performance that involved the use of Image and F.T. [14]

The last performing form of F.T. or Image Theatre to be presented is their use during a lecture in a conference. In this case, audience who has come to attend a lecture can be asked about the theme that is presented through Forum or Image theatre. At a crucial point when the lecturer wishes to provoke the audience, he interrupts his lecture and with the help of some actors they present a small piece of a F.T. performance or a Still Image, in order to ask the people’s opinions and suggestions about the social or political problem.

Another T.O. technique which is often used during conferences is Boal’s Invisible Theatre. In brief, the Invisible Theatre consists of a presentation of a small scene in an environment other than a theatre, in front of people who are not spectators. During the spectacle, these people must not have the slightest idea that a “spectacle” is to take place, for this would make them “spectators” (Boal, 2000: 143-144, Boal, 2002: 277-288 and Barauna & Motos,2009: 149-155.). A conference constitutes a place where an Invisible Theatre can be realized in order to involve people in the eruption and the effects of the performed scene. In most of the cases the lecturer who introduces a piece of Invisible Theatre in his lecture, reveals the truth and explains why he chose the specific technique. This revelation is a fact that breaks the rules of the Invisible Theatre but it often happens as a feedback critic to the audience.

B. Forum Theatre as a technique for group dynamics with no spectators

In this form, F.T. is used as an educational tool which can be applied in a lesson or a workshop for different pedagogical aims such as promoting discussion and negotiation between the students, helping and advising each other, selecting appropriate situations, analyzing a social theme. During the process there are neither spectators nor an aim of a performance.

[14] Further information is available at <http://www.eduso.net/archivos/iiicongreso/congresobcn.htm>
[Accessed: 31 October 2014]

Jonathan Neelands and Tony Goode describe the F.T. as a technique that can be used in a drama lesson as follows: a group of students enact a situation in order to illuminate a topic whilst the others observe. Both actors and observers have the right to stop the action whenever they feel it is losing direction, or help is needed, or if the drama loses authenticity. Observers may step in and take over roles or add to them (Neelands & Goode, 2000: 59).

When F.T. is used as a technique in order to analyze a social theme, it constitutes an important tool for social intervention and empowerment. Based on the participants' personal experiences, difficulties or problems, F.T. can help them analyze the situation and realize the reality they are living in. Through theatrical interventions and critical thinking they reveal and underline social structures and economic forces of injustice and inequality and they search for changes that must be done inside the society. In a way, through theatrical action they prepare themselves for real action and this is a fact that empowers them.

In this form of F.T. which is described, there is a notable attempt to distinguish the integrated F.T., that is constituted of a theatre skit and dramatic interventions, from the process of creating a F.T. story or skit without the people's interventions.

More specifically, creating a F.T. story can be a very interesting and educational process for all participants. First of all, the group has the chance to discuss and analyze social or political problems, to share personal views, needs and experiences and to introduce important questions that need to be answered. Through the process people learn to make suggestions and to take decisions regarding a common point.

The structure of the F.T. story can be a very strong process as it can be used as a tool for each person to understand where he stands in the power structures he lives in and would take a first step in changing those structures. More specifically, the central character of the story, the protagonist or the "oppressed" person, seeks to do something which is in direct conflict with what the antagonist or chief "oppressor" wants. This is the central struggle of the scene. According to Boal, the struggle also involves two other types of character who represent the other levels of the hierarchy: One group is those who feel their best interests lie with the antagonist, the "allies" or "supporters", while the other group consists of "potential allies", namely people who share the long-term interests of the protagonist but, because of the existing power-structure, are likely to support the antagonist. This structure gives a group the tools to analyze the particular shape of the hierarchy of power-over in any given community.

Lib Spry argues that people are often so alienated from their reality that they are unable or unwilling to recognize what power they have or where they stand in the hierarchy. In her T.O. workshops she introduces the term “power-over” rather than “oppression” because she has found out that people are more prepared to look at the power structures in which they live and the role they play in it (eds. Schutzman, & Cohen-Cruz, 1994: 173-174).

Strengths, difficulties and key point of Forum Theatre: A critical analysis

At this point, after having analyzed the different forms of F.T., it is important to proceed to a critical analysis of the strengths, difficulties and key points that should be carefully attended in F.T.

First of all, one of the most important points in F.T. is that it strengthens the critical thinking and awareness of its participants. Through F.T. people develop a sense of social justice and a more critical understanding of how society functions. If people are not encouraged to be critical they will accept injustices and it is unlikely that they will work with others to effect changes in society. Learning is not about accepting the existence of a given social order but rather it involves acknowledging that the ‘status quo’ is not a fixed entity and that it is possible to work with others to participate in and shape the construction of new social formations that affect people’s lives and the lives of others. [15] As Freire argues “to surmount the situation of oppression, people must first critically recognise its causes, so that through transforming action they can create a new situation, one that makes possible the pursuit of a fuller humanity” (Freire, 2002: 47). In F.T., when Boal changes the spectators, who are passive beings in the theatre phenomenon, into subjects, into actors, it is this transformation action he wants to achieve. Audience’s “participation with meaning” is one of F.T.’s most important strengths. The spectator has the right to assume the protagonistic role, change the dramatic action, try out solutions and train himself for real action. Theatre becomes a rehearsal for revolution.

Another point is that Forum theatre gives the opportunity to the participants to learn about and through the experiences of others. In F.T. the participants put themselves in the place of the “oppressed” and they see things through the other's eyes. In this way

[15] It is worthy to mention that at this point there has been made a synthesis between Freirean ideas and notions of active and effective citizenship education. See Brett, 2007: 6.

F.T. elicits the capacity of empathy. Forum Theatre is highly relevant to the participants, because it reflects moral dilemmas which they face in their everyday lives. This interactive theatre technique gives to the participants the chance to try out moral behaviour, which can potentially be applied to real-life situations. In this way, F.T. enables the participants to put themselves "in other people's shoes" and to cultivate and sustain the awareness of others. The participant feels empathy for the protagonist, identifies moments or situations in which he felt oppressed as well and he participates to the dramatic action in order to liberate the protagonist himself. Of course, the individual differences of people's socialization, cognitive abilities, and state of mind mean that everyone will likely have to develop personal strategies for nourishing and sustaining their empathy.

Moreover, F.T. encourages people to express themselves and discover their individual creativity, while, at the same time, developing collective creativity. Boal argues that theatre enables individuals to reclaim themselves as subjects. His central message is that through F.T., the participants can discover Art by discovering their own creativity, and by discovering their own creativity, they discover themselves. (Boal, 2006: 50) Furthermore, in F.T. people are creative as they perceive the world in a new critical way and they find hidden patterns of it. Through the dramatic participation, they are able to express themselves physically and emotionally, they make connections and they generate solutions. A last element of creativity which is unfolded during F.T. is that the participants have the chance to turn their ideas and suggested solutions to reality, while they involve the two fundamental processes: thinking and producing.

F.T. constitutes an important tool for the empowerment of people. It can be used in order to promote an "empowering education", meaning a critical-democratic pedagogy for self and social change which is a student-centered program for multicultural democracy in school and society (Shor, 1992: 15). Both Freire and Boal invite people to become subjects rather than objects of their complex social lives. F.T. invites the spectator to take dramatic action against the problems that the protagonist is facing. In this way, the spectator delegates no power to the character either to act or to think in his place. He participates to the action directly by trying out solutions and discussing plan for social or political changes. This is a process that empowers and liberates him.

Although many teachers see the impact and power of F.T. on their students, they remain reluctant to use it because it is not scripted, and its process involves a pedagogy of exploration and uncertainty (Linds & Goulet 2010). Some others argue that they find the space for student expression too uncontrolled, especially the open-ended nature of student-initiated interventions. But this is exactly the point. To use Freire's and Macedo's words:

“A pedagogy will be that much more critical and radical the more investigative and less certain of ‘certainties’ it is. The more ‘unquiet’ a pedagogy, the more critical it will become. A pedagogy preoccupied with the uncertainties rooted in the issues is a pedagogy that requires investigation. This pedagogy is much more a pedagogy of question than a pedagogy of answers” (Freire & Macedo, 1987: 54).

Certainly, there are some difficulties and key points that should be carefully attended in F.T. First of all F.T. must provide a theme that concerns its participants; that means F.T. should derive from their needs, experiences, ideas and difficulties and it must have to deal with their own preoccupations, doubts, hopes and fears. As far as dramatic interventions are concerned, Boal answers to the question “who can replace whom?” He argues that “only when spect-actors who are victims of the same oppression as the character (by identity or by analogy) can replace the oppressed protagonist to find new approaches or new forms of liberation” (Boal, 2002: 269). In this way, the spect-actors who are as oppressed as the protagonist are trained for self-defensive action in their real lives. On the other hand, if a spect-actor wants to replace the oppressed protagonist, while he is not experiencing the same oppression, F.T. manifestly falls into the theatre: one person showing another what to do. It should be mentioned that in Image Theatre or when there is a less specific oppression which deals with feelings, sentiments, subjectivities and not a specific one (such as a strike, a salary negotiation, a confrontation with the police) Boal suggests the replacement of the oppressed protagonist by anyone. In any case, when the spect-actors at a particular moment and for a particular reason need to change the F.T. rules, they can do it as far as they keep two fundamental principles: “spect-actors must be the protagonist of the dramatic action and these spect-actors must prepare themselves to be the protagonists of their own lives. (Boal, 2002: 270).

One major difficulty that F.T. faces is audience's decision and willingness to go on stage and participate. In most cases people hesitate to intervene to the dramatic action

because of the risk of embarrassment, which might cause “a loss of face”. Some people believe that exposing their thoughts, perceptions or emotions in a public event like F.T. is risky as there is always a chance of public embarrassment by revealing too much or by failing to intervene or by feeling inadequate to answer to the oppression. Sometimes people hesitate to intervene as they think that the dramatic intervention may turn out to be not enjoyable, or might actually be distressing. Potentially, there is a physical risk involved in the interaction to be undertaken. Moreover, in a site of a F.T. conflict, there may be a risk that a performance will bring some sort of serious consequence after the show is complete. In most cases, the majority of people are shy of being performing in public, and will need encouragement and a procedure specifically designed to help them overcome these reservations. For this reason, in all the F.T. performances, Boal introduces a fundamental element of the “warming up” of the spect-actors. In reality, the function of these exercises is not only warming up but transforming a bunch of people into a communion. As Boal states “if we do something together we become a real group, rather than a mere juxtaposition of individuals” (Boal, 2002: 264). In addition to that, it is vital that the spect-actors feel safe in order to engage to the dramatic action. According to Boal, the first steps of this warming-up is the Joker’s presentation, where he explains the rules of F.T. Then, some simple drama exercises are proposed by the Joker. What follows is Image Theatre, where the audience presents its first views and ideas on the subject. Then it is the performance of the F.T. story which is accomplished with the audience’s dramatic interventions.

It is important to mention that as F.T. is the last and most completed degree of Boal’s third stage “Theatre as Language”, it might be characterized as the most difficult and demanding one. For this reason, in some cases, when the audience’s participation, for several reasons, is too difficult, there is always the choice of Simultaneous Dramaturgy or Image Theatre.

Another major difficulty in F.T. is the danger of the spect-actors’ manipulation. When Gareth White refers to the manipulation of the participants, he states that “The risk of embarrassment has a controlling function in everyday life: it prevents people from following their impulses. As facilitators, we try hard to help people overcome this kind of fear, but in doing so we may be in danger of leading them into areas that are genuinely risky. Certainly there are ways and means in the procedures of audience participation to produce the actions that we, as facilitators, want”. He points out that

facilitators are bound to control the performances and when they fail to do so, they are very much in danger of exposing the participants to the risk of manipulation. He argues that “If control is inevitable, but manipulation generally undesirable, there needs to be both a way of distinguishing between them, and of knowing which parts of a procedure of interaction can feature in them” (White, G. 2006: 7-8).

It is true that the danger of manipulation is real in F.T. even when it happens on purpose or by mistake. When the F.T. story is presented in a subjective point of view and there is no objective study and analysis of the proposed theme, then the spect-actors can be manipulated into actions they cannot choose themselves. In most cases, the biggest danger of manipulating the audience holds the Joker of the performance. He is the key person in F.T., the person who has a polyvalent role as director, master of ceremonies, interviewer and exegete. Through all his various roles, the Joker is responsible for performing a commentary on the performance within the performance but not entering in personal interpretation of events or personal suggestions. The Joker is in the position of authority and must take responsibility for how much he or she affects the workshop process (eds. Cohen-Cruz & Schutzman, 2006: 133-145). Through the dramatic process he is the person who does not give advice or orders, but sincerely and democratically seeks to learn what needs to be done. It is the spect-actors’ voice that is raised. The Joker must maintain his neutrality and try not to impose his own ideas on the audience. But his neutrality arises only after having made a choice, after taking the side of the oppressed (Boal, 2006: 104). The Joker’s role is very important and difficult and constitutes one of F.T’s key points that must be carefully attended.

When Boal refers to the Joker’s role, he underlines some rules which are almost obligatory. Specifically, “Joker must avoid all actions which could manipulate or influence the audience. They must not draw conclusions which are not self-evident” (Boal, 2002: 261). The Joker must open the possible conclusions to debate, putting them in an interrogative form rather than a affirmative, in a way that the audience can answer ‘Yes’ or ‘No’. He must constantly be relaying doubts back to the spect-actors, so that it is they who make the decisions. He himself decides nothing. He is the one who spells out the rules of the game but stays alert to change them if it is deemed necessary for the analysis of the proposed subject.

One delicate situation that the Joker must encounter is when a spect-actor shouts “stop” while the preceding spect-actor has not finished his own intervention. Then,

the Joker must tactfully persuade the newly intervening spect-actor to exercise patience, while also trying to sense what the audience wants. A second delicate situation is the evaluation of whether or not the spect-actor/protagonist has won. In the event of a spect-actor victory, anyone is free to replace the oppressors. The decision rests within the audience. It is worthy to mention that the Joker must watch out for all ‘magic’ solutions. It is his role to interrupt the spect-actor/protagonist’s action if he considers his intervention to be magic, not *ruling* that it is magic, but rather asking the audience to decide (Boal, 2002: 260). Last but not least, the physical stance of the Joker is extremely important. All the *images* produced by the body are significant. He must be aware of his demeanour in order not to show through his own doubts or indecision. If the Joker on stage is tired or confused, he will transmit a tired and disorientated image to the audience. Of course, being dynamic does not mean seeking to influence the outcome (Boal, 2002: 262). Finally, the Joker must be Socratic – dialectically, and, by means of questions, by means of doubts, he must help the spectators to gather their thoughts, to prepare their actions. *Through maieutics* the Joker must assist the birth of all ideas, of all actions. “Going further than Socrates, who framed questions that expected answers, and, in so doing, limited the field of discussions, Forum Theatre frames questions that expect, as answers, new questions: what do you want to talk about? We try to avoid any form of manipulation of the participants” (Boal, 2002: 262).

Through F.T., it is crucial for people to understand that no problem is unique and exclusive to one person alone. “In one way or another, the problems are pluralised. In the absence of absolute identity, there will be analogy; when there is no analogy, at the very least there will be a resonance, always.” (Boal, 1998: 37). It is the Joker’s duty not to latch onto an individual problem but to show, by means of examples solicited from other participants, how problems are pluralised. On the other hand, he has the duty not to undervalue the individual, to protect the spect-actor from feeling devalued or that his personal problem is subsequently revealed as a possession of all. For Boal, through a F.T. experience, spect-actors should understand the generic nature of every particular case. An individual problem must serve as the point of departure, but it is indispensable to reach the general. “The process to be realized through F.T. performance or discussion is one that ascends from the phenomenon toward the social laws that govern those phenomena. It is then, when, a change in the society can be realized (Boal, 2000: 150).

To conclude, both Freire and Boal proved the crucial importance of participatory, dialogic forms of education and art. According to Deborah Mutnick, what fundamentally “unites the two practices is dialogue, meaning a true praxis of action and reflection that unfolds differently but engages the same principles in each realm” (eds. Cohen-Cruz & Schutzman, 2006: 43). Their central achievement is their theoretical articulation of the relationship between teacher and student, actor and spectator. Freirean pedagogy and Boalian theatre are revolutionary in their commitment to struggles for social and economic justice. Theatre educators, who practice Boal’s T.O. method, must continue to implement Freire’s method, so as to resist the banking system of education, additionally to resist the “banking system of Art”, and promote, instead, theatre as a practice of freedom. F.T. can constitute a practice of freedom. To end with Boal’s words:

Theatre is a form of knowledge; it should and can also be a means of transforming society. Theatre can help us build our future, instead of just waiting for it (Boal, 2002: 16).

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Alternative students' assessment in a junior high - school in Greece: A teaching and research intervention

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to present and critically discuss in the framework of Critical Pedagogy an Educational Collaborative Action Research planned and implemented by a team of high-school teachers and their facilitator. The purpose of the Action Research was to improve the ways students were assessed and through this to change their perceptions about teaching and learning. The teacher-researchers decided to test in practice alternative techniques for students' assessment, more participative and empowering, such as descriptive assessment, self - and peer - assessment and group assessment. Their intervention is described and discussed in details, as the procedures that are developed and tested in practice are of great importance in an Action Research project. The findings of the research are really interesting. The benefits for the participants (students and teachers) concerned mainly their activation and empowerment, their opportunity to shape the educational conditions and the enhancement of their role. On the other hand, the difficulties -derived mainly from the highly centralized educational system- referred to the established curriculum and its demands in time and obedience to a certain time management for the courses and to the impact of the role of examinations in the social perception of education and its value. All in all, the participants considered their experience positive and its findings crucial in the feedback and re-planning for a further implementation of the Action Research.

Keywords: alternative students' assessment; action research; a teaching and research intervention in accordance with Critical Pedagogy; students' voice

Introduction

How can a group of teachers of a Model Experimental Junior High School adopt principles of Critical Pedagogy within the strictly centralized context of the Greek educational system? Within a social and educational context that is experiencing the heavy impact of a multilevel crisis - primarily a crisis of principles and values - how can teachers react in seeking to emancipate themselves and their students from the restrictions imposed upon them by the system? What difficulties do they face and what opportunities can they utilize?

As Dave Hill put it in his opening talk (see these Proceedings), the immense focus on “the pedagogy” leaves no room for dealing efficiently with matters as “who determines” the pedagogical activity itself, or “what curriculum and why” is supported by this activity and who has a saying in the formulation of the whole “macro -educational” (in his words) framework. What we aimed to achieve -through our collaborative action research - is a step towards dealing with the above questions, notwithstanding the fact that we also tried to keep up with the synthetic character of educational research: we dealt with both the “educational” and the “macro - educational” in our thematic, concerned with the impact of alternative assessment methodology upon the educational environment in the classroom, the cognitive and metacognitive performance of students, also, upon the way teachers reflect on their practices and, last but not least, we are concerned with the impact that a participation in such a collaborative action research could have on teachers’ efforts towards their “re-professionalization”, as explained in the sequel.

Admitting the assumption that current social norms and structures impose silence upon voices that do not belong within the dominant groups (in our case, several teachers, as well as numerous students), the team of teachers, along with a university-researcher facilitator, attempt to help these voices be heard, aiming towards a transformation of the school to a more democratic-participatory community and to a more efficient learning organization. More precisely, they try to propose the means for a change of students’ assessment, transforming it from typical, traditional (teacher-centered) and technocratic to being alternative and participative. In other words, they try strengthening / empowering students, so as to make them apt to become critical (each be a critical judge of one’s self, of the group and of the community) and active in their own assessment. So the team of teachers are transforming their teaching - utilizing the opportunities provided by action research -

so as to give voice to the students (therefore also power, authority and responsibility), and the opportunity to participate in a procedure that is usually the “privilege” of the teachers (students’ assessment), while, at the same time, the members of the team themselves participate in a process of professional empowerment.

1. Alternative students’ assessment, Critical Education and Action Research

Let us first discuss the theoretical framework that supported our effort, namely how certain concepts -crucial for the research and teaching intervention presented here- and their interrelations were conceived by the team.

Apart from any traditional approach to students’ assessment that is measuring only learning outcomes and student’s final performance, being summative and promoting a competitive educational environment, there are alternative approaches that emphasize, monitor and evaluate not only the outcomes, but mainly the learning processes, students’ involvement in the processes and in the construction of knowledge and also students’ interactions with others (students and teacher) (Dunn et al., 2004).

The former approach is based on standardized testing, requires learning as accumulation of knowledge, views curriculum as contents of academic knowledge, facts and information that have to be transferred from teacher to students. Obviously, it is an approach to assessment based on behaviorist learning theories.

On the contrary, the latter approach views assessment as a formative and continuous process that requires students’ active involvement and learning as an interactive process building on what the student already knows. Teaching means encouraging students to constantly assess how the activity is helping them gain understanding. This approach is based on the constructivist theory (Worley, 2001). A crucial aim of such assessment isn’t to trace “what students aren’t capable of”, but rather to point out deficiencies of the whole teaching procedure, seeking improvements, while, as concerns the social dimension of it, it has a significant impact in helping teachers and students comprehend their social roles. Thus, assessment is conceived as an interactive procedure of evaluating and (re)formulating an activity in accordance with the educational scopes and the characteristics of the specific group of teachers and students, through constant feedback. It also provides teachers with much information about their students’ needs and their progress, along with a significant amount of useful details they need to make decisions about their teaching and the necessary interventions they have to make to meet their students’ needs (McManus, 2006). Such an assessment is different from stereotypical comparative procedures and focuses on

students' differentiation, aiming at pointing out learning obstacles, interpreting them and, finally intervening in a corrective, motivational and encouraging manner.

Such an assessment involves the enhancement of teachers' role: from a marker who assesses pre-constructed knowledge, teacher turns to a responsible pedagogist who tries to understand the reasons of the difficulties that students face, is always ready to redefine the teaching aims and reform the educational material in use, and constantly investigates his/her personal responsibilities, and also the responsibilities of various other factors of the educational system, for any lack of success (Black & Wiliam, 1998). Through alternative assessment techniques, student's capabilities and weaknesses are described, and also the learning processes and the development of learning, too. These descriptions are used to plan the appropriate interventions to improve teaching- and learning-processes (Darling-Hammond et al., 1995: 10, 252). Besides, alternative assessment can support teaching and teachers' choices from within the curriculum, and can integrate fruitfully teaching, learning and assessment (Torrance & Pryor, 1998).

The descriptive assessment, that is the qualitative attribution of student's performance based on criteria under negotiation, the peer-assessment and student's self-assessment, and also students' group-assessment and the portfolio, are only some of the alternative assessment techniques that could be implemented.

These assessment techniques require complex and high-order students' competencies, such as reasoning, problem-solving, collaboration and negotiation, argumentation and critical thinking. Moreover, they engage students actively in their assessment. Such assessment techniques can give precious feedback to the students concerning the process of their learning, as they focus on the procedures of knowledge acquisition and not on a final score (Boud, 1997: 36-39).

Beyond its constructivist character, alternative assessment also has critical orientation, as it can be focused on relevant social issues and can have transformative power. Without doubt, apart from "teaching" factors that affect student's performance, there are socio - cultural and economic conditions of socialization, which are of course different for each student, and affect substantially his/her performance at school (Kontogiannopoulou-Polydoridi, 1998). The cultural capital, the restricted and the elaborated codes, teachers' expectations, students' and their families' expectations from school determine students' performance.

The movement of Critical Pedagogy is radical as it transfers the discussion about knowledge and its validity from the academia to the school and to teachers' role in the prospect of progress and emancipation. It challenges the established curriculum, viewing it connected directly with the dominant ideology which constructs the dominant social meanings that -through education- are considered to be natural and popularly accepted (McLaren, 2007). But it is not restricted to challenge; Critical Education offers potential and prospects towards resistance to dominant socio-political ideology. Educational processes have to reveal and undermine first of all the conventional forms of meaning making and then all the authoritarian, anti-democratic, unequal and inequitable social relations that support and legitimize all these forms. For Giroux (1992 & 1983) education is a political, social, economic and cultural enterprise. Every educational practice aims to social reform with orientation to social justice and solidarity to marginalized populations or social groups (McLaren 2007). Education has to be critical, liberating, empowering and emancipating.

Thus, in the framework of Critical Pedagogy, testing strategies of action and investigating critically their consequences aiming at their improvement, by the teachers themselves, are strongly encouraged (Giroux, 1988); also the active participation and the development of critical thinking on the behalf of the students. In students' assessment what has priority is the action for mitigation of the impact of the social conditions that affect performance, for creation of "substantially equal opportunities" for all and, therefore, assessment according to each student's specificity (individual and social). Besides, when student's assessment takes place at the same time the chosen teaching strategies are evaluated. Thus, through students' assessment, the institutional, teaching and social context is evaluated.

From the easy solution of the measurement of the results, we focus on the interpretation and evaluation of the various factors that affect student's capabilities and form the outcome of the learning procedure. The process that constructs any outcome highlights (except student's responsibility) the responsibility of the teachers, the Curriculum, the school, the society and the education as an institution.

Through such processes, teachers are not any more skillful technicians, but acquire the potential to become what Giroux & McLaren (1996) described as «transformative intellectuals» combining scholarly reflection and practice, thought and action in the service of educating students to be thoughtful and active citizens; under the conditions that they resist to the conventional role prescribed for them by the educational system

and investigate critically the procedures through which the social inequities are preserved so as to take informed action for altering them.

A methodology for research and change that can not promise prescriptions for permanent solutions, but offers dynamic transformative tools in education is action research (Carr & Kemmis, 1986), a research methodology and a hypothesis for action towards Critical Education (Udas, 1998). Action research aims at intervening in the cultural, social and historical processes of everyday life to reconstruct not only practice and practitioner but also the practice setting. This change can be achieved through the joint commitment of participant teachers to assume responsibility and the action it entails for their emancipation from felt dissatisfactions, alienation, ideological distortion and the injustices of oppression and domination emanating from specific aspects of the current educational framework. For this purpose, participant teachers must be empowered to develop a critical and self-critical understanding of their situation (Kemmis, 2001, p: 92). Within critically thinking communities, participants strive for more rational, fair and democratic forms of education, by first recognizing and addressing – to a certain extent – the limitations of their action (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, pp: 201-207).

From the above, one could quite easily trace a convergence of action research and critical pedagogy, at least the basics of the latter, since it isn't a concrete set of principles. The aim itself of transforming not only every - day teaching practice, but also the educational structures, through dialogue among equal participants and relevant action. And the struggle to understand the specific characteristics of the social and cultural framework within which this transformation is attempted, may constitute a first point of coincidence of Action Research and Critical Pedagogy. The postmodern demand for focusing on differentiation, on human subjects and their experience, on the historical, as well as on the every-day, along with the modern struggle for justice, social equity and freedom, are also basic mutual concepts. So is the perception of educators as reforming intellectuals or self-reflecting professionals, agents -in any case- with the ability to get empowered so as to undertake social and political action, since both action research and critical education focus on action. Let us consider the corresponding note of Giroux (1983) concerning the need to move over from the question of how society reproduces itself based on the interests of capital and its institutions, to the one asking how marginalized majorities can develop institutions, values and practices that would serve their own interests.

In our era of crisis, such combinations of Action Research and Critical Pedagogy may motivate communities of practice (educators, in our case) to participate in grassroots efforts for the creation of new forms of dialogue between policy-makers, practitioners and academics. The procedure of globalization itself provides for possibilities, not only for powerful international organizations that exercise their oppressive authority, but also for movements that reflect the popular will, to emerge, express themselves and strengthen. In a word, create movements of “globalization from below” (Appadurai, 2001: 16-20), essentially as a response to the enforcement of “globalization from above”, the consequences of which we are experiencing today.

2. The research context

It was the team of teachers themselves (the co-authors of this paper) that acknowledged the need for a teaching intervention through Action Research (AR). In fact, it was agreed that the results and proposals that would derive from the AR would be used in the “School Self-Evaluation Programme” that was imposed by the ministry of education on the school ^[1].

In itself, this implies teachers’ initiative towards an active participation in the series of events and their involvement in and taking responsibility for educational practice.

The participating teacher-researchers are a team of school-teachers of a Model Experimental Junior High-School ^[2], but are nonetheless expected to exercise their profession within the centralized and fully-controlled Greek educational structure, that allows minimum, if any, room for innovation in teaching. Furthermore, the exams-oriented character of the educational system and the consequent pressures by the society do not facilitate the adoption of principles of Critical Pedagogy, even if the accordingly informed and educated teachers acknowledge the need for the adoption of such principles. This internal conflict and contradiction that governs the educational system -teachers’ initiative are encouraged theoretically but strangled at the practical level- constitutes also an inhibiting factor for the interconnection of school and educational research, with obvious and unpleasant results regarding the prospects and quality results that this educational system is in position to provide.

This exact inflexibility of the system creates also at the same time an intense pressure to cover the required teaching material, as defined in the Curriculum. However, the problem of time, which could obstruct the testing of innovative ideas in practice, did not work for this group of teachers as a deterrent factor, but rather as a challenge to devote teaching time to treat a diagnosed need, so that students can “construct

knowledge” rather than just absorb information and reproduce it. The participating teachers realized that teaching time is very short and they need to find ways to exploit it in this direction.

Thus, based on these initial common beliefs, the team of the teacher-researchers took the initiative of the intervention. With the support and coordination of the facilitator of the AR, Eleni Katsarou, faculty member of the University of Crete and Chairman of the Supervisory Committee of the specific school, proceeded to its planning and implementation during the school-year 2013-14.

3. The teaching and research intervention

3.1. Planning the intervention

Initially, and following the usual AR procedure (indicatively: Johnson, 2002; Koshy, 2005), teacher-researchers proceeded – in a very detailed manner- to the problem identification and definition, mainly deriving from the implementation of traditional assessment: the fact that students are intensively chasing the best marks, the social pressure experienced by students themselves, caused either by their parents, or the social environment, the identification of their value with their grades, which leads to a comparative and quantitative valuation of themselves, formulating a utilitarian perception of assessment. Thus, students resort to sterile memorization of knowledge or of what they consider that will help them get the best grades, being indifferent to the acquisition of functional and critical knowledge and disdaining the educational process. During this phase of the problem’s identification came also to the surface issues related to teaching itself, that were acknowledged to intensify the problem. Thus, it became evident to the team that they had to test teaching methods, focusing not only on results, as was customary until then, but also on procedures developed in class and in students’ groups and on qualitative parameters of them: students’ motivation, involvement of all students in the learning processes and participation in decision-making processes, autonomy, inductive thinking, problem solving, collaborative skills.

All these parameters confirmed the idea to turn to alternative forms of assessment, both in order to mitigate the above problems, and to focus on various substantial dimensions of educational practice. For this reason, after the problem identification and the formulation of the basic hypothesis that alternative students’ assessment could improve the situation, an in-service training seminar was organized, during which the participating teachers were informed about some relevant techniques. This led to a

series of further elaborations of increasing specialization, supervised by the facilitator, that reproduced those of an AR:

- The participating teachers were divided into four teams of “related subjects” by their own volition: Social Studies (History & Religion), Mathematics & Sciences (Mathematics & Physics), Literature (Ancient and Modern Literature) and Languages subjects (Ancient Greek & French Language).

We believe that the resulted grouping itself speaks roughly about the point of view that the team adopts concerning the curriculum objects and a tendency towards a global view of education.

- Each team determined the desired outcomes of the intervention, taking into account the cognitive goals of the module to be taught, as much as the intended metacognitive and social skills that students are asked to accomplish through it.

Specifically, each team’s members:

- agreed upon a list of the cognitive, metacognitive and social characteristics that a student must have for the specific subject,
- based on the above, they formulated a list of basic directions for the active-critical and participative assessment of students on the wider thematic,
- chose the alternative assessment method that they would test in practice, considering all the above, in the sequel
- they chose, according to specific criteria^[3], the section with which they were to conduct the teaching intervention and the material they would be teaching – as part of the established curriculum
- consequently formulating, in a collaborative manner, the teaching intervention itself.

Considering the above options, and during a plenary session of the teacher-researchers, the teams formulated:

A) The *list of criteria for the evaluation of the implementation of alternative assessment*. This list was common to all teams, so that the plenary of the AR could process its outcomes and so that the outcomes would be appropriate for consideration and possible adoption by colleagues who would participate in a similar AR.

B) General guidelines for the formulation of the list of criteria according to which students would be assessed on the specific subject. They were articulated in a way that they would be proposed to the students as the common mutual general directions for the set of criteria for their assessment. In no way did the teacher-researchers

consider them as a final set of criteria, letting room for the (re)formulation of this set during a discussion and vivid interaction in the classroom.

It was scheduled that all teams of teacher-researchers would start their teaching intervention with a session specifically oriented towards the formulation of the list of criteria, while students should be held responsible both for the detailed elaboration and for the final form of the list. It is worth noting that this list of criteria for students' assessment differed from team to team, since it was supposed to adapt to different subjects and different assessment techniques.

3.2. Implementing the intervention

Planning and implementing the intervention have been creative, even if tiring, and co-operative procedures for the teacher-researchers. In 3 of the 4 teams, one member undertook the implementation of the intervention acting as the "teacher" while the others as "supporting, but not intervening observers", while, in the other one, members co-existed in both teaching and observing. The implementation itself lasted many hours (7-8 hours) and should be completed in a few-days' time. In this same period, the teacher-researchers of each team kept collaborating, so as to guarantee continuous feedback, self-evaluation and to discuss possible changes of plans. Moreover, teacher-researchers from different teams discussed their experiences, questions and expectations during all the stages of each one's implementation of the intervention, a fact considered as positive and motivating by all.

After all teaching interventions were completed, the AR team met in plenary sessions again, where the small teams announced their first results, facilitating collective reflection and feedback. Furthermore, the teacher-researchers proceeded to the evaluation of the whole procedure and considered their next steps and the possible spreading of their experience inside their school.

In the framework of their research, teacher-researchers chose the techniques of data gathering they used and designed tools for the collection and analysis of research data. After plenary- and team-discussions, participants in AR concluded that the research data should be collected by:

1. the self- and peer- assessment texts, as well as the general reports produced by students themselves,
2. the assessment reports of the teacher-researchers for their students, as concerns the descriptive assessment technique,

3. comments that would result during feedback discussions in plenary sessions of the AR and of the teams,
4. the outcomes of the list of evaluation criteria completed by teacher-researchers during the implementation of the intervention (through peer-observation),
5. teacher-researchers' written notes taken during the implementation of intervention, such as students' comments expressed during all phases of the experimentation, especially during the final discussion/ group interview, which aimed at identifying the perceptions of students about the whole intervention, and

In what follows, we present the way each team of teacher-researchers realized their intervention, within the common framework formulated by AR:

3.2.1. The team of Social Studies

The team of teacher-researchers that applied the experimentation in the field of History, made use of the alternative form of assessment in students' project. The subject of the teaching intervention was: "The time of Charlemagne and the modern European identity", that corresponds to a lesson of 8th grade Medieval and Modern History. This was chosen because it was considered to achieve: a) a disengagement from the ethnocentric approach of the official textbooks, b) a link to the European present - in 2014 various events took place in European capitals on the occasion of the 1200 years from Charlemagne's death - and c) to be set as an example of the ideological use of History.

The intervention's aimed:

- a) in the cognitive domain: acquisition -through research- of new historical knowledge, production of outcome and transmission of new knowledge through processing and presenting the worksheets^[4].
- b) in the domain of social skills: promoting teamwork and mutual aid, handling different views in a democratic way, good organization and presentation of new knowledge in plenary, highlighting the individual contribution to the team.
- c) in the meta-cognitive domain: students' ability in receiving, processing, analyzing and presenting the new knowledge, the teamwork (levels of cooperation and management of differences), as well as the individual contribution of each member of the team.

Summarizing the results of the intervention, one would say that the assessment of the teamwork by the students themselves had the following benefits:

1. All students with no exception were involved in the process of individual and group assessment with graded criteria of quality, obtaining, according to their teachers, personal benefit, both through the process of establishing the quality criteria, and the process of assessing the obtained knowledge and the developed skills and abilities. This assessment is based on the fact that students were asked to assess their teamwork three times as groups and give a self-assessment of their individual and team contribution twice. This involvement was reflected in the rubric assessment that all the students completed proving their participation in the whole project. The personal benefits of each student, and the degree of this benefit, were reflected in the individual and team completion of the rubrics of graded criteria of quality. The data collected from the students show that most of them felt they benefited from the whole process.

2. The students were called to develop in particular their teamwork and cooperativeness initially with the formation of the basic directions of the criteria and then mainly through joint research, joint assessment and joint completion of the rubrics of graded criteria of quality. The students themselves admitted during the final discussion at the end of the implementation, that their teamwork ability was increased. One of the groups stated for example: *“We believe that we had fully satisfactory results because we showed respect for each other, we had mutual support and were operating as a team ...”*. All these data, combined with observations of the teachers, who, during the whole process monitored the groups, watching the level of dialogue and cooperation, as well as the methods of resolving any disputes and conflicts, led the teachers - researchers to the conclusion that through the whole process almost all students developed teamwork and cooperation skills. Here are some characteristic quotes from the notes of the two teachers - facilitators of the group:

Wonderful debate / when dissent, explanations and arguments are requested / consensus choice for the final decision”. “A discussion starts. The group designates X as secretary and coordinator. Explanations are given when necessary. X gives the floor to all members and requests explanations in order for the whole group to be convinced for the correctness of the choice.

3. Students were asked in the course of their work to develop in many different ways their personality and special skills and talents and monitor their achievements in these areas through individual and group assessment. Students, as part of their cooperation with the other members of their group, exchanged views, participated into dialogues

based on arguments, observed images, maps, coins, public monuments, studied and tried to understand various historical sources, treated historical and social issues that raised, linked prior knowledge with new information, constructed new knowledge, planned themselves the way they worked, found real meaning in what they did: “We worked very satisfactorily following the objectives, the assessment criteria and within the specified time.” “We enjoyed it, we had fun and we bound well as a team” (from the rubric “Teamwork assessment”).

4. Students had the opportunity to assess their individual and group work, as well as the work of the other team members and of the entire class. Through the process of dialogue, monitored by the teachers, the self-assessment reports, the assessment rubrics and the discussion following the completion of the assessment, the teachers drew the conclusion that students were able to shape and express well-founded judgments about their work: “I think that my participation was pretty good in terms of contribution to the team, presentation, delegation of roles, supporting and helping the members of my team but also maintaining the good spirit of the group” (excerpt from the “Personal Assessment Report” of a student). The students were also able to express judgments about the work of other groups. Thus, a student noted about the presentation of another group: “Your presentation was very good, it does not matter that you were not able to complete it in time; what is important is that we understood what you wanted to say.”

We did not, of course, lack problems in the whole process: First, it was evident that several students encountered some difficulty to fully understand and accept the benefits of such an assessment process with quality criteria as a tool for reflection and self-improvement, especially at the cognitive level. The students, most of them at least, seem to perceive the assessment process as a task imposed “from above” and not as a method of self-development. The following excerpt from the teacher’s observation is enlightening on this point:

During the 1st session, the groups had the criteria next to them (without consulting them) / 2 groups pulled them out (on the worktable) following our reminder / Generally, they did not refer to them, they argued that they had them in their minds.

The teacher-researchers considered that this might be due to the reluctance shown by many students to face some of their weaknesses and take action on them. During working in groups, the teachers also called the students to pay sufficient attention, not only to the criteria, but also to the way the questions on the worksheets were

expressed, as they did not process all the data available to them, hurrying to get to what they thought was the “correct answer”, and thus skipping or neglecting stages of the process. Thus, one teacher noted during the final discussion that, in several groups *“the speed in reading the instructions resulted in ... (wrong) interpretations and different (than expected) results,”* while students of the same group had previously self-assessed their work in cognitive area as “Fully Satisfactory” or “Very Good”. All data suggest that many students did not want to explicitly recognize the benefits of the assessment process using quality criteria, especially regarding the cognitive area, as this would probably urge them to change their working conditions so far within the school.

Another difficulty was the belief of some students that self-assessment should always be positive in order to influence the teacher or the other group members positively. The teachers observed that some students from almost all groups indicated their tendency to exaggerate positively in their self-assessment, especially when one of the teachers commented on the worktable that some of the behaviors or choices or events that took place during the process were not considered at all in the self-assessment. This trend appeared during the presentation of the assessment results of each group and the discussion that followed, as the elements which should appear as a deficit were buried or downgraded (see the above 3 citations). This situation has led teachers to conclude that a significant number of students worked under the logic and the pressure to give a positive image to the teacher, especially since the traditional grading from the teacher continues to exist together with the alternative assessment in the particular school. At the same time through the self-assessment students found the opportunity to strengthen the identity that they present to the teachers and classmates (educational profile they want to construct). The findings of teachers are often different: “They are trying to present to the teachers and classmates that they worked properly and did not quarrel, while in group assessment they judged their cooperation as just satisfactory. Personal dislikes prevailed” (excerpt from the discussion of the teachers).

Finally, the attitude of students towards other groups’ or individuals’ judgments was problematic as they were perceived as personal attacks and not as helpful suggestions. So they were met with irony or other negative comments. The teacher is thus forced to clarify: “The critic should be made to the work and opinions of peers and not to the

individuals.” “Our work (assessment) with criteria was intended to help us understand our strengths, our shortcomings ... and help us improve.”

3.2.2. Mathematics & Sciences Team

The team chose to experiment with a class of 7th-graders, on the lesson of Mathematics, especially «Problems with percentages», that is part of the established curriculum and allows multi-disciplinary views. The specific section had been acquainted to being taught Mathematics in a classroom organized in small interacting groups (pairs that were prompted to interact with neighboring pairs while dealing with tasks). The choice of this specific section was made having in mind that two out of the three members of the team were teaching them, also because it was considered by the team as a class with immense views of Mathematics as “a lesson where one has to know exercises and definitions by heart”, that resisted alternative attitudes and didn't change even when it was shown to be ineffective via the teaching methodology.

The team chose to test in practice the “descriptive assessment” and formulated a “problem-solving” - oriented presentation of the material to be elaborated in a class organized in 6 “groups of collaboration” of 4-5 students each. The groups themselves were created according to a sociogram provided by a teacher outside the MS-group. The tasks were aimed towards dealing with “real-life Mathematics” (as proposed in the “Realistic Mathematics” tendency, e. g., as in (Freudenthal, 1983; Heuvel-Panhuizen, 1996), thus motivating an elaboration of both cognitive skills of “choosing the appropriate method” and “clarifying the parameters of the problem”.

The purpose of this teaching intervention has been to elaborate the special characteristics of the “open-ended problems” (Arsac et al., 1988) and of the alternative assessment in trying to promote students' personal involvement in procedures of self-awareness facilitating a re-evaluation of their attitude towards Mathematics.

As to the criteria of students' assessment, the team agreed upon two conceptual forms of them: the achieved level of collaboration among the students and their ability in dealing with the posed problems. These were put to debate in the classroom with the students - a rather lengthy one, since the students were constantly failing to respect the rules of a dialogue - resulting in the following specifically postulated criteria:

A) As concerns collaboration:

1st: Collaborative attitude, that is accepting the opinions of the others and being prepared to debate and evaluate them within the group.

2nd: Mutual aid, that is helping the other members of one's group or of other groups.

B) As concerns problem-solving and other skills:

3rd: Grasping the context (what is asked for, what is already given, what remains to be found) and the methodology towards a solution (how and why).

4th: Presentation, that is being understandable to others, presenting the thoughts and the methods adopted.

The teaching intervention began with a review of the already taught concepts and methods, during which the team witnessed a retrogression of students' conceptual and methodological skills towards an additive perception of percentages (as in (Freudenthal, 1983, ch: 6). The member that acted as a teacher chose to deal with the consequent problem as one more task for the inquiring groups of students to deal with. After the first meeting of the team, the class was provided with their first assignment, which consisted of an "open-ended" problem on percentages, referring to reduction of a fictional students' wage under a certain rate and a successive raise of it under the same rate. Students were asked to compare the initial with the concluding wages.

During their work on the assignment, students provided evidence of their problematic acquisition of the principles of cooperative work in the classroom: lack of appropriate social skills and confirmation of the negative expectations assumed via the sociogram [5]: Notes kept by the teacher-researchers refer to opinions imposed to others via a "power-game" (raising voices), as well as tense relations created within the "groups of collaboration" alongside with inefficiency.

Students that were predicted (via an analysis of the sociogram) that would be problematic in collaboration, did do so, but this issue had been one of those that the team wanted to deal with along the intervention. Thus, they met with correctional acts with positive results.

Only one of the "groups of collaboration" was successful in solving the problem posed, a fact that shouldn't surprise us, given the structure of the problem (new to the students) and the character of the teaching intervention itself: being the starting point of a collaborative action research, it sought rather to trace problems that should be avoided in the long run, than to draw on concrete results of immediate use in the classroom. The latter is still our target for the whole AR.

One finding that was considered as rather meaningful, and is indicative for students' habits, is that they tend to ignore the material provided to them (notes, printed hints,

criteria as postulated in the 1st meeting) even when they are met with obstacles that they couldn't overcome.

The team proposed that it is rather promising the fact that, but for one "group", students tended to take into account the 4th criterion (see above). The remaining group, driven by a pupil whose attitude tends towards "learning by heart" and who is considered 'above average' in the school, adopted a "mechanical" (also false) solution that they couldn't even present before the class (see also below the report of a pupil).

After this 2-hour session and assignment, the teachers of the team met and provided each other with feedback, at the same time reviewing actions and attitudes and formulating their "descriptive assessment notes" that were to be presented by them to each and every pupil in the next class. These notes were pointed towards both positive and negative attitudes of the students and were formulated as "encouraging" advice.

The team's meeting and the feedback provided, led to a change of plans, due to both the amount of time spent for the formulation of criteria and to the failure of students to deal with the "open-ended" problem, that should be taken care of.

Meeting with the class again, the team handed the "descriptive assessment notes" that met with no negative reaction at all, according to the teacher-researchers' observation. Students were then provided with a second assignment on percentages, again concerning reduction and raise of wages.

A significant elevation of the achieved level of collaboration and of motivation was observed by the teacher-researchers ^[6]. Even if the "statistical" outcome didn't vary significantly as concerns students' performance in dealing with and solving the problem, there was a significant outcome noted; namely, one student, along the line of being more motivated and active in collaboration, did pose certain crucial questions that would set the "percentage problematic" in its correct base: "is it the same to ask of profitable consensus for the laborer if we consider wages raised (after their reduction) at a certain rate for a year or for a significantly larger amount of time?". The further elaboration of this and such questions was left for the class-teacher to deal with in the sequel.

After concluding this 2nd class, students were invited to a next one that would only constitute of discussion on their experience during the teaching intervention. They were also asked to provide, in a voluntarily manner, written feedback. This last meeting was held by a member of the team other than the class-teacher, and took the form of a "round-table discussion" with coordination. The results of it propose that:

- students have had in mind all postulated criteria, not only the first two, as predicted by the team ^[7]:

there was cooperation and mutual aid [...] but, I think we haven't yet understand how to elaborate and solve a problem – what is given, what is missing, what it asks for, whose percentage it is – and we haven't been able to explain what we do (abstracts from texts provided by students at the closing meeting).

- students didn't disdain the descriptive assessment as such: “I am still not acquainted to teamwork and to my companions and I haven't been cooperative... but I am sure I will change, so as to be assessed and become better than now”, considering it, as is the case here, as part of a procedure of improvement, even if some students did ask about the “equal of their assessment to numbers”. This attitude didn't spread among the students, though.

- Last, they showed signs of fully understanding and accepting the fact they should learn and get acquainted to “collaborative-working” in the classroom, appointing to it the same value as any other subject they are taught: “we should learn groups, as we learn Physics and Math” (verbal conclusion of a student).

It should be pointed out that the students asked to be taught a special course on the methodology of “problem-solving”, a fact the team considered as positive, as to the initiation and responsibility taken by the students themselves. Realizing what was missing and what they were taught is surely a success in the cognitive field.

In short, the advantages of “descriptive assessment” implied by what was observed during the teaching intervention, are:

- It provides information and feedback of students' skill- and cognitive- evolution and not solely of the students' results, providing the chance for the acknowledgment and development of meta-cognitive skills:

In general, as a group we need to understand problems and their solutions better”, or “I haven't understood the problem very well. I was a bit confused. Well, percentages confuse me. I worked out the rule of three quite well, but I had no idea what the result was or meant (verbal report of a student in the closing meeting, referring to the “group” that provided a “mechanical” solution for the assignment).

- Students are informed on what they can or cannot do well, contrary to the assessment via grades, that constitute an average of them, and, even more significantly, a pupil is fully conscious of this fact:

I believe that as a group we didn't perform well. Of course, after you handed us the 'note' with our assessment, we tried to get better as a group: We tried to solve the problem [...] and we tried to cooperate better (written report of a pupil).

- Assessment is provided in the form of positive encouragement, contributing in improving the teacher - student relations: the team's observations refer to an eagerness of students to discuss their assessment with their teacher and try to make something useful out of it.
- Focusing to aims, that are not only cognitive, is strongly facilitated, as students' reports indicate.
- On the other hand, "descriptive assessment" provides a handy tool for the teacher to intervene in order to improve the class' performance in certain issues, the more since,
 - as observed in the findings of the team, students' attitudes and performance in the classroom change immediately, as soon as they are provided with corresponding notes in accordance to the criteria.

Of course, one must also point out the problems that occurred:

- Given the size of the class (26 students) and the "collaborative groups" methodology, the teacher of the class cannot get the exact picture of the performance of all the students: in the case of the MS-team, the meeting after the 1st assignment was an instance where it was observed that the "observers" had a complete -more or less the same- view of what each student did, while the teacher -obliged to act as the source of information for "groups" whose questions needed an answer- had only a minimum of impressions! Given, moreover, that the teacher is present and without a second, supporting, teacher in more classes every day, it is questionable if a complete record of each student's performance can be kept.
- We should also point out that, as witnessed by the teacher-researchers during the planning of their intervention, the present form of the curriculum (fully described and imposed on teachers by a certain central state service, in Greece) is hostile to the adoption of such classroom procedures or assessment methods, of the time needed for students, but also teachers, thus posing a problem of "time- and subject-management", that doesn't touch on the quality of what is taught, but rather its quantity and the obedience to the postulated procedures.

- “Collaborative work” in the classroom demands a certain level of social skills by the pupils, a fact that may pose a drawback; the latter shouldn’t be considered as a definitive obstacle, since, as already pointed out here, at the same time students are being taught and are getting acquainted to the methodology, so they get rid of the drawback in the long run.

3.2.3. The team of Literature

The team chose to conduct experimentation in the course of Modern Greek Literature, because it was considered that the four members of the group could contribute equally and creatively. The team’s teachers proposed various topics and sections of classes and finally they decided to choose as more appropriate a literary text of a social story of the 1960s and as the most suitable a section of the 9th-grade, because all team members knew very well the students of this particular class.

The techniques tested in practice were: students’ self- and peer- assessment.

Initially, the teachers set the objectives of the teaching intervention as for the students:

- a) In the cognitive domain: 1. To be able to recognize in the text, the historical and political elements of the period 1950-60 in Greek society, 2. to understand the manners that the writer uses, so as to transfer the atmosphere of the era.
- b) In the emotional domain: 1. To develop skills of cooperation, compassion, solidarity, adaptability and acceptance of the other, 2. To become aware of humanist values and the concepts of the social interest and co-responsibility.
- c) In the metacognitive domain: 1. To be aware of the mechanisms through which they are able to make comparisons between our modern time and the time in which the story takes place and reach their own conclusions, 2. To realize the criteria according to which, they can judge the characters, their actions and attitude.

Initially the students were divided into five groups and the teacher presented briefly the historical context of the literary text, recalling previous knowledge of the students. Thereafter, students and teachers discussed upon the set of the assessment criteria, which were recorded in the table as follows:

- 1) For students’ group A (that would apply self-assessment) the criteria were: collaboration, participation, respect of opinions, acceptance of the other, degree of contribution of each member group, proper time management, ability to synthesize opinions, complete and clear presentation of the assignment.
- 2) for groups C-D and B-E (which would apply peer-assessment) the criteria they set, were: accuracy of responses (to questions directly related to the objectives put), vivid

and interesting presentation, the logical sequence (structure) of the presentation, the ability of team members to give integrated answers. Criteria of social skills were not raised here because of the nature of peer-assessment, since the students of a group could not judge the teamwork shown by another team during the work.

In the next two-hour course the short story was read, worksheets were distributed and completed by the teams of students, and during the third two-hour course the answers of the groups were presented and commented by students. Then, students completed the self- and peer-assessment sheets. During the last hour of the intervention a discussion took place, a feedback on the whole procedure.

Considering all the data collected from various sources, the group of teachers arrived at the following findings:

Students have in fact benefited from the implementation of alternative assessment techniques. More specifically, they realized their thoughts, attitudes and behaviors, since they discussed and studied them. This particular fact became a motivation for reflection and activation towards responsible behavior. Moreover, they appreciated the need for self-assessment and the potential benefits of peer-assessment, as well as the procedures included. Characteristically, students who did not work diligently realized the problem and honestly admitted their indifference, assuming responsibility of their own learning (which would otherwise be the responsibility of the teacher). Also, in the framework of peer-assessment, negative and positive elements of teamwork were the subject of creative dialogue and negotiation that highlighted new considerations and different angles of the object under consideration. At the same time, it was noticed by teachers and by the majority of students that the application of alternative assessment improved the relations between them. Some said that when students themselves take part in the formulation of criteria and are aware of them, since the beginning, they can better understand the teacher and it's easier to put themselves in teacher's position. Others also said that knowing in advance the criteria, helped them understand that teacher's evaluation is more fair, impartial and objective than they thought and thus not to have the feeling of injustice to their detriment and to see the teacher with greater respect and trust. Finally, the co-formulation of criteria by students and teacher familiarized more the students with a scientific field and gradually led them to the realization of what is important and what is insignificant.

There were certainly some problems: The students seemed to have difficulties of adaptation to the new assessment techniques as they were experiencing them for the

first time in Literature. Teachers had thus to explain all steps of the assessment process and consumed valuable time. Furthermore, students seem not to have paid sufficient attention to the assessment criteria, neither during the procedure of teamwork, nor during the self- and peer-assessment. In the opinion of students, that happened because: “we wanted to respond to the demands of the teamwork’s tasks” (extract from the final discussion). Also, resistances of students to alternative assessment and particularly to peer-assessment were raised. They claimed that these techniques stressed them psychologically, since they had to assess their friend’s worksheet. To the question why they do not wish to assess a classmate and other members of the team, their responses were very specific: “We do not like to snitch”, “the assessment of our classmate is very difficult and a psychological pressure for us”, “even when our classmate does not know which accusation we held against him, we are morally responsible and have remorse”, “we prefer the self-evaluation [...] the peer-evaluation, let the teacher take care of it”.

At this point, teachers realized the absence of criteria of social skills in their list, which could have indicated to students how to judge the work of another person using arguments.

Finally, some students had a critical attitude against the whole process, declaring their reservations about the way they accomplished the tasks assigned to them during teamwork. Mainly, they focused on the fact that not all students are always willing to work within the framework of their team collaboratively.

3.2.4. Team of Languages subjects

The team of Languages subjects^[8] experimented with a section of the 1st class of Junior High School (7th school year) in the course of Ancient Greek, module “Grammar - the Present Perfect tense (Indicative Mood, Active Voice)”, according to the established curriculum. These particular choices have been made because the teachers of the team could contribute to this matter of grammar, whereas the students were familiarized with the teamwork, a fact that facilitated the teaching intervention. Self-assessment was adopted as an alternative way of students’ assessment, which included not only students’ assessment in terms of knowledge gained, but also their assessment for the participation in teamwork.

First of all, the teachers’ team agreed upon cognitive and metacognitive learning aims for the students.

a) Cognitive Objectives: To acknowledge -through the observation of grammatical phenomena- what part of their prior knowledge is related to the formation of Present Perfect tense, to activate it so that they point out the Present Perfect's differences in comparison with other tenses and finally to proceed, by themselves, inductively in the formulation of rules related to its formation.

b) Metacognitive Objectives: To realize, using specific and collectively postulated cognitive criteria and through teamwork, how to learn more effectively, to evaluate their individual effort and proceed to corrective actions in order to improve their individual performance, but also their behavior in the team.

These objectives constituted the basis upon which to build -via a discussion- the common set of criteria for students' self-assessment. They are divided into the following three categories:

a. Assessment criteria of the group's cooperation: To construct new knowledge collectively, to cooperate, to be in solidarity, to accept the different opinions, to stick to the rules of the group and respect the roles that teachers assign.

b. Self-assessment criteria of membership: To express themselves freely and equally, to help classmates, to respect their role and the time limits of work.

c. Self-assessment criteria for the cognitive objective (Present Perfect): To know rules of formation of the new tense, to apply these rules in producing the Present Perfect of any verb.

These -collaboratively set- assessment criteria were written on a presentation, which was projected on the whiteboard during the experimentation, in order to remind students of the criteria for their assessment. Then, the students were divided randomly in six groups and each of them undertook a role: "coordinator", "reader" (communicates the content of the worksheets in the group), "employee of mutualism" (asks other groups if the group cannot answer), "announcer" (announces the findings of the group to others), "animator" (motivates and encourages the group).

Then, the teacher gave them the first worksheet, that was formulated according to the inductive method of learning, so that students would reach their own conclusions and rules for the formulation of the Present Perfect's suffix. Most groups of students responded positively to the first worksheet: "They remember the criteria. They respect their roles. They consult each other before seeking the help of other groups" (teacher-researchers' notes). However, in two out of six groups, where high-performing students participated, it seemed that collaboration was nearly impossible. These

students could not collaborate harmoniously, did not respect the criteria set by the class and tended to work individually: “Student X is unable to cooperate. Does not wait for his classmates. Solves alone exercises”. In both these groups, the student who had the role of “coordinator” tried to restore the cohesion of the group, alone, at first: “Don’t go to the next question. Wait for us!”. Then -if not heard by his classmate-asked for the teacher’s help: “Mrs, the X student progresses faster than we do and is not waiting, neither explains to us!”. The teacher-researchers had to remind these particular not collaborative students of the criteria for their assessment: “Remember your role in the group, but also how you will be assessed! Which is more important? Your personal performance or mainly the performance of your group?”. The behavior of these students resulted in negative performance of their groups as they failed to accomplish -neither in group or individually-their work within the time limits put to them.

During next class, the students undertook an oral qualifying test, which aimed to explore the degree of assimilation of the cognitive goals. They responded successfully, since out of 26 students, only 6 answered wrong. A feedback discussion followed, in which the teacher attempted to introduce students in processes of self-assessment. Thus, students expressed their opinions about the procedure of teaching and their performance as a group. Most students said that the process helped them to learn, that they liked it, they went home and knew how to form the new tense, they declared that they worked well in their groups and they all said that they wanted to repeat it. They reported that the role of the “employee of mutualism” was particularly helpful in the process of understanding the concepts. In teacher’s notes we read some characteristic students’ statements: “I really liked this way of teaching and my role in the group. I was able to work and complete the exercise helped by my classmates”. The two students that did not manage to cooperate well admitted that they did not respect the pre-agreed criteria, whereas the other students of the groups felt that the “coordinator” failed to impose the rules on the uncooperative student.

The second worksheet that was given to students related to the formation of the reduplicative prefix in Present Perfect. The groups studied the worksheet and presented the results.

The teacher-researchers observed that during the group-work on the second worksheet, even uncooperative students successfully joined and collaborated with their group, as illustrated by the teachers’ notes: “They seem to have conceived their

roles. All students, without exception, cooperate, even those who had initially caused problems”. Complying with the criteria for students’ cooperation while completing the second worksheet had a positive impact on the performance of all groups. We can read, indeed, in teachers’ notes, that all students have completed their exercises within the time set to them.

The procedure of self-assessment took place during the final stage of the intervention, when the teachers gave the students:

- a) the assessment sheet of cognitive performance, that is a test,
- b) the students’ self-assessment sheet as for the accomplishment of the cognitive goals, but also as for their overall performance during the intervention (this is where they also wrote down what they learned, what they didn’t and why not), and
- c) the students’ self-assessment sheet as for each one’s contribution to the group and their overall appreciation for the way their group performed.

In the discussion that followed, the students expressed their opinions on the inductive teaching, on teamwork, and on alternative assessment. As we can read in teacher-researchers’ notes, all students claimed that the intervention had a positive impact on them. They, also, considered that inductive teaching and self-assessment suits them and that they profited in various directions, since they learned how to master the new knowledge and how to collaborate in a profitable way. They said that they now know exactly what they need to do, what they didn’t know well and acknowledged the need to study more at home.

Thus it appears that the benefits were several:

- The combination of inductive teaching and self-assessment diminishes the passivity of students, since their activation is achieved all along the process: “I liked it (the process) because I participated more, I was not a passive listener” (from the final discussion on the intervention). Specifically, their new role posed by self-assessment, urged them to be more careful during the common activity of correction of the assessment sheet, because they all wanted to assess themselves in a fair way. In fact, if we compare the results of the assessment sheet of cognitive goals (test) and the self-assessment sheet for the accomplishment of cognitive goals, it appears that, in their majority, students correctly documented their weaknesses and -during the final discussion- expressed the intention to improve themselves: “I did not understand well the point X, but I will study more at home and I will be better prepared next time”.

- Teachers value that this active attitude towards learning gives an opportunity of autonomy to the students, because they develop a critical ability towards their performance. Furthermore, given their active participation in the formulation of assessment criteria (constantly reminded by teachers), students managed to focus on cognitive and cooperative goals: “I have to study more at home, because I relied on the group and didn’t study enough”, “Even though I was a weak member of the group, I was helped by my peers to better understand the rules”, “I don’t have team spirit and I love working on my own, I saw however that through teamwork we accomplish better” (from the final discussion). In fact, teachers observed, in the findings derived from assessment sheets, that, at the end of the process, students had a clear conception of conceived knowledge, and of their gaps as well: the 6 out of 26 students that admitted not fully achieving the cognitive goals were those that did not perform well in the cognitive test. There was, consequently, absolute agreement between their self-assessment and their results in the cognitive test.
- Precisely, the adoption of this critical attitude towards their performance made students aware (even in a primitive level) of mechanisms of knowledge acquisition and of metacognitive skills in general. In teacher-researchers’ notes we can read some characteristic students’ answers, expressed during the final discussion: “Yes, I saw differences. I realized that it is not the same thing to do everything on your own and, on the other hand, to be supported by your group”, “Being open to teamwork and tolerant to other views, helps you learn better”, “Through teamwork, I was able to understand better the lesson in comparison with previous times”.
- Students developed cooperative social skills. They relied on their group, asking, only occasionally, teacher’s help, who assumed role of coordinator-animator during the intervention. In fact, students mentioned in the self-assessment sheets: “We worked well together, we listened to different opinions and leaned upon each other as a team”, “We decided always with unanimity”.
- Thanks to the choice of self-assessment, the teacher was exempted from the role of judge-authority. Consequently, students realized that their performance was absolutely dependable on the time they dedicated in their preparation, since they identified on their own their weaknesses and admitted that they have to study more at home.

We cannot, however, overlook the difficulties we encountered. The self-assessment process required much time (at least because it was the first such application). That time isn't handy according to the established curriculum. On the other hand, establishing relations of confidence between members of the group needs also time.

4. Conclusions and discussion

In the prospect of continuing our AR, we value the following results of the feedback gained via the teaching interventions as the more important and we think they should be taken into account for the next step of the AR:

As concerns students' alternative assessment:

- the advantages:
 - the instructor's role changed from judge-authority to feedback provider, condition that improved the relations of teacher and students,
 - the teacher took immediate feedback concerning the teaching,
 - students became more motivated and responsible towards their learning and engaged eagerly in the educational process,
 - students had the opportunity to be critical and to make improvements individually and collectively forming, thus, a community of learning,
 - students developed metacognitive skills.
- the problems:
 - the difficulties generated by the present educational context,
 - the lack of teachers' and students' familiarization with practices of acceptance of critical judgment, critical self-reflection, self-improvement and autonomization, apt to cause various resistances and problems in time management

As concerns the aims of Critical Pedagogy:

- the point of interest as regards students' assessment shifted from the social targeting of specific students (not studying, indifferent, etc.), to concerns related to the teaching methodology, the choices made by the curriculum and the teacher and their co-assessment with the participating students, also the limitations imposed by the framework of the education process,
- admitting the fact that students –not having voice– constitute a less- favored group within the educational process, we value that the processes developed during our AR, helped them gain voice (during the co-formulation of criteria, while expressing their judgments, etc.),

- the group-work methodology in the teaching and learning process and the procedures involved, opened prospects in school for the adoption of social values, such as respect, solidarity and justice, although, at the same time, in some cases, it limited even more the participation of certain students, to whom the required social skills and attitudes were still absent,
- the participating teachers - despite their deprofessionalization in the broader social context achieved through external control on school and by minimizing teachers' initiative and autonomy (Groundwater-Smith, 2005) - claimed, through their research and its outcomes, their right to be heard on configuring the institutional educational framework.

As concerns the Action Research:

- The involvement of teachers in the AR indicates their willingness for changes in the educational process and, simultaneously, their own personal commitment and engagement in the formulation and promotion of this change.
- AR made it possible for teachers to convert the institutional impositions to a research and creative activity that elevates the value of their teaching practice: ie, the "school's self-evaluation" was transformed into AR and the decontextualized "peer-observation" into a means for the collection of research data.
- Teachers realized the current educational context, and thus were involved in a critical dialogue on the impact of social issues in the construction of any educational outcome.

Having valued the positive elements of the preceding process and continuing the AR in a second cycle, we believe that the following would have a positive impact:

- the implementation of co-teaching more extensively, provided that a collaborative atmosphere is entrenched between them,
- the further cultivation of students' social skills through a more systematic application of group-work,
- the further training of teachers and students in alternative assessment techniques, as well as in participatory processes, and the practice of these in a more systematic manner, which would also facilitate the implementation of such methods,
- the exploitation of the potential given by the institutional framework of the Model Experimental Schools, which leaves room towards autonomy, so as to overcome institutional contradictions that entrap the school in rigidity of the centralized educational system.

At the same time, the systematic adoption of such practices would contribute to the change of the culture of the school itself.

Notes

[1] The Ministry of Education imposed this Program to all schools in Greece at the beginning of the school-year 2013-14 (Official Government Gazette, no. 614/5-3-2013) without the appropriate preparation for such an innovation (mainly without relevant teachers' training). Especially for the Model Experimental Schools, an additional feature of the School Self-Evaluation was imposed: the peer-observation procedure. And it was imposed in the middle of the school-year (in February 2014) when the School Self-Evaluation Programme has developed. Besides, it had no clear purpose nor defined framework, a decontextualised observation. So the team of teachers decided to include it in the their AR project that was then in full progress and is now presented in this paper.

[2] The Ministry of Education established the Model Experimental Schools in 2011 (Official Government Gazette, no. 118/24-5-2011), aiming at “ensuring public and high-quality education for all”, “promoting of educational research in practice”, “the experimental implementation of Curricula and innovative teaching methods and practices”. These schools' staff are highly qualified teachers. The law that established these schools promised a series of provisions that would have ensured their autonomy. However these announcements still remain just promises...

[3] These are presented accordingly as to each team in the sequel.

[4] Worksheet (WS) 1: Mapping the evolution of the state of Charlemagne and his successors (the ideological projection to the present), WS 2: Depictions of Charlemagne to contemporaneous coins and posterior medals (the ideological connotations), WS 3: The Christianization of the Saxons and the canonization of Charlemagne (political instrumentalization of religion), WS 4: The coronation of Charlemagne by the Pope (relationship between ecclesiastical and political power) and WS 5: Artistic depictions of Charlemagne and public monuments of him (ideological connotations).

[5] Students with a problematic stance in the sociogram, predicted also by the class-teacher, as concerns cooperation with other students, evidently did show the respective signs: 3 out of 5 were acting in a destructive manner within their group, evidently promoting a lower group-performance. The other 2 kept a low profile, not

intervening in the procedures of their “group of collaboration”. Students that were characterized as ‘above average’, in 2 out of 3 cases were silenced during the group-work, while the other one didn’t manage to be heard by the “group of collaboration”. These drawbacks were considered as stemming out of the usual attitude of a ‘good’ pupil. ‘Average’ students performed rather well, or at least as expected. ‘Below average’ students didn’t seem to take advantage of the group-work, but this should be considered along with the new technique of assignment they were faced with. The team proposed that the “open-ended problem” and “problem-solving” -approach may be considered as a possible method for further elaboration.

[6] In 2 out of 6 “groups of collaboration”, students that didn’t cope well with their group in the 1st assignment were motivators for better cooperation this time. This means they grasped the “criticism” provided by the descriptive assessment and used it to their benefit. In one of the groups, students that failed to be initiated in the 1st assignment showed significant improvement in the 1st and 2nd criteria in the second assignment.

[7] It was predicted that students would find it easier to deal with criteria of a “social” character. This was falsificated by the facts, taking into account the vast majority of the students.

[8] In the team of Languages courses collaborated two teachers: a teacher of Ancient Greek and a teacher of French. This cooperation, although it seems to be mismatched, is justified by the way of teaching Ancient Greek in the Experimental School. The teacher of Ancient Greek -team member- teaches this subject by adopting techniques used in teaching foreign language. Precisely, she uses worksheets based on skills, “Reading Comprehension and Listening”. Having this in mind, teachers decided to cooperate, specifically to the teaching of a grammatical phenomenon, a procedure common to both courses.

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Alexandra Kollontai and Inessa Armand: How socialist feminism may empower critical education

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Abstract

This paper links the question of women's oppression with issues of education and child caring expanding on the work of the soviet revolutionaries Alexandra Kollontai and Inessa Armand.

Kollontai and Armand both joined the Bolshevik Party after 1915 and became leading figures in the socialist women's movement. Their views have been debated extensively inside and outside the feminist movement nowadays.

Keywords: feminism, education, Alexandra Kollontai, Inessa Armand, Russia, Soviet Union

Alexandra Kollontai, Inessa Armand: Biographical details

Alexandra Kollontai, one of the most important Bolsheviks, was born in St. Petersburg, Russia, on March 31, 1872, into a wealthy family of Ukrainian, Russian and Finnish background, was raised in both Russia and Finland, and acquired an early fluency in languages which not only served the revolutionary movement well, but later led to a career in the Soviet diplomatic service.

Kollontai began her political work in 1894, when she was a young mother, by teaching evening classes for workers in St. Petersburg. Through this activity she was drawn into both public and clandestine work with the Political Red Cross, an organization set up to help political prisoners.

In 1896, Kollontai saw the open face of capitalist industry for the first time when she visited a big textile factory where her engineer husband was installing a ventilation system. For the rest of her political career, Kollontai retained her connections with the women textile workers of St. Petersburg. By 1898, Kollontai was fully committed to Marxism, and left her husband and child to study in Zurich under the Marxist economist Heinrich Herkner.

In 1900, she became an advisor to the Social Democratic Labor Party (RSDLP), specially on the “Finnish Question”, and in 1908, she was forced into exile when a warrant for her arrest was issued for advocating the right of Finland to armed revolt against the Tsarist regime; Kollontai, like many Russian socialists, was neutral in the Bolshevik-Menshevik split of 1903. In 1904, she joined the Bolshevik faction and conducted classes on Marxism for it. In 1905, she joined with Leon Trotsky in pressing for a more positive attitude towards the newly-emerged Soviets and in pressing for unity of the party factions.

From 1905 on through 1908, Kollontai led the campaign to organize the women workers of Russia to fight for their own interests, against the employers, against bourgeois feminism, and where necessary against the conservatism and male chauvinism of the socialist organizations.

At the end of 1908, after spending three months evading arrest, Kollontai was finally forced to flee into exile. From then until 1917, she remained outside Russia, although many of her works were published there. In early 1911, she taught at a socialist school organized by Maxim Gorky in Italy.

In 1914 she organized in Germany and Austria against the coming war, and was arrested and imprisoned after it broke out. Released, she moved to Scandinavia and established contact with V. I. Lenin.

She returned to Russia after the February Revolution of 1917 and she was elected a member of the executive committee of the Petrograd Soviet (to which she had been elected as a delegate from an army unit). For the rest of 1917, Kollontai was a constant agitator for revolution in Russia as a speaker, leaflet writer and worker on the Bolshevik women's paper *Rabotnitsa* (*Working Woman*). During this period she joined other women activists in pressing the Bolsheviks and the trade unions for more attention to organizing women workers.

At the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets, she was elected Commissar of Social Welfare in the new Soviet government and played a key role in organizing the First All-Russian Congress of Working and Peasant Women (November 1918).

Throughout 1919, she was an activist in the newly-formed Women's Section of the Communist Party (the *zhenskii otdel*, or "Zhenotdel" for short), which she, Inessa Armand and Nadezhda Krupskaya had played major roles in founding.

In 1922, Kollontai was appointed as advisor to the Soviet legation in Norway. From then until her retirement for health reasons in 1945, Kollontai was effectively in exile

as a diplomat, and her views on the status of women were marginalized and trivialized in the USSR itself. From 1946 until her death in 1952, she was an advisor to the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs [1].

Another important Bolshevik woman, Inessa Armand was born in Paris in 1874. After her parents' death, as an orphaned niece of a French governess working in Russia, Inessa was brought up in the family of her aunt's employer, trained as a home teacher and married one of the sons of this family, a rich textile manufacturer. Even after Inessa had left him, Alexander Armand continued to give her generous financial support, which enabled her to devote her time and energy to work for the causes she embraced - eventually Bolshevism.

Inessa spent the first years of her marriage in an estate near Moscow in the early 1890s doing good deeds among the local peasantry, while bringing up her children. She opened a local school for peasant children and interested herself in a philanthropic Society for Improving the Lot of Women, which was active in 'rehabilitating' prostitutes in Moscow, and this helped her to gain knowledge of the life of the urban poor. Through her brother-in-law (who became her second husband), a radically-minded university student, she was introduced to Marxism, and in her thirtieth year she became a Bolshevik.

Being well off, she was able to help Lenin's faction in many ways. Lenin appreciated Inessa's qualities, and he made the most of them. She was given the task of organising the Bolsheviks' party school at Lonumeau in 1911, and was the only woman lecturer there, fluent in French and English, she functioned often as interpreter with non-Russian Socialists. The Bolshevik leader came to rely on her help in many situations. Armand had been especially interested from early on in the need for political activity among working women, and for the workers' party to pay attention to 'the woman question' generally. Like others who held this view, she came up against not merely indifference but actual opposition from comrades who thought they spotted the cloven hoof of 'bourgeois feminism' in any particular concern with women's problems distinct from the common problems of the working class. Inessa was largely responsible for getting the party to consent to the publication in 1914 of a newspaper, *Rabotnitsa* (Working Women), together with Kollontai, devoted to the interests and demands of women workers.

After October 1917, she pressed for a national congress of working women. From this congress there emerged in 1919 the *Zhenotdel*, a special 'women's commission' of

the party's Central Committee (to be abolished in 1930). The spring of 1920 saw the appearance, again on Inessa's initiative, of the journal *Kommunistka*, which dealt with 'the broader aspects of female emancipation and the need to alter the relationship between the sexes if lasting change was to be effected'. But the fifth number of this journal carried its founder's obituary. Worn out by overwork and weakened by lack of food and warmth, she had died of cholera [2].

The "Woman Question" in Russia and the work on feminism movement

As we mentioned above, Alexandra Kollontai and Inessa Armand became leading figures in the socialist women's movement and they had worked on multiple levels not only as agitators and organizers but also as theorists, and they wrote a lot of articles, books and pamphlets [3].

The relationship of social democratic parties to the working masses, in terms of leadership and direction, has been an extensively debated question since the split between Bolsheviks and Mensheviks in 1903, and even before. However, the problem of the Russian party's relationship to working women specifically has received much less discussion. This was partly because most Bolsheviks themselves felt that directing particular attention to one segment of the working class would create unnecessary division within it. Until 1917, the Bolsheviks firmly opposed any form of separate organization of women. Believing that revolution was necessary before anyone, including women, could achieve genuine liberation, they called women workers to fight for socialism 'hand in hand with men'. Prior to 1913, they did not even print literature dealing specifically with women [4].

The turning point in Bolshevik's politics about women was in 1914, when the *Rabotnitsa* (Working Woman), a newspaper for working women begun to be published. In the Editorial Board we find the names of Armand, Krupskaya e.t.c. (*Rabotnitsa* had as main goals: maternity insurance, female labour, child-care centres, electoral rights for women, the problem of working women and the family etc.) [5]. The second step was the establishment of a women's commission of the Petrograd Committee, in 1917, and the third was the establishment of a separate women's section of the Communist Party, in 1920 (Zhenotdely) [6].

Kollontai played a major role in forcing the Russian socialist movement to organize special work among women and in organizing mass movements of working-class women and peasants, and was the author of much of the social legislation of the early Soviet republic.

Kollontai, unlike the bourgeois and social democratic feminists in Russia and the whole Europe, believed that women's emancipation could be achieved only when society's mindset regarding marriage and family changed. She recognized that changes in the attitudes of men and women required more time than the economic restructuring of society. Her socialist solution to woman's subjugation was the eventual dissolution of marriage and the family [7]. According to Kollontai, the individual small family, historically, was related to bourgeois society. But in the last century, when women became laborers, the family lost this character, making always bigger the woman's and children situation, which grow up without any care [8].

For Kollontai, the tasks and responsibilities of the individual family would be transferred to a collective and communal society. Inequality would naturally be eliminated and the need for community fulfilled. Individuals would belong to the community as a whole but never to each other [9].

Kollontai's plan included the communal raising of children. She considered it the responsibility of the working community to create conditions that were safe for pregnant women. Once the child was born, it became the responsibility of all the members of the community to care for and educate it.

Kollontai's work is significant because she applied Marxism to areas outside labour and production. After the October Revolution, Armand expanded on Kollontai's theory of the psychological oppression of women. Armand wrote that one step towards liberating women was education. The majority of Russian women were illiterate and lacked practical skills and political knowledge. In addition, women learned from birth – through their fathers, brothers, and eventually husbands – that they were subordinate to men. Armand believed that educating the backward masses would attack woman's oppression at its roots.

Critical Education

It is the task of this paper to elaborate further on Kollontai's and Armand's views and infuse them in the emerging Critical Education movement. If we define revolutionary critical education as a program to transform education for the benefit of the working class and deprived social groups, which will assist educators to understand and fight against the education mechanisms who maintain and preserve the repression of the lower social classes [10], the work of Kollontai and Armand is very valuable.

Their main proposal could be divided into two periods, before the Revolution and after 1917, until 1930.

Before the Revolution, they tried to educate the workers, especially women, which were more illiterate. So, they organized schools for adults, working and peasant women. In addition, except for establishing these schools, they paid attention to non-formal education, publishing newspapers, as mentioned, books and pamphlets.

After the Revolution, when Kollontai became Commissar of Social Welfare and the New Family legislation had been established, the Bolsheviks tried to resolve the contradiction between work and family. So, household labour had to be transferred to the public sphere [11]. The revolution made an effort to destroy the so-called “family hearth” – that archaic, stuffy and stagnant institution in which the woman of the toiling classes performs galley labor from childhood to death. The place of the family as a shut-in petty enterprise was to be replaced, according to the plans, by a finished system of social care and accommodation: maternity houses, creches, kindergartens, schools, social dining rooms, social laundries, first-aid stations, hospitals, sanatoria, athletic organizations, moving-picture theaters, etc. The complete absorption of the housekeeping functions of the family by institutions of the socialist society, uniting all generations in solidarity and mutual aid, was to bring to woman, and thereby to the loving couple, a real liberation from the thousand-year-old fetters.

In our opinion, this is a crucial point for revolutionary critical education: the goal of a comprehensive care and education of children, not only in the family but in organized social base.

Although after the 1930s, old Bolsheviks disappeared from the history books and the party, during the last decades, scholars of the Russian women’s movement (especially Western) study again the prerevolutionary soviet feminists and their plans for equality, like Armand, Kollontai, Krupskaya, Stassova, Slutskaya, etc. [12]. Although the Stalinist authority denounced the revolutionary ideas of 1920 as “petty bourgeois anarchist propaganda”[13] and all the revolutionary structures were abolished [14], today, Revolutionary Critical Education has to study the work of the Soviet feminists again, in addition to the work of Western Marxists.

FIGURES



Alexandra Kollontai



Alexandra Kollontai (center) with delegates to the second International Conference of Women Communists, 1921



Inessa Armand



Police photograph of Inessa Armand, 1907

Notes

- [1] Biography by Tom Condit in <https://www.marxists.org/archive/kollonta/into.htm>
- [2] For more details, see B.C. Elwood, *Inessa Armand: Revolutionary and Feminist*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1992.

- [3] See for Kollontai <http://www.marxists.org/archive/kollonta/1927/fighters.htm> and for Armand B.C. Elwood, op.cit.
- [4] Anne Bobroff, “The Bolsheviks and Working Women, 1905-20”, *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 4, Oct. 1974), p. 540.
- [5] Anne Bobroff, “The Bolsheviks and Working Women, 1905-20”, op. cit. p. 546.
- [6] Anne Bobroff, “The Bolsheviks and Working Women, 1905-20”, op. cit. p. 541.
- [7] Αλεξάνδρα Κολλοντάι, *Οικονομική και σεξουαλική απελευθέρωση της γυναίκας*, [8] Αλεξάνδρα Κολλοντάι, *Οικονομική και σεξουαλική απελευθέρωση της γυναίκας*, op. cit., pp. 11-33.
- [9] Alexandra Kollontai, “Working woman and mother”, in *Selected Writings Of Alexandra Kollontai*, transl. Alix Holt, Allison and Busby, London 1978, pp. 127-139.
- [10] Κώστας Σκορδούλης, «Πρόλογος», στο Peter McLaren, Ramin Farahmandpur, *Για μια παιδαγωγική της εκπαίδευσης*, Τόπος, Αθήνα 2013, pp. 11-15.
- [11] Wendy Z. Goldman, *Women, the State and Revolution. Soviet family policy and social life, 1917-1936*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1993, pp. 1-3.
- [12] Alexandra Kollontai, “Women Fighters in the Days of the Great October Revolution”, *Zhensky zhurnal (The Women’s Journal)*, no 11, November 1927, pp. 2-3 (<http://www.marxists.org/archive/kollonta/1927/fighters.htm>)
- [13] Wendy Z. Goldman, *Women, the State and Revolution*. op. cit., p. 3.
- [14] Leon Trotsky, *The Revolution betrayed*, Courier Dover Publications, 1937, passim

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Critical science education and its pedagogical practice

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Abstract

The current global crisis in society, economy and politics is implicitly affecting Science Education pointing towards a redefinition of its role vis-à-vis the neoliberal, neoconservative and technocratic offensive.

Derek Hodson (1999, 2004, 2010) has stressed the necessity for a renewed Science Education beyond the STS paradigm, oriented towards sociopolitical action and Angela Calabrese-Barton has underlined the value of a democratic Science Education promoting social justice (Barton, 2003; Barton and Upadhyay, 2010; Basu and Barton, 2010).

In this paper, Critical Science Education is presented as an alternative pedagogical approach which favours the participation of ethnic, racial and religious minorities in the scientific endeavour while at the same time promotes a stance against racism, discrimination and generally every form of oppression. It is furthermore interdisciplinary and transformative, in the sense that it pursues not only the empowerment of the student but the radical transformation of the social relations as well.

Critical Science Education aligns with the STS and STSE (Science-Technology-Society-Environment) traditions but goes further into incorporating the experiences of the radical teacher's movement and the pioneering attempts for radical science pedagogy (Skordoulis, 2009). For Critical Science Education the role of the teacher is crucial, considering the latter as a "transformative intellectual" and a public, critical thinker rather than just a transmitter of scientific knowledge.

Finally, this paper discusses the various approaches to Critical Science Education, focusing on their theoretical background as well as on their foundational and core attributes. It also provides an overview of some of the global endeavours inside and outside classroom which aim towards the infusion of criticality in Science Education.

Keywords: Science Education, Critical Science Education, Critical Pedagogy.

A. The Present Status of Science Education

A.1. Science Curricula and Nature of Science

Most science curricula today tend to aim towards the supply of the next generation of scientists. That means that science education does not refer to a meaningful education in science but it is actually a form of pre-professional training (Osborne and Dillon, 2008). Also, critical thinking about scientific knowledge is not usually developed, but contrariwise, an emphasis on the content of science appears in the majority of the curricula. Due to the above factors, most of the school students find science alienating and not connected to their interests.

Science in schools usually appears without context, objective, mechanistic and overly rational. For Shan (1997), science appears as pure, neutral, value-free and reliable, therefore it becomes really powerful. This image undoubtedly contradicts with the value-laden, political, economical, social and cultural context (Shan, 1997: 167). Also, science emphasizes content and preparation for national and international comparative exams and, therefore, students do not, in their science programmes, become involved within their community (Tal and Kedmi, 2006). In addition to this, the image of a common scientist both in the students' minds and in the school's textbooks is that of a white and western man and, moreover, science is viewed from a Eurocentric, white and male perspective (Osborne and Barton, 1998). We usually perceive that science consists of stable facts and theories existing "out there". Conversely, feminist and post-structural theories advocate that science is partial and biased (Osborne and Barton, 1998). According to the latter authors, in a science classroom the students typically face two types of oppression: the first one is oppression against the alternative opinion (knowledge is acceptable only in prescribed ways) and the second is that a student feels oppressed and inferior if his/her experiences do not align with the "objective" truths of science. Shan (1997: 171) states that bias is communicated to students in three ways, namely by giving an ethnocentric view of science, by not encouraging a critical appraisal of world events and by a lack of awareness of the existence of a hidden curriculum¹.

A.2. Cultural Capital, Minorities and Inequalities

The existence of an apparent contradiction and conflict between the cultures of some students and the culture of the school is a really common phenomenon. The inequalities that students have to confront become apparent in urban science settings

(Barton and Berchini, 2013). That happens because of the fact that school and the stereotypical school curriculum typically reflect the values and the experiences of the middle class and ignore the struggles and the experiences of many other students (Osborne and Barton, 1998).

Bourdieu argued that the culture transmitted by school confirms and legitimizes the culture of the ruling and powerful class and ignores and underestimates the cultures of other groups (Hill, 2009). This formed for him the cultural capital (Alexakos, 2007). Bourdieu stated that we all have cultural capital, but it is that of the middle class that is valued. Hence, that of the working class that is commonly devalued. The cultural capital therefore favours the cultural reproduction and works to disadvantage working-class students. For him, the cultural capital that students themselves bring with them affects learning in school. Consequently, the latter is in some cases slowed down and in others supported (Alexakos, 2007). For Bourdieu, this cultural reproduction is formed through the formal and hidden curriculum but also through the private schools which are, overwhelmingly, affordable only for middle and upper-class students (Hill, 2009).

With regard to science, many students (especially those of a low-income background) face consequently difficulties in understanding the scientific language or, even worse, they are marginalized from access to school science education or discouraged from pursuing a future career in physics (Barton, 2001b; Barton and Osborne, 2001; Barton, 2009; Hill, 2009; Basu and Barton, 2010). Consequently it is observable that there is low achievement in school science, negative attitudes towards science and a low number of women and people of colour who choose to pursue studies or professions related to science, maybe because of the fact that physics is usually held for a future use of the older, white, high-income, male high-school students with a prior success in school physics (Barton and Yang, 2000; Barton, 2001b; 2009). Barton (2001b: 904) stresses that there are many inequalities in science education and that these inequalities are related to four areas: academic achievement, resources, schooling practices, and the culture of schooling. Specifically, according to several studies, students of a low socio-economic background perform worse than the others in science. Also, these students have limited access to resources that could support a high level of science teaching (e.g. the Internet, certified science teachers etc.). Concerning school practices, poor students are usually tracked into low-level classes.

Finally, as we have stressed before, the culture of schooling is usually compatible only with the home-culture of middle-class students.

According to the ROSE project², there is a decline of students' attitudes towards science in most of the European countries (Osborne and Dillon, 2008). The findings of the same study also pointed that the more advanced a country was, the less the students were interested in the study of science. Another study (Third Mathematics and Science Study, TIMSS), conducted in 1999, showed that the higher the average student achievement, the more negative was their attitude towards science. One possible interpretation of these findings could be that this phenomenon transcends science education itself and that it is highly linked to issues concerning culture and status. Learning science presupposes values such as application, discipline and enjoyment, which seem to be neglected by contemporary culture. In addition, the immediate relevance of the subject may not be clear to students (Osborne and Dillon, 2008).

Girls are less interested in school science and only a minority of them chooses careers which are related to science. This could be interpreted if we take into account factors such as parental aspirations, self confidence in science, the quality of the teaching, and sense of identity, which, for most students is strongly gender related (Osborne and Dillon, 2008). Osborne and Barton (1998), embracing a feminist perspective, state that the social identities of the girls come into conflict with other identities which are promoted in a science class, and this consequently leads to a low participation in science.

A.3. Science, Power and Status

It is obvious that the values of the powerful class are reflected in society and therefore in education, too. That means that the culture of power seems to be dominant both in the curricula of the different disciplines and in the teaching process. According to Cole (1997), schools are arenas where young people are provided with only the dominant ways of interpreting the world. Shan (1997) states that science is also used to justify inequalities as well as to legitimate the social, racial, gender, sexual and other differences.

Concretely, in a science classroom, Science, Power and Status are highly associated with each other (Osborne and Barton, 1998). As McLaren, when interviewed by Barton, similarly advocates (Barton, 2001a), capitalism, science, research and education serve each other intimately. That means that there is an economic control

by the elite classes in schools and that science aims for profit rather than the betterment of the global condition. The scientists work on topics that, to some extent do reflect the interests, motivations and aspirations both of the scientists and of those who fund them. So, we could say that scientific knowledge and science education are far from being value-free, still on the contrary they are carried out for a concrete purpose, that is supposed to be good (Reiss, 2003). Scientific literacy promotes economic growth at the expense of the poor and the marginalized (Barton and Upadhyay, 2010) and, this way, science education has become a subsector of the economy, a zone of free capital investment (Barton, 2001a). McLaren also underlines the necessity for an understanding of the ways that capitalism has formed practices in both science and education. Otherwise, we will not be able to bring about a socially just and equitable society through our science education efforts (Barton and Tobin, 2001).

A.4. Assessment practices

Curriculum, pedagogy and assessment are the three aspects which frame any learning experience (Osborne and Dillon, 2008). In recent decades, tests which require recall of information are used as the main source for the assessment of the students' knowledge. Criticality and scientific literacy skills are normally not explored, as the test-driven pedagogy dominates and restricts the teacher's choices and initiatives. Taking these into account, assessment should be given more attention and governments should support further research in this field.

The use and misuse of high-stakes tests are a controversial topic in public education, especially in the United States where they have recently become especially popular. No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is an act that was passed into law in 2002. According to this, all students must be tested in grades 3-8 and once in high school, in reading and maths, with future provisions that students will be tested at least once at the elementary, middle, and high school levels in science. Student test scores are publicly reported and this assessment system has many negative outcomes. For instance, Hill (1997) states that this has led to the creation of a "league table" of school performance. State authorities use those scores to hold districts, schools, administrators, teachers, and students "accountable" for increases in those scores (Au, 2010). The system of high-stakes testing therefore controls the content and the form of the knowledge being taught, as well as the pedagogy in classroom practice. Teachers are forced to follow the requirements of the tests and thus, any innovative

characteristic is squeezed out of the teaching practice. Also, this system develops vertical hierarchies in education and forms an anti-democratic curriculum, in which there is no space, or very little space, for diversity, deliberation, democratic thinking and experiences of the students. The latter are reduced to a test score and context disappears so that the students can be compared according to a universal and single standard (Au, 2010). Marker (2003) stresses that these tests lead to a racist, one-size-fits-all approach to education that is designed to present a singular and simplistic view of knowledge, truth, and learning that ignores the diverse needs of the marginalized and therefore reinforces inequalities of gender and class.

A.5. An Alternative Approach for Science Education

The above aspects and observations make the requirement for a renewed science education urgent. Science is indeed a very powerful subject and can address inequalities (Shan, 1997). Accordingly, special attention should be given to the goals of the science curricula, as the latter determine the nature of school science. These new curricula should address the needs of all minorities, enhance the students' skills to think critically as well as aim towards future citizens which will be scientifically literate. Furthermore, teacher practices and pedagogical strategies should be improved and developed, with the purpose of a higher student engagement. Assessment is also an issue that has to be examined and changed, so that it could explore the skills, knowledge and competencies expected of a scientifically literate citizen (Osborne and Dillon, 2008: 24). However limited the spaces are within every educational setting, we can always find some spaces to question and to encourage the children / students to do this (Canaan, Hill and Maisuria, 2013). Finally, the role of the teacher should be transformed too. The latter should be always up-to-date and capable of assisting the students to develop their critical thinking and other higher-order skills. Also, every teacher should consider the implications of using science for promoting a better understanding of how inequality and injustice is a constructed phenomenon (Shan, 1997).

In the next chapters, Critical Science Education is presented as an effective alternative approach. Its theoretical background and a number of attempts for the incorporation of the criticality within the teaching of science are articulated below. Among the leading figures stands Derek Hodson who stressed the necessity for a renewed Science Education beyond the STS paradigm, oriented towards socio-political action

as well as Angela Calabrese-Barton who has underlined the value of a democratic Science Education promoting social justice.

B. Critical Science Education

B.1. From Critical Pedagogy to Critical Education

Moving towards a Critical Pedagogy and therefore towards a different approach to knowledge has apparent implications for those who think of education in the broadest sense, but mainly for those who find themselves in classrooms on a daily basis (Kincheloe, 2008). Critical Pedagogy has more or less influenced all the disciplines and thus, Science too.

Critical Science Education is presented as an alternative pedagogical approach which favours the participation of ethnic, racial and religious minorities in the scientific endeavour while at the same time promotes a stance against racism, discrimination and generally every form of oppression. A theoretical background of Critical Science Education and some efforts to incorporate the critical dimension into Science are presented in the next chapters.

B.2. Theoretical Background

B.2.1. Recent Reforms, Scientific Literacy, STS(E) and SSI

Reforms such as American Association for the Advancement of Science (1989), National Research Council (1996) or Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (1999) in many western countries (the first two in USA and the third in England, Wales and Northern Ireland) have been occupied with observations regarding inequalities in Science Education and therefore have tried to accomplish the tenet “Science for All”. According to this, all students must attain some level of Scientific Literacy (Barton and Osborne, 2001; Zembylas, 2005; Weinstein, 2009).

The concept of Scientific Literacy is linked to science for usefulness, for citizenship, technology and society (STS) (Weinstein, 2009). It means also the vehicle which helps tomorrow’s adults to understand scientific issues (Gräber and Bolte, 1997 in Reiss, 2003). For Tal and Kedmi (2006), Scientific Literacy means practicing science in an everyday context as part of community life.

Nevertheless, these efforts do not ask the primary curriculum questions such as “Whose knowledge do we teach?” or “What is the purpose of that knowledge?” and thus fail to produce scientifically literate citizens (Barton and Osborne, 2001; Roth and Lee, 2004). In addition to this, literacy has not been widely connected to the

political, social and economical forces and has failed to address significant cultural aspects (Wallowitz, Freitas, Hogan and Linne, 2011). Also, it seems to be ignored that students are different in many aspects (their family background, their interests, their ability, their behaviour) and that we do not refer only to the privileged ones (Reiss, 2003; Zembylas, 2005; Weinstein, 2009). Is it really possible for us to envision the construction of a science for all, if we consider all of these differences? The pursuit of scientific literacy promoted by recent national agendas and reforms does little to align with the diverse audiences, many of whom have been in the margins of science in traditional approaches (Roth and Lee, 2004).

Derek Hodson, professor with 40 years experience in science education in UK and Canada, advocates that the recent STSE (Science, Technology, Society and Environment) education and SSI (the confrontation of Socio-Scientific Issues) are proved to be inadequate to meet the needs of the contemporary life (Hodson, 2010). In addition to this he underlines that SSI has obviously a broader scope. Hodson proposes a much more politicized SSI-oriented approach, which emphasizes social critique, values and socio-political action. For Tal and Kedmi (2006), science education should become a part of the society as well as engage both students and community members in activities which are meaningful to their lives.

Generally, science today should aim towards the development of an understanding of the basic science's explanatory themes and contribute to the students' ability to engage critically with science in their future lives (Osborne and Dillon, 2008).

B.2.2. Critical Education and Political Choices

Teaching, Education and therefore Science Education are clearly a matter of policy, a political choice. The central question is who decides what is worth teaching and knowing (Aikenhead, 2008). Science Education is dynamic and always a field of struggle (Weinstein, 1997). This reality makes it obvious that we have to reconsider the way we teach science, the content of that science and its relationship with the students' lives and experiences (Osborne and Barton, 1998; Barton and Yang, 2000). We also envision that in a classroom like that all the voices could be heard and all the values and experiences would be noted. But, how could a teacher make his / her teaching critical?

Critical education goes further than traditional education. It integrates in the curricula of the various disciplines and in other educational activities the principles of feminism, anti-racism, anti-colonialism as well as egalitarian principles relating to

social class. It also aims to educate students and educators about critical analysis and to facilitate them to engage in social activism and citizenship (Barton and Upadhyay, 2010; Skordoulis and Hill, 2012).

B.2.3. Theoretical Traditions

Critical Science emerged between the decades 1980 and 1990 and defined science as a social and cultural practice. It drew from Critical Pedagogy and many theoretical traditions, such as the critical, the feminist, the multicultural and the post structural as well as from the recent reforms which were mentioned above. Beside their differences, all these traditions raise questions of power, knowledge, production in science and schools. Also, their common goal is the construction of a more inclusive science education (Barton and Osborne, 2001; Fusco and Barton, 2001). Critical Science Education aligns with the STS and STSE (Science-Technology-Society-Environment) traditions. Specifically, STS movement advocates the integration of Science, Technology, Environment and Society in the science curricula, and is oriented towards social action and activism (Tal and Kedmi, 2006). More recently, a call for the replacement of STS from SSI (Socio-scientific Issues) emerged. The SSI approach engages deeply the students into controversial and ethical issues. Critical Science Education also relies on certain notions of Vygotsky, such as the apprenticeship, the scaffolding, the zone of proximal development and generally his activity theory³ (Hodson, 1999). Finally, it interacts with the social movements and incorporates their experiences into the classroom.

B.2.4. Main Characteristics of Critical Science Education

-The Nature of Science and Knowledge

Critical Science stems from Critical Theory and it refers to the process (while Critical Theory refers to the outcome and Critical Pedagogy refers to both). It takes nothing for granted and tries to comprehend the causes of the problems rather than deal with the symptoms (McGregor, 2003).

As far as scientific knowledge is concerned, for Critical Science Education it is a human made explanation of how the world works, therefore it is quite subjective although rigorous. Moreover, scientific concepts are culturally based explanations of the phenomena of the nature and science itself is a social activity (Fusco and Barton, 2001). In other words, it means that science can never be seen separately from individual or societal history and that scientific knowledge is a conflictual and lively cultural field that is constructed through social acts (Barton and Osborne, 2001;

Weinstein, 1997). For Basu and Barton (2009), knowing is something more than knowledge itself. More specifically, it goes beyond the individual, as it includes the skill of working in a community and this determined movement aims at making a difference. Learning is an agency for Critical Education and its impacts have to be authentic, feasible and attractive. Finally, the discussion focuses not only on the content of science but also (and most importantly) on “the how” of science learning (Barton and Tobin, 2001; Fusco and Barton, 2001).

-The Intersection between Science and Society

The above characteristics of scientific knowledge mean that, for Critical Science Education, science is highly connected to larger societal issues. Scientific concepts are the outcome of the confrontation of societal and real life problems and science itself has a great ethical responsibility for the knowledge it produces (Barton and Osborne, 2001; Fusco and Barton, 2001). For Critical Education, the process of knowing intersects with the process of doing and being in the world (Basu and Barton, 2009).

For Critical Science Education, Science is about understanding and critiquing the world and its power imbalances as well as challenging the existing social conditions. Most importantly, for Critical Science Education the teaching and the learning processes must become simultaneously pedagogical and political (Osborne and Barton, 1998). In other words, science critiques the larger societal structures that sustain power and dominance and it is necessary, especially for children and youth in poor urban settings (Barton, 2001a). Its basic tenet is that people need to think about the betterment of their living conditions and not to compromise with the inequalities of the reality (McGregor, 2003). Science must also be linked to an understanding of power, inequality and critique and the students, together with the teachers, must be prepared for collective agency (Osborne and Barton, 1998).

The concept of critical gives a political view to Science Education, as it focuses on the facilitation for youth to look critically at society and the values that sustain it (Hodson, 2004). In other words, science is situated within large social values and global ecosystems and therefore must be analyzed critically. Furthermore, emphasis must be given to the social, cultural and historical frameworks that determine and define science (Barton, 2001a; Barton and Osborne, 2001). At this historical point, where the most decisions are taken with the use of the science, it is a matter of

Democracy for Science Education to create citizens that will be able to think critically (Skordoulis, 2009).

-Transformation, Action and Discursive Practices

For Critical Science Education, the teaching and learning of science ought to contain not only access to the world but also action, change and generally interaction with it (Fusco and Barton, 2001; Hill, 2009a; Barton and Upadhyay, 2010). Also, it should include discursive strategies and strategies for participation. In the context of Critical Science Education, the learners should be viewed not only as users but also producers of science (Fusco and Barton, 2001). In other words, a Critical Science Education classroom must be an environment within which flourish discourse practices of critical inquiry (Bayne, 2009; Hill, 2009b). Also, there must be frequent conversations about power and authority (Barton, 2001a).

In such a context, the role of the teacher should be totally altered. Specifically, the teacher ought to be a public, critical thinker and a transformative intellectual rather than just a transmitter of the scientific knowledge or a manager of day-to-day activities in school (Giroux, 1988; Fusco and Barton, 2001; Hill, 2005, 2007). This type of educator doesn't teach the students what to think, but how to think dialectically and evaluate critically, developing critical awareness and aiming at social transformation (Hill, 2003; McLaren and Farahmandpur, 2013). Thus, a teacher should not be a technician who delivers someone else's de-theorized and de-skilled curriculum but contrariwise he / she should educate students to be thoughtful and active citizens (Giroux, 1988; Hill, 2009). For Buxton (2010: 5), the teacher should be a critical friend who mentors, models and inquires along with the students into questions of equity and social justice. In such a framework, teaching is not technical or instrumental, but conversely, it turns into an intellectual procedure (Giroux, 1988). Teachers, teacher educators and student teachers must engage in self-criticism as well as understand their possible role in changing society (Hill, 2006, 2007). As suggested by Kincheloe (Bayne, 2009), teachers must be critical researchers and scholars and Critical Science Education must therefore begin with the education of the teachers so that the latter will be capable of implementing alternative cultural orientations (Skordoulis, 2009).

For Zembylas (2005), it is required that there are learning activities which focus on the diversity of the students' interests and goals, as well as on the social and political context of science. All of these are targeted at the empowerment of the learners so that

they will be able to engage in science. Hodson (1999) suggests a radical form of multicultural Science Education for Socio-political Action that is based on antiracist education and Vygotskian notions. A critical approach to teaching science challenges students, teachers and researchers to question what counts as science and how the scientific process is enacted (Barton, 2001a). Furthermore, students must be able to act and think critically and to use this critical knowledge for the empowerment of their own lives and for social transformation, namely for a more just world (Barton, Ermer, Burkett, and Osborne, 2003; Gibert, 2006). Critical Science education urges both teachers and students be critical, reflective and robust in argument (Hodson, 2010). It must also be a science education that does not emphasize corporate values at the expense of human dignity and social justice (Barton, 2001a).

For Zembylas (2005), Science Education has two different visions: the egalitarian perspective (science education for citizenship) and the critical perspective (science education for social justice). The first perspective has as ultimate goal to educate students so that they will act as responsible citizens when confronted with socioscientific issues and the second has as ultimate goal to connect the teaching of science with the social justice. Critical Science Education is more relevant with the latter perspective. According to Moje (2007), teaching science for social justice differs fundamentally from socially just science, because the former not only provides the learners with access to scientific knowledge and practices or with a chance to succeed on society's terms, but also offers several opportunities to the students to challenge, dispute and possibly reconstruct the knowledge. Teaching and learning of critical science has to contribute to a socially just world, at both the personal and the community level (Barton and Upadhyay, 2010). In similar terms (Reiss, 2003), Science Education must aim not only to scientific literacy of the students but also to social justice, to fairness and to the human concerns.

In conclusion, scientific practice is composed historically, culturally and ethically and Science Education should therefore take into account social, political and ethical values and stances (Skordoulis, 2009).

-Performance Assessment

Critical Science Education considers the process of assessment in a totally different way. Assessment is socially constructed, a performance showing what the learner can do and not a standardized test or a recall of information from the student's memory. It is also based on cooperation and it takes full advantage of the problem solving

process. An assessment like this, both checks the enactment of the critical, as well as values the performance assessment in science. In this context, a performance assessment should address the decisions about what and whose science we teach. Also, this type of assessment emerges in response to social demands and is both a method as well as an ongoing search for a method. This means that we get far away from the traditional linear model where, after the assessment, new material is taught and the process begins again (Fusco and Barton, 2001).

Tal and Kedmi (2006) advocate a type of classroom assessment, which emphasizes original performance tasks and considers learning as a social rather than individual process. These tasks should have more than one possible solution and should take advantage of students' critical skills. It is finally essential to say, that assessment, just like Critical Science Education generally, should take place not only in the classroom, but also outside of it. The aim of the social justice must go through Science Education beyond the classroom (Reiss, 2003), and schools must be highly linked to the communities into which they belong. For an assessment to be just and effective, Critical Education takes into account both the individual and the collective perspective (Basu and Barton, 2009).

B.3. Critical Science Education inside and outside the Classroom

A satisfying number of attempts that have been made in the fields of Critical Science Education are articulated in this chapter. Most of them focus on the ways that a teacher can make his / her teaching in science critical. Another common characteristic of the majority of these critical approaches is that they take into account the cultural knowledge and the lived experiences of the students and also they try to involve the minorities (Osborne and Barton, 1998). That means that these approaches explore the way that ethnicity, class and gender, which are lived and experienced by both the students and the teachers, affect their engagement in science (Barton and Upadhyay, 2010). In the next chapters there is an attempt for a categorization of some of the articles that were studied, according to their major goals and targets.

B.3.1. Developing Critical Agency

Many studies have mainly focused on the development of students' critical skills and agency.

In this context, Basu, Barton, Clairmont and Locke (2009) investigated when and how two high school students (Neil Clairmont and Donya Locke) of the School for Social Change in New York City developed critical science agency in a physics context.

Furthermore, the researchers with these case studies tried to examine what critical science agency means for the students' deeper engagement in physics learning. The findings were encouraging, because it became obvious that when they have the opportunity in the context of physics, youth can create new types of identities that help them to broaden their network resources and spheres of influence (Barton, 2009). Concretely, both students made gains in physics literacy and expressed agency at some level. The term "critical science agency", is meant to describe the use of science with the aim to reshape and impact our lives and our worlds.

Basu and Barton (2010) examined in a qualitative, multi-year investigation which was held in the School for Social Change how six teachers and twenty-one students defined and envisioned democratic science pedagogy in the context of their own classrooms. The main purpose of the study was to explore the set of democratic teaching strategies, from the different perspectives of teachers and students. With separate interviews, focus groups, classrooms observations and the collection of artefacts, the study revealed the basic elements of democratic science pedagogy for these groups. Concretely, students defined and interpreted such a classroom mentioning concepts such as freedom and choice, community and caring, and leadership. On the other hand, teachers mentioned organization and structure, criticality, rigorous content and choice as the basic elements of democratic science pedagogy. From the same study emerged that democratic science pedagogy is linked to the students' engagement and achievement in science and that shared power, expression of the students' voice and opinion as well as critical science agency contribute significantly to a democratic science classroom. Also, it was revealed that teachers can create and implement their own models of democratic pedagogy to fit their students' needs in learning science (Barton and Upadhyay, 2010). Nevertheless, as the authors stress, these claims are not to be generalized about all teachers and students.

The School for Social Change, which was mentioned in the studies above, is a small public school that opened in the Sunnyside Park neighbourhood of New York City in September 2004. The school's mission emphasized student activism and leadership and the empowerment of the students to make social change in the general context of all students' preparation for college. All ninth-grade students at the school enrolled in conceptual physics, and this decision of offering physics to all students early in their

high school life was quite innovative when compared with the majority of the city schools (Basu et al., 2009; Basu and Barton, 2010).

B.3.2. Working in Homeless Shelters

Angela Calabrese Barton argues that we have to understand teaching and researching in poor, urban centres as opportunities to work with youth rather than work on or for youth. Based on her experiences of teaching and researching with homeless youth in urban settings, she advocates critical ethnography as a useful methodological framework within science education circles, as this practice connects the lives of the researchers and the researched and leads to a participatory pedagogy (Barton, 2001b; Barton and Tobin, 2001). For Barton (2001b), participatory research and pedagogy means a move from research on or for towards research with. Some of the studies which have taken place in urban homeless shelters are articulated below.

Barton (2001b), shares the stories of two 4th grade Mexican-American girls (Maria and Claudia) who lived in a homeless shelter in USA. Specifically, the two girls participated in the after school science programme, organized by Barton. From their stories and the conversations with the researcher emerged that their background shaped to a great extent the learning and doing of science. As the girls explained, they found science boring and not connected to their lives. Nevertheless, when science emerged from their interests and abilities, the girls seemed to be more motivated and more positive about science. Claudia, for instance, asked if she could use some of the wood, which was going to be used by her and the rest of her classmates for the construction of planters for the gardens, in order to make her own desk. This decision reflected that she wanted to have her private space to study. The fact that Claudia took with her the desk when she left from the shelter indicates that she used science to alter her environment and enact power over her situation.

A relevant research refers to Miguel, a 26 year old, Puerto Rican, unemployed father of two children who lived with his family in a homeless shelter in New York City (Barton and Yang, 2000). The goal of this study was to reveal the way that the practice of schooling and school science influenced Miguel's experiences and opportunities for success in and out of school. The main concept here is that of "culture of power" that leads to a stratified society and creates several borders for those that do not belong to this culture. According to the authors, the teachers have a great responsibility to find the suitable way of teaching science and they must also take into account the understanding of the Culture of Power that leads to several

missed opportunities for Miguel and other students that happen to be excluded from this culture, thus marginalized.

Fusco and Barton (2001) worked with teens aged 12-16 in a homeless shelter in New York City. The project was about the transformation of an abandoned city area (lot) into a community garden by the teens of the shelter. Forty children at least were involved in the project that lasted 9 months and included role playing, discussion about the possible transformations, presentations of the plans to the local community, video production, weekday get-togethers and many other activities. For the assessment of what the participants learnt about urban environmental science and particularly about the transformation of the lot, the teens made the Book, which contained material artefacts, actual products, visual representations, inquiries and the summary of the activities done. The Book was for the authors a type of a performance assessment and reflected the critical science perspective which aims to action and change. Also, by creating this book, the participants were facilitated to learn more about the values in science, the connection with the society and the cultural changes that potentially took place in their identities because of the project. Although this project was carried out in an out-of school context, the authors underscore that there are multiple ways in which a teacher can implement a critical science education in the classroom that is connected to the students' lives and serves a communal purpose.

B.3.3. Incorporating the Notions of Freire in a Science Classroom

In association with the Freirean concept of a liberatory education, Seiler and Gonsalves (2010) described a two co-teachers' effort to promote a more critical, situated, activist and desocializing science in an African American school in West Philadelphia. This plan included the idea that topics and questions of the 11 African American youth would actually shape the content of the course. That was aiming to the improvement of students' agency and capacity to learn science as well as to the elimination of students' marginalization from science. Four activities are presented in the article. Two of them were originally emerged by students' suggestions, therefore were successful. These activities were about dissections and the construction of a poster about sexually transmitted diseases. On the contrary, the other two activities were seen by the students as irrelevant with their queries, and because of this fact, the teenagers showed less interest in answering questions or accomplishing a task. Besides the fact that mutual constructed science was just partly achieved, the investigation revealed that it is essential that the students' questions, interests and

experiences are incorporated in the teaching process. The importance of structuring the teaching on the students' interests is also depicted in another study, being held in an urban school in Philadelphia (Tobin, 2011). In that framework, when the students were given the opportunity to select the activities, they participated in a higher level than before.

B.3.4. Enacting Science within the Community

Some of the studies have attempted to link the teaching of science to the community and generally the society. For instance, an effort of enacting science within the community in Oceanside is described in Roth and Lee (2004). In the 3-year long research in school science classes, the students participated in activities that were basically oriented to the same goals and in the same context as those of other people in the community. Concretely, three national youth teams worked together for the whole summer to help the HCP (Henderson Creek Project) to improve the watershed and the water quality in the area. The HCP is an environmental group that attempts to transform the attitudes and practices regarding water and the watershed. The area has several problems related to water, such as erosion and water pollution. Parents, activists, aboriginal elders, scientists, graduate students, and other Oceanside residents constituted the relevant community in the context of which the seventh-graders learned. This project proves that school learning actually relates to everyday out-of-school activity.

B.3.5. Teaching Science for Social Justice

Some of the studies were oriented toward teaching science for social justice.

A study with a relevant goal is described in Barton and Upadhyay (2010). Specifically, Barton in 2009 taught the unit of weather at a fifth grade of an urban school, integrating literacy and technology. The students had to collect and analyze with real world proof how young students (K-4) might stay safe from weather events while on the playground that summer. This evidence of the real world should be used for the building of a case, in a digital story format. The final goal would be the students to present their digital stories on a science conference with the K-4 students. After several weeks of classroom activity, the students finally prepared successfully their digital stories and with this process tried to interconnect others with their world. In a totally different geographical context, Spencer Foundation funded a large study that intended to examine the life histories of six teachers who taught science for political empowerment and social change in Lahore, Pakistan (Upadhyay, Barton and

Zahur, 2005). Shagufta is a science teacher in the fifth grade of a charity school which is only open to very poor families. She has to overcome several obstacles, such as female social and cultural limitations, restrictive school authority, familial politics and traditional instructional practices. The social and educational situation in Pakistan as well as the health and environmental issues are described in the same article. Concretely, the students are expected by Pakistani society to leave formal education before the eighth grade and the situation is even worse for girls. For example, Shagufta was trying for a year to persuade their parents to allow her enrolment at the college and also had problems with her community, because of the fact that she was seen as a bad role model for other young girls. Also, there is a plethora of health and environmental concerns in Pakistan that influence Shagufta's beliefs about the type of the science that should be taught in that context. In spite of the curriculum's restrictions, Shagufta perceives that the major aspect of her role is to enable students to gain voice and power in their lives and their communities. She advocates thus a community based science, which means a science that emerges from the students' lives and underlines the importance of teaching about the "usefulness" of the scientific knowledge, an aspect that state does not find crucial. She also realizes that when science is contextual and meaningful to disadvantaged students, the latter get more excited, enthusiastic and eager to participate in the classroom. The story of Shagufta depicts an effort towards the implementation of critical science education, despite the difficulties that a female Pakistani teacher, who decides to promote empowerment and freedom, has to confront.

Another project (Social Problem Solving through Science) engaged middle-school students in the study of local environmental problems which affect human health, like the problems regarding the drinking water. The participants of this project came from a wide range of neighbourhoods in a large coastal city in the South-eastern U.S. (Buxton, 2010).

The goal of the project was to assess the degree to which learning tasks designed to be transformative could also increase students' science knowledge despite that outcome not being a primary focus of instruction. It also focused on how science can serve as a context for thinking about and acting on social problems. The purpose of this study was to design and teach a science curriculum grounded in the idea that adolescents benefit from learning to critically question the world around them and then take action based on those critical questions.

B.3.6. Investigating Different Practices in Classroom

There are several studies that propose different strategies in relevance with critical science approaches in classroom.

Thadani, Cook, Griffis, Wise and Blakey (2010) investigated whether a curriculum-based science intervention could address equity gaps in science teaching practices. Concretely, the researchers examined whether an inquiry-based Pedagogy could be a tool for promoting equity in science education in three economically and demographically different schools in Los Angeles. Eight teachers from the schools were randomly assigned to either the intervention or control conditions. Intervention teachers used the curriculum to meet targeted science content standards. On the other hand, control teachers covered the same standards as they normally would. Periodic observations in all classrooms and pre-post measures of student learning were included in the study. According to the results of the research, teaching varied in three schools. The control classroom at School 1 (serving the highest proportion of low-income children) showed less evidence of inquiry-type activities and more evidence of didactic, teacher-directed instruction than control classrooms at the other two schools. Also, at each school, more events indicating inquiry-type learning took place in intervention classrooms than in control classrooms. Specifically, observations showed that children in intervention classrooms were engaged in the practice of science rather than simply learning about science. Due to this engagement, their teachers' roles changed too. Regarding the learning of the content, intervention students showed an advantage over control students at the two schools serving higher proportions of low-income and minority students. The authors conclude that when teachers use inquiry-based curricula, their teaching practices can be affected in a way that moves classroom interactions toward a more socially just pedagogy.

Hodson (1999, 2004, 2010) refers to the inadequacy of STSE education and SSI approach, because in his opinion they can't meet the needs of the contemporary life. On the other hand, Hodson stresses that we need a much more politicized approach, emphasizing social critique, clarification of values and socio-political action. In other words, Hodson advocates a SSI-oriented teaching and learning in which the students not only address complex SSI but also prepare for and engage in socio-political actions with the purpose of the improvement of the world. Thus, the writer suggests the building of a new curriculum. This curriculum has four levels of sophistication (Hodson, 1999, 2004, 2010). The first level is about the awareness of the interactive

relationships between culture / society and technology / science. The radical political character of this curriculum emerges in the second level. Here, the technological and scientific development is connected to the human interests, wealth and power. In level three, there is emphasis on the values we wish to promote, because it is about the formulation of the students' own opinions on important social, political and environmental issues. Finally, in level four, there must be ways of putting the values of the previous level into action. According to the writer, it is very important that we encourage students to take action in the school's framework. This way, we make it more possible for them to become active citizens and generally activists (Hodson, 2004).

For Hodson (1999) Science Education is to be conceived as enculturation. That means that somebody has to acquire the knowledge, the practices, the codes of behaviour, the language and the values of the scientific community (science culture). On the other hand, several problems arise from this view because the students bear also their own culture from their families and community and the two worlds (that of the science and that of the family) are not always congruent. Teachers must ease the students who meet difficulties in the transmission and in the movement between the different worlds. According to the same article, it is significant to demythologize science and to politicize science education. With the former action, we can create a more welcoming and accessible culture of Science Education for children from ethnic minority cultures. For example, we could use well-designed historical case studies that do not reflect the white, western, middle class values and aspirations. With the latter action, we can provide the students with opportunities to confront a wide range of socioeconomic issues that have a scientific, technological or environmental dimension. It is also essential for the teachers to be politicized, so that they could politicize their students too. Political action should become part of students' learning experiences too (Bubolz, 1985). With the goal of bringing about change, both teachers and students must be prepared for and engaged in socio-political action. In this way, they are truly engaged in Critical Science.

Shan (1997) recommends strategies for a science classroom practice in a primary school. These strategies aim to the development of the students' better understanding of how inequality and injustice are socially constructed. Specifically, she advocates removing bias from the content, images and schemes of the textbooks and replace them with positive images from around the world. Also, she suggests placing science

in the local community. For example, in a multicultural context, teachers should draw on the multiplicity of examples of everyday life. Placing science in the national and global context of the commodities is another strategy that she supports. Finally, Shan argues for using science in children's stories as a way to explore stances, values, feelings and beliefs. The author concludes that science should promote growth and development in all students and that should never be used to support prejudices and inequalities.

Endnotes

1. The "Hidden Curriculum" could be defined as the norms and the values that are implicitly, albeit effectively, taught in schools and that are not usually talked about in teachers' goals or statements. For instance, the students learn to cope with the systems of praise and power in the classroom, with the teacher being the first "boss" of the student, or learn to alter certain aspects of their behaviour in order to conform to the existing reward system in the classroom (Jackson, 1968 in Apple, 1971).

2. ROSE, The Relevance of Science Education, is an international comparative project which aims to reveal affective factors of importance to the learning of science and technology. Key international research institutions and individuals work jointly on the development of theoretical perspectives, research instruments, data collection and analysis.

For further information see also the website: <http://roseproject.no/>

3. See also: Parkes, 2000. According to the author, a radical pedagogy could be linked to the Vygotskian concept of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Concretely, ZPD is a notion that stresses that development may possibly occur whenever the person encounters alterity. Also, Vygotsky asserts that cultural tools (such as language), mediate the encounter between the self and the world. Therefore, conceptualizing ZPD this way, provides the basis for an ethics of radical pedagogy. A pedagogy built upon ZPD attempts to provide students with opportunities to engage in "performance before competence" and to transform school environments into communities of practice. Another concept of Vygotsky's theory is "scaffolding" (Parkes, 2000, p.8). Related to a radical pedagogy, the teacher should support students by resourcing them, namely providing them with tools (physical or semiotic-psychological) that support them towards the accomplishment of their goals.

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An emerging learning and communication forum in science education: Discussions inside atlaswiki

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Abstract

For two and a half decades, we have become spectators of a vast web-intrusion in our lives and gradually it becomes clearer to the researchers' and developers' eyes the need of certain pedagogical principles crucial to be used in education in order to play an important role in facilitating learning under circumstances that allow technology to bring forward educational improvement and innovation. The demystification of technology and its role as the 'medium' for learning interactions, opens the way towards effective web-based learning environments providing fruitful feedback on the learning procedure (Koulountzos & Seroglou 2007a). Mathematical theories of communication may help us understand information and communication technologies (ICTs) and the difference between transmission and communication, which is from the recreation of the sender's message to the communication between two people if some form of shared understanding is achieved (Shannon & Weaver 1949). However, can Information and Communication Technologies help us communicate with one another?

Keywords: Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), atlaswiki, Web Based Learning Environment (WBLE), Discussion Forum, Dialectics, Radio Theory.

Inside atlaswiki

Wiki platforms nowadays provide multi-dimensional, multi-functional, interactive and fully-communicational environments for teacher education.

Bertolt Brecht gave us a positive suggestion to use interaction and collaboration in communication with his radio theory: to change radio apparatus over from distribution to communication, thus to become the finest possible communication apparatus in public life, a vast network of pipes, adding to it the capability to receive

as well as to transmit, and to let the listener speak as well as hear, to bring him into a relationship instead of isolating him (Brecht B. 1930). Bertolt Brecht's prophetic suggestion that is fully fulfilled in our days by Cunningham, who has presented wikis in 1994, explaining in his words, the transformation of a medium from one-dimensional to multi-dimensional multi-functional, interactive and fully-communicational. Bertolt Brecht's radio theory leads us to web2 applications and Cunningham's wikis 60 years later. The Hawaiian word wiki that means quick inspired Ward Cunningham to use it to name the collaborative tool he developed for use on the internet in 1994. Wikis are fully editable websites. Users can visit, read, re-organize and update the structure and content (text, pictures, and videos) of a wiki as they see it. This functionality is called open editing (Leuf & Cunningham, 2001).

In the ATLAS research group at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, we have designed and developed atlaswiki: a web based learning environment that encourages the creation of a climate of commitment and trust between his members, facilitators and students (pre-service teachers) and scopes to achieve a student-centered, trainee-centered, interactive, collective, collaborative structure that allows students (in our case pre-service teachers) to collect, organize and re-contextualize knowledge. The way atlaswiki can be used in order to create an interactive and collaborative virtual learning environment for pre-service teacher training in scientific literacy is presented. "Science and Culture in Education", is one of the applications inside the atlaswiki web based learning environment. This application is actually the by-distance part of the "Science and Culture in Education" undergraduate face-to-face course at the School of Primary Education at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.

This course aims to present the interrelations between science and culture to future teachers and to encourage a "unified culture" for science education. The course attempts to present the overall image of science and culture in education, in contrast to the divided picture of "science studies" (science in education) and "cultural and humanistic studies" (culture in education) that prevailed for more than a century now.

The course consists of three thematic units:

a) In the first unit, scientific events that influenced human culture are presented and discussed: the atom bomb and World War II, space race and the Cold War, AIDS research and the nature of science, DNA researchers and bioethics.

b) In the second unit, a comparative presentation of scientific explanations and myths about scientific phenomena coming from many different cultures around the globe is carried out.

c) In the third unit, examples of works of art are commented that either present scientific phenomena and ideas or have influenced the scientific thought of their times. In this unit the interrelations between science and theatre, cinema, visual arts, painting, literature and music are discussed.

The course is taught through a selection of films (movies, cartoons, documentaries) and is supported by an educational wiki. Students attending the course discuss on the web between the lectures of the course about each topic presented and also develop their final projects as web pages in the educational wiki.

In this course, pre-service teachers are introduced to the interactions between science and culture, the conflict of western science to non-western cultures as well as the ways that science has affected and also has been expressed through art, while discussions concerning the social and cultural impact of scientific research are highly encouraged and supported by atlaswiki. Pre-service teachers in their discussions taking place “inside” the atlaswiki environment constantly express interesting ideas about: a) the nature of science, b) the role of history of science in science education, c) experiments and videos for the classroom. At the same time, students also present their impressions and suggestions concerning: a) atlaswiki as a structure and a medium, b) multimedia information, c) communication in the context of atlaswiki.

Pre-service teachers attending the courses have the opportunity to access information within and beyond the lectures of each course as well as the forum to discuss about science and science education. Pre-service teachers that for any reason cannot attend the lectures of the course may attend the course online and participate in the current discussions.

The design of atlaswiki aims towards a user-centered, trainee-centered, interactive, collective, collaborative structure that allows the individual to collect, organize and re-contextualize knowledge, in order to achieve a user friendly learning and communication environment for pre-service teachers, allowing them to present their ideas, to improve their self-esteem and their appreciation of their efficacy in science teaching, to take an active part through the process of participating in this blend-e-learning procedure, to get familiar, to collect, to use and to develop instructional e-material from the web, to become more active and independent as future teachers.

Our main focus has always been to create a comfortable, safe, flexible environment in order to encourage discussions concerning feelings, fears and insecurities about using technology and teaching science. We have anticipated a spread of information, collaboration, contribution, codependence and team spirit to occur in order to achieve the knowledge and information transformation from single-dimensional and limited to multi-dimensional and beyond time and space (Koulountzos & Seroglou 2007b).

After the fast development of web-based learning environments in the first years where the main focus was on technology, nowadays becomes clearer to the researchers' and developers' eyes that the need of certain pedagogical principles is crucial. The use of web-based environments in education may play an important role in facilitating learning under certain circumstances which allow technology to bring forward educational improvement and innovation. Technology now gains its primal role as the 'medium' for the learning interaction, and loses its mystical role of the focus theme in communication. The demystification of technology opens the way towards effective web based learning environments providing fruitful feedback on the learning procedure (Koulountzos & Seroglou 2007a).

Atlas wiki web based learning environment is functional and it is growing well encouraging the creation of a science community inspired with a climate of commitment and trust between his members: facilitators and pre-service teachers.

Our design scopes to achieve a user-centered, trainee-centered, interactive, collective, collaborative structure for the atlaswiki learning environment that allows the individual to collect organize and re-contextualize knowledge. We are expecting a transformation to take place during the above interaction: the teacher's role is not only to teach but to host, to advice, to encourage and to facilitate the learning procedure, while the student becomes an active participator and discussant re-structuring the teaching and learning procedure. A balance between pedagogical, structural and technical aspects is needed for atlaswiki web based learning environment to be a successful attempt, that won't replace the traditional educational forms and techniques but will foster teaching and learning, adding new and more possibilities and capabilities to the teaching procedure.



Figure 1: Introduction page of atlaswiki web based learning environment

In figure 1 we can see the introduction page of atlaswiki web based learning environment that initiates new pre-service teachers and visitors to the environment, explaining them the information and communication map they need to explore atlaswiki facilities.

Some of atlaswiki advantages are the free availability, the reliability and the easiness to use. Our scope is to implement atlaswiki in the education area. Atlaswiki web-based learning environment stores units of multimedia information and provides free and easy (at any time) access to all pre-service teachers (Wang and Beasley 2002), while interacts with sources and qualities of the World Wide Web (WWW) in order to facilitate the learning process (Piguet and Peraya 2000). Another important characteristic of atlaswiki web based learning environment is its global accessibility to a certain section of it, while another section atlaswikiwork is entered only with the use of a password. In atlaswiki pre-service teachers participating in the e-training course had two different writing modes, the document mode and the thread mode. In document mode pre -service teachers create collaborative documents enriched with multimedia materials as pictures, videos etc. They can also edit and put comments in the content of the document and gradually the content itself became a representation

of the shared knowledge or beliefs of the contributors (Leuf & Cunningham, 2001). With our atlaswiki proposal we illustrate how wikis can be used to create collaborative virtual learning environments, foster pre-service teachers in thread mode to start a dialogue in the atlaswiki environment by posting signed messages. The community respond to them, leaving the original messages intact and eventually a group of threaded messages evolves (Leuf & Cunningham, 2001).

Nevertheless, pre-service teachers can also add new pages to atlaswiki web based learning environment which offers the possibility of integrating multimedia information, providing multiple web pages, enhanced with multimedia content with experimental and role-play videos, pictures and photos, hyperlinks to external sources and a discussion forum. The reproduction and replication of historical experiments creates an on-line archive on atlaswiki web based learning environment, introducing pre-service teachers to science. Pre-service teachers have the opportunity browsing on atlaswiki web based learning environment and interacting with each other to discover multiple interpretations of the scientists' profile and research, the contemporary culture effecting by research results as well as the social and cultural matrix affection on the scientists' life and work. They attend role-plays in videos, develop their own role-plays, rehearse and perform. Concerning role-plays, pre-service teachers focus on the opportunity to be "in the scientist's shoes" and support that when they are reproducing an era and an environment in the context of role-plays, they are introduced to an understanding of how all those inventions happened and how scientists come to their results and theories. In other words, science starts to "make sense" for them.

Our goal has been to achieve a user friendly communication environment for pre-service teachers, allowing them to present their ideas, to improve their self esteem, to take an active part in this web-based learning environment, to use and develop e-material. We wanted the atlaswiki web based learning environment to be comfortable, safe and flexible in order to encourage discussions concerning feelings, fears and insecurities about using technology and teaching science. We anticipated a spread of information, collaboration, contribution, co-dependence and team spirit to occur, to achieve the knowledge and information transformation from single-dimensional and limited to multi-dimensional and beyond time and space (Koulountzos & Seroglou 2007b).

Research focus

Our research interest focuses on how pre-service teachers interact with each other, with atlaswiki designers and facilitators also “with-in” atlaswiki environment.

Thus a quality and a quantity data collection comes up, showing that from the thread mode and discussions inside the discussion group raised quality data and from google analytics quantity data concerning the site and the visitor’s “behavior” inside it.

The discussion - dialectics that took place trigger a dialogue about impressions and suggestions for atlaswiki, which lead us to the question: "Is adequate and clarifying multimedia information and communication inside atlaswiki?"

Communication among facilitators and pre-service teachers as well as among groups of pre-service teachers and visitors is taking place inside the atlaswiki web based learning environment which integrates: software for discussion groups, bulletin boards, group-mailing, enriched web page designing embedding picture, video and multimedia on the environment. This final form of atlaswiki web based learning environment provides the ability for a dialogue among facilitators and pre-service teachers as well as among groups of pre-service teachers. This kind of communication and interaction allows the elaboration of ideas, focus topics, questions, comments, enquiries concerning the development of the pre-service teachers’ projects and may go on during the development period offering non-formal guidance. Also the facilitator can provide access to information sources via network connections - hot internet links or via direct use of it. Navigation through hot links results direct access to information sources on screen.

On the other hand the dialogue focuses on experiments and videos presented in the classroom. The dialogue seeks for the relation between role-plays and history of science and the role of history of science in science teaching. (Koulountzos V. & Seroglou F., 2008)

Threads and discussions

All pre-service teachers participating in atlaswiki web based learning environment gave us a fruitful feedback. The pre-service teacher’s impressions have been positive from the beginning. It was easy to sign up for the first time, there was no need to have special skills and someone with basic computer literacy could interact easily with atlaswiki environment. The basic knowledge was the ability to operate a personal computer with an internet connection and an internet browser. The atlaswiki environment offers an easy add page and edit function, offering the ability to pre-

service teachers to “forget” the medium and focus on their community collaboration and knowledge construction.

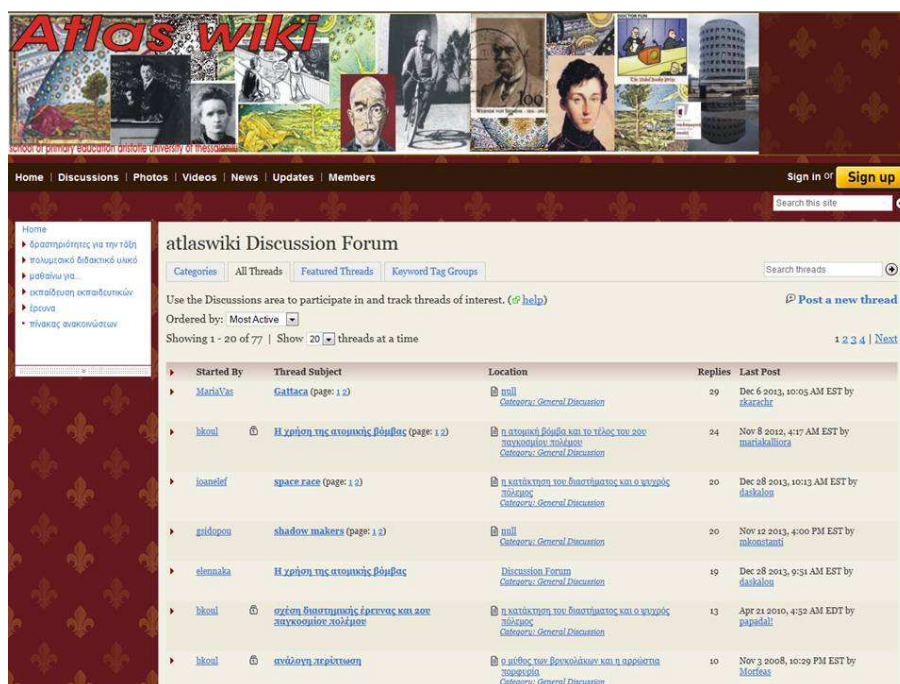


Figure 2: Introduction page of atlaswiki discussion forum

In figure 2 we can see the discussion forum page of atlaswiki web based learning environment that invites pre-service teachers and visitors to participate in atlaswiki discussions and dialectics, concerning all the topics that atlaswiki deals with.

A new “dialectic” (Karl Marx, 1983; Edwards, 1967) emerges in atlaswiki: conversations between pre-service teachers attending the atlaswiki courses and the atlaswiki discussions taking place during the semester lessons concerning science education, nature of science and philosophy of science reveal the characteristics of a population that needs and wants to understand science and its impact on decision making affective current culture, society and quality of life. The monitoring of the discussions and interactions and the study of qualitative data (discussions and the developed e-material) as well as quantitative data offers multiple perspectives to understand the way pre-service teachers interact with each other, with the designers and facilitators of the atlaswiki and with the atlaswiki environment itself. Furthermore, much interesting information is brought forward concerning the various ways pre-service teachers perceive and realize in their instructional material, teaching strategies and classroom applications the science and culture interrelations in science teaching.

Pre-service teachers were saying that with multimedia information you can understand science better and you can change your opinion about science teaching. They suggest more e-material existence, more ideas and themes to teach inside atlaswiki. Atlaswiki web based learning environment brings science to people, showing alternative methods in science teaching by implementing ideas from history of science and contemporary issues in science education.

They suggest also to perform experiments with simple materials and devices and to act in experimental videos, so pre-service teachers can watch them with sound and narratives with more interest.

In role-plays pre-service teachers focusing on the opportunity to be in scientist's position, saying that when you are reproducing an era and an environment you can reach in conclusions about how all that inventions happened and how the scientist concluded in his result.

Finally in teaching history of science, pre-service teachers suggest more themes about women in science, science and technology, and the relations between science and politics, economy, religion, ethics, myths and preconceptions.

"It is an excellent attempt. I believe that it will be helpful in the educational procedure. In the era we are living and the following years, everyone demands and requests new approaches to teach science".

"It's innovative attempt for pre-service teachers, to communicate by distance, to understand, exchange ideas and follow new developments and research in science".

Some of the responses to the question "How do you believe that an environment like this would facilitate teaching?" showing that there was a positive acceptance of the atlaswiki web based learning environment to all participating pre-service teachers and the case study showed them an alternative and innovative way to teach science through a web based learning environment such as atlaswiki wble.

To the question for atlaswiki web based learning environment manageability, all students found the site easy to use, friendly as a tool to teach science, the spread of information to many participants and the possibility of connection without time and space limitations.

"Atlaswiki web based learning environment offers to pre-service teachers a certified and up-to-date informational and educational source".

"It is a well structured tool for the educators to teach science inside the schools"

Furthermore some answers to the question “What do you expect for a web based learning environment to contain in science teaching”, showed that all pre-service teachers seek for interesting, pleasant, understandable and alternative solutions to teach science. New and fresh ideas from life, development and great scientist’s biographies would help and support new teachers to make the science lessons more interesting and understandable for kids in the classroom.

“Atlaswiki web based learning environment in science education, is expected to provide new didactical ways to the learning procedure with more educational material such as videos, worksheets, scenarios and experiments, but also to illustrate problems of the real world based on the peoples unfamiliarity and misunderstanding of science”.

To the topic “History and philosophy in teaching science” and the question concerning to the use of history and philosophy elements to teach science, some pre-service teachers mentioned the historical review in the beginning of science books, but all of them suggested themes to teach from stories about unconventional scientists like Faraday, Einstein, Curie etc.

“I believe that most interesting science themes concerning the joint of science with other sections of life and science, like technology, politics, economy, religion, ethics myths and preconceptions. Such examples are the research for DNA, space, cloning etc.”

About Multimedia information and the use of videos in science teaching, all of pre-service teachers acknowledged that it is a source of infinite information and motivation for learning science. A thousand of words is a picture, more of that is a video.

“Videos of experiments will help pre-service teachers to understand and teach science phenomena” and it is “...a useful tool to teach science, delivered to the hands of teachers”.

“Videos of experiments and multimedia material in general are pleasant to participate and most of people found them as entertainment than as a lesson”.

“It’s really nice a worksheet to be accompanied by a video of experiment. An idea is to act in experimental videos, so the whole result is going to be more interesting for participants...” and “...be more colorfulness with sound...” instructions, “...dramatization...” and active performing inside the experimental video.

Finally to the question of "...role-play design to teach science based on history and philosophy of science", all pre-service teachers agree that the opportunity to be in scientists position, the era recreation "...gives us information not only for the fact that we are discussing, but for the characters involved, the way that they interact and how they influence the evolutions, shown through the prism of the socio-cultural matrix of contemporary conditions".

All pre-service teachers participating to atlaswiki web based learning environment for this case study confirmed that web2 with wiki delivery may lead to a step forward the education procedure. The atlaswiki web based learning environment offers to the pre-service teachers an environment to support and foster science teaching, although atlaswiki can be a powerful source to help pre- and in-service teachers understand and teach science to young students.

Further discussion

Atlaswiki web based learning environment aims to become a forum for creative discussion among students studying science and/or science education, in-service teachers, science education researchers and designers. Atlaswiki also attempts to become a window to the world of science for every citizen who seeks scientific understanding and awareness in order to be able to participate in the ongoing interaction between science, culture and society and assimilate scientific information necessary for making decisions that lead to a better quality of life.

Nevertheless, pre-service teacher training is necessary for preparing pre-service teachers to teach "science in context". Pre-service teachers need to be introduced to this "new culture" for science and such an attempt requires the introduction of pre-service teachers to aspects of the nature of science and to aspects of history, philosophy and sociology of science (Wandersee 1990, Slezak 1994). This shift in science education won't happen easily (Bartholomew et al. 2004, Bianchini et al. 2003, Wong et al. 2010). It is the first time in the last 100 years that we ask from teachers all over the world to overcome and leave behind them the way they have been teaching science for years till now. This change of culture for science education perhaps appears as a challenge for researchers, curriculum developers, policy makers and educators; however it is a demand of society today for an education for all (Seroglou 2014).

Atlaswiki web based learning environment offers the capability of integrating multimedia information in multiple web pages. It can provide text (web) pages with

pictures on-line, enhanced with experimental and role-play videos, hyperlinks to external sources and discussion forums. History of science provides the opportunity to reproduce and replicate experiments as well as repository them on-line via atlaswiki web based learning environment, introducing pre-service teachers to science. Never the less, pre-service teachers have the opportunity during the activities to seek multiple interpretations of the scientists' profile, way of research, effect on his contemporary culture as well as the affect of the social and cultural matrix on the scientists' life and work.

Atlaswiki web based learning environment trains pre-service teachers to work together collaboratively and to achieve goals more easily together. Also atlaswiki offers a comfortable web based learning environment, which allows pre-service teachers to "live" and work there continuously with no space and time limitations and produce collaboratively a remarkable result. The atlaswiki platform offers a user friendly web based learning environment that can incorporate aspects of history and philosophy of science, to understand science and to become active teacher to teach science.

It is like a game, for pre-service teachers to collaborate inside atlaswiki web based learning environment, to participate in discussions and to produce more pages and to propose more science lessons based on the history and philosophy of science. Pre-service teachers without any previous introductory workshop, from the first time can interact, collaborate within the environment, use all the atlaswiki facilities and elaborate the communicated knowledge. The only precondition is to have basic computer knowledge and skills, to understand the operation of a computer with an internet connection. Beyond that, the multimedia enriched atlaswiki web based learning environment guides pre-service teachers to accomplish their tasks and present their results.

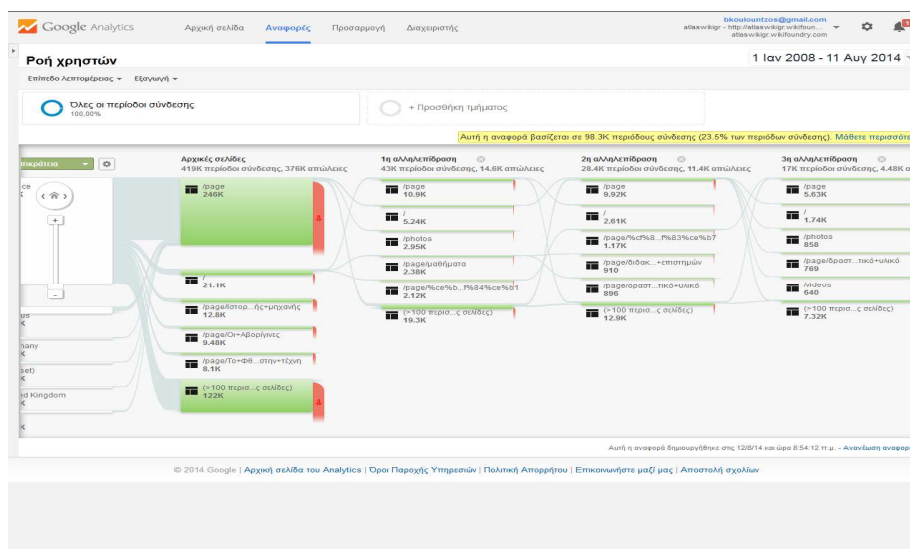


Figure 3: Atlaswiki web based learning environment pre-service teachers & visitors flow

In figure 3 we can see the pre-service teachers & visitors flow in atlaswiki web based learning environment, showing us the pre-service teachers "movement" inside the atlaswiki environment, the leaps (nonlinear movement) they made among its pages, the pervasion they made inside atlaswiki and how deep the pervasion was.

In atlaswiki web based learning environment traditional roles are changing and a transformation is taking place (Mezirow J. 1991), therefore atlaswiki is a new environment using its own rules. There is no centre-based learning process, but a process characterised by dissemination, co-operation, contribution, co-dependency and group responsibility. Facilitators and pre-service teachers share their ideas and construct knowledge. This is the next stage which triggers results and changes the way of information-knowledge transmission. This knowledge-information from one-dimensional and time and space limited shifts to multi-dimensional and time and space independent.

The sense of humor and the creation of a pleasant disposal between facilitator and students play an important role for the whole operation. Facilitators should care to give a sense of humor to the on-line procedures, answers and advices for pre-service teachers, to create a positive climate of development and collaborative improvement of atlaswiki and to activate the co-operation of all pre-service teachers. It is vitally important for atlaswiki learning environment to activate student's participation and nourish collaboration and long-term function. Nevertheless, a series of potential

barriers may be identified and confronted concerning resourcing, institutional infrastructure and politics, staff development, teaching and learning, content and access (Koulountzos & Seroglou 2007b).

The development and reform of educational material is vital for pre-service teachers training. The aim of the atlaswiki is to go beyond the traditionally developed instructional material that has a static, permanent form not allowing reform, change and meaningful improvement. While, the development of instructional e-material carries the ability to reform, change and improve towards an advancing effectiveness and efficiency. Pre-service teachers, acting as users-trainees in the atlaswiki web based learning environment, “publish” and communicate their ideas and their teaching suggestions in the form of texts, videos, multimedia material etc. minimizing both time and storing space needed. On the other hand they communicate with each other, with the environment and with the facilitators, providing discussions concerning science education, nature of science and philosophy of science and the atlaswiki web based learning environment gradually overcomes a series of time and space obstacles and limitations, encouraging free and global communication and interaction, constructing a discussion forum which scaffolds dialectics, paradigms, teaching strategies and suggestions to teach science in the classroom. At the same time, a double shift of roles and a transformation is taking place during the above interaction: the teacher is there not to teach but to advise, encourage and facilitate (that’s why the term facilitator is used in this paper), while the learner (pre-service teachers in this case) participates and re-structures the teaching and learning procedure.

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Michel Foucault and Antonio Gramsci: Education, power and student assessment

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Abstract

This paper is a critical reflection on student assessment, part of my long-term attempt to study the impact of assessment upon student personality and education. It begins by presenting and analyzing the relations among school culture, education, power and student assessment and, afterwards, focuses upon the theoretical contributions of Michel Foucault and Antonio Gramsci for the school function as a power implementation mechanism, disciplinary power for the former and hegemony for the latter. It becomes a cause for the combination of these two views, which are explored to develop an understanding about the power relations that are built within the school and the assessment processes. This proposal aims to create an opposite suggestion for student assessment.

Keywords: student assessment, disciplinary power, hegemony, pedagogical relationship.

Introduction

Is it possible for schools instead of controlling and measuring any deviations or mistakes and consequently to function evaluative arranging, ordering and choosing students through assessment, to respect their reasoning, to analyze the mistake, to understand why it is happening, to teach the students how to correct it, and to finally function educatively?

School Culture and Power

The answer to this question presupposes the questioning of the ruling discourse about school's neutrality, which springs from: Both the functionalistic perception, which considers that its role is the dissemination of objective knowledge, ruling values and the norms of the society, in order to shape productive individuals and to create a consensus, overlooking its contribution to the distribution of the class power relations

with the reproduction of social hierarchies and the social division of labor. And from the technocratic, positivist perception that names the didactic practices and school knowledge objective, since it oversees that their choice and organization are not independent from class adjusted power relations and social control authorities.

Education in schools is everyday confined to a curriculum that is hierarchical and fragmented into distinguishable subjects, that shatters the content of knowledge and disconnects learning from the understanding of social reality. It follows the strict pre-assigned design of educational packages (objectives, content, processes, teaching results, student assessment criteria), which is a captive of the technical control logic and of the ideology of teaching “effectiveness” (Apple, 1993). This way the educator is led to the implementation of conservative pedagogies, where teaching methods that promote memorization prevail, methods that educate towards individualism and competition and to the usage of a “technocratic language”, which produces communication forms appropriate for the calculation and measuring of knowledge. Both of them do not promote critical thinking, the autonomous and collective action of students; they weaken the creation, description and transfer of moral values as well as the respective creation of an ethos among students (Giroux, 1981).

It is not enough viewing the school only as reproductive site, where the reproduction takes place through the provision to students (from different classes and social groups) forms of knowledge, skills and culture, legitimating the dominant culture and differentiating them by gender, class and race in order to take their place in society as ‘entrant’ labor force. For the critical educators primarily is the need to challenge the perception about the school’s neutral role which in action can take place when we understand it, as site of contestation and conflict, i.e. *“as place where particular forms of knowledge, social relations and values can be taught”* in order to educate students to take their place in society in a position of empowerment (Giroux, 1988: 115). Additionally it is central for a critical grasp about the school the study of the relationships between authority and disciplinary power which are exercised through the teacher and school institution over students in order to control them (Giroux, 1988).

Eventually, both hegemonic forms and processes (ideology inculcation, imposition of cultural meanings, submission of ways of thinking and practices of everyday life) and omnipotent present technologies of disciplinary power (examinations, observation, assessment, etc.) subdue the existence through conquering or penetration (Macherey,

2013). Both shape and interweave a *school culture* that entails: knowledge forms, understanding formulas, linguistic practices, corporeal practices and behaviors, social relationships, values and school life experiences (Apple, 1989; Freire 1985; Giroux, 1985; Trend, 1992)

Despite that with the materials of school culture, possibilities of contestation and resistance against power are created as a result on the one hand of the conflict with the ruling ideological representations and on the other of the power relations. Further this culture entails elements that can be utilized to promote critical thinking and to create alternatives, liberating practices and experiences both in the school environment and in its social surroundings with the participation, intervention and action of students, teachers and communities in order to address not only the educational, but also the broader social, economical and political inequalities that pierce school life.

Consequently, school culture can also function as a tool for struggle, controversy, and resistance for the reversal of power. But the way this culture is structured, transferred, represented, reveals that authority in school is not imposed as a monolithic power that “recasts and immobilizes” students according to its own measures, but it is rather a relationship that is diffused and realized as an authority, resistance, strategy and creation (Foucault, 2008; Giroux, 2002).

School Culture, Power and Student Assessment

The most direct and obvious result from power implementation through school culture is produced from assessment. It is the prioritization of track records, ranking and choice of students and the establishment of school inequality as well. Even beyond the fact whether students objectively, know or do not know, own or do not own the abilities that are expected. Within the school the sociocultural identity of the successful or the unsuccessful is being created and understood.

It is assessment that leads to the social existence of failure or success and its experience has as a consequence the “transformation of the representations and actions of students” (Perrenoud, 1997: 32). Particularly for them who fail, the identity of the failed one becomes an “indelible” characteristic (label) they have, which the school projects not only outside as a signifier/signified that is identified with the core of the ruling ideological representations of society, concerning what kind of work a student can produce and what kind of abilities, skills they must expect from that student. But it also becomes a central part of the ideological representation, which

students have for themselves, their self-evaluation and their opinion about anything they do, as well as what they themselves may expect from their powers.

Students' assessment in the frames of verbal and non-verbal control and regulation regimes in schools, takes place daily with the implementation of typical and atypical examination practices in combination with keeping of records (students registers, record cards, transcript of records). It leads very often to irreversible verdicts, which reproduce class regulated social hierarchies and the social division of labor.

Michel Foucault and Antonio Gramsci: Education, Power and Student Assessment

Even though Foucault and Gramsci have radically different theoretical beginnings, the particular interest of the two thinkers can be found in the school function as a power implementation mechanism, disciplinary power for the former and hegemony for the latter, and it becomes a cause for the combination of these two views. For the study of the power relations that are built within the school, the assessment processes and the creation of an opposing suggestion for student assessment.

Michel Foucault

The School is for Foucault a mechanism for the faint implementation of disciplinary authority that brings changes till the smallest detail of existence, through corrosive micro-practices that impinge repetitively and daily on the body. Examination combined with the keeping of documents and records are power technologies, used by the disciplinary power mechanisms, and have as a consequence the making and implementation of the modern coercion system on the bodies, behaviors and gestures of humans.

According to Foucault this normalizing school Discourse [1] penetrates the power relations that are implemented within it at a number of points, which frame the examination technology and shape the subject through the student's identity. At this point power does not simply function upon a single person as authority, but it shapes the subject. To be more precise the normalizing Discourse, penetrates the disciplinary school practices, which are expressed in a number of points as: 1) a system of differentiations that allow action upon the actions of others (differences in the statutory position of educators, linguistic and cultural differences among teachers and students) 2) the type of objective purposes that others pursue with their actions upon the actions of others (consolidation of the teacher's expertise/power) 3) enunciative modalities (supervision and control of the educator with various results that have to

do with discourse, body movement arrangements, etc.) 4) institutionalizing forms (school as a closed structure that reproduces, perpetuates conservative pedagogies) 5) rationalization degrees, because of the activation of power relations (student/educators' resistances that lead to refining, processing, transformations, reorganizations of the disciplinary practices) (Foucault, 1991).

As a consequence in the pedagogical relationship between teacher and student a whole block of power relations is entailed, which according to the limits and requirements of the normalizing Discourse, activates, subdues and produces the subject student (Butler, 2009). But thanks to the freedom ability of action/reaction of the individual (Veyne, 2011), when the teacher tries to determine the behavior of the student, then the student seeks ways to avoid it or to determine the teacher's behavior. More specifically the school's normalizing Discourse produces a mental identity (or psyche) for students, where the power's actions and the reference of a particular knowledge are met. *"It motivates them to live, and this psyche itself is part of the sovereignty that is exercised by power on the body"*, turning their ego partly into a possession of the school power system (since the psyche itself enables the acquirement of a knowledge, which strengthens the power's actions, since it is part of it) (Foucault, 1989: 43). Due to these disciplinary practices the body is trapped within the soul, i.e. the soul becomes a power's tool that shapes, cultivates and activates the body. Through normalization, regulation and framing and finally subjugation, the subject is formed constantly and with repetitiveness (and not once and for all) (Butler, 2009), which manufactures and sets into motion the body as a productive, labor power. The students "embody" everyone for themselves the control and supervision by the authority on their conduct, behavior, aptitudes, in order to strengthen performance, to multiply the abilities and to be put in posts, where they will be most useful (Foucault at Macherey, 2013).

The disciplinary power is therefore productive as well. It creates labor force bodies *"by structuring the field of prospective action, where they come to take place"* (Macherey, 2013: 54-58), i.e. it transforms them into now productive subjects. When humans act productively, they express the labor prowess that they embody, which has been structured based on the refinement and transformation of their existing recourses into an already structured action field. Since prowess cannot be separated from humans it makes them exist as machines. The prowess-machine cannot be disconnected from the individual-carrier and so it is not the laborer, who through a

form of labor force becomes a subject of supply and demand, but now it is the productive worker. This way a governable human is being produced, the active financial subject, whose financial behavior, its inner rationality, its activation, its view of labor, have financial results, which is the production-flow of incomes (Foucault, 2012).

For the labor force of individuals to become productive within capitalism, the Discourse and the school disciplinary practices are of vital importance, which reshape humans from scratch in order to achieve a raise both of their compliance and of their usefulness. *“Schools are involved in the production of particular forms of bodily control and expression which can serve to obtain from children and adults forms of consent that the mind could otherwise refuse”* (Shilling, 2003: 19). Schools are a disciplinary power mechanism that impose, process, supervise and control the achievement of the human governability and productivity standards. Its normalizing Discourse functions on the one hand “totalizing”, turning the student together with its classmates into a mass, while at the same time on the other hand it separates them, individualizes them, turns them into case-studies, into a field of knowledge, into an object for use.

More specifically, control on the one hand subjects to complying with the norm, it homogenizes the individual existences, and it divides them between right/wrong, normal/infringing, physiological/pathological. On the other hand, while it becomes more delicate:

a) for supervision, it “objectifies”: it understands and describes, it makes the labor data and the student’s essence known and obvious through examination (Foucault, 1989) and

b) for normalizing judgment, it “quantifies”: it measures the deviations and changes concerning a benchmark system of pre-assigned skill standards.

The normalizing judgment presents in quantitative terms behaviors, abilities and records for the individuals themselves and not their actions to be ordered, classified, measured and weighted according to value terms. They are being rewarded by providing good grades or positions, they are being punished with demotions and alienation. Moreover they are compared, differentiated, equated ... normalized (Foucault 1989). The result of this is also a *“microsystem of penalties”*, so that even the slightest deviation from the rule (e.g. concerning ability, behavior, etc.) will be punishable with detention, which does not ordain. But it rather strikes the values and

moral characteristics of the students' personalities (it humiliates, shames, demotes their position in class) so that they will be pressured to reform (Foucault, 1989: 237). So within schools measuring, prioritization and classifying of students, individualism and their competition, as well as differentiation and their homogenization are established. The norms and rules of the disciplinary power eliminate, obstruct, underestimate the discourse and knowledge of students and create a dogmatic, hypocritical, formalistic, and mechanical communication in the pedagogical relation, strengthening this way the power's effectiveness, since it now functions as a mechanical structure.

The power's normalizing Discourse that shapes the subject offers despite that opportunities for resistance, re-meaning-giving and as a consequence for its de-structuring on the basis of the expression of a Discourse, which it names. This happens through *strategy games*, where power relations are volatile and allow obedience but also resistance [2]. On the contrary in cases of sovereignty, resistance is harder to take place, since the power relations differ from the previous ones, because they are constantly unequal, established, arbitrary, contra-productive, demand submission, and allow a little room of freedom.

The dependence for the creation of the subject from repetitiveness, since it is not created once and for all, gives the opportunity for the production of new identities. This can happen with the variations of a Discourse that fights power phenomena of dominating situations and which engages into a fight to avoid or to reverse power (Foucault 2008). According to Foucault there are possibilities for denial of this power from the subject's side, so there are possibilities for its reshaping. When in situations where power relations exist and in which there are various frameworks of freedom, we create and implement "the directional principals of law, management techniques, morality, ethos, practice of oneself" that give the opportunities to power games "*to play with the minimal possible degree of dominance*" (Foucault, 2008: 383).

At this point the student has to understand the school's normalizing Discourse and the educators must intervene determinately towards this, who as the *specialized intellectuals* name, indicate, put pressure on the institutional briefing network and give a fight that turns into conscious a target that up till then was subconscious for students, non-verbal, hidden, repressed (Foucault, 2008). When the educator acts as a specialized intellectual, s/he "problematizes", analyzes and describes to the students the facets of the school's disciplinary power, i.e. its archaeology (or its genealogy).

More precisely, the tools and circumstances for its implementation, the thought that is being created within its interior, it transcends it and is imposed through it (Veyne, 2011) (e.g. examinations, school verdicts, validity of school judgments, stigmatization, competitiveness, hierarchical ranking, grades, grade books, registers, etc.)

Educators in the frames of this prescribed truth game, take the responsibility to teach their students in order for them to learn whatever they do not know about their own situation, “*they teach them, they transfer them knowledge, they teach them techniques*” (Foucault, 2008: 384). So that they can stand at a distance from their own selves and their own present and think differently, to problematize and to react. Educators as specialized intellectuals offer the possibility to students to fight the disciplinary discourse and to resist, to speak and to react.

Antonio Gramsci

Gramsci considers schools, the church, unions, professional associations and the press cultural institutions that have a particular importance for the implementation of hegemony from the ruling towards the weaker classes in an indirect, distant, complex, high and more sophisticated way (Entwistle, 1979). Within these institutions the hegemonic powers act with an intellectual and moral persuasion and not with power and coercion by implementing rigorous and direct control (e.g. as happens during the implementation of a law or with the police). They engrave and do not transfer (or “put”) the content and the life ethos of the rulers. They impose painlessly and subtly the mental and ideological leadership of the rulers, which lies in a concatenation and connection with the financial and social leadership. Gramsci’s purpose is to realize the hegemony of the labor class and for its structuring he suggests the Comprehensive School.

To be more precise, he was interested on how the school mechanism produces forms of social, financial and cultural authority through the symbolic power of a conformist culture, based on which it educates the student population. It considers schools a clear political organization through which the hegemonic control of the rulers can be implemented. Since from a young age and for many years it transfers and teaches to the ruled ones their ideas, their way of understanding, their financial and political values. It cultivates mass consensus towards the ruling rules, so that they can consider them as something self-evident, as a “common logic” and this way they do not only accept them, but it also seems as if they obey them freely, ensuring this way stability

within the sociopolitical and financial system. Gramsci considers that schools can “mobilize the ideological area”, “prepare and process intellectuals of various levels”, contributing to the securing of a “spontaneous consent of big population masses towards the guiding of the social life by the ruling group” (Gramsci, 1972: 61, 62).

Gramsci rejects the “oligarchic” school of his time, which he says has a rhetoric character, it teaches based on lectures and it evaluates using traditional type examinations. He considers that with this teacher-dominated method it uses “it fills the students’ heads with recipes and words that in most cases are irrelevant for them and quickly forgotten” (Gramsci, 1973: 26), because they are only fragments of knowledge that cannot structure the real, that is built upon the definite and objective of the material conditions of the real world. It emphasizes on the mechanical and dry teaching of facts and not on the methodology for events to be studied, i.e. it does not shape students able to think, to study, to lead and to also control those who direct. Its pedagogical will is external and it does not offer pedagogic formation (Gramsci, 1973).

Gramsci considers that hegemony is a pedagogical relation and that the role of the educator as an intellectual is critical for the content and orientation of the conscience and the transformation of the students’ experiences, which receive meaning within the framework of the social relationships they participate in (Gramsci, 1973). The educator must neither downgrade nor overestimate the students’ experiences, but in the contrary needs to be sensitive, to recognize and understand their experiences, their mental and emotional world, to be taught from the relationship with them, since all are elements of utmost importance for the formation of their educative needs, their wishes and identities. This can be achieved with the creation of an active, bilateral and unequal *pedagogical relationship* with the students (Noutsos, 1988). At this point the educators become students as well, and the students become educators, i.e. the educators help the students understand their history, while at the same time the educators reexamine their role as public intellectuals (Giroux, 2002). The goal is the transformation of the students’ experiences (as well as theirs), in order to lead them (or to be led together) towards a higher understanding of life, in which together with the gnosiological element, feelings and passions have their place (Noutsos, 1988). But of course the educator is not equated with them, since they differ not only socially

and culturally concerning their generation but also as far as the conscious ethics is concerned of which the first one is a representative (Gramsci, 1973).

But the educator based only on the achievement of a collectively structured common cultural climate with the student is in position to transform the experiences of the latter on a higher level and this is happening by utilizing the theoretical-practical human activity, i.e. the *labor principle* (Gramsci, 1973). Gramsci understands labor not as a manual activity, mostly for one's livelihood, but as a way for an active participation in nature's life, a way to get to know the social and state life (responsibilities, rights), to get into contact with the historical part of life's and technique's necessities, having as its purpose to humanize human relationships and to utilize techniques in the services of the human productive freedom (Lombardi, 1986). Only in a Comprehensive School, which is governed by the previous mentioned principles and that is connected with life. Through collectivity it can be the foundation for the relations among students and teachers, where initially the students will gain the basic knowledge and habits through "dogmatic" education and a disciplined study during the first classes (where even though education takes place head on, the students receive help from older students and teachers). In higher classes method and knowledge teaching will follow for the understanding of science and life with an original and creative character. Generally the students will be educated in intellectual self-control and in moral autonomy. The gnosiological and conscious evolution are the core elements of the pedagogic formation (Gramsci, 1973). Within the Comprehensive School the labor class learns not to be the servant class, but to think itself through a critical understanding of its existence and its needs, within the historic and political framework. That is why in the program of the Comprehensive School, the study of its understanding of the world (folklore, imagination, creativity), the humanities, the physical sciences in their historic and political dimension, combining the principles of scientific discipline are included.

Gramsci wants that the examination procedures in the school and the grades will affect educatively and improve the students' development, which means that they have an educative character. To be more precise, during the examination he is interested to concentrate closer on the process of understanding knowledge by the students, on their ability to reproduce it, but also on the positive feedback received by the older ones

The first exam is a very important thing in life; (...) can say now that he has made (...) an effort to let other people see what he has to show for his age; and these others have sat in judgment and their verdict has been favorable (Gramsci, 1974:22, CXXXIII).

But the examination should not have a traditional character, concentrating on events, dates or meanings that the students must remember in order to answer, in a way that their performance is based on memorization or luck and not on critical understanding. Gramsci believes that critical understanding can only then be evolved, when the examination includes critical expression, aesthetic, philosophical, etc. analysis (Gramsci, 1973). Additionally the meaning he gives to the grading scheme “*you have marks given you every month, it’ll be easier to see how you’re getting on in general*” (Gramsci, 1974: 39, CXC) reveals that the assessment he seeks, has a formative/diagnostic character and this is for the students’ and their learning’s advantage and is not being used for prioritization in the class. Furthermore he is against entrance examinations for the intermediate school, which with their selective character lead to students coming from poor working classes to be rejected leading to the reproduction of social hierarchies

I don’t even know what character or object these ‘entrance exams’ have (...) I should imagine they are State examinations for entrance to the intermediate schools, instituted with the express aim of making it more difficult for poor children to win their way forward to advanced study (Gramsci, 1974: 34, LXXXIII).

According to Gramsci in order for the ruled ones to organize and implement from their own side their own hegemony, first of all they need intellectual educators with deep theoretical knowledge and the appropriate didactic method, which they have clearly organized, “*a path towards educative policy*” (Gramsci, 1973a: 43-44) for their advantage. Educators that create a pedagogical relationship with their students, targeting not simply to the transfer of knowledge, but to change consciences and knowledge methods, which will also be accompanied by honest and strong emotions. In addition based on Gramsci’s position on the political nature of intellectual work, the intellectual educators need to also be distinguished by the ability to enable the school’s social function and as a consequence their own (class) function, within this hegemonic power, as an object for rethinking, intervention and transformation (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1993). Therefore intellectual educators need to combine

“a particular culture level, a total of intellectual processes and from them (as a product and consequence) a particular total of passions and very strong feelings, which have the ability to be transformed into action at all costs” (Noutsos, 1988: 16-17).

A suggestion for student assessment

The creation of a gramscian pedagogic relation can contribute towards the humanization of the relationship teacher-students. When the educator utilizes the dynamic of the school’s cultural elements in order to get to know the students, so that the one learns from the other, to recognize and to appreciate the experiences and knowledge that every student brings to the class. Then the power relations are transformed and are equalized, since they can be agreed upon and shaped together. So when the ontological relations are transformed democratically, a horizon for “truth games” is opened between teacher and students, which according to Foucault, can reshape students, because they help them utilize their freedom and think from a distance. At this point the educator reveals and names the school’s normalizing Discourse, which is entangled in the culture and the elements of the school mechanism, i.e. in school knowledge, in words, behaviors, gestures, thoughts, ambiguous and unambiguous rules, customs, powers, pedagogical practices, in the building’s plan and the situations it creates for life in school, producing power and obedience relations, competitive and individualistic relations, school inequality and social exclusion.

Consequently the educative intellectual by putting into practice within such a framework the venture for an anti-hegemonic evaluative process, has the ability on the one hand to get to know the students, hear their voices and to learn: their needs and experiences, their interests and difficulties, their behaviors, gestures, their positions and their resistance. On the other hand he has the ability to examine the effect of the school’s canonizing Discourse utterances: in the effort, knowledge, mistakes, failures, practices, behaviors, thinking, so that he can understand the power’s fingerprint on their bodies, on their level of thinking, their possibilities, abilities, feelings, values, dreams and their wishes.

Additionally, with the presentation of reasoning by the students, the feedback, the recognition of various views about what is being sought, the encouragement by the educator, the stimulus for a dialogue between them is given, but for a re-directioning of the power relations as well, since they together are opened to thinking on the learning processes and elaborations. At this point the meaning of mistake and error in

the students' evaluation is replaced by the value given to reasoning. Therefore both are participating in the creation of critical praxis, which is the dialectic among the radical practices and the critical understanding that becomes a cause for the transformation of the traditional beliefs that prevail concerning assessment and school.

Notes

[1] According to Foucault, Discourse refers to whatever was happening and was being said about an idea (or practice) during a period that made it unique. Every Discourse "recruits" a number of elements that are arranged around it: laws, gestures, institutions, powers, customs, norms, mores, knowledge, words, buildings that implement it etc. These according to Foucault consist the discursive practices and structure the mechanism (Veyne, 2011).

[2] For Foucault there can be no society without power relations, which in order to be implemented there must exist a certain form of freedom by both sides. He categorizes them a) into strategy games that are implemented within a freedom framework, where the one party tries to define that behavior of the other or to resist b) into dominance situations, where power intervenes and is implemented through submission, so that there will only be minimum chances for resistance (and a minimum freedom framework) and c) into governance technologies, which is the way someone rules, e.g. their family or an institution. Very often they entail authority situations (Foucault, 2008).

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Imprisonment and education. A critical action-research in a Greek prison

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Abstract: *This article describes a critical action-research which took place at the Volos Special Juvenile Detention Centre, a prison for minors located in the city of Volos in central Greece. The research was incorporated into a narrative workshop held in collaboration with the prison school and was connected to a program of Greek language learning for prisoners. Participation in a critical pedagogy process inside the prison help prisoners to link the educational program in which they are involved with their personal life story, to challenge previous perceptions and finally to find their own voice. Through a gradual process of awareness and reflection, the prisoners' voices begin to emerge in their narratives during the action-research. The research showed that starting from an initial description of their experiences, prisoners moved gradually towards more critical approaches and concerns both for personal issues and social problems.*

Keywords: critical education, prison education, narrative, action-research.

Education in Prisons

Research into the bibliography of issues related to education in prisons reveals a mass of related articles, which focus on the necessity of an effective educational system, which can play a defining role in the social reintegration of *student prisoners*. Education helps prisoners not only to make creative use of their very large amount of free time but also to gain formal qualifications and skills. These can open doors to social and professional reintegration. (Travis, J., Solomon, A.L., Waul, M., 2001). Given that a vast majority of inmates worldwide have dropped out of formal education at a very early age, (Wilson, 1996), their inclusion in an educational process in prison enhances their self-confidence and *strengthens their self-image*. *At the same time, it gives student prisoners opportunities for reflection and re-evaluation of*

former opinions and attitudes which have lead them to the development of socially unacceptable behaviors.

The study of the international bibliography regarding prison education highlights a great variety of educational approaches and types of education. These vary from classic, formal education in the form of a functioning primary, secondary and vocational education system in the prison to informal types of education in the form of artistic or other open workshops and seminars. Educational opportunities provided in prisons try to stimulate students' interest, to create positive emotions about themselves and others, to help them discover aspects of themselves, talents and interests which can give purpose to a new orientation in their lives. (Diseth et al., 2008;Page, 2009).

Many different educational methods, techniques, materials and tools have been used in order to reach the above educational targets. The majority of teachers who have worked in prisons agree that the educational approaches must be compatible with those which are used in adult education (Costelloe& Warner, 2003). In other words, they should be experiential and collaborative. They should have as a starting point the interests and needs of the prisoners, should respect their emotional state and be compatible with the everyday context of life behind bars.

Beyond educational methods, another important factor that influences the effectiveness of educational approaches in prisons is the conditions in which the whole educational process is carried out. These conditions concern: the time and place of the education; the teacher's and the overall prison staff's specific education and training; the existence of a library; a computer room and other resource rooms; as well as suitable educational materials which take into consideration the particularities of this specific student group. It is obvious that the effectiveness of the educational process in a prison will be in proportion to how effectively these conditions have been met. Unfortunately, it is obvious that the above conditions are very far from the situation that exists in Greek prisons.

The use of narrative in prisons

One of the most common techniques used in both formal and informal education is narrative. According to Neuhauser (1993) narratives are effective because of the following characteristics: they are believable, are remembered and are usually pleasant. Salmon (2008) in reviewing the use of narrative, notes that it was initially considered as a form of communication and education for the exclusive use of

children, and moreover, limited to their free time. Today, however, it is a form of speech that one finds in many different educational and social contexts, transcending political, cultural or professional divisions and leading to the identification of our age as the 'age of narrative'.

The greatest number of incidents and experiences which become the subjects of narratives during an educational process are usually autobiographical incidents, life stories, and myths, tales, anecdotes, etc. relating to various aspects of the identity of teachers and students. The exchange of narratives helps participants to illuminate life events and issues of everyday life, which often remained blurred until their story is told. This process contains all the characteristics of a reflective process, which can result in transformation of previous perceptions and attitudes (Mezirow et al, 2007). As noted by Bruner (1986), narratives can simultaneously affect both the thought and the action of the narrator.

In the literature, a great deal of research refers to the creative use of narrative in education (Olson, 2000; Gomez et al, 2000; Butcher, 2006). This research highlights the empowering and emancipatory effect of narratives (McEwan & Egan, 1995), and their ability to unleash the true voices and reflections of the narrators. (Schwartz,2001). In this context, the use of narratives in prison can be supported. It has been almost a century since the days when the only reading material and narrative in education in prisons was the Bible (Gehring, 1995). In modern educational programs conducted in prisons, both classic and modern literature play a decisive role (McLaughlin, Trounstine, Waxler, 1997). According to Stephenson (2007) and Hopwood (1999), the use of narrative and general literature in prisons helps the prisoners to improve their self-confidence, work on expression and active listening, develop empathy, and improve their communication skills. Findings from two large training programs demonstrate the effectiveness of this educational approach. In "Changing lives through literature" in the U.S. prisons of Massachusetts (Trounstine, J., Waxler, R., 1999) and "Stories that unite" in British prisons (Stephenson, 2007) the telling, reading, writing and processing of various forms of stories are seen as key dimensions of this specific educational process. In the majority of prisoners who participated in educational activities using narrative, changes were observed in the value system which they had used prior to incarceration in jail. Alongside these major changes, learning objectives such as growing a love of reading, learning foreign languages and an interest in the development of written expression were attained.

Generally, prisoners acquired new interests that redirected them to socially acceptable attitudes and behaviors.

Critical Pedagogy

According to McLaughlin, Trounstein and Waxler (1997) delinquent behavior is due to the fact that prisoners function impulsively based on their emotions and instincts. Similarly, they lack critical thought and do not make an attempt to be aware in each problematic situation. The use of literature in education can help them to escape from one-dimensional and non-functional thinking and to understand the complexity and diversity of human character and ways of thinking. Studying and discussing appropriately selected literary texts can be combined with content from personal narratives and life stories. In this way, prisoners can gradually rid themselves of feelings of anger and hostility towards society and begin to think critically and to gradually realize the real reasons that led them to prison. Understanding the social inequalities and social conditions in which they find themselves and the relationship they have with the, often unconscious, social choices they make, is a crucial process for the prisoner's future. This can be mobilized through the philosophy and methods of critical pedagogy.

Participation in the critical pedagogy process helps each prisoner, individually, to link the educational program in which they are involved, with their personal life story. They find where their paths overlap with other prisoners'. They challenge their prejudices, stereotypes and perceptions and gradually find their own voice. Through a gradual process of awareness, the prisoners' substantial voices begin to emerge in their narratives. Clandinin & Connelly (1996) make reference to "cover stories" i.e. those stories that are not easy to tell, because they often bring the narrator into conflict with the dominant ideologies and widely prevailing stereotypes. Through the development of a critical pedagogy process, cover stories gradually come to light and become the object of collective processing and discussion by students in prison. Through these discussions, prisoners form a new image of themselves which is not "contradictory, inconsistent and changeable" (Worrall, 1990: 7), but begins to develop stable frames of reference. Relevant bibliographies reveal a substantial body of research that highlights the mobilization of critical thinking and the creation of a prisoner's new identity as a result of educational processes based on the principles of critical pedagogy. Higgins (2004) describes how discussions on contemporary sociological issues with women prisoners in New Zealand mobilized critical reflection

processes and identity reconstruction. Through the same educational processes, Kilgore (2001) studied the development of prisoners' empathy, which is particularly important both for their personal development and social integration.

The research

The action-research took place at the Volos Special Juvenile Detention Centre, a prison for minors located in the city of Volos. The research was incorporated into a narrative workshop held in collaboration with the prison school and was connected to a program of Greek language learning for prisoners. Respondents had a triple identity: minors, immigrants and prisoners. The last two dimensions of their identity (immigrants and prisoners), on the one hand, assign them to a minority identity in relation to the dominant group. On the other hand, this socially stigmatized identity, under the prevailing stereotypes, becomes even stronger due to the age identity of the participants. The young people who participated in the workshop were ages 18 to 21 and were all of Pakistani origin. Five were beginners in learning the Greek language, three were intermediate Greek speakers and three acted as translators for the others. They had already spent from a few weeks to two years in prison, while their sentences ranged from several months to many years. The specific prisoners' participation in the workshop was proposed by the head and teacher of the school, after approval by the prison management. These prisoners all agreed to participate in the workshop. The workshop was part of the school timetable and was incorporated into the language course, mainly the development of speaking in Greek. The venue was the room used as the prison school, which was a cell converted into a classroom by the addition of some desks and seats, a board and a metal bookcase. In the room, there was a window that overlooked the inner courtyard of the prison. There was also a small sliding window in the metal door of the room, which was opened systematically by the prison officer for security checks.

The action-research evolved into three cycles. Each cycle followed the standard procedure of planning, action, observation and reflection. The researcher had the dual role of educational researcher, since it was he who designed and carried out the action. There had been provision for the participation of a critical friend, whose role in action research is particularly important (Costa and Kallick, 1993). However, the prison space in which to carry out the activity and the necessary bureaucracy to allow entry to each new person functioned as obstructions to their participation.

There were two research questions in this action-research. The first focused on investigating if and how the educational context of a narrative workshop, designed on the principles of critical education, would act as an incentive for the active participation of prisoners in the educational process. The second was whether the workshop would motivate the prisoners' critical reflections in relation to specific dimensions of their lives up till then, and whether they would explore these dimensions as well. The action-research took place over 10 meetings, with each meeting lasting from 90 to 120 minutes.

Research methodology

The research techniques used were the group interview and the researcher's diary. Given the small number of group members, group interview had the characteristics of a focus group interview. There were two group interviews using the same questions: one at the start and one at the end of the research intervention. In this way, the group interviews were the means of evaluating the results of the research intervention. The use of a tape recorder and camera as a research tool were forbidden despite the fact that the space was filled with security cameras. As a result, the research diary was the only instrument which recorded the views of teacher and learners; the dialogues among learners; the narratives of learners and generally all the findings from the teacher's observations. It is obvious that this remark was a participative observation and as such followed the principles of ethnographic research. The recordings were made as the group dialogues developed. Often the participants spoke at the same time, and while the researcher tried to deliver the precise meanings of their words, he was not always able to reproduce the particular syntactical style and vocabulary of the young immigrants. The inability to use a tape recorder was one of the limitations of the research but it was not the only one, nor was it the most significant. Carrying out research in a prison has a number of particular difficulties and limitations (Page, 2009). In this research, the difficulties mainly related to: the small amount of time available for the meetings; the enforced absence of some prisoners because of work commitments in the prison; for health reasons; for appearance in court; the noise from other rooms in the prison; the interruptions by the prison officers for many different reasons. The limited vocabulary of some of the Greek language learners was an additional difficulty, despite the mediation efforts of the remaining prisoners who had an intermediate knowledge of Greek.

The initial group interview

The first group interview with the prisoners was carried out during the first meeting between the teacher/researcher and the students. The main purpose of this meeting was: for the teacher and students to get acquainted; to explore the prisoners' desire to take part in the workshop; to investigate the possible content of the workshop so as to mobilize the interest of the students and to investigate the students' general interests and desires, regardless of their current situation. In general, taking into account the theory of Freire (2000) the first group interview was intended to highlight the thematic universe of the members, i.e. their thought - language used to deal with reality, the level of their conceptions and opinions about the world.

Although the prisoners responded to questions from the interviewer, their answers in this first group interview were very short and did not highlight the wealth of their views. One possible reason for this attitude of the group members was the embarrassment they felt towards the researcher which often turned into suspicion about how their answers could possibly be used. Suspicion towards teaching and research procedures is one of the difficulties that is often referred to by those who carry out research in prisons (Higgins, 2004).

From the responses of prisoners on their participation in the workshop, it was clear that their participation was mainly associated with killing time in prison:

"I do what I can to make time go by faster" / "in jail, time doesn't pass" / "an hour will pass, it will be lunchtime, we'll eat, it will be evening, and we'll sleep".

They were also curious: *"I'm curious to see what we'll do" / "it's something new" / "strange".* Moreover, there was a chance for them to communicate with other inmates *"so I can see the others and discuss things" / "to have a discussion, it's nice" / "in the cell, it's the same people all the time".* In answer to the question of what they wanted to discuss, all the answers were about the outside world: *"what's happening in the outside world" / "so we can learn news from our country" / "we want to know where there's a party, nice girls, so we can go there in our imagination".*

It is well-known that the greatest problem faced by inmates in prisons is killing the endless time and the constant presence of the same people recycling the same conversations. As young men, aged 18-21, it was to be expected that what motivated them to participate in the workshop and the preferred topics of discussion would be linked with spending their time creatively, making contact with new faces and learning news from the outside world.

The first cycle of action-research

The first cycle of action-research, designed by the teacher-researcher, had as its starting point the telling of a Greek folktale. This exists with similar content in many countries of the world, so it would probably be familiar to members of the group. It is the folk tale "*The mouse and his daughter*", which describes the journey of a father mouse to seek a husband for his daughter. On the journey, which has the characteristics of a migrant journey, the hero encounters several types of otherness with which he needs to communicate. The tale raises a range of social issues such as marriage and companionship, the relationship with yourself and with others, acceptance of difference, travel and migration.

Folk tales have been used in education programs in prisons (Hopwood, 1999) due to the simplicity of their content at a first level and the universal values they carry. The frequent violations of conventional social rules by the heroes of the story, helps prisoners to make connections with their own personal stories.

After telling the story, the group members divided into two smaller groups and each group worked on specific questions posed by the teacher, with regard to the story. When asked about the message the story wanted to convey, some of the members answered: "*to be strong*" / "*to trust yourself*" / "*strength is within us*". Then the debate focused on whether they felt they were strong and where they could draw strength from.

During the discussion, which was punctuated by moments of silence and whispering, all team members spoke, either directly or through a translator. Characteristic phrases heard more than once were: "*I became strong in prison*" / "*On the way from Pakistan to Greece I got strength*" / "*No matter how strong you are, in prison it's not enough*". The group members described their sources of strength as: "God" / "my family when I'm on the phone" / "my friends". The element of strength has particular significance where prison and prisoners are concerned. They stated that the experience of prison and obviously the struggle for survival in this particular place is a source of strength. Another source of strength for them was their migrant journey. As well as these sources of strength, the students mentioned God, family and friends, thus revealing their value base background, obviously from the cultural references of their country of origin.

Upon completion of this meeting, the prisoners made a commitment to telling and discussing tales from their homeland. With regard to the next meeting, the teacher researcher writes in his research diary:

Entering the room the group members are all in their seats, which is very different from the first meeting, where the guards were looking for them in their cells. I feel as if something strange is about to happen and try to be calm. I ask if they have thought of a tale from their country and they respond positively. I starts to tell a story. After the first few minutes, it becomes obvious that I. is telling the story of his migrant journey from Pakistan to Greece.

Analytical descriptions are given of the causes of migration; communication with the migrant smugglers, the stages of the journey, the difficulties and obstacles encountered and ways to overcome them. Although the story is not a fairytale, as it evolves, it has the plot and many features of a folk tale, such as twists, encounters with good and evil and more. The narrative lasts half an hour. Most of the group members remain silent and watch the narrator, who occasionally summarizes, in their mother tongue, the content of what has been said. The researcher notes in his research diary:

After the story, there is silence. Only the voices of other prisoners from the courtyard and the corridors can be heard. I find it hard to talk. I am particularly moved both by the content of the narrative and the process.

The remaining time is spent in a discussion on the issue of immigration and particularly the reasons for a minor to become an immigrant, the dangers of the journey, aspirations, hopes and frustration. Quotes from some of the group members which were typical of the group's opinions were: *"If I had known what I would find, I would not have left"* / *"The ones that left before me were full of lies, they said everything was fine"* / *"There, they're dying of hunger and they say nowhere is as bad as it is there"* / *"Getting from Pakistan to Greece alive is like going through the war. They don't all make it through alive"*. Their experiences of the migrant journey are so intense that, despite the time that has passed, they remain deeply etched in their memory. They recall, in detail, the names of the stages of the journey, the names of people who they traveled with, dates of arrival in and departure from each place.

The second cycle of action research

Following this meeting, the researcher decides to abandon the original plan of using fairytale narrations, and instead to focus on the group members' personal life stories. This is how the second round of research is planned and started. The researcher's

purpose is to investigate the use of autobiographical stories as a starting point for the group to meditate and reflect on various aspects of their lives.

The majority of the group members' stories come from the journey of migration, highlighting the uniqueness of each one's experience. Recurring themes in their narratives are the desperate financial situation that led to their decision to make the journey and the deception by migrant traffickers. In particular, they narrate the dangers they faced on the migrant journey. Half of the members of the group (four out of eight) agreed that more than once on the journey they had thought that their lives were about to end: *"It was over, I was done for, I had no air"* / *"One stayed on the mountain, he couldn't take another step, then me"* / *"I prayed because I thought he was going to kill me"*. However, apart from their decisions to make the migrant journey, the group members' narratives also bring to light many cases of childhood which again highlight great poverty: *"I worked from the age of five"* / *"We are four brothers, our father has died"* / *"You have no idea here about how tough life is there"* They also highlight wider economic and political problems in their home country: *"It's all wars and killing people there"* / *"They set up armies and fight each other"*.

About the development of discussions, the researcher notes in his diary:

In an uncomplicated way, important critical questions and comments connecting personal life stories with more general political and social issues such as social justice, equality of opportunity and colonialism are entering the narrations and discussions.

However, vocabulary is a great inhibitory factor *"I don't have the words to say it"* as one of the narrators says at a certain point. The views expressed have a powerful element of critical reflection: *"terrible evil done to us by the English"* / *"people are hungry, but they (the government) give all the money to their friends"*.

From start to finish of this second round of meetings, group members made no reference whatsoever to the reasons that led them to prison. This was in contrast to the wealth of references they made to the everyday prison routine. The researcher wonders in his diary: *"There is an intense embarrassment every time the subject of what the reason they were put in prison is mentioned. So, is this hiding shame or lack of trust?"* At the last meeting, one of the prisoners on the occasion of his appearing in court and his expected absence from the next meeting, made reference to the sentence. This had a knock on effect and immediately all prisoners wanted to talk about the

charges they faced and the reasons they were in prison. In the discussion that followed there were strong elements of reflection in their views. *“Don’t Greeks steal too? Is it just us that steal?” / “When you haven’t eaten for three days, you steal” / “I looked for a real job, but there was no work” / “At the beginning, you make a lot of easy money [drug trafficking], and then you realize that you’re in trouble, because you’re scared to leave”.*

The third cycle of action research

Once all members of the group had narrated their personal histories, the researcher decided to investigate the prisoners’ willingness to have their autobiographies published and how they would like to do this. The most prevalent idea was to write their shared story, addressed to children, because they would like "to read it one day to our children." Additionally, which parts of their personal narratives the members of the group wanted to highlight and publicize and which they preferred to conceal, needed to be ascertained. Group members collectively decided the story, while the researcher recorded and then offered the necessary linguistic improvements and connections to the story to give it a single coherent structure and narrative style. The main character of the story was Tariq, an immigrant from Pakistan. As was expected, Tariq represented all members of the group, while the story was a mosaic of individual narratives of childhood, life at home, and the group members’ migrant journey.

What the narrators wanted to show was mainly the misleading “European dream”, the hazards of the migrant journey and the exploitation of immigrants. However, they also wanted to show the strong ties of friendship created among some of the immigrants. What they decided to cover up was their confinement in prison. They considered incarceration to be incidental, despite the long sentences of some of the group members and therefore did not want to mention it in the story. The exclusion of their imprisonment can be linked to their desire to avoid social stigma. On the other hand, the detailed description of the migrant journey and attaining their goal of getting to Europe were associated with the qualities of success and strength, qualities that the prisoners wanted to display.

The title which the members of the group, in collaboration with the researcher, decided to give the story was “The Golden Bird”, which represents the dream of a better life in the western world. *“Tariq slept. He slept heavily and had many strange dreams. First he was chasing a golden bird and was about to touch it when the bird*

opened its wings and escaped". The golden bird appears regularly in the story on several occasions. As well as the golden bird in the story, there is also the golden cage, indicating, perhaps, the ultimate fate of the hero.

Although *The Golden Bird* is a composite of real life stories, it contains many of the characteristics and archetypal elements of folk tales such as lies, betrayal and social injustice, but also friendship, camaraderie, courage and perseverance. It is particularly interesting that the third round ends in quite a different way from the initial action research plan. It is completed by the telling of a story in the form of a fairy tale. The first round had started with the telling of an actual folk tale.

The final group interview

After the completion of the story that marked the end of the third round of the action research, the second group interview was held. The purpose of this interview was to investigate the views of prisoners on their participation in the workshop and their evaluation of the workshop as a learning experience. Characteristic phrases of members in the context of this interview were: *"we learned our lives"* / *"we learned ourselves"* / *"we talked and the time was spent enjoyably"* / *"we remembered, we were sad and happy"* / *"we became better friends"*. When asked if they would take part again in a similar workshop, all group members responded positively. Regarding what they would like to discuss at a similar consecutive workshop, the responses were: *"to speak about our country"* / *"talk about Greece"* / *"to read Greek newspapers"* / *"to learn about the law in Greece"*. Regarding the workshop as an educational experience detainees said that: *"it was like hanging out. There was no voice. There was chat"* / *"if school is like that, then I would get to university"*.

Conclusions of the research

The first research question of the action-research was whether and to what extent the voluntary participation in a narrative workshop could motivate prisoners to remain in the educational process. As noted above, detainees participated until the end of the workshop, on the provision that from early on in the workshop, it was adapted to their needs and interests. Characteristically, says Freire, (2000) learners carry cultural power and cultural capital which cannot be ignored by the educational process. With this condition fulfilled, their participation was active and their evaluation of the workshop showed that they were satisfied with their participation. Knowing that education in prison is a unique educational field, with considerable difficulties and many special features on the part of learners (Page, 2009), planning and organizing

relevant workshops can be a proposal to mobilize the interest of prisoners in education process. As most detainees have negative past educational experiences, a traditional educational process that focuses, according to Freire, (2000) on depositing knowledge, would not produce the expected results, as opposed to experiential processes such as the above, associated with the development of emancipatory learning.

The second research question concerned whether and how the workshop was able to mobilize the critical reflection of prisoners. The present study showed that starting from an initial description of their experiences, through appropriate critical pedagogy procedures, prisoners moved gradually towards more critical approaches and concerns both for personal and general social issues. Despite the short duration of the workshop and the great number of difficulties to overcome, which were obstacles to the development of the educational process, the dialogue that developed amongst group members and between them and the teacher had the characteristics of critical dialogue. As it was developed within a literacy program, it could be argued that the whole process of participation by the prisoners in the workshop was a critical literacy process and ultimately empowered them.

Reflection of the researcher

Higgins (2004) wonders what it is that motivates a researcher to investigate such separate spaces, as is the space of the prison. Obviously for researchers who are motivated by the philosophy of critical pedagogy, a prison is an ideal place to test elements of Freire's pedagogy. This was the motivation for the researcher of this study along with the challenge of carrying out action research. This research methodology is of particular interest to the researcher, in such a distinctive place. The researcher believed that he was free of the classic stereotypes towards the group he would be working with. However, until an atmosphere of mutual trust was created, there was, at least in the initial meetings, a feeling of suspicion about the prisoners' motives for participation in the process. Even more embarrassment and suspicion existed, especially in the first meeting, on the part of the prisoners. The research experience of the researcher had been mainly with teachers or students as subjects, who mostly do not exhibit similar attitudes. As a result, he was unprepared for such an atmosphere of communication. In practice, significantly more time was needed to create an atmosphere of trust, than would have been required for a more typical group of research subjects.

Although a friendly atmosphere was created by the passage of time, for the subjects, the researcher did not cease to be a member of the dominant group. Furthermore, he was on the "outside" and an "important" member of the dominant group on the outside, as he visited the prison in the capacity of teacher from the local university. Despite not being mentioned beyond the initial meeting, this is likely to have acted as a barrier between the researcher and the group members. Moreover, the original intention of the researcher was to participate as an almost - equal member in the processes of narrative. According to the original design of the survey, he would also act as narrator of one or a group of fairy tales and stories and then as the content of action research was redesigned, he would narrate autobiographical events. However, except on a few occasions, this could not be achieved. Nevertheless, the researcher systematically tried to maintain the basic features of the role of the teacher as described by Freire (2000). These are the factors that help learners to express their experiences and then mobilize a critical approach to the experiences of all group members. The views and experiences of the learners gave the researcher full knowledge of the socio-economic situation of their country of origin; a detailed description of their migrant journey; how migrant smuggling networks function and the humane support networks of immigrants in the countries they travelled through. On numerous occasions, whilst questioning the students, the teacher/researcher felt the role reversal of the teacher-student relationship, a characteristic feature of Freire's pedagogy. Getting to know each other and exchanging knowledge, led to the development of an intense emotional relationship between the students and the teacher. From the perspective of the researcher, this emotional relationship was also a key element in the development of empathy.

The emotional charge was particularly strong at the end of each meeting and much more so at the last session, as it was clearly written on their faces: "*you're leaving now, but we're staying here*". This became a constant source of reflection, for long after the end of the workshops. With a clear realization of the failure of the traditional prison system, the tormenting question remained of whether this intervention was just tokenism and ultimately a support to the functioning of traditional correctional services. Such haunting thoughts were mitigated by the positive opinions of the prisoners about their participation and their desire to continue. Finally, the researcher's reflections could not avoid focusing on the thoughts and feelings that

lead to the temporary but very strong sense of unfreedom because the action research was conducted in a prison.

There is no better way to describe the relevant reflections and emotions than in the following literary passage by Swift (2003: 191):

When you go to visit someone in prison it's like a small rehearsal of the real thing, a small taste of punishment. Doors close behind you. A system - a smell - swallows you, you're searched and counted and marked. You wonder vaguely if they'll let you out. Then, when your time's up, a small miracle occurs. You go back - it's OK - the way you came. You take that simple step which for those who stay inside isn't simple or even thinkable at all. Everyone ought to be made to do it perhaps. A kind of education, a privilege. To know what it's like to leave the world and then be put back in it again.

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The use of cognitive dissonance / conflict and impasse-driven learning as a tool for critical teaching

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Abstract

This paper aims to present the findings of a pilot survey conducted with 27 final-year undergraduate students of the School of Philosophy and Education, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (Greece), who attended, during the academic year 2013 - 14, the course of “History Didactics in Secondary Education”. Core assumption of the research was that students, influenced by the dominant culture and related personal microtheories (stereotypes, prejudices, blind spots, etc), are very likely to ignore strategies for developing critical thinking skills and the relevant theory, although it is well-known to them, as well as what they know about Critical Pedagogy, and to be led to misguided conclusions on the validity and reliability of illusory or false sources (hoaxes). The survey was conducted in two phases: a) during the preliminary phase (four weeks before the experiment) examples of fabricated sources were presented to the students, the ways for the critical analysis and evaluation of the sources were explained, and the probable reasons why people, even if they are updated on the principles of critical teaching, are sticking to their earlier misconceptions, were discussed; b) in the next phase (four weeks later), six worksheets with sources, some of which were hoaxes (all sources were referred to various cases of measurement of IQs), were given consecutively to the students, and students were asked to comment on them. At the end, there was a sheet for overall evaluation of the students’ reactions and of their learning experience. Data from worksheets was analyzed by qualitative content analysis. The research, utilizing elements from the theories of “cognitive dissonance/conflict” and of “impasse-driven learning”, points out that careful use of a mixture of hoaxes and of original sources can cause critical reflection, which is a prerequisite for a lasting conceptual change and for a deeper understanding of the value of teaching for critical thinking in the context of Critical Pedagogy.

Keywords: cognitive dissonance/conflict, impasse-driven learning, teaching for critical thinking, critical teaching.

1. Introduction

As often mentioned in the literature that relates to teaching and learning methodology (Didactics), it is extremely difficult to put critical teaching into practice in a meaningful and effective way and to achieve the cultivation of critical thinking and the development of critical reflection (Van Gelder, 2005). These difficulties make it problematic, if not impossible, to achieve conceptual change in the analysis of data (text, photos, paintings, cartoons, statistical tables, diagrams, etc.) and in the problem-solving process. This phenomenon is observed with particular intensity in the teaching of History, which is closely linked to ideologies, values, prejudices, biases, emotion charge, etc (Savich, 2011).

Therefore, in order to find an appropriate strategy to address the so-called “microtheories” and “misunderstandings” of students, namely the ideological prejudices, stereotypes, blind standpoints and unwarranted judgment, when they are analyzing and interpreting historical sources, I was led to the hypothesis that this could be achieved, in the context of critical teaching, by the carefully planned use of “cognitive dissonance/conflict” and by the guiding “impasse-driven learning”.

2. Theoretical framework: conceptual clarification

2.1. Critical thinking, critical teaching and critical pedagogy

Teaching for critical thinking has a long tradition. It is clear that critical thinking is related to *reflective thinking*. It is a skillful activity which requires the interpretation and evaluation of observations, communications and other sources of information. It also requires special skills in thinking about assumptions, in asking core questions, in drawing out implications, that is to say, in reasoning and arguing issues through (Fischer, 2001)¹. Critical thinking also includes the component skills of analyzing arguments, making inferences using inductive or deductive reasoning, judging or evaluating, and making decisions or solving problems. Critical thinking involves both cognitive skills and dispositions. These dispositions, which can be seen as attitudes or

¹For a brief overview of definitions see: Paul, Richard W. & Elder, Linda (2000). *Critical Thinking Handbook: Basic Theory and Instructional Structures*, 2nd edition, Dillon Beach (CA): Foundation for Critical Thinking.

habits of mind, include open –and fair– mindedness, inquisitiveness, flexibility, a propensity to seek reason, a desire to be well-informed, and a respect for and willingness to entertain diverse viewpoints (Lai, 2011).

At the same time, critical understanding, critical analysis, and critical evaluation are essential elements for constructing knowledge and critical pedagogical praxis (Egbo, 2005). Everyone could agree that one of the main goals of education is to help students to develop critical-thinking skills. But critical-thinking skills are hard (Van Gelder, 2005). Students often fail to think critically and to make sense of what they have received. Critical understanding can occur when students start to analyze the materials from multiple perspectives in their efforts to make sense of the received information. Students usually tend to have unexamined, one-sided, and digestible views about many types of information, and to ignore prejudices, biases, stereotypes, misconceptions, and blind standpoints (Kim, 2000).

This is the exact point where critical thinking teaching coincides with critical teaching and critical pedagogy, which seeks to foster the development of good quality of learning and knowing. As it is well known, critical praxis involves moving between a critical perspective, one's learning practices, evaluative reflection on the dominating aspects, and returning to a critical and liberatory perspective (Boyce, 1996).

2.2. Cognitive dissonance and cognitive conflict

The *cognitive dissonance theory* is considered important in the learning process. Often a person has competing and conflicting perspectives of certain issues or behaviors. The question of how such *cognitive conflicts* can be solved has been discussed by Leon Festinger (1957) and Gregory Bateson (1972). Their analyzes are based on the theory according to which the person who has contradictory beliefs, ideas, values, attitudes, behaviors, perceptions, etc. would attempt to reduce *cognitive dissonance*, i.e. the disharmony between cognitive elements, by rejecting one of these elements or adding new cognitive elements supporting some of the previous or new data. For this reason, *cognitive dissonance/conflict* is a very powerful motivator, which will often lead us to change one or the other of the conflicting belief or action. Any inconsistency, i.e. propositional beliefs, in the way we think or act produces dissonance, which is uncomfortable and creates a drive to reduce the tension through reassessing its validity (Gawronski, 2002: 665).

2.3. Cognitive dissonance/conflict and conceptual change

Cognitive conflict is based on Piaget theory (1971), who discussed the inner sense of *disequilibrium* that the learner experiences when the world behaves in unexpected ways (1971, 22 & 46). This sense compels the learner to reform the structure of cognitive schema, in an attempt to re-achieve *equilibrium*. Because of this, the principle of *cognitive conflict* is widely used in education, but it is not uncontested. For example, both the nature and timing of the designed conflict may have consequences for learning in terms of understanding content as well as developing habits of mind (Tirosh, Stavy& Cohen, 1998). However, although the theory has been questioned, it shows that it is still durable and remains functional in the classrooms (Cooper, 2007; Graham, 2007; Sayce, 2010).

The theory of *conceptual change* (Vosniadou&Verschaftel, 2004) goes back to Kuhn's (1970) structure of scientific revolution as well as Piaget's (1985) basic notions of *disequilibrium* and *cognitive conflict*. According to Llinares and Krainer (2006, p. 437), *conceptual change* can be defined as learning that existing beliefs and knowledge change by a dynamic process. More precisely, the theory of *conceptual change* describes "the kind of learning required when the new information to be learned comes in conflict with the learners' prior knowledge usually acquired on the basis of everyday experiences" (Vosniadiou&Verschaftel, 2004: 445). Core assumptions are that in some cases students form misconceptions about data, that these misconceptions stand in stark contrast to the accepted theories explaining these data, and that these misconceptions are very strong (Rolka et al., 2007).

A more detailed analysis for *conceptual change* is given by Appleton (1997) who elaborated on a constructivist-based model for describing and analyzing students' learning. This model provides, in relation to Piaget's terms of *assimilation* and *accommodation*, different possibilities of what happens when students are confronted with new information and experiences. When this new information is processed the situation evolving can be described by the following possibilities:

- 1) Identical fit: The new information may form an apparent identical fit with an existing idea. This means that students are able to make sense of the new information on the basis of their existing knowledge. This does not imply the correctness of the students' explanations.
- 2) Approximate fit: The new information forms an approximate fit with an existing idea in which aspects are seen to be related, but details may be unclear. These students encounter new ideas but do not give up old ones. However, contradictory as

they might be, they do not reach a situation where a *cognitive conflict* could take place. Hence, new information is assimilated but not accommodated.

3) Incomplete fit: The new information is acknowledged as not being explained by the ideas tried so far. This incomplete fit of information results in a *cognitive conflict*. When students experience an incomplete fit they try to reduce the conflict by seeking information which might provide a solution.

2.4. Impasse-driven learning

The exact definition of “impasse” depends on the problem-solving architecture, but, generally speaking, an impasse occurs in a problem-solving process, when it comes across a goal that cannot be achieved by any operator that is believed to be relevant to the task at hand (VanLehn, 1988). The essential idea of *impasse-driven learning* is to resolve the impasse somehow, then store the resulting experience in such a way that future impasses will be avoided or at least handled more efficiently (Jones & VanLehn, 1994).

According to VanLehn (1990: 40-41), there are four kinds of impasses: a) the *decision impasses*, b) the *reference impasses*, c) the *primitive impasses*, and d) the *critic impasse*. People facing an impasse tend, when they take additional information or proper guidance, to repair the impasse (op.cit., 42-45). As research has shown, upon teaching an “impasse”, self-explanation helps students think more carefully about their knowledge and form a more accurate model of the target concept, even if the resulting explanations are inaccurate. Beside this, the strong correlation between learning and impasses has been pointed out in many domains (Bogaerts&Leake, 2006).

3. Instructional strategies for critical thinking and conceptual change

The *conceptual change* models, using the *cognitive conflict*, are a very useful tool for overcoming *cognitive consistency* and resistance of students, which hinder the revision of their misconceptions and microtheories. However, critical thinking ability was found to be significantly correlated with *cognitive conflict* (Kang et. al., 2004). Students with high logical thinking ability experienced more *cognitive conflict* after realizing the discrepant event than those with low ability.

Although some theoretical models were not developed in an attempt to apply to the classroom, many empirical studies were conducted with this aim. According to Limón (2001), three kinds of instructional strategies show many of the efforts made to promote *conceptual change*: a) the induction of *cognitive conflict* through anomalous

data; b) the use of analogies or metaphors; and c) cooperative learning to promote collective discussion of ideas. Especially the strategy of presenting or offering anomalous data or contradictory information is often considered the best way to induce *cognitive conflict* (Limón, 2001, p. 374). In this context and for this aim, the theory of *impasse-driven learning* is also perfectly useable, because the “cognitive inconsistency serves as an epistemic cue for errors on one’s system of beliefs that require a reassessment of their validity” (Gawronski, 2012, p. 665).

4. The empirical research

4.1. Starting point and aims of the research

The above theoretical premise became the starting point of this research. Key research questions were if the students: a) could put into praxis knowledge acquired from other courses, such as Educational Psychology or School Pedagogy, in the course of History Didactics, b) would be in position –and when– to realize that some of the sources offered to them were hoaxes, c) would be able to reflect on their beliefs and to engage in conceptual change. The main purpose of the research was to investigate the conditions under which learning can be relieved of the “misconceptions” and “microtheories”, as well as the instructional value of the *cognitive dissonance theory* and of the *guiding impasse-driven learning* for the development of the students’ critical thinking skills, in order to be able to consider without prejudices the validity and the reliability of the sources.

4.2. Methodology

The study was conducted in the academic year 2013-14 with a sample of twenty seven (27) graduating students attending the course of History Didactics in the School of Philosophy and Education of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. The whole research process is a case study in the form of a quasi experiment. The experimental setting had the following structure:

- 1) Investigation through discussion, in a previous point of time, of the students’ beliefs and cognitive or affective reactions on issues of measuring the IQ.
- 2) Introduction of anomalous data (hoaxes).
- 3) Description and analysis of students’ learning reactions during the experimental exercise.
- 4) Introduction of normal (valid) data and apocalypsis of hoaxes.
- 5) Critical reflection on normal data. Creation of cognitive conflict.
- 6) Reflective praxis on the point of doubt and questioning.

7) Contribution of experimental exercise to the process of conceptual change.

Students were given, in seven successive phases, the following material:

1st Worksheet: A report published in 2007 by the Lovenstein Institute of Sacramento, Pennsylvania, where the detailed findings of a study on the IQs of the USA Presidents in correlation to the party they belonged are being presented. This report is a *hoax*².

2nd Worksheet: A table with IQs by State (USA) according to the Ravens Advanced Progressive Matrices (APM), in correlation with the 2000 election vote and the income by State. The table was inspired by the: Lynn, Richard & Vanhanen Tatu (2002), *IQ and the Wealth of Nations*. West Point, CT: Praeger / Greenwood Publishing Group³.

3rd Worksheet: A table with many examples of minorities within ethnic groups that score worse on IQ tests. This table was accompanied with references to sources for each country⁴.

4th Worksheet: An extract from the newspaper *The Times, UK* (March 27, 2006) under the title “German are brainiest (but at least we’re smarter than the French)”⁵.

5th Worksheet: A table, derived from the above study of Richard Lynn, with the average IQ of 82 nations, where Greece is in the 37th position, below from almost all European countries, except Croatia and Turkey.

6th Worksheet: A text that reveals that the first source, i.e. the Lovenstein Institute report on the USA Presidents’ IQs, is a hoax, for which the British comedian Garry Trudeau and the *Guardian* had fallen⁶.

In all six cases students were asked to report on the subject and the content of the source, to write a free comment on it, and to record their emotions about it.

² For details about this hoax see for example: U.S. Presidential IQ Hoax. Wikipedia, available online at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U.S._Presidential_IQ_hoax, accessed July 21, 2013; and Text of the Lovenstein Institute Email, The Museum of Hoaxes, available online at <http://www.museumofhoaxes.com/lovenstein.html>, accessed July 21, 2013.

³ See the next note.

⁴ Myth: Some ethnic groups have genetically inferior IQ's, in: The Long FAQ on Liberalism, Copyright by Steve Kangas, editor, available online at <http://www.huppi.com/kangaroo/L-inferiorIQ.htm>, accessed July 22, 2013.

⁵ This article was based on the following study: Lynn, Richard (2005). *Race Differences in Intelligence: An Evolutionary Analysis*, Augusta (GA): Washington Summit Books.

⁶ See above note No 2.

7th Worksheet: A questionnaire, the purpose of which was the description and the analysis of students' learning reactions during the reading of the six sources. The students should answer the following questions:

- 1) What you thought, what you felt etc. during the study of the six sources?
- 2) Did you identify some point in the whole process in which you felt crumbles to your initial impression on the validity of the sources, which were all related to measuring intelligence (IQ)?
- 3) If you had the chance to modify something on previous approaches and estimates, would you change anything? If yes, what and why? If not, why?
- 4) How different do you think now for the content and the measurement procedure of intelligence (IQ)? (Too much, very, so-so, a little, not at all).
- 5) a. What can the utility of theories of *guiding impasse-driven learning* and of *cognitive dissonance* be in the history teaching?
b. Could you give a specific example?

The method used for processing the data, according to which the necessary categories and subcategories were formed, was the *content analysis*.

4.3. Research findings

The above mentioned analysis led to the following findings:

Table 1

Theme / Content of Worksheets No 1 – 6						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Understanding	27	26	27	27	27	26
Misunderstanding	-	1	-	-	-	1

As is illustrated in Table 1, almost all students understood the theme and the content of sources

Table 2

Free Comments on the Content of Worksheets No 1 – 6						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Acceptance	17	18	6	7	14	22
Reservation / Doubt	6	5	10	9	7	3
Controversy	2	3	3	3	3	-
Rejection	1	1	4	5	2	1
Contradictions	-	-	1	1	1	1
No answer	1	-	2	1	-	-

Table 2 shows that the majority of students accepted the validity of the sources 1 and 2. Their certainty fell on the next two sources where the information came into conflict with their beliefs, especially the primacy of North Europeans and of men, but bounced back somewhere around source 5.

Table 3

Emotions on the Content of Worksheets No 1 – 6							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Confirmation	2	2	2	1	1	-	8
Interest	3	4	2	3	6	-	18
Curiosity	1	1	-	1	2	1	6
Pleasure, joy	1	1	-	-	1	-	3
Laugh, irony	2	2	-	1	-	1	6
Surprise	4	3	3	3	2	3	18
Impression	1	1	1	1	2	7	13
Reflection, questioning	8	6	5	3	3	4	29
Suspiciousness, doubt	1	2	3	7	4	1	18
Regret	1	4	1	-	2	-	8
Disappointment	1	-	2	-	-	3	6
Injustice	-	-	2	-	2	-	4
Vexation	-	-	5	4	1	-	10
Anger	-	1	1	4	1	-	7
Confusion	2	1	-	-	2	2	7
Indifference	3	1	1	1	3	4	13
No answer	2	4	2	1	1	2	12

According to Table 3, the majority of students felt surprise, doubt and wonder, but these emotions were usually not translated into strong critical questioning.

Table 4

Worksheet 7 – Answers to Questions						
Students	Thoughts/ Emotions	Point of Reflection	Modification of Thinking	Change on I.Q.	a. Utility	b. Example
1	Clarification, additional data	YES, indefinitely	YES, attention to details	Very much	Irrelevancy	Irrelevancy
2	Interesting information	YES, 4 th (women)	YES, previous sources	A little	-	-
3	Interesting, doubt about validity	YES, indefinitely	NO, plausible data	So-so	-	-
4	Questioning on validity	YES, 6 th	NO, plausible data	Very much	Search for truth through falsification	Irrelevancy
5	Suspiciousness	YES, 6 th	NO	So-so	Critical thinking	-
6	Surprise	YES, 4 th (North – South)	YES	Very much	Critical thinking	Irrelevancy
7	Reproduction	YES, 4 th	NO,	So-so	Critical	-

	of stereotypes	(North – South)	suspiciousness from the beginning		thinking	
8	Doubt about validity	YES, 6 th	NO, plausible data	So-so	Critical thinking	-
9	Doubt about validity	YES, indefinitely	YES, more suspiciousness	A little	Prejudices	Homosexuality in Ancient Greece
10	Confirmation based on sources	YES, 4 th I.Q of French	NO, plausible data	So-so	Critical thinking	-
11	Questioning on connection of variables with I.Q.	YES, 6 th	NO, plausible data	Very	Critical examination	Conflicting sources _ Multiperspectivity
12	Need for additional data	YES, 4 th (North – South)	NO, plausible data	So-so	Critical thinking	Conflicting sources _ Multiperspectivity
13	Difficulty for validity testing	YES, 5 th	YES, questioning on validity of sources	So-so	Critical thinking	Conflicting sources _ Multiperspectivity
14	Interesting content	YES, 6 th	YES, careful control of data	-	Critical thinking	Conflicting sources _ Multiperspectivity
15	Suspiciousness	YES, 2 nd	NO, no deception	-	Critical thinking	Conflicting sources _ Multiperspectivity
16	Certainty at the beginning, surprise at the end	YES, 5 th	YES, careful control of data	Very	Critical thinking	-
17	Questioning for the purpose of the activity	YES, 3 rd & mostly 4 th	YES, careful control of sources	So-so	Critical thinking	Conflicting sources _ Multiperspectivity
18	Surprise, controversy, confusion	YES, mostly 6 th	NO	So-so	Critical thinking	Conflicting sources _ Multiperspectivity
19	Enervation	NO, plausible sources	YES, reservation	A little	Critical thinking	Conflicting sources _ Multiperspectivity
20	Interest	YES, mostly 6 th	YES, serious reflection	So-so	Critical thinking	Different versions of the same event – Conflicting sources
21	Initial acceptance, progressively	YES, from 2 nd & mostly 6 th	YES	A little	Critical thinking	Sequentially portraits

	doubt					of Stalin – Conflicting sources
22	Suspiciousness	YES, 3 rd	YES, careful control of sources, especially of 1 st	So-so	Critical – historical thinking	Video for the first moon landing
23	Questioning	YES, 3 rd & 4 th	YES, careful control of sources	Very much	Critical thinking	-
24	Difficulty of understanding	YES, mostly 6 th	YES, careful control of sources	Very much	Critical thinking	-
25	Fabricated data	YES, from 3 rd	NO	A little	Misundersta nding	
26	Continuous questioning for the truth	YES, mostly 6 th	NO	Very	Critical thinking	Conflicting sources _ Multiper- spectivity
27	Controversy, confusion	YES, indefinitely	YES, additional information	Very	-	-

Table 4.1

Thoughts / Emotions	No
Acceptance / Certainty	4
Interesting Information	4
Surprise / Confusion	3
Need for Additional Data	2
Questioning / Doubt about Validity	7
Continuous Questioning for the Truth	1
Suspiciousness	2
Reproduction of Stereotypes	1
Fabricated Data	1
Enervation	1
Questioning for the Purpose of the Activity	1
Total	27

Table 4.2

Crumbles to Initial Impression	In General	2	3	3 / 4	4	5	6	Total
YES / Point	2	2	2	2	5	2	11	26
NO								1

Table 4.2

Modification of Thinking	No
YES	15
NO	12
Total	27

Table 4.3

Change on I.Q.	No
Not at all	-
A little	4
So – so	10
Very	5
Very much	5
No answer	3
Total	27

Table 4.4

Utility for History Teaching	No	Example	No
Critical / Historical Thinking	20	Comparison of Conflicting Sources / Different Views of the Same Event	13
Irrelevant Answers	-		3
No Answer	7		11
Total	27		27

According to tables 4 and 4.1 – 4.4, the following findings are of particular interest:

1. Most students (13:27) said that their doubts about the validity of the contents were reinforced mainly from the 3rd source and below. Many, however, realized the problem only by uncovering the hoax in the last source (11:27).
2. Most students said that they were willing to modify their approach. The majority of those who were unwilling to do so explained that the data seemed believable and reasonable. Only one said that he had serious doubts from the beginning.
3. Finally, most students (20:27) were of the opinion that this strategy is useful for the development of critical thinking, while almost half of them (13:27) found that this may be applicable in the teaching of history, mainly through the use of conflicting sources and through multiperspectivity or other similar practices.

4. Conclusions

The quasi-experiment leads to some critical conclusions:

1. Students are usually not ready to recognize the drastic effect of microtheories and of dominant perceptions on their way of thinking, notwithstanding their prior theoretical knowledge on some issues, such as in the case of criticism on IQ tests.
2. Students show similar lack of critical readiness when analyzing sources, the validity of which they accept more easily because their content agrees with the students' prejudices and stereotypes.

3. Cognitive dissonance/conflict usually occurs when the content of a source is in contradiction with the students' beliefs. In our research this was the case mainly with the sources 3 and 4. Indeed, it appears that the model of Appleton (1997) has been proved functional, as well as the strategy suggested by Limón (2001), namely that of presenting or offering anomalous data or contradictory information. Also it is partially confirmed that there are four stages in cognitive conflict: recognition of anomalous data, interest, anxiety, and reappraisal of cognitive conflict situation ((Lee & Kwon, 2001, Lee et al., 2003).
4. It has been proved that Cognitive dissonance/conflict can be a good instructional strategy, in conjunction with guiding impasse-driven learning. Of course, constructing and managing cognitive conflict and impasse-driven learning is a very difficult task for any teacher, but developing critical thinking skills and fostering conceptual change is very important(op.cit.).
5. This strategy may also have a variety of applications in the teaching of history, especially in the context of the principle of multiperspectivity and of interpretive multiplicity.

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From EU policies to the economic crisis: The rise of the neoliberal agenda and the demise of public education in Italy.

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Abstract

The paper intends to give a critical analysis of the neoliberal reforms that are deeply changing the Italian school system, starting from the experience of socio-political struggles on two basic issues: the abuse of temporary teaching contracts and the spread of standardized testing. Moreover, it points out the relationship between the reforming process and the changing role of school-workers unions, with a particular focus on the rise of social movements in the fight to save State education in Italy.

Keywords: Neoliberal reforms, standardized tests, INVALSI, temporary teachers, unions, intellectuals, critical thinking/productive-thinking, COBAS, European Union.

“Art and science are free and teaching them is free.
The Republic lays down general rules for instruction
and establishes State schools for all kinds and grades.
Entities and private persons have the right to establish
schools and institutions of education,
without funding from the State.”
Costituzione della Repubblica Italiana (1948), art. 33

Where is Italian education going?

Italy has a long tradition of state education: over the last 150 years, public education has been a key factor in the strength of the Italian democracy. Public schools have been the place where Italian has become the national language, where Italian people have become aware of their history and culture; public schools have always been totally inclusive and free, places where pupils from different ethnic, social and economic backgrounds have worked together. Private institutions have always existed, but to date they comprise just a small part of the education system (around 10%).

Nevertheless, the situation in our country and all over Europe is rapidly changing (see De Michele, 2010 cap. 1 and 3): since the end of the 90's the European Union has been pushing for neoliberal policies in education (as shown by the "Lisbon agenda" devised in 2000), influencing the state member's strategies. In Italy the neoliberal reform in education has been encouraged by both right and left governments, and it has been strongly supported by financial institutions (such as banks and foundations) as well as by powerful Catholic associations. As a result, the quality of public schools is dramatically decreasing: the government is cutting funds for renovating school buildings, for libraries and new technology; it is reducing programs for pupils with special needs and for immigrant pupils; it is increasing class size after heavy cuts in the teaching staff. And Italian teachers are among the least paid in the EU and 25% of them have been working with temporary contracts for years. Moreover, in 2007 the Ministry of Education introduced standardized testing: the bizarre purpose was to give a global evaluation of the deeply heterogeneous Italian public education system, but the result has been an exacerbation of education inequality and a loss of quality in teaching. In these years of economic crisis, successive governments of different political orientations have endorsed the same agenda - defunding public education - in the name of "economical urgency". And the same governments have never stopped funding private schools and universities (which in Italy are mainly Catholic), as a consequence of the old and ruinous link between Italian politics and the Vatican.

Berlusconi's reforms and the fall of the major school unions.

Given this scenario, a few questions arise: how are the main school stakeholders reacting, and more extensively the whole population of Italian citizens? How is the struggle against neoliberal reform of education in Italy progressing? And what is the role played by Teachers Unions and social movements?

The crucial point in the recent history of the Italian education system was the so-called Gelmini's reform. In August 2008, during Berlusconi's fourth Cabinet, the Council of Ministers declared the "Tremonti law" (nr.133) cutting funding for all public services in light of difficult economic conditions, including art.64 which cut nearly eight billion euros (more than 10 billion US dollars) in funding for public school education. Indeed, such a huge defunding required a comprehensive review of the whole education system, from primary school to University. This was the job of the Education Minister Mariastella Gelmini (still one of the prominent figures of Berlusconi's Forza Italia party), who introduced a package of destructive measures:

the number of pupils per class (up to 32) increased, as well as the planned number of teaching hours per teacher per week, which led to a subsequent cut of 87.000 teaching jobs. Schools closed in areas with low numbers of pupils (mainly in Italy's mountains and islands) and school time per week had been reduced, cutting mainly humanistic subjects as Literature, Art, Music: they were perceived as "useless" in a logic of "productive education" based on computer technology, applied maths and business technology. The replacement of the "critical thinking" with the "productive thinking" has been global in the capitalistic societies (Nussbaum, 2010: 34) but in countries with a huge cultural heritage like Italy, the cut of art/history-based teaching becomes also an economic suicide. In this direction went also the strengthening of standardized testing for basic literacy and math, considered by Gelmini the only reliable method to evaluate the public school system.

These policies have been carried out under the guise of improving the outdated Italian education system and, at the same time, with propaganda discrediting the figures of teachers as public employees and educators (Bajani, 2014 cap.4).

In the following fall, a widespread protest arose: on October 30th 2008, the major union confederations (CGIL, CISL and UIL) together with teachers Unions like Gilda and Snals, called for a national strike: hundreds of thousands of teachers, students and parents marched through Italian cities, almost a million people reached Rome for the main demonstration. With the typical arrogance of Berlusconi's politics, the government just ignored the protest and went ahead with the reform. The consequences have been disastrous for our schools that are still paying the price, but also for unionism and for the protest movement for education reform in general. People have stopped trusting the effectiveness of school unions in terms of collective bargaining and providing real opposition to neoliberal change. Since then the main unions have lost most of their bargaining power and have definitely renounced any form of conflict with the several governments that have since been in power. As a result, any important change in school workers' rights has been decided through the legislative process, without any negotiation between legislators and teachers. (the "missing in action" well described by Weiner, 2012: 8-9).

Italy's major unions, nowadays, consist of skilled officials helping union members navigate school bureaucracy, but there is no commitment to support workers in their struggle for their rights, a battle teachers are losing year after year. But with the major school unions in a deep "identity crisis", who is actually providing real opposition? Of

course the students' associations are still an important element in activism, but the main forces in defending education and social justice have been the so-called "Base unions" (the "Sindacati di base", listed and described in *Struggles in Italy*, 2012) and a new wave of social movements.

The challenges of *precariato* and INVALSI testing.

After 2008 and the Gelmini reforms, the critical opposition has been focused on two crucial issues: the abuse of temporary contracts (called in Italian "precariato") in state schools and the introduction of standardized testing in all school levels. Despite the importance of these issues, the confederal unions didn't give any sign of resistance: as a result, both of these fights, based on opposition through conferences, strikes and demonstrations, have been conducted outside the major union organizations. The first issue concerns the situation of temporary teachers, well drawn by Brancatisano (2010): in Italy there are roughly 200.000 out of 800.000 teachers with temporary contracts, who have been waiting for a permanent position for years even after passing a public exam required for permanent teachers. They are fired June 30th every year to be hired again the following September: this trick allows the State to save money by not paying wages during the summer period. Moreover, the number of temporary and unemployed teachers has increased significantly after the cuts of Berlusconi's government and the Court of the European Union is about to condemn Italy for such unjust treatment on behalf of school employees. According with Gallino (2014: 6), we call such a labour policy *insecurity*, not *flexibility*. Nothing has been done by major national unions, and so, starting in 2009 temporary teachers began organising themselves in free local movements called "Coordinamenti Precari Scuola" (Temporary Teachers Committee). The main groups, still active, have been in Roma, Milano, Napoli and Bologna. The organization is voluntary, without hierarchy and self-financing; the political actions take place mostly at the local-level as the situation differs from place to place throughout Italy, but the several Committee have often worked together: the last collaboration was the national "Temporary teachers strike" in April 2014, when a delegation from the various committees was finally received by the Ministry of Education in Rome after hours of a sit-in at their office. The debate with the Minister's officials was difficult. We soon understood the message: there is no will from politicians to solve the problem, the Government just accepts keeping workers in temporary situations as an inescapable fact, without any concern for the thousands of people left to an uncertain future. The Ministry guaranteed to hire

14.000 temporary teachers next September: unfortunately, the number of temporary teachers employed at the moment is ten times higher. The struggle is still going: temporary teachers are eagerly awaiting for the sentence from the European Court that will be published on November the 26th and will apply sanctions to the Italian Government for exploitation of school workers. The Committees all over Italy will definitively continue demanding permanent positions for all of the teachers exploited for years by the school system.

The second issue concerns the growing use of national testing to evaluate students and schools. The harmful effects that testing is having on teaching practices and school curricula are sadly known from countries like US (see Giroux, 2013) and UK (see Wrigley, 2006: 13-20), which have experienced it in education since years. Here the point is rather focused on the resistance campaigns come up over Italy to challenge it. Again, the tacit consent of confederal unions, since the beginning of the process, has been remarkable. They offered no critical resistance when Berlusconi's government created the National Institute of Schools Evaluation (INVALSI), a state-funded research institution which manages the evaluation of the education system by analysing the "objective" data from the standardized test results. The introduction of standardized testing is one of the steps leading to the privatization of Italy's public-schools: in the 5 years from 2006 to 2011, the INVALSI tests have been introduced in all the school stages, from primary to upper secondary school, even for the final exam in middle school (with devastating consequences, as shown in Millozzi, 2014: 152) . The only anti-INVALSI campaign was held by the base unions, mainly by COBAS. In the Italian system, the base unions are small unions, born out of the disputes of the 70's social protests, presenting themselves as alternatives to the confederals but unlike the major unions they are excluded from the collective bargaining process. Within the COBAS Union, a critical analysis quickly developed regarding the teaching-to-the-test system and its social effects; the results have been discussed in several conferences around Italy and summarized in a volume (Bernocchi, P. et al., 2013), published in 2013 by the COBAS Institute for Public Education Studies (CESP). Alongside their theoretical reflection, COBAS began an awareness campaign inside the schools for teachers, parents and older students aiming to encourage them to boycott the tests. In order to enable protesting teachers not to give the test, COBAS and other base unions like USB called a strike on the dates of INVALSI national exams. Many parents kept their children at home (in several cities some schools

remained closed), and high school students faked the tests or refused to answer the questions. During the strike, teachers and students staged a sit-in at the Ministry in Rome as well as in other cities. This form of strike against the INVALSI test has been successfully repeated for the last four years, with a growing debate involving the public opinion through newspapers, TV and web.

The main achievement of the anti-INVALSI movement has been to force the Ministry of Education to make some changes. A small but important success happened this year: the elimination of the INVALSI exam for the first year of middle school.

The role of intellectuals and conscious teachers.

Unfortunately the analysis (and the sequent debate) on INVALSI tests have never involved the academia and researchers in the field of education, excluding very few exceptions. Two outstanding intellectuals coming from different fields of knowledge, like the mathematician Giorgio Israel and the classicist Luciano Canfora have condemned the test-system through newspapers' interviews and articles (Canfora, 2013; Israel, 2014) but they have never given any critical opinion "as scholars" inside the Academia. This is significant to show the lack of commitment to social and political issues typical of Italian academics, closed in a sort of "ivory tower" and unable to influence the socio-political contest of their country. Now, more than ever, Italy does need a new generation of "organic intellectuals", almost a century after Antonio Gramsci and half a century after Pierpaolo Pasolini. And moreover, education needs a new era of critical pedagogy to contrast the growing role of neoliberal policies. Both the fight of temporary teachers and the battle against the INVALSI standardized testing demonstrate how movements for social justice in education are still alive in Italy, despite the passivity of the main unions and despite twenty years of bipartisan politics against public education. But the positive action of the movements will survive only with a new generation of "conscious teachers" taking part in them and actively committed in social struggles, as pointed out by Lois Weiner (2012):

A new movement of teachers can help spearhead development of the broad political and social resistance needed to reverse the tidal wave destroying public education, and social movement unionism is at the heart of that struggle. (p.36)

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Financial crisis and the dreams of high school students for the future

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Abstract

This abstract is part of my MA dissertation under the title “Different types of violence in Modern Greek school: a case study”. It addresses mainly structural violence drawing on the theoretical assumptions of Critical Pedagogy of Peace and Critical Pedagogy. In this paper I primarily focus on the way the students of 23rd High School of Thessaloniki, where the research was held, face and picture their future under the circumstances of financial crisis. The Greek financial crisis is a major factor in pupils' responses that acts decisively and in certain cases shapes the dreams for the future and how children project themselves in it. The internalization of the objective conditions along with the feeling that these conditions are insurmountable and invincible, are almost always present to students' thinking process and their accounts of reality. The structural violence, the violence of social inequality, which aggravates due to the crisis, traps mainly the subjugated social groups and simultaneously defines the role of Critical educator in these conditions.

Keywords: financial crisis, structural violence, frustrated dreams, alienation, marginalization, barbarism

“What happens to a dream differed?
It dries up
like a raisin in the sun”.
Langston Hughes

Concerning Research

The proposition presented today constitutes part of my Master Degree dissertation which examines the issue of violence in modern Greek schools. In this paper, the research topic does not explore merely or exclusively the phenomenon of physical violence as appears in schools (bullying), but the structural and cultural violence which draws on theoretical assumptions of Critical Peace Education and Critical

Pedagogy. More specifically, my dissertation addresses school violence in real time and place, the punitive and disciplinary framework, the relationships among the subjects of the educational environment, the means and the teaching methods, the existence -or not- of racist beliefs and finally focuses on the way students, both male and female, see themselves in the present and future time.

The research was conducted in the 23rd High School of Thessaloniki, during the year 2012-2013, at the heart of the financial crisis. The school is located in the city centre, in an evidently degraded area. Students who attend this school along with those enrolled to another two Junior High Schools that all three are housed together, belong to lower socioeconomic class. Parents of most of these children are workers and employees. Also, the majority, up to 70 percent, are second generation immigrants. Most of these come mainly from Georgia, Russia and Albania.

For the needs of this research, 49 anonymous assignments were examined, the completion of which was triggered by a questionnaire structured on the framework mentioned above. These projects were analyzed with the methodological tools of qualitative research (Critical Hermeneutics and ideologico-critical approach) as well as the Critical Discourse Analysis.

Today's abstract focuses on how students face their future and perceive themselves in it. The question answered was irrelevant to the financial crisis, yet the crisis interfered with their answers, as an inevitable fact. The question was: "What are your dreams for the future and the potentials to make them come true?"

Living to the extend feasible

The following answers indicate how the objective conditions burden students' hopes and dreams. Similar to an insurmountable wall, families' financial recession, as outcome of the economic downturn, seems to frighten children and make them limit or even abandon their ambitions.

I'm thinking about applying for the School of History and Archaeology here, in Thessaloniki. I like theatre a lot, though I know that it will be difficult to find a job as an actress. That's why I've decided to study something else I'm interested in and I'll see what I do later on. Many things can change in ten years though. So, instead of being frustrated and not believe in anything, we could better be more optimist and ambitious, because out of the blue life changes route and everything is different.

I picture myself a very competent teacher at school, a beloved one by pupils, doing creative things with them. Moreover, I would like to travel, see new places and meet new and different people. Also, in my life along with my profession, I'd like to be involved in something more artistic, which I could take up as a hobby and

lead me to something else. I'd love to be a volunteer for organizations and serve the common good, such as environmental ones or else. It's true that the current situation has forbidden us even to make dreams but we mustn't stop dreaming, we have to try and realize as many dreams as we can.

My dream is to be a teacher of elementary school and make an effort to put in practice all those things I wanted to do as a student. Interacting with children and educating them substantially, is a life dream for me, it is something I love. I picture myself fighting against social injustice, but this is pointless. I already know that my dream will never come true. It may sound pessimistic but who can be an optimist in this financial and mainly social crisis? I'm really afraid I'll end up doing something I don't love.

In the future I would like to be either a researcher or a musician. None of those two is easy nowadays, since in both cases you are self-employed and you hardly have a chance. I want to follow these careers but I won't earn my living.

In the future I'd love to study physiotherapy and dance as well. Obviously, this is a bit difficult, because a lot of money is needed for both schools! If I had a lot of money, I could study them both. Now, I can only choose one.

I would like to be a teacher of English, because I love the language. I'm not sure if this is possible, especially now due to the economic crisis. If we recover from the recession, many children will realize their dreams.

In the future, I would like to work and be independent, to study and live life to the fullest. Also, I'd like to have fun with my friends and determine myself my life path as much as possible. I hope I'll be given the chance to realize these dreams, mostly the one concerning work, since in our days the situation is even worse, due to the economic crisis.

According to the totality of the above evidence, it is apparent that the professions preferred the most, such as “teacher of primary and secondary school”, or “nursery teacher”, are in some cases combined with art, a path which students would dearly follow while studying something else, but it cannot be trusted from fear of non-sustainable living, “especially nowadays because of the crisis”.As a consequence, artistic activities are either abandoned or placed only as a possibility far into the future. Worth-mentioning is also the fact that, when it comes to students' job prospects the current situation acts as a brake as well. The financial and social crisis is seen as an obstacle impossible to overcome, because children understand that living in these conditions run the risk of being unemployed and eventually end up doing a job they haven't chosen. According to their quotes: “It may sound pessimistic but most probably I'll end up unemployed”, “I don't want to be a pessimist but I 'm afraid I will do something that I don't love”, “ maybe I won't be able to earn my living”, “I'm not sure if this is possible, especially now due to the economic crisis”, “the current situation has forbidden us even to make dreams”.The adversative conjunction “but”, which is

repeated, separates students' wishes from reality, the desirable optimism from the unwanted pessimism. Moreover, the modalverb “maybe” conveys the fear of a potential weakness to achieve their goals, “maybe they [dreams] won't”, “maybe I won't be able to earn my living”. Accordingly, the phrase “has forbidden us” and the determinism which carries, eliminates the dream to the sphere of impossible to happen, and imprints to the subject the idea of an overbearing, yet impersonal “situation”, which is imposed and functions by default, far beyond the subject's will. Simultaneously, the phrase “I'm afraid of” is straightforward connected to the harsh socioeconomic situation, which along with the intensification caused by the adverb “very”, transforms the fear of a not desired future life, opposed to one's will, into almost certainty.

The current socioeconomic conditions seem to threaten young children's lives and lead them to psychological entrapment, decisions which are not directed by their personal choices and therefore do not correspond to their dreams, real needs or desires. This is the definition of alienation by Marx (Marx,1979), as far as individuals feel they do not control their thinking process, the decision making procedure and they finally fail to determine their own future. Contrary, it is their destiny self-imposed on them, because of the financial downturn. This attitude towards life is a far cry from their personalities. As a result, this prospect generates fear “I'm really afraid”, a kind of fear which is to be exhorted by youth, since youth is meant to hope and dream, “but I believe that we mustn't stop dreaming”, “We'd rather be a bit optimists and ambitious and smile”.

However, the transformation of hope into reality seems to rely exclusively on luck, on an unknown and indefinable future that human fails to control and weigh its conditions, development and conclusion. Here, hope appears as an ingredient of a potential positive turn of time in the future, “in ten years”, or as a relatively irrational attitude towards life, “because out of the blue life changes route and everything is different”. Life materializes, becomes the subject of the sentence, and marches on according to its own will, independent of any human factor. This kind of life seems to develop automatically, spinning like Russian roulette, like a dice that can accidentally land on the lucky number. Individuals are not the active agents of their lives, able to change their living conditions; instead, they witness this life adrift.

Even in that case of the student who wants to bring the change, soon enough the effort is doomed to fail. An inescapable fate foreshadows that this is a futile fight, “I picture

myself fighting against social injustice, but this is pointless". The force which imposes the exploitation seems extremely powerful, surpassing, and unbeatable and the defeat of those fighting is both scheduled and expected. An alienated ego does not define, it is defined by conditions out and beyond his/her will that surpasses him/her, dark, incomprehensible, insurmountable. The impossibility of a victory against injustice appears as given fact. The teenager's psyche is marked by the undeniable certainty, a fact which is justified by the use of the verb "I know", implying awareness of the situation. Furthermore, the subordinate clause which follows serves as direct object to the verb, "that my dream will never come true". The submission of students to their fate appears as the only option. For some only dreams and hope counterbalance this situation. Thinking and action are limited to the extent of having "as many dreams as possible".

Minimum life expectations

Internalization of the objective conditions leads to compromise with what appears to be destiny. Expectations lead to a slight improvement of labor and social status compared to those of parents and social environment. The rest, dreams ambitions and plans seems to have ended even before birth. Resignation looks more attractive choice as less painful than the frustration of dreams, which is considered certain.

Nowadays my dreams and goals seem distant and impossible to come true, not any more. Various causes, mainly social and financial, act against the realization of my goals.

A dream is the realization of a future plan that we ardently desire. Personally speaking, I would like to study economics. How I picture myself in a few years however, is something I don't want to predict. I don't want to make plans for the future that they maynot come true, because most probably I'll be disappointed. I believe that we must let life roll without having great expectations.

In the future, I would like to work and be independent, to study and live life to the fullest. Also, I'd like to have fun with my friends and determine myself my life path as much as possible. I hope I'll be given the chance to realize these dreams, mostly the one concerning work, since in our days the situation is even worse, due to the economic crisis.

When I was younger, I used to think about what I could do in ten years time. Now, I can't do the same. The overall situation in which we live in has destroyed my vision of the future, because I know that skills are not enough, if there aren't the right opportunities. I think I will have left Greece and stay in a free country, where I can find hope for the future. Finally, I think of having a job, to provide me not only with goods but also the satisfaction that what I do is an offer to myself and the others.

My dream is to become a hair stylist, open a salon, save money, and leave with my parents and siblings for another place; I want to get away from her.

I don't know which profession I would like to choose, but I would like to be financially independent, so as no one could ever say "I took care of you for so many years, I sustain you financially and it's me...me..." I would like to work in a building and have a specific timetable, so as not to be cold, when it rains and keep working when it is too hot.

I think that the generation in which I belong isn't good, because the next years Greece would be in a worse situation, and the only thing left to do is hardly pay my own expenses for food.

Primarily, I'd like to have proper attitude and manners rather than education. I would like a decent job, though I don't think this is going to happen. The following years all these will be very hard!

My dream is to study in the university, in a good military school or the maths faculty in Thessaloniki, because I can't afford to study in another city.

Expectations, as seen to the preceding statements, have been diminished to the minimum level, "we must let life roll without having great expectations". It seems a better option not to expect much from life which once more "rolls" unexplored and unexpected, able to turn upside down and fail us in the most painful way. "Most probably I will be disappointed", since there is no room for predictions in a reality we cannot understand, we lack the tools to analyze and make sense of. The answer to the fear of future unrealized dreams, which functions as defence mechanism, as a protective shield against frustration and negative feelings, is the low expectations, as observed to students' responses, "I don't want to predict" and "I don't want to make plans for the future that they may not come true". Even imagination cannot work under such conditions, make a leap into the future and capture personal life in some years, "I used to think about what I could do in ten years time but not any more". Time for future plans has eventually faded away.

For others, requirements of life and expectations for the future are related to securing one's personal dignity and independence, a slight improvement comparing to parents and their current situation, since parents is the standard with which teenagers might compare themselves: "I would like to work in a building and have a specific timetable, so as not to be cold, when it rains and keep working when it is too hot." Expectations are extremely low and only connected to the working place or weather conditions in order to protect the individual from cold or warm. At this point, emerges the internalization of objective conditions (Bourdieu 1985: 367), the

submission to “fate”, to social destiny, which limits the way that the student picture herself in the future. This “internalized necessity” (Bourdieu 1985: 367) refers to what Giroux defines as “the deeper grammar of class domination and structural inequality” (2010: 94) which becomes the norm and appears as socially acceptable situation.

At times, pupils' expectations touch the bare minimum, the very essential “may health problems be missing as much as possible in order for the living conditions to be better and we can live more calmly”. For a child when the family environment is burdened by health problems, the best gift possible would be to reduce and ensure comparatively again, “better”, living conditions, primarily psychological, “calmly”. In some other cases, it becomes apparent that dreams for the future shrink and are reduced to the level of mere survival, since to find a job equals to “hardly pay my own expenses for food”. This phrase underlies the knowledge that the job to be found, if ever found, will be underpaid and barely cover even the very essential expenses, in this country where, according to the student's opinion, the situation will progressively become even worse and it is not only him but the whole generation in which he belongs that will find themselves trapped in a very difficult situation.

What is also striking, is the fact that pupils' ambitions for studies, if any, depend once again on the financial prospects of their families, since the realization of their dreams is quite expensive: “because I can't afford to study in another city”. Here, it is implied that this specific person, will not apply for a university located in “another city”, but even in the hypothetical case that he succeeds in doing so, most probably he will not enroll to the school, given that the daily expenses are so high away from home and that it will be impossible for his family to afford. If we examine now the case of that student who proposes as his personal dream the proper attitude towards life, the right ethical code, “proper attitude and manners”, and he cares less for an educational vision, which is also connected with what he calls a “proper job”, argues eventually that “the following years all these will be very hard!”. The use of the demonstrative pronoun “these” in plural coupled with the word “all”, substitutes here his goals, whose realization is burdened by the crisis, it is in fact both job and education that stand for “these” in this context. It becomes apparent, therefore, that he has come to terms with, or he is about to accept the idea that the diminution of “all these” are linked in a physical way to the financial crisis.

There is also the case of the student who adopts a more critical view towards reality. She realizes, in contrast with the dominant educational and social arguments which

attribute the achievement of academic goals to natural talents, strong will and hard work of students, that it is not only personal “skills” necessary prerequisite to study but also various other facts mainly “social and financial”. The same awareness is evident in the case of that student who expresses the same view in a rather metaphorical way: “various causes, mainly social and financial, act against the realization of my goals”. The utterance as structured by the economic and social causes, which are personified and resist him/ her who tries to implement his/her life project, gives the impression of a man-to-man fight, a conflict, a clash between the student, who struggles in order to realize his/her plans and factors which are far beyond them, impossible to be fully interpreted, “various causes”, a fact that makes even harder the resolution of the problem. The outcome of such a conflict is rather a losing battle, since she/he claims in a determined and firm fashion: “Nowadays my dreams and goals seem distant and impossible to come true”. Dreaming nowadays seems distant, like a blurred future possibility in the realms of the impossible. The phrase “not any more” indicates as well that the time frame for a possible positive outcome of the battle has dissipated. The battle has been forever lost and the adjective “impossible” marks the final scene. The “resisting conditions” win the student's “attitude”. Reality proved stronger than the student and therefore, is imposed on him/her defining the way she/he pictures his/her future.

The same awareness is evident in the case of that student above who is well aware of the social and economic factors and their subsequent restrictive role. She states that, contrary to what happened when she was younger, she can no longer imagine herself in the future: “When I was younger, I used to think about what I could do in ten years time. Now, I can't do the same”. The phrase “now, I can't do the same” resembles very much the previous “not any more” indicating a frustrating time that shatters the perspectives. It is the same person who draws later the conclusion that “the overall situation in which we live in has destroyed my vision of the future”. How furious the Greek crisis can be is reflected in the verb “destroy” which with all the semantic tension that conveys, it isn't simply about a professional dream but refers to “a vision of the future”. That probably means something much broader, possibly a “vision” for the future, possibly a whole life plan, or even a design that transcends personal calling and extends to the society. Here, the verb “destroy” does not indicate a temporary suspension of the vision but a severe blight which has shaped the child's psyche, giving the sense of an irreversible situation.

Hence, in a country that “destroys” its children, dreams are shuffled to other latitudes, to distant and idealized countries of freedom, where people can make their dreams come true “I think I will leave Greece and stay in a free country, where I can find hope for the future”. At this point, Greece, as an unfree country, is contrasted with other non defined destinations, perhaps utopian lands of freedom, which are approached through imagination by the student. Greece is therefore presented here either as an “enslaved” country or in terms of metonymy as a country consisting of people with no rights, confined to a life without opportunities and hope. Additionally, the desire to escape is so strong that it is perceived as a completed action and not as a future plan, “I will have left”, in Future Perfect Simple tense. At times the need to flee is expressed in a more impulsive way “leave...for another place, I want to get away from here”. The place where the expectations are realized is anywhere “another place”, perfectly contrasted to “here”. Moreover, the use of commas functions as if something threatens the student, and reinforces the need to escape.

“Killing” for a slice of bread”

The financial and social dead end is understood or better worded, experienced in the most threatening dimensions by some students. Sometimes, their self projection in the future seems bleak.

If things continue as such, in the future I picture myself jobless killing for a slice of bread.

Up to this point several answers have been examined further, answers which refer to trivial dreams in a reality that gradually narrows, dreams that are compressed because of the objective prospects, ambitions adapted to the realistic possibilities. This specific student, though, pushes the verbal limits indicating his hopelessness and despair: “If things continue as such, in the future I picture myself jobless killing for a slice of bread”. This phrase does not leave any room for misunderstanding. Such a situation may lead to atrocities. The use of an “If clause” referring to future time, indicates a condition that the student does not want but expects to happen and gives unpredictable proximity to a perspective that seems a nightmare. The student argues that if the social conditions remain the same, he “picture[s]” himself without a job, impoverished and desperate thinking of committing a crime in order to survive. The self image projected to the future reminds of what we called until nowadays “social outcasts”, people marginalized from society, who in our country was a relatively

small number of people. Through the word choices made by the student, it is implied that the path for such a life turn has been cut short without intermediate stations in between. Extreme situations lead inevitably many people to barbarism.

Conclusions

"The unjust walks today in stable pace
the oppressors are preparing for the next ten thousand years
Violence assures: the situation as it is, will remain.
But many of the oppressed are now saying:
What we want will never happen
You, who still live, don't say ever!"
Bertolt Brecht (1932)

According to Critical Pedagogy of Peace, it becomes evident that students experience what theorists of this specific domain of inquiry call structural violence. This means that the capitalist economic and social structures and even more as they are shaped in the current context of crisis multiply inequality destroying the "conditions of equal development of power and distribution of goods" (Galtung 1969: 183), promoting multifaceted development of the individual, in a setting of equality and justice. To put it differently, violence is constructed within the structures and appears as an unequal power and therefore as unequal opportunity provider (Galtung 1969: 171) resulting to "the potentials of human beings are potentially at a higher level than what they can reach at the given reality" (Galtung 1969: 169).

According to the data collected, the conditions within the crisis intensify the deprivation mostly of the subordinate social groups of the benefits of education, wider cultivation and work and subsequently push back their members from their personal and social development. The financial downturn, which among others undergoes our country, destroys the prospects especially of the weaker, in economic terms, spreading frustration and cultivating the sense of futility and entrapment.

Under these circumstances trying to give an answer to the question behind conference's title about the role of Critical Pedagogy in the area of crisis, we rather concede that teachers, who want to work as radical, reformer educators, should face the challenge especially in such a difficult period. The ongoing degradation of public schools presupposes and demands the deprivation of teachers' role, of every creative initiative, self organizing action for the formation of the goals, the aims and the learning process as well as a broader degradation of the teacher's role in society (McLaren 2010:520). The purpose of the system seems to be "to further reduce the abilities of the teachers making them simple technical factors, condemned to wander

around into a maze full of procedures” (Macedo 2010:476). The straightforward connection of school with the new type of colonial economic context which is formed rapidly in our country alongside with the general economic and intellectual impoverishment of society threatens to diminish teachers to “processors of predetermined content and teaching procedures” (Aronowitz, Giroux 2010:203), especially when it is intended to be controlled and deprived, in conditions of relentless social war, of any possibility of resistance within the school.

Hence, the greatest calling for the critical and reformer educators is to face schools not as places where master-servant relations are reproduced but also as active intervention sites, as social places of conflict and resistance, in which are not simply hatched “ the processes of reproduction but the dynamics of social reformation as well” (Giroux 2010:104,106). Being aware of their social role and in spite of the multiple obstacles they may experience, it is essential for teachers to insist in their effort to wake up their students trying to educate critically and be educated as well in a relation of reciprocity, contribute to the formation of subjects able to identify themselves and adopt critical thinking towards themselves and the world around them (McLaren 2010:316,317) practicing the skill to unveil the «mystified elements» (Marcuse 1971:195) that obscure the mechanisms of exploitation and consent. Only through this process the pupils will be strengthened both individually and socially (McLaren 2010:287,322) so as to transform “from beings for others into beings for themselves”, to put it in Freire's words. (1974:73). The transformative practice of emancipation, in other words, cannot do otherwise but be directly linked not only to the struggle within schools but also to the active participation of teachers in the political struggle against injustice, in their effort to articulate in and out of school a new “language of possibility”(Apple 2010:238), which “demystifies reality” (Freire 1974:93) reveals the “delusional” that idealizes and legitimizes the “institutionalization” of privileges and dominance of modern power (kastoriadis 2000:135,136). This would help students and their own selves to rediscover their creative power “that has been lethargic and paralyzed” (Freire1974:90) and “understand the situation as a historical reality liable to changes” (Freire 1074:95), finding simultaneously the courage to undertake the subsequent responsibilities.

In fact, the teacher who decides to act this way, realizes what Cornelius Kastoriadis summarizes best while stating that the market economy today uses namely democratic forms which fills with oligarchic contents (Kastoriadis2011:136) and a different

educational system oriented to the emancipation of the individual can only be “indispensably connected with the rebirth of a big new sociopolitical movement which will revive democracy filling it both with the necessary forms and content demanded” (Kastoriadis 2011:137). It is quite clear, I think, particularly within the financial crisis, that this calling has become more well-timed than ever before.

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Nonverbal communication in instruction

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Abstract

The educational process has a particular dynamic and is being changed and evolved in time and space offering new challenges and demands to modern educators. In this context, understanding and adopting new communicative tactics in instruction is more than imperative, as their application potentially offers new dimensions and a powerful boost to teaching. Body language, as a new communicative tactic, can affect decisively and positively the better understanding between teacher and students, the creation of a positive climate in the classroom, the improvement of relationships, improvement of lesson and higher student performance.

Keywords: body language, classroom management, immediacy, instruction, learning.

Introduction

Learning is a multilateral concept including sufficient learning of psychomotor behaviors, acquisition of multiple levels of cognitive ability, composition and assimilation of information as well as development of emotions and attitudes. In other words, it is an on-going process through which individuals acquire new knowledge, skills and attitudes or they modify their pre-existing ones accordingly. Accumulation of knowledge or skills is done through teaching, practicing and studying. Learning is not a random but rather goal-oriented process which is strongly supported by teacher motivation and it occurs consciously (Schachter, Gilbert & Wegner, 2011). It is also an interactive process which takes place between the educator and his students in which the communicative relation between the two is rather determinant to successfully complete the process of instruction while it engages students in active learning. Active learning is enhanced when students take control over their learning

experiences. Provided that they understand the information they are introduced to, they are able to acquire command of what is taught. Through active learning students become participants of the instructional process rather than merely passive or indifferent listeners.

During instruction on an everyday basis, both students and educators articulate different standpoints and opinions and, at the same time, they are invited to manage a series of problem-solving situations and understand their interlocutors. This is not always achievable as different viewpoints are expressed and conflicts may rise. Communication on this level is not exclusively interpersonal as the educator addresses the total of his students, namely a group of individuals, attempting to convey certain messages and his role is adjusted to the work which has to be done with the group of students. Message transmission presupposes immediate response in some cases. For instance, the teacher asks a question which needs to be answered immediately, whereas in other cases no immediate response is required (Ruesch&Keis, 1956).

Discipline in the classroom is another field on which educators are concentrated as they often face difficulty in proper management of their classrooms. Even when educators employ discipline patterns in the classroom, they are surprised to find out that they result in making their classrooms harder to manage as severe rules usually fail to grab students' attention to the lesson. Besides, through discipline patterns the educator is regarded by the students as an authoritative figure, which is rather discouraging for them to actively engage in learning (Kearny, 1983).

The educator's attitude is pivotal to creating a positive climate in the classroom. In this respect, when the educator ends up criticizing the weaknesses of learners it is more likely to create a negative climate which is definitely not conducive to successful instruction. More specifically, the climate which is created is not suitable for problem-solving, offering new knowledge to be utilized by both sides. On the other hand, the educator who employs elaborated discourse patterns is more likely to grab students' attention and encourage them to actively participate in classroom activities.

In this respect, student motivation is regarded as a highly important factor to the successful completion of the learning process. By the term "student motivation" is meant the stimulating factors which determine a student's attitude toward learning. In other words, stimulating factors can boost a student's investigating skills and

consequent behaviors, specify their orientation and lead to certain choices with regard to their role in the classroom. If motivation is regarded as a kind of process then it consists of the following elements which are student energy, willingness, orientation, involvement and completion of task. These elements are strongly interrelated and depended on one another. Therefore, lacking any of these will misdirect the entire process, leading to interruption of it.

To this end, educators implement a variety of teaching techniques which do not always generate the desired outcome. Student motivation to learning, if not a predisposition, is always reinforced by a variety of patterns like communicating teachers' expectations to students, direct teaching or students' socializing with teachers. In this respect, the educator can function as an active agent in the classroom who enables communication and consequently enhances student motivation.

It is true that a successful teaching process is based on a positive interpersonal relationship between educator and students. Thus, the educator who communicates better with his audience and is characterized by immediacy is more likely to lead his learners to successfully meet the aforementioned goals (Richmond, Gorham & McCroskey, 1987).

According to Mehrabian (1971) immediacy is the manner by which a person perceives the natural and psychological approach of another person towards each other. Immediacy is interrelated with motivation and learning and can be processed by individuals so that instruction is more effective. It is distinguished in verbal and nonverbal communicative patterns (Velez & Cano, 2008).

Even though the two forms of communication differ, they are observed to co-exist in Mehrabian's theory that human beings are attracted by those ones who like the most, whereas they distance themselves from the ones who do not like or judge negatively. As regards human behavior, immediacy is associated with approaching or avoiding certain people. This tendency is based on the amount of effect which is produced.

An immediate educator is able to create a climate of familiarity in the classroom by adopting both verbal and nonverbal communicative patterns. According to researches which have been conducted over the past years it has been found that immediacy,

when it is continuous and stable instead of being occasional or piecemeal, is conducive to positive student performance. This is so because students tend to trust their educator more and, consequently, they are motivated easier to complete their classroom tasks. An immediate educator manages his classroom more effectively as

he is able to establish a climate of liking in which students find it easier to comply with his guidance(Plax, Kearney, McCroskey& Richmond, 1986).

2. Verbal and non verbal communication

Communication is a process which is carried out among individuals who assume the roles of transmitter or receiver in order to send and understand messages, distribute information and comprehend emotions. This way, healthy human relationships and the creation of a climate of acceptance and mutuality are established. A common code of communication is important so as to successfully carry out the entire process. In other words, reference is made to a system of meanings which are complete and familiar to all people involved in the process. It is clear that communication among individuals is the outcome of social learning in combination to their psychological state. In addition, throughout the course of human history, communication has been the base of interaction among people in all aspects of their lives. Understanding viewpoints, attitudes and moods of the individuals involved in the process is the first and most important step in order to develop and cultivate better relationships. Besides, proper communication is positively conducive to the improvement of the quality in people's social life.

Verbal communication includes verbal patterns in the form of written and oral discourse and can be carried out either interpersonally or massively, namely through Mass Media. It is present in our everyday life as it forms the means by which information, ideas, viewpoints or emotions are transmitted. Nonverbal communication appears in an individual's life shortly after his birth. Ray Birdwhistell (1952) was the first to interpret various body movements to which he attributed the term "kinesics" while strong interest in nonverbal communication was raised during the 1960s and 1970s. Based on descriptive linguistics Birdwhistell argued that each body movement has a particular meaning. Even before articulating its first words, the infant is able to send messages through face or body movements. This form of communication is being elaborated along with the development of verbal skills and is present in human beings throughout lifetime. Nonverbal communication is based on the processes of encoding and decoding. By the term encoding is defined the generation of information like facial expressions, gestures or posture. By decoding is defined the interpretation of information which derives from the sensations of previous experience received by a person. The two forms of communication co-exist since the one works as a supplement to the other resulting in smoother interpersonal relationships.

Furthermore, Argyle (1988) argued that nonverbal communication includes five major functions which are the expression of one's emotions, the expression of interpersonal attitudes, the accompaniment and reinforcement of verbal cues as well as the performance of certain rituals such as greetings.

The traditional dimensions of nonverbal communication are primarily associated with body language and a variety of paralinguistic elements. Thus, body language includes facial expressions, eye contact, gestures, posture, social distance and time. The paralinguistic elements encompass the quality of voice as well as its rate, pitch, volume and speaking style along with prosodic features like rhythm, intonation and stress (Pease & Pease, 2004).

One could apparently argue why people adopt nonverbal communicative patterns. The explanation to this question is multilateral. First of all words have limitations. As a result, people often use nonverbal expression to fully convey their messages like in the case of describing the shape of an item. Additionally, nonverbal communicative patterns are genuine as some body movements cannot be controlled in the same way words can (Miller, 1988).

The characteristic features of body language are concentrated on external outlooks as it forms the first nonverbal messages transmitted towards people's evaluation and affect the impressions made about other individuals. Clothing is also known as artifacts. It is a means by which certain information is conveyed about a person such as one's financial status, personality or background and it defines the manner in which others respond to this person. Clothing also indicates culture, level of confidence, interests or mood, beliefs or authority (Yammiyavar, Clemmensen & Kumar, 2008). In this context, formal clothing implies a person who is capable of doing things, well-organized and fully trained. On the other hand, a casual and loose garment points to people who have a friendly disposition, are extrovert and flexible (Richmond & McCroskey, 2004).

The use of social distance or proxemics is another nonverbal communicative feature indicating the way in which people perceive each other. This aspect shows the degree of intimacy among people (Noller, 2006). In this respect, two friends stand closer to each other rather than two people who maintain a business relationship. Social distance is affected by gender. In other words, it is more likely for two women to stand closer to each other rather than two men or a woman and a man. It is also affected by status, meaning that a person of higher social class is attributed

more space as a sign of respect. People perceive social distance in different ways and it is often the case when there is misunderstanding because the two interlocutors expect different levels of intimacy for the same relationship. Intrusion of personal space can create annoyance and a feeling of defending this space. When reference is made to the school classroom, the teacher who prefers to stay at his bench gives the impression of a distant teacher, lacking friendly disposition or the feeling of communication (Kontakos & Polemikos, 2000).

In 1872 Darwin in his book *The Expressions of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (Pease & Pease, 2004) argued that all mammals, human beings included, used facial expressions to convey their feelings. He concluded that humans have adhered to facial expressions as they have acquired special value in the field of communication in the long course of the evolutionary history. Therefore, humans employ facial expressions as an external sign of what happens inside them (Krauss, Chen & Chawla, 2000).

In this context, the educator's facial expressions affect significantly their students' feelings towards instruction.

When the educator looks dull or boring this is a sign of lack of interest in both students and teaching. More than that, it is difficult for him to properly manage his audience due to oftentimes disturbances in instruction. The educator should look pleasant so that students feel that he is interested both in them and the content of learning. This image is usually followed by a positive nodding which implies immediacy, friendly disposition to students and the willingness to create a pleasant, positive and confident climate in the classroom. Negative nodding or lack of it indicates poor communication and downgraded relationships between educators and students (Ekman, 1982).

Gestures reflect the process of thinking and regulate communication.

They are often used to express enthusiasm or to enhance the transmission of complex messages. It is true that the classroom may cause anxiety to students, to a smaller or larger extent and this is obvious in students' motions such as playing with their hair or chewing their pencils. These gestures may also connote that instruction is boring and insignificant. However, the educator's gestures are more likely to preserve students' interest for a longer period of time. Additionally, certain gestures can remind students of specific routines which they have to follow throughout their learning process. For

instance, the educator can employ particular gestures to make students look at the whiteboard or to listen carefully to what is being told.

Posture is another cue of nonverbal communication. In this sense, an open posture signals a communicative educator. To grab students' attention educators can maintain a straight posture, placing themselves at a certain point from which they can be easily seen by everyone. Moreover, moving around the classroom from time to time conveys the message that the educator owns the classroom space. In addition, teacher-student communication is enhanced as students can feel proximity between them and their teacher. Through the teacher moving around the classroom, students get the impression that he is rather relaxed, confident and assertive. Touching or haptics is also important, according to Argyle (1988) this is conducive to reinforcing interpersonal bonds and enhancing the establishment and preservation of good relationships. It is also a sign of students' reward for their good performance or a warning for improper behavior and its ceasing. In any case, both educators and students ought to be aware of the nonverbal communication code and adhere to it instead of avoiding it.

Voice signals or else paralanguage include pitch, tone and variety of voice and all work together to enhance the transmitted verbal meanings. A pitched and vivid voice has positive impact both on students and their educator. Thus, the former understand that the educator is interested both in them and in instruction. The latter is able to capture the students' interest and the corresponding feedback for the procedure.

Time or chronemics, being another nonverbal communicative element, should be utilized wisely by the educator either to present new knowledge or to reward students for proper behavior or good performance. Besides, it is a good means by which classroom management is carried out as all students are engaged in a variety of activities and this is preventive to reduced interest. The educator's arrival at the classroom before the commencement of teaching is a strong indication that he is formal with his duties and particularly interested in his students and the content of instruction (Knapp & Hall, 2002). The time allocated to students is also known as "wait time". Wait time defines conversational turns among interlocutors. Yet, the amount of time allocated to students' responses is very short, limited to only one second, according to researches (Good & Brophy, 2002). In this respect, students are not able to form appropriate and enriched responses and most times they answer automatically (Tobin, 1987). If more time is allocated to students, this can lead to more desirable

results. More specifically, students have more time available to construct full and more elaborate answers and express more ideas of higher complexity. Nevertheless, the educator has to be cautious about the amount of allocated time as wait times often vary among students and often lead to wasted time.

When the educator finds himself in a multicultural classroom he should bear in mind that students originating from different cultures or ethnic groups need longer wait times to provide answers, especially when their mother-tongue is different from the conventional language spoken in the classroom (Toth, 2004). In this respect, students from certain cultural groups may take a pause while speaking to show their respect to their teacher or they may use overlapping comments; that is taking turn to speak before the interlocutor has ended his speech. The latter is an indication of interest in one's words (Chami-Sather & Kretschmer, 2005).

Eye contact is determinant to student – teacher interaction. Real communication between two individuals begins as soon as they establish eye contact since this kind of communication ensures that they are interested in listening what the other one wants to say. Avoiding eye contact indicates that confidence is absent. Therefore, eye contact acquires significant value, especially when reference is made to teaching practices for effective classroom management (Zeki, 2009). In this sense, this form of nonverbal communication can be applied by the educator to check out whether students are concentrated on their tasks or whether they are talking to each other, are bored or absent-minded. It can also be used by the educator to address a certain student (Gower & Walters, 1983). Furthermore, Parker (2006) argues that when the educator enters the classroom, eye contact can help him understand when the students are ready for the lesson to begin. When students avoid eye contact it may be a sign of not being interested in what is being said in the classroom, shyness or merely avoidance of communication. On the other hand, in the case of the educator, it indicates a distant person, not interested in his audience whereas limited eye contact on his side implies shyness or even anxiety. During communication people seek after their interlocutor's eyes as a sign of interest in what the interlocutor articulates. Lack of eye contact signals rejection of the content of discourse or perhaps the interlocutor himself.

Classroom environment is another factor affecting learning either positively or negatively. A clean, settled and well-lit classroom is definitely conducive to positive disposition towards learning. Desks layout also affects the learning procedure. In this

respect, the traditional layout of desks is ideal for lecturing or taking notes. On the other hand, a layout in U shape enhances open conversation between learners and the educator.

3. Nonverbal communication in instruction

Nonverbal communication is an neglected part of instruction resulting in insufficient communication in the classroom, whereas communication is necessary to create a climate of understanding between teacher and students. In this respect, non verbal communication is determinant to positively motivate students to engage themselves with the learning procedure. Nevertheless, a number of nonverbal elements during instruction are overlooked despite the fact that the biggest number of the transmitted messages is nonverbal.

In some cases words have weaker meaning than body language, especially when it comes to facial expressions, gestures, eye contact and pitch of voice which are all tied to the immediate transmission of messages to students. Effective educators, like good actors, use body language and enable, this way, their verbal behavior by leading learners to a better understanding and learning of the content (Chaudhry & Arif, 2012).

Although research, on an international level, about nonverbal communication in instruction has bloomed and has been conducive to teaching the art of communication at Western schools, in Greece it is still in a primitive phase. The limited findings have shown that the conscious use of body language in instruction is limited. It is noteworthy that instability in nonverbal behavior on the side of the educator may confuse students and generate, consequently, discipline problems in the classroom. It is often the case that verbal and nonverbal messages which are transmitted at the same time are conflicting, paving the path for further conflicts and the creation of a negative climate as well as doubt about the words of the educator. In other words, nonverbal communication should be consistent with verbal communication so that students are not confused and disoriented from the learning process. Clinical and neurosurgical researches have shown that the left hemisphere of the brain is involved in analytical processing and the right one is involved in nonverbal processes (Palvio, 1974). If the messages conveyed to the hemispheres are conflicting, then only fragments of the information are perceived whereas other parts of it are omitted (Rice, 1977). The educator's cognitive background is clearly not enough to offer knowledge to his students. What is more necessary is the creation of the best possible communicative

conditions between the two sides resulting in better teaching and learning (Tribonia, 1998).

Along with lesson preparation the educator should spot and utilize all those features which will contribute to effective instruction. Thus, features like smiling, loose body posture and a warm voice can be integrated into the educator's behavior towards the improvement of the relationship between students and educator as well as motivation of the former. The combination of verbal and nonverbal patterns has been evidenced to increase clarity of speech.

At the same time, higher student performance and more effective cultivation of skills have been reported.

Meanwhile, stress and student anxiety about learning are reduced whereas their liking and interest in learning is increased. More analytically, the use of 1st person plural is part of verbal immediacy.

This technique is conducive to creating a positive climate, tightening bonds between students and teacher as there is a feeling of belonging which motivates students to take action. Using comments like "please, go on", "I would like to hear more from you" and calling students with their first names or commenting to elevate endeavor or decent behavior could be conducive to gradual enhancement of relationships. Be that as it may, the educator should take into account that he should understand and implement those practices which are more likely to motivate students and boost their performance (Velez & Cano, 2008).

Besides good command of the verbal communicative code, the nonverbal codes should be properly interpreted, especially in classrooms where students from different cultural backgrounds co-exist. Misunderstanding of certain patterns can generate annoyance, reactions or conflicts between the involved students or lead to emotional distancing of certain individuals from the rest of the group or the educator. There are some universal nonverbal patterns like facial expressions of joy, anger or sorrow. Yet, a number of them are developed and rely on each cultural background, especially what has to do with gestures. In other words, a large number of nonverbal cues have different cultural significance. For example, the volume of voice is significant to conveying feelings like uncertainty, enthusiasm or shyness. In this respect, a raised voice is interpreted as a sign of anger or hostility by Western societies. On the other hand, Latin American or Africans raise their voice just to indicate excitement. In addition, a raised voice indicates good manners and an intention to be heard by everyone in Africans. On the contrary, Asians regard a raised

voice as absence of politeness. Furthermore, social distance is perceived differently among various cultures. Thus, Africans and Latin Americans who place special emphasis on personal relationships are more likely to stand closer to one another. On the contrary, Asians preserve a certain distance, especially from people belonging to higher social classes (Diversity Council, 2008). In this context, communication can be a useful tool of intercultural knowledge and enrichment among the participants of the learning process while it strongly contributes to the development and cultivation of cultural awareness and modification of behavior depending on the occasion. In this respect, nonverbal communication could be deemed part of intercultural education (Okon, 2011).

Moreover, to reinforce student motivation the educator should bear in mind that the manner of presenting new knowledge to students is more important than the content of learning. In this sense, the educator's behavior is determinant to student motivation as the manner of behavior adopted by the educator can shape, to a significant extent, student motivation. Immediacy is a particular behavioral feature which functions to this direction. In this respect, immediate educators make positive impression to their students and there is positive effect on their instruction, too. To achieve this, the educator should use a variety of techniques such as prompts, positive questioning patterns or motivational messages which help students be engaged with the task or comply with task requirements. In addition, the educator's relaxed body posture, smiling face and clarity of voice and expression are conducive to students motivation as their positive effect on them is likely to modify their behavior accordingly (Christophel, 1990).

Being aware of nonverbal communication and its application in the classroom, the educators are able to understand their students' messages and also have the opportunity to send those messages which enhance student motivation and participation. Proper interpretation of nonverbal messages helps the educators understand their students' feelings and beliefs. To fully achieve smooth communication and enhance the bonds between them and their students, they should also be aware of how to transmit nonverbal messages. In this respect, facial expression, gestures or voice are good means to convey enthusiasm, discontent, confidence or disapproval for their students' behavior or reactions.

Educators should bear in mind that any kind of effective communication stems from the environment. Not only should they have to create the relative environment, but

they should also be good listeners to both verbal and nonverbal messages. In this way, they can notice when a student wants to be heard or when one feels bored or interested in the learning process or when one agrees or disagrees with a situation or a statement. When educators manage to clarify their students' stances and feelings, then they will be able to adopt the corresponding nonverbal patterns to show their enthusiasm or concern or when to use clear voice or intonation to grab students' attention (Johnson, 1999).

4. Conclusions

Body language is a universal language which differs from one culture or place to the other.

Nonverbal communication reflects the inner emotional state of the individual as, according to researchers, "we are what we feel". Body language reflects people's emotions. Observation and awareness of body language can contribute to one's self-esteem in relation to people around oneself.

Understanding nonverbal communication is improved through practice.

The combination of instinct and experience are key factors to understanding and interpreting the type of communication. Furthermore, education is directly related to the use of nonverbal behavior and personal observation. Therefore, the key to proper interpretation of body language is to understand the emotional state of the interlocutor at the moment of speaking and to simultaneously observe the existing conditions. The educator should take into account that the direction of instruction is formed from the very first moment he enters the classroom.

Nonverbal communication significantly affects student psychology and the educator's ability to tighten the relationship with his students.

Thus, outside the classroom he has the possibility to evaluate his behavior and make any modifications necessary to improve the efficiency of instruction. The impact of the educator's behavior contains a special dynamic toward the indirect formation of the corresponding student behavior.

This can be accomplished on three levels. On the first level, nonverbal communication contributes to reinforcing cognitive learning. On the second level, the emotional bond between teacher and students is enhanced. On the third level, it shows the way of organizing and managing the classroom as well as the prevention or relaxation of crises emerging during instruction (Okon, 2011).

Moreover, the educator ought to be self-aware and potentially control his different mental states so that he is able to collaborate with his students without obstructions. In addition, he should also bear in mind that different cues of nonverbal communication

acquire different meaning depending on the occasion and overall conditions at the moment of transmitting the message. In other words, not all cues are important to convey a certain message at a given situation (Miller, 1988). Another important thing to be taken into account is that from the moment of his entering the classroom he is exposed to his students' eyes and judgment. It could be said that, having been aware of the latter and having managed the former, his emotional awareness is quite developed which, in relation to his maturity, allow the control of nonverbal behaviors and the eventual balance in the classroom.

In this context, acquaintance with nonverbal communication and its adoption in instruction is challenging to the educator who ought to explore it and trace all those elements of this kind of communication which are defined in cultural terms so that he is able to better understand his students' needs. As a result, he is able to change his behavior accordingly and contribute to a climate of acceptance, understanding and mutual respect which are the prerequisites to successful instruction even when he teaches multicultural classes.

It is true that the existing educational system primarily emphasizes verbal communication through the techniques of receiving and producing written and oral discourse, however, without reference to other forms of communication. The art of communication is important and its teaching at schools can play a crucial role as students who have been properly trained will benefit in the future when they integrate into broader social structures (Stevick, 1982). Arguably, education in communication is conducive to the overall development of the individual as it becomes more responsible to others and, at the same time, cultivates organizational skills and helps stability, increased confidence and improvement of self-image.

All in all, employing non verbal communication patterns along with oral discourse is deemed a necessary life skill which helps the individual incorporate more effectively in the social, professional and political mainstream and interact positively with others. Apart from the inherent ability to produce sounds, words and movements and given the dramatic changes in the structure and function of society globally, crises and conflicts management as well as effective negotiation are more than necessary. Thus, communication should be taught towards personal, educational and professional development of all members involved in instruction.

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Developing literacy activities¹ through viewing films

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Abstract

*The purpose of this paper is to present the work of students of the second class of the sixth grade of Asprovalta Thessaloniki primary school. During their weekly two-hour flexible period, they grappled with the issues of Fascism/Nazism and immigration through the screening of films. The broader socio-political developments, the ideological confrontations and the effects of economic crisis in our country underlie the selection of specific subjects. This work is presented as entity combining the empirical educational aspects with theoretical analysis. We borrowed P. Freire's idea of productive issues, which focuses on social problems experienced at a collective level and which offers opportunities for action. This determined the search for suitable films, that is, identifying those film topics that would promote the goals of emancipatory teaching. During the first thematic cycle we showed the movies: *The Pianist*, *The Fall*, *The Big Cannon* and *The War of the Buttons*. In the next cycle, we showed the films *America America* and *The Brides*. The students were encouraged to focus on specific aspects of the case, on the narrative of events, on the emotional impact and on the critical approach to deeper meanings. Finally, our work, having taken the form of a printed edition, thus giving pragmatic social meaning to student work, was distributed to parents and was added to the school library.*

Keywords: critical literacy, critical thinking, socio-political framework, films, productive issues, Fascism, immigration.

Introductory comment

Between October 2012 and March 2013 the students of the second class of the sixth grade of Asprovalta Thessaloniki primary school, during their weekly two-

¹The concept of literacy in our case does not concern the acquisition of writing and reading skills (literacy), but the building blocks that constitute the awareness of a social issue (Freire, 1985, 18).

hour flexible period, systematically covered the issues of Fascism/Nazism and immigration through the screening of films. The purpose of this paper is to present this work, as entity combining the empirical aspects with theoretical analysis. It should be noted that the issues of Fascism/Nazism and immigration occupied us during the entire school year, and these were linked to the whole range of the curriculum to strengthen both the students' critical ability and their ability to debate specific historical issues. The need to investigate these issues, however, arose from the actual current socio-political climate with the emergence of neo-nazi tendencies in Greek society, particularly in our region. We support that this very socio-political climate, the ideological demisting of social life as well as the upgrading of film 'text' and everyday experience into research fields underlie the selection of specific subjects.

Theoretical conditions/prerequisites

First we propose the educational process that takes place in everyday school, does not constitute an un-mediated "pure" practice which draws in characteristics exclusively from the micro environment of the classroom. Instead, we take as a starting point of any pedagogical discussion the following causal relationship:

Socio-political framework - Educational conditions - School environment.

The above figure highlights that the relationship between the book, the student and the teacher should not be considered to be a pure and static state. We could argue that this particular triptych is defined (without being determined) by the general controversy over the purposes and means of the curriculum; a broader view of the organization and selection of material; and the level of socio-political conflict over those issues. To free ourselves from the restrictive schema of teacher - student - book, it is appropriate not to lose sight of the structural constraints generated at the level of socio-political conditions and the power relationships which are reflected in educational practice. Given these factors, the teacher, who is asked to conceive and implement an educational project is required to contemplate the basis of the existence of material conditions of his teaching.

Second assumption. The processing of knowledge is determined by some basic elements²:

- a) Positioning the subject-matter to be investigated, in its historical context.
- b) Moving from the general to the specific, from the whole to the part. This process, within the context of a dialectical perspective, can also take place vice versa.
- c) The option to acquire knowledge through the exploration of the different aspects of a subject and their articulations. In this sense, the teaching practice is interested in the relationships of the phenomena and not in individual parts.
- d) The notion that knowledge is not something ready and unchangeable.
- e) The notion that knowledge is connected with the concept of the act, which is concentrated on the moment of the conception of a theoretical problem (contemplation) and on the moment of the practical implementation of the aspects of the previous phase (action). In this way, the concept of the act is related to the project/effort of revealing the truth.

Third assumption. On the basis of the previous points of departure, literacy is considered a form of social empowerment that gives man the ability to think and act critically (Shor, 1999: 22). Here, learning is not displayed as a linear cognitive phenomenon, a kind of knowledge accumulation, a boring repetition of information, but a political-cultural process that brings the student into contact with different attributes of meaning, with values and perspectives on human relationships and with the social world.

Because each teaching initiative is built (albeit implicitly) on an earlier existing view of learning and social life as a whole, we claim that, in our case, the theoretical principles which affected the methodological and educational characteristics of our work come from the educational stream of Critical Pedagogy and, more specifically, from the scientific work of American educators Henry Giroux and Peter McLaren. What we need to note here is that the pedagogy is regarded as a force of understanding and social change. It is not restricted to the language of criticism, but rises to the level of the language of capabilities (McLaren, 2007: 313). Our work took into account also the stance of cultural

² The choice of these elements is significantly influenced by Pavlidis Periklis (2012), *Knowledge in the Dialectics of Social Life*.

studies, according to which *culture* is viewed as a battlefield. The academic field of cultural studies raises culture to a central element of analysis. Culture, according to Raymond Williams, is the organization of human sociality and, at the same time, the acknowledgement that this organization is part of the material conditions of life what we do and the awareness of our actions (Williams, 1994: 81). The cinema should be considered as such a "text". Giroux approaches films as the pedagogical practices of culture (Giroux, 2006: 123). Its study facilitates a deeper understanding of current problems, such as poverty, hunger, war, sexism, social inequalities.

Pedagogical options - application

The teacher, in response to current events and discussions with students about the importance of democracy, brought to prominence the issues of Fascism-Nazism and immigration. We borrowed P. Freire's idea of *productive issues*, which focuses on social problems experienced at a collective level and which offers opportunities for action (Freire, 1977: 113-114). This determined the search for suitable films, that is, identifying those film topics that would promote the goals of emancipatory teaching. During the first thematic cycle we showed the movies: *The Pianist*, *The Fall*, *The Big Cannon* and *The War of the Buttons*. In the next cycle, we showed the films *America America* and *The Brides*. Before viewing, we conducted an introductory debate on the subject and the identity of the film. Then, the film was projected in the students' classroom as well as other areas, such as the school's computer lab or in the hall. At the end, there was semi structured debate³, which focused on specific aspects of the film and was designed to avoid misunderstandings on the part of students. The next stage involved students writing their own texts individually and sent to the teacher by e-mail. The support frame was relatively structured: students were encouraged to focus on specific aspects of the case, on the narrative of events, on the emotional impact and on the critical approach to deeper meanings. The following week the texts were shown and improved upon and edited by the whole class. Improvement was related to the

³ It is about a structured dialogue based on some central axis. However, this option avoids the risk of setting objectives within a strictly structured framework, that is, to reduce teaching from being a living set of actions to a standardised frame of predefined actions, which dries out the educational opportunities in the school life.

plot, clarity and originality of ideas, integrity of cohesion and semantics and grammar of the texts. During this stage students exchanged ideas and positions, disagreed, participated and experienced peer/public criticism, and improved upon each others work. The teacher intervened at this stage only when it was clear that the students' suggested improvements were not completely sufficient to render meaning. The teacher would then reflect on the outcome and procedure and planned the next viewing.

At this stage we utilized the position of Paulo Freire, according to which "the reading of the world precedes the reading of the word" (Freire & Macedo, 2001 35). In short, we relied on the relationship of the text within its social context. It is impossible to "unlock" the deeper meanings of a text without first having to deal with the social context in which it appears. This applies to the written text, but much more to the film, which, somehow, has the features of a full text and corresponds to the construction of coded messages. It is a lively entity of speech and image, which acts as a challenge for thought. We, also, utilised position of critical literacy, that the reading process must be based on the scheme study *within* the text, *on* the text and *against* the text (Scholes, 1985: 21, 24). With the former two we refer to the practice of decoding and understanding, with the latter to the processes of reflection and critical analysis, which, ultimately, aim at unlocking the narratives.

At the end of the semester, and after a short period of time to allow some distance, we created discussion circles to evaluate the overall experience. Students, now freed from their homework on the specific project, talked about their experiences and about things that did not happen or could have happened differently. They talked about the parts of their work which touched them most, as well as about the problems they experience today. They correlated, on a second round of debate, the themes of the movies with phenomena encountered in their region. Of course, we should point out that there were disagreements about how the present is projected into the past, as well as refusals to participate in the above evaluation procedures. Finally, our work, having taken the form of a printed edition, thus giving pragmatic social meaning to student work, was distributed to parents and was added to the school library.

Methodological conclusions - review

First of all, our interventions, within an environment of free expression of all views, aimed at encouraging students to express themselves openly on the anti-social inhumane phenomenon of Nazi violence. This was done so that in the future they will delve into a more comprehensive critical rejection of the practices of totalitarianism and human rights violations. (The perceptions of the students in the related discussions summarize exactly these problems.)

"The beginning was a bit shocking when the Nazis killed innocent Jews, just for fun."

"Hitler did not care if his people starved, to tell the truth he did not care even if all his people were annihilated ."

"I think the phrases and actions of people declare hunger and especially the difficulties of life. This is what it is to be hungry, cold and your hopes for survival to dwindle."

At least in two cases, a substantial change (compared with previous opinions) was recorded on the approach to issues related to nationalism and immigration. Also, the violence used by Nazi troops, the devaluation of human life and dignity, the struggle of people for their socio-economic conditions of their existence were at the heart of negotiations of the texts we analyzed .

A student wrote:

"In this film what struck me was that Germans - Nazis did not appreciate any human life. The most unfortunate part of the film was when they threw a disabled old person off the balcony because he was told to get up and he merely could not !"

"Also what deeply impressed me was when a mother poisoned her own children and then she killed herself not to surrender and not to live in a world without Nazism , as she said. "

"What I would like to stress is the relief on the faces of immigrants when they finally saw their ship approaching America."

"The film shows us how much these people struggled after leaving their homeland to go to the edge of the world for a better tomorrow."

Although the theoretical refutation of these phenomena is not sufficient to automatically establish a comprehensive democratic consciousness of responsibility, it creates favourable conditions for the understanding of its

necessity and familiarizes with criticism of social and political practices. In other words, it prepares the emancipatory perspective of defending the authentic - participatory democracy.

Secondly, the students developed a keen interest in the historicity of productive issues and in their recurrence in the spacetime. In this context, the first correlations with the current socio-political context emerged based on the principle which connects the knowledge of history with the actual living experience. The present began to take shape with greater clarity through the historical narrative. The reference to situations of social life began to reconstruct their personal experience.

"My own feelings are so tangled. On the one hand I think... what if I were in the position of the pianist? What if I lived through these events? Nobody would want to be in his position. The meaning of the movie " teaches" us a lot about real life .

" "As for the Germans and the Nazis at the end they got their lesson .

They felt what others felt. I hope this does not happen to us these days because of the CRISIS.

"I wish we will never have to live through such situations. There is no more beautiful thing than peace and it should always be sought after. Winners never exist in a war. "

"Man, if he wants, can do anything and can face up to everything . The movie left me with this feeling of certainty and I believe that everyone can manage as long as they have confidence and strength. "

"Immigration was a lot more difficult, nothing like today when in 11 hours you arrive in the United States. In the old years during migration you got robbed, hit, there was no money and technology was not so advanced."

"I would like to comment on and to compare some things against today. The English photographer when he was fired from his job, did not give up and believed that there was salvation for him, something which is not possible now because of the financial position in which our country is in. "

"With all this we see that at that time it was hard to be a woman because they had no rights. Their parents decided for them and later their husbands. Fortunately nowadays this is rare. We are all equal and no one decides about our future."

Thirdly, the students proceeded to approach the film "texts" from the perspective of contemporary art. They discussed issues related to the directors' choices,

interpretation of roles, technical aspects, shooting options and they sat back and enjoyed themselves.

"The movie was amazing, because it had feeling. The actor who played Hitler was perfect, the way he acted was so good that I got the shivers!"

"I like the films we've seen so far a lot because they show us many things about the war."

"This film caught my interest (...) I loved the humorous scenes, such as television and the fork. I also liked it because the lead role was played by Thanassis Vengos."

"The movie was amazing It had a lot of humor, in humor, though, there are many hidden truths."

In conclusion, we would say that films, based on intellectual pedagogy and authentic democratic teaching, proved to be a means to significantly release educational potential. A field of production and negotiation of social meaning.

Fourthly, there was significant improvement for all students in the level of production of written language (particularly in semantic cohesion). This was based on the rationale of holistic development⁴, that is, by promoting the unity of language and text as the basic unit of analysis through meaningful activities rather than typical scenarios in experimental conditions. There were fewer errors in morphology and spelling, as well as more extensive use of specialized vocabulary. Of course, there were also weaknesses as the eyes of a child tend to focus on the part and the narrative, which worked against (or at least made it more difficult) critical penetration into the essence of things. In general, we cannot say that all students reached the same potential of linguistic documentation and realisation of concept. Thus, the entire class did not become familiar with the production of written language, within the frame of a composite articulated concept structure. We managed, however, even in cases where there was an "irrational" (sometimes

⁴ Charalampopoulos argues that language should be treated integrally in the sense that its subskills (oral expression, written expression etc.) are not taught separately but coexist and interconnect (Charalampopoulos, 2000). Also, Goodman points out that for the most effective acquisition of written language we need to move from the whole to the part, from the frame to its component parts. The written language is easily mastered, when it manifests a social use and relates to real situations (Goodman, 1993).

chaotic) placement of terms, clauses and speech units, to have students practise and organize their ideas in a logical sequence, and thereby formulate a satisfactory level of production of meanings avoiding the logic gaps. Difficulties emerged in the cases of children whose mother tongue was different from Greek (mainly Albanian and Bulgarian). These students, although having mastered fairly soon the communicative aspect of the Greek language, were encountering difficulties in academic language school subjects⁵. This particular problem dictated reinforcement and individual interventions, which concentrated on continuous conceptual clarification of terms, grammatical elements, issues and reviews and, where necessary, on returning to the code of the student's mother tongue. We used commentary on cultural differences in behavior, encouraged the elimination of national and linguistic stereotypes, as well as the morale and emotional development necessary to reach practical applications that pertain meaning. Overall, our intervention, according to need, managed to achieve its objectives. Let us not forget that the connection of learning with social problems is not one - dimensional or linear process, but is facilitated or hindered by a set of cultural and individual variables. It became feasible, however, for the class as a whole to consolidate the element of active - inquiry learning, as the cornerstone of the relationship between students and knowledge. Of course, this did not happen uniformly, it did not have the same nature and the same depth in all students, since, as it is known, the individual starting points in each case were different. In this context, dialogue became the central lever of negotiation of the topic at hand, the empowering act of understanding the world. Students were encouraged to make progress towards the construction of knowledge and not just stay at the level of "information". They were encouraged to establish a comprehensive understanding of things and not a fragmentary intake of individual incidents. Of course, this is a demanding continuous process not enclosed entirely within the limits of the classroom. Essentially, it is a case of a broader cultural framework and public pedagogy.

5 For the foreign speaking student to benefit from the educational process, separation between communication skills and advanced language skills of complex semantic linguistic elements is required (Baker, 2001, 245).

While discussing the films, we adopted a critical thinking conceptual equivalent to dialectic thinking⁶. This means that the learner must be able to capture things in their evolution and in their change. They must be able to relate the contrasting facets and to talk about their interactions. This, of course, is not a goal that can be achieved entirely within elementary education. It is possible, however, for the guidelines towards some familiarity with dialectical thinking to be introduced at these early ages.

Finally, the students according to their educational needs and their potential, exploited the organized academic dialogue and the process of discovery and criticism, which takes them away from a pedagogical model of "depositing" and also merges action with contemplation, the feasible with the transcendence.

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Teachers in 2000s: An anthropological view from inside

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Abstract

There are two reasons of inability of teachers interrelate with knowledge by an intellectual style instead of instrumental one. Firstly, we may talk about the continuity of anti-intellectual attitude of the (Turkish) state. Secondly, anti-intellectualism of global capitalism which mystifies the market economy and profit maximization may cause a cultural crisis. The main characteristic of political culture of Turkey inherited from Ottoman Empire depends on the mystification of the state. State is over all individuals (citizens), all institutions and also all religious beliefs and cultural groups in tradition of Turkish state, and this approach includes also culture of fear. We may claim that there is a strong continuity of this approach. There are two main reason of this culture of fear. Firstly, wars, lost of the lands of empire and nationalistic riots against the Ottoman Empire within the period of decline of the Ottoman Empire. Secondly, resistance of Muslim people against the westernized reforms and the traditionalist bureaucracy are the reasons of anti-intellectualist attitude of Turkish state. The discourse of “internal and external threats” mostly used by the state elits of Turkish Republic for diffusion of culture of fear for integrating Turkish society in the first period of Republican Era. This discourse, also, used as a basis to military interventions to Turkish democracy. This discourse continously indoctrinated by the educatinal institutions as an inseperable part of educatinal curriculum of Turkey. As a result, culture of fear and anti-intellectualist attitude formed a part of the political culture of Turkey. The pressure and also threat of state violence over the all intellectual activities has been continued within all republican period. Diffusion of anti-intellectualism is a main characteristic of Turkey as a result of state’s heavy pressure over the all intellectual activities. Educational institutions did not meet the artists and the intellectuals as a result of this

heavy pressure. Ideologically rigid and arcaic materials and didactic methods are the basis of the Turkish educational policy.

Keywords: Anti-intellectualism, Culture of Fear, Teachers, Educational Policy, Cultural Crisis.

INTRODUCTION

In this study, we want to discuss how the teachers in Turkey deal with the issue of anti intellectualism, which is actually a global case. We prefer to view the problem of teachers' relationship with information in an anthropological view created by practical datum (the experiences of teaching, information, observation, insights and thoughts) placed in the historical, political and social context instead of a theoretical view. In this paper, it is focused not on the observable professional information and the potentials of the teachers inside the classroom, but the events, ideas and discussions that take place outside the classroom. Therefore, with an attempt to a view from the inside which we are also a part of, we hope to make both a critique of the system and a self-criticism on behalf our colleagues.

The problem of Turkish teacher's superficiality or instrumentalism in their relationship with information or the lack of their intellectual knowledge which is becoming the topic through the years with several research results reflected into the public, could be argued to be grounded in a systematical anti-intellectual point of view running throughout the society, one that goes beyond the teachers, or even the educational system. A political culture that sanctifies the state and fears of dissociation that carried from the past to today, rooted in hundreds of years ago, systematically blocks the meeting of information and freedom; therefore, neither the students nor the teachers can exist in the school system with their free, creative selves. This matter ends up with the result of the teachers; the students and therefore a big part of the society's relationships with the truth [1] are being problematic and faulty. Anti-intellectualism could be approached in two different levels; national (in relation to the Turkish political culture) and global (global anti-intellectualism as a part of new capitalist culture). Firstly, it could be argued that, the ideologically anti-intellectual view that places state's security the first priority, which is dominant since the Westernization reforms the state decisively started in the 19th century to today, has penetrated into the educational system with a persistence and that this view is still

widely continuing today. Secondly, the capital's hegemony that threatens the culture in the age of global consumer capitalism, the underestimating the role of intellectuals in society and the disapproval towards the intellectual effort that values the education and knowledge per-se just for the education and knowledge themselves and is operated through a search of truth, continues to effect the new generation of teachers as a current problem.

THE INTERNALIZED MENTALITY OF THE STATE AND TEACHERS

In Turkey (just as in anywhere in the world!) every individual is born as a human, thinks and acts like a human; as he/she grows older he learns to think like the state, internalising and sanctifying the supreme power of the state. While this is mostly relevant for the groups under the effect of right-wing thought, with the exception of some small opponent groups that fight against the 'state mentality' personally and socially, this is relevant for individuals from almost all sides of the society; Kemalist, Liberal, Islamist, Conservative, Nationalist, etc. It is a sort of reflexive reaction of conserving the state in any conflicting situation of truth for those living in Turkey and is relevant especially for the bureaucracy of security and top-tier civil servants who work for the continuity of the state. The understanding of State, as an entity by itself, being beyond the people, society and the real, is a vital problem in Turkey that historical, therefore cultural depth, is solidified, somewhat seemingly impossible to get rid of, and makes the daily life complicated as much as any archaic and insoluble problems of Turkey.

First of all we must remind that the effort to reform, educate, civilise the society that existed for decades is not one of Turkish enlightenment movements. It is the era of II. Mahmud that the wide range of reforms for Westernization started, alongside with reforms about education that aims to make more people literate. In the beginning of 19th century when education was not available in modern schools, the most important cultural space was coffee houses. The systematic method of this time was to keep spaces of interaction, whether written or spoken, under control with agents and spies (Kırlı 2009:3). On the other side, coffee-houses, since the 16th century when they were first opened with their aim as spots for people to communicate, has always been political spaces. Therefore, in the era of Abdulhamit the second which was famous for being tough on its opponents and its secret police organisation, coffee houses were kept under strict control. But under the oppression era of Abdulhamit the second, the number of literate people had raised, the distribution of newspapers and magazines

had started and both local and translated novels had become a part of the cultural life. In line with these innovations /developments that are a part of Westernization project, around the time that being literate had risen, the idea of controlling the books, the press and the mediums for ideas to spread (also known as censorship) had began.

Thus, culture of fear originating from the attempts to prevent the collapse of Ottoman empire since 19th century by using the state's institutions like military, education and press was not limited within the political life but spread over every sphere of life in time. That's why, in 19th century which was full of external and internal political turmoil, wars, uprisings, and assassinations, the anxiety of elite and society prevented flourishing enlightenment and did not permit the emergence of an autonomous intellectual class. As the aim of Ottoman-Turkish modernisation originates from the practical need to protect and recover the state rather than believing the essence of the modernization or a result of societal dynamics (Söğütü, 2009:193), the modernization process always contained suspicion and anxiety and the state became hesitant about this process.

“Holy state” understanding in administration culture from Ottoman to today could be apparently seen in the censorship systematically implemented to *different* opinions and publications. In this sense, Mahmud Makal's book *Bizim Köy (Our Village)*, in which the author clearly described the village where he worked as a teacher, is a good example to see the mentioned strict censorship on publications in the beginning of 20th century. The government prosecuted the book that actually published in many languages as a good ethnographical study, for doing an anti-propaganda against Turkish village life (in other words, for openly telling the truth), and Makal got prison sentence. In addition to this measure, to see how the government perceived the book as a big threat, some officials went to Britain in order to prevent further publications, and they offered the publication house to buy all new copies (Makal 1973: ix). Whereas Makal was an realist patriot who graduated from one of the Village Institutes [2] which was the most important education project of the young the young Republic. It is clear that the great fear resulting in the strict state control over the areas where knowledge is produced, spread and thought has implicitly continued until today. At this point, even it is not needed to mention about the authors suffering from penalty or prison sentences, the scientists sacked from universities, there were the cases of assassinated journalists, and burned books etc.

As a result of the above-mentioned anxiety, the enlightenment attempts were perceived as dangerous for the existence of state, and teachers negatively affected from the cultural/political tension between the protective reactions towards the state and enlightening intellectualism. Here, we focused not on every aspect of this problematic al but the aspects that are tied with education and of the interest of the educators. Teachers in Turkey have internalized their fears, hostilities, and mistakes along with the ideology of the state within the framework of their special missions and roles. This situation became one of the two reasons that limited teachers' ambition to improve their intellectual capacity and alienated them from their job that could be also called as "continuous studentship". As a result, in addition to Turkish state's official ideology, its anxiety, antagonism and fallacy were also embedded by teachers in the context of their missions and roles within the system. Particularly, the generation who started to work after the 1980 coup d'état repeatedly obey the official suggestion: "do not become a part of political discussions and do not exceed the limits of the professional duties". The main duty of a teacher is to form a bridge between the official curriculum and society. Therefore, her/his relationship between information and knowledge is deprived of innovation and dynamism. Unless state decides to reform the official curriculum, s/he does not critically question what s/he is teaching and gradually loses her/his professional curiosity.

The traditionalised fear of the state against knowledge, science, thought and the visible material forms of these, books, magazines, newspapers, continues today. On the other hand, Turkish society that shifted into global capitalism after 1980's military coup d'état, *also* shifted into the global anti-intellectualism where information became increasingly valueless, and where everything except getting money became a subordinate issue. Teachers, despite reading slightly above the level of common reading habit in Turkey, is effected by and continue to be effected by from the campaign of ignorance and free market ethos that has spread after 1980 coup d'état. In this paper, the current problem which we will talk about in accordance with some of observations and witnessing, the problem of teachers' intellectual qualifications and their instrumental relationship with the information has been affected by the developments mentioned above more or less, in a direct or non-direct trend. The problem of the state and the official ideology being shaped by a culture of fear that is persistent from Ottoman Empire's era of downfall to today, is a very serious problem which gets its power from the lack of freedom.

The process that keeps students as well as teachers away from learning, investigating, subjecting the current information to criticism starts at the primary schools. As the teacher starts his/her job at school he/she meets something that is never talked about or taught in university; the spirit of the school and the state which gives its hue to this spirit. This spirit consists of gloomy concrete buildings mostly devoid of aesthetics, administration, regulations, the mechanising strict temporal discipline, students who stand up once the teacher enters the class and do the same 'naughtiness' over and over again, lazy and hardworking students, concerned or unconcerned parents, ceremonies that are made purely of schematics and formalities, and many more memorized, automatically done procedures that have existed over the years create this spirit. A text (Our Oath) was repeated aloud every morning for many years by all students and includes as: "my existence shall be dedicated to the Turkish existence"(this ritual of primary school continued from 1930s until a year ago).

On the other hand, the school spirit is also reflected upon the students through the didactical school songs, school games, school stories that are far from aesthetical and literary sensitivity and sees the children only as creatures to be educated, objects (stereotype) to shape into form. Children's songs, children's books and similar products that do not respect the child and only refers to him/her with a language made of advice models made of 'should do that and should not do that's will turn into a memorizing that cannot be internalized by the student; a fugacious 'school language'. This formalism, simulation and rote-learning start at the school as the first steps of the beginning of a lifelong teaching of hypocrisy that will, maybe, last for a lifetime.

A teacher most commonly has two choices after coming into contact with the school spirit; either he/she gets used to this spirit and obeys it without any questioning, or he/she protects himself/herself by adopting a critical view. As it is easily guessed, most teachers choose the first one which is much easier to do. The teachers of the second type has a harder job, there is only a few of teachers who manage to make changes in the school. It is a very likely case to starting the job with the determination of becoming a new and different teacher and submitting into the cliché of raising hands to students and saying 'this is school, this type of behaviour is not allowed here' just after one or two years. The search for innovation bumps into the national educational system's bureaucracy, starting from the school principals. The hardest thing to do in Turkish educational system is to find teachers who listen, learn and are curious in an intellectual manner. This situation is the main reason of the inefficacy of

the seminars given by Ministry of Education each year, about different topics. Most of the times, these seminars and the other running in-service training activities are just turned to be formalities.

But what is even worse is that the teachers are fully aware of this situation and doing most of these activities are just to obey the rules and follow the formalities. For example, preparing the speeches and the texts which both the students and the teachers unwillingly, forcedly listen to for the ceremonies like Teacher's Day, memorial days for Atatürk and such is a formality of this type. Teachers, just like students and their parents, are breathing in the individualistic culture of consumption in which money and the capital are the determining factors; their actions are in-line with the ethos of this time. Plus, the state is also supporting the industrialization with innovations such as performance system, career steps system for teachers etc.

A Sample Case

Here, the most important cultural problem is that the western part of Turkey perceives the eastern part of the country as a mysterious, scary, authentic, and exotic "far land", as a foreign geography. In this context, as a teacher who born and raised in a village of Kars that is a 'far' city and worked there for years, I can give many examples supporting this argument [3]. However, I will focus on the sample about a teacher's ideological attitudes towards a societal problem.

The communication ability is very important for a primary teacher who started his/her new job in order to develop his/her relationship with a new institution. Naturally, it is highly important for this teacher to effectively use the language, to understand other side and to give her/his messages as much as clear and understandable. However, in the Turkish case, a new teacher is not ready to educate pupils who cannot speak Turkish in the eastern part of Turkey. In 1999 when one of the authors of this paper just started job, there was a tendency to ignore the Kurdish problem, and universities did not give enough education about Kurdish. As a result, when newly graduated teachers start their new jobs in the eastern part of the country, they confuse and react to the issue in a security dominated statist way, and at the beginning of their careers, this security state understanding dominating the country for centuries prevents teachers from an effective communication with pupils in the region.

A similar event happened in my first workplace, a school with united classrooms in a poor village in which Kurdish was spoken. About half of the students that began first grade knew no Turkish at all. The other students were communicating each other

using their mother tongue. Therefore it was logical and expected for the teacher to ask help from students who were bi-lingual and even attempt to learn Kurdish. The teachers who had worked in that school before had gone down this path - not minding about the law's bans about the subject-. But in the fall season of year 2000, a Western female teacher who had just started her job in a village school told the children that speaking Kurdish was forbidden and they would be punished if they do so in the first day of the school. The children were surprised by this unfamiliar forbidding. Some of the parents who knew about this disregarded but some who were outraged came to school to question the teacher about 'how could she forbid their mother tongue'. Thankfully, the teacher in question did not come to the school that day; this way, a very worst start luckily had not happened.

Consequently, as it can be seen with the experiences above and the other experiences, ignorance of teachers who are uninformed of realities of their own countries and cultures or the ones acting respectfully to the state not to the people, causes many new problems.

THE DISSAPPROVAL OF THE TEACHER AND TEACHING IN 'THE AGE OF INFORMATION'

The main fact that divides pre and post 1980 periods is the spread of consumerist culture beyond the extensions of the Western culture. Unlike the Western culture prioritising elitism and intellectualism, the consumerist culture has an anti-elitist and anti-intellectual characteristic (Appadurai 1998; Akt. Özbudun 2003:272).

Bauman (2010), who pays attention to the political results of this process of avoiding rationality, points out that in the new capitalism that is based on flexible production the circumstances for continuous and safe work are non-existent; and the relationship between work and education is becoming ambivalent. Bauman, who sees the society where the citizens are dangerous entities and should be disabled in today's world where apolitical views and ignorance is rising, points out that democracy cannot survive in the long term in an environment of passivity caused by political ignorance and the indifference of the citizens and is not safe when the rights of the citizens are confined in personal conservation, and says that the guarantee of the freedom is a socio-political environment that must be constantly fed (2010:162).

Frank Furedi (2010), who questioned anti-intellectualism in the societies where new Capitalism dominates in his book, which also touches upon the topics such as: intellectual laziness among society and university due to superficial knowledge and

the programmes with simple curriculum, the humiliation of intellectuals, post-modern and anti-elitist attacks taking subjective knowledge at the centre instead of objectivity, argued that there is a recent shift from the Enlightenment tradition because the Enlightenment is seen as the main reason for declining power of religion and culture; moreover according to him, while a lack of knowledge was seen as dangerous in past, people worry about extra knowledge today.

It could be argued that the 1980 coup d'état through which Turkey was integrated into the global market transformed education in Turkey from being a state service to a profit oriented service sector. Therefore, after 1980, the education system started to be governed by putting a priority over the Capitalist terms like productivity, performance, career and customer-driven. In this way, the education system mostly emerged as a tool of the Bourgeoisie/market because of their intervention to the system according to their own needs.

According to Furedi (2010:73-74), who argued that the influence of postmodernism over education theories has increased today, postmodern pedagogues put “personal knowledge” at the centre instead of “pedagogical knowledge”. From this perspective, the main duty of teacher should focus on personal abilities of pupils and help them improve these abilities instead of a more general knowledge education. Furedi urges that, in the rise of an instrumentalist ethos that treats knowledge and culture as means for achieving economic and political objectives rather than as ends in themselves. The pursuit of knowledge for its own sake is now regarded by the political elite as a bit dodgy instead, education must now justify itself in terms of the economic benefits it provides to stakeholders.

The most dramatic criterion that divides the periods as pre and post 1980 is the change from a culture with a social responsibility, devotion to duty, idealism, and utopic ambitions for a better future to a new narcissist culture with individualism, selfishness, consumerism , vanity and brand fetishism. It is also true that new information technologies like telephone, cell phone and internet have changed learning habits as well. These technologies that placed a new communication habit depending on instant, dynamic, fast and superficial sounds and pictures that have directly affected the reading habit which actually needs for quietness, concentration and the ability of comprehension. The researches [4] focusing on the generation born after 1980 who are blamed for being apolitical, selfish and consumption-oriented, pointed out some common characteristics of this generation such as business-oriented,

technocratic, competitive and conservative. The priorities of this outward-looking generation who are travelling Europe by train, using computer, and want to learn new languages rather than devoting their life to an idea or belief are to get married with a good one, to live in a big house and to drive a good car (Lüküslü, 2009).

As many societies are discussing these questions despite their being more popular in the USA and Britain, it could be argued that this problem is not spatial but periodical. The recent sociological discussions mainly focus on the points: the progress in the information technologies like television at the expense of the reading habit; the consumerist mass culture motivated by hedonist mottos like “live the moment”, “use and dispose”, “enjoy the life”; and, the substitution of individualism for communalism; in other words, the substitution of individualist identities expressing themselves with consumption (e.g. style and fashion) for common identities created by societal ideas. Overall, anti-intellectualism or irrationalism is a global problem today.

Findings of a survey by Ministry of Education (Bulut 2011) shows that teachers' reading habits were affected by the period of commodification of culture, as well as students'. According to the survey though little above national average, teachers' reading habits are on notably low level, considering their professional requirements. In this survey, the teachers were asked what they had read latest. As understood from the answers teachers read mostly books of conspiracy theories or popular historical novels, especially those made into movies or TV series. In addition, personal development books have got a remarkable a place in this popular books list.

Surely, despite being small in amount, there are teachers who do not choose books that are best-selling/most popular/most advertised or those adaptations to movies but instead reads works that have literary and scientific value or focuses on societal problems apparently. But our personal experiences lead us into a categorising in teachers' relationships with reading as follows. 1. Newspaper readers (mostly males and the biggest group of readers amongst teachers.) 2. Bestseller readers (mostly females, and possible to divide into subcategories of those who read self-developmental books' readers and adventure/action books' readers.) 3. Readers of contemporary politics, actuality, conspiracy theories and history (a group that is unique to Turkey, a reflection of the revival that is caused by the discussion of the big problems of Turkey, and the newly-budding discussions about the topics that are distorted through history writings and the topics that were concealed over in the past)

4. The readers that past beyond reading novels that also read scientific work particularly those about psychology and education. (These are very few in amount; some of the teachers of the old generation (above their 50s) are not only good readers, but also writers themselves. The small amount of young teachers in the group are mostly also has additional occupations, such as doing their post-graduate or doctorate degrees.)

On the other side, the teachers that surprise us the most are those who understand the act of reading as just another personal choice, by saying ‘both me and my child dislike reading books’. But, as it can be understood; this not-reading, alienation from the written word, and possibly fear of books which appears as a personal choice is actually the product of a two-hundred years old culture of fear, and political repression. The problem is contemporary; only the type of books that disturb the state has changed. The complaints about the books that teachers make the students read is arriving at *Alo 147*, a call line for the complaints of the parents started by National Ministry of Education. As the cases of teachers who has been investigated because they have suggested books or made the students read them (these books can be scientific books about evolution that disturbs religionist parents, or classics that are under the label of children’s literature) rises in amount, it becomes more clear that this fear of books and anti-intellectualism is likely to spread further in both teachers and students.

Instead, the teachers who are working to learn the truth and spread it to children and society, must be ethic-building workers themselves both because of their job’s ties to the truth and information and their job having societal results in every situation (gaining people positive/negative actions, information, emotions, beliefs, habits etc; being guides in the road to maturation, arousing curiosity in students and providing them with a *pair of glasses* to make them see and understand what is happening more clearly). It is clear that these ethics cannot be built without information, and what is essential here is not in teaching but in being students. . The effort to learning continuously, has always been a long and painful journey. In addition to the teacher sparing time to teach by giving up on less tiring and more joyful parts of his/her life, another hardship is the societal, humane responsibility of the effort to teach and effort to learn. This responsibility is likely to cause to the teacher continuously fighting with himself/herself, demolishing and rebuilding his/her inner world, and therefore ensure the continuity of the relationship between learning and maturing. Due to this, teaching

also includes the effort to become a good human being. The only coherent description of being good, as known, is the continuousness of the effort to become better and more mature.

Notes

[1] *The essence of truth*, is constant change and formation. The essence of teacherhood's societal importance and function is also the people's need to learn, to adapt to new situations and to solve problems.

[2] Village Institutes is a group of [co-ed](#), [public](#), [boarding](#), [normal schools](#) that were operational between 1940 and 1954. They were the cornerstones of the rural development project. At the time there weren't any schools in most of the villages. Village Institutes are established to train teachers for each village and send them back to form new village schools. Despite their short life, they highly increased the number of primary schools in the country. The Village Institutes were accused of fostering an subversive, unruly, anti-traditional generation and being the hotbeds of [Marxist](#) indoctrination. These attacks were waged mainly by the great landowners in and outside of the Parliament and their mouthpieces in the press. (*M. Asim Karaomerlioglu (1998). "The Village Institutes Experience in Turkey". British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies 25 (1): 47–73*)

[3] The observations mentioned, and after then which "I language" are the observations of the Sefer Yetkin Işık who is one of the writer of this article.

[4] İstanbul Mülkiyeliler Vakfı Sosyal Araştırmalar Merkezi. (1999). *Türk Gençliği 98 Suskun Kitle Büyüteç Altında*, İstanbul; Başbakanlık Aile ve Sosyal Araştırmalar Genel Müdürlüğü. (2010). *Türkiye'de Ergen Profili 2008*, Ankara.

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As an element of the process of making-becoming labour: Internship

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Abstract

The state's official discourse in Turkey related to vocational and technical education (VOCED) is based on ideas like these: The VOCED not only provides employment to the students who have "less chance to enter college", are unsuccessful in terms of academic, "but also the students can serve to the "industry ", "economy", "market" and "society". "So this education increases the "social" interests. But, especially when the law of VOCED (called 3308) is examined, It can be indicated that the VOCED purposes to provide the demand of the capital which requires the cheap, obedient and compatible labour power who can be easily adapt the deregulation in labour power markets. This study is based on the findings related to internship process of PhD thesis called "Analysis of the political Economy of the Process of Reproduction of Labour Power: A Case Study Related to Vocational High Schools [1]". In this research, the views and experiences of students and teachers are analysed critically. Some of the results of this research are; the students can be called as students legally but in fact they are labour during internship. The experiences of labour during internship mean that there is no control over the workplace-business which could protect the "students" against the asymmetrical power relations between labour and capital.

Keywords: Secondary Vocational Education, Internship, Neoliberalism, Becoming-Making Labour.

Introduction

Globalization which includes reorganizing the labour process can be seen as an answer to overcome the capitalist class' profitability crisis which had increased with 1960's. With 1980's years, national state formation and its welfare state implementations which are seen as obstacles for globalization had been attacked by the neoliberal politics (Ari, 2006, p. 24). By these politics, the labour process had

been made irregular and insecure for working class and legal basis about the working life which protects relatively working class despite had been shattered. In this context, the worker's legal rights like organizing in the trade unions and making collective contract had been restricted. In the same period, flexible employment practices in the public sectors had become legal (Köse and Öncü, 2000: 81). National capitalist organizations in Turkey have been the biggest supporters of these politics in the name of competitiveness and national development (Delican, 2006: 27–29). In the other side, public expenditures and public financing had been restricted and privatization and marketization practises of public services pervade.

In this process, after 1980's years, Turkish educational system had been redesigned by the neoliberal politics which were forced by international capitalist organizations like IMF, World Bank and EU. In this context; all levels and all kinds of educational institution's [schools'] aims and contexts are wanted to be determined as to be compatible with capitalist class's rules, privatization and marketization politics are used in education, the government's role in finance of education service has been decreased (Sayılan, 2006). One of the most important aspects of neoliberal educational politics can be named as vocationalisation of educational systems (Apple, 2004, p. 104). So, with 1980's years, the changing processes in vocational and technical education (VOCED) in Turkey, aimed to satisfy the capitalist class's needs for make itself more capable to compete in global division of labour. So VOCED means that one of the most effective way for cheap and obedient labour force for capitalist class.

In this context, from 1980's until now in Turkey, the ratio of the secondary VOCED in all of the secondary educational system has been increased. The general high schools have been closed and by this way, the student who could not been able to go to academic high schools have been forced to go to VOCED high schools. In the same times, the curriculums of VOCED high schools have been turned to be more compatible for capitalist class needs. The below statements are very important to understand VOCED in Turkey:

The new needs arising from our growing society's and technological era we live and the globalization and integration process which have been observed makes the equipments such as direct abilities for vocations, vocation techniques and fast compatibility are more important than knowledge in the process of training the quality labour force. These needs entail a new and consistent vocational education with and in the general education. The basic principle of

the reorganizing process of vocational education is to assure the vocational education based on unity across enterprises and schools... in all levels of the educational system» (Government Planning Foundation (GPF), 1995: 27).

What do the above statements tell us? Those tell us that “direct abilities for vocations, vocation techniques and fast compatibility are more important than knowledge”. These statements mean that practical education will become more important than theoretical education in VOCED. This is compatible with the division of labour between mental labour and physical labour which is the one of the basic division of labour in capitalist societies. In the other side, these statements tell us more; the practical education is not just an education which includes some practical abilities. As Althusser indicated (2006: 86-90), qualification of labour is not just an education which gives students technical skills. Qualification of labour is something that would give the students social rules, vocational rules, vocation ethics, which are suitable the position of labour force in the social and technical division of labour. So, VOCED in Turkey, which is needed by capitalist class, must be an education which can force students to be more *compatible* for unequal relations between capitalist class and workers in the *labour process*.

So labour process has to be analysed to understand what “VOCED students’ compatibility” means. In Turkey, labour force had been become cheaper after 1980’s. Working class’s legal rights had been stolen by governments. Labour processes had been made flexible. Flexibility includes working time flexibility, working place flexibility, and flexibility of the work description. Labour processes had been made insecure. So a lot of workers died in these processes. For example, recently in Soma city, 301 workers were killed in a “work accident!” When the frequency of fatal work accident in Turkey is examined it can be understand that it is much more 7 times than the average of the 15 Europe Union States (Ceylan, 2011). Public employment had been decreased. So, being compatible which is expected VOCED students is to be cheap and obedient workers.

One of the most effective instruments of secondary VOCED system which aimed to make students obedient is internship process. The legal basis of this process can be find in the “Law of Vocational Education” (LOVED) which is called as Law of 3308. LOVED can show us which needs of capitalist class are satisfied by the VOCED and internship, and how can it be done? By this law “Apprenticeship and Vocational Education Committee” was consisted. Most of the members of this committee belong

to representatives of governments and capitalist class. So it can be said that the planning, improvement and inspection of the VOCED processes are given to government and capitalist class. 18. Articles of this law include that “Vocational Education in Enterprise” is a compulsory part of VOCED. By this article, the enterprise which has 50 or over workers, has been able to employ the VOCED students. But the changes in this law with the law of 6111, it became possible to the enterprise which has 10 or over workers can employ the VOCED students. So that small and mostly insecure enterprises can employ students. One of the most important aspects of LOVED is the article about “Obey for Enterprises Rule for Students”. The 21 article of this law says that “the students who are in the enterprises as intern has to obey all of the rules and order of the enterprise” (Ministry of National Education, 1986, 12; Official Newspaper, 2011).

Method of the Research

This study is based on the findings related to internship process of PhD thesis called “Analysis of the political Economy of the Process of Reproduction of Labour Power: A Case Study Related to Vocational High Schools”. In this research, the views and experiences of students and teachers are analysed critically. This study is a qualitative research in which ninety-five twelfth grade students studying at industrial vocational high school chosen in the context of case study were applied “Student Questionnaire” form developed by the researcher. This questionnaire is related to these students’ internship experiences. This case study was carried out in an Industrial Vocational High School taking place in which socio-economic and culturally disadvantaged individuals live in Ankara. In addition to the questionnaire, at the same time, among these 95 students, twenty students and also ten teachers were interviewed deeply.

Students or Workers? Becoming Worker

First of all, it has to be said that, even though internship is a part of education and it has to include a formal education named as “ability education” which has to be given in the enterprises by the authorized persons in the enterprises, the findings showed us that there was not an education in internship process. When the students’ answers to the questions which asked them by the questionnaire form analysed, it can be said that internship process is not a part of educational process but instead it is a part of labour process. %53, 7 of students indicated that they haven’t got any skill education during their internship in the enterprise. At the same time just %32, 6 of students indicated that they could exhibit their vocational abilities. %33, 7 of students indicated that they

were able to do works which belongs to their vocations, so most of the students indicated that they were not able to do any work about their vocation. So how can it be? We asked to students if they worked in works which belongs to their vocation or not? %83, 2 of students indicated that they worked in works which are not belonging to their vocation and vocational education at the internship process in enterprises.

In the other side, findings showed that, VOCED students are not students in the internship processes. %72, 6 of the students indicated that during their internship, enterprise behaves them not as students instead as workers. So these results can be interpreted that during the internship process, the students are not students. They are persons who are becoming workers. By the research, it is aimed to understand that what kind of being worker processes have been lived in the internship processes and how.

Becoming Obedient For Flexibility in the Labour Force Process

By the questionnaire forms, and interviews, some questions asked to the students to understand this processes. The findings showed that, the internship process had been designed to make students obedient for flexibility in the labour processes and obedient for all inequalities in the labour processes.

In the interviews, all of the students who are “working” in the private enterprises told that they did drudgery works at the internship. Such as cleaning the working places and lavatories, working as secretary and sometimes working as carrier. But little students who are intern in the public enterprises said that they did not do anything like this works.

While some of the students who are “working” in the special enterprises telling that they did drudgery works as wishfully, some of the others students told that they had been forced for that works. For example, one of the electric-electronic department students said that:

Of course nobody told me to make tea. But we knew that it was our responsibility. When the boss comes in the enterprise of course he will need to drink tea... So everybody [students] knows their responsibility.

So it can be said that some of the students internalized of the obedient workers identity. But on the other hand, some of the other students said that they are aware of that doing drudgery works are not their responsibility, but they are forced to do them. For example one of the metal department students said that:

They forced us to do drudgery works. “Wash the dishes, clean the working place, make tea, go to the grocer, and buy something”. I said that “I am a student”. But I have to deal with those men. If I do not deal with them, they can say that “don’t work, you are fired”. I have to do. If you leave that enterprise and go to another enterprise, if that place is worst, it will be worse for me.

Another student told that students become not only workers, but also slavers:

Because of that we are intern, they forced us to do drudgery Works. Carry the armchair, carry the sofas, and carry the machines. They forced us to do the most drudgery Works. Bring too heavy things alone. They forced us. They behave us as **slave**. In fact, we know better than them but we are intern.

The findings showed that the “being slave” includes overtime working for near half of the students. Legally the last year students of secondary VOCED have to be at the internship process for two days in a week. But the results showed that nearly half of the students worked in the enterprises as intern except the legal time. And most of them were working not just more hours instead more days. When we asked to the students that “do you work in enterprises over the legal working hours or days” with the questionnaire form, %51, 6 of the students indicated that they did. The interview findings support these findings. But interview findings also showed that there were differences between students who are in the public enterprises and private enterprises. While all of the students who are intern in the public enterprises told that they did not work over legal working times the students who work in the private enterprises told that they did. So we asked to students who told us that they work over legal times that if they can get any money for this overtime working. Some of them said they did not. In the other side, it is understood that the money for the overtime working is very limited. For example one metal department students told that:

They gave me money for overtime. But that was not equivalent to my labour force. They [bosses] thought that we don’t know working, because we are intern. They thought that we don’t need money... But we have to work. We have to obey the rules. These statements showed that some of the students were aware of exploitation. But they were thinking that there was nothing to change this situation. These findings can be interpreted that the reproduction of labour force is not just a skill education. It is also reproduction of capitalist relationship of production. If there is flexibility in the work description or in the working time in the labour force markets, these findings

can be interpreted as “expectable”. In another words, these results reflects the unequal relationship in the Turkey Labour force processes.

While students experienced flexibility in the means of working description flexibility as doing drudgery works and flexibility in the means of working time as working except legal time, the results showed that most of the students have been subjected to bad treatment as not students, instead as workers. More than half of the students indicated that, the enterprises behave them not as students but as workers. Also %43, 9 of students indicated that, they have been subjected to bad treatments in the enterprises.

The interviews gave us very interesting information about these bad treatments. But again, we have to say that there were differences between the students in the public enterprises and special places. Despite nearly all of the students who worked in the public enterprises said that, they were not subject to bad treatments in internship process, nearly all of the other students who are not able to be intern in public enterprises said that they were. Those students’ statements about the bad treatments showed that these bad treatments are changing from verbal violence to physical violence. In the other side, some of the students’ statements they told at the interviews showed that sometimes the enterprises making force them to do drudgery working and fire of threats can be named as violence. For example one male machinery department student said that:

I discussed with the boss, because I wanted money for my overtime labour. One day I did not go to the work. I said that “if you don’t pay me for my overtime labour, I won’t work. That’s why we discussed... One day I was ill. So I could not go to the work. Boss asked me "why you don’t come? I said "I was ill". He said me that “don’t lie”. I said “I was ill” again. Then he said "don’t come to here again". Until that time, there were no days that I did not go for work.

Another metal department students who told before that his father died in a work accident statements was like this:

I had got a work accident. My wrist has been cut. [He showed his wrist]. Machinery threw a piece. It was a day which is not belongs legally time. I was working on Saturdays too. But he was not giving me any overtime labour money. Here [school administration] it is told us that students have got government insurance. When we investigated it, we understood that there is not insurance. They said us that “school made insurance but school did not pay any money for insurance”. “That is not active”

they said... So when I had this accident, boss said me that “lets go to hospital”. But I said that “there is not insurance”, because I was working there in Saturday [over legal time]. So he was afraid. Then I went to hospital alone. And he [boss] fired me. He never called and asked me about my leg because of this accident. He had said [to the school administration] that “I can’t agree with him [me] and fired me.

After all these results, it can be said that most of the students are working in unsecure conditions in over legal time. Also students are subjected to bad treatments. All these results are compatible with the Turkey's labour process and the aim of capitalist class. In the other side it can be asked if there is any inspection about internship processes. Or it can be asked if schools administrators or teachers protect students from these bad conditions. So it is helpful to look some results about teacher’s viewpoints.

Did You Say "Organic Intellectuals"? What Does Teachers Think About Internship And What Does The Teachers Who Are Responsible To Protect Students Do?

In Turkey VOCED high schools, teachers can be called in two different groups. One of these teachers is named as “Culture lesson teacher”. (After here CLT) These teachers are the teachers of the lessons like mathematics, grammar exc. So these lessons are common with the other high schools. The other teachers are named as “Vocational lesson teacher” (VLT). VLTs are most important than culture lessons teachers. Because vocational lessons are much more than culture lessons in curriculum. In the other side, VLTs are the teachers who are responsible for the inspection of the internship process. Legally, VLTs have to go to enterprises and have to protect students from bad conditions per week.

Before examine the teacher’s viewpoints, it has to be said that just %6, 4 of the students indicated that their teachers (vocational lessons teachers) came for inspection the enterprise and their internship conditions. So it can be easily said that there is nobody who can protect students from all of the bad treatments during their internship. Also these findings are compatible with the labour process in Turkey. A lot of workers working in illegal conditions because of there are not any government inspection for labour process.

During interviews, it is understood that, there are differences between culture and vocational lessons teachers about all the VOCED procedures. For example, all of the vocational lessons teachers said that VOCED is very important for economy, and national government. Just some of the culture lessons teachers said that VOCED is an

education that satisfies capitalist class desires. In the other side, all of the VLT told that internship is a process that makes students more capable to find a job after graduation. They all think like that.

When we interviewed with teachers about internship process, there were differences between VLTs and CLTs again. All of VLTs interpreted internship positively in the context of the construction of the obedient worker identity. Some of the CLT's share the same idea but the other CLTs said that, although the internship processes may give some practical abilities to the students, it also causes bad student behaviour in the school. So it can be said that CLTs are more critical about internship. Fore example one male grammar teacher told that internship is an exploitation process:

I think the internship process would affect student's future positively if all the conditions would be better. But in Turkey, I don't think that these processes affect students positively. First of all, I think in the internship processes, students are being exploited as in the name of intern. They are exactly exploited as monetary. Even they are being exploited as morally... If internship is an obligatory necessity, it would be more wisely that executed after graduation.

But we have to say again that, just VLTs are responsible for internship process. So theirs viewpoints about internship are more important for us.

The VLTs think that internship process gives market experiences to students. So it is very important and necessary. When we asked about what are market experiences, it becomes clear that they don't speak just about practical abilities. They also states at the interviews that internship process; teaches the bad conditions of working life; teaches the unequal relationships between bosses and workers; and by this way teaches the importance of being compatible in the labour force markets to be employable. So for VLTs the internship process is a kind of identity construction process.

A machinery department teacher described this identity construction as recognizing the life:

First of all, the internship is very helpful for students because it gives money to them. Anyway all of our students are from very poor families. Students realize the fact that "life is very hard" which we told students in school by experience it. They saw in the enterprises that, life is hard. They recognize the life. They also learn something practically. But recognizing the life at the internship is more important than learning some practical abilities.

One wood technologies teacher described the life clearly which all of the VLTs talk about:

The students are seeing the communication at there [in the enterprise]. In fact, most of the students are astonished. Students come us and say that, “foremen curse us, fires us, and do something different thing”. The things like these can be in small enterprises. But in big enterprises something like that can’t be done... But in the big enterprises everybody can work. But the labour market conditions are not like in the big enterprise, so students have to get used to bad things like these. Students can see the market conditions just by this way, because there is not any other enterprise.

The statements below that the same teacher said us showed that, VLTs do not want their students to go to public enterprises. They thought that if the students want to learn about market conditions they have to work in bad conditions because that is reality. So it can be said most of the VLTs legitimates and perpetuates the unequal relationships. The same teacher concluded his statements like this:

For example we can’t find good enterprises for our girl students. We could not send them everywhere because we think that girl students like our daughters. There is cursing, in a lot of enterprise. So we did not send them to there because we want to protect girl students. Of course we protect boy students. But we don’t want boy students to go to public enterprises because in the public enterprises, students generally don’t work. They can’t learn anything in public enterprises.

It was clear that VLTs who are responsible for protecting students in the internship processes don’t do their work and also they want those students to experience all the bad things in the labour processes in the name of being employable:

Now, I think internship is very good. It is very helpful... The aim of the school is upbringing the students as to be compatible for labour force markets and society. What is society? In fact society is the working life... So after graduation, if the students go to the labour force markets, they need an adaptation process. An adaptation process that will introduce industry... The identities of the students are getting better in the enterprises. When the students go to enterprises for internship, they see that everybody [who is in the enterprises] is not like teachers. Maybe sometimes they curse, sometimes they become angry. Sometimes they say that “do this work in this time”. [The voice of the teacher became angry]. In the school the only thing that students afraid of is lesson scores... But it is not like this in the

enterprises. If students aren't able to do the work or aren't able to do it in just in time, they will be fired. We can't fire students. But in the enterprises it can be done.

These statements are summarized all of the VLTs thoughts. So let me say something about these statements. Firstly, VLTs see the society as something that there is no contradiction. So they think that compatibility with labour force markets is the something to compatibility to society. So, they think that the benefits of the capitalist class's which they speak about it in the terms of "markets", "industry" or "economy", benefits is the benefits of the all society's and people. So, although VLTs know that there is bad working conditions, there is cursing, there is working accident, there is [exploitation](#) of labour in the enterprises which students go for internship, they think about all these exploitation procedures are legal and normal. So they want from students to be compatible for all these exploitation procedures. These findings are compatible with Sultana's (1995) research conclusions. As Sultana indicated, in VOCED secondary schools, the dominant ideology belong to paid working has been reproduced by the VLT's practises. But VLTs practises that help this reproduction processes is not latent. They do these practises by behave the students as workers.

Conclusions

Turkey VOCED educational systems aimed to satisfy the reproduction of labour force. Reproduction of labour force includes the reproduction of social classes. So it can be named as to reproduction of the relationships of capitalist production. By this research's findings, we can easily say that the internship process in VOCED is the most influential way of this reproduction processes. The internship processes includes all the asymmetrical relationships between social classes. In this processes, students are becoming workers. So it can be easily said that In Turkey, Vocational secondary education which includes internship process reflected the labour processes.

It can be argued that if there is a possibility for resistance. The answer is of course yes, because there is resistance in the labour processes. The resistance possibility in the educational process hinge upon the objects of this processes and one of the most important objects of the educational processes are teachers. They can empower students for resistance. But in the context of this research, we can't see this position. We saw that, most of the VLTs and CLTs accept the formal aims of these schools. So it can be said that they could not use their critical potential. Of course there are lot reasons about this result. But one of the most important reasons is that, most of teachers (especially VLTs) are old graduates of these schools. The other important

reason may be that teachers and students may think that the labour processes can't be change. So we have to empower the hope, the hope for changing all the reality. But just hope may not be enough. And maybe one of the ways which takes us to that result is the think about shut down all of the VOCED, at least secondary parts of this system, because in turkey, vocational education system quickly transforms to labour process.

Note

[1] This thesis was completed under the supervision of Prof.Doc. L. IsılÜnal.

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The importance of personal autonomy in the era of crisis

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Abstract

Even though the concept of autonomy is not a new concept in philosophy and sociology, the past few decades has been redefined by several theorists of education and has been placed in the centre of educational theory and practice. However there is a difference of opinion even between the supporters of autonomy regarding the definition of autonomy and whether it should be an (compulsory) aim of education. This resulted in a rather ineffective effort to reach a point of mutual understanding. On the other side, a plethora of theorists have disapproved of the significance the above theorists hold to the concept of personal autonomy. The aim of this paper is to briefly examine some of the modern theories of personal autonomy and some of the most dominant critiques that have been applied to them. Furthermore, our aim is to provide an alternative approach to the concept of autonomy - one which connects personal autonomy with the development of one's personality, while simultaneously emphasizing the practical meaning and social connotation it should have.

Keywords: personal autonomy, personality, development of personality, aims of education.

Undoubtedly, the concept of autonomy is not a new concept in philosophy and sociology. It can be found in the work of the ancient Greek philosophers Aristotle and Plato and it has an important place in the theories of Kant, Rousseau and Mill. Personal autonomy has been redefined as a concept and, as illustrated by several theorists, has been in the centre of educational theory for the past few decades. Since western democracy places a high value on autonomy and rationality, there have been a large number of theorists and philosophers arguing in favor of personal autonomy as a desirable aim of education.

The supporters of the liberal notion of autonomy emphasize the criticality of the development of the individual's personality and psyche, and - through this - the achievement of personal happiness and the development of society. Autonomy has been linked with concepts such as critical and rational thinking; independence from physical, psychological and spiritual bonds; freedom and authenticity.

One of the most solid explanations regarding the importance given to personal autonomy and its support by our societies was given by Wardekker. According to him, it is only natural that autonomy should have such a place in modern theories of education. People have to encounter people coming from different nations with multiple cultural standards and a variety of choices to be made considering one's lifestyle (2001: 101). Since now-a-days there is more than one authority in western societies it has proven to be quite difficult for one to make choices deriving from accepted norms and standards. What is more, people constantly come across different perspectives of things and facts from the people they associate with. This situation has led to the need for an education that enables the pupils to handle this pluralism in an autonomous way (2001: 103).

Nevertheless, reaching a point of mutual understanding has proven to be quite a difficult project. Even amongst the supporters of autonomy there have been several disputes concerning, *inter alia*, the definition of autonomy; its importance as an element of the human psyche and character; and its promotion as a compulsory or non compulsory aim of education. There are mostly two major subjects that have divided the supporters of autonomy. The first one is regarding whether the notion of autonomy entails ethical values. Some theories dissociate it from any values and support that one can be autonomous without necessarily being ethical. Other theories set, as a prerequisite for the existence of autonomy, the ethical virtue (Owen et al, 82).

The second subject is concerning whether autonomy should be rational or not. Some theories thereof set some presupposition of rationality in order for one to be considered autonomous, while other theories do not. The most crucial disagreement between the supporters of autonomy derives from the effort to adequately define it. Even though most of the supporters of autonomy believe that education should aim at the development of pupil's autonomy, there is quite a confusion regarding what that means in details and in action (Gibbs, 1979: 119).

Alternatively, many theorists have criticized the concept of autonomy. The criticisms that have been assessed in the definitions and functions of autonomy mainly derive from alternative Schools of Thought, which emphasize the social standing of human beings; their formation from society and their dependence upon it; their social functions; their responsibilities towards social progress and prosperity; and the importance of the social dynamics and social elements in the formation of personal identity. Some theorists reject the notion of autonomy either for being impossible for one to attain or for being unnecessary for one to obtain. Other theorists reject the liberal notion of autonomy and its persistence in individuality and rationalism.

The aim of this paper is to briefly examine some of the modern theories of personal autonomy and some of the most dominant critiques that have been applied to them. Given that it is impossible to include in only one article all the theories that support or criticize the concept of autonomy, only a few have been chosen to be presented; those which are considered among others to have been influential. Furthermore, our aim is to provide an alternative approach to the concept of autonomy - one which connects personal autonomy with the development of one's personality, while simultaneously emphasizing the practical meaning and social connotation it should have. These practical and social elements of our concept of autonomy (such as the development of personality through interaction with other people; solidarity; and an ethical stance towards the common good) emphasize the need to surpass the antithesis between autonomy and socialization and alternatively highlight the value and importance of personal autonomy in this modern era of crisis.

Personal Autonomy in Liberal Theories of Education

R.F. Dearden has been one of the first theorists that concerned himself with the subject of autonomy as a fundamental aim of education. He has defined autonomy as an inherent value, as a quality of human nature (1972: 448) and a 'quality of character' (1972: 448). Autonomy, according to Dearden, is the ability to make decisions rationally. For one to be considered autonomous, the reasons that lead to a decision and ones' actions must be somehow important to the person (1972: 454). These reasons and actions need not be ethical or based on correct criteria and comprehensive information. Dearden states that autonomy requires reference to the processes of the mind; yet autonomy does not simply depend on any cognitive processes, but on those associated with anything that is actually deemed important to

the individual. Such processes could involve the labour of the individual, their interpersonal relationships and their family life.

A person is autonomous, then, to the degree that what he thinks and does in important areas of his life cannot be explained without reference to his own activity of mind. That is to say, the explanation of why he thinks and acts as he does in the abovementioned areas must include a reference to his own choices, deliberations, decisions, reflections, judgments, plannings or reasonings (1975: 63).

Therefore, according to Dearden, autonomy is the ability to make choices on the basis of logic. That is why autonomy is very important in one's life so as to facilitate the existence of dignity, self-respect and self-esteem. What is more, autonomous action is a source of satisfaction because this action entails one's volition. Satisfaction is granted to the extent that what one fulfills contains what one wants or intends.

Moreover, authenticity for Dearden is not considered to be a prerequisite for autonomy. A reason for a decision or an action does not necessarily have to be original to the person to be autonomous, as long as the person has made those taught reasons their own (1972: 454). Self-awareness, however, is according to Dearden a presupposition for autonomy because the better one knows oneself (ones' motives, desires, aims and reactions) the better the chances are of bringing ones thoughts and actions under one's conscious control (Kerr, 2002: 17).

Connecting the concept of autonomy to educational theory and educational practice, he argues that the question of what are the appropriate conditions which favour the development of autonomy of students is mainly empirical. It is likely that strict upbringing is the one that leads children to greater autonomy, or the opposite, namely a freer model of upbringing. He considers that there may be not just one answer to that question but any answer can depend on the people to whom it is intended, the time period and the freedoms they have in mind.

Strike has defined autonomy as the persons' ability to recreate themselves through a critique of the way they have been socialized. He accepts that people are defined by the culture and environment they live in; However, via the development of autonomy, one should be able to be free from the shackles of this socialization (2003: 173).

Being autonomous, according to Strike, derives from one being responsible for one's actions and choices. Human beings are ethical beings and they are responsible for choosing wisely and acting with respect towards others. For one to be able to do this and thus be responsible for one's action, one must have both the opportunity and the

means to choose wisely. ‘Whatever autonomy is, it seems reasonable to assume that it depends in some measure on the ability to make and to act upon reasonable judgments about the choices one has’ (Strike, 2003: 180). Since autonomy is related to one’s choices, the existence of an evaluative framework is essential to autonomy, so as to evaluate their choices and act upon them. In his own words, autonomy depends on the possession of virtue, or at least certain virtues... People who lack courage may have their reason overruled by fear. People who lack moderation or temperance may have their reason overruled by their desires. People who have not formed habits of sharing or of considering the needs of others, or who have learned that only their own needs and desires count, are not able to consider moral arguments. Such deficiencies of character not only disable reasoning, they undermine autonomy. It is not just that the lack of virtue leads people to be unable to act on reasons that seem good to them, analogously to the difficulty people have in quitting smoking when they are persuaded they should. Those who are ruled by their passions or who have not learned to care about the welfare of others will not count as reasons the same kinds of things as will others. Appeals to what is genuinely good or to the welfare of others will not be reasons for them (Strike, 2003: 181). This framework depends on the knowledge one acquires during their life (2003: 185). Additionally, Mele identifies autonomy with self-control. A person is autonomous when they are free to desire and act without any extrinsic restrictions (1995: 5). People with self-control are able to manage themselves and act in accordance with what they consider as ethical or correct. As he indicates, self-control is essential for autonomy because even though our most desirable judgments are based on our evaluations, the driving force of our desires is not always in accordance with our evaluations. Nevertheless, self-control is not enough for one to be autonomous. For a person to be considered autonomous, they must not have forced or violently created motivational situations, they must be a trustworthy thinker and their belief must drive them to deliberation about the matters that implore them (1995: 147-148). What is more, one must have no “history of compulsion” to be considered autonomous. There are two predispositions for this. Firstly, the way they have acquired their predispositions must not overpass their abilities for self-control with regards to their mental life, and secondly, this overpass must not have made the person incapable to dispel these predispositions (p. 172).

A person is free to act only when they are free from any external coercion. Mele identifies autonomy with free will and freedom of action without any external constraints. A person is generally autonomous when they are free to desire and to act without external constraints. Therefore, an agent is not autonomous and responsible for their actions if they do not act freely. As he said, ‘an agent who performs an overt action A does not freely A [and is not morally responsible for A-ing] if (1) he expresses unsheddable values in A-ing, (2) owing directly to those values, he could not have done otherwise than A in the circumstances (on a compatibilist reading of “could have done otherwise”), (3) those values were very recently produced in a way that bypassed his capacities for control over his mental life by value engineering to which he did not consent and are seriously at odds with autonomously acquired values of his that were erased in the process, (4) he retains no preexisting value that is promoted by his having the unsheddable values he expresses in A-ing, and (5) A is the first overt action he performs on the basis of his new values’ (Mele 2006: 170 in Mele, 2009: 470).

In general, the contribution of Mele’s theory of independence is that he enriched the concept of autonomy with the notions of beliefs, feelings, principles and attitudes of the individual. He supported that, for a theory of autonomy to be comprehensive, it must explain and account for the utility of autonomy not only in relation to the decisions and actions of the individual but also in relation to the concepts above.

Another extremely important thinker of education and a supporter of autonomy is J. White. Even though some aspects of his theory have changed throughout the years, he has always been convinced that both autonomy and well-being must be central aims of education. Autonomy, according to White, is the ability to be the only judge of what is good for oneself having in mind all the alternatives. Well-being, as said by White, is the ability to learn how to acquire all that constitute autonomy. These two values, though extremely important for White, are not interconnected. Autonomy is not a presupposition of well-being and vice versa. Therefore, one can be autonomous without being happy and one can be happy without being autonomous. In his late work, White has presented his theory concerning the satisfaction of human needs. According to his theory, one’s well-being is dependent upon the satisfaction of his needs, in relation to the whole of his life. The higher the desire that is satisfied is to the hierarchy of the person’s desires the more one’s well-being is promoted. Likewise, autonomy is dependent on having adequate information and alternatives regarding

their choices. The more unaffected one's choices are, the more autonomous one is. Both well-being and autonomy have a scale. One can be more or less happy and more or less autonomous.

For White, autonomy through the hierarchical assembly of the desires and needs of the person as a whole entity can help the students to face the contradictions and conflicts that may arise during the course of their lives. The lack of autonomy can cause failure in resolving conflicts in two ways. Firstly, because the person could remain in a constant state of conflict unable to find solutions, or secondly because they will always resort to and depend on the power and authority of others to solve their problems. Linking his theory regarding the satisfaction of desires with education, White argued that education should be able to supply students with different perspectives and alternatives so that they are able to make thoughtful and autonomous choices. The main goal of education should be to provide each student with adequate information about their desires and how to accommodate the most important of them. In his book "Towards a Compulsory Curriculum" he argues that one of the main purposes of education should be to create people who are able to think independently, and based on logic to be able to form an opinion and to make decisions and plan their lives based on just these decisions.

Aviram recognizes two types of autonomy: institutional and psychological autonomy. The first type concerns the free action of people as it is provided by people or the sociopolitical status quo (p. 67). The latter refers to a component of human personality. This second type is the one that theorists of education have been referring to. The two types have no logical connection between them. One can enjoy constitutional autonomy without being psychologically autonomous and vice versa (p.68). According to Aviram autonomy is the ideal of human personality that enables people to make the best choices on their ideals (p.63). He recognizes the danger of isolating people, due to the constant emphasis on independence; however education can minimize the danger by simultaneously emphasizing commitment. Aviram believes that commitment is not contrary to autonomy when autonomy is understood in terms of (volition) will or desires. This is because, in the case of will, the configuration and exercise of the commitment is the centre of autonomy and, in the case of the desires, commitments are the reflections of the desires (p. 64).By his words, commitments of all kinds restrict, by definition, the institutional autonomy of the committed individual by reducing his/her range of free choice. Once one is

committed to a specific cause, many other commitments *mutatis mutandis* become impossible. From this perspective it would be correct to say that autonomy and commitment contradict each other. But once we distinguish between institutional and psychological autonomy we realise that this contradiction does not necessarily prevail as far as psychological autonomy is concerned. We cannot automatically deduce from the fact that somebody committed him/herself to some cause and hence restricted his/her autonomy-institutionally speaking-that he/she lost his/her psychological autonomy. This invalid chain of reasoning is often followed by the critics of autonomy when pointing to love and care as incompatible with autonomy, (also) because these narrow institutional autonomy (Aviram, 1995: 68).

What is more, he disregards the identification of autonomy with self-control because the constant control of the self and the constant criticizing of one's actions prevent true commitment resulting in a person isolating oneself from their environment, even from other people (p.65).

Critiques on personal autonomy

Many theorists have criticized the notion of autonomy, as it is defined by the liberal theorists. According to Devine, Canfield and Gough one of the most dominant critiques that have been made about the notion of autonomy is that it depends on the culture of western countries and thus fails to understand: cultural traditions that place more importance in the community; all that community offers to the individual; and the interaction between the community and the individual- including the way the individual is defined through this interaction with the societal and the way the individual affects society (2008: 107).

The supporters of autonomy have tried to surpass this critique in two ways. Some of them support that autonomy is a fundamental value within the frame of liberal society. Although autonomy may not be an important value in other more traditional societies, it is undoubtedly a desirable and essential value for the well-being of humans within the current society that we live in. Other theorists try to prove that autonomy is an essential element for the well-being no matter the society one lives in. They base this argument upon three reasons: all people possess the desire to live in accordance with a perception of life which suits to their personality; all people desire not to be a victim of deception manipulation and other dubious ways of persuasion; and the value of autonomy is interdependent with other values that regard the democratic liberal rights and, in general, the human rights (Piper, 2011: 20-21).

Oshana, for example, rejects the theories of autonomy that fail to take into consideration the social-relational element of the human life. She supports that in order to be autonomous some presuppositions must be met. Firstly, the social background of the person must enable them to develop critical thinking so as to reflectively define their way of living and rule themselves. Secondly, the person must be able to adhere to values, interests and aims, even if they are different from those who have some kind of authority on the person, without a fear of punishment for their beliefs. Thirdly, people must not be victims of misinformation or a lack of adequate information. What is more, one's environment must provide them with an adequate number of choices regarding everything that is important in their life from which one can choose. Lastly, it should not be expected from a person to take responsibility for another person's needs, with the exception of cases that are logically expected or when the person of interest agrees (Christman, 150).

Schinkel, de Ruyter&Steutel reject the liberal notion of autonomy since it concentrates solely on rational critical thinking; therefore it is a cognitive and intellectualist concept. Additionally, according to them, autonomy as defined by the liberal theorists has become an extremely demounting notion. Few people in life will be able or are capable enough to become autonomous. Furthermore, there is no proof that even in liberal society non-autonomous people are in low levels of well-being nor that if these non-autonomous people become autonomous they will obtain higher levels of well-being and happiness (2010: 109).

Evaluating the concept of autonomy, Schinkel argues that liberal theorists identifying autonomy with the concept of self-control (for example, control of the situation in which the person is located) restrict autonomy in an area of human life, that is, the area of values and beliefs. Therefore, they limit the manner in which individuals can be autonomous (2010: 105). For these reasons, Schinkel, de Ruyter and Steutel suggest formulating a realistic descriptive concept of autonomy which applies to normal (based on their skill set) human adults (2010b: 274). There are two reasons why one should use a notion of autonomy different from liberal. Firstly because by the less demanding concept proposed, all children without intellectual disabilities have the opportunity to develop a basic autonomy. Secondly, if the hypothesis that certain characteristics of the consumer society in which we live threaten the development of autonomy in people is correct, then this increases the importance of the question of possible abandon (2010b: 270-271).

However, Schinkel, de Ruyter and Steutel defend the notion of autonomy in general. They do not suggest the abandonment of the idea of autonomy as a whole but they only suggest that the liberal concept should be replaced by a realistic descriptive sense of autonomy which would apply to 'normal' human adults. The conditions laid down for persisting on the notion of autonomy are: the individual is recognizable as a single person; has concerns about the truth; can recognize what commitments to action is a result of their conviction; know that if one changes these beliefs they will change simultaneously their commitments for action and the hierarchy based on the long-term interests; and, finally, they are able to form a specific time one intends to act for the sake of a preferable situation and to act on this intention, either at that time or at a later time (Schinkel, de Ruyter and Steutel, 2010: 274).

Continuing, according to Dunlop, liberal theorists overlook the expressive aspect of human action and speech, while simultaneously perceiving simplified terms of the social status of the individual (1991: 112). The desired ideal of a critically autonomous person, encompassing the meaning given by these theorists, is contrasted with the situation of 'socially convenient compliant schemes' people (1991: 113), while the most common usage of autonomy is that which completely identifies with the choices regarding what a person thinks and acts (ibid.). The concept of personal autonomy is concerned with human nature. The issue is complicated, however, when the question of the relationship of human beings (as individualities) and society rises. A fact that most philosophers accept is that man is a social being. Nevertheless, socialization is considered a coexistent entity in a person, namely that man is not only a social being (ibid). Society is perceived by liberal theorists as something outside of man.

Dunlop considers that society is not only the environment that people live in but it is also a part of themselves. People act, think and feel as social beings, having plenty of social identities which define them. Through these identities people construct their individualities. The means to this procedure are the institutions, since people constitute their lives within them. The subversion of these institutions, via the encouragement to evaluate and criticize society and its institutions holds the danger of undermining the people around them and one's own self (p.114).

In contrast, there are other theorists, such as Michael Hand, who entirely reject the notion of autonomy. According to Hand autonomy could be a functional value only if the actions of the individual that are determined only by themselves are more

important, more relevant and more effective than the actions led by others. He separates the meanings that have been attributed to autonomy in 5 categories and argues that none of them is a defensible purpose of education. Originally he separates the concepts of autonomy in five categories, two "ordinary" and three "technical", which he attributes to the theorists of education. The first ordinary concept of autonomy identifies autonomy as a state of being, where the person in order to be reckoned with individuality should be free to determine their actions. The second meaning of autonomy identifies it with a quality of character: the tendency of the individual to determine their actions (p. 537). Hand rejects the first concept because it is subject to conditions outside of the individual and related to their relationship with the world. Therefore, there is no purpose for an educational intervention in this sense. He rejects the second meaning, because it is not always better for the individual to determine their actions.

The first technical term of autonomy set by Hand is the one which defines autonomy as the ability or the capacity of the individual to determine their actions. This concept requires the mental capacity to consider their options and choose one of them. Hand stresses that it is undoubtedly important for one to be able to determine their actions. However, he rejects this concept because, as he mentioned, almost all people are able to identify with them, even if they are not taught to be autonomous, or free. The only cases where this capacity is absent are the ones involving long-term isolation or abuse. But as he points out, even in these cases the absence of this capacity is not due to lack of education or because this ability has never been within that person. Instead, these people were once able to determine their actions; yet they were deprived of this ability by the conditions in which they lived.

The second technical concept refers to the meaning of independence as it is understood in Kant, namely of autonomy as the shaping of our beliefs based on logic and with the purpose of them becoming general, universal beliefs. Hand's opinion on this issue is that beliefs are the result of our consciousness. In other words, they are the result of how the world affects the person and vice versa. This means that beliefs are not the result of will, which does not mean that the person is will-less in front of the influence of the environment, or that they have no choice about these influences. Instead, Hand writes, one may choose how seriously they take these beliefs and how skeptical or credulous they will be regarding the information provided by others. This thoughtfulness could be described as autonomy, but because there cannot be a general

rule that people should always be thoughtful towards all the information they receive from others, the teaching of this kind of autonomy is detrimental to students. The only thing we can teach students in relation to the formulation of their beliefs is to be preferably autonomous in the sense described above, but be equally comfortable to evaluate themselves whenever necessary and in some cases to accept the evidence and reasons provided by others (p. 545).

The third concept of autonomy equates autonomy to the determination of the desires of the individual. This determination must be based on reflection and on the careful and rational confrontation of the reasons leading to it (p. 546). Hand rejects this third term of autonomy for the same reason as the second. Desires are not the result of will. The only thing that people can control about their desires is the degree to when they either identify with them, act in light of their satisfaction, or withdraw from them and try to focus their lives away from their satisfaction (p. 547). This act of choice regarding the satisfaction or non-satisfaction of desires can be equated with autonomy, but again according to Hand this cannot be a purpose of education. This is firstly, because the evaluation of desires has no particular significance in peoples' lives. Most often people accept their desires and only try to regulate them properly. Also, it is not always true that the most appropriate person to assess the wishes of someone is the same person who has these desires. There are desires that are wrong, neurotic or pathological and unrealistic. Reasonable people would want to remove these desires and control them in full extent. But it is undeniable that not all people are equally suitable to assess their desires and accept that they are incomplete and must therefore be controlled (p. 549).

An alternative concept of personal autonomy

Autonomy has been the subject of numerous conversations and disagreements between the theorists of education, a small selection of which we have examined in this essay. The fact that on one hand, we accept the importance of autonomy as a part of human personality, yet on the other hand we locate it in an alternative concept of individuality and socialisation, has caused us to diverge from the above theorists and has created the need for an alternative theory regarding the value of autonomy. The critiques that have been made to the liberal theories of autonomy, though fruitful, are not sufficient because they are limited to the relationship between autonomy and socialisation or between autonomy and gender. The alternative theory we locate the concept of autonomy in, is a part of a different theory for the development and

consummation of the human personality; one which deepens to the dialectic relationship between the individual and the social and defines autonomy in terms of its social status. This orientation to the social existence of people and the relationship between them is rooted to a different concept from the liberal one, on what constitutes human nature and personality.

Unfortunately, due to lack of space, these issues will not be discussed in this essay. However it needs to be said that we define human personality as the internal unity of the social and the individual and it depends on both the natural inclinations of people and the social content they assimilate (Vazjoulin, logic of history). Human personality is developed through the assimilation of the social to the personality of the person, assimilation not passive but active in the sense that the person conquers the components of the societal and alters them into an integral part of their personality. This conquest of the social is both dialectic and creative. As soon as they become part of one's personality they become means of thought and behaviour.

For those of us that accept this definition of personality it becomes clear that human personality is the subject of social relations, which are established via a person's activities. As said by Pavlides:

by the concept of personality we mean the person as a dialectical unity of their biological nature and social relations in which they are involved. Personality, therefore, is not just a limited material - physical limit of individual reality. It is the relevance of a certain bodily individuality with a historically specific grid of social relations (Pavlides, 2002: 73).

Undoubtedly consciousness does not exist independently from the human body. "Every human being as a consciousness agent and to the extent that he/she acts consciously is defined as personality" (Pavlidis, 2012: 41). People perceive the world through the entity of their personality, through all aspects of it. The degree to which one is conscious of their bounds, with other people of the social essence of their individuality determines to a large extent their education, in the sense that the significance of it for an individual is defined by their social position in life. Hence, the development of human personality is based on the realization of their place within society and is manifested in the social content of their aims and goals (Pavlides, 2002: 86).

Therefore we diverge from all the theories - liberal or not - which maintain that the biological status of a child's personality is the aftereffect of the integral human needs,

unlike their social status which is external and hostile (Pavlidis, 2006: 167). Personal autonomy, in the sense conveyed by the liberal theorists, is based on the conclusion that people exist regardless of their social relationships and before them. Human beings are considered, in other words, capable to understand themselves and the world around them, to be associated with the world, to think independently from it and act autonomously due to the abilities nature gave them. Such a distinction is impossible to make. We are formed as people not only from our biological characteristics but also from the experiences, beliefs, knowledge, interpersonal relations, etc. Human capabilities have both social and natural character and because of these capabilities people are able to think and act rationally.

The dialectical approach followed here leads to a socio-historical idea of personality. This position means that the personality is not revealed for the first time in history rather than as a person ... endowed with certain physical properties and capacities and that there is no personality rather than as a subject of social relations. In other words, in contradiction of the person, the personality of the man, just as his conscience, in no way they pre-exist their activity; rather they are born from activity (Leontief, 181).

There is no authentic self, authentic personality in this regard, since personality is shaped by human activity and through its relationships with the world and people. Social relations, as analysed above, are established via a person's activities. Labour, for that reason, is extremely important to the development of one's personality, since it has always been the base of human life, well-being and culture. Human beings are above all creators / producers.

People - aware of their activity and the world in which they are situated, acting in function of the objectives which they propose, having the seat of their decisions located in themselves and in their relations with the world and with others, infusing the world with their creative presence by means of the transformation they effect upon it of schooling - unlike animals, not only live but exist; and their existence is historical (Freire, 2005: 98).

Keeping all these in mind, we argue for a dialectic envisagement of the value of autonomy, one which sets as a pre-requirement the constant interaction between the individual and their social – relational - cultural environment. The interaction between humans and nature reveals and develops the inclinations and abilities of every human being and makes them functional personalities. This development operates both from the result of labour and from the relationships between the co-workers and is dialectic.

Via labour, humans attended to transform their relationship with nature. As long as people are the subject and not the object of labour there can be no human individuality (Pavlidis, 2002: 88). This kind of labour alienates humans from their labour, their environment and their own selves. People cannot be autonomous under these conditions.

If we are right and the relation between an individual and the world or nature are vital to the development of one's personality, then the quality of these relations is vital to the development of personal autonomy. But what does it mean to be autonomous? What is autonomy?

Autonomy is a part of human personality. The more developed a personality is, the more autonomous. A person to be considered autonomous does not have to be independent and isolated from other people but is autonomous through their interaction with other people, while being a separate personality. This concept of autonomy is not identified with the respect towards other people's need for happiness, well-being and self-actualization; nor is it a mere recognition of the interaction and interdependence between people. Autonomy is the deeper completion through other people.

Therefore, autonomy is conceived as the union of the person with other people without any submission to them and without losing one's self or one's uniqueness. This concept of autonomy then presupposes the existence of relations and interaction between people; yet it is not limited to that. It regards autonomy as the consideration of the self through the eyes of the others. Such a concept also entails the notions of respect, loyalty and care.

What distinguishes the broader theory that we locate the concept of autonomy in from liberal theories is that it gives a universal dimension to the concept of autonomy. Each one is an opportunity for the other to become autonomous. Only when one becomes the 'means' for the integration of others, can they achieve their own fulfillment and vice versa. In this regard, there is a reciprocity, which is based on love between humans (Eagleton, 2003: 176). At the same time we believe that man is a political being, not only with the liberal concept that one must take into account the needs of other people for self-actualization, but in the sense that the truly deep integration of human personality is achieved through other people (ibid, 177).

The liberal model of society requires people to prosper in their own space without mutual interference, so that the self-actualization, well-being and integration of a

person will not prevent the self-actualization, well-being and integration of the other. This means that the person is left free to realize their nature with the presupposition that they will allow others to do the same (ibid., 243). Instead, we believe that man achieves autonomy, freedom and completion in and through the integration of other people.

Since autonomy is part of one's personality, the more developed one's personality is and the more multifaceted this development is, the more autonomous one is. Thus, autonomy has gradations. Measure for the degree of one's autonomy is the degree of the completion of one's personality. This procedure is both quantitative and qualitative and is linked to a person's pedagogy, their relations to other people and their activities.

If this is true, then being non-autonomous is not linked to a concept of autonomy that is a separate and an independent value; on the contrary it is linked with all the parameters that affect the development of one's personality, be they social, psychological, economic and political. And since we have connected the development of a personality with the quality of the social relations between people and human activities, then autonomy is affected by all the parameters that affect these factors. This leads to the conclusion that autonomy has both an intellectual and a practical complexion.

To explain, the kind of relationships one holds with other people can affirm or undermine autonomy, by affirming or undermining rational – critical thinking and acting. Autonomy is a value characterizing all people who have social consciousness since all people who have consciousness can distinguish themselves from the others and recognize and understand their needs. This understanding however does not mean that people can in all cases and every time correctly understand their own needs and act in accordance, because there are cases that the social conditions one lives in, do not allow them to understand the pre-requirements of the satisfaction required for one to obtain their needs and desires.

There are even cases that people, in order to satisfy their needs, consciously chose to submit to the volition of another, to show tolerance towards repression or to accept conformism. Therefore, autonomy as a mere ability of the individual to choose is inadequate. Human life is not the subject of choices on behalf of the individual but of the objective possibilities, contradiction and prospects. Autonomy gains a substantial content when it refers to the formation of social interaction (Pavlidis, 2006: 123).

Therefore, autonomy should not be connected to the education of people so they can function as independent and isolated members of society. On the contrary it should be connected with the freedom to participate in making decisions regarding matters that concern the various aspects of their lives. This of course has political, social and economic prolongations. We diverge from the theories that either fail to take into consideration the practical aspects of autonomy or promote the isolation in people as the expression of autonomy.

Furthermore, the only way for someone to be autonomous is via: the reconnect of the social and the individual; the reconstruction of the socialization of people through emancipated, unselfish and productive relations; and the acquirement of more qualitative relations with the world- that is the environment and its people. These relations are based on the acceptance of the difference and the uniqueness of each person and refer to the deeper and more substantial ways of connecting with people, through which one develops and becomes complete. The structuring of these relations should be accomplished in a climate of collegiality and solidarity, where people are responsible not only for themselves but for the common good. Needless to say that these relations are not an exchange between society and individuals: society providing safety and protection in exchange for blind faith and obedience to the community. On the contrary, they are based on respect, trust and love, they do not jostle individual needs and they promote criticism and social change, as and when it is considered necessary by people. Consequently, if autonomy is the ability of people to think and act consciously, keeping their independence within their relations to others and the environment, while simultaneously criticizing and self-criticizing, then autonomy should be considered a desirable and necessary value.

The significance of personal autonomy as an aim of education

Undoubtedly, we all live in an era of crisis: economic, social and political. This crisis has touched and affected all of our lives either directly or indirectly. Moreover, it has affected education at a global scale. Public education is shrinking, it has lost its status, it has become less critical and its role has been redefined. The neoliberal, neoconservative and technocratic dogmas that influence the role and aims of education seem incapable of offering an understanding to the causes of this worldwide crisis and the various ways it affects education. The conditions prevailing in education now-a-days seem quite similar to what Giroux and Aronowitz described in their book 'Education still under siege'. In their own words:

the meaning and purpose of schooling at all levels of education were refashioned around the principles of the marketplace and the logic of rampant individualism. Ideologically, this meant abstracting schools from the language of democracy and equity while simultaneously organizing educational reform around the discourse of choice, reprivatization, and individual competition. Consistent with a broader attack on all notions of democratic public life, schools became a prime battleground for removing the language of ethics, history and community from public discourse. Within this approach, schools became the quintessential institutions of bureaucratic individualism (1993: 1).

I will argue that in these times, when education is indeed still under siege, autonomy is both a desirable and an essential value.

Education in liberal society emphasizes knowledge as a self-worth value and education as an end in and itself. This consideration, however, underestimates the fact that the assimilation of the cultural wealth of humanity is determined by the configuration of young peoples' ethical and socio-political behaviour, and by their worldview, ideals and aims. Indeed,

the creation of new knowledge contains as its single element the critical assessment of the accumulated knowledge in light of the increasing social needs, and therefore it implies a particular understanding of the nature and the forms of learning (Dafermos, 2004: 64).

This leads to the conclusion that the education of the youth, as a process of transmitting knowledge always occurs within the process of the development and the edification of human personality. This process defines the ways of assimilating, using and developing the existing knowledge. Education in light of the development and edification of human personality has an important value because it refers to the relationship between education and social relations. Social relations are the ones that indicate both the desirable social subject and the program of their education (Pavrides, 1998: 125-126).

There is no doubt that one of the core aims of education is the development of the children's abilities and inclinations and the shaping of the capabilities of their minds; However, since the significance of education is defined by the social content that gives meaning to their life, then equally important is the development of one's personality as an aim of education. The formation of one's personality renders the pedagogical relationship indispensable since both the intellectual faculties and the

social consciousness can only be developed through the interaction of personalities (Pavlidis, 2012: 42).

In these times of crisis, the acceptance that the formation of a personality within social relations must be a core aim of education is of great importance. In a social environment that is characterized by contradictions - where the social relations are based on selfishness and self-interest - the assimilation of the specific environment becomes an inhibiting factor for the multifaceted development of one's personality and education itself acts to a large extent as the process of reproducing the existing social relations and the labor power (Dafermos, 2004: 70-71). If the relations within which such a formation takes place are relations of comradeship and solitarily, based on a foundation of love and respect then the motivation and need for intellectual and creative activity will be through dedication to other individuals and to humanity. It will be the desire to pursue social progress (Pavlidis, 2012: 45).

From that point of view, it becomes clear why we diverge ourselves from the liberal view of autonomy and most of the educational theories that support the fostering of autonomy as an aim of education.

The individualistic conception of autonomy has greatly emphasized the idea of a lonely self, who chooses autonomously their program of life and create themselves, always in control of the effects they receive from other people. Likewise, the concepts of the social existence of people and of the socialization of youth have become problematic...(Pavlidis, 121).

This conception of autonomy considers society as something given and socialization as constant adjustment to the social environment. This concept then opposes to our beliefs on human personality, social interaction, labour and education.

It is one of our greatest beliefs that people are not the limit but the essence of our selves. Through relationships with other people we develop as personalities, we acquire consciousness and self-consciousness and we have a personal relationship with our selves. Thus the development of one's personality should not be identified with a process of introspection but with a process of constant interaction with the others. Of course it should be noted that this correlation with people does not mean identification with them or submission to them.

Under these conditions, the subject of personal autonomy gains an important and substantial position in educational theory. Education itself :

as the assimilation of spiritual goods, as the education of people within culture and though culture, gains the most decisive significance for human life when social relations are transformed into educational procedures, when they serve, as the utmost purpose, the optimal and multifaceted development of each [person, M.P.] through the universal access to the achievements of civilization (Pavrides, 2006: 125).

From this point of view, we are quite skeptical towards all educational theories that do not examine social relations and do not recognize nor understand the contradictions that characterize modern societies.

Education as the practice of freedom - as opposed to education as the practice of domination - denies that man is abstract, isolated, independent, and unattached to the world; it also denies that the world exists as a reality apart from people. Authentic reflection considers neither abstract man nor the world without people, but people in their relations with the world. In these relations consciousness and world are simultaneous: consciousness neither precedes the world nor follows it (Freire, 2005: 81).

The significant role that education has in shaping comprehensive people and society is undeniable. For this reason, the quality of education and its goals set can contribute positively or negatively in future society. It is necessary at this point to clarify that education alone is not sufficient to shape the personality type which we have analyzed above. The whole pedagogy of human beings needs to push them towards that direction, which is consistent with social reality as experienced by them. 'The development of personality is in its substance the assimilation of the social by humans, that is, not only schooling, education but most certainly pedagogy and self-education of man as a conscious social being' (Vazjulin, logic of history).

Education cannot serve as a means of empowerment for people, if it is not part of emancipatory efforts of the whole of society itself, as guided by emancipatory purposes (Pavrides, 2006: 194). For this reason, there is an urgent need for improvement (if not for remodeling) social relations of man to become less alienating and alienated and more qualitative, which of course requires the remodeling of the socio-economic status quo.

In conclusion, the idea of an autonomous person is inseparable to the idea of a multifaceted developed personality, which immediately raises the question of all the necessary social conditions needed to implement it. In order for people to develop into multifaceted personalities and be autonomous they must be governed by values such

as respect, solidarity, reciprocity, comradeship, love and thus be able to communicate and interact successfully. From this, it becomes clear that the educational ideal of personal autonomy is inextricably connected to the social ideal of social emancipation.

Therefore, the education that aims at the multifaceted and integrated physical, cognitive, emotional and ethical development of children's personalities, with the ultimate purpose a society of freedom and solidarity, should not disregard the issue of personal autonomy. Because, 'authentic education is not carried on by "A" for "B" or by "A" about "B," but rather by "A" with "B," mediated by the world—a world which impresses and challenges both parties, giving rise to views or opinions about it. These views, impregnated with anxieties, doubts, hopes, or hopelessness, imply significant themes on the basis of which the program content of education can be built' (Freire, 2005: 93).

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Social consciousness, education and transformative activity

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Abstract

This paper examines the relationship between social consciousness and transformative activity, and also the importance of education for the formation of a social consciousness which advances such activity.

Keywords: Consciousness, education, knowledge, social emancipation.

At times of deep crisis, when dominant social relations no longer respond to the needs of people, what emerges to a large extent is the importance of social consciousness, in the sense of understanding the contradictions of the present, and at the same time of identifying the possibilities and prospect of transcending the latter.

Given that education acquires its genuine social significance to the extent that it renders people capable not only of adapting to but also of creating their world, a study of education from the perspective of human's transformative activity, i.e. of education's potential contribution to the issue of social change, would require an examination of the cognitive preconditions of such a change, in conjunction with detecting the cognitive dimensions of emancipatory educational activity.

In other words, it is impossible to think about critical education's emancipatory aims without thinking about the cultivation and development of consciousness that best *corresponds to these aims.*

In line with the above, I shall now attempt to highlight some crucial issues regarding the relationship between social consciousness and transformative activity, and also between education and the formation of a social consciousness which is suitable for such an activity.

Particularly, I am going to examine two aspects or two sides of social consciousness: consciousness, in the meaning of knowledge of the objective reality and consciousness, in the meaning of awareness of oneself as a subject in his social ties with other persons –subjects.

Generally speaking, human consciousness is linked to people's active stand towards the world; it stems from labour activity of which it constitutes an organic part. Consciousness does not simply involve a reflection of reality but also a constitution of the plans-goals of social labour. It is the internal, intellectual part of the transformative labour relation to the world, which it guides and directs.

If we examine the relation between social consciousness and labour we shall observe that, as regards the productive interaction of people with nature, consciousness constitutes knowledge of the conditions, the materials and means of labour used in order to produce the desired outcome. Knowledge of things, in the sense of identifying their objective attributes, is an essential requirement in order to understand how susceptible they are to change, via the intentional transformative effect of humans upon them.

Thus, we know the world in order to transform it and precisely because we do so.

However, which knowledge is the one that allows people to comprehend the relations and processes that characterize various objects in their world and therefore act on them effectively and transform them?

The initial, direct reflection of things is the one that is realised through our senses, since the latter reflect things as the sum of their directly observable external attributes.

Sensual knowledge accumulated in numerous daily situations, which comprises the everyday experience of people, is the one which grasps and contains the phenomenality of things. At this cognitive level, things appear familiar: we know that something exists; however we do not really know what it is.

The entrapment of knowledge in the phenomenality of things makes it impossible to comprehend the interconnections that form the wholeness of their parts. Empirical knowledge, in general, cannot distinguish essential relations, dynamic contradictions and developmental processes. Being restricted to the limits of the phenomenal, it always perceives the particular, which, when examined outside the framework of its interconnections, emerges as something static - unchanged.

The superficial and fragmented nature of empirical knowledge is the starting point for the creation of a false or more precisely *inverted reflection of things*, when some *random and* inessential attributes of their occasional daily connections, are viewed as being substantial and definitive. A large extent of the illusions and fetishisations that affect social consciousness and social practice stem from people being entrapped in their immediate, sensual-empirical knowledge of reality.

In contrast to the spontaneous empirical thinking the cultivated human intellect concerns a reflection of the internal, of the essence of various objects, as adialectic unity of their parts, which is represented through the constitution of a theoretical system, within which each concept presupposes the rest and is interrelated with them, thus revealing the object as a developing organic totality of parts.

It should be noted that the possibility to change things lies in their internal negativity, in the existence of internal-determining contradictions (whatever lies outside contradictions lies outside evolution). Therefore, the knowledge that primarily supports the transformative activity of humans is related to the theoretical conception and representation of the essential contradictions that determine the genesis and evolution of various objects.

According to the above, we can support that education as an activity grounded in teaching, would have no particular social significance, if people were able to become active in labour process and social life, using just their daily experience.

The social significance and necessity of education, as an organized and systematic process, in conjunction with the crucial role of teaching and subsequently of educators, is related to the transfer of knowledge which concerns aspects of reality found beyond daily empirical knowledge.

At the same time, education as teaching restructures and fundamentally develops the intellectual abilities of students, and primarily those skills that concern the theoretical-conceptual understanding and representation of various objects.

Education as an organized systematic teaching process has a reason for existence when, as Vygotsky points out, zones of proximal development are created within it; when the intellectual powers of the child are nurtured and developed through intellectual actions, which it carries out jointly and with the assistance of his/her teacher (Vygotsky, 1987: 211).

Within the framework of teacher -students interaction, a decisive role is played by the awareness and volitional use of scientific concepts by children, which requires an understanding of the specific relations of generality in the semantic content of different concepts.

The cultivation of the ability to know the world scientifically is related to the understanding of the laws that govern the cognitive process and therefore to the cultivation of people's ability to reflect upon their own cognitive activity.

In this context, it should be pointed out that the effort to promote schools as a place of teaching theoretical knowledge comes into contrast with the traditions of pedagogical naturalism and educational empiricism, which view the sensual perception of the world, along with the spontaneous accumulation of empirical knowledge by children, as being of intrinsic value.

For example, Maria Montessori, a prominent representative of these traditions, claims that:

Scientific observation then has established that education is not what the teacher gives; education is a natural process spontaneously carried out by the human individual, and is acquired not by listening to words but by experiences upon the environment. The task of the teacher becomes that of preparing a series of motives of cultural activity, spread over a specially prepared environment, and then refraining from obtrusive interference. Human teachers can only help the great work that is being done, as servants help the master. (Montessori, 1963: 3)

The supporters of pedagogical naturalism and educational empiricism as a rule share a child or person-centered approach to learning, and sceptically view the role of society, of adults and teachers in the formation of a distinct personality, through the intentional-organised teaching and cultivation of intellectual skills.

It should be underlined here, that educational empiricism refers to an individualistic consideration of man, accompanied by suspicion towards anything of a social nature, and also towards the collective activities of people and their cultural-cognitive achievements and traditions.

The idealization of individual experience goes against human *sociality*, undermining the foundations of human communication. One requirement for people to be able to communicate universally is for their personal ideas to be presented in a universal form, in the form of generality. By lifting up the individual sensual experience to the level of generality, transforming it into concepts and systems of concepts, the related to language intellectual activity attributes to the individual experience a universally perceived and announceable form, therefore ensuring human communication in this manner.

The theories of pedagogical naturalism and educational empiricism consider that the basic cause of intellectual manipulation lies alone in the institution of education, in the socially organized learning connected to systematic teaching. Consequently, they systematically ignore the social relations and class interests that determine the

ideological role of schooling. Also they ignore the fact that, as a rule, it is spontaneous, everyday knowledge, which perceives the world in a false, inverted way. From this perspective, the research of Paul Willis on the consciousness of working class high-school students, which constitute the so-called “counter school culture” has been particularly enlightening (Willis, 1999). This kind of culture seems, at first glance, as a form of resistance by the working class students to the official school system, its values and ideology. But what Willis’ research actually reveals is that this kind of resistance is no resistance at all, but quite the opposite. By rejecting theoretical activity and idealising practical knowledge, everyday experience and manual labour, the representatives of the “counter school culture” just accept their highly disadvantaged position in the social division of labour in an unreflective, conformist way. The case of the “counter school culture” is a very characteristic example of an inverted *consciousness, which being entrapped in an immediate empiricist understanding of reality interprets the major traits of a miserable social condition as a virtue.*

The case of the “counter school culture” studied by Paul Willis confirms the view founded in Marxist theory, that the spontaneous empirical consciousness of workers within a bourgeois society is to a high degree a bourgeois consciousness, in the sense that it reflects bourgeois relations in society in a way that confirms the dominance of the bourgeoisie, i.e. as relations that are natural, given and inevitable.

Following the same line of thought, Lenin will support that workers can spontaneously develop only a trade-union consciousness, which does not supersede the horizon of their individual claims, within the framework of the bourgeois society, and marks “the ideological enslavement of the workers by the bourgeoisie” (Lenin, 1978: 41).

Now I am going to present the second aspect of social consciousness.

What is worth noting at this point is that people do not learn simply because they possess the intellectual capacity. Learning is largely affected by another dimension of consciousness, beyond the purely cognitive one, which involves a perception of the self as a subject, in its relation with other persons-subjects, and in their interaction with objective reality.

If knowledge, as a first aspect of consciousness, stems from the practical-transformative relation of humans to objective reality and reflects nature and humans mainly as objects, the second aspect of social consciousness stems from labour

relations and, broadly speaking, from the social ties between humans, and the need to consciously regulate these ties, and consciously affect other people (Vazjulin, 1988: 156-157).

Some basic forms of this second aspect of consciousness, include morality, aesthetics and philosophy. In all these three forms, the same thing is realized and expressed, that is the awareness of the social tie between every person and others, as a tie between subjects, between bearers of consciousness, and therefore as a tie for which the persons-subjects themselves are responsible.

People, as bearers of consciousness, in this second sense of the word, intentionally decide on how they will exist and become active within the objective reality; they map out their strategy of existence, and formulate the fundamental aims of their life and actions.

The degree of awareness of their social tie with other people is expressed in these fundamental aims, by which the direction of their active transformative stance towards social relations themselves is determined.

According to the above, it should be noted that the cognitive/learning interest of people, the focus, range, intensity and duration of their conscious efforts to gain knowledge and comprehend the world, are decisively determined by the way in which they define their life prospects, and by the fundamental aims and ideals that give meaning to their existence.

But, what kind of life meaning, social ideals and conscious lifestance best correspond with and leads to a genuine interest in profound, uncompromised critical examination and cognition of the world?

Knowing and understanding reality in depth requires a sincere and strong interest in people with whom we share and co-create it as a social-cultural reality. The individual life position which generates the strongest and most genuine cognitive /educational interest is internally connected with a universal interest in human world and a passionate care for its future.

However, in conditions of capitalist society the examination of reality from the point of view of universal human needs, interests and prospects cannot ignore the dominant class contradiction between capital and wage labour, which penetrates all aspects of social life and defines the possibility and trends of social evolution.

In our times, no social prospect can stand above the relation between capital and wage labour and all contradictions it creates within broader human relations and in the interaction between society and nature, as well.

Within our divided by antagonistic interests society to study the human world from a pan-human point of view means not to take a neutral stance towards the dominant class relations but, quite the opposite, to take the side, the class interests of which best correspond to the universal interests of humankind.

It is worth underlying here that the quest for objectivity and truth has nothing to do with the absence of material needs, social interests and life stance. As Terry Eagleton put it, “objectivity can mean a selfless openness to the needs of others, one which lies very close to love. It is the opposite not of personal interests and convictions, but of egoism” (Eagleton, 2003, 131).

Within the capitalist society, universal social interests and a pan-human perspective of social development coincide with the strategic class interests of the wage labour, because the emancipation of wage labour from capitalist exploitation is the only way to the establishment of an authentically unified humanity.

Consequently, the consideration of the social prospect from the point of view of the transcendence of the relation between capital and wage labour towards a classless society constitutes the utmost universal interest in human affairs and also the most authentic cognitive/ learning interest, the strongest interest in the objective examination and deep understanding of human condition.

Subsequently, as regards educators who strive for social change and progress and attempt to critically educate people, what is of particular importance is how they themselves perceive the content and the prospects of such a change.

In order to teach for social transformation and progress is crucial to have a profound understanding of the social needs, interests and contradictions that make such a transformation necessary and also of the direction and content of this transformation.

If, for example, critical educators, willing to work for social transformation, are governed by short-term objectives concerning only separate social problems, but lack a thorough social ideal, an understanding of the characteristics of a possible, alternative emancipated society then they inevitably lack a stand point for a deep critical examination of the dominant capitalist world and the corresponding to it dominant ideas and ideologies.

I have to underline here that the educators should not be considered as engineers of social transformation. The educators and education in general cannot within the present social conditions radically change people. The idea of social progress through education which was emblematic in Enlightenment tradition and was strongly advocated in the 20th century by John Dewey and the movement of Progressive Education is a characteristic delusion of the liberal philosophy of education and the social-democratic ideology. The activity of educators and the whatever emancipatory impact it has on students, cannot overcome the destructive and manipulative influence on peoples' consciousness, which is exerted by the everyday antagonistic-alienating relations of capitalist society and its ideological mechanisms.

People change drastically as personalities when they are engaged in practical activities aimed at a revolutionary transformation of society. Changing society they change themselves. And they are massively engaged in the radical change of social relations when they feel that within these relations they can no longer satisfy their fundamental needs in a way to which they have been accustomed.

But the radical transformation of society requires the maximum possible awareness of the feasibility, the direction and the content of the revolutionary project. And although a revolutionary critical education cannot create such an awareness to all, it cannot alone change people's consciousness, however it may contribute in the formation of a crucial conscious social vanguard, which will be able to play a leading role in social struggles for social change and emancipation.

And it can do that by fostering critical thinking towards dominant relations and ideas, provided that the most critical approach to dominant reality is the approach that deepens the understanding of and strengthens the devotion to a possible alternative social prospect and an emancipatory social ideal.

To sum up, what must be noted is that an education which promotes the *critical conscientization of people*, can only strive for an awareness of the essential contradiction in capitalist society and its various expressions in all fields of social life, and of the possibilities-prospects of resolving it, because this is the only way to achieve an authentic progressive change of social relations.

From this point of view, the educators willing to become revolutionary criticaleducators should first of all understand themselves as organic intellectuals of the wage labour. They should become conscious of their fundamental social interests as part of the strategic class interests of the wagemlabour and act as organic

intellectuals, working for the cause of the emancipation of labour and social totality as well.

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The social and the spacial as educators. What to learn from 19th Century socialist educational theory

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Abstract

The predecessors of Marxist theory and the early Marxist socialists of the 19th century are seldom in mind, when we are thinking about critical education. But critical education as transformative education, as education that aims to support an alternative to capitalist society should use this historical sources. There are theoretical ideas, analytical concepts, as well as utopian fantasies to find in the socialist educational theories of the 19th century, which may inspire contemporary critical educational theory. With Charles Fourier, Robert Owen and Clara Zetkin this paper introduces three representatives of this era and explores their key ideas. The aim of the article is not to give a coherent systematic of socialist thinking about education in the 19th century but to demonstrate some of the potentials lying in the re-reading of the 'old' socialists.

Keywords: Utopian Socialism, Charles Fourier, Robert Owen, Clara Zetkin, Feminism, Marxism.

Introduction

After the experiences of the 20th century for mainstream pedagogy it may seem a bit strange to refer to socialist educational theory. Torgau, Pitești, or Tiananmen may occur in the minds while thinking about socialism and education. Otherwise leftist activists and scholars may complain that we have burning problems to solve; current struggles to fight both, in society and in the educational system, and one of the deepest crisis of capitalism in the last 100 years. – Why waste time reading the utopia of the pre-Marxist socialist dreamers or old-fashioned analyses from the old Marxist orthodoxy? Beside the fact that the history of socialist education should not be reduced to its violent and authoritarian examples and structures established in the so called Real Socialism in Europe and Asia, there is more than one good reason to read and discuss the old socialists, especially the pre-Marxists.

The first reason is historical: We, as left wing activists and scholars should know our history. Not in the idealistic way, that we may learn something from history. But our history is a valuable, rich source to inspire us, our practice and our conceptual and theoretical work. That brings me to the second reason: In the socialist, even the pre-Marxist socialist theory, there are plenty of ideas and conceptions – sometimes not thought to an end – but worth to think about. Especially the so called Utopian Socialists developed their theories at a time of uncertainty, radical social changes, political rumours and deep economical crisis. The situation nowadays confronts us with a striking likeness: Multiple crisis, questioning of traditional ways of social reproduction, challenges in political strategy. The third and last motivation I want to address is, that beside Karl Marx there is a rich socialist tradition which disappeared under the weight of Marx' work. Indeed, Marx thought about pedagogical issues – as economist and philosopher not as pedagogue. But there is a core of pedagogy which can't be discussed in economical or philosophical terms. So we have to search for other works containing and reflecting the historical experience of socialist pedagogy – and we will find many socialists with an understanding of the nature of pedagogy and astonishing practical pedagogical experiences.

In this paper I will introduce three socialists or predecessors of socialist thinking: Charles Fourier, Robert Owen, and Clara Zetkin. I will give some perspectives on their works and illustrate why I am convinced, their works are useful for contemporary socialist theory and praxis. You will not find a coherent systematic but some – from my perspective – inspiring thoughts which are worth to work with.

The Utopian Socialism of Charles Fourier and Robert Owen

Charles Fourier, Robert Owen and other socialists of the beginning 19th century have been disregarded for serious debates for a long time. Due to the writings of Marx and Engels they were called Utopian Socialists in contrast to the so called scientific socialism 'invented' by Marx and Engels (Engels 1892). But beside their sometimes bubbling utopian fantasies their works have a highly analytical quality, which was also honoured by Marx and Engels (Marx/ Engels 1999/ 1848).

Charles Fourier – The Desirable Community

Charles Fourier was born 1772 and died in 1837. As son of a merchant he was forced by his parents to start a professional training as merchant. He tried his whole life to get through this job he hated. Although he lived a life in poverty, especially after the French Revolution, he produced an extensive corpus of work covering such various

fields as society, psychology and education, cosmology, sexuality, architecture and agriculture. He was obsessed to develop one holistic system including all parts of life, talented in analytical thinking and inspired with an impressive phantasm.

To understand Fourier's ideas concerning education we have to start with his analysis and critique of the contemporary society. Here we find how deeply his thoughts are rooted in the European Enlightenment and its belief in the supremacy of rationality. He radicalised the idea of human rights, still bound in the narrow boundaries of social rank, claiming that every single man and woman has the same value and rights. And he considered the radical equality between men and women far ahead of his time.

The idea of self-determination instead of determination by others is shaping his concept of human nature: "The complete free choice of work, guided by the desires is the nature of the human being" (Fourier 1919: 8). But self-determination in Fourier's terms doesn't mean to fulfil a free will. Instead of this voluntarian perspective for him humans are forced by their desires to feel certain feelings and to do certain things. The goal of his social utopia is to give space to this desires. Far away from considering the same set of desires for all people he was convinced that there is a tremendous diversity in characters. The biggest mistake, society at his time made, Fourier said, is that society cut down the whole plurality of human desires and thus acts against human nature *and* the norm of a rational and efficient society. Only if each desire will have a field to flower out society will emerge in the most productive and efficient way. In his own words: "Our aim is, to create a mechanism of voluntarily interconnecting desires without oppressing one of them. This works if each individual follows his own interest and thus consequently serves the common interest" (Ibid.).

According to Fourier society and the individual's desires have to be in a harmonic order, which means that the rational construction of society matches perfectly with the nature of each person –for the sake of both, society and the person. So he estimated the construction of a society in which the organisation of the social and spacial structures accommodate the desires of the people as crucial. We see a pedagogical motive here, it is not a teacher-pupil-relationship Fourier conceptualize – it is rather an understanding of structural education via circumstances:

Every child from the youngest on, has diverse desires and possible abilities. But how could we know which they are? The civilization is unable to do this. It is possible only with the application of the serial system. It is the key to each section of the social mechanism and also mainly to education.(Ibid.: 16)

Convinced that each man and woman is driven by naturally determined desires, Fourier developed a complex system of characters and the corresponding social institutions. He paid much attention to the social regulation of society as well as to the spacial arrangements. He developed an architectural utopia, the Phalanstère, a huge building-complex in which his social utopia is situated. Here all is adjusted in a symmetrical, harmonic order so the corruptive disorder of capitalist society will disappear from space. All social regulations and all the architecture should help the human desires to evolve and thus to motivate the highest outcome of work and the highest level of happiness for all members of the Phalanstère. He planned to construct such colonies which should act as models of the new society and thus initiate a slow change of social structures – but never got enough money to realize it.

Fourier heavily criticized the conditions of the early capitalist society. What he wanted, was the liberation of the individual, an educational system, a society that is constructed in a form that supports the individual to develop *joyfully* all its possibilities for its own and society's sake. Even if his methods seem strange for us today, his aims should be considered as relevant as in the 19th century. We see nowadays how big companies, like Google or Facebook use similar methods to motivate and control their employees – and even clients. Indeed, it is a new perspective, driven by the knowledge that not all desires are of natural origin but that the most exploitable desires are open to social construction and manipulation: Fourier's dystopia.

Robert Owen – Utopian Realism

Contrary to Charles Fourier Robert Owen (1771-1858) was a successful young businessman, managing his first cotton fabric at the age of eighteen. Another difference between them is, that while Fourier developed his system during his whole life, but never changed it in general, in Owen's work we find big fractures. We have to consider at least three different periods in his work. In his first period he is a kind of philanthropic social-reformer. Later he becomes more radical and started to establish communist colonies in the United States. Towards the end of his life after some disappointments (his colonies, like other owenite experiments collapsed due to economic and social problems), he started to develop a spiritualist ideology.

In Owen's anthropology the biggest difference to Fourier and to liberal theories of the time are obvious. In his book *A new view of society* Owen wrote:

The character of man is, without a single exception, always formed for him; that it may be, and is, chiefly, created by his predecessors; that they give him, or may give him, his ideas and habits, which are the powers that govern and direct his conduct. Man therefore, never did, nor is it possible he ever can, form his own character.(1816: 45)

This standpoint shaped all further analysis Owen made. And it is indeed a progress compared with the Christian discourse of the original sin and the justification this myth gave traditional government and subordination. But it is not new. It is more or less the same statement John Locke made about human nature. What is new, is that Owen gave big attention to the society that forms the individual character. So he criticized that people live in conditions

which directly impel them to a course of extreme vice and misery; thus rendering them to the worst and most dangerous subjects in the empire; while the far greater part of the remainder of the community are educated upon the most mistaken principles of human nature, such, indeed, as cannot fail to produce a general conduct throughout society, totally unworthy of the character of rational beings.(Ibid.)

Beside the accusation of the conditions of early capitalism we find a second judgement about human nature, even if the individual character is unwritten with birth it is predicted to be rational. That means beside the external determination of ones character there is the possibility of rational thinking and acting but this is prohibited by social circumstances. Furthermore he started to complain against those who are responsible for the social misery:

Any general character, from the best to the worst, from the most ignorant to the most enlightened, may be given to any community, even to the world at large, by the application of proper means; which means are to a great extent at the command and under the control of those who have influence in the affairs of men.(Ibid.: 14)

In contrast to Fourier Owen was not only a writer, he was was a hypoactive philanthropic social-reformer and one of the ruling actors for legislation against child labour. The problem of his activism was the lack of knowledge about the structural forces of capitalism Marx analysed only a few decades later. So Owen's activities were confronted with one setback after another.

Thinking one man could act against the bad consequences of the industrial system (he did not speak of capitalism), he tried to transform his factory in New Lanark into a factory that not only produced good goods but also good men and women. This

corresponds with his patriarchal character and his belief in the ability of individual leaders to improve the social situation (which, by the way is contradictory to his theoretical works in which he doubtlessly argued for the supreme power of circumstances and not men).

In his model-industrial city New Lanark and later in his colony New Harmony he tried to put his principles into practice. And in the first case it worked, maybe more due to force and his personal patriarchal power than true regulation of the community itself. He had all the houses in which workers families were living renovated, he reduced child labour to a certain degree, he made the production halls more pleasant and clean. All this followed his belief that a messy and dirty environment leads directly to a dirty character. And it worked to improve living conditions in New Lanark. Later Owen changed his attitude towards a more voluntaristic view of human nature. But his projects build upon this opinion like New Harmony in the United States failed.

A last thing I want to highlight about Robert Owen is, that he can be seen as a predecessor of anti-nationalisms, which should be in my opinion one key element of leftist ideology. This anti-nationalism is combined with his view of the human being as empty paper on which society and other circumstances write the persons character. So he wrote: “Children can be trained to acquire any language, sentiments, belief, or any bodily habits and manners, not contrary to human nature” (Ibid.: 16). Letting aside the possibility of natural, to day one would say genetic and neurological pre-determinations we have to consider this in our pedagogical practice. If children are, what they are as results of a process of educational production then we are in responsibility to design this process in a reasonable way.

Summarizing the main points we may get from Robert Owen, the most imported finding is his strong statement against the ideology of the gifted character. He showed that character to a certain degree formed by society and it's hard to say to what degree. So we as educators have to be careful with prejudice and fast assessment about pupils characters and abilities.

Clara Zetkin - Feminist Marxism

Clara Zetkin, born 1857 in Saxony, Germany, was trained to be a teacher in Leipzig. During her studies there she got in contact with bourgeois feminism. Later she met Russian radicals and started to study the writings of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels.

In her later work she combined both, bourgeois feminism and Marxism and these elements shaped her pedagogical and political thinking.

Zetkin should be regarded as one of the most important socialist woman of the 19th and 20th century. She was one of the first who conceptualized the liberation of the working class and the liberation of women as interdependent. For many years Zetkin was editor-in-chief of the German social democrat's women's magazine *Die Gleichheit*. Being in the centre of the SPD (Social Democratic Party) in the 1890s she became more and more isolated especially after starting criticizing the socialists' support of World War I. In 1917 the board of SPD dismissed her from the position as editor-in-chief; in the same year she left the SPD and founded together with Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg and others the Spartakusbund and later the USPD (Independent Social Democratic Party). From 1919 on she was member of the German Communist Party (KPD) and Member of Parliament until her death in 1933.

One main problem Zetkin was concerned with was the position of women, and working class women in particular, in the capitalist society and their relation with working class men. In one of her early works *Die Arbeiterinnen- und Frauenfrage der Gegenwart* (Zetkin 1889) she explained the situation of women using a materialist analysis of economy and its corresponding ideology. Thereby she sharply criticised the conservative position, stating a natural predetermination of women and a corresponding social position:

The position of women don't arise from certain eternal ideas, from a unchangeable destiny for the natural occupation of the Eternally Feminine. The position of women is a result of the economical relations of a specific time. [...] These conditions, which forced the woman in different historical periods in a certain position, simultaneously produced certain ideas about the woman's social position. These ideas have had and have only one intention: Glossing over the existing order of things, and maintain it to the gain of those who benefit from the conditions as they are.¹Zetkin (1889: 3)

According to her analysis these ideas are resistant to social change, so that, even when the social and economical conditions changed, these ideas maintain a certain power. So she described the situation at the end of the 19th century: In economical terms women were liberated from the domestic economy but socially and politically they were now under the rule of men *and* capitalists. The task for socialists should it be in

¹Translation from German here and later by the author.

this situation to support new ideas, in this case about the position of women, which fits to the new socio-economic circumstances and the demands of class struggle.

Zetkin did not speak about women's rights. That is the difference between her Marxist feminism and former bourgeois feminism. She saw only in the socio-economical process a path to women's liberation: "The development of the means of production destroyed the economical foundation of productive women's housework, but at the same time, it created the condition for women's work in the public" (Ibid.: 7). So at first the economic development delivered the necessity for women to work in the public, to emancipate from domestic work. After this economic socialisation the next step should be the political participation in public affairs.

Considering the evolving competition among working men and working women Zetkin demands an explicitly pedagogical strategy from the socialist movement to ensure proletarian solidarity:

If we want to prevent or at least to soften the bad and calamitous consequences that follow women's work in our time like light is followed by shadow, we have to unite men and women. We have to unite them to one strong mass and build a consciousness that there is a conflict between working class and capitalist interests, not between men and women. Zetkin (1889: 13)

Another problem Zetkin addressed, which is still relevant today, is the relation between domestic and public education. Contrary to the mainstream of pedagogy which takes for granted that education takes place in families, Zetkin questioned this assumption in her speech *Sozialistische Erziehung in der Familie*: "It is obvious, that – before asking what the family can do to educate children in a socialist way – it has to be discussed, if or if not the family itself is an unit capable to educate" (Zetkin 1906: 182). Let aside the historical answers to this question, even in our time this question is not easy to answer. But it needs to be discussed if families today are capable to educate and so – considering the conservative and reproductive nature of education (Bernfeld 1925) – contribute to the reproduction of contemporary society as it is. If this is not the case, and there are multiple evidences, a socialist movement in public education has much better tactical and strategic opportunities to set a own agenda.

The last remark on Zetkin is concerned with her discussion of the aims of education. She referred to two in the history of education well known motives: First, the development of an unique, individual personality, and second, the education of a valuable member of society. While the first goal is more or less liberal and

emancipatory, the second stresses the communitarian aspect and addresses solidarity. Both, the liberal and the communitarian aspects she tried to combine:

The aim of education can not only be the education of a personality. The aim has to be the education of a personality, conscious about its relation with general society; a personality conscious about its obligations to society. We need public education to develop these social feelings society need from childhood on. While public education has to develop the personality in perspective of the needs of society, it is the task of the family to cultivate the individuality. Zetkin (1906: 186)

We find the liberal idea of intrinsic development of ones individuality, popularized by Rousseau, as one aim of education. It is obvious, without this motive – even if it is a fiction – we cannot have a progressive pedagogy. Considering the history of so called socialist education we have to make human dignity to the keystone of progressive pedagogy. On the other hand Marx’ dictum still rings true, that the individuals liberation is not possible without the liberation of mankind. So there is no easy relation between the collective and the individual. And this is the challenge for leftist, progressive pedagogical theory and practice: How we may do both, protect human dignity and at the same time work on a transformation towards a postcapitalist society, which clearly implicates collective action and conscious subordination to achieve the common goal – this is a different question.²

Summarizing Zetkin we see an early representative, first, of intersectional analysis of class and gender questions. We should read her works again and ask how the situation of the working class, the relations between the classes and the class struggle are interdependent with gender questions and the reproduction of capitalism. Here contemporary debates can draw on her work. Second, she asked important questions, still relevant today: How about the relation between domestic and public education (relevant because also leftist activists often reproduce anti-feminist and conservative patterns of education at home, while struggling for the “better world” in the public)? Which position does the individual occupy, which the collective in our pedagogical theory and practice?

Space, Society and Education in Times of Crisis

Reading the works of Fourier, Owen or Zetkin nowadays it is astonishing with which structural similarities between the 19th and the beginning 21st century we are faced

²It should be useful to work more with the critical educational theory developed by Heinz Joachim Heydorn (1970; 1972) in the 1970s which deals in an outstanding manner with this challenge.

with. As in the time of emerging capitalism with its concussive implications for the traditional social and economical order, we are currently faced with multiple crises of social and economical reproduction. Far from helping us to understand the current crisis of capitalism much better, we can learn from the authors mentioned above how theorists dealt with such unsteady times in their utopia – or in the case of Zetkin – in their analysis. I summed up how Owen and Fourier considered the interrelation between society, community and space. Nowadays we have developed materialist analysis and concepts of this relation further.

I briefly want to refer to Henry Lefebvre and David Harvey to highlight to possible links and inspirations we may derive from the early socialists. Henry Lefebvre pointed out that space is a socially produced category which influences the social and which can be influenced by social struggle: „Space is permeated with social relations; it is not only supported by social relations, but it also is producing and produced by social relations“ (2009: 186). He proclaimed the ‘Right to the City’ to which in the last decade more and more has been referred by urban social movements. He, as well as David Harvey who in one of his latest books (2012) described the economical processes of spacial production in the cities, saw the possibility and the necessity for interventions in this process.

Conceptualizing pedagogical theory we have to include these theories of the urban because as Lefebvre said the urban is the condition of life in modernity. Fourier and Owen lived in the beginning age of urbanization of the capitalist metropolis but their analysis of the urbanisations’ results on the people are still relevant today.

An additional current reference I want to make in relation to the early socialists is the debate about commons (Bollier/ Helfrich 2012). In Germany Marxists often keep their distance to this debate. But I think it is one of the crucial debates of our time. The key of the commons debate is the social nature or genesis of our cultural goods and our environment.

In the common-movement you find community-oriented ideas as well as practical concepts, not in the old Fourier-like way that commoners construct and play with utopian, holistic concepts of the new society (indeed, some of the common-activists have such concepts in mind). But there is the development of little islands of community-oriented activities and micro-milieus like public gardening, like open source soft and hard ware.

In many aspects commoners follow in the footsteps of pre-Marxist socialists. It will be useful to discuss the old concepts and especially their critique to prevent errors already made in history, and discuss some of the hidden implication (which are sometimes esoteric, romantic and reactionary, open for nationalism and so on) to enhance the common debate in a progressive way.

We also may understand the attractiveness, and the potential, of commoners' analysis of the economy (like the works of Elinor Ostrom) may be not for the analysis of contemporary capitalism but to think about a coming society. The pedagogy of the commons is one to write and I think it could profit by the examples and mistakes given by the utopian socialists.

Conclusion

Concerning the main question of my presentation: What we can learn from reading and discussing the socialists of the 19th century? I tried to make three points:

At first it is crucial to considerate the socio-spacial embedment of every pedagogical practise (as Fourier and Owen saw it). We have to have sufficient knowledge of the circumstances pedagogy is embedded in, to know both what we have to do to work against social and spacial boundaries of progressive or transformative education and how to use social and spacial arrangements in a strategical way for progressive or transformative education. This is not only relevant for school and class room architecture but also on a higher level: how cities are constructed, how boundaries and frontiers between countries are build and enforced, how they are legitimized and how they are used to legitimize current situation.

Second, these socio-spacial circumstances are the underlying frame of daily pedagogical practice but *they are not eternal*. They can be changed within and through pedagogical practice and – and by no means without – social and political struggle. This was maybe one of the mistakes made by the utopian socialists – they thought it is possible to reform society via education. History has shown this as wrong.

Third and last point: We have to re-discover our fantasies of a better life. A materialist and structural analysis of the existing world conditions does not automatically lead to a better world. We need utopia as source of motivation and for the creation of counter-images and -discourses. With Fourier and Owen we can learn to think again in utopian terms as a kind of cognitive experiment how the future could or should be. Utopia is – and this is often forgotten – also an important source for the training of

ones analytical abilities. One can discuss here the logic of arguments and the implications of ideologies.

This all does not mean to forget analytical and material analyses of social, economical and political processes, structures and interests – like Clara Zetkin did it – but utopia should be among our comrades in the fight for better future.

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Critical thinking and its critiques in the philosophy of education

Maria Pournari

Abstract

The philosophy of education is primarily concerned with the nature, aims and means of education and also with the character and structure of educational theory, and its own place in that structure. Critical thinking is often regarded as a fundamental aim, and overriding ideal, of education. Efforts to foster critical thinking aim at the promotion of independent thinking, personal autonomy, and reasoned judgment in thought and action. But these aims, and the broader conceptions in terms of which they are grounded, are philosophically contentious; it is no surprise, then, that they – and the educational ideal of critical thinking itself – have been challenged.

These criticisms are, generally, of two sorts. One type of criticism challenges particular aspects of critical thinking theory and practice, providing useful correctives to problems, omissions, or elements that have not been sufficiently emphasized in critical thinking theory and practice, but nonetheless accept its role and importance. A second type of criticism challenges the very foundation of critical thinking theory and practice. According to this type of criticism, critical thinking is seen as one ideology among others. Its principles and criteria are seen as arbitrary, and the promotion of critical thinking is seen as an act of cultural hegemony.

The aim of this paper is to point out that the equation Critical Thinking of rational thought with linear and deductive reasoning is problematic: Deductive reasoning represents only a narrow subset of rational thinking. If a central goal of critical education is to teach students the essential reasoning abilities and thinking skills as to be effective critical thinkers and citizens, it concerns, first, the nature and the purpose of arguments, and, second, the argumentation on the basis of rationality, objectivity and truth. To make sense of moral arguments, students must learn to see moral claims as right or wrong, things to which evidence and reason apply.

Keywords: critical thinking, argumentation, philosophy of education.

I. The philosophy of education is primarily concerned with the nature, aims and means of education and also with the character and structure of educational theory, and its own place in that structure. Educational theory is best regarded as a kind of practical theory which would ideally furnish useful guidance for every aspect and office of educational practice. Such guidance would rest in a well-grounded and elaborated account of educational aims and the moral and political dimensions of education, and also in adequate conceptions and knowledge of teaching, learning, evaluation, the structure and dynamics of educational and social systems, the roles of relevant stakeholders and the like.

Philosophy of education often approaches educational issues from the vantage points of other philosophical sub-disciplines, and contribute in a variety of ways to the larger unfinished project of educational theory. These contributions may be divided into work on the nature and aims of education, on the normative dimensions of the methods and circumstances of education, and on the conceptual and methodological underpinnings of its methods and circumstances through work on the foundations of various forms educational researches.

So, philosophical analysis and arguments encounter normative theories of thought, conduct and the aims of education inspired by a broad consideration of epistemology, logic, aesthetics and ethics. In this mode of educational philosophizing, the objects of various branches of philosophical study are proposed as the ends of education, and the significance of pursuing those ends is elaborated with reference to those branches of study.

A second form of philosophy of education derives from substantive arguments and theories of ethics, social and political philosophy, philosophy of law, and concerns itself with the aims of education and the acceptability of various means to achieve them. It revolves around arguments concerning the moral, social and political appropriateness of educational aims, initiatives and policies, and moral evaluation of the methods, circumstances and effects of education.

The philosophy of education has also sought to guide educational practice through examining its assumptions about the structure of specific knowledge domains and the minds of learners; about learning, development, motivation, and communication and acquisition of knowledge and understanding.

Logic would seem to commend rationality as an educational goal or idea, much as epistemology does, and to suggest that there are skills of reason or rational inference

that can be isolated and taught independently of other aspects of the curriculum. Since the 1960s, however, there has developed a large body of work on critical thinking predicated on the inadequacy of formal deductive logic as an account of quality in inference, argumentation and reasoning. Formal logic has thus been largely set aside as a model for teaching of critical thinking, through something of its spirit has preserved in the idea of subject-neutral principles of reason assessment advocated even by those who regard critical thinking as no less epistemic than logical. This critical thinking movement has produced not one of the more important streams of theoretical analysis undertaken in recent philosophy of education, but also innovations in curriculum and evaluation procedures at all levels of instruction.

Debate about the nature, teaching and evaluation of critical thinking was strongly influenced through the 1960s and 1970s by the work of Ennis (1962), who first conceived of critical thinking as correctly assessing statements, later as thinking that is reasonable, reflective and concerned with assessing not only beliefs, but also actions. His focus on discrete skills of reasoning has drawn a variety of criticism.

McPeck (1990) has argued, against not only Ennis but the critical thinking movement generally, that there is no significant body of general critical thinking skills which can be taught. He argues that the subject-specific forms of inquiry we engage in have too little in common for us to extract a common logic which can be profitably taught as a subject in its own right.

Other philosophers have rebutted McPeck's grounds for denying the existence of a robust set of subject-neutral critical thinking skills, while also arguing that there is more to being a critical thinker than possessing such skills. Paul (1982) has insisted that the mastery of atomic thinking skills only makes one a "weak sense" critical thinker with the ability to criticize the views of others and reinforce one's own. Exchanges of arguments involve clashes between opposing perspectives or world views, so to be a "strong" critical thinker involves being able to take a systematic view of perspectives and world views one does not hold, he argues. Resisting the potential relativism in Paul's view, Siegel (1988) has argued that it is "atomistic" criteria of appraisal that we must rely on in judging world-views. He holds that a critical thinker is one who is appropriately moved by reasons, one who possesses not only the abilities of rational assessments but a willingness, desire and disposition to follow reason. Lipman (1991) has argued that philosophy itself affords the best training in reasonableness and judiciousness guided by the ideal of rationality, and

that it requires that we convert classrooms at all grade levels into communities of inquiry” through conversation governed by norms of reasonableness and mutual respect.

These developments lay useful groundwork for an integration of work in philosophy of education with broader philosophical investigations of the nature of rationality and good judgment.

It is to hold that educational activities ought to be designed and conducted in such a way that the construction and evaluation of reasons, in accordance with relevant criteria, is paramount, throughout the curriculum. As Scheffler puts the point: “Rationality...is a matter of reasons, and to take it as a fundamental educational ideal is to make as pervasive as possible the free and critical quest for reasons, in all realms of study” (Scheffler, [1973] 1989: 62). Fostering of the abilities and dispositions of critical thinking is considered as the prime educational directive to the design and implementation of curriculum and educational policy. But, why should the fostering of critical thinking be thought to be so important?

Siegel offers many reasons for so thinking (Siegel, 1988). First, and most importantly, striving to foster critical thinking in students is necessary if they are to be treated with respect as persons. The moral requirement to treat students with respect as persons requires that we strive to enable them to think for themselves, competently and well, and to determine for themselves, to the greatest extent possible, the contours of their own minds and lives, preparing them for their adulthood. Such preparation cannot properly be conceived in terms of preparing students for preconceived roles; rather, it must be understood to involve student self-sufficiency and self-direction.

But as educators, treating them in this way involves striving to enable them to judge in accordance with the criteria governing critical thinking and it requires fostering in them the relevant abilities and dispositions. All the rational traditions that have always been at the center of educational activities and efforts – mathematics, science, literature, art, history, and so forth – incorporate and rely upon critical thinking, which initiates students into scientific way of thinking and research.

This involves the place of careful analysis, good thinking, and reasoned deliberation in democratic life. Democracy can flourish just to the extent that its citizenry is able to reason well regarding political issues and matters of public policy, scrutinize the media, and generally meet the demands of democratic citizenship, many of which require the abilities and dispositions constitutive of critical thinking.

So, efforts to foster critical thinking aim at the promotion of independent thinking, personal autonomy, and reasoned judgment in thought and action. These particular aims are justified in terms of broader conceptions of knowledge, reasons, and values (Baillin, 1998).

These aims, and the broader conceptions in terms of which they are grounded, are philosophically contentious; it is no surprise, then, that they – and the educational ideal of critical thinking itself – have been challenged.

II. Much recent discussion about critical thinking has taken the form of challenges to prevailing conceptions and their justification. These criticisms charge that critical thinking favors the values and practices of the dominant groups in society and devalues those of groups traditionally lacking in power (Bridges, 1991; Garrison and Phelan, 1989; Martin, 1992; Orr, 1989; Thayer-Bacon, 1992, 1993). These criticisms claim that critical thinking privileges rational and linear thought over intuition; that it is aggressive and confrontational rather than collegial and collaborative; that it neglects or downplays emotions; that it deals in abstraction and it devalues lived experience and concrete particularity; that it is individualistic and privileges personal autonomy over community and relationship; and that critical thinking presupposes the possibility of objectivity in a way that does not recognize an individual's situatedness (Baillin, 1995).

These criticisms are, generally, of two sorts. The first type of criticism challenges particular aspects of critical thinking theory and practice, but leaves intact its foundational underpinnings. Some of the criticisms of this type have provided useful correctives to problems, omissions, or elements that have not been sufficiently emphasized in critical thinking theory and practice. Others, however, are misdirected in failing to recognize aspects that already exist in much contemporary critical thinking theory, or are problematic in suggesting revisions that might undermine important aspects of critical thinking.

Consider, for example, the charge that critical thinking neglects or downplays emotion. Contrary to this complaint, many critical thinking theorists explicitly acknowledge a role for emotions in critical thinking, enjoining us to be sensitive to the feelings or to understand perspectives of others (Baillin, 1995; Paul, 1990). Indeed, emotional aspects are central to Siegel's notion of the critical spirit (Siegel, 1988) and to Scheffler's account of critical thinking (Scheffler, 1991). Also, Ennis has added

caring to critical dispositions in response to some critiques of critical thinking (Ennis, 1996).

What some critical theorists would caution against, however, is a reliance on emotion without critical assessment. What is advocated is an appropriate role for emotion, one which would enhance rather than detract from one's assessing and acting upon reasons.

A similar point can be made with respect to the charge that critical thinking is aggressive and confrontational and devalues collegiality and collaboration. Although it may be the case that critical thinking has sometimes been practiced in a confrontational manner, there is nothing in critical thinking theory that requires or even suggests that it must be so practiced or understood. Many theorists in fact acknowledge that critical thinking can be practiced in a collegial, collaborative manner, and argue that such practice may better serve our purposes as critical thinkers. And although autonomy is generally advocated as a value central to critical thinking, this does not preclude an acknowledgement of the role of joint and communal inquiry (Bailin et al., 1999).

The claim that critical thinking privileges rational, linear, deductive thought over intuition is to be put on further examination. First, it is to be pointed out that the equation of critical thinking of rational thought with linear and deductive reasoning is problematic. Deductive reasoning represents only a narrow subset of rational thinking; Rational thinking also encompasses (at least) inductive, probabilistic, analogical, and abductive ("inference to the best explanation") reasoning. In addition, critical thinking does have a generative, imaginative component. It is the case, however, that critical thinking theorists do advocate rational thought (conceived of in this broader way) over intuition as a means of deciding what to believe or do. All these mentioned critiques offer challenges and correctives to the manner in which critical thinking is currently, or has been, conceptualized or practiced, but nonetheless accept its role and importance.

The second type of critiques constitutes a more radical type of critique of critical thinking than the first ones, challenging the very foundation of critical thinking theory and practice. According to this type of criticism, critical thinking is only one mode of understanding— that of the dominant groups in society among others – but it has been privileged as the only legitimate mode of understanding. Such privileging, it is alleged, is biased in excluding the modes of understanding of minority groups, traditionally

lacking in power and status. Critical thinking is seen, then, as ideology. Its principles and criteria are seen as arbitrary, and the promotion of critical thinking is considered as an act of cultural hegemony. This criticism argues that logic (which includes critical thinking) is an invention of men that structures speech situations that occur mainly between men and thus excludes many voices, while it falsely presents itself as universal (Nye, 1990). This type of criticism goes much deeper than a critique of certain contingent and remediable biases in critical thinking. It puts into question the validity of the entire enterprise and its claims to universality. If accepted, it would necessitate recognition of the partiality of the enterprise of critical thinking and the recognition of other modes of understanding, intuition for example, as equally valid. However, this second, more radical type of criticism seems to be seriously problematic. One problem is that the charge of arbitrariness is based on a misrepresentation of the nature of critical criteria and principles. These principles are not simply the products of group interests but are embedded in traditions of rational inquiry and are closely tied to purposes – for example, predicting and explaining natural phenomena, recovering and understanding the past, developing and appreciating works of art, and so forth – that are not, so to speak, group-specific. Moreover one of the defining characteristics of rational inquiry is that it is self-correcting (Lipman, 1991; Scheffler, [1967] 1982). Thus the criteria themselves can be, and regularly are, modified in the face of criticisms and our purposes as thinkers. So, the traditions themselves are considered dynamic, open-ended, plural ones that contain alternative or competing streams (Baillin, 1992a). Thus critical modes of inquiry provide for the possibility, and actuality, of alterations of the traditions themselves, in the light both of new evidence, arguments, problems, and limitations discovered during the course of inquiry and also in light of criticisms from competing streams within the tradition and insights from other traditions and frameworks. So, rational inquiry gives rise to criticism, and criticisms of a tradition inevitably grow out of the traditions that they criticize, appeal to values inherent in these traditions. Indeed, it could not be otherwise, since any attempt to engage in questioning, criticism, and inquiry presupposes rationality and recognition of the force of reasons. Criticism rests on rationality, including the criticisms of rationality itself, and any proposed alternative would ultimately have to be assessed on the basis of critical thinking principles and criteria (Siegel, 1988, 1997).

III. It is a truism, and therefore true, that one goal of education is to teach students the thinking and reasoning skills they need to be effective and responsible citizens. These skills are necessary, but obviously not sufficient, for them to deal reasonably and intelligently with the information they need to make sensible decisions, both about their own lives and about the public issues that come before them, when they engage in public action.

One way to attempt to teach some of these reason skills is through courses on argument analysis. The purpose of these courses is to teach students to identify, interpret, and evaluate arguments as they are presented in nontechnical sources such as books, sites, newspapers and magazines. These principle sources of information for educated citizens help students to be capable users of this material, if they are able to digest and assess this information. For this to be achieved, it needs a method for taking the arguments found in the relevant material and reconstructing them as precise arguments that can be assessed for their logical structure and for the merits of their premises.

It would be a mistake to think that argument analysis is all there is to effective thinking. However, it would a mistake to think that it is not a key component of the desired skills. It would also be a mistake to think that there is a unique, correct way to teach the skill of argument analysis. No doubt, different techniques will work with different degrees of effectiveness for students at different levels of sophistication. Nevertheless there are some general points about arguments that students must grasp if they are to be develop the key skills.

What, then, makes for a good argument? The short answer is that a good argument provides a good reason to believe its conclusion. To begin, note that the account to be presented makes the notion of a good argument relative, in the sense that what can be a good argument for one person need not be a good argument for another person. This is not a matter of taste or preference. An argument is not a good argument for someone simply because he/she endorses it or approve of it. Rather, it is a consequence of the fact that the account of good arguments is epistemic, that is it relies on the concept of good reasons.

According to an epistemic account of good arguments, a good argument must satisfy three conditions (Feldman, 2009). First, arguments provide rational support for their conclusions only if the premises are justified as reasonable ones. Arguments can have true premises that a person has no reason to accept. Such arguments do not provide

the person with good reason to believe their conclusions. Moreover, arguments with false but well-justified premises can provide good reasons to believe their conclusions. So, an argument is a good one for you only if you are justified in believing its premises.

Second, good arguments must have premises that connect to their conclusion in a suitable way. Assuming that we have a notion of validity or necessary or necessary connection that applies to arguments expressed in ordinary language, we can say that valid arguments meet this condition. But we should allow for good arguments that are not valid. The word *cogent* can describe the structure of such arguments. When an argument is either valid or cogent, the premises are “properly connected” to the conclusion and the argument is “well formed”. However, there are arguments that are in fact valid, but the connection between the premises and the conclusion is enormously hard to be seen, If there is no any reason to think that the premises do support the conclusion, then this is not a good argument for someone, because the believer does not justifiably believe that the argument is well formed, that is, he/she does not believe that the premises are properly connected to the conclusion.

Finally, there must be a “no-defeater” condition. Cogent arguments can have premises that are well justified, but the argument can nevertheless fail to provide one with a good reason to believe its conclusion because you have defeating evidence. A simple inductive argument might have premises that you know to be true and a conclusion that is highly probable on their basis. But you might have defeating evidence from direct perception that defeats this otherwise strong argument. Thus, an argument is a good argument for a person provided the person is justified in believing the conjunction of its premises, and the person is justified in believing that the premises are properly connected to the conclusion, and the argument is not defeated for a person. When a person encounters a good argument for a conclusion, then it is reasonable for the person to believe that conclusion, so as good arguments guide rational belief.

Each of the three conditions just described includes an element whose satisfaction is depended upon the background information available to the individual. People can differ with respect to which premises are justified for them, which patterns they know to be formed, and which cogent arguments are defeated. Such differences can make an argument a good one for one person but not for another. Again, this is not a matter of taste or preference, but one of reasons and evidence. On this account, when

assessing an argument, a person raises three questions: Are these premises justified? Do the premises connect in a proper way with the conclusion? And, in the case of cogent arguments, is the argument defeated? A rational person will modify beliefs in light of a good argument, when the conclusion conflicts with a previously held belief. So, understanding arguments in this way invites students to approach arguments by asking “what should I think now, having encountered this argument?” This question treats arguments as potential sources of information and understanding. It encounters students to modify beliefs in the light of arguments that provide good reason to believe a conclusion not previously accepted. It properly focuses on issues of rational support, a fundamental component of an effective approach to teaching reasoning, rather than on passive persuasion.

However, if students do not think that there is some truth that they are trying to reason toward, then it is very difficult for them to make any sense of the project of analyzing arguments and to establish truths in that domain. Yet, sometimes it is thought that certain controversial realms are mere “matters of opinion”, about which there is no absolute truth”, assuming a naïve view that these are matters of taste. But even when we simply have different preferences is not to say that there are no related factual issues about which we might formulate arguments. For students achieving some kind of clarity about these matters, it will be useful to discuss separately factual issues, including controversial issues such as moral or policy issues, which of course also often fail to attract consensus. The key point is that there is no truth that is not relative. But the relativised truth is a matter of argumentation on topics that we would regularly describe as factual or empirical.

When it comes to questions in the domain of values or policies, such as whether we ought to do this or that, what is right, what is best, or what is morally acceptable, the issues become murkier. To think effectively about a moral subject, it is imperative that one carefully distinguish questions about what we ought to do, or what the best policy is, from a host related clearly factual questions. All of the second kind is fairly readily seen to be objective factual questions about which evidence can be assembled and conclusions drawn. If students are to learn to reason effectively, they must see that there is an additional question to be addressed. This concerns what we ought to do in light of other facts or in light of those of them that are relevant.

Much of what comes up for discussion in politics or in societies, are in this sense moral questions, and if one is rationally questions, then must see them as genuine

questions to which there are potentially correct and incorrect answers. If there is no truth to the matter, if there is no objective fact, then there is nothing to argue about. There cannot be a good argument, unless the conclusion of the argument is something in the objective realm.

What does it imply? It does not imply that moral truths are in no way dependent on human choices and constructs. And it may be that these factors differ from society to society, so that the only truths along these lines will be relativised. In this way, moral truths will be comparable to sociological truths, where there may well be genuine value in arguing about whether our social arrangements determine that we ought to believe in one way or in another. That is, even if the moral facts are socially relative in this way, they may remain open for legitimate rational debate. Therefore, the idea that there are objective truths about moral issues differs from the idea that there are simple universal truths about all of the same kind moral subjects. In other words, it is clearly mistaken that the objectivist about morality must assume that if an action of a particular type is wrong in one circumstance, then it is wrong in all circumstances.

Another confusion comes from running together epistemic and metaphysical issues. To claim that there objective truths about moral matters is to make a metaphysical claim, not an epistemic one. The objectivity claim has no implications concerning our ability to know what the moral truths are. It is consistent with a profound moral skepticism. It is undeniable that the most interesting form of moral skepticism implies a kind of objectivism: there are moral truths but we cannot know what they are. Also, if someone thinks that the truth must be universal, then he/she might even more easily reject the objectivity claim.

As far as concerning the attitude of tolerance and open-mindedness, it is not to be allowed that everyone is right, because he/she is entitled to his/her opinion. While it is fine if it leads to respectful treatment of others, it should not be taken to imply that everyone's belief is not untrue, that there is no fact of the matter, or the morality is in any sense not objective. Far from being the objectivity morality thesis a stand on contentious philosophical debate, we must set it the sort of thing that is possible to argue about something, that can be the conclusion of an argument to which reasons and evidences are relevant, and thus our critical judgments must be true or false.

Another way to put the point is that moral reasoning and argumentation make sense only if somehow or other there are facts that make some difference to morality. Thus, some sort of discussion of these meta-ethical issues is a crucial component of

educating students to reason well. One more reason that controversial issues are controversial is that the evidence we have about them is limited on inconclusive, so as there are topics about which there is considerable uncertainty. The other point is the ease with which we can confuse simple universal generalizations with other more restrictive generalizations. In any case students must see moral issues as real issues about which we can argue if they are to analyze arguments about such issues effectively, and, additionally, for what they are. The correct answers may be complex and unreachable given the available evidence. But this does not undermine the need to see them accurately.

If a central goal of critical education is to teach students the essential reasoning abilities and thinking skills as to be effective critical thinkers and citizens, it concerns, first, the nature and the purpose of arguments, and, second, the argumentation on the basis of rationality, objectivity and truth. To make sense of moral arguments, students must learn to see moral claims as right or wrong, things to which evidence and reason apply.

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Dewey's critical pedagogy in time of crisis

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Abstract

The critical pedagogy based on pedagogical views on Dewey, Freire, Gramsci, Althusser, Apple, Bourdieu and others. It supports the need for renewal of the school, the emergence of a new pedagogical discourse, teaching and applying the knowledge and skills of critical citizenship. Using exclusive interactive approach to learning, it creates new forms of knowledge , with emphasis on the scientific frontiers burglary, considers teachers reformers intellectuals' seeking the "critical literacy", which refers to the understanding and control of all spheres of social life. It progresses, therefore, a form of cultural policy develop a critical language, but a language option. The pedagogy of critical literacy has as main aim of active citizens to assert, democratically, their rights and to fight all forms of social exclusion. The ultimate goal of critical pedagogy is to prepare students to participate in the struggle for a democratic public life. Critical pedagogy creates critics and not just good citizens who resist inequality and injustice. John Dewey rejected the traditional approach to learning and teaching and delivered a series of new principles for a school open democratic society, ushering in a new era in pedagogy. The purpose of this paper is to a reassessment of critical pedagogy through Dewey's educational philosophy, aspiring to capture the components, redefining the role of the school in modern educational reality.

Keywords: critical education, pragmatism, democracy, school.

Introduction

In recent decades the concept of critical pedagogy has been one of the most important subjects and it has caused a large number of discussions about deadlocks and its potential as a movement. The ideas of American philosopher John Dewey (1859 – 1952) had a particular influence on progressive educators trying to promote democratic principles in education. Dewey's work is based on his attempt to link the

concept of individual and social (collective) intelligence with democracy and freedom by specifying the characteristics of citizenship. Specifically, Dewey focuses on the fact that education should aim at creating citizens who will be able to accept social change as a natural evolution of society. He proposed a “language ability”, a philosophical structure which played an important role in the evolution of critical pedagogy. This paper aims at highlighting the most basic positions of critical pedagogy of John Dewey. We will focus on key aspects of critical of John Dewey the epistemological (empirical – practical) and democratic dimension elements which radicalize Dewey’s Pedagogy. Initially we focus on the conceptual orientations of critical pedagogy, then the pragmatic approach of Dewey, highlighting the epistemological and democratic dimension. Finally, we would mention the influence of Dewey’s epistemology in contemporary educational reality.

The conceptual orientations of critical pedagogy

Critical pedagogy is a theory and practice that helps teachers and students to acquire critical social consciousness, through the understanding of the causes, social context and ideology that shape their lives. According to Aronowitz and Giroux (1993), the common place of theorists of critical pedagogy are : “1) an expanded concept of the political, 2) an attempt to link the languages of criticism to those of option 3) a reason who sees teachers as public intellectuals and 4) a restatement of the relation between theory and practice.”

They pose the primary purpose of educational the individual and social emancipation which do not specify in negative terms, but define it as the ability to self-realization of the individual within the social conditions of freedom, self-determination and autonomous social action (Matsagouras, 1999). The critical pedagogy is multidisciplinary, analyzing the cultural and social bases of disciplines and has a public mission to make society more democratic, trying to be both theoretical and practical (Beck, 2005). The values to which targets are human dignity, freedom, equality, social justice. The analysis and management of educational phenomena is not individual but collective affair, trying to engage in critical analysis of personal and pedagogical beliefs and established practices that compose the pedagogical processes, all involved in the educational process. Only then can education contribute to the empowerment of the individual and the reconstruction of society toward more equitable systems (Carr W, Kemmis S, 1986).

The critical pedagogy is an extremely complex project that contains a composition , transformation theory, policy conclusions and education policies that are opposed, in one degree or another, the dominant contemporary social and educational (neoliberal and neoconservative) policies, “radical” act of teaching. However its meaning cannot be attributed to a specific and precise manner, precisely because of the complexity and sophistication has many facets and those who are supporters, which complicates the formulation of a single, coherent definition of the concept.

The pragmatic approach of critical pedagogy

John Dewey was one of the most influential American philosophers and educators. His name was associated with the movement of “pragmatism”, a philosophical movement that was born in America in the second half of the 19th century. It covers a time period immediately after the American Civil War up until World War II. Some of the versions are also known under the names of “instrumentalism” and “experimentalism”. Pragmatism was born by the attempt to give an answer to the basic principles of rationalism and empiricism, philosophical currents that tried to give answers to the problem of the source of knowledge (Gruender, 1983).

The main feature of philosophy of pragmatism is the empirical concept. It accepts that the human experience is the ultimate source and the trial of all knowledge and values. The main pragmatic maxim, as formulated by Dewey argues that the value of each concept, each knowledge, as well as the meaning of each proposal lies on the way pragmatists define knowledge. For example, Dewey said that if we could understand that knowledge is not an act of an outer viewer, but of someone who participates in the natural and the social scene, then the true object of knowledge lies on the consequences of the guided action. So, says Dewey, “the criterion of knowledge is located in the method used to ensure the consequences and not in metaphysical conceptions of the nature of the real.” Dewey noted the relationship between education and experience, and declared his belief that every genuine form of education is born of experience. To paraphrase the famous dictum of Lincoln for Democracy, it is argued that education is “from experience, for experience and through experience”.

Pragmatism describes a process where theory is extracted from practice, with dominant notions of instrumentalism, radical empiricism and conceptual relativity. According to pragmatism, theories are not faithful representations of reality, but “forms” to which we reduce or organize a group of phenomena in sections. The

reality can be approached only through knowledge of abstract thinking, analytical abstraction and deduced logic. According to the pragmatists, the “usefulness” and “truth” is no longer separated from each other, but appear as two sides of the same reality.

In their confrontation with rationalism, pragmatists start from relational approach to human and environment, human and world, actor and structure. What is rejected is the notion of a world whose principles are defined once and for all and whose truth once known. Instead of a philosophy of first principles, support the indeterminacy of the external world, the multitude of configuration possibilities and the corresponding sense-making. The world “out there” is waiting to be completed and streamlined. This process, of course, is not treated as something that can be completed at some future point once and for all. The society understood as a set of countless situations-actions, and is perceived both as an ongoing process and, secondly, the removal of indeterminacy displayed through symbols and meanings constructed by the actors as culture, institutions, and through everyday interpretations that give the actors in the various situations encountered. The removal of uncertainty, therefore is a conceptual ability related to practical interest.

The epistemological dimension of Dewey critical pedagogy

Center of Dewey’s philosophical interest is the “theory of knowledge”. He rejects the term epistemology (theory of knowledge) and prefers the term “theory of inquiry” or “experimental logic”, as conditions more representative of his approach. The purpose of knowledge is to cause changes in different empirical situations. To investigate whether the acquired knowledge is true or false, we propose and establish the pragmatic theory of truth. The actual truth of knowledge is a function of the practice of operating its consequences. If this knowledge has some practical utility, it will be useful and true. If, however, the knowledge has not benefits in practical terms, then there is a need for further research. The criteria to investigate whether knowledge is true or not, are the conditions under which a belief can be tested and confirmed, it is called “warranted assertability”.

Knowledge is a representation of the world, not passive recording of events in mind, a concept that was very prevalent in traditional philosophy. It is an exploratory process, a series of constructions and reconstructions, through which we come to a result, when this process there is the element of logical structure (the element considered stable in the situation of a continuously variable). This result, the end of the

investigate process, is knowledge. According to Dewey (1938), we learn not to do, unless we do help to change our perception of life. To achieve the learning, the man must realize the consequences of his act. Therefore, learning is the result of experience, but simply does not constitute experience.

In this way, Dewey tries to give the educational process a new basis. It is radically opposed to the philosophy of traditional education, which was based on prefabricated material courses. This, in the view of the persistence of ready knowledge of the past, does not seem to offer something above is not enough to solve the problems facing the education system. His method of problem solving, the project method and the active step help substantially in this direction.

The democratic dimension of the educational philosophy of Dewey

John Dewey developed his thoughts and concerns on the issue of democratic education by his work on the relationship between democracy and education, which was fundamental to the further progressive movement of education. Dewey's proposal for an education in the service of democracy is this: the free communication between people and the unimpeded exchange of experience aimed at the convergence of different social interests will be secured. "Regarded as an idea, democracy is not an alternative to other principles of associated life. It is the idea of community life itself" (Dewey, 1991). Through free communication and mutual experiences the flexible adjustment of the institutions and the continuous progress of society will be achieved. At this point it is necessary to mention that Dewey contrasts the traditional form of education with a more modern approach of the educational process, which includes the experience as the pervasive principle.

The contrast between the two forms of education is strongly emphasized by Dewey, who concludes that there is a close and necessary link between education and experience (Kolb, 1984). Dewey supports the dual aspect, namely the subjective and inter-subjective dimension of the reconstruction of knowledge, highlighting the inherent and continuous interaction between man and his experience with the social environment. According to him, human experience considered as a special type of interaction with the environment in which the one side defines and shapes the other one and simultaneously it is shaped by it, opening up possibilities of new forms of coping with the situations and forming of activities. In formulating these positions, he attempts to remove the division between the subject and the object, theory and practice, rationalism and empiricism. It defines learning as a process which extracts

meaning from experience and argues that the reflection on experience is a key element of the learning process. Dewey dealt extensively in his work with the concept of reflection, which constitutes a concept with a broad content. It is a part of thinking and learning from which it must be differentiated and separated. Generally, it occurs as a synonym for mental processes of a high level and it is used for the activities (mental and emotional) that a person is involved in, having as ulterior purpose to explore the experiences and to be led to a new understanding and appreciation of the phenomena (Mezirow, 2000). The methodological principle of learning by doing is the essence of the educational thought of Dewey highlighting the experience as the dominant method of reality's approach and knowledge of things. According to Dewey (1910, 1957) experience transfers the principles connection and organization of information or stuff within itself. For Dewey, the reflection is the starting point for the action and it aims to help the person to get out of the deadlock, resolving problematic situations. He says that reflection is associated with the evaluation of the justification of a person's beliefs", that is a the process of rational examination of conclusions with which our beliefs have been justified.

The liberal idea of Dewey regarding the ability of education to adjust and improve the social leads to the concept of equal opportunities the provision that is, to all students of equal access to cultural goods (with potential parallel aid of the disadvantageous) so as everyone has the possibility of obtaining the means for the realization of their own rational plan of virtuous life (Dewey 1916, 1938). Dewey's philosophical thought can be condensed and formulated in the following sentence: "A general application of the methods of science in every possible area of research is the only adequate means to resolve the problems of an industrial democracy" (Hook 1939). He believed that democracy is an activity that take place through action, giving particular emphasis on social rather than political dimension of democracy. Dewey approached education as part of a larger project that included the exploration of the nature of the experience knowledge society and morality. Therefore he offers us the perfect bridge from the theories of knowledge to the democratic theory then with the theory of education.

A key feature was the concern for "social intelligence". According to him through the cultivation of human the collective capacity to enlarge the freedom and creating a more desirable form of social life begins to develop (Carr & Harnett, 1996).

Democracy as a way of life and not merely as a means of governance is based on the human contact and communication of their experiences. This concept highlights the two dominant components of a democratic way of life: the recognition of a layer of common values and ideals and at the same time the emergence of flexible communication forms between people who promote interaction (Alexander 1995). As a result they experience jointly and reconstruct their experiences and knowledge setting common goals and perspectives as well as organizing their action and confronting situations. A democracy of this type has the characteristics of community life. It is open to constant adjustment in order to satisfy new circumstances as they arise. The development of a deep democratic consciousness necessary for the formation of democratic character. This development is not be reflected in the stereotyped acceptance of democratic principles. On the contrary, it depends on the overall accomplishment of the educational system.

Dewey emphasized the changes that are continuously being conducted (progress of democratic ideas new scientific discoveries) which required a shift of people on issues concerning education. In a democratic society all citizens should have equal opportunities for education and knowledge .He wanted the knowledge direct and accessible to everyone and not elitism and intellectual authoritarianism which provides knowledge for the few. Students should have the freedom to think and act. They exercised themselves to in freedom which can manage well when in the future they will be the people who will administer the state (Dewey 1916, 1991).The new school should equip students with interhuman values and the meaning of democracy basic skills for their later life. A democratic school environment means supplying students with life experiences with which they will develop the democratic ideals of equality freedom and the community of people. People, who have been nurtured with the universal and timeless values of personal liberty, dignity, kindness, mutual understanding and dialogue, have a higher quality of experience. Richmond says that “Dewey wanted firstly to humanize and personalize the learning process and then it makes it democratic”. According to this approach of Dewey, Kilpatrick emphasizes that the respect for personality means to help everyone to develop on their own efforts their best predispositions to help them especially to decide freely for the best purposes. Such respect for personality is the most sacred thing in human relationships.

Conclusions

Critical pedagogy refers not only to pedagogical theory but also in teaching and learning strategies which are aimed at fostering critical awareness of the subject against the oppressive conditions of the social environment. The formation of critical consciousness is perceived as the first step in a process of social transformation. Using the methodological tools of a critical social science making the people involved (students and teachers) in an educational process of critical analysis and social events situations. Dewey's critical pedagogy aimed at social reconstruction and he encompasses the epistemological and democratic dimension highlighting the components of critical literacy critical thinking and critical reflection concepts of major importance for the formation of critically conscious students /citizens.

Nowadays, the need for critical pedagogy dictated by the rising wave of authoritarianism. Since new political circumstances that threaten to invalidate any promise of democracy in the 21st century. Today it is recognized that there can be no real democracy without substantially trained citizens. The critical consciousness is seen as a necessary first step of a broader collective way of being for democracy by questioning the social injustices and creating a society based more on equality and social justice. Education is the most important condition for equality and justice. It is a key element of the policy because it provides knowledge and skills through which individuals become socially acting subjects. The ultimate goal of critical pedagogy is to prepare students to participate in the struggle for a democratic public life.

The new school contrasts the "external" and "above" enforcement that characterized the traditional culture the culture of personality and expression of children and learning come only through texts and teachers. The acquisition of individuals skills and techniques has absolutely no use if there are means to achieve the goals set by the individual and that have direct practical application. The school should try to offer as many opportunities as possible that relate to this child and not oriented only in their future. So the key feature "new" school, is the dominance of freedom thought and action rather than coercion of any kind. But it is not the increased freedom goal to be achieved in school, but the medium. Freedom of external action for Dewey, freedom of movement an essential tool for maintaining physical and mental health, but also means to think freely and to engage whoever purposes we have chosen freely.

From the late 19th century in both Europe and America developed a strong "criticism of the old school and put the goals for New Education". The educational ideas of Dewey had such a significant impact on educational thinking globally, so the view

that was expressed was that no educator since Comenius was more recognized internationally than Dewey and any no one else's projects were so much translated around the world.

Dewey contrasts the traditional form of education with a more modern approach of the educational process which includes a pervasive pattern of experience. The contrast between the two forms of education is strongly emphasized and he concludes that there is a close and necessary link between education and experience. He defines learning as the process that extracts meaning from experience and argues that the meditation experience is a key element of the learning process. The methodological principle of learning by doing is the essence of the educational thought of Dewey, highlighting the experience as the dominant method of approximation of reality and knowledge of things. According to Dewey, the experience transfers the principles connection and organization of information or stuff from which it is made within itself. The crucial point, therefore in order for the behavior to be explained or predicted is the meditation of personal experience. In order someone to create behavior with incentives they should create the experience of awakening (stimulation), commitment and pursuit. For Dewey, the reflection is the starting point for the action and he aims to help the person get out of their deadlock, resolving problematic situations. He says that meditation is associated with the "evaluation of the reasons I believe a person", i.e the process of rational examination of conclusions which our beliefs have been justified with. The schools certainly will not change society, but we can create within these pockets of resistance that provide pedagogical models for new forms of learning, understanding of our world and social relations – forms which can be used in other spheres, most directly involved in the fight for a new ethics and social justice.

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Reconstructing 1980's primary school students' educational experiences in Turkey with their own words: The school rules and students' punishments

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to clarify what the school rules were in 1980s, how these rules were implied and whether the students were punished because of not obeying them by taking into account the center-periphery and gender variables that reflect the social and economic conditions of the milieu in which they used to be during their primary school educations. The method of the study is oral history which uncovers so many details about the classes whose history has been ignored throughout the time by the classical historiography. We may come across some official documents about these students and also their diaries that may give us some information about their educational experiences; however, they can not be enough to see much about their educational experiences. It is oral history methodology which reconstructs their hidden educational experiences and highlights their details to some extent. This paper consists of oral history methodology, the school rules and their implications in relation with punishments. It is significant to indicate that oral history methodology helps researchers see and understand the narratives of 1980s primary school students' educational experiences about the school rules and their implications. Since oral history inspires its entity from the words of those who do not take part in historical studies in general, it lets us get more information about these rules and their implications that do not appear in the written documents. In this study I have made interviews with fifteen women and fifteen men studying primary school in different parts of Turkey. Their narratives about the rules and the punishments will be presented with their original forms.

Keywords: oral history, primary school experiences, urban-rural, school rules.

Introduction

One's narratives are worth of researching if there is a possibility to make history (Grele, 1991). To unveil the educational experiences of primary school students including the school rules and punishments they were exposed in 1980s via oral history methodology allows us to reach not only their educational practices but also the details about their childhood. Moreover, it also provides significant data about their daily lives, and those of the social, political context in which they had their childhood. The priority of this paper is to sift out their memories about the school rules and penalties they were incurred when they were primary school students by taking into account the center-periphery and gender as variables which may be decisive in terms of classifying them.

With the amplification of the scope of historiography to write more about the masses, such as workers, women, children, prisoners since 1960s, more researches have appeared on those who have been on the margin of dominant way of writing history and doing social studies. One of these masses, children about whom there is a scantiness of the written documents, that's why what they recall both about the school rules and penalties related are significant not only for child history but also for educational studies. Despite the fact that making use of oral history in educational studies is not a prevailing way of constructing children's educational experiences, there has been a propensity among the academicians to provide more resources along with the written ones in the last two decades in Turkey.

There have been several studies reflecting students' educational experiences in general by making use of the oral history methodology. Oral history as a collective memory is a set of ideas, images, feelings about past. It is best located not in the minds of individuals, but in the resources they share (Zarecka, 1994:4). Öztürkmen's "Celebrating National Holidays in Turkey: History and Memory" is one of these studies that reflects the memories of people about holidays during their childhood in general in Turkey (Öztürkmen, 2001). In her study a young student narrates the image of Atatürk as: "*Until the end of primary school, the image of Atatürk that we carried in our heads was the following: Atatürk was a good man. He loved the nation as our mothers and fathers loved us...*" (Öztürkmen, 2001: 68).

However, in some of the studies actualized by oral history, we directly confront with the school rules and punishments generated from the students own words. Cumhuriyet'te Çocuklar (They Were Children During the Republic) is one of the

studies performed by Tan et al via oral history methodology reveals significant data derived from the narratives of primary school students of Early Republican Turkey. AdviyeGünel denotes the school discipline and describes it as “*We had to obey the rules. Discipline, it was a very disciplined school*”İhsanAtılcan puts into words how his teacher did control the students. “*When the teacher came into the classroom, he checked the pencils, whose pencil was better sharpened. The pencils were to be on the desks. Those whose pencils were not sharp enough were being punished.*” SaibeFırçacı remembers their toenails controlling. “*They were looking at our toenails*”(Tan, Şahin, Sever, Aksu, 2007: 62)

Moreover, Sağlam’s study named *SözlüTarihYöntemiyle 1970lerİlkokulÖğrencileri* (1970s’ Primary School Students with Oral History Methodology) reflects the school rules and their penalties derived from the reminiscences of the 1970s’ primary school students. Hasan Tatık represents how he was beaten by his teacher. “*One day I wanted to go up the roof. While climbing the stairs, there was our teacher called Nihat, he caught me and hit me to the wall. I was mercilessly beaten. There was always beating at that time*” (Sağlam, 2014: 112).

Despite all these studies, there are no distinguishing studies directly based on primary school students’ own educational experiences reflecting the unofficial school rules and the punishments that can be commented as part of informal education under the form of hidden curriculum that provides necessary conditions for the reproduction of cultural and economic class relationships in the society (Apple,1994: 111). It is hidden curriculum that ensures all the behaviours required for a life style which is almost legitimized and approved by the society and state. All these behaviours are reproduced by the school directors, vice school directors and teachers. They are even reproduced by the students themselves and kept on agenda as an oppressive issue when needed (İnal, 2008: 134).

Since the following narratives will be evaluated regarding *center-periphery* and *gender* as variables, I had better put these terms into a framework so that it could be easier for the readers to interpret the relation between the narratives and social context of the lives experiences of the period. Center-periphery distinguishes the schools where the children completed their primary school education as the ones in the cities and in the villages (Sağlam, 2014)The question is to what extent the children’s narratives vary from each other on account of studying in the cities (towns, slam areas

surrounding the cities) and the villages on account of the social, economic and political differences.

The center-periphery reveals how different social, economic and political conditions in the cities and the villages. Therefore, the memories of children about the period may differentiate regarding the milieu in which they got their primary school education (Sağlam, 2014: 18-19). The children in the cities recall softer rules and almost do not face considerable punishments. Here the parents' cultural and social resources are crucial as well as the income condition while perceiving the period (Apple, 2006: 457). It is because economic and social capital turns into cultural capital via various ways. This cultural capital provides certain advantages to the children of middle and upper class families (Apple, 2004; İnal, 2008).

Gender is another term that partially becomes decisive in differentiating the narratives. According to Ecevit (Ecevit, 2003: 83) "gender with its general definition, is simply used to indicate the socially determined roles, learned behaviors and expectations" in different cultures. Unlike biological sexuality, gender differences appear as a result of the social configuration and can be varied. In many societies men and women are accepted as different entities and also it is believed each one has opportunities, roles and responsibilities (Akın & Demirel, 2003: 73). The social relations attributed to sexual differences encode what is belonging to civil, public political, social and private by separating them (Sancar, 2012: 27). When the school rules are and their implications are considered, the teachers' behaviors and attitudes against the children reckon among children's sexuality become influential (Sayılan, 2012).

To put it in Aksu Bora's words, "sexuality is a decisive factor in the determination of regulating of social relations and the establishment of social hierarchies in economic, political and cultural spheres. It is important to be aware of the fact that sexuality is not only a significant factor in private sphere like individual relations, family relations, but also in public sphere like in the production of politics, economy and science" (Bora, 2008: 13-14). According to Joan Wallach Scot (Scot, 1988: 42) "gender is a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes, and gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power." Hence, gender is to be taken more seriously when considering what the children denote about their period perception and educational practices in the past (Apple, 2006: 456). When gender variable is consulted as

evaluating the narratives of children, no difference is observed from their narratives, the differences are more because of the center-periphery.

Method

The method of this study is oral history methodology. Oral history methodology with its critical, innovative, transformative approach cares about individuals, groups' life styles and their socialization patterns in historical studies and contributes the socialization of history (İlyasoğlu, 2006; Thompson, 1988, 2006). As Paulo Freire puts into words "*the power of reciprocal dialogues*" (Mclaren, 2001, 2003) for a democratic society oral history plays an important role and function in the share of knowledge. According to Grele, oral history is a sort of development of historical consciousness (Grele, 1991).

This method mainly writes the history of those particularly being excluded from the dominant historical understanding, children and relates their history with big historical events. What oral history does is to ferret out the individual experience that is a gap in classical historical approach (Tan, 1998, 2000). The oral evidence of ordinary people are part of the understanding of history as a whole, in this respect oral history has a vital role in giving sense to the past. By this way we can understand today better and plan our future (Counce, 1994).

What oral history does is to ferret out the individual experience which is emptiness in dominant classical historical approach (Tan et al, 2007) and as Alessandro Portelli puts into words "*oral history tells us less about events than their meaning.*" (Portelli, 1998: 69). It has sought to cast the light of history on people who have occupied the lower rungs of various status hierarchies thus the phrase 'history from the bottom up' (Chan, 1994: 597; Danacıoğlu, 2001:131). Oral history is more than merely a supplement to other extant documents, it stands as an attempt at first interpretations of a series of events (Cuttler III, 1971: 185).

Briefly, it is oral history methodology that enlightens the history of masses who have been excluded from the dominant historical approach and develops a critical and alternative historical approach (Sağlam, 2013: 8). With such a belief I made thirty interviews including fifteen women and fifteen men who completed their primary school education in 1980s. In order to contact them, snow ball method was used. The interviews were decoded in their original forms. These narratives that render the unofficial school rules and punishments implemented when violated form the core of the study. The validity and reliability of interviews was proved both by getting the

approval of the interviewees after decoding the interviews and the help of an academician about the framework provided previously so as to use the narratives in the text.

The Discipline Policies At Schools

There are not specific discipline policies about primary school students. However, not telling lies, obeying general social rules of the society both at school and outside, fulfilling their duties, not coming to school without excuses, not attending to the lessons while being at school, using slang words at school and outside, quarrelling with their friends, damaging school belongings, writing slang words on any parts of the school, not obeying their teachers and school directors' orders, insulting their teachers and threatening them, cheating during the exams were able to be accepted as generally applied discipline policies in Turkish Educational System (İlköğretmen Okulları Disiplin Yönetmeliği, 1967: 6-7).

The Punishments To Be Given To The Students When Found Guilty

When the students were found guilty, the following punishments were to be implemented. These are some of the penalties. Informing and warning the student about his/her mistake (behaviour) that requires punishment, telling him/her that his/her behaviour requires punishment harshly, sending him/her away from school from three to fifteen days, dismissing him/her from school with a certificate, depriving him/her from his/her educational rights. (İlköğretmen Okulları Disiplin Yönetmeliği, 1967: 8-9).

The School Rules and Punishments: "Beating"

No matter where the students went to primary school, the school rules which took place in the memories of 1980s' primary school students are like being punctual, not coming to the school and courses late, not being noisy both at school and in the classrooms, not talking without taking permission from the teacher during the lesson, not harming the school supplies and equipment, doing homeworks on time, bringing course materials to the school properly, being respectful to the teachers and elders and coming to school with clean clothes.

Similar school rules have been encountered from the words of both Early Republican Period and 1970s primary school students. In spite of belonging to different periods of Turkey, we come across similar partially informal rules and thus this helps us see the continuity from the educational practices of the primary school students.

A. Haydar Caner who was a primary school student during the Early Republican Period recalls the rules as "The cleaning control had been done before the flag

ceremony on Mondays. Everybody did show their clothes to be checked if they were clean. We let them see our nails” (Tan et al, 2007: 62). Birgül Çetin who was a primary school student in 1970s in Turkey puts it as: “We were supposed to be quiet, there were controls about been clean. They wanted us to be clean” (Sağlam, 2014, 114). These are the rules that could be partially performed under the form of hidden curriculum which form some sorts of behavior, knowledge and value (İnal, 2008: 134).

We understand from the narratives that when the students of the period did not obey them, they were exposed to certain kind of punishments. Also it is commonly seen that the students had been exposed to punishments. Particularly, this was more common in the villages where all most all students of the period faced some kind of punishments which were deemed suitable by most of them. The widely faced penalties were hitting their hands’ nails with a ruler, slapping in the face, hitting hand palms with a ruler or a pair of compasses, having them wait on one foot near the bin in the corner of the classroom, beating them respectively, complaining them to their parents and suspending them from school.

The narratives of both Early Republican and 1970s’ primary school students reveal almost the same or similar punishment examples. Düriye Köprülü, a primary school student during the transition from the Ottoman to Republican Period, remembers how they were punished. “What I remember from primary school was that the teacher was sometimes did not let student sit and wanted him/her stand at the corner. I remember that” (Tan, 2001: 168). Also Yunus Gürpınar puts beating into words as “Of course the teachers were beating, they had such a right.” Kenan Küpçü legitimizes the beating at school as “Beating was free at that time. Show me the child who did get beaten at that time” (Tan et al, 2007: 63).

To see the continuity in the form of the students’ punishments in primary school, it is worth of the words of Leyla Akıncı who was a 1970s’ period primary school student describes it “I got beaten. My second teacher was punishing the one who did mistake. He was hitting our fingers with a ruler even when we laughed each other. O got beaten several times” (Sağlam, 2014: 112-113).

Unlike a few students of the 1980s who do not recall the school rules no matter they had their primary school education in the cities, towns and villages regarding their gender, the rest can remember the school rules. For instance, Gül Ak Karataş,

DeryaAksüt, VildanAsur, SeyhanDörtyol, Kaya Orduluve Berk Nur Nil who went to primary school in the cities put forth the school rules as in the following narratives.

GülAkKarataş:

I do not remember any punishments given to me like being complained to my parents, given disciplinary punishment or dismissed from the classroom. We were obeying the rules. What were the rules for example? You will not harm the school belongings, break the school windows, saden your teachers, be disrespectful to them and altercate with your friends.

DeryaAksüt:

“You will stand up when you teachers come from outside. When the teacher says “good mornig”, you will talk back. You will not sit until he/she tells you to sit down. You can not look around you, you can not talk without raising your hand.

VildanAsur:

We were to come to school on time. Yuo could not be late to the lesson for example. During the lesson of RasimKayhan, you could not be late as he got angry, even during the break time we could not be late. Our teacher was so prim. As school rules, ‘do not throw the garbage to the floor, clean your environment, do not throw anything to the garden.’ I remember them well. There was the nail control every week, I remember those controls. There is a need to cut the nails every weekend now. It was a habit left from that time as if we had memorized it.

SeyhanDörtyol:

As discipline, every morning everybody lined up, we were allowed to go into our classrooms after the clothes, hair, nail controls.

Kaya Ordulu:

While entering the school, you know queuing up with your class friends, going into properly, saying anthem, National Anthem etc., Of course, being quiet during the lesson, not fighting such things.

Berk Nur Nil:

Like not talking during the lesson. Nazire teacher was good at slapping. She was very disciplined. She got angry while someone talked during the lesson. She was saying ‘listen to this part carefully!’ as she was teaching something important. We knew that and did not talk at all during the lesson while she was teaching something important. Those who completed their primary school education in the villages depict what they had witnessed as the school rules.

Aykut Ay:

Not being late to the school, not prolonging the breaks. Once the teacher called me I had been late to the classroom. I got beaten. Naughtiness or misbehaviors were definitely punished.

Murat Gül:

There was a disciplinary school administration. The rules were expected to be obeyed. Not harming school belongings, coming to the school on time, not dirtying/besmearing the environment were some of the rules.

Gülcan Boy:

The students were to come to classroom with holo hair. The nails had to be cut. You ought to have brought your books in a bag properly. When somebody had not brought like that, his or her nails were hit with a ruler, nail tips were hit, I remember that.

GözdeÖksüz:

The rules were about cleaning. Then, there was a classroom prefect elected by the students. The nails were checked whether they were dirty, washed and clean, if the clothes were ironed, the hair had been washed and combed or not. There were rules.

Musa Erdoğan:

As rules; cleaning was cared about. There were nail, handkerchief controlings every week. Definitely those controlings were an important stage for us. It is because the teacher might have thought that it was village culture and the students could not be clean. It has been a long time. When we were children I did not know the reason of them but he could have let them have those features. Nail cutting, cleaning, using handkerchief, hair controlling, having clean hair were the rules. Since there were fleas at that time, he did care about cleaning. He did not withhold his labor and there were the controls of them.

The narrative of one of the period students who got her primary school education in a boarding school denotes that the rules at her school were harder than those in normal primary schools and were applied as if they had been in a military school. Sonay Yol puts it as

There were school rules, yes. It was like military system in the mornings at six. We were getting up at six to wash our faces and hands, brush our teeth and have breakfast. Then when it was half past seven we were starting the lessons. At midday lunch and in the evening dinner it was the same. There were the school rules. It was forbidden to violate them. You could not go far more than 5 kms. The boys and girls compartments

were separate. Namely, everybody was responsible from their parts. There were such rules.

As it was indicated before, we understand that the students were exposed to serious punishments when they did not obey the rules. The dimension of the violence of these punishments becomes lighter from the villages to the cities. Even in the schools situated in the developed parts of the city centers, it is hardly possible to face with such examples of these forms of punishment. Moreover, considering gender the boys were encountered with more severe fierceness examples and these examples of fierceness were harder than those which the girls faced when they are compared with each other.

These are some of the narratives of those who completed their primary school education in the villages. Aykut Mert Kuş describes how he was expected to obey the rules as a child of the period.

I never forget one thing. I went to my teacher's house to get permission not to go to school since my shoes were stuck in mud and I wore my brother's shoes which did not fit my feet so I had to only put my fingers into the shoes. She/he told me to wear slippers. There was definitely no any rights for school absenteeism. It was impossible to be against the rules. There were very strict school rules. There was beating, I got beaten a lot. There were hits on our nails. Slapping was so normal. When we did not get slapped, it meant we had not gone to school that day.

Although when the students did not obey the school rules, they were officially expected such as to be sent away/ dismissed from school. Unfortunately, the students were punished according to the unofficial rules implemented as part of hidden curriculum which is not written and complements what is incomplete in the official curriculum. With the hidden curriculum certain behaviors found suitable with the requirements of a sort of life style approved, legitimated by the society and state are reproduced and kept on the agenda as repressive elements when necessary by the directors, assistant directors, teachers and even by the students themselves at school (İnal, 2008: 138).

Mahir Özyurt:

There was fierceness at our school. The teacher was punishing sometimes when someone made naughtiness. He/She was first called the student to the board and wanted him/het to stand on one his/her foot. Then he/she could let you sit on your desk or could take the heed. When someone made a special mistake, he or she was

exposed to a special beat like taking the heed, being slapped or being beaten with a stick. Despite this, I do not remember anybody being disciplined or suspended from the school due to not obeying the school rules.

AyhanSağ,

Calling to the board, there was standing on one foot penalty.

SonayYol:

There was beating. I got beaten, particularly during the Ramadan I got beaten as we were fast but we broke it and had something earlier. I bought bread from the baker. There was the teacher's daughter there and saw us. Yes, we were exposed to a lot of violence.

In some of the narratives it is possible to encounter the students' claims that they deserved to have been punished and it was for their benefits.ÖzkanÖzgürillustrates it as

The discipline rules were normal. There had been certain penalties if they had been violated. They were either with a ruler or by the teacher directly. But, when I look at them now, I find them to have been for our future benefits. It is because people were trying to give you something and it was clear that there was a price for them. When you violated them you were exposed to punishment. It was not an arbitrary punishment. It was fort he students to pay more attention to their education. The teachers were from our homeland.

There are the narratives of those who studied primary school in the cities and were also beaten by their teachers.DeryaAksüt states it as

There was beating, there was a lot. I can not tell lies. There was hitting the fingers.

Kader Yorulmaz who completed primary school in Yozgat city center describes how she was punished.

There was beating with a ruler. Even the teacher was asking the students to bring a stick. He/she wanted us to crimp our fingers like this (she shows how it was). There was the prefect who was writing the names of those who were naughty. I was one of them. He/She was hitting our hands and fingers. We were standing on one of our feet and waiting near the board.”

TuranBölükçe recalls the beating. He puts it as

I remember that beating was so common at school. Always you could see a child to have been beaten. I was one of these children.

Özmen Ok remembers how he faced the chastisement.

Yes, I got beaten a lot. I was not individually an impish person. However, punishment was widespread at school. Namely, it was such a common method used by our teacher.

ErcanÖzçelik:

I had been beaten. How? What our teacher commonly did was to pull our hair. Nursel teacher was doing that. She was hitting girls' heads with a ruler when she got angry. Mostly there was hitting with a ruler.

As it was mentioned before the students' punishment is less common in the big cities, even it changes from the periphery of the cities towards their centers. Some of the students who got their primary school education in the metropolitans and assert that they never got beaten at school. To illustrate, ŞeydaAyhan recalls it as

I never got beaten by my primary school teacher.

SeyhanDörtyol also

I was no exposed to any beatings at primary school. But, I denote that we were sent to the vice-directors of the school when were naughty by the teachers being on duty that day.

VildanAsur:

I never took bashing. I do not think there was much punishment and we were being punished.

AliyeParmaksız:

“No, never I took trashing and never saw anyone to have been punished at school.

Ayşe Zor Duran:

I never got beaten. I think I was not a naughty student. Yet, there were strict discipline rules.

Kenan Coşkun and Kaya Ordulumention that they never took bashing but there were punishment sometimes. Kenan Coşkun:

We never got beaten but there was punishment. At least there were penalties like standing on one foot but there was no beating.

Kaya Ordulu indicates it

It is interesting but I never got beaten by the teachers at school. As peanlity, I denote standing on a foot. I also do not remember any students who were beaten.

ÖzayÖztürk:

I never had beat. There were penalties such as being dismissed from the lesson, standing on a foot.

Conclusions

The students witness similar rules in different parts of Turkey, but the types of their punishment vary when they violate them regarding the place and social milieu where they got primary school education and gender. It changes accordingly. Even the density of the punishment may change or disappear completely in relation with the place where they got their primary school education and being male or female.

To begin with, facing with the school rules and the punishment ‘beating’ the students exposed when the rules were violated is more common in the villages and evaluated as a normal part of educational process. This can not only be confronted within the narratives of 1980s’ primary school students but in those of belonging to earlier periods in Turkey (Sağlam, 2014: 113). The expression “You have his/her meat, I have the bones” that the parents tell the teachers reflect the dimension of the issue (Sağlam, 2014: 106-107). All these reveal that they do not question the beating seriously as a part of age and authority (Tan et al, 2007: 63). Despite the fact that none of the punishments that the students were exposed were not to be implemented officially, they were enforced and mostly were found as normal punishments.

Even though most of the students recall both the school rules and punishments they were exposed regarding the place where they completed their primary school education and gender, those who were in the villages were punished harshly when compared with those in the cities. Considering the gender, boys were punished more ruthlessly while compared with the girls.

Even in the villages, girls were punished more slightly than the boys. In other words, the forms of punishment change due to the sexuality and where they got their primary school education.

Both the narratives of 1980s’ primary school students and those of earlier from the Early Republican Period to 1980s display that the formal and informal school rules and their punishments when they violated had similarities and this led to a continuity in the educational practices of primary school students about the school rules. This reminds us to comprehend how the educational practices at school about rules and penalties the students exposed are reproduced and legitimized and the dimension of this legitimacy vary from the cities to the villages where being beaten is deemed more normal and usual.

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Dilemmas and perspectives about the use of ICT in education

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Abstract

An unprecedented technological evolution is undoubtedly taking place nowadays. Innumerable technological achievements have dominated our lives enabling us to perform activities and making us face new facts. We are witnessing a new kind of human, homo novusetuniversalis. This kind of human is rather critical toward knowledge, gathers information, processes various stimuli, analyzes and approaches facts in a way that fully meets the “Society of Knowledge and Learning”. New Technologies are gradually entering the educational community and are conducive to forming the New School of Information Society. The concepts of lifelong learning, teachers training, investigatory instruction, active-revelatory learning, interaction and approachable and manageable knowledge are the focal point of teachers and students. This way they have to adjust to rapid changes which are taking place in the field of education.

Keywords: Senior High School Students’ stances, ICT in education, group-collaborative learning.

Introduction

The Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have undoubtedly dominated the modern society of the 21st century. They form the basic parameter of everyday life and are determinant to – if not pre-eminent at all – every aspect of individual and collective activities such as economy, care, administration, education and, of course, entertainment. As a result, the New School of Society and Learning is generated by the emergence of New Technologies in the educational procedure. Consequently, students, being future citizens of the society, are invited to adjust themselves to the current changes relating both to instructional practices and learning habits, to the means being used and the organization of the educational premises.

New Technologies in education: dilemmas and perspectives

Investigating learning through ICT

By the term ICT reference is made to educational and cultural goods and services engaged in the combinatory use of the various means access to which is achieved only through television or computers (Vosniadou, 2006). In this respect, reference is made to digital platforms, social networks, special software like Avakios e-slate about the construction of a microcosm to meet specific instructional objectives, the Verbs Train, which explains the formation of verbs in Ancient Greek Language and behavior-related software with Drill and Practice tasks along with interactive whiteboards – like electromagnetic inductance, touch, simple surface transformation to interactive and projector. Their conspicuous positioning in the educational procedure is justified by the technological development, having affected students' everyday life and their tendency to use the computer. The proved efficacy in knowledge transfer, the expanded way of thinking, students' discharging through the use of image-sound-motion and, finally, the preservation of concentration on higher levels are well accepted by educators.

Partial reference to ICT

Ever since 1960 the computer has been used as a tool of instruction and learning worldwide. In 1992 it was introduced, primarily as an experiment, to some Secondary Education schools (Pigiaki, 2008). Students have been gradually familiarized with searching the Internet for information through the use of search engines and keywords. Thus, the computer is perceived as being directly associated to information about humanistic education and cultural issues. They develop skills which enable them to meet the market needs and be more adaptive to the technological evolution. On the other hand, teachers admit that through the use of multimedia the student is able to self-actualize and discover knowledge. Yet, trying to get informed without satisfying guidance may lead to piecemeal and incomplete knowledge. Any information acquired through the computer should be processed and incorporated exactly in the specific cognitive area by elevating its functionality in it. Therefore, teachers' detailed preparation and training are the prerequisites so that technological possibilities are properly utilized even toward e-learning.

As regards the Internet, there is a general viewpoint that its usage in education may be conducive to liberating instruction and learning off the physical classroom boundaries. Furthermore, the Internet is very important to teachers as it potentially

changes the way of instruction and learning. There is a schools interface through the Internet which is, indicatively, a source of information for a propos issues from all over the world and its information varies according to students' interests and the possibility to correlate them to their school subjects. In this manner, school books and the interdisciplinary-multifaceted approach of the subjects to be taught through technology are enriched. At the same time, there is an emerging challenge for a national and European collaboration among schools, not merely on a students "acquaintance" level but even further towards processing issues of mutual interest (Pigiaki, 2008, Vakaloudi, 2003). This kind of inter-school communication fully meets the need to get schools away from geographical isolation. The bonds between Greek schools and schools abroad are tightened. Meanwhile, students with a different language and religion are faced with the opportunity to collaborate with other students online (Balasoglou, 2013).

The interactive board has been introduced for the first time to working groups and while training executives in private companies at the end of 1990. Later on, its use was introduced to education, mainly to the Higher Educational Institutes. In Greece, it was primarily used by private educational foundations, private schools and colleges. Its provision by the public sector is rare and when this is the case it is usually the outcome of private initiative funding coming from parents, teachers or donors. Using the computer in the school was regarded a necessity due to pedagogical needs and technological upgrading overall. Its basic advantage focuses on the possibility to support multiple pedagogical environments like cognitive or collaborative. The interactive board has been deemed one of the most significant technological innovations in education ever since the beginning of the Millennium (Nikolidakis&Paraskevas, 2012).

Last but not least, audiovisual media can be used in multiple manners, either to carry out individual work or in student groups or throughout the entire class. The latter presupposes the corresponding infrastructure in the school. More specifically, videos can be conducive to boost students' interest in the lesson. They can be source of authentic material, make international comparisons easy and students have the possibility to learn about international important people through interviews. The utmost benefit from videos is that students learn to respond, remember process and implement new knowledge. On the other hand, teachers should be aware of the research findings which verify that people remember only 10% of what they hear,

15% of what they see, 20% of what they hear and see, 70% of what they hear, see and respond and 90% of what they hear, see, respond and process (Gousias, 2013). At the same time, the Pedagogical Institute in collaboration with the Ministry of Education have proceeded in approving various software about theoretical and practical issues. Moreover, the use of websites and digital platforms like YouTube and social networks like Facebook, My-space, Hi-5 and Twitter can be perceived and utilized as educational tools under proper teacher guidance.

To sum up, every modern school which aims to provide useful knowledge to future citizens in order to meet the Information Society needs should seek for the pedagogical use of New Technologies and adopt them (Raptis&Rapti, 2002). To this end, educators could utilize the current popularity of social networks.

Teacher and student's roles during group work in school

The teacher acquires a new dimension by turning away from the authoritative figure and moving toward being collaborator, advisor and assistant to students. He encourages them to complete their tasks within fixed time limits. Meanwhile, he provides them with stimuli and is responsible for the organization, guidance, presentation and evaluation of group work. At the same time, he intervenes, when necessary, to support students when meeting difficulties, takes care of providing security and love to students within a democratic and full of understanding environment.

The student, being a member of the working group in school has to accomplish a lot of tasks so that the group is more productive. The understanding of interdependence and mutual give and take are crucial. In group works all the activities are carried out toward the development of team spirit along with the elevation of individual features (Trilianos, 2008).

Criticism on introducing New Technologies to education

New Technologies can without doubt support in an effective and fruitful way the educational procedure toward the improvement of learning. To achieve this, of course, the appropriate conditions should be met. In other words, incorporating New Technologies in education offers important opportunities. On the other hand, there are lurking dangers which should be avoided.

As it has already been mentioned, the use of the Internet can form a kind of educational activity toward the enhancement of student-centered education. Nevertheless, unlimited use of the Internet by students can be definitely conducive to

real threats and hazards. Besides, it should always be kept in mind that the student population is the easiest target group for deceive and propaganda. At the same time, the specific medium has an enormous potential to grab the adolescents' attention, like a magnet, occupying a large amount of their free time. In some cases, it occupies a large amount of their time for homework, too. In this respect, an adult's discreet intervention is imperative. This can be the teacher who provides supervision and clarification of questions regarding navigation through the Web. This is the only way to secure the positive function of the Internet within the framework of the educational procedure.

Research

Participants

The present research was conducted in the prefecture of Attica during the academic year 2013-2014. The participants were 100 students of 2nd Grade and 100 students of 3rd Grade Senior High School. They were also attending a tutorial school "Ekpaidefsi" for their preparation in the theoretical field to sit the Panhellenic Exams. The selection of the randomized sample was based on the permit provided by the Headmaster and instructors of the school. The 2nd Grade students were 78 girls and 22 boys with a mean grading from 15 to 18 for 56% of them, from 18 to 20 for 40% of them and from 10 to 15 for only 4% of them. The 3rd Grade students were 83 girls and 17 boys. Their level of performance was from 10 to 15 for 12% of them, from 15 to 18 for 54% of them and from 18 to 20 for 33% of them. To meet the research objectives, the categorization was based on gender, class, type of school (public, private, experimental), the reasons as well as the frequency of connecting to the Internet.

Procedure

The questionnaires were produced by the researcher. They aimed to record and classify students' attitudes about incorporating ICT in education. Some of the questions were used as a means of differentiating our research. Those questions referred to Internet connectivity by students, their preferences about print or digital material for reading and the contribution of audiovisual media to reducing the time for homework.

Means

Constructed and stabilized questionnaires were used to conduct the research. They included introductory question, close type question, dual, single and multiple choice

questions. The procedure was based on research ethics about anonymity and respect of the participants' privacy.

Results

According to the results, it can be argued that almost the entire number of students reaching up to 99% have a computer and Internet connection at home. At the same time, the massive majority of students, that is 85% of boys and girls, have their personal profile in social networks. In other words, they are members of the digital community and this can be proof of New Technologies domination over the modern way of living. As regards the frequency of Internet connectivity, most responses are concentrated on daily access, with a percentage of 77%. Only 23% of the participants speak about more seldom connectivity to the Internet. More specifically, the role of New Technologies in education has been already formed by the responses provided by students in both public and private schools. This is the situation when the majority of educators fail to grab their students' attention and activate the specific population. As a result, the educational procedure becomes dull and boring.

Additionally, despite the negative responses regarding the traditional teacher's replacement by the computer in the Future School (95%) and students' dedication to traditional forms of reading, like books, instead of digital ones, like computers, their overall attitude toward ICT was positive. This fact becomes more apparent as the majority of students expressed the desire to incorporate New Technologies as an assisting means of instruction. As regards group –collaborative teaching, students explicitly and firmly express their standpoint that it is present and crucial to the educational reality (99%). This is attributed to the Project Method which has been introduced as a subject in the 1st Grade Senior High School and the instruction of Literature on the basis of the new curriculum.

Discussion – Conclusions

The outcome of the research process focused on the interest in alternative forms of instruction which is more active and interesting. Besides, it is achieved through the implementation of new means in education. Incorporating ICT in the process of teaching and learning is positively addressed by students. Their top preferences are centered round the interactive board, software, social networks reaching a percentage of 75%. On the other hand, only 25% of them prefer the traditional model of teaching through lecturing. As regards the subjects, which are mostly suitable for use along with ICT, students suggested theoretical subjects mainly like History, Essay Writing

and Literature. Latin and Ancient Greek were placed in the last positions as they require memory skills. The research about Digital Practices of Adolescents' Literacy (Koutsogiannis, 2007) and the one about the Attitudes and Stances of Secondary Education Teachers about the implementation of ICT in their instruction (Tzimogiannis&Komis, 2001) have almost the same results. It should be kept in mind that technology as a teaching tool can stimulate students and provide multiple benefits to instruction on the grounds that its use is in alignment to the objectives and the teaching material of each subject.

Yet, there is a fact of significant consideration regarding students' attitude about the effectiveness of ICT in relation to the reduced time for homework. 57% of the students doubt about the positive contribution of New Technologies in learning. 28% of them are for and 14% of them are against this theory. The specific responses reveal an inadequate teachers' training in ICT as they regard them separate means for the educational procedure. They actually never implement them while teaching. On the other hand, there are a lot of teachers who completely avoid using innovative media due to their fear and precaution. This is the outcome of their minor familiarization with the specific practice according to students (20%). There are a few deviations in 2nd and 3rd Grade students' responses related to the above findings which imply that both groups of participants have been familiar with the new educational system and express the desire to implement technology to the teaching act. On the other hand, teachers should acquire the role of knowledge mediators and be open to new challenges in their workplace by adopting the technological achievements as teaching tools to make instruction more interesting. In this sense, the expected results may be positively surprising to the student community.

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“Much learning does not teach understanding”: On introspective methodology of protection against manipulations

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Abstract

The international system of education that is about to be presented today, is internally contradictory and paradoxical by many features. One of the major contradictions is that, on the one hand, the necessity of producing experts with various high “competencies” is declared and, on the other hand, the trend of forming many a society member who are loyal to employers and authorities and who may be easily manipulated through the mass-media is fairly evident.

Everyone with commonsense due to their being adequate within their daily life experience, may appear to understand easily that they are manipulated. But the moment of transcending their own competence is unaware by them because the competence and self-estimation ability beyond this limit are not there. One can properly set up the border of one’s own knowledge, and make difference between his knowledge and others’ knowledge, but one immediately loses the adequacy on the other side of the border. The everyday consciousness manifests itself as ordinary one beyond its everyday existence.

How to find this limit, this “inflection point”? The only way of being aware of such the border line is reflection. Since we reflect on the edge of losing reflectness and subjectness, there is sharp necessity of the certain technology, called reflective procedure, allowing to see this border.

Keywords: ordinary consciousness, subject, object, commonness, routine, personality, reflection, manipulations.

Quasi-introduction

Physician, heal thyself.

Γιατρέ, θεράπευσον σ’εαυτόν

(Luke, 4:23)

Over the last years, many “industrial injuries” have been observed in the communication industry: some non-experienced young colleagues who try to manipulate the ordinary consciousness fall under their own “sorcery” thus becoming the first victims of their own manipulations. The communication domain has become such a complex system that the ordinary common sense is not enough to safe work. A special protocol of action is needed commonly known as “safety devices”.

Furthermore, we’ll try *to set up approaches* to solving the issue and *to formulate principles* of the technique of communications that are to be safe for both a recipient and an actor.

Approaches

Initially, there are some basic questions to answer: How does manipulation become eventual? What is its essence?

The well-spread common opinion is that so-called *ordinary consciousness* or “common sense” are pivotal subjects to manipulate [1]. But when a question of defining their identification arises, one faces a fairly funny paradox that could be named an “evasive definition”.

Really, any attempt to distinguish an invariant in understanding of common sense forms a rather narrow “passageway”, beautifully described by Russian psychologist Helen Ulybina [2]: “When speaking of ordinary consciousness, literally all the researchers take note of its irrational nature, ability of ignoring laws of logic, and rejecting science information.” Another practical and generally acknowledged feature of ordinary consciousness is non-specialization: its owner is not an expert in the fields reflected by ordinary consciousness. Thus, we have a kind of “package” of invariant and—more precisely—universally recognized predicates of ordinary consciousness, such as *non-specialized, unscientific (empiric), contradictory, unsystematic, irrational, illogical*. There is one important peculiarity to note: ordinary consciousness described by all the above definitions is presented as a “*negative definiteness*” of consciousness qualities. All the predicates are negative, they don’t add a quality, but “take it away”.

Daily *consciousness* by its opposing to *specialized* and/or *scientific* knowledge is often used nowadays. Analysis of the above opposition shows two paradoxical things.

On the one hand, the most of us who are driven in our daily life by “common sense”, act in a rather adequate, rational and logical way. Moreover, science is getting to become (and it has already become in many ways) a direct productive power. A

number of science-intensive processes tends to grow. Among people there are those doing theoretical activity on a *daily basis*, but also there are those using applied scientific achievements in their daily living and productive practice. Everyday existence begins to grow “wiser” whereas science is becoming a subject of daily opinions. Somebody within their daily practice is rarely a subject of manipulation due to their rather high *specialization, competence*.

On the other hand, the paradox is that specialization and division of labour together form a great stratum of people who are aggressively incompetent beyond their competencies. It is also the case with intellectual labourers and men of science. For a strictly specialized subject the only instrument to know other objects and become aware of some relation to other subjects is their own “cognitive web”, which they throw on the entire world independent of their own works (another system of coordinates they don’t have).

Everyone with commonsense due to their being adequate within their daily life experience, may appear to understand easily that they are manipulated. But *paradox* is that *the very moment* of transcending their own competence is unaware by them because the competence and self-estimation ability beyond this limit are *not there*. One can properly set up the border of one’s own knowledge, and make *difference* between his knowledge and others’ knowledge, but one immediately loses the adequacy on the other side of the border.

Hence, there is an “inflection point”: ordinary consciousness manifests as such *beyond* its routine.

The question is how to find this limit, this “inflection point”? The question is not pointless, because its answering is directly related to successful communications. Our view is that this point lies where the individual *loses subjectness*, meaning that they stop setting goals and/or realizing their activity aim which takes place after transcending *their own* goal-setting into the sphere of others’ goal-settings.

The only way of being aware of such a border is reflection. It should be understood that it is not the matter of “activity of reflective understanding”, which is “directed against reason” and “behaves as ordinary common sense”[3], which “by nature is a negative activity. . . that splits everything into oppositions and keeps them isolated”[4], but the matter of “*reasonable* reflection” which is “transcend ... its separating determinations” while seeing a *contradiction* that “is precisely the rising of reason above the limitations of the understanding and the resolving of

them.”[5]Reasonable reflection is awareness of not only one’s own separateness from other acting subjects, but also a possibility of getting rid of it in the unity through realizing mutual *social goal*.

Nevertheless, since we reflect on the edge of losing reflectness and subjectness, there is *sharp necessity of a certain technology*, allowing to see the border of ordinary consciousness in a different perspective, not as it is seen in its reflexion by “abstracting and, therefore, dividing common sense, which is stubborn in its division making.”One may be needed to describe *reflective procedure*.

Furthermore, we make a first attempt to form a successive branching chain of questions that are necessary to identify manipulation that admittedly may be applied to you.

A. Preliminary questions

1. Which option is applied to you: reason or emotions?

If emotions are applied, the possibility of manipulation is very high. (Take note that saying in a humble complaining tone, “Dear,you really love me not!”is also a manipulation.)

2. Is “Occam’s Razor” is efficient in argumentation? Do they offer to see an essence“multiplied without necessity”? In other words, don’t they try to drape the significant issues by the insignificant ones?

If affirmative, seek manipulation.

3. If arguments appear sensible, allow yourself to look to what extent they are. In other words, *how much*do they convince you?Are there logical inconsistencies in the argumentation?

If affirmative, seek manipulation. The most wide-spread “believes” of that kind in logic and rhetoric are to be classified as errors of “*illusory proceeding*”or, simply,*disloyal approaches and arguments*.These may include, for example, some sorts of substitution of theses, among them the most prominent is the “extension of thesis”: “*All the inhabitants of our district have supported a new mall’s construction.*” Very popular is the “argument to illiteracy” that is based on the audiences’ *ignorance*. This argument is side-followed by the “argument to vanity”,when some argument is supported by addressing a compliment, or by “argument to adulation”, when obviously weak argumentation is flavoured by gross flattery directed to someone in the audience.

In narrow sight, the disloyal approaches seem not rational, but emotional ones. Besides using vanity and susceptibility to flattery, the manipulator may also use timidity and fear in those being manipulated. Thus, the “argument to personality” exploits their misgiving of “being different”. The classic example is the phrase: “You are now learned enough to be our calamity.” In the more severe form the fear is used in the “argument to authority” (“Thus said the principal!”) or, more improperly, in the “argument to policeman”: “Your ideas are explosive and dangerous enough to lead you to detention!”

The “lady’s argument” that is highly popular today, should be considered separately. It’s about a denial quality being exchanged by an opposite one, and the more absurd is the quality the better. The examples may be these: If not genius—then a fool. If not a beauty—then a monster. This approach is also used by men: “Why are you trading at the stock exchange?” “Are you of that opinion that it’s better for me to be a homeless beggar?”

4. Does this argumentation fit a Kant imperative in its second statement, “As a part of humanity you should always approach it (as well as everybody) as goal, not only as means”?

It is not a grandiloquent rhetoric, but an indicator showing *how* you are treated—like a purposeless object of manipulation or like a purposely acting object. Actually, approach to goal is a major definitive position to diagnose a real manipulation.

B. Approach to goal

This is another chain of questions necessary to define—not a formal possibility of manipulation, but its content and purpose.

1. Is the goal of action you are induced to do yours or not yours? Could you formulate the purpose for yourself?

2. If negative, is a possible result acceptable for you? Can you accept the goal when it has been reached?

There are three options to answer: “Yes”, “No” and “I don’t know”. If “Yes”, you will join your sympathizers and together you will reach your mutual goal. Congratulations! Two other options mean that you are manipulated.

3. And, finally, the classic question, «Qui prodest?» (“Who stands to gain?”)

Who convinces you and why? Who stands to gain from the goal being set up? By answering these questions you will be able as a minimum to detect a person prone to manipulate you. And if you are lucky, you’ll find someone to share your mutual goals.

If someone makes you to do something with a promising result somewhere in the far future, meaning there is a significant period of time between your initial action and your final result, try to see if the initiator is eventually planning to attain an in-between result within this time gap? It happens too often that it is the intermediate result that is major one—not for you, of course.

If you are convinced by someone that any action, decision, human being has no alternative, be alert! The alternative is always there, and the discussion about its absence only mean that the other part wants it to be absent. That's the goal!

Quasi-conclusion

It may seem that the author induces an excessive watchfulness. But can checking for truth validation be really excessive? All in all, the suggested algorithm is not less than an element of feedback, without which no one sensible/reasonable system can work. By asking yourself this set of simple questions, you can escape many sudden surprises while doing any project—surprises available both for yourself and for others.

In any case, by filtering your actions through a sieve of these questions, you can escape a danger of “hitting your head” by your own shell rebounding from the information massif.

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Plato, Piketty, and the United States of sovereign exception.

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Abstract

What Freire termed the “ethics of the market,” which has subsumed the promise of democracy in education, is now transcendent and dominant on the landscape of approved discourse, and practice in Education. There are numerous critical intellectual efforts to disrupt this, and here I would like to argue for the exposure of archetypes which are bedrock forming sediment for the business of political illusion. I will practice here a method of collision, bringing together two very disparate discourses. Centrally, Plato’s The Republic, and Thomas Piketty’s Capital in the 21st Century will perform here, a critical duet, with support through the archetypes of exclusion, and the work of Giorgio Agamben.

Keywords: Sovereignty, Inequality, Agamben, Piketty, Neo-liberalism, Justification.

“There is no subjection so perfect as that which keeps the appearance of freedom.”

J. J. Rousseau

“Let Us Tell a Lie that is Worthy of the Name!”

Plato

“God Is Not Dead, He has turned into money.”*

G. Agamben

Introduction: Neo-liberalism and the schooling solutions to a problem of justification.

In this paper I would like to describe a city where much that is accepted as the truth is in fact, a lie. The rulers of this city depend on justification for this arrangement, and this is a discussion of how this dependence arose, and how it may be ended. I discuss here the outlines of this justification, how education regimes play a role in its maintenance. Neoliberalism threatens to strip us of feeling for suffering--it becomes a social Darwinist version of reality. Some must suffer. Some die. Justice is a non-

issue. The basis for the lie is a robust apparatus for justification of unwarranted risk and suffering, and an accelerated shift of the burden of risk from elites to the middle and working classes.

There is no shortage of good work which outlines the ways in which the marketization of education, and related neo-liberal impacts have made a mark on schooling practices. I won't be adding to this, for it is well established. My effort here is to make a contribution to the business of exposure, to the difficult developing effort to unmask the lies which have accelerated public acceptance of the private, corporate takeover of public education, and the distortion of its potentials, in the service of elites who have retreated further than ever before behind a curtain of unaccountability and insulated privilege.

What Freire termed the "ethics of the market," which has subsumed the promise of democracy in education, is now transcendent and dominant on the landscape of approved discourse, and practice in education. There are numerous critical intellectual efforts to disrupt this, and here I would like to argue for the exposure of archetypes which are bedrock forming sediment for the business of political illusion. I will practice here a method of collision, bringing together two very disparate discourses, which following a Surrealist faith, can hopefully generate more critical energy than would otherwise be possible. Centrally, Plato's The Republic, and Thomas Piketty's Capital in the 21st Century will perform here, a duet. One the classic, critical philosophic fabulist; along with the current prodigy of the "dismal" science's more critical wing.

Opening cracks in the edifice of market justification

Neo-liberalism, is not a new form but rather, the radical acceleration of an old one. For the critical community, what has taken on this new energy is an ancient injustice: simply, goods which rightfully belong to the people, including their share of a reservoir of life chances, are commandeered by elites, taken by force of power. This expropriation of what had been in the commonwealth is not new. It has always taken place under cover of darkness.

Varieties of expropriation are accompanied by the schooling disciplines, sites where students are required to appear for state approved social adjustment through "approved" curriculum, accreditation, school level matriculation rules, graduation requirements for job application rights, state approved rituals of graduation, age grading, testing, "Special" education, child "development," tracking and ability

grouping. Public education, with all its promise, is too often an archipelago of compulsion, and the distortion of human potential to fit the requirements of the division of labor in capitalism, was not invented during the Reagan Thatcher counter-revolution.

What is important, is that these arrangements must be justified, for a compliant public is necessary for smooth operation. Discourses of legitimation naturalize Schooling regimes “naturalize” whatever irrationality might accompany these regimes.

Justifying the market ethic

Education reformer Horace Mann orchestrated the first truly public education system in the U.S., in nineteenth century Massachusetts. Following the Prussian model, he was not secretive regarding uses of this “common” schooling. It was accepted, ordained by the manufacturing elites of the state, on the promise that it would create a sense of patriotic unity in a swelling immigrant population, and work to temper the symptoms of urbanization, and the division of labor as corporations began to redefine labor, with a dizzying shift from artisan craft skills to the immiseration of corporate consolidation, mechanization and labor “discipline.” His most powerful argument was the claim that universal common schooling for the working class would form the essential solution to poverty, and improve economic conditions.

Thus at least for the U.S. case, the uses of schooling for labor exploitation are as old as public schooling itself. What is also not new is the “problem” of justification, that is the need, not so much to eliminate the economic and social inequality that characterizes capitalism, but to justify that, unlike feudal arrangements, these inequalities are not the result of unjust noble privileges but the righteous, just expression of the rational public administration of the required division of labor for industrial capitalism. And essential to this apparatus of administration is the assignment of merit, of the qualifications which FIT the public properly to their proper station in the division of labor.

The problem of legitimation includes public assessment of the relationship between the traditional rhetoric where educational attainment is congruent with economic prosperity. How should the share of “output” or income from production be divided between capital and labor? This question is the essence of distributional conflict, and relative public satisfaction or anger regarding the current social/economic contract. (Piketty, 39)

How can we be sure that the market magically provides the right division? –for the growth of capital’s share increased around 1980 with Reagan/Thatcher. Conservative laborrestoration. This along with the financial globalization that followed 1989 and Soviet collapse, directly overlap the standards and privatization movement. These twin engines of privilege which work to provide reinforced justifications in a time when it is becoming harder to mask the way the output share to labor is shrinking dramatically, with poverty, homelessness, unemployment increasing dramatically while meta-national economic and financial elites reap record profits and salaries. With these changes it has been essential capitalist strategy to reinforce the architecture of both free markets, AND meritocracy in one policy stroke.

Michael Applehas written persuasively concerning the “great restoration of privilege during these times, and quotes Olssen, “In the shift from classical liberalism to neo-liberalism, then, there is a further element added, for such a shift involves a change in subject position from ‘homo economicus,’ who naturally behaves out of self-interest and in relatively detached from the state, to ‘manipulatable man,’ who is created by the state and who is continually encouraged to be ‘perpetually responsive.’ (Scott, Freeman,157.)

Stanley Aronowitz writes, even more to the point here, “Having proven unable to provide most working class kids the necessary educational experiences that qualify them for academic promotion, the standards movement, more than a decade after its installation, reveals its underlying content: it is the latest means of exclusion, the success of which depends on placing the onus for failure to achieve academic credentials on the individual rather than the system.” (Ibid, 181)

What is important here is the shift of risk, responsibility, and blame from a failing economic idea, from the system, to the citizen, the student. Justification of regimes, two new accelerators: The testing expansion shifting blame to working class kids--- the privatization revolution—with afterburners---opens the commonwealth in education to private investment and tax free profit in a pure expropriation using public taxation for unaccountable private gain.

If there was an inequality stoplight, it has changed to green.

An essential feature of the current discourse is the restoration of classical liberal faith in the righteous hidden hand of the market. Market rationality is everywhere used to justify the usurpation of public property, and is connected to the replacement of the rationality of democracy, and public deliberation with the hidden, secret dialectic of

market exchanges. New threats have emerged for elites, for as Piketty shows, it is becoming harder to justify the excesses of capital and the rapid shift since 1980 where the share of production going to capital and its “supermanagers” dwarfs the share that is going to labor. Piketty is worth quoting at length:

Our democratic societies and their relative peace rest a meritocratic worldview, or at any rate a meritocratic hope, by which I mean a belief in a society in which inequality is based more on merit and effort than on kinship and rents. This belief and this hope play a very crucial role in modern society, for a simple reason. In a democracy, the professed equality of rights of all citizens contrasts sharply with the very real inequality of living conditions, and in order to overcome this contradiction it is vital to make sure that social inequalities derive from rational and universal principles rather than arbitrary contingencies. Inequalities must therefore be just and useful to all, at least in the realm of discourse and as far as possible in reality as well. (“Social distinctions can be based only on common utility, according to article 1 of the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen.”) (Piketty,422)

MarketWorship

What is an adequate ideology critique in a late capitalist society of digitally saturated consciousness? Do we build institutions with power to win class war, or seek to influence conscience, and consciousness? Any permanent change would eliminate, unmask the liberal disguise covering authoritarian ideological supports protecting traditional/propertied elites’ advantages in the Hobbesian struggle.

This work is a small stone thrown through a little window in the great empty factory housing the mechanical tyrannies of institutional privilege protection. How to disrupt and expose the cynicism of market ethics? Know the deadly risk of embarrassing and exposing the master teacher, the Inquisitor. How do we break the spell how do we interrupt the hypnosis the magic the misdirection? What is this business of exposure?

The dilemma for any Critical Pedagogy: the urgent need for impassioned conscience, reinforcements of the relatedness and dependence of all working classes, endangered by and politically united with digital machinery.

In Magical Marxism Merrifield workstoward potential strategies for the re-freshment of a critical spirit. He presses together the books of two fabulists, to suggest that such proximity might fire the imagination in new ways toward forms of resistance borne in rejection of the usual political economics. These two books are The Society of the

Spectacle by Guy Debord and One Hundred Years of Solitude by Gabriel García Márquez. He writes:

“In what follows, I want to bring these two texts together into dialogue—a strange dialogue that will help initially map out the ontological contours of Magical Marxism.”

The unique power of Debord is the compelling evocations of a world in which unity spells division and truth spells falsity. It is, Debord says, a topsy-turvy world where everything and everybody partakes in a perverse paradox, a world in which “the true” really is “a moment of the false.”

“The spectacle is capital to such a degree of accumulation that it becomes an image” (Thesis #34.) The surrealist undertow of *The Society of the Spectacle* conjures up the realm of dream, releases unconscious yearnings and sublimates deep political desire.” (Merrifield, 26)

The Spectacle of market ethics is itself a form of consumption. Education under neo-liberal conditions has been the exponential acceleration of capitalist legitimization discourse, which is sold as a public relations commodity. There are two essential parts to this. First has been of conservative, free market propaganda supporting extensive financial, corporate, international collusion of capital which has stripped millions down to desperation. Property expropriation, financialization, and the juggernaut of capitalist collusion have been cloaked by the spectacular ideological apparatus of justification: that these new “opportunities” and globalized revenue streams are part of needed efforts to attack the “waste and abuses” of the welfare states. By unleashing the forces of the “free market” new wealth would be generated, would “trickle down” from the top, to bring new security and expand middle classes everywhere. The second subterfuge has come with the propaganda campaign to extend this market justification into the most important connection between the market and society: education.

What follows is the forced meeting on a “dissection table” not of a sewing machine and umbrella, but of two other objects. I chose these objects for the following. Plato’s The Republic, is the oldest, most revered and still riveting account of the need for mass hypnosis regarding the manipulation of power in complex societies. Thomas Piketty’s Capital in the 21st Century is the newest, spellbinding, ponderous, deliciously boring unmasking of the illusion of justice behind the neo-liberal counter revolution. Plato’s tools are metaphor, logic, and drama. Piketty’s are mostly the

economist's mathematics, data analysis, with dash of literature, his tools in the project of demystification. He offers us the opportunity to assign economic values which may expose, not so much the extent, as the motivation for the extent of elite political management relations of educational architectures. (Piketty,6) Capital in the Twenty-First Century exposes the coming trainwreck of politically unsustainable inequality. Early in the book he clarifies his title and its nod to Marx's Capital by identifying the way Marx, early on, had distinguished himself from the "Proudhonists" of his day, the social utopians who were "content to denounce the misery of the working class without proposing a truly scientific analysis of the economic processes responsible for... In fact his principal conclusion was what one might call the 'principle of infinite accumulation,' that is, the inexorable tendency for capital to accumulate and become concentrated and even fewer hands with no natural limit to the process." (Ibid,9)

Piketty's work exposes the elite need to camouflage the shifting burden of business risk from corporation and the state, to the individual. In one long sentence Piketty announces the beginning of the end of the main justification for the neo-liberal faith. For, "when the rate of return on capital significantly exceeds the growth rate of the economy. (when $r > g$) then inequality can be expected to rise to levels incompatible with meritocratic values consistent with social justice democracy." (Piketty, 25)

The Poverty of Philosophy

We may recall Proudhon's argument in The Philosophy of Poverty which received Marx's reply in his The Poverty of Philosophy. Marx was not comfortable with the contributions that "humanist" philosophers had made to a correct theory, and especially a correct politics of Socialism. Those reading this are no strangers to the extensive critical examination of the new properties of neoliberalism, the new poverties of the same. Piketty's work is a tear gas canister lobbed into the dining room at the Country Club. He has wedged his work into the discursive door which has been closing on the space where critique on the finality of the neoliberal answer to the so-called excesses of democracy, end the end of "history," lives. It is a true refreshment. There is an ongoing narrative which dominates elite representations of the necessity we all must accept: the necessity of market discipline, and inequality. That is the problem term. It is such a bland term, for taken by itself offers no moral imperative. What Piketty does is reawaken the question of justice, the question of whether justice is served, whether justice is identical with the necessity connected with progress, growth and increasing control of public goods in private hands.

He provides us with a powerful reminder that "the history of the distribution of wealth has always been deeply political, and it cannot be reduced to purely academic mechanisms." (Ibid, p. 20) What is important for this paper with respect to Capital in the 21st Century, is Piketty's injunction, where he writes:

The history of any quality is shaped by the way economic, social, and political actors view what is just and what is not, as well as by the relative power of those actors in the collective choices that result. (Ibid.)

For the neo-liberal spectacle the justice of meritocracy has been essential. Those who merit wealth have deserved it.

Helping Friends and Harming Enemies

One of the keys to the power of Piketty's argument lies in the heart of what has come to be known as the Social Contract. This term has roots in Rousseau and is the basis for social a shared social burden, where there exist social divisions of labor, living condition, real and perceived opportunity for the "good life." As a fragment of our current social contract, relative equality is an issue, certainly. It becomes a problem only when the promises imbedded in it are perceived to be just. Class collaboration, class conflict are not unexpected in the democratic arrangements beneath the capitalist imperative. The rapid accumulation of wealth among the global economic elite is not a secret. Yet deep social resentment, and threats to this arrangement have been avoided by a promise: this rising inequality is accompanied by a social benefit to the middle and working class. In Piketty's terms, gains at the top are friendly gains. They accompany what he calls a convergence. The interests and opportunities, and yes, the wealth of the lower classes are "convergent" with the interest of the elite.

Piketty has uncovered a problem. It does not work. By a simple systematic, dogged analysis of generations of tax records, he shows that at a point, a point we have now reached, this flow of wealth upward becomes, rather, "divergent." That is, the friendly social contract has become toxic, irrational, for elite interests are exposed baring the plutocratic machinery of capitalist consolidation.

For many years, I have essentially agreed with Marx on the "poverty" of philosophy, where social philosophers, content to theorize regarding the world, and its sufferings. Following his Theses on Feuerbach: regarding this world, yes, theorize, but remember that, "the point however, is to change it." (Marx, 2002)

Following this we might be cautious about using Plato as a guide toward to critical practice as we confront the question of justice. He is truly an archetypal philosopher,

the one about whom Alfred North Whitehead once famously remarked, all subsequent Western philosophy has been “a footnote.”

Generations of educators have also turned to this work for its logical as well as its metaphorical power regarding the foundations of education. With all the changes I've made over nearly thirty years teaching the one indispensable work: Plato's Republic for it offers timeless grounding standpoints on justice in education, unfolding one after another especially early in the dialogue. However, shouldn't a critical educator be wary? How might this quintessential philosopher's work help, not just illuminate, but change the world?

I agree with those who have argued that the conceits, the imaginary excursions, in The Republic form archetypal frameworks which offer indispensable illumination, despite or rather perhaps, because of their antiquity. These metaphoric standpoints are among the most powerful intellectual tools one can employ regarding the muscle and bone of social role assignment justification, particularly claims of justice as it pertains to education. These standpoints pinpoint what we might call deep structures of injustice. *Book One* opens with power everywhere, and this is no accident. In the first sentence Socrates is “going down to the Piraeus,” in Athens, the port, a seat of conversation, and commerce. The hustle of the market is where things begin. We see a group of young men who meet up with Socrates. Socrates is preoccupied and even his preoccupation is prescient. He says he had gone down to pray and also to observe how they would put on a festival. So then, what is Socrates? Is he a sociologist; is he a philosopher; is he motivated by religious belief?

Plato begins by having the young men use threat, and the unbalanced exercise of power, to get the attention Socrates. Telemachus, son of Cephalos, "order(s) his slave boy to run after us in order us to wait for him." The grand foundations of the historic seat of philosophy, which we are reminded here, rest on a chattel population, mere extensions of their masters. Next there is a strange discussion and a friendly threat to the group to use their power to stop Socrates. That this exercise of power, and not persuasion, comes so early I believe foreshadows the fundamental questions of power that condition the politics of social justice. This is what puts The Republic in a powerful vortex of congruence with Piketty, the twin questions of Justice, its nature, and social requirements for its realization.

Then the group moves to the home of Cephalos, importantly, an immigrant arms dealer originally from Syracuse, and Plato confronts us with the kinds of

preoccupations which influence all life in the polis. Socrates and Cephalos simply begin to do what humans around the world have always done-- they say hello, how are you doing? How are you doing? Yes, this fundamental question-- how do we judge how we are doing? It seems so obvious, such a commonplace; they begin to chat and Cephalos begins to talk about how he judges his life, and Socrates encourages him in this. What ensues is Cephalos describing his degree of satisfaction with how his life has been lived. Importantly he begins to discuss his inheritance, his wealth relative to his vision of his obligation to his ancestors and consequently to his heirs. By judging this degree of obligation Cephalos confesses his worry and this worry is focused on whether or not salvation will be his. Will he be saved? Will the gods' judgment be good?

His anxiety about his mortal condition is dramatized with a wink, I believe, by Plato when he has us imagine this wealthy successful man who wants for nothing, by most standards, except perhaps by his own, sitting in his home decked out in a costume fit for worship and the oldest semi-comic device we know in the theater, the otherwise dignified man--in a funny hat---(he wears a garland.) He is even paying homage to stay at this festival dedicated to what several commentators refer to as a new, and "borrowed" goddess, Bendis. The celebration for this goddess unfolds because of the political influence on expanding group of Thracian immigrants. So Plato has us to begin thinking, "a novel God, and an imported God, and yet, "better be safe than sorry thinks Cephalos." It doesn't take much to frighten this man, the suggestion being our description of the good life for ourselves begins with our own anxiety our own salvation, and only from their do we extend our concern to others. It doesn't take much to frighten us, either.

A-moral Anxiety

I linger on this passage because I believe it demonstrates once again the importance of the ideological foundations of political action and personal senses of responsibility. They move forward and Cephalos confesses that he is more or less satisfied with his life, first because like today he feels he has been able to pay his debts, and discusses the importance of meeting his obligations in life both to men and Gods. We are required to stop and consider before we go ahead the question what is our obligation - -what is our debt, what do we owe as part of a central calculus in the judgments we make about life. So Cephalos says I've been able to pay what I owe so my salvation is secure, however "I must be getting on back to the festival to stay updated, to stay

current so that I don't miss anything!" (emphasis mine) This existential anxiety is filled with a need to be included in the world of saved, the righteous.

It is important Cephalos puts his focus on his wealth as a way of justifying his life and actions. This question of property is central the argument that I pick up. The uses of property is central to Piketty as well. Then Socrates asks, to paraphrase: "so you are judging yourself by your wealth Cephalos, let me ask you what is the greatest good that you are enjoying from your wealth?" Cephalos says, "When a man comes face-to-face with the realization that he will be making an end, fear and care enter him for things to which he gave no thought to, for tales told about what is in Hades, that the one who is done unjust deeds here is paid the penalty there, at which he laughed up to the now make his soul twist and turn whether it is due to the ability of old age, or whether he discerned something more things in that place because he is nearer to, as it were, he is at any rate, now full of suspicion and terror; and he reckons up his accounts and considers whether he has done anything unjust to anyone." (Plato, 6)

For any rupture in our confidence that justice is being served is the foundation of the fear and anger that motivates change. Throughout the rest of The Republic Plato lays out a succession of dialogical standpoints which emphasize how important it is for us to believe in the justice of any social condition and this is the point what becomes important what becomes possible are the dual options that social obligations have been met truly, or that those who are affected by social conditions at minimum, believe they have. In a goal of social "stability" it is not so much that truth is necessary, as faith.

The Perception of Truth and the Arts of Obligation

And in walks Doubt. Socrates asks innocently, to paraphrase: "So that if our rule is that paying what I owe is the basis of justice still we are left with the question: am I to pay back the loan of a weapon to a man who since he gave it to me, is going around the community threatening to kill me if he could only get his hands on that weapon again." This is a problem-- whatever we think we paid in a real world --the rupture of unreason, madness, is waiting to suck the righteousness right out of the payment.

Then Socrates works to fix the problem, for he says "All right let's keep the definition of focus only on helping friends. If anything is owed to our enemies, it is harm." Helping friends and harming enemies is our new definition of justice. Yet here begin down the slippery slope of judgment where mistakes are everywhere. Have we not mistaken a friend for an enemy and vice versa? At this point in the dialogue Plato

chooses to focus on the arts of obligation in a complex society, with varied social roles.

He does this through Socrates questions which relate to the proper exercise of occupations. For example, regarding help or harm of a medical nature, say an elixir or a poison, who knows those arts best but a doctor? The next section unfolds variety of occupations express arts and here we have our first hand of education, what is the best education for those arts? Socrates begins to expand the quest for justice by expanding target out into a real not an imaginary community.

We are onto something here; we're beginning to look at justice in the city, with a foreshadowing of the problem of illusion: illusions which trick us, which allow us to believing one way about our true obligations, oblivious to the depth of our ignorance. The arguments become confusing, and when teaching this work many students report that they are lost in the detail of the ensuing logic. Feeling the frustration is important for the drama here, for then we can identify with the next action in the drama where celebrated professional teacher Thrasymachus, silent until now, has an outburst full of threat and full of warning. Socrates is on thin ice gaining and holding the attention of these young men while this celebrated moneymaker in the art of education is struggling to impress any of them in completion with Socrates' brilliance.

The Power of, well....Power

Thrasymachus "tantrum" is important for another discussion of the Republic for it is said in life he was among those who participated in the condemnation and execution of Socrates for "corrupting the youth of Athens." This is a fascinating section, but I won't dissect it except to establish once again not only the general role of power in matters of justice, but the role potentially played by power to entirely blot out the sun truth, to establish through power as Thrasymachus says that, "Justice is simply the interest of the strong." End of discussion and dialogue, and end of his embarrassment. For no need for to go further. Indeed Thrasymachus' tantrum our next standpoint echoes throughout history. It is the condition where social justice is confined for only to the reason of the powerful with no reflection on whether social conditions bring salt or balm to the wounds of society. Socrates gingerly talks himself through this crisis using flattery alongside subtleties of sarcasm which are beyond the can Thrasymachus, sharpness of whose mind has been honed on service not to truth to the uses of speech to ingratiate power.

The City of Desire

There's an extended discussion which unfolds which builds a city and which crucially starts with labor, begins with foundational agricultural life, building trades for, the various arts before making clothing for preparing food etc. Quickly occurs Socrates that this is not enough for he says what we are building here is not a city of humans; it is a City of Pigs: where all needs are simple, all needs are met, for there is no desire for anything more. Socrates wants to build a real city, for it is there we may find real not imaginary conditions in which to find justice. For they then began to build what he calls the city of desire ----for luxury. For this is the city where real men and women, have the need for more than necessities. This is a city where the desire for wealth is a key factor. It's also city a where these desires are intermingled with the arts of celebration and music, most importantly.

It is this music, including the songs which not only express the world of desire but will go on to condition to teach members of the city for him to create desires where they may not have existed before. For we are now beginning to imagine the schools, and the arts within leading to excellences in the technologies for of safety and security, protection from the elements, and an efflorescence of the imagination moving toward the purchase of luxuries. In the City of Desire where quickly led to imagine society which may desire more than that which is within the city, that may begin to imagine justifications for moving outside the city acts appropriate“foreign” goods there to satisfy their desires. This is also a society which now begins to imagine the need to protect their own necessities and luxuries against the armies of the cities of desire outside the walls. Thus we've established the workers in the artisans. And now begin to establish the guardians of the city. We also begin to imagine the education required for both to play their different roles.

The discussants begin to imagine the education for such guardians, and it is schooling in the arts certainly, including physical skills, but more importantly they focus on the curriculum which will “steel” the anxious mind for bravery in the defense of the city. The curriculum censored carefully to include only those poems songs and arts which magnify courage, avoiding those which open the mind to the fear of death. For this to curriculum for defense and it is by necessity carefully censored. Now we are asked to contemplate the details such an education. For the contemporary reader where hard-pressed to make connections with our own subdivisions labor including needs and city of desire all civilian from the standpoint we moved to the last conceit a final archetype which we can explore the ideological conditions with which we must

content stemming from our own city of desire, our own ministers of ideology would construct an apparatus where social and educational obligations can simply and only be judged from their point of view. In the next section take a look at how each of these standpoints is exceptionally important archetype critical thought regarding how far from the truth is possible to stray in the service of power alone. This is Plato's Noble Lie.

The Myth of Metals or, the Noble Lie

In this myth, Plato devises a solution to the problem of justification. The division of labor, and the way lives are affected by selection for roles, must be legitimized, for radical differentiation defies human nature. While there are inevitable differences in human capacity and outcomes, the range of natural difference is not so great to justify the deformations required in the City which requires hyper-differentiation of labor.

“Therefore, as I was just now saying, we must enquire who are the best guardians of their own conviction that what they think the interest of the State is to be the rule of their lives.” Plato devises this lie as a cautionary regarding the necessities of misdirection that any elite would need to solidify its privileges. “How then may we devise one of those needful falsehoods of which we lately spoke—just one royal lie which may deceive the rulers, if that be possible, and at any rate the rest of the city?”

This lie is ridiculous, he knows: “They are to be told that their youth was a dream, and the education and training which they received from us, an appearance only....The youth are to be told that their differences are not social constructions but born in nature. In rulers the finest metal Gold, is found. In Guardians, Silver, and in laborers and artisans, Iron or lead.

“Citizens, we shall say to them in our tale, you are brothers, yet God has framed you differently. Some of you have the power of command, and in the composition of these he has mingled gold, wherefore also they have the greatest honor; others he has made of silver, to be auxiliaries; others again who are to be husbandmen and craftsmen he has composed of brass and iron; and the species will generally be preserved in the children.”

In a brilliant turn he uses the inevitable exception to the rule: the ruler who is a dolt, the laborer who is brilliant, as a sly reinforcement of the principle of earth born, natural differentiation. These are to be explained by nature, and heredity, for out-of-class matings are in The Republic, as in life, inevitable!

“Such is the tale; is there any possibility of making our citizens believe in it?” And in another brilliant stroke, he shows how the ideology of unjust differentiation need only be taught to one generation. But, as we see the power of racism exercised in our own time, children begin as unquestioning believers of their parents. “*Not in the present generation, he replied; there is no way of accomplishing this; but their sons may be made to believe in the tale, and their sons' sons, and posterity after them.*”

From here I'd like to pick up threads from important narratives which are central to the neo-liberal counter-revolution as they are expressed in the ethics of the market, the promise of fair social mobility through meritocracy. It is this meritocratic faith which underlies the unstable social contract regarding the share of income to capital and to labor. Plato and Piketty both participate in exposing the dysfunction of this imaginary promise, Plato through metaphor, and archetype: Piketty through a close analysis of tax records.

The Metallurgy of Human Capital theory in neo-liberalism

At its core, education has become the essential factor administration of society. Marx wrote regarding the “problem” of poverty emerging in the mid-nineteenth century. He is writing during the same time that Mann is devising a public education for Massachusetts. In England, Parliament sent “commissioners” to other countries to assess how they are dealing with the politically uncomfortable optics of poverty. “In so far as States have concerned themselves at all with pauperism, they have remained at the level of *administrative charitable measures*, or have sunk below this level. Can the State act in any other way? The State will never look for the cause of *social imperfections in the State and social institutions themselves...*” Insofar as the State admits the existence of social evils it attributes them to natural laws...or to private life,...or to the *inadequacies of the administration* which is subordinate to it.” (Bottomore, 216.) He goes on to indemnify the slavery, the ultimate expropriation, upon which liberal democracies were built. Built on radical exploitation, the state depends on ideological administration of structures in education, and also manipulates public belief about its purposes. In any case, social categories of exclusion, and service to “higher” ends is essential to capitalism, as it is essential to the development of loyal “guardians” and contented workers in the Republic.

The very language of “reform” is freighted with an assortment of intertwined narratives. These involve formal or oblique references to religion, patriotism, and dual spectacles of popular and curricular “culture” to help both train and

contiguously, justify the division of labor, and certify that education is the administrative solution to social and economic problems. These work to absorb the shock of inequality. This reinforcement of the justice of oligarchic elites is ongoing. Thomas Piketty directly confronts the way that the ideology of meritocracy, the ruptured social contract, comes where the friendly oligarch has become enemy. All efforts must be expended to obscure this. The “fairness” of accelerated market forces in education are intended by social elites to coincide with the virtues of convergence where concentrations of wealth are to be seen as benefits to all.

Following Marx, if not too closely, Piketty works to expose the system for maintaining mechanisms of maximum surplus extraction from the middle and working classes. Here is not the place for each detail of Piketty’s argument, but here is an important one for critical education. For example, the acceleration of educational credential competition through standardized testing and curriculum functions to condition expectations downward, and away from the increasing divergence of working class and elite interests. This is aided by the acceptance of mass state surveillance as a new commonplace. This competitive environment has valorized the logic of the market, yet it is a market whose mechanics have operated to increase, not decrease very rapidly growing scarcity of middle and working class opportunities.

Capitalist Exceptionalism

In the U.S. during the time since the surpluses of the nineteen Fifties, and sixties ended, and as wages, jobs, and general surpluses have been expropriated, precarious, and casualized we witnessed the propaganda of “American Exceptionalism” increase. This is the myth of American egalitarianism. Coinciding with the “Washington Consensus” of the early 1980s, the growth of both concentrated wealth, concentrated power, accompanied not by starving workers, but the promise of a happy and growing middle class. Propagandist pundits in the U.S. criticized the “sclerotic” European economies while in fact Piketty shows, American social mobility is in fact lower than in Europe. The “tales” told to the population have been carefully censored. For in reality the U.S., along with Europe are increasingly inegalitarian societies. (Piketty, 284)

Piketty reminds us of the revolutionary conditions in France during the Eighteenth century. His argument: When ten percent of the population controls over fifty percent of the wealth, revolution is around the corner. Unless effective repressive regimes are established. Scanning the political horizon for such regimes is not encouraging for a

revolution. Digitalization and surveillance technologies have rapidly increased the ability of authorities to identify internal enemies. Repressive regimes have become more sophisticated at censoring or stifling the progressive uses of the digital theater of expression. Consolidated media empires work closely with oligarchs. In the U.S. it is easy for centralized, homogenized media to catastrophize, using “terrorism” as a pretext for more sophisticated forms of martial law, and radical “states of exception” where human and political rights vanish. Justice is indeed, the interest of the strong.

Apparatus of Justification

For Piketty, the “apparatus of justification” is in force to camouflage extreme inequality. For critical educators, it is enlightening if not encouraging seeing nearly every variety of neo-liberal policy as part of this apparatus. (Ibid, 264)

All the usual suspects: in higher education, a new feudalism where academic barons run their fiefs of casual academic labor, using this and the industrial/digital shop floor to rationalize pedagogy and curriculum both as “interchangeable parts” in a new more “flexible” “efficient” “delivery system,” to the higher education “customer.” A new language is emerging to sanitize the mechanization, terms like “blended” learning, are being used. New market pressures are everywhere, also justifying an Hobbesian war of all against all in the fight for high quality credentials, as the value of those has steadily decreased, with inflation, conditioned by debt. (Lazzarato, 2011)

The cynical propaganda of “entrepreneurialism” where the institution may market credentials to “new customers” on new global platforms, yet the individual scholar, can only function as entrepreneur as far as the institution may extract its own profit from the arrangement with the blessing of his or her “patron” the university. Be an entrepreneur, but we expect a cut. (Kelly, 2005)

And the new market discipline works conveniently to thin the ranks of the arts and humanities, silencing potential critical voices, extinguishing the “language of freedom” with new rewards for courses and programs that promise economic, not social returns to students. Liberal arts programs are being decimated by worship of Mammon.

The New Dogs of Cynicism and a “Higher” Education

In The Republic, Plato refers to the education of Guardians in the following way. He says that by nature men are not good loyal guards of their friends. The dog however, is best at this. They don’t need to be trained for this. It comes naturally. Interestingly, the education of loyal guards, is conditioned by the need to mask the

basic injustice of selection for the differentiation. The Myth of Metals is devised. The dog, Cygnus, the ancient root of the word cynic. Piketty outlines the tapestry of illusion where obstacles to opportunity are cynically manipulated. The promises of education must never be held up against the actual decreases in middle class economic surplus.

Thus the illusion of market rationality is pushed ahead by relentless propaganda, in the U.S. its neo-liberal form is shared easily by the politicians of the conventional Left and Right both. Obama is a relentless neo-liberal. While there are record levels of shift of wealth from labor to capital, other structural economic conditions are opaque. Policy ideologues promote these “efficiencies” and claim that the new industrialization of education, will promote more opportunity. Yet the mix of credential inflation, a shrinking percentage of middle class jobs with the promise of the surpluses required to cushion against the vicissitudes of life, health, age etc. is toxic.

Higher education, once the requirement for surplus promising employment, has become the new high school, yet without the free or greatly discounted tuition. It is a new compulsory education, but it is far from free. Access to higher education becomes a new requirement, yet this access is not under conditions of your own choosing. Falling rates of middle class income are conditioned by other realities. Land and property inflation is rampant. For the landlord class, there has been a steady traditional rate of return of 3 to 4 % for this investment. Higher education choices are thus conditioned by ever increasing share of income going to housing, yet wages are stagnant. Falling middle class surpluses are further endangered by increasing need to leverage what property one’s family may have, against tuition and living expense. The epidemic of rising student debt is creating a class of indentured. Usurious credit conditions are everywhere. Shortened and unilateral shifts in payback requirements on such loans are common. Finally, a bank friendly legal structure which makes student debtors ineligible for bankruptcy permanently relegates the student debtor as class whose very existence is leveraged against capital. (Lazzarato, 2011)

For Piketty, what is clear is that these conditions need the illusion of justification, and his work is that business of exposure which threatens to expose the propagandists who cry like The Wizard of Oz, “Pay no attention to the man behind the screen!,”.....thedemiurge which we have been falsely worshipping.

Guardians of the Gods of Money

Philosopher Giorgio Agamben has confronted power politics by using a unique set of tools. He was taken by the work of Schmitt, where the boundaries of the state are inscribed in its raw power, where justice lies in its pure power to declare the “state of exception” or who may live, who may die, when laws may be suspended, when there are existential threats to the state, all conditions where Justice is imbedded in the deep structure of Power: the Interest of the Strong. He has also developed the work of Walter Benjamin, who was another great metaphor maker, and critical fabulist, who drawing from Kafka, meditated in the darkest times how Capital, and money had become sanctified; and the Market had become the new God, for our age of Doubt.

While the critical intellectual distance between Strauss and Agamben is great, however both engaged seriously with the incommensurable violence of the Holocaust. Politicians who represent the neo-liberal impulse took energy from a Straussian clarity that politics lay in the region where justice is the interest of the strong, and permits little flexibility. Agamben returns also to a classic argument, where for Aristotle, human life can only be comprehended if we relate our natural, biologic life-Zoe, to that life which can become the good life, through politics.

Agamben contends with the legacy of Arendt, where she articulated “‘the condition of country-less refugee— a condition she herself was living – upside down in order to present it as the paradigm of a new historical consciousness’ The paradigm of the refugee not only reveals the contemporary quality of “mass statelessness resulting from them mark a decisive turn in the life of the modern nation-state”; it has the additional effect of revealing the need for “definitive emancipation from naïve notions of the citizen and a people”(Paradigm....). As he argues, the ‘figure of the refugee’ reveals the opportunity to “build our political philosophy anew.” (Agamben, 2002)

Agamben argues that we are vulnerable, who are stateless, vulnerable to being in a state of unrecognized humanity, bare life. This begins his discursus on the roots of personhood, that thus of human right, in the history of Roman imperialism, and the birth of the nation state. This is a condition where the power, on Thrasymachus' argument, and along with Hobbes locates justice purely in the Sovereign. Indeed citizenship is inscribed in both ancient Greece and Rome as a condition of citizen birth. Immigrants and slaves are meaningful only in service, not in self. Thus the boundary for humanity becomes the will of the sovereign to recognize the person as a member. This is why the paradigm of the refugee is so important, particularly as globalization inscribes new corporate and financial sovereignty to capitalist economic

“states” which have no democratic “constituency” beyond their stockholders, and the total privacy of their boardrooms. The danger here: that you may become part of the logic of Exception, excluded from political concern, at the very point, the limit horizon, where you stop serving the interests of capital. Thus in a world of totalized, globalized, radically “financialized” governmentalities, all are threatened with statelessness, held beyond law, beyond citizenship to the political irrelevance of the refugee. The radical assignment of the student to his or her “human” capital coefficient, under current education regimes, is an existential threat of this type.

Agamben refines this work by drawing on the Christian political heritage, which rests on the foundation of the old Roman Empire. He finds Aristotle’s “bare life” in a new state of exception,-- “sacred life”—and the “sacred man” --- homo sacer. Here sacred means “cursed” in an older usage. Thus the power of religious authority to further inscribe precariousness on any who are deemed outside salvation. He finds this problem deep within all the Abrahamic religious expressions, Christian, Muslim, Jewish. This is not the place to elaborate but look into his discussion of the “messianic” traditions, where the messiah delivers BOTH condemnation AND salvation. The ways salvation plays a role in current politicized religious expression, from The West Bank, to Egypt and Syria, to Religious Right in the U.S. is fascinating, and alarming. (Agamben, 1998, 2005)

Meritocracy and the (flattening) arc bending to Justice

The perfection of market rationality to justify all privilege, and to indemnify all poverty: lies in that the market, like the church I once saw, at Monte Alban in Oaxaca, Mexico, which like those across Central and South America, lies on the destroyed sacred ground of the ancient generations. It takes necessary energy and nutrition from the decay of the old order.

The logic of neo-liberal Public education reform awards an opportunity to those who would naturalize inequality and its attendant sufferings. Again, this is not new; the juggernaut of Social Darwinism in the nineteenth century produced a cottage industry for sociologists to justify the righteousness of greed. Agamben’s work, to critique this righteousness is, however novel and consistent with the effort to locate justification in foundational paradigms, ideological prototypes which are the thermodynamics of justified exploitation. His work on the classical bases of sovereignty, reinforces the inertia regarding human rights, where the arc of history

might be long, and it may bend, as Martin Luther King said, toward justice, but it bends against tremendous pressures to justify servitude.

Agamben stands out for this attention to antiquity, and to religion, as sources not for salvation but for its appearance, in service to selfish gods. Privatization is a radical reactionary solution to the “problem” of political community. It is the “enclosure” of civic rights in community—re-Feudalization. It serves the social and ideological needs of elites, for it simultaneously reinforces market ethics, and opens new markets for capital investment during a time when rates of profit are stagnant, if not as Piketty remarks, falling.

Privatization is fundamentally counter to democratic deliberation regarding the use of public space and treasure. As such, the public and the public school child are role players, and for use, whose futures are subject to sudden expropriation. Thus, Public education based on sovereignty, and thus not foundationally ethical nor moral.

Rights are suspended, as citizenship is suspended, when children are in use for others. This is where wealth, position, property, and power determine child exchange value, child (human capital) labor value, following a sovereign manipulation of value codes. Business as usual in the apparatus of the human capital narrative can be challenged: by data driven research such as that produced by Thomas Piketty.

Conclusions from the Plato’s Cave.

Counterhegemonic archetype discourse can be varied and linked. The excavation of Plato’s foundational prototypes for public control is an essential, for *The Republic*, not to mention the saga of Socrates, are essential to the Western narrative of both intellectual freedom, and ideological manipulation. Agamben’s archeology of sovereign power is essential to this business of exposure, pointing the way toward serious challenges to authoritarianism, and radical states of exception where children are tested, judged the extent to which, in the words of Andre Breton, they are “mouths moving in the service of capital.”

Political economic analysis and exploration of culturally powerful archetypes are both sites where ideologically hegemonic narratives can be disrupted, and be disrupting. Of all the great archetypes of justice and education in *The Republic* none is more archetypal than the Cave Metaphor. Plato describes the citizens of the City, like all of us, enthralled with the “appearances” of reality, which in fact are just shadows coming from the light of reality, a sun of truth, cast on a wall. We are all chained

together, living in blithe agreement because it is all we see, and our pride reinforces our ignorance.

The business of exposure in Piketty, Plato and finally with Agamben, are exemplars of effort to turn us, to lead us toward the truth. This was the task of philosophy. For us philosophy unfolds from exposure to the reality behind the growing illusions of meritocracy, and promises of a mythic Market. We are witnessing a level of challenge to neo-liberalism that is accelerating. Politics and power are being challenged where expropriations in the name of privatization, and policies supporting the market ethic, are exposing the Noble Lie of our time: the myth where a rising tide for oligarchs and plutocrats lifts all working and middle class boat--that fraying royal tapestry where the discourse of equal opportunity, fair chance is written. These exposures will be devised by explorations political, economic and mythic. This is the place where critical education will make its political difference.

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Notes

*Thanks “a million” to ZeynepAlica of Ankara University for alerting me to this essential contribution from GeorgioAgamben: <http://libcom.org/library/god-didnt-die-he-was-transformed-money-interview-giorgio-agamben-peppe-sav%C3%A0>

**Thanks to my friend and colleague Gerald Wood, who found this book-recently impossible to acquire, and loaned it to me, the indebted man.

Appendix

What I do, mostly is teach, and often wonder how what I do in critical study might translate for students. I feel the need to make a note of one student comment in a paper, after her exposure to the kind of argument present in this paper. She wrote:

“In Republic 1, Socrates shared:

‘No one is willing to govern; because no one likes to take in hand the reformation of evils which are not his concern, without remuneration.

For, in the execution of his work, and in giving his orders to another, the true artist does not regard his own interest, but always that of his

subjects; and therefore in order that rulers may be willing to rule, they must be paid in one of three modes of payment, money, or honor, or suffer a

penalty for refusing. ...Decisions are made in the name of securing a better education for the students we have chosen to serve.'

Currently, in our own state, (Arizona) there is a scramble for districts to convert public entity schools to public charter schools by June 30th, 2013. This effort is being made in an

attempt to secure, at additional \$1,000 per student, per fiscal year. While few would scoff at

the opportunity to secure additional funding for their school, one must look at the implications of such a move. I had an opportunity to sit down with the Executive Director of Finance for my school district, Deer Valley Unified. The Director shared that our district would not be converting any schools to charters, despite the significant monetary yield, and although the majority of districts in the state were doing so. When questioned with the obvious question of "why", the Director shared that our district felt it was an elitist move that would be short lived. He went on to explain that a number of other districts were converting schools to obtain funds from both pots, both public and charter- and Deer Valley wanted no part of something that they feel would later be viewed as unethical. He shared they will continue to focus on improving their schools from within."

And another: Too often lawmakers, board members, and superintendents use their clout

and position to run the field of educational practice as a business, searching for ways to turn a buck and better their resume. Educational practice would be so much better served if the strong were merely those who were strong enough to stand for the interests of those too weak, or too young, to do so.

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The effect of external environment of high schools in the workplace of secondary education faculty: A systemic approach

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Abstract

This article focuses on exploring the School External Environment and on identifying disorders that appear in the workplace of the Teaching Staff of Secondary Education, to record the impact of these problems in natural (physical) and mental balance and health of the teachers. It is based on a sample of 188 teachers, 65 men and 123 women who work in High and Senior High Schools of Karditsa (Thessaly, Greece). It focuses more on the effect of social, political, legal, economic, cultural and technological factors but also on the effect of social groups and organizations that have direct relationship with the members of the school community. The results demonstrate especially that the Educational Policy of the Ministry of Education, the funding for operational needs of schools by the jointly responsible Ministries and their income affect negatively the teachers' daily work. On the other hand, especially the role and the behaviour of the Teacher Advisors', the attitude of the local community towards the performance of students and the school unit, and the role of Associations of Secondary Education affect positively the teachers' daily work. Finally, the findings shed light on the factors that can contribute to the creation of necessary conditions which could improve the working environment of the Teaching Staff of Secondary Education.

Keywords: School Unit, Environmental Systemic Approach, Teaching Staff, Workplace, Mental and Physical Effects, Work Performance.

1. Introduction

With the word "Environment" of a school organization it is considered whatever is located outside and inside of the "systemic" limits of its body and is divided into *External* and *Internal*, and in addition the first (the External one) is divided into *General* and *Special*. According to the literature of Bennet (1974), Riga (1992) and Zavlanos (1998) the General Environment is about general environmental factors that exert a decisive influence on educational organizations. And then it is the Special Environment which includes social groups and organizations that have a direct relationship with the members of the school community (cited in Saitis, 2008a:32-39). The examination of these factors under the view of their impact on teachers is significant and therefore necessary. At researches satisfaction and motivation of teachers appear to be based on the assumption that job factors which satisfy teachers and job factors which dissatisfy teachers are arranged on a conceptual continuum. Further, the satisfaction factors identified for teachers tend to focus on the work itself and the dissatisfaction factors tend to focus on the conditions of work (Sergiovanni, 1967).

Regarding Social Factors, let us note that the values, the principles, the rules, the beliefs and the habits of each society determine attitudes and behaviours. Undoubtedly, the Social Factors are those which fix how teachers also face the educational process, the knowledge that is expected to pass to the students and at the same time the students' expectations (Berry et al., 2008; Orfanos et al., 2006). Social support has a positive effect on the general health situation of teachers, while conversely, the absence or rupture of it causes feelings of anxiety or fear to the teachers (Troman, 2000).

Subsequently, there are also Political Factors related to the school environment. The educational system operates as a part of the national political system. The responsibility for increasing the quality and effectiveness of schools is mainly dependent on the Government, those who plan the current educational policy and on those who are involved in the implementation and realization of goals (Caillods and Lewin, 2001; Orfanos et al., 2006). Whatever is the methodology or the political orientation, the researchers of the education must have documented policies that are needed to create schools that students and teachers deserve (Slavin, 2002). Otherwise,

as reality has proven in the past, the uncertainty and the stress are inevitable for teachers and students.

In relation to the Legal Factors, the Educational Legislation that exists supports the functioning of Education. The legislative changes, which are made at times, aim at improving the educational process. The Fullan (2007:138) argues that the rules that bring institutional changes are necessary for teachers, who as the time passes, begin to feel boredom or alienation and burnout. The Legislature should make provision so as educational reforms to provide teachers with opportunities to develop themselves professionally. Emphasizes that interventions in the educational process should be aimed so that teaching becomes at least interesting, if not exciting for teachers and exciting for students.

The Economic Factors have a very important role in school. Initially, we note that the quality of education depends on the amount of appropriations for the Education (Brooks and Saiti, 2003; Caillods and Lewin, 2001). For example, the reduction in the costs of a school (mainly it is related to the salaries of the Teaching Staff and their working relationship, e.g. permanent teachers or deputies or teachers who work with the hour) is a factor that affects the life and the way of living of the teachers and increases their effectiveness. Also, it should be noted that the size of the financial resources that are available for schools in order to buy the Hardware and the Software of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), is a factor that affects the teachers and their teaching (Berry et al., 2008; Mumtaz, 2000; Orfanos et al., 2006).

Moreover, a key factor in the development and progress of a country is the cultural infrastructure. The education brings teachers and students in touch with the culture. Alongside the cultural climate and receives the influence of the teachers. Modern sociological approaches to the education of the future, talk about an "open school" with orientation to the society. The way of achieving it, is mainly through the interaction of the school culture and the cultural activities of the wider society to which it belongs. The learning through innovative educational programs and the method of assigning learning projects bring a positive cooperative climate in the classroom and also positive emotions for teachers and students (Amabile et al., 2004; Bakker et al., 2007).

Finally, in the modern era of proliferation of the Internet and of the use of Social Media it should be noted that in the school curriculum, but also in extracurricular activities a new literacy about the Media must be promoted, namely the promotion by

teachers of a series of cultural competencies and social skills that young people need in the new Media landscape. Above the traditional literacy that teacher is called to build research skills, technical skills, and critical analysis skills so useful in the classroom, that drives them to face new situations and diverse feelings (Jenkins et al., 2009).

According to Zhao and Frank (2003: 809) Technology itself has also been named as the source of a set of factors that affect its uses by teachers. First, there are conflicting ideas about the value of technology and hence conflicting advice to teachers about how technology should be used in schools. This leads teachers to a state of confusion about the educational values of technology. Second, the constant changing nature of technology makes it difficult for teachers to stay current with the latest technology. Everyday new software and hardware becomes available. Teachers, who are already struggling for time and energy, find it difficult and discouraging to keep chasing this elusive beast. Third, the inherent nature of unreliability makes technology less appealing for most teachers. Technology is inherently unreliable and can break down at any time but teachers, who have only a limited amount of time in front of students, cannot spend the time troubleshooting problems they may or may not be able to solve. Thus unless there is a strong need for the use of technology and reliable support, teachers may opt not to use it in their teaching. But, when, in fact, the teacher is supported in the use of ICT in the classroom by instructors, then the pressure that he feels is reduced and there is enthusiasm for learning with computers (Mumtaz, 2000). In the first Article of Law 1304/1982 it was introduced the new institution of the Teacher Advisor, who has the sole task of scientific and pedagogical guidance of teachers, and highlights the inclusiveness, communication and exchange of ideas and information that are necessary for the educational process with positive effects on those involved. The developments in education require the guidance and support of teachers by trained Teacher Advisors, so as to have much support in teaching and more support in their daily work, and to feel able to manage their classroom and their subject, to be effective and to experience positive emotions in the workplace (Panagopoulos, 2012).

Regarding the Parents' Association it must be noted that it is an instrument of popular participation in the administration of the school unit (Saitis, 2008b: 10). It has been shown that the Associations of Parents, in many schools here they exist, affect the school community to varying degrees. The degree of impact depends on the school

community. In small schools it has been shown that the involvement of parents is higher (Cotton, 1996) and this interference affects the operation of the school unit, creates a good atmosphere and positive impact on its human resources.

Also the role and work of the Federation of Secondary Education (OLME) and Local Associations of Secondary Education (ELME) is important. The OLME as bipolar organization, professional and scientific, has included in its mission to inform its members on issues of scientific content, to express opinions in the field of education policy, to serve the professional interests of teachers and all working men at Public Services, with a leading position in demands of teachers, mainly those that are related to salary and evolution of teachers. Therefore, the OLME supports the Teaching Staff so that they are informed and satisfied with the reality of their work (Pyrpyris, 2010:50).

In addition, in any public school of Primary and Secondary Education exists a municipal entity under the name "School Committee" and it is the organ that connects the Local Government with the school unit on economic matters. The School Committee is responsible for administering the funds for the repairing works of the school building, the operating costs, the address the problems (such as poor lighting, lack of cleanliness, etc) that make the smooth operation difficult, and finding other resources to meet the needs of school units (Saitis, 2008b:19). The "School Committee" is that which contributes to the smooth running of a school unit and the provision of good working conditions for teachers, so that there are not disorders in their workplace (Schneider, 2002).

Finally, let us emphasize that at Senior High School it has been created a situation where the students' success in the entrance exams to Higher Education is an end in itself for them and affects the whole educational process, whether it relates to the attitudes and behavior of teachers or to the attitudes and behavior of students (Pagoulatou, 2010). Indeed, the reforms that have led to a new Senior High School in September 2013, have contributed to the transformation of Senior High School in each grade at the end of each school year in a center of exams that are associated with the entrance to Higher Education more than the past, creating a new reality which teachers and students have to accept and adapt to while various emotions affect the way that they think and operate.

It is important to examine personal, moral, cultural, and political dimensions of teaching in the context of rapid and far-reaching change within teachers' work and in

the world beyond it. There are powerful forces for change in society and those forces are exerting pressure on existing institutions. Issues such as the growing decentralization of systems and the emphasis on self-definition and self-actualization are examined, as are their effects on schools and teaching. Undoubtedly, social, political and economic conditions influence on teachers' work. Teaching must be restructured. This process has many components: curriculum and instruction redesigned to promote higher-order thinking skills, the decentralization of authority and decision-making to site level, more diverse and differentiated roles for teachers and broadened systems of accountability (Hargreaves, 1994).

The Environment of the Greek School Units, especially that of Secondary Education, has been changed radically in recent decades and in fact unfortunately, apart from few exceptions, for the worse. For example, the unstable Educational System in which each Government or even any new leadership of the Ministry of Education introduce untested and evaluated systems, the depreciation of administrative hierarchy and performance tests and leveling of students' performance incentives, have created a very difficult working environment for educational offer. The city of Karditsa is perhaps the most indicative region of Greek territory for a systematic study and record of the effect from the newly formed operating conditions of school units and therefore of the effect of external school factors, as it tries to "balance" between the "creative" past (schools in this region still maintain the reputation of the units with the most successful performance of their students) and the "flattening" present and even more "bleak" future.

2. Theoretical Approach

The following apposition of literatures presents the disorders on mental and natural (physical) balance and health of Teaching Staff (mental and psychosomatic disorders) associated with factors in the external school environment (Wakefield, 1992). Regarding the first ones they are under investigation, especially in the last decade, the anxiety, the depression, the mental alienation, the in-school violence and the syndrome of burnout (Bauer et al., 2007; Chatzichristou, 2004; Pappa, 2006). While, regarding the latter, they are under investigation the natural elements of the working environment, such as the design and the conditions of classrooms, the proper lighting, the heating and cooling conditions, the hygiene conditions, the natural (physical) intensity of teachers' work, the security of the school premises, etc. (Shalley et al., 2004).

2.1. Mental Disorders

In the Sciences of Psychology and Sociology, the term alienation is used to declare the alienation of man to society, nature, other people or himself. In the case of teachers alienation was defined as persistent negative feelings that some teachers may experience during the course of their work. These feelings may be expressed as powerlessness (which relates to individuals who feel a lack of control over general or specific personal situations), meaninglessness (which relates to feelings of a lack of personal meaning when in a specific situation), or isolation (referring to feelings of withdrawal and isolation from, or rejection by, peers or peer groups, or a general sense of feeling 'alone' either socially or emotionally), and may in fact be expressed in combinations of these constructs (Carlson, 1995: 467; Lunay and Lock, 2006).

Also findings have been shown conclusively, that feelings of alienation exist among teachers. By far the most common manifestation of negative feelings was a sense of isolation. Strong positive links between these feelings and exposure to a range of (mostly) previously identified major systemic problems within the broader educational system have also been shown. Relationship problems with the wider educational bureaucracy and problems accessing time allocated for lesson planning, locating resources and other related non-teaching duties seems to be causes of alienation exist among teachers (Lunay and Lock, 2006).

Regarding the mental alienation of teachers it has been argued that it is related to the job satisfaction, the degree of students' learning and the feeling of exhaustion. The strength of teachers is reduced because of the negative impact of working conditions that lead to alienation. A teacher who feels the environment in which he works hostile and he feels like a stranger in it, is a teacher who wants his removal from the classroom. The unhappy teacher seeks for other jobs. And this desire and the trend of teachers for leaving the teaching process is a major issue for the school performance. It has been found that one wound for the smooth running of schools is not the retirement or the lack of Teaching Staff, but the inability of staffing schools with qualified and satisfied teachers who are interested in the performance of their duties and feel moral satisfaction (Ingersoll, 2001).

Also for teachers a major cause of alienation is their removal from the design of curricula. The curriculum is not designed by teachers, but it is bounded by them. The offer of teachers, when they teach, is confined to the curriculum and graduation tests. The teaching has been downgraded to bureaucratic services. The compliance with

guidelines and curricula has as a result the alienation of teachers from their job and their students, because the school programs seem to be the perpetrators of teaching and learning (Shannon, 2000). It has been found that: (1) female teachers experience more stress, (2) younger teachers are at greater risk of alienation, (3) a relationship between stress and alienation is lacking, and (4) male and female teachers experience comparable levels of alienation (Calabrese and Anderson, 1986).

The stress that is endemic in our society today affects teachers both in and out of the classroom (Truch, 1980). During teaching the stress is a common feature. Researchers have tried to recognize stress factors and to assist students and mostly the new teachers with effective coping mechanisms. Twenty-five to fifty percent of beginning teachers resign during their first three years of teaching (Fleener, 2001). Among all the causes, stress from teaching is one of the salient factors that has been investigated by many educators. The deal with stressors is vital in teacher retention (Rieg et al., 2007)

The main factors causing stress to the teachers are the poor time management, as they try to ensure a balance between the duties of teachers and the time for break and preparation, the workload of the teaching responsibilities and other ones, occupational difficulties (such as the professional development, the salary, the recognition), the lack of discipline and of motivation in the classroom and the lack of opportunities for improvement of intellectual abilities (Olivier and Venter, 2003; Van Dick and Wagner, 2001). Moreover, it must be emphasized that what happens in the classroom is related to both the satisfaction and the stress of teachers (Brouwers and Tomic, 2000; Smilansky, 2011). A research has shown that the number of students in the classroom and the aggressive behavior of students could increase stress levels of teachers (Bauer et al., 2006). With regard to the feelings of teachers from their teaching it has been argued that the unsatisfactory relationships with adults, such as colleagues or the Director of the school unit (Supovitz and Turner, 2000) or parents (Troman, 2000) seem to be one source of stress in teaching.

Also, several elements of school social organization were strongly related to average teacher efficacy and satisfaction, and teachers were more efficacious when they had greater control in their own classroom practices. Although there are consistent suggestions from teachers' unions that smaller classes and higher pay will attract and retain good teachers, results suggest that fostering cooperative environments and allowing teachers reasonable autonomy are more likely to foster teacher efficacy and

satisfaction (Lee et al., 1991). The failings of current teacher education indicate that teachers enter the field poorly prepared to cope with the problems they will face (Truch, 1980). School teaching is regarded as a stressful occupation, but the perception of the job as stressful may be influenced by coping responses and social support. It has been found that high job stress was associated with low social support at work and greater use of coping by disengagement and suppression of competing activities. It is suggested that behavioural disengagement and suppression of competing activities are maladaptive responses in a teaching environment and may actually contribute to job stress. Coping and social support not only moderate the impact of stressors on well-being but influence the appraisal of environmental demands as stressful (Griffith et al., 1999).

Moreover, the teacher, having a job with a high level of emotional activity-work (Loonstra et al., 2009; Näring, 2006) and when he experiences beyond stress, physical and mental exhaustion, he suffers from burnout syndrome. Burnout usually is conceptualized as a work-related syndrome stemming from the individual's perception of a significant gap between expectations of successful professional performance and an observed, far less satisfying reality. Burnout commonly is conceptualized as a three-dimensional phenomenon consisting of exhaustion, depersonalization, and unaccomplishment. Exhaustion has been identified as the most salient reaction to the stress of job demands and sense of unaccomplishment at work. When people feel cynical, they assume a cold, distant, depersonalized attitude toward their work and the people they encounter through work. They tend to minimize their involvement at work, and even relinquish their ideals. Feelings of ineffectiveness or unaccomplishment are accompanied by a growing sense of inadequacy. The world seems to conspire against efforts to make progress. They lose confidence in their ability to make a difference professionally (Friedman, 2000: 595; Maslach, 1993).

Friedman (1996) suggested that burnout progression consists of two distinct tracks leading from the emergence of stressors to the reactions to stress-induced experiences. The tracks are: (a) a cognitive pathway, involving a sense of personal and professional unaccomplishment, and (b) an emotional pathway that evolves into an initial sense of overload, followed by a sense of emotional exhaustion. The tracks may intersect, allowing other merging paths to be identified. Another line of investigation explores the interplay between personality and environment, such as the social exchange perspective of effort and reward (Bauer et al., 2007; Van Horn et al., 1999), and self-

efficacy in eliciting social support (Brouwers et al., 2001). Intervention programmes focusing on personality factors are likely to be more effective than those focusing on environmental conditions because they appear to be more easily altered than organizational factors (Tomic et al., 2004).

The teacher who suffers from the syndrome of burnout presents a number of symptoms, such as increased commitment to his goals followed by his resource depletion, a reduced commitment to his students and he becomes demanding towards others, like decline, resignation and psychosomatic reactions, and also loss of hope for changing the status quo. The Bauer et al. (2006) have studied and attempted to determine the degree of hostility, of anxiety, of depression, of severity, of susceptibility, of phobias, of anxiety, of compulsive disorders and of body disorders, as symptoms of the syndrome of burnout in teachers. Particularly, the psychosomatic disorders (headaches, hypertension, gastrointestinal disorders and other somatic complaints, the increased consumption of alcohol, tobacco and psychotropic drugs), are symptoms associated with so-called burnout, that is proved to be the main cause of rise rates of teachers' early retirement.

A research examined the relative importance of predictors of burnout over time. It has been found that predictors of burnout depend primarily on social roles including the occupational role which is often confounded with gender. Also, teachers had higher levels of burnout than school administrators with the exception of the personal accomplishment component. Overall, the strongest predictors of burnout were red tape (for administrators) and disruptive students (for teachers). Results indicate more teachers are female than male and more administrators are male than female. Therefore, female are more prone to disruptive students and male are more prone to red tape predictors of burnout (Burke et al., 1996).

Moreover, it has been argued that depression is the most common result of teachers' stress (Chapain, 2008), who do not find meaning and value in their everyday lives. Anxiety may lead to signs or symptoms of depression, because of several stressful events at work, of working hours, of the level of responsibility at work, of the control's degree of personal work, of the teachers' personality of the lack of support from the social environment (Kokkinos, 2007; Tennant, 2001). Furthermore, the new teachers may experience depression because of the job requirements or because of the incomplete and poor support at work (Parkes, 1990; Tennant, 2001).

It has been found that many children had more (or less) conflict than predicted based on teacher-rated problem behaviour. Older children were more likely to have conflictual relationships with teachers than expected based on their level of problem behaviour. Furthermore, teachers who reported more depression and lower self-efficacy and teachers who were observed to provide less emotional support in the classroom tended to report more conflict with students in their classroom than expected based on levels of problem behaviours (Hamre et al, 2008).

Finally, we have to admit that schools are becoming the focus of violence that affects students and teachers at all academic levels. Many research findings about violence involving students against students can be found at the literature, but a few studies have examined the frequency and the causes of violence involving students against teachers. Consequently, precursors and consequences of violence experienced by teachers are less well documented. Whereas teachers can be perpetrators, they also can be victims of school violence (Steffgen and Ewen, 2007). As with crimes against students, most crimes against teachers involve theft. Teachers in urban schools are more vulnerable to crime at school than are those in suburban schools and teachers in urban schools were more likely to be the victims of violent crimes than were teachers in suburban or rural schools (Small and Tetrick, 2001).

Teachers are victims of theft, minor and serious assaults, subtle and overt threats, and property destruction. Fear and heightened levels of stress that teachers feel lead to burnout and less effective work (Elliott et al., 1998). The teachers who worry about their safety are more likely to leave the teaching profession (Daniels et al., 2007; Galant et al., 2007). Another research has shown firstly that the speaking violence from students to teacher and the students' inappropriate behavior could cause emotional disorders and are strong predictors of anxiety (Hastings and Bham, 2003). Secondly, the support of the Principal and of the school unit's colleagues for the difficulties that are faced by the teacher enhances the acceptance by students. Third, when the teacher receives support in his workplace he is more effective. Fourthly, the school violence affects the emotional world of teachers, who experience anxiety and depression symptoms. Fifthly, the school violence affects educational performance (Galand et al., 2007). We have to admit that only a few studies investigate the role of strain and school culture for the prediction of victimization of teachers. The victimization of teachers could be predicted by class oriented strain, time pressure and quality of school environment. The quality of school

environment, in particular, can reduce the victimization of teachers at school (Steffgen and Ewen, 2007).

Also a big problem for teachers and students is the classroom disruption. Schools continue to experience minor crimes and disorder. Student disruption that interferes with teaching remains a significant problem in many classrooms. As other situations improve (e.g., carrying weapons and physical fighting), student behavior that leads to classroom disruption remains at unacceptably high levels. Student misbehavior has, at one point or another, interrupted teaching in classrooms (Small and Tetrick, 2001).

School violence refers to any violent crime against one or more people that is perpetrated at school or a school-related function. This violence can be lethal (e.g., a school shooting), injurious (e.g., a stabbing), or potentially lethal (e.g., a hostage or barricade situation). Researchers tried to find out the effects of that school violence on victims. After an act of school violence, victims are likely to experience a number of reactions to stress and trauma. Following a psychological trauma, victims experience both immediate and long-term consequences. Immediate reactions include physical, behavioural, emotional, and cognitive responses. Physical responses may include faintness or dizziness, hot or cold bodily sensations, tightness in the throat, stomach, or chest, and nausea or gastrointestinal distress, to name just a few. Behavioral reactions may include sleep disturbance, hypervigilance, interpersonal conflicts, avoidance of reminders of the trauma, inability to express feelings, withdrawal, and increased substance abuse. A few common emotional responses to trauma include shock, anxiety or fear, psychological numbness, grief, and feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, and vulnerability. Finally, frequent cognitive reactions to trauma may include confusion or disorientation, poor concentration, complete or partial amnesia, flashbacks, self-criticisms, preoccupation with protecting loved ones, and questioning of spiritual beliefs (Daniels et al., 2007: 563).

Finally, it is necessary to exist a safe environment for teachers and students. A safe environment that affects teachers' performance. There are strategies for humanizing school environments, encouraging a sense of community and collective responsibility. These strategies include, for example, improving the aesthetic character of schools by including art in the design of schools or by making space available within schools for students to create gardens or encouraging adults who live within the community to volunteer or otherwise assist with a variety of school activities (Noguera, 1995).

2.2. Causes of Natural (Physical) or Psychosomatic Disorders

Most research on schooling, it is not, however, primarily considered with education itself, nor even with the teachers' role in the learning process. Teachers are workers and schools are workplaces. Teachers are mentors, instructors, surrogate parents and also employees in organizations. Life in classrooms is not a closed kingdom where teachers have authority over what gets taught and how. Rather, control of a classroom is nested within the decision-making powers of a principal, the school district, and the state, so that ultimately teachers are free largely to perfect their pedagogical technique- a freedom that is itself being limited by new national policies (Ingersoll, 2003). The working conditions of teachers were studied in the past. Five categories of stressors were identified in the work environments: governance/leadership, budget cuts, security, staff relations and student issues. They are basic issues (Ginsberg et al., 1987).

Regarding the natural and physical intensity of teachers' work the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in its publication «*Education at a Glance*» (2012) includes comparative data that allow a good evaluation of natural and physical intensity of work of teachers. Greek teachers teach far fewer hours per year than their colleagues internationally, in classes with fewer students, in schools with less administrative burden, without any evaluation, about them or about schools, in schools that run by the most centralized system internationally, that is the main cause of its problem.

Teaching is a high-risk occupation for voice disorders and this health problem may have significant work-related and economic effects. A study compared the frequency and effects of voice symptoms in teachers to a group of individuals employed in other occupations. Teachers were more likely to report having a voice problem and physical discomfort. Also, teachers were more likely to perceive that a voice problem would adversely affect their future career options, had done so in the past, and was limiting their current job performance. Over 20% of teachers had missed any days of work due to a voice problem (Smith et al., 1997). A teacher's voice is compromised, and requires more attention including control of environmental factors and associated diseases, preventive vocal hygiene, periodic laryngeal examinations, and access to adequate specialist treatment (Tavares and Martins, 2007).

The studies have shown that noise is the main factor of annoyance in the school environment. Over 50% of questioned teachers consider noise as annoying and near 40% as very annoying or unbearable. The most frequently reported subjective feelings

and complaints (over 90%) are: growth of psychical and emotional tension, irritation, difficulties in concentrating, hoarseness and cough. Noise in schools is also a harmful factor. High background noise levels (55-65 dB) force teachers to raise their voice. It can lead to the development of an occupational disease-chronic voice disorders due to excessive vocal effort lasting for at least 15 years. Poor acoustics in classrooms (reverberation time ranging from 0.8 to 1.7 s, STI < 0.6 in 50% of classrooms) have an adverse influence on speech reception and make the teaching and learning processes difficult (Augustyńska et al., 2010).

Moreover, the hygiene and safety conditions at school have a catalytic influence on the school climate and on the education (Horne-Martin, 2005; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2007; Schneider, 2003). *It has been argued that teachers' working conditions affect them more than their economic earnings* (Berry et al., 2008). Researches on teachers showed that their job satisfaction is related to the basic characteristics and conditions in the workplace (Shield and Dockrell, 2004). The lack of Technological Equipment and Supplies affect negatively the Teaching Staff, but also their willingness to stay in the profession. The quality of the facilities of the school unit is a prognostic factor in the teachers' decision to leave their current position (Buckley et al., 2005). It also should be noted that the decoration and the lighting that exist in a classroom cause discomfort and affect teachers' and students' performance. Research has shown that the light bulbs with flickering light in classrooms can cause headaches and impair visual performance (Winterbottom and Wilkins, 2009). Therefore, it is important the training of students be done in an environment as pleasant and friendly as possible (Schneider, 2002).

Schools with poor water, sanitation and hygiene conditions, and intense levels of person-to-person contact, are high-risk environments for children and staff, and exacerbate children's particular susceptibility to environmental health hazards. Schoolchildren are heavily influenced by the example set by school staff - their teachers in particular - who should provide positive role models by consistently demonstrating appropriate hygiene behaviours. A healthy school environment and appropriate use of water supply, sanitation and hygiene facilities should be promoted systematically through the application of clear regulations and the participation of staff, school children and parents in planning and managing facilities and the school environment (Adams et al., 2009). If successful school restructuring is to occur, school conditions must be addressed first (Taylor et al., 1993).

2.3. Research Model and Research Hypotheses

Since, as it was mentioned above, that the aim of this research is to determine the effect of external school factors on the working environment of the Teaching Staff (here in particular at the city of Karditsa), it is attempted to be gathered primary data through a structured Questionnaire, to give answers to a number of research questions-hypotheses such as what are now the dominant factors of external school environment that affect the teachers' workplace, how they affect them and therefore what are the consequences of these effects on the mental and natural (physical) balance, and to determine what needs to be addressed or even improved at the school environment and, consequently, in all schools of the country.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. The Sample of Research

The population of research is Secondary Teachers, who perform administrative and teaching duties in Karditsa. In the schools of this city their power according to elements of school units on September 2013 for High schools was 204 teachers and for Senior High Schools and Technical Schools was 248 teachers. Totally, 452 teachers work in the aforementioned schools. Based on the demographics of the research the sample is consisted of 188 teachers of Secondary Education, 65 men (34.6%) and 123 women (65.4%). Of these only 2.1% of the sample (4 people) have age less than 37 years, 72 people (38.3%) have age from 38 to 46 years, 85 people (45.2%) have age from 47 to 55 years and 27 people (14.4%) have age over 56 years. The analysis also shows that in the above sample only 6.4%, 12 people have M.Sc. in addition to the first degree that is from Higher Education. The presentation of respondents' working years is also helpful. It shows that 14.4% have experience less than 10 years, 39.4% have experience of 11-18 years, 26.6% have experience of 19-26 years and 19.7% have more than twenty seven-year experience. Additionally, it must be noted that of the total sample a rate of 6.4%, 12 people, have positions of responsibility and they are members of the school units' Directorate.

3.2. The Questionnaire: Structure, Reliability and Process of Analysis

The Questionnaire that was constructed includes closed-type questions and specifically questions of an assessment scale (it has been used the five points scale of Likert) and dichotomous questions (for simple and multiple choice). The Questionnaire is structured in two parts. The first includes and searches demographic and other information from respondents, such as the gender, the age, the years of

working experience, the level of education, the specialization, the type of duty (educational or administrative), the category of schools that they work, the family situation. The second includes questions to investigate the influence of factors from external school environment on teachers' workplace.

After the collection of the Questionnaires, the questions were codified and then the answers were analyzed with the statistical program **SPSS 17** (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). Specifically, when analyzing the results they were mainly used the Mean, the Standard Deviation, the Frequencies, the Correlations, as well as the Reliability Coefficient (Cronbach's α) for measuring the reliability of the survey sample. For items on the Second Unit of Questionnaire the reliability index α is high, **0.84** (must $\alpha \geq 0.700$), which indicates that the Questionnaire module has good reliability (Bishop et al., 2007; Hair et al., 2010).

3.3. Statistical Analysis of Questionnaire

The **Table** below (**Table 1**) shows the Mean and the Standard Deviations of questions relating to the extent of the influence of external school factors on teaching duties. Furthermore, observing the results of the Frequency of responses about specific questions in the Questionnaire, it is possible to come on conclusions about the effect of the internal environment on Teaching Staff.

Table 1: The Mean and the Standard Deviations of Questions

Factors of External Environment	Mean	Standard Deviations
Q.1.1.b. Attitude of the local community towards the school unit	2.39	1.17
Q.1.2.b. Attitude of the localcommunity towards the Teaching Staff	2.95	1.24
Q.1.3.b. Attitude of the local community towards the school performance	3.06	1.22
Q.1.4.b. The role and behaviour of Teacher Advisor	3.11	1.23
Q.1.5.b. The connecting of Senior High School with the introduction to the Higher Education	3.62	1.33

Q.1.6.b. View of the Society on the role of Private Tutorials	2.64	1.38
Q.1.7.b. Involvement of Local Government and politicians	2.38	1.23
Q.1.8.b. The role of OLME	1.92	1.04
Q.1.9.b. The role of ELMEK	2.11	1.16
Q.1.10.b. Ministry's Educational Policy	3.72	1.30
Q.1.11.b. The Finance of the operating school needs	3.67	1.28
Q.1.12.b. Salaries of teachers	3.33	1.45
Q.1.13.b. Policy of performance incentives by the Ministry of Education	2.57	1.23
Q.1.14.b. Behaviour of the Association of Parents and Guardians	2.84	1.22

Below, the **Table 2** shows various opinions of teachers of specific factors in the External environment.

Table 2: Teachers' opinion of Factors of External School Environment

Factors of External Environment	Teachers' Opinion%		
	Positive	Neutral	Negative
Q.1.1.b. Attitude of the local community towards the school unit	48.4	42.6	9
Q.1.2.b. Attitude of the local community towards the Teaching Staff	43.6	49.5	6.9
Q.1.3.b. Attitude of the local community towards the school performance	54.8	38.8	6.4
Q.1.4.b. The role and behaviour of Teacher Advisor	59	35.1	5.9
Q.1.5.b. The connecting of Senior High School with the introduction to the Higher Education	13.8	14.4	71.8

Q.1.6.b. View of the Society on the role of Private Tutorials	4.3	12.2	83.5
Q.1.7.b. Involvement of Local Government and politicians	10.6	32.5	56.9
Q.1.8.b. The role of OLME	9.6	39.4	51
Q.1.9.b. The role of ELMEK	24.5	52.1	23.4
Q.1.10.b. Ministry's Educational Policy	1.1	5.3	93.6
Q.1.11.b. The Finance of the operating school needs	3.7	3.7	92.6
Q.1.12.b. Salaries of teachers	-	3.7	96.3
Q.1.13.b. Policy of performance incentives by the Ministry of Education	16	49.4	34.6
Q.1.14.b. Behaviour of the Association of Parents and Guardians	33	59.6	7.4

Using the method of Correlation it is examined the impact that the above-mentioned aspects of the Teaching Staff has on their daily performance (**Table 3**).

Table 3: Correlations of Factors from the School External Environment

Factors of External Environment	Result
Q.1.1.b. Attitude of the local community towards the school unit	0.33
Q.1.2.b. Attitude of the localcommunity towards the Teaching Staff	0.31
Q.1.3.b. Attitude of the local community towards the school performance	0.45
Q.1.4.b. The role and behaviour of Teacher Advisor	0.55
Q.1.5.b. The connecting of Senior High School with the introduction to the Higher Education	0.03
Q.1.6.b. View of the Society on the role of Private Tutorials	0.09
Q.1.7.b. Involvement of Local Government and politicians	0.40

Q.1.8.b. The role of OLME	0.26
Q.1.9.b. The role of ELMEK	0.45
Q.1.10.b. Ministry's Educational Policy	-0.23
Q.1.11.b. The Finance of the operating school needs	-0.19
Q.1.12.b. Salaries of teachers	-0.16
Q.1.13.b. Policy of performance incentives by the Ministry of Education	0.01
Q.1.14.b. Behaviour of the Association of Parents and Guardians	0.32

4. Discussion and Conclusions

Totally, they have been collected primary data about 14 factors in the external school environment. It appears that the majority of them, namely 11, influences positively the Teaching Staff of Secondary Education atKarditsa and therefore the more positive the view on these factors is, the more positively they affect teachers' work. Three factors affect teachers' work negatively, so the more negative the view, held by the Teaching Staff, on them is, the more negatively teacher's work is affected.

On the basis of both the results of the conducted research and of elements from Greek and Foreign Literature it has been proved that the External Environment of the school unit plays a preponderant role. Particularly it is noticeable the economic,political, legal and social sector. The economic and educational policy followed worsens the position and work of the Teaching Staff of Secondary Education inKarditsa and affect negatively the attitude and their feelings. Initially, it seems to be necessary the better allocation of financial resources so that teachers feel satisfied with the financial rewards and the schools meet their needs and operate smoothly. The recent cut in the salaries of teachers has affected them negatively. At the same time, the educational policy followed has been treated in a negative way due to the recent change in the educational landscape at many levels and exacerbates the teachers' teaching. Recent educational reforms for the New School, the changes in the curricula are considered by teachers to be in the wrong direction. Although the changes aim at a betterment,

their sloppiness, when they are continuous and non planned, brings about the opposite of improving the educational process.

It should be noted that teachers are definitely civil servants, the State intervenes and determines the content of their profession, at their workplace the context is bureaucratic, which is the cause for mental disorders. In addition, it is found in relation to the external environment that the more society supports teachers the more positive they feel at their work. Towards this direction it also helps the institution of the Teacher Advisor, the Parents' Associations, Local Authorities and they follow their Trade Union Bodies, factors presented in the Literature.

5. Limitations and Directions for Further Research

A series of recommendations based on the findings of the current study are presented below. From the data collected and the research in Greek and Foreign Literature it was found that a further investigation is needed on the impact of the Teacher Advisor, regarding the role and work, on teachers of Secondary Education. In addition, the influence of social factors such as society's attitudes regarding the school, teachers and students performance can be the field of research regarding the severity of teachers' of Secondary Education in the daily work.

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Social resistance in the 21st century: Results and prospects

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Abstract

In this paper I will give a historical account of social resistance movements that emerged in the first decade of the 21st century. This historical account distinguishes two important periods: i) the period of the “antiglobalization” mobilizations (1997-2008) and ii) the period of “antiausterity” mobilizations (2009 to the present).

Throughout the paper I am arguing that the challenge for anticapitalist currents in the social movements will be to be present in the heart of mobilizations as they unfold, to be able to propose to these movements a social and political programme, and new forms of organization (new parties) capable of giving them coherence and perspectives.

Keywords: social movements; resistance; anticapitalism.

Introduction

In this paper, we give an overview of the new social movements that emerged with the dawn of the 21st century. These new social movements are vigorously and creatively engaging in grassroots organization challenging the conduct of traditional politics. Their growth and militancy have generated whole new repertoires of action creating a non-authoritarian, participatory political culture. Using existing political space to maximum effect, they are substantially strengthening participatory democratic practice and significantly altering political life. Less clear is whether they are, as Gramsci might conclude, coming together in a new cycle of subaltern actions that can break down the hegemony historically exercised by the ruling classes.

Social resistance is best understood not as a struggle for state power, but rather as a movement resisting the dominant mode of power being imposed from above. Examining the political, economic, and cultural dimensions of globalized power as a set of contested processes, the study of social resistance shows how social movements

have contested power in spheres beyond the nation-state, appealing to global networks but also to local practices and identities.

In this paper we will try to give a historical account of social resistance in the 21st century that emerged more than a decade ago. In my chronological periodization, I will distinguish two important periods:

a) the period of “antiglobalization” mobilizations signified by the activities of the World and European Social Forums which started with the movement of the Euromarches against unemployment in 1997, culminated with the huge demonstrations in Genoa in 2001 and lasted through a series of summits and conferences till 2008 and

b) the period of “antiausterity” mobilizations, the struggle against the dictatorship of the bankers and the international corporations which started with the “Occupy Movement”, was inspired by the Arab Spring (the mobilizations in Tahrir Square etc) and continued with the mobilizations against the troika (IMF, EU, ECB) in the European South.

In the first period, at the time of the flourishing of the European and World Social Forums the agenda was dominated by the demands for the cancellation of the debt of Third World, the problems of immigrants and asylum seekers, against the production of genetically modified crops for sustainable agricultural policy, climate change and other important issues concerning mainly the Third World. The “Anti-Globalization” spirit was dominant in this first period.

During the second period, immediately after 2007, the Southern European countries (and Ireland) were hit by the “austerity” policies as a result of a prolonged capitalist crisis manifested brutally in the weakest links of the Eurozone, specially Greece. This period is characterized by an attack on the living standards of the working people but also by an attack on the working conditions and the labour relations aiming at a greater flexibility of the work force, reducing the labour cost and diminishing social security thus increasing capitalist profits. This class war resulted in a crisis of political representation both in the camp of the bourgeoisie and in the traditional parties of the working class. New forms of self-organization and of direct democracy emerged, inspired by the Arab Spring. The movement of the “Indignados” in Piazza del Sol in Madrid gave birth to the movement of the squares all across the European South while the general strikes and mass mobilizations of the working class showed that the working class is capable of fulfilling its historical mission.

From the Euromarches in 1997 to Genoa 2001

The year 1997 will probably be remembered as the year when European mobilizations emerged. Previous pan-European initiatives, like the coordinated railway strikes in 1992, have been few in number, and usually confined to a specific professional group [1].

The EuroMarches assembled 50,000 people in Amsterdam to protest against unemployment, job insecurity and marginalization.

It was declared that this movement is against a Europe built only on a free market of merchandise, services and capital, and reinforced only by a bureaucratic technostructure in Brussels.

These challenges to the neo-liberal and technocratic management of European integration have forced the question of social measures at the European scale into the political centre-stage and they have made credible the idea of European-wide political mobilizations.

For the EuroMarch network, the priority was to develop a horizontal network which could support trans-European mobilizations. Not to compete with the existing structures, but to reinforce them, to respect their differences, to learn from diversity, and to build a coherent, pluralist campaign. Such movements are essential for any type of campaign on a European level. It was made clear that if Europe was to develop on a model of social cohesion, coordination on a European scale and even beyond Europe is needed.

The success of the international meetings organized through ATTAC in Paris in June 1999 indicated the emergence of a movement that clearly appeared in November of that year in Seattle. A few months later in Bangkok, the first "international alliance" began to be formalized, comprising not only ATTAC but also various coalitions for the cancellation of the Third World debt: Via Campesina, Focus on the Global South and the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions.

In Geneva, in June 2000, the 'Swiss Committee on the Bangkok Appeal' organized a conference which was very significant both for mobilizations like that in Prague and also for the construction of the movement: it was here that the appeal for the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre was launched. Porto Alegre represented a watershed at which the various movements could coordinate to prepare the mobilizations to come; Buenos Aires, Quebec and, of course, Genoa.

The purpose of this short resume is not only to summarize the history of a movement which includes many stages and affiliations. The big mobilizations would certainly have taken place, with or without this series of conferences and meetings. Nevertheless, the framework built was determinant in creating a network of confidence and solidarity between those leading the social and activist movements of the various continents. Above all, a framework was laid down, combining unyielding defense of the demands of these movements and a permanent will for unity, which made it possible for the movement to extend itself without fragmenting.

Genoa represented a turning point in terms of the number of the demonstrators, but that was only possible because the alliance of forces in the Genoa Social Forum was completely new.

The end of the 1970s, the rise of autonomy and then the "years of lead" had accelerated the fragmentation of activist networks, including those of the radical left. The beginning of the 1990s saw a revival of working class struggles, a political re-composition on the Italian left with the split between the Democratic Left Party and Communist Refoundation and the growth of independent trade unions through the rise of the COBAS. The emergence of the "social centres" [2] was also a very significant development, offering young people space for recreation and activism.

Genoa marked a turning point in this aspect, as a new activist generation made its presence felt by linking these radical structures to the particularly active and established Italian associative world [3]. The success of ATTAC-Italy was indicative of this revival of activism.

Although there is nothing automatic about it, Genoa could be a starting point for a revival of struggle in Italy within a framework of re-composition which was much more favourable than that of the 1990s.

A more difficult question was posed by the place of the trade unions in this re-composition. The three Italian confederations [4] have been outside the re-composition process.

The international and European trade unions (the ICFTU and ETUC) organized a debate on globalization with several hundred participants, the majority of them playing leading roles in Italian trade unions. The spokesman of the Genoa Social Forum had been invited and his intervention was extremely well received, except by the union notables present. The secretary-general of the CGIL announced the next day that the demonstrations at Genoa should not be supported.

It was believed that this absence left space for the sectors of the trade-union left, whether they are members of the confederations or not [5]. It was hoped that this would ultimately push the confederations into the battle against neo-liberal globalization, like the AFL-CIO in the United States. The example of Barcelona, where the CC.OO and the UGT (the two principal trade union confederations in the Spanish state) called for demonstrations against the conference of the World Bank together with the anarcho-syndicalist CGT showed that that was possible.

But this plan turned to be not realistic. The trade union left lacked the special weight required to shift the balance in favour of the movement and despite the heroic struggles of the various movements of social and cultural resistance, the demonstration in Genoa was brutally suppressed. Carlo Giuliani was murdered by the police. The offices of the Genoa Social Forum were invaded and the people arrested.

The antiglobalization movement was never the same after the Genoa events. Mass mobilizations coordinated on an international scale gradually faded away and were replaced by international conferences in an attempt to devise a coherent political program in response to Globalization that is yet to be seen.

From the “Occupy” Movement to the Indignados

The “Occupy Wall Street” movement [6] voicing against the overbearing power of the corporations, the enormous inequities of American society, and the inordinate role of money in politics, spread within a few weeks across the country. The slogan “We are the 99%” captured the imagination not only of the participants, but of large swathes of the broader American public as well.

During the fall months of 2011, thousands participated in “Occupy” encampments in cities from coast to coast while tens of thousands participated in marches and protest demonstrations organized by the movement. “Occupy” emerged as the largest and most important social movement in the United States since the 1960s and 70s. “Occupy Wall Street” and its offspring were the first serious response from working people and the citizenry at large to the economic crisis of 2008, playing the role that in another country or in earlier times might have been played by a mass labor movement or an emergent socialist party.

“Occupy” ’s declaration represented a wide-ranging radical challenge to the economic and political establishment and to the status quo such as we had not seen since the civil rights/Black Power struggle, the anti-war movement, and Students for Democratic Society (SDS).

Occupy criticized the continuing high rate of unemployment, the foreclosures on homeowners, the inadequacy of the health system (including Obama's health plan), and the crisis in the costs of Higher Education. While never explicitly anti-capitalist and certainly not pro-socialist, "Occupy" 's critique of the economy and politics tended to challenge the system as a whole—and the system was capitalism even if it usually went unnamed in the official declarations. The movement's slogan, "We are the 99%!" rang out not only in Wall Street, but also in cities, towns, and university campuses across the United States and soon reverberated around the world as "Occupy" sites were established in various countries in Europe and Latin America.

The "Occupy" movement in the United States arose, in part, out of the succession of extraordinary mass struggles that exploded onto the global scene in response to the world economic crisis, demanding democracy and opposing austerity. The Arab Spring that began in December 2010 saw huge social movements against the region's dictators that in the following months forced governments from power in Tunisia, Egypt and Yemen. At the same time there were major uprising and huge social protests in Algeria, Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco and other countries in the Arab world and in Muslim countries in Africa. The protests in Tahrir Square involving tens of thousands in January of 2011 provided the model of the occupation of the public square, as Egyptians engaged in massive civil disobedience which had been preceded by and was accompanied by strikes. Demands for an end to the Mubarak government and its fierce repression combined with demands for lower prices and higher wages.

Inspired by Egypt and the Arab Spring, in Spain groups such as Juventud sin Futuro (Youth without a Future) and others brought together hundreds of smaller organizations, all of them calling upon young unemployed workers to occupy the public plazas on May 15, giving rise to the M-15 or "Indignados" movement. The Indignados demanded jobs, opposed cuts in social welfare, and opposed the Spanish political system and its parties. By June the demonstrations had spread to 80 Spanish cities and the occupations of the plaza were accompanied by huge protest demonstrations and marches.

This movement demonstrates the social violence of the policies carried out by Western governments against their own population, the absence of any perspective proposed by the social-democratic currents, and also the weakness of the responses in terms of mobilizations by the forces of the traditional Left Parties.

This movement, which expresses democratic aspirations, for control, in opposition to the economic dictatorship of capitalism, is eminently political, even though it most often rejects parties. It should be seen in relation to the massive social mobilizations called by the trade unions in most of the countries of the European Union.

In Britain, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy and Greece especially, there were also in this period large labor union protests and strikes, particularly of public sector workers, including general strikes against austerity. All of the protests and upheavals in both Europe and the Arab world represented responses to the economic crisis of 2008, though as in the case of Tunisia, Egypt and other Arab countries, the crisis also provided the occasion to deal with longstanding issues of authoritarian governments, the lack of political and civil rights, and the poverty of millions. In those cases, the crisis was the detonator of long pent up explosive forces in the society.

These social mobilizations, as well as the movements of the Indignant, testify in negative to the crisis in political perspectives in the region.

The Gezi revolt developed in this historical context. It altered the existing paradigms of social subjectivities in Turkey: different social groups who attached their political subjectivities to Gezi in varying ways, launched a struggle against the authoritarian tendencies of the AKP and called for a collective mobilization to overthrow the existing political status quo. A huge variety of groups including football fans, leftists, secularists and anti-capitalist Muslims, just to mention a few, gathered under the banner of the “Gezi Resistance”.

The absence of the intervention of the organized working class was notable in these events [7].

But furthermore, the Gezi revolt represents a turning point with respect to the participation of the youth. It comes within a cycle of events starting with the revolt of the youth in the French suburbs in 2005, the events of December 2008 in Greece following the assassination of Alexis Grigoropoulos and the revolt of the British youth in 2011. All these events have a common denominator. They represent the uprising of the poor urban strata, of the unemployed youth worst hit by the crisis of decaying capitalism with the support of the various movements of youth counter-culture.

The perspectives of action for revolutionaries

In Tunis, on Saturday March 23 and Sunday March 24, 2013 the first Mediterranean meeting against the debt, austerity policies and foreign domination, and for a

Mediterranean which is free, democratic, social, solidarity based, feminist and respectful of the environment, was held.

Organized at the call of the Popular Front [8], this meeting brought together around twenty political formations from the Mediterranean region [9]. It is the first time that so many parties and political organizations have met at the scale of the Mediterranean region to struggle for the cancellation of the illegitimate debt.

This gathering ended with a big meeting of representatives of the political parties in a passionate atmosphere of anger, joy and collective force with each affirming the will to work around the debt, against the dictatorship of the creditors and for the emancipation of the peoples. More than 1000 people were present, including many young people and women. The activists in the room displayed their determination to sweep away the capitalist system and to found a new world order in the service of the peoples.

Tributes were paid to different leaders, revolutionaries or progressive activists. A film tribute to Chokri Belaïd was shown. Chokri remains a very popular figure of the Tunisian revolution, a source of inspiration for many. Later another short film paid tribute to Hugo Chavez. For more than three hours, speakers hailed the Tunisian revolution and more broadly the Arab spring which overthrew the dictatorships of Ben Ali and Mubarak. At this historic turning point, it is necessary to add an international dimension. The Tunisian revolution is, for several generations, the concrete demonstration that revolution is far from being a rhetorical formula and the people can take their destiny in hand. The public meeting ended with a vibrant intervention from the spokesperson of the Popular Front, who has developed a position on the debt aligned with that of the CADTM.

As stressed by the preamble to the declaration of this meeting, the fall of Ben Ali “allowed the disarming of the local neoliberal capitalist order without however overthrowing it. The social regime, which is the historic product of foreign domination and more recently of world neoliberal capitalist restructuring, is still there. But the revolutionary crisis opened up by the insurrection remains active. The victory of the social and democratic revolution remains possible in Tunisia”.

In this context, it is necessary to get rid of the debt which remains a central tool of the domination and oppression of the peoples. An instrument for the transfer of wealth and political domination, this question was at the heart of the debate. The participants affirmed the deed for freedom from the diktat of the creditors and the international

financial institutions, the IMF and World Bank in particular. Several speakers cited the examples of Argentina, Ecuador or Iceland to show that it is possible to disobey the creditors so as to follow policies in favour of the population. The audit of the public debt was also posed as one of the possible strategies to identify and cancel illegitimate and odious debt, while the importance of mobilization on this question was stressed.

It is the first time that a common front has emerged, and it is undoubtedly a historic advance in the struggle against the debt. The parties who met in Tunis decided to set up a monitoring committee and meet again in Spain in a later year.

Resistance will continue to develop in Europe, in the Maghreb, in the Middle East, in Africa, but also in the emerging countries of Asia. That makes all the more necessary coordination, united action of the revolutionary and anticapitalist organizations of these regions.

But the development of this resistance is taking place and will continue to take place, raising in the process several questions of the first order.

The most important is obviously the question of content, of the political perspectives for this resistance. Today it is more than evident the lack of a political program capable of encompassing all kinds of resistance in a struggle that can lead to a global alternative to the capitalist system, posing the fundamental economic, social and cultural demands of the present movements of resistance.

The other question is obviously that of the consequences of the explosion of precariousness and the social destructurement in the capitalist metropolises, that have reached a scale with social consequences that we have not seen very often in recent decades.

This is accompanied by the structuring of a massive urban working class, which is gradually becoming conscious of its common demands and of its strength.

Today, the challenge of creating a political identity in these new working classes is colossal, so that the workers' movement can represent an international alternative to capitalism, a credible socialist alternative given that all the social-democratic governments in Europe, Asia and Latin America, governments which often found allied around them radical parties are unable to trace an independent strategy.

So the challenge clearly is, more than ever, for revolutionaries and anticapitalists, to create a social and political alternative that responds to the aspirations and the revolts of populations hit by the crisis and by poverty.

The months and years to come will be marked in all the regions of the world by the social and environmental effects of the systemic crises that we are living through.

The present imbalances will continue to weaken the populations, but also the state structures: the Arab revolution, as well as the political crises in Greece and Italy, bear witness to that.

So social discontent will continue to increase, seeking ways to express itself.

The real challenge for anticapitalist currents will be to be present in the heart of mobilizations as they unfold, to be able to propose to these movements a social and political programme, and new forms of organization (new parties) capable of giving them coherence and perspectives.

The present political hegemony of the conservative religious forces in the election results in Egypt and Tunisia, as well the rise of nationalist and even far-right currents in Europe show the challenges which face us.

The clearest aspect of this challenge is that any progressive response to the present crisis implies a global questioning of and challenge to capitalist society. Flowing from that, having confidence in the possibility of successfully advancing in this direction will be crucial for our ability to respond. That also makes it necessary to structure political forces on an international level and to make sure that they are putting forward political responses on this level.

Such political structures should be built in the course of the revolts, because during a revolt the consciousness of the people develops abruptly and the historic time is accelerated and the material conditions mature and become favourable to build the necessary party capable of uniting protesters around radical demands and leading them forward with correct tactics and a revolutionary strategy for power.

Notes:

[1] Indeed, the first half of 1992 has seen a succession of events. First came the protests against Renault's decision to close its car factory in Vilvorde, Belgium, in favour of a lower-wage site in Spain. The protest of Renault workers struck a cord in public opinion, mainly in Belgium and France, but also further afield. Then the European Trade Union Confederation organised an EU wide day of protest on 28 May.

[2] Based in former industrial premises occupied by activists often from the autonomous currents

- [3] Mani Tese, Lega Ambiente, ARCI etc.
- [4] The CGIL, which was linked to the PCI, the CISL, in the past close to Christian Democracy and the UIL, linked to the Socialists
- [5] The COBAS and the CUB were independent, and in the CGIL the left tendency Alternativa Sindacale had called for demonstrations with the FIOM, the powerful metalworkers' federation
- [6] Beginning in Zuccotti Park near Wall Street in New York City in mid-September 2011
- [7] The failure of the organized working class to intervene in the Gezi events has been analyzed by C. Skordoulis in "Gezi, Isyan, Ozgurluk", Derleyen: Kemal Inal, Ayrinti, Istanbul 2013
- [8] a coalition comprising left radical political parties, associations and independent personalities in Tunisia, one of whose leaders, Chokri Belaïd, was assassinated on February 6, 2013.
- [9] including the Front de Gauche and NPA (France); Izquierda Unida and Izquierda anticapitalista from the Spanish state, Sortu from the Basque country, CUP from Catalonia; from Greece, the OKDE Spartakos ; from Portugal, the Left Bloc; from Italy, Sinistra Critica ; Al Mounadil from Morocco and political formations from Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Algeria and Palestine. There were also organisations present from Belgium, Haiti and Venezuela.

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The fairness in education in the era of crisis

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Abstract

This paper examines the meaning of fairness through the “Theory of Justice” by John Rawls and the greek “curriculum kindergarten 2011” with methodological tool of content analysis and examines its implications in education and prospects in kindergarten. The results show that the schools should play a central role in the cultivation of democratic consultation process and democratic participation within a liberal framework that leaves people free to develop their personality and to form their own conditions of their lives based on their own choices and according to Rawls emphasize the fairness of the procedure and equity in results.

For Rawls (2001) citizens are not only free and equal, but also rational. The rational citizens have the ability to comply with fair terms of cooperation, even to the detriment of their own interests, provided that others are also willing to do so. In “Justice as fairness” Rawls calls the rationality as the ability to sense justice.

Rawls although in “theory justice” focuses on socioeconomic level however he does not miss out to report on educational policy. So we are in terms of education and the role that prepare children to participate as citizens of a common fate should be focused on teaching children to understand themselves as interdependent with other people through a process not simple and formal relationship, but as a body to rebuild these interfaces according to their own fairly judgments.

According to Rawls, the fair equality is not limited to a formal and superficial report. The whole theory analyzes the need for structures and functions that even the restriction of freedom be for benefit of the least. This theory although socioeconomic refers to education as focused in this specific research.

Rawls argues that to correct the social and economic disadvantages need a fair meritocracy in education and not a mere formal equality of opportunity. The establishment of training programs that will provide equal educational opportunities, giving children the chance to form more complete and logically the meaning of citizenship. The kindergarten is faced with challenges that it really can exploit them to

make the step which will be the first base culture of citizenship with substantive and catalytic perceptions about the child, which is the potential citizen.

Keywords: Rawls' theory, fairness in education, kindergarten, crisis.

Introduction

Every society should encounter three issues about the education. First of all should have an opinion about the role of the characteristics of what people want for society. Secondly, should have the opinion about the role of education in preserve of the society statute. Third, should have the opinion about the role of education for the goods contribution which the society produce (McDonough, 2005).

Rawls theory of justice directly addresses the question of what is a just distribution in society-or, put differently, whether inequalities are justified in society, and if so, what kinds and amounts of inequality. Rawls answer is that only those inequalities are justified which are to the benefit of the least advantaged. Because some inequalities of position or of resources may bring greater productivity and thus greater benefits to all, they may be justified by this principle-though only those such inequalities are permissible (Rawls, 2001).

The principles in Rawls theory give the clearer direction for the beneficially opportunity to compose the concept of citizen and how this is could formed.

The concepts of justice and fairness are the prominent in Rawls theory (Rawls, 1975). The basis of the theory is the notion of justice. All should haveupfront the opportunity of the chance in the equality.

The concept of citizen is interwoven with the concept of justice. The meaning of citizen in the greek early childhood curriculum (2011) is in relation with the issues of promotion in active citizen. The role of which is the versatile in different social environments during the life.

Subsequently, presents the Rawls theory about the justice and fairness and the kindergarten curriculum 2011.About the research and methodological analysis used the content analysis and later exported results. Then, presents the conclusions, discussion and recommendations.

The fairness in education

A quality education for all cannot be achieved without an education policy aiming to reduce the number of person not attending school or “dropping out” of the education

system because of social inequality. An education system with a tendency for quality education for all should ensure that all children have easy access to such education, improving their chances to have a quality life regardless of their national belonging, gender, special needs, or social group.

Quality education for all assumes an inclusive approach to education, resting on the conviction that the right to education is a fundamental human right enabling the creation of a basis for a more just society. The right to education does not depend on individual characteristics.

Initiatives for inclusive education focus on the groups that have been deprived of the possibility to attain education in the past. These groups include children living in poverty, members of ethnic or linguistic minorities, in some societies also girl, children living far away from educational institutions, and children with learning disabilities or other special educational needs. (European Agency for Development Special Needs Education 2003a).

Fairness in education refers to the educational environment in which persons have the possibility of choice according to their own developmental potential, abilities, and talent, and not on the basis of prejudice, educational stereotypes, expectations of the environment, or discrimination, which opens up economic and social opportunities regardless of developmental potential, gender, age, ethnic or racial belonging, or social status. (European Commission, 2002b).

The readiness of all segments of society is required to build the principle of fairness into the education system. This demands thorough analyses, recognition of the existing hurdles and possible sources of support for the accessibility of quality education for all, based on which changes begin.

They are not limited to the sphere of legislation, organisational changes and resource mobilisation, but also concern the attitudes of the society. The creation of a fair education system cannot be considered separately from the process of the democratisation of the overall society and respect for human rights. In a nutshell, democracy in education relies on the recognition of two basic principles:

- The principle of equality (fairness, accessibility, and acknowledgement of rights for all, regardless of gender, age, racial, ethnic, or religious belonging, place of residence and wealth, abilities and medical condition),
- The principle of participation (freedom of expression, choice, and active participation in decision-making in education, along with assuming responsibility)

(Rawls, 2001).

On the preschool level, there are no plans and programmes adjusted to the developmental needs of children with disability, that would allow a more adequate preparation for quality inclusion into the regular education system. The plan and programme realised in special primary and secondary schools is mainly just a shortened plan and programme for regular primary schools and it does not acknowledge the specificities of the developmental difficulties of the children. Such plans and programmes were not even compatible with the plans of the regular education system, which prevented horizontal mobility and practically closed off the regular system to the children with disability. There are no special educational plans for supporting the children with disability who are in the regular system. The plans and programmes of the majority of special secondary schools only exist to the level of post-primary education, which prevents horizontal mobility to regular schools and vertical mobility to tertiary education.

The notion of citizenship

The citizenship has many extensions which correspond to many and different responsibilities which must take over the current citizen. The citizenship is in a nodal point (McDonough&Feinberg, 2005). Moreover, there are new problems and new need in modern developed societies from the economic and technological revolution. These needs and problems highlight the sense of the new citizenship.

It is more necessary the international cooperation about the problems of the natural environment and also the gradual transformation of human from the individual customer to individual – citizen. In other words a transformation of human with responsibilities and duties (Wildemeersch, Stroobants&Bron, 2005). So, in current conditions emerge with greater intensity the need for greater responsibility and citizen participation in governance of modern societies (Giddens, 2001).

The official texts of the developed countries refers to citizenship and democracy. These concepts not only relates to the need of political stability, economic and social cohesion and the development of a European public sphere but also the knowledge society. It is fact that this choice aims to combine on one hand the economic development and the strengthening the competitive position of every country in this world and on the other hand the development of democracy in a broader level (Karalis&Mpalias, 2007). This strategic is directed through educational frameworks,

which can be achieved the shaping and cultivation of democratic consciousness of active citizenship.

The Rawls theory of justice

The theory of justice has two principles. The first one regard to the recognition of the claim of each person to have equal rights and freedoms. This principle determines the distribution of freedoms and rights in a society. The second principle relates to inequalities, which are should be treated in a way that benefit for all. First of all, all the chances should be opened for all, in a condition of equality and secondly should create open positions that should favor as much as possible the least advantaged members of society (Rawls, 1971).

The second principle determines the terms of distribution of social and economic goods. Rawls allows exceptions to the equal distribution of goods and opportunities where inequalities benefit the least beneficiaries (the principle of difference). The restriction of freedoms is accepted only if it leads to greater freedom for all (Rawls, 2001). Simultaneously refers in institutional features, which are mutual in all liberal political notions such as equal opportunities to all citizens, especially in education and training.

Rawls understands the overlapping consensus as a possible basis for a maximum democratic stability. So, the justice requires that whichever inequality should profit all the citizen and especially most of all the citizen who have the less. The equality defines the baseline. Any inequality should improve the situation of each individual and in particular the situation of those who are worse off.

For fair equality of opportunity, Rawls emphasizes that laws and policies should go beyond simply preventing discrimination in education and hiring. To ensure fair opportunities, regardless of social class of origin, the states should also fund high quality education for the less affluent.

Accepting the possibility of a just and peaceful future offers a defense against the resignation or cynicism, which otherwise would have seemed inevitable.

Demonstrating how the social world can realize the characteristics of a realistic utopia, the political philosophy provides a long term goal of political struggle and the effort of achieving it gives the meaning of what we can do today (Leif, 2010).

The equal opportunities are closely associated with the notion of justice. There are some items for education such as issues of access, participation and outcomes of the learning, which compose a fair educational system.

For Rawls (2000) the citizens are not only free and equal but also logical and rational. The rational citizens have the ability to comply with fair terms of cooperation, even to the detriment of their own interests, provided that others are also willing to do so.

Rawls, in justice as fairness, calls the rationality as the ability to sense justice.

People when they have the ability to argue and to revise their view of what is valuable in human life then they deemed as rational citizens. Rawls calls this ability as the perception of good. These basic skills are together the two moral powers (Rawls, 2001).

Rawls's second principle of justice has two parts. The first part, fair equality of opportunity, requires that citizens with the same talents and willingness to use them have the same educational and economic opportunities regardless of whether they were born rich or poor. In all parts of society there are to be roughly the same prospects of culture and achievement for those similarly motivated and endowed (Rawls, 1979).

Although, Rawls in theory of justice focuses on socioeconomic level however does not fall down to report on educational policy (Rawls, 2001). Therefore, considers that regarding education and the role of this, it prepares children to participate as citizens of a common fate should be focused on teaching children to understand themselves as interdependent with other people through a process and not merely formal relationship but as a body to rebuild these interfaces according to their own judgments fairly (Rawls, 2001).

The notion of citizen in Greek kindergarten

The recent reform of Greek Curriculum of Preschool Education (2011) promotes the development of key competences defined by the national and European strategy. One of these competences is the social skills and abilities associated with citizenship. Therefore, it is the first time that integrates the learning region "Personal and social development".

According to the new curriculum (2011) the social skills help people to participate in social life, to cooperate, to manage effectively the conflict and resolve the disputes in a constructive way, to negotiate their views and to build solid relationships.

The skills which related to citizenship facilitate people to participate fully in social life and relates to individual skills such as solidarity, concern for social problems, responsibility to themselves and others, behavior control and compliance rules.

Children belonging to a community, the community of school and have not only rights but also obligations. They have the right to participate, to create and shape their learning culture.

Below are some extracts from the curriculum for kindergarten (2011).

-The basic abilities that underpin the new curriculum defined by national and European strategy for education and [...] social skills and abilities associated with citizenship. (Part 1 (2011), 9)

-Social skills help individuals to participate in social life and to resolve various conflicts in a constructive way. (Ibid, 18)

-The abilities as effective communication and cooperation in different environments, negotiation in trust, acceptance and respect for others.

-The skills which related to citizenship facilitate people to participate fully in social life and relates to individual skills such as solidarity, concern for social problems, responsibility to myself and to others, controlling behavior and compliance rules. (Ibid, 18) .

- The child's ability to develop meaningful interactions with others in particular socio-cultural contexts, to recognize appropriately and respond to ideas, actions and feelings of others, respecting their needs, to seek and provide assistance.

-The social skills will help children in the future to become active citizens and to work flexibly in different social environments that may be found during their lifetime.

-The development of social skills is supported in kindergartens where there is a cooperative environment and solidarity among all.

-The development of social skills, such as to cooperate and to manage conflict more effectively, to negotiate their views and to build solid relationships (ibid, 20).

-The development of an active citizen requires a person who operates independently but simultaneously has developed a sense of teamwork.

-The development of a positive personal and social self-image along with the acceptance of diversity and the ability of satisfactory interaction within the group contribute to the formation of a healthy society which its functioning guided by common benefits and everyone needs. (Part 2, 64).

Method

For this study and for the analysis of text " Theory of Justice John Rawls" and " Curriculum for Kindergarten 2011" used the method of content analysis, which is considered the most appropriate research method that will help in the analysis of texts

and will lead to clear answers to the research question (Stemler, 2001). Content analysis is a suitable method for analyzing verbal, oral and written data (Mayring, 2000).

Content analysis helps researchers to delve into a text containing a large amount of information (Fairclough, 1995). Emphasis is placed on key points of the text, which are organized into categories according to their content. This results to facilitate the study and interpretation of texts but also exported findings easily (Stemler, 2001). For analysis and comparison of the texts and the presentation of the similarities and differences focused on the concept of citizenship and fairness.

Analysis

In both texts, as presented benchmarks in the concept of citizenship and fairness, there seem to have common points. In the text of Rawls the purpose is to develop a citizen which integrates it in the context of a broader concept of justice. For Rawls it is important not only the equality and freedom that should have the citizen in his life for himself and for others but also be rational and logical. From all of these comes of that the political notion of justice aims to the idea of the rational citizen. Citizens are rational, facing each other as free and equal persons in a context of cooperation between them.

The preparation should be referred to an offer by one to another under fair terms for social cooperation. Having agreed to act in this context, even at the expense of their own interests in particular situations, agreeing and others that accept the same terms. These terms must be fair, rational citizens offering should also give rational citizens who are also ready to accept.

The rational citizens should respond to it, free and equal, without being manipulated or subordinated to political pressures or knuckle under social positions and views. For Rawls this is called the criterion of reciprocity. The second aspect of the rational citizen is to recognize and be willing to undergo the consequences of fairness. It is fair to recognize that rational people can disagree without prejudice or selfish or self-centered.

The text of the curriculum of kindergarten 2011 presented the concept of the citizen and fairness as the process that will shape the learner with the characteristics of solidarity, cooperation and respect. From extensive field on the cultivation of social skills and the development of the concept of citizenship that is needed to form the democratic citizen acceptance of diversity. Student should solve conflicts, show

solidarity with others and interact each other. Basic ethical and social values contained in the text as there is love for our fellow man, to cultivate democracy, law, peace, freedom, respect for human values, collective effort, responsibility, dialogue, personality development the behavioral control and compliance rules.

Conclusions

The conclusions conducted by comparative data which resulting from the data analysis of the two texts and the degree of achievement of the target. The emphasis in Rawls's theory and in kindergarten curriculum 2011 is on fair equality of opportunity, as guaranteed by the concern for education and the norms that support the fair value of political liberties. The concept of justice as fairness in the text of curriculum for kindergarten comes of the other concepts. Justice is not expressly mentioned or referred to the concept of fairness, however is emphasized the possibility of equal opportunities. The fair equality of opportunity lays the foundation for effective and fruitful constitution of citizenship.

The fair equality according to Rawls is not limited to a typical and superficial reporting. The whole theory analyzes the need for structures and functions that even the restriction of freedom intended for the benefit of the less advantaged. Although this is a socioeconomic theory however refers to education as focused in this specific research.

For fair equality of opportunity Rawls emphasizes that laws and policies must go beyond merely preventing discrimination in education and hiring. To ensure fair opportunity regardless of social class of origin, the state must also fund high-quality education for the less well off. Moreover the state must also guarantee both a basic minimum income and health care for all.

Therefore, although the curriculum of kindergarten 2011 there are not such in-depth reports, however, is the first attempt to introduce such concepts and orientation of the purposes of education. This is a prototype because in the previous curriculum of kindergarten in one hand there were not any reference, on the other hand there were not obvious and was not apparent from the context.

It is clear that a new proposal in educational programs requires a series of analyzes before applying. As is also clear that schools play a central role in the teaching of democratic consultation process of problem-solving discussion and democratic participation (Levinson, 2007).

The central goal of education should be the discovery way to allow students to experience justice and to experience the values in a fair learning community. This contribute them to the quality of life.

Generally, the liberal part assumes that justice at the head of social stability. Students understanding the liberal justice with the needed skills penetrate into the essence of liberal notion of citizenship education. A liberal theory of education should be indicated in the fair distribution of the social goods. A liberal theory of justice has as a primary concern the correctness of the distribution of social goods and resources. The educational sector plays an important role in the distribution of social goods. In current society the schools need to promote the development of individuals in a free and rational agent, to enable them to develop rational plans for life and having a sense of justice. The first aim of education is to make those features that make individuals, citizens.

Moreover, this must be done in a way that respects the emerging personality. According to Rawls is surely right that should be characterized by the emphasis on providing the causes, affects understanding and avoiding political indoctrination. The schools require from students to master the skills of political participation. The Curriculum and teaching methods should have basic purpose of cultivating abilities of children for freedom, autonomy, rationality, self-esteem, in order to develop them. This role must be achieved so as to promote the development of the student as a citizen. It should also enable students to develop a satisfactory vision for a good life.

Suggestions

The role of education is deemed crucial. Therefore, the international requirement concerns to the establishment of the purpose of education in a democratic point of view.

To build societies more democratic, humanistic and just it established through knowledge, information, acquisition of the appropriate skills and ' life skills ', adopting democratic values and the awareness of all kinds of problems with which every modern man is confronted in democratic societies (Korsgaard et al., 2001). According to Rawls this is come true through education and the duty which it holds a larger role in politics perception.

Through education students are sensitized to public culture and with their participation in it. They learn to be free and equal. The children's education should include the knowledge of constitutional and civil rights. In addition, it should prepare

students to become associate members of society and to enable them to support themselves. Also, to raise the political virtues in order to wish to follow faithful terms of social cooperation in their relations with the rest of society.

The interest of the state for the education of the students focus on their role as future citizens and therefore focus on essential goals, such as gaining the ability to understand the political culture and to participate in the institutions, to become financially independent and self-reliant members of society throughout their lives, and to develop the political virtues in the light of a political viewpoint.

The very social diversity of its population led to practices within it designed to preserve the advantages of some and to reproduce, without too much reshuffling, the social structure of the preceding generation. Yet the school remained a common school, in which children from all social levels mixed-and in the smaller communities of that early period, social levels were not as far apart in social style as they are today. If a family was strongly opposed to anything about a child's school, but without the money for private school, it could move to satisfy its educational tastes; or in some cities with optional attendance zones or city-wide schools, it could choose another school without changing residence.

In this situation, there are two obvious policy alternatives, and a third that is not so obvious:

1. Withdrawing individual rights, vesting them in a central authority which can assign children from different backgrounds unequal measures to all schools. This option attaches total value to equality, and is indifferent to any loss of liberty that may result.
2. Retaining the individual rights of families and children to the choice of school by choice of residence. This option attaches total value to individual liberty, and is indifferent to whatever inequality may result.
3. Rather than withdrawing rights from those who have the (economic) power to exercise them effectively, enlarging the rights of others. This is a less obvious alternative to both positions that provides a set of "countervailing rights" which when exercised will increase equality rather than inequality.

The plans and programmes for education should be a manifestation of programme minimalism, without the necessary adjustment to the andragogical and didactic-methodological criteria. The curriculum is a significant step forward in terms of ensuring fairness in the education system, primarily through its focus on the needs of the pupil and the opening up of space for an essential and systematic adjustment of the

curriculum to these needs, the development and nurture of methodical procedures aimed at recognising the individual needs of children, the possibility of creating and developing stimulating and individualised programmes in accordance with the developmental abilities of the child and the introduction of a special part of the curriculum of regular schools.

Some general recommendations for supporting the fairness principle in education are about:

- Development of a policy for preventing the segregation of members of educationally threatened groups and the development of mechanisms for their protection from discrimination based on legal regulation,

- Early inclusion of children from educationally threatened groups into preschool education and the development of compensatory programmes,

- Development of a model of financing that would allow the development of the inclusive model on all education levels. This primarily means per-pupil financing in the sense of positive discrimination, and the provision of special forms of continued financial support for preschools and schools educating minorities. Special emphasis is placed on institutions developing projects for the enrolment of Roma children and on new models of adult education financing as an integral part of the education system and a manifestation of lifelong learning,

- Development of programme and methodical procedures for working with children with disability, minorities, children who have dropped out of the regular education system (the “Second Chance at Education”) and adults,

- The introduction into the teachers’ initial education and professional development of teaching programmes for work with children with different educational needs, with special emphasis on reducing prejudice and developing positive attitudes; reforming the teachers faculties and vocational schools for preschool teachers in order to resolve the problems facing teachers in practice,

- In the area of quality assurance, defining the indicators that will represent conditions for including educationally threatened children into the regular education system; introducing the accessibility, retention, and survival of educationally threatened children in schools as a measurement of quality,

- In terms of contents, textbooks must be non-discriminatory in terms of children with disability, gender, religious, national, and ethnic belonging, as well as any other difference, and must be accessible to all social groups regarding price.

The students should be informed and to enjoy the rights and be able to fulfill their obligations. The aim is to create knowledgeable citizens about rights and responsibilities and therefore able to act in society in accordance with them. The schools through curriculum and their implementation should include education of democratic citizenship and cultivating and dealing with human rights from an early age, at a cognitive level of each age, in order to build and form gradually and steady, the conscious democratic citizen.

The aimed training at active democratic citizenship is connected not only with the institutional framework, the content of the curriculum and how pedagogical approach and educational implementation of this target (Economou, 2004), but primarily by the political ideology that permeated the curriculum and political norms below.

Rawls argues that to correct the social and economic disadvantages need a fair meritocracy in education and not a mere formal equality of opportunity. The establishment of curriculum that will provide equal educational opportunities, give at children the chance to form completely and logically the meaning of fairness. The kindergarten is faced with challenges that if it really can exploit them, it will make the step that will be the first base to culture the fairness with substantive and catalytic perceptions about the child, which is the potential citizen.

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Πρόγραμμα Σπουδών Νηπιαγωγείου, 1ο Μέρος, Παιδαγωγικό Πλαίσιο και αρχές Προγράμματος Σπουδών Νηπιαγωγείου, Π.Ι., 2011.

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The real subsumption under the capital and pedagogy of strike

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Abstract

In my article I would like ask about the change of education and future transforms of education and institution in contexts of the double crisis. First, I will mention about real subsumption under capital and the pedagogy of dept. Second, I would ask about possibility of emancipation and education against subsumption under capital. In my opinion strike is immanents' way for emancipation. The pedagogy of strike can be developed as alternative for pedagogy of dept.

Keywords:subsumption, university, strike, struggle, higher education.

The questions

I will ask about the possibility of radical change the education. How we can transform the institution from the didactic machines into the nomadic educational machines? Where is place for education without the state and the marker – the place for (anarcho)communist education? How the double crisis open a new way for practice and thinking?

The double crisis

First of all, I have to say a few words about the crisis. The crisis is the context of the student struggle and can help to understand the transformation of the university. Edu-factory collective says, that the university is in a double crisis.

On the one hand, this involves an acceleration of the crisis specific to the university, the inevitable result of its outdated disciplinary divisions and eroded epistemological status. On the other hand, it is the crisis of postfordist conditions of labor and value, many of which are circuited through the university(Edu-factory collective 2010: 4-5).

First, we experience an economic crisis, which is not only a financial crisis but, as EduFactory collective says, it is the core of capitalism. A crisis is not only a moment in the capitalist cycle. A crisis is permanent. “Crisis becomes a new form and technique of governance” (Ibid, 6). This crisis as a new form of social life changes

social relations and institutions. We can link the contemporary crisis with neoliberal reforms which started in the seventies and eighties of the twentieth century. We should take into consideration the question on transformation from fordism to postfordism (a neoliberal regime). In my opinion, Michel Husson made an interesting interpretation of the transformation. In his book *Le capitalisme sans anesthésie* (Husson, 2011) he shows how capitalism changes in all fields of social life. The neoliberal transformation is described in four main dimensions: “accumulation regime, a technological paradigm, social regulation and the international division of labour” (Husson, Louçã, 2012, 3). He calls the neoliberal regime a “productive order”. This means that fordism and postfordism are specific models of a capitalist regime. Transformations of social life made by the neoliberal regime refine the capitalist “mode of functioning in order to respond to its contradictions” (ibid, 1). In this new regime the capitalist ratio is dominant. Every social institution has to be the subsumption under capital. The real subsumption increases exploitation and the method of work. The real subsumption under capital, as Marks said, transforms pre-capitalist, craft mode of production, into factory production. Under the formal subsumption the mode of production stays like it was before. Marks wrote about it: The labour process continues exactly as it did before — from the technological point of view — only as a labour process now *subordinated* to capital (Marx 1861-63; see also Marx 2013).

We can say that in fordism the university was only the formal subsumption under capital. Academic workers have a lot of freedom whereas academic production is wrapped up in a nostalgic narration of integral humanity. An academic product expresses the individual character of its producer. In the neoliberal regime the mode of production in academia is changed. Marx said: “(...) the relation of capitalist and wage labourer can replace the *master of the guild type* and his *journeymen and apprentices* (...)” (ibid). We can quote it while analyzing the reform of the university. Academic craftsmen in fordism are now – in the neoliberal regime - just wage labourers in the education factory. Managing, techniques of governance, destroy academic freedom. Academic work is strictly controlled and evaluated. The economic logic is now official, one and only, logic of the Academia. This logic not only changes the mode of production, but also the conditions of employment.

The real subsumption of all society under capital was the first step. The neoliberal regime is the answer to the crisis of capitalism in the seventies and in the eighties of

thetwentieth century. The new “productive order” resulted in a new crisis in 2007-2008.

We can say that the hope and the promises made by neoliberalism were not kept. Neoliberalism brings only disappointments. Neoliberalism brings also the crisis of the university: transforming the ivory tower into a factory, making the university an important element of capitalist production, finally destroying classical curriculums, especially the mode of production. George Caffentzis, who analyzed the African reforms, concludes that shutting down a humanist department or an ineffective university, salary cuts, precarisation of workers conditions, and so on, is not only a problem in periphery. Caffentzis says that it can be the future of core countries (Caffentzis, 2010).

This is one side of the double crisis – an economic crisis which changes the institution. Another side is an imminent crisis of institution or a social, or a political crisis. Of course, the university is only one of many social institutions which are now in crisis. What we call an imminent crisis, the collective EduFactory describes as a problem of knowledge, a problem of relation to the social order, democratization of higher education, and so on. This is a situation in which white-man-knowledge has to be confronted with black-, women-, folk-knowledge; when the curriculum of elites has to be confronted with working class culture. When the old border and division of production of knowledge is challenged and melted. When the “objectivity” of science has to be confronted with the particular, engaged, underground knowledge.

According to the autonomist tradition, EduFactory collective sustains that the crisis of capitalism and the institution was started by a social movement:

The state university is in ruins, the mass university is in ruins, and the university as a privileged place of national culture — just like the concept of national culture itself — is in ruins. We’re not suffering from nostalgia. Quite the contrary, we vindicate the university’s destruction. In fact, the crisis of the university was determined by social movements in the first place (Edu-factory 2009, 1; see also Cleaver, 2000).

They say, that the double crisis provokes two fantasies on the exit strategies: rebuilding the ivory tower or making the university the “engine of a new economic cycle” (Edu-factory 2010, 6-7, see also Szwabowski, 2013). This two fantasies have been rejected by radical social movement. Neither the ivory tower is what a radical movement would like to defend, nor a university as an accumulation machine. Radical

movement treats the crisis as a battlefield: seeing in crisis an opportunity for a communist social organization.

In this decisive transition, a new role for the university is only possible through social cooperation and conflicts. This means turning the university from a place *occupied* by capital to one occupied by the bodies of living labour (ibid, 7).

Here is a starting point of my reflection. If we really understood the crisis, we know that stopping the reform is as difficult as, or even more difficult than revolution (Husson, 2011). We cannot defend the ivory tower or fordism as a normal, humanist or ethically proper social order. We do not have past which we can revive. We do not have future in the neoliberal regime. We have to create our future in the struggle. The future world is an impossible world, a world which does not exist. So, we need to take the crisis back, and end the process of destruction.

We can pose the same theoretical question about the reform of education. I would like to ask how the student struggle creates an impossible word, a new meaning of education? Maybe students and academic workers are intoxicated by one of the aforementioned fantasies? What kind of the hope is engine of the struggle? The hope of future in hierarchical systems, hope to be on top; or the hope of new world, the new radical democratic system (about hope and struggle see Beuret, 2010; Penny, 2010). Two dominant discourses about education and the university – the ivory tower and the economic actuator – can be repeated by the social movement; can be a part of social common sense. Maybe a student and an academic, even in a borderline situation, cannot transgress the reason and the system at all?

Looking for an answer, I analyzed the new revolutionary discourse: the words open a new world - which we can hear in streets battles; in the rebellious production of knowledge; in the vast network made by a multitude. I tried to read out the future of education.

Paul Mason writes in his book *Why It's Kicking off Everywhere: The New Global Revolutions* that the neoliberal reform changes the lives of students. New students do not have time to drink and discuss. They do not waste time on political activity, long philosophical disputes, getting self-conscious, developing their own humanity. Social justice, social problems, existential problems – they are not important questions in education under the siege of the capital (Mason, 2012). In fact, the new “pedagogy of debt” makes a classical liberal education impossible. Of course, the classical liberal education, the former student lifestyle, was based on privilege. Sometimes, student

lifestyle was based on an illusion. According to Bourdieu (Bourdieu, 2006) we can say that a carefree or a politically and/or existentially involved student question does not recognize the possibilities of their own social standing. To put this in terms of politics: the former student lifestyle as characteristic and appropriate to a human was not universal. It was based on non-human life conditions of the masses; was based on exclusion from education and from humanity.

This belongs to the past. Now students think of education as an investment. They go to university because they want to accumulate capital which is going to enhance their chances – on the battlefield of the labour market. Higher education is like a machine of hierarchization. If you invested your time as a student in a good way, adjusted your curriculum, it may help you to get a better place in social division of labour. This style of thinking is not an individual one, but created by social neoliberal order. The new student lifestyle and the new meaning of education reflects the definitions provided by the central bureau of social sense. This global office of the official meaning of teaching treats education as an individual commercial good. Unfortunately, education as an individual commercial good becomes unattainable. The university from a social elevator transforms into a slippery slope of precarity (Roggero, 2011). The result of higher education became debt and disappointment. The credentials given by the university are toxic. A student can say: “We do not have future, but we have debt”. Disappointment can develop into disillusionment.

Here we can find two meanings of education. The first one is the meaning I wrote about before: an investment in student’s own “human capital”, developing their own worker skills. The second one, strictly connected with the first meaning, but not so optimistic, is the pedagogy of debt. Jeffrey Williams assumes that the pedagogy of debt is not only a question of financial education, does not mean such narrow problems as students forced to loan if they want to go to the university. Debt is a more serious problem.

Debt is not just a mode of financing but a mode of pedagogy (Williams 2009, 93).

How pedagogy of debt changes classical pedagogy? What curriculum, what ideology, what subject we become when it is based on loans? Williams states that pedagogy of debt teaches students six lessons.

First, debt teaches that higher education is a consumer service. (...) Second, debt teaches career choices (...) Third, debt teaches a worldview (...) Fourth, debt teaches

civic lessons.(...) Fifth, debt teaches the worth of a person (...) Last, debt teaches a specific sensibility (ibid, 94-96).

Debt is a new “didactics machine” (Laskowski, 2011). This “debt machine” produces a subject and contributes to the neoliberal regime. When a student takes a loan, it reinstalls software in an educational institution.

The double crisis is as a battlefield.

If crisis is a battlefield, the exit can be found deep in the dark heart of capitalism. Agamben who wrote in his books about biopolitics, argued that it functions in the modern society as thanatopolitics. Bare life is the “hidden foundation on which the entire political system rested” (Agamben, 1998: 9). The politization of bare life is the foundation of the state of exception. The figure of homo sacer shows how a democratic society functions like a fascist society. But we cannot simply depolitizate.

Like Agamben says:

Just as the biopolitical body of the West cannot be simply given back to its natural life in the *oikos* (...) This biopolitical body that is bare life that is bare life must itself instead be transformed into the site for constitution and installation of a form of life that is wholly exhausted in bare life and a bios that is only its own zoe (idem: 188).

Agamben, like Negri and Hardt, assumes that “emancipations” is something immanent. Freedom will be born only in actual prisons. The new humanity can be born on the same foundation as the state of exception is established on (see about new humanity Bednarek 2010). Judith Butler wrote about the ambivalence of the immanent field: the neoliberal regime made life precarious, but our biological life is precarious itself. This biological precarity provokes us to build a society in which we can survive – more or less. The neoliberal regime only increases our precarity, so we have to break with the neoliberal economy, in the name of human precarity, in the name of a good human life (Butler, 2011).

So, like I said, a crisis is battlefield. Furthermore, the double crisis is double in another sense. On one hand, a crisis destroys our lives. On the other hand, a crisis is an opportunity, a possibility of different life. Because it is a crisis of the system– a crisis of economy, a crisis of institution, a crisis of democracy, a crisis of ideology – an answer to this crisis should be complete. The completeness can only be found in social struggle. We can find there a new meaning of education, a new concept of the institution of education. Not as something finished, but more as something which is still in progress.

Mike Neary and Sarah Amsler writing about a pedagogical aspect of Occupy movements assume that we cannot find common space and knowledge outside power relations. We cannot just exit the crisis, simply “deschooling” the society by abolishing ‘the curriculum and smashing the university (Neary, Amsler, 2012: 114). This view on politics is romantic and naive. We have to transform or rebuild the institution, curriculum, and so on, because there is nothing like an empty space, a space outside power. We have to produce “the social relation through which knowledge is created i.e., curriculum” (ibid: 115). The emancipation of education is a process which works within and against existing social relations and the university. Occupation works in crisis as another face of commoditization or value (ibid: 118-119).

In other words, liberation is not something which can be given or found. It is something which has to be won. Another education is not something that politics can give us. A new self-education already exists: in the streets; in the nomadic educational machine (Shukaitis, 2009).

Occupation as the education of the working class.

In November 2011, American students called for a general strike. This event taught students an unexpected lesson. Simone Weil (1999) wrote about her own experience of working in a factory, that a strike is a unique experience. When we read the sad and gloomy description of the working life and work; about humiliation and degradation, about exploitation, we cannot see a ray of hope. Workers’ everyday life is nothing more than a hard, ultra vires drudgery. The sad and gloomy air changes when workers walk out. A strike is festival. A strike is a holy day. A strike brings dignity, happiness and freedom. Managers stop shouting, their yells fade out. Workers start singing. A strike is the time when workers start working for themselves. It is a time for self-valorization. Benjamin (!986) write about strike in his essay about violence that strike is special event, special kind of violence. Strike is activity characterized with this, that people not made any demands, but they start live like a power does not exist. It is moment when multitude, on one side will destroy the state, on the other, they are creating a new models of life and a new institutions, without the state. Pedagogy of strike is really autonomy practice without the state and the market. The pedagogy of strike is practice of the commons.

When American students called for a general strike, they knew very well that the strike is not only a stoppage. A general strike as an idea is an event in which the world opens and people start living different than before.

A strike is general only if its limits are unsettled, expansive, indistinct: if it gives birth to unexpected subjects and sites of struggle (Reclamatio blog, 2011).

A strike revives some classical liberal education promises. Perhaps a struggle is the way to realize the idea of liberty without capitalism and the corruption of the government. Refusing to cooperate with the university education, students show how a really free education should look like.

What we saw with the open university at Berkeley on November 15, and what we will likely see in coming days at Davis, was a form of learning that emerged out of our collective refusal to participate in official university schedules. Our strike gave us time to meet together and to discuss, without the usual formalities or hierarchies, theoretical questions of direct relevance to our lives. This experience confirmed for us the falsity of the notion that a strike in support of public education is self-contradictory – now we know from experience that a better form of education is possible, that it lingers in the shadows of our universities, and that only through concerted strike actions will it reemerge (ibid).

A better education is possible when students start fighting. A strike which frees from the rules of the university and curriculum. A strike questions students' being as students. They refuse their own social roles (ibid). Same with workers. The refusal of work and becoming workers implicates a different form of production and transforms a factory into a different space. I think that a radical student movement is in a way as revolutionary as workers were/are.

Lina Dokuzović and Eduard Freudmann wrote about squatting the crisis. They wrote about the protest on October 20th in 2009 in Vienna:

Overall, the protests have not been limited to de-hierarchisation, appropriation of space(s), self-organisation and the examination of the conditions of work and study. They have rather been dominated by demands, criticism and claims that go beyond the immediate context of education and universities, expanding to the identification of how the neoliberal capitalist market logic has infiltrated all parts of life, commodifying and isolating them through racist and sexist policies of exclusion, deteriorating the very collectivity the protests have aimed to establish. The realisation that the fight for an improved educational system cannot be made specific but must

instead reflect and depend on changing the very structure and system that produces it, not through homogenising top-down reforms, but through grassroots democracy, evidences the authenticity of the protests. It's not about asking for a bigger piece of the pie or having the whole pie to yourself—it's about taking over the whole damn bakery (Dokuzović, Freudmann, 2010: 121)

Squatting is not only taking over a place, but also changing the place into a social center. It is not only taking over a place, but also transforming it. Squatting a building, we change its function – buildings are no longer accumulating machines, but start to be a place of living. Occupations, strikes, all forms of direct action are areas of actions in which we get knowledge on (self)education and (contr)production which will not be capitalized.

Like Neary and Amsler assume, occupying a place, we change it. This practice of *détournement of space and time* (Neary, Amsler 2012: 118; See also about *détournement*: Debord 2002; Debord, Wolman 2010) is a practice of constituting new time and space. Such practices “create autonomous educational institutions”, “new social relations”, as well as “alter-subjectivation” (ibid: 112). Therefore, these practices are educational practices themselves. It is a real democratic pedagogy, based on participation, self-government and creating social relations. Like Negri and Hardt say, referring to Thomas Jefferson:

(...) participating in government is a pedagogy in self-rule, developing peoples capacities and whetting their appetites for more. Democracy is something you can learn only by doing (Negri, Hardt 2009: 310).

Questions on knowledge production

In this part I am going to analyze the issue of knowledge production. Or, in different words, a problem of theory and practice. As I mentioned earlier, the university is a space where the production of knowledge is a subsumption under the capital. Therefore, knowledge is produced exactly like in a factory: hierarchization, control, disciplinary regime, and so on. This mode of production we can find in actual factories is alienation and commodity fetishism. In the university the production of knowledge separates theory from practice. The relation of theory to practice is hierarchical. Theory is more important. Theory is in the first place. Sometimes the university puts its own theory into practice, but this is the only way it connects the two things. For example, Nicholas Mirzoeff says about occupy theory:

Don't make the phrase into a noun: it's not a theory of occupation. Occupy theory is what you do as you occupy (Mirzoeff, 2011).

Lukács in his famous work *History and Class Consciousness* said that the problem with theory and practice is, in fact, a problem of organization (Lukács 1967). The university is a typical organization in which separation is necessary. If we want to connect theory and practice on non-hierarchical field, including cooperation, we have to create a special institution. Therefore, when students occupy a university and transform it, they change the mode of production. This is main questions what I write about.

Taking over the whole bakery implicates changing the mode of production. This new mode reconnects theory and practice. The new class university has to produce knowledge and create the world at this same time. Like Debord says, the working class finds its own university in democratic class councils (Debord 2002). Thus, creating a new university is creating a new world. Or, better, creating a new world is creating a new university. The theory is no longer pure, as well as reasons.

Conclusion

In conclusion, pedagogy of debt is a narrow concept producing subordinated workers or just forming "a graduate without future". We cannot assume that former liberal education is alternative. It is just privilege. Moreover, according to the concept of subsumption, both modes of the education produce a subject desired by the system. Both modes of the education are involved in injustice. Both legitimize hierarchy and silence social movements, radical theory and practice.

I am maintains that pedagogy of strike is the radical different model of education. If pedagogy of debt is didactic machine, pedagogy of strike is the nomadic educational machine. Pedagogy of strike is creating the new space and time. The pedagogy of strike is also new model of the knowledge production. It is revolutionary exodus. In this way, there is not distinction between refusal of work and anti-capitalist education. Both are parts of practices of the self-valorisation. The education which rises in the streets. This education comes with ordinary experience of militant multitude. Pedagogy of strike is practice of radical change the world without taking power. This education is a part of the revolutionary process - the real social Enlightenment.

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Free school choice in the neoliberal era. The case of Sweden

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Abstract

Sweden's education system used to be a role model in terms of quality and democratic education. Since the 1990's and the influence of neoliberalism, the country has introduced market-oriented policies in education and is considered to be one of the most decentralized school systems in the western world (Skolverket, 2009). One of the structural changes that occurred to the Swedish education system was the introduction of free school choice between existing municipality schools and the new publicly funded but privately managed schools (Arreman & Holm, 2011). By means of a voucher system, parents were given the chance to select the school of their preference, while the growing industry of profit-seeking educational companies was legalized to keep and use the profits gained (Fredriksson, 2009). The aim of this paper is to examine and critically analyze the neoliberal practice of free school choice in the case of Sweden and its outcomes in terms of segregation, costs and student achievements. Using document and secondary data analysis, the paper argues that free school choice has not delivered its promises and is actually increasing school variation, the importance of parents' cultural and economic capital as well as the students' underperformance. Since Sweden is currently facing an educational crisis that has become a serious political issue, it is worthy to rethink how this kind of practices has affected the quality and equity in education.

Keywords: Neoliberalism, Sweden, Free school choice, voucher system, independent schools.

Introduction

The production of public education has historically been a public concern and a non-profit activity (Fredriksson, 2009). Since the 1980s though, neoliberal policies on

education have questioned the concept of “one school for all students”, implying a far-reaching critique of centralized public education. Such a critique is based on arguments that public education is inefficient, bureaucratic, costs a lot of money, promotes inequality and is of low quality. As Fischman (2009) mentioned, the role of the state in regulating the private sector and in implementing policies of social justice or redistributing forms of the social capital like education are rejected as the “nanny state” by the advocates of neoliberal politics. Instead, models from the private sector are introduced in a restructuring process that changes the mandate, forms of capacity and government mechanism of education sectors (Robertson, 2007). “One school for each student” is the new motto of conservative coalitions, which translate it as the right of each student to self-development for as long as it is possible and according to each individual’s own capacity (Franscia, 2011).

In the Anglo-Saxon countries, the introduction of market-oriented policies was supposed to raise educational standards and reduce inequality (Lauder et al., 2006). With similar expectations, welfare states with a long tradition of democratic and egalitarian education have also introduced marketization and privatization practices in education, expecting an increase in performance and efficiency of the system. Sweden is maybe the most predominant example of a welfare state that implemented a neoliberal education model envisaging a more effective allocation of public funds, development of innovative pedagogies, increased teacher professionalism, improvement of teaching methods and student outcomes (Governmental bill 1991 as cited in Arreman & Holm, 2011). In this direction, Sweden has introduced policies that increased the decentralization and privatization of public education, as well as promoted the right of parents to choose for their children a school of their choice.

The present paper will focus its scope in the implementation of free school choice policy in the Swedish educational system and will further examine the impacts of this policy in terms of its intended goals. School choice has generally been praised as a positive policy that increases individual freedom and reduces government involvement in public school system (Harris, 2013). However, in the case of Sweden, it seems that segregation between schools has been increased (Skolverket, 2009) and the system is currently underperforming, according to the results of various international assessments as for example PISA (2012) and TIMSS & PIRLS (2011). Therefore, it is worthy to rethink how the recent embracement of neoliberal policies has influenced this situation.

Aims and objectives

This paper aims to critically analyze the policy of free school choice as it has been developed the last twenty years in the Swedish educational context and examine its impacts in comparison to its intended goals, as indicated by the modern research and official documents. By doing so, we envisage giving a clear image of the way that a neoliberal policy in education, such as school choice, is being transferred from the international to the national level and consequently being translated and transformed into practice (Cowen, 2009). Thus, the objectives of the paper are:

- To provide a theoretical framework of free school choice as a policy that has been promoted in the neoliberal education discourse.
- To present the way that this policy has been integrated and developed historically in the Swedish educational system.
- To identify and analyze the impacts of this policy in terms of segregation, the role of the parents, educational outcomes and costs.
- To describe the efforts of other countries to apply the Swedish model in their own education system.

For these reasons, we will try, at first, to provide an analysis between the connection of neoliberalism and education, as well as clarify the concepts of voucher system and school choice, as proposed by Friedman, in an attempt to set the theoretical background of our intended research. A brief overview of the Swedish educational system will in turn set the context within which the policy of free school choice is implemented. Afterwards, the policies that led to the current status of school choice will be presented, along with their main characteristics. The recent educational impacts and implications of free school choice will then be examined and relevant country cases will be mentioned. Finally, some conclusions are drawn from the analysis.

Significance of the study

Sweden is a unique example of a country that shifted so rapidly during the last 20 years from one of the most centrally regulated and uniform education systems in the OECD area into one of the most decentralized and market-oriented ones (Lundahl et al., 2013). A “Swedish model” of a quite different nature than its predecessor, which fostered full employment and social equality, has been developed and is attracting considerable attention internationally during the last years (Lundahl et al., 2013: 499).

The new model is characterized by large free school companies, competition between all schools at municipal and national level, new managerialism, educational assessment and free school choice. However, Lundaht et al. (2013) argued that characterizing the current situation as a complete shift to neoliberal education policy would be incorrect, since in parallel with the discourse for excellence, performance and competition, the values of social inclusion and equality still prevail, at least in the guidelines of the national curriculum for compulsory education.

The “Swedish model” that tends to become an example for conservative parties around Europe, as for example in the United Kingdom (UK), needs to be re-examined under the light of the latest international results that show a rapid decline in students’ performance. That is why the present study is trying to address the issues of inconsistency between the intended policies and their actual outcomes, indicating whether or not the free school choice in Sweden has led to positive outcomes that could be transferred in other educational context around the world.

Moreover, Sweden presents an interesting case to study, since it has adopted the voucher system proposed by Milton Friedman in a much more “market-conforming” way than its adoption from the USA (Chubbs as cited in Lindbom, 2010: 616). All education has remained free of charge for students and public and independent school agents are paid from the municipalities for each student that is registered in their school. According to Lindbom (2010), this public support to independent schools has led to an increased establishment of independent schools and to a rise in the number of pupils attending them. For these reasons, the Swedish version of school choice seems to reflect a good example of schools operating in a private marketplace, in accordance to Friedman’s ideas (Friedman as cited in Levin & Belfield, 2006). It is crucial though to examine whether this good example is actually working for the benefit of parents and individual students.

Last but not least, Apple (2006) argued that critical pedagogy cannot occur in a vacuum. If we want to produce a counter-hegemonic common sense, then we need to understand and face the neoliberal and neoconservative transformations. In this direction, we will try to provide a critical analysis of the transformations that occurred in the Swedish case after the gradual implementation of free school choice policy.

Methodology

After taking into consideration the objectives of the present study, a qualitative strategy is seen as the most appropriate orientation for conducting our research. A

case study is better reflecting the design of our research, since the main unit of analysis is the country (Sweden). Yin (2003) pointed out that case studies are more appropriate when “how” or “why” questions are being asked and when a more holistic study of the phenomenon is needed. In contrast to the statistics, case-oriented studies leave more space for interpretive analysis and our research objectives imply a need for interpretation and holistic understanding. Manzon (2007) also argued that country comparisons offer the advantage of providing a general framework for understanding and interpreting the relationships between education and society.

As the main research method, we are going to employ the secondary analysis of data. This method “entails the use of already produced data to develop new social scientific and/or methodological understanding” (Irwin, 2013: 295). According to Bryman (2012, p. 586), “in the context of qualitative data, it is possible that a secondary analysis will allow the researcher to mine data that were not examined by the primary investigators or that new interpretations may be possible”. Relevant research literature about free school choice and its impacts in Sweden will constitute the material of our study and will be further presented critically and cross-examined.

Key concepts and theories

Neoliberalism and Education: Raising the importance of choice internationally

As a political and economical movement, the dominance of neoliberalism is often attributed to Thatcher and Reagan in the 1980s. During that time the Keynesian inspired state intervention and the power of trade unions began to decline (McLaren, 2009). A successful struggle of the Right to form a popular broad-based alliance led to what Apple (2000: 59) refers to as “the conservative restoration”. This rightward turn that combined neoliberal and neoconservative ideologies achieved a political consent and transformed every kind of educational and social policy.

Inside this new context, education as a term has been redefined by means of its contribution to the economy. The needs of production and labor market are seen as the dominant forces that shape the character of schools. Across the world, neoliberal education reforms have been implemented in an effort to increase performance and efficiency, replacing the democratic political goal of education with the economic goal of “educating individuals to successfully compete in the global marketplace” (Apple as cited in Francia, 2011: 403). Education has been transformed into a product that individuals can buy and sell and in that sense lifelong learning was developed in accordance with the neoliberal notion that “the most worthy citizen is a flexible homo

economicus” (Ong as cited in Blum & Ullman, 2012: 368). Apple (2000) argues that by turning education into a commodity through voucher and choice plans, it becomes increasingly self-regulated. The individual is seen as a consumer that is deraced, declassed and degendered.

Such a transformative connection between neoliberalism and education raises the significance of school choice for parents that are seen as consumers inside a vast global market. While the advocates of neoliberal reforms are progressing in their efforts to reshape schools, more and more countries are implementing a free school choice policy. As indicated by Dudley-Marling and Baker (2012), some short of school choice has taken place in England and Wales, New Zealand, Australia and the United States. In England and Wales, school choice is supported by the open enrollment policies, the quasi-independent schools and the annual test scores’ publication. In New Zealand schools compete for student enrollments and in Australia many students attend private schools that are publicly funded. Last but not least, in the United States school choice has taken the shape of charter schools and is also contemplated by some regulations that allow parents to transfer their children out of the low-performing schools in the same district.

Voucher system and school choice

A voucher system that would enable parents to choose freely the schools that their children attend is the most feasible way to improve elementary and secondary education in the US. Such a voucher system will encourage privatization of a sizeable fraction of educational services. That will unleash the drive, imagination and energy of competitive free enterprise to revolutionize the education process. The competition will force government schools to improve in order to retain their clientele. Except for a small group who have a vested interest in the present system, everyone would win: parents, students, teachers, taxpayers, private entrepreneurs and, above all, the residents of the central cities.

(Milton Friedman, 1997: 341)

In one of his influential papers, Friedman (1997) argued that primary and secondary education in the US needs to be radically reconstructed and for that to be achieved, the better way is by gradually privatizing a significant part of the education sector. A voucher system that enables parents to choose freely a school for their children is considered to be the first step in transferring power from government to private enterprise. Vouchers are the means of moving from a government to a market system,

providing public schools with the competition they need to improve themselves and helping to reduce the stratification caused by the “new industrial revolution” (Friedman, 1997: 342). However, in order that vouchers can promote rapid privatization, they first need to be universal, available to all parents who can send their children to public schools, and secondly, they have to be large enough to cover the expenses of private for-profit schools that offer higher quality of education. In this way the government will still pay less for each student in education and more families will be motivated to supplement the voucher in order their children to receive an even higher standard of education. Last but not least, by becoming an active and profitable industry, education would attract many talented people to enter the teaching profession and engage themselves in the teaching process.

Friedman is widely considered as the theoretical source and ideological role model for researchers and politicians who believe that the state should provide funding, but not necessarily to education itself (Bunar, 2010). His ideas reflect a market-oriented position in education that imply a total support for school choice policy, competition and vouchers, not only as the means for attaining educational excellence and reducing the cost for tax-payers, but also for promoting social justice, since the most disadvantaged groups have the opportunity to move their children “out of the dilapidated schools in their neighborhoods” (Walford as cited in Bunar, 2010: 3).

As support for free school choice has been growing rapidly during the last decades and relevant policies have been implemented in various shapes in educational systems around the world, it is crucial to examine critically their present outcomes in comparison to their intended ideological goals. Sweden has been one of the most interesting cases that created an educational quasi-market, following the ideas of Friedman, but trying also to sustain the welfare character of its system, which promotes a comprehensive school of equity and integration.

Free school choice in Sweden

An overview of the Swedish educational system

The organization of the educational system is an individual goal, part of the vision for a fair and equal society, focused on equality of opportunities and equivalence of outcomes. The Swedish educational system is comprised of a number of types of schooling and education, designed for individuals of different ages and with differing needs and abilities. Compulsory education from the first to the ninth grade (7-16 years old) is free and is offered to all the Swedish citizens, regardless the income, the

cultural background or the social status (Wiborg, 2010; Ministry of Education and Research, 2008). Nursery schools and higher education are only partly funded by the government. (Swedish Institute, 2014)

Schools are divided into public and independent both funded by the municipalities. As for the administration, the municipalities are the principal organizers in the school system for the public schools, representing the National Agency for Education, whereas independent schools are responsible for themselves as privately managed units. (Skolverket, 2014).

The Swedish term for the independent schools is “friskola” (“free schools”) and it serves the distinction between a private and an independent school. A private school is totally or partly funded by the parents in the form of fees whereas an independent school is totally funded by the municipality, but privately managed, accepting the voucher system in full or not at all since any “adds-on” fees are not allowed (Lindbom, 2010). Independent schools are available in about 210 of the 290 municipalities in Sweden (MOER, 2011) and comparing urban and rural areas, the number of independent schools in rural areas is limited (Böhlmark & Lindahl, 2012). Cowen (2008: 15) assumed that “despite the rapid expansion of independent schools”, they still remained “in the minority” and in 2010 it is confirmed that almost 10 per cent of school units were privately run (Swedish Institute, 2014).

The Swedish Parliament and the Government set out the goals and guidelines for the whole education sector through the Education Act and the Curricula. The mission of the Agency is to actively work for the implementation of the policies and the attainment of the goals. Despite the way that curriculum is primarily formed, since the 90s and due to the decentralization, the schooling sector has been deregulated in order to better adjust to local demands (Ahlin and Mörk, 2007). The independent schools have to align with the national curricula or syllabi and the education must contain the general objectives, the values, knowledge and ideals that underpin the national documents (Alexandersson, 2011). By creating a school profile, for instance, on a specific pedagogical method (such as Montessori) or focusing on a specific school subject (such as sports, language, music, science etc), schools of all kinds aim to attract more students (Östh, Andersson & Malmberg, 2012; Cowen 2008).

The development of school choice policies in Sweden

By the early 1980s, the criticism of the neo-liberal ideology extended to the educational system and to social groups of scholars and teachers. It was supported that

the Swedish compulsory education “suffers from too much bureaucracy and too little democracy” (Bunar, 2010: 6), “leaving no room for individual differences and the wish of parents to shape their children’s education” (Englund, 2010: 245 as cited in Harris, 2013: 31). The Conservative Party demanded, therefore, a thorough reformation of these in order to be given more school alternatives. It is interesting to highlight that the attitude towards the role of the public sector changed within the Social Democratic Party itself. However, even though both the left and right welcomed neo-liberal policies, they did not drastically act for an immediate change (Skolverket, 2006).

In 1988, the state monopoly was broken and the decentralization was a fact. The relevant legislation affected the education system transferring power from the central state to the municipalities and the schools themselves. The decentralization process, according to Blomqvist (as cited in Wiborg, 2010: 10), “transformed the Swedish school system from a virtually all-public, bureaucratic operated system with very little room for parental choice, to one of the world’s most liberal public education systems”. In early 90s Sweden experienced recession and the banking crisis (Englund, 1999) while a voucher system was introduced in 1992, enhancing diversity and local initiative. For every student who chooses to enroll in school, the public school system should provide the school with the amount of money equal to the average cost per student (Böhlmark & Lindahl, 2012). The cost per student is established by the municipality including expenses on premises, school meals, teaching materials, teachers’ salaries etc and the payments of private providers are under municipal management. (Skolverket, 2007)

Several amendments to the Education Act were converted to reforms in Government Bill 1992/93:230 *Freedom of choice in schools*, which introduced school choice policy and open the path for publically funded, but privately managed schools (Harris, 2013). Before 1992 and this legal amendment to the Education Act, students were assigned to the public school in their inhabited area (Böhlmark & Lindahl, 2012). Private run schools were a few and less than 1% of school-age children attended them. Besides, “a mentality of discouragement, and even hostility, was shaped against the private providers” (Wiborg, 2010: 4). For this reason, private schools could “only survive financially through tuition or subsidies from the church” (Hepburn & Merifield, 2006 as cited in Harris, 2013: 32). Afterwards, a significant expansion of independent schools and students attending them has taken place. About a decade

later, during the 2008/2009 academic year almost 10% of pupils of compulsory school age attended these independent schools (Lindbom, 2010).

Harris (2013) described the gradual transmission of the responsibility to choose schools to parents in the amendments from 1992 to 2010. Thus, the following amendments are derived from Harris's dissertation in 2013. The amendments to the 1985 Education Act in 1992 introduced the ability of parents to request a different school from the one that was assigned to them, always within the same municipality. This request cannot be interpreted as a right to choose because it was not superior to the municipality's decision. Parents and guardians could express their satisfaction or dissatisfaction as far as it concerned the education system. Besides, independent schools were still a few.

After 1994, the 1985 Education Act changed and stated that the first requirement to place the children in schools was not that much whether the school is close to home, but that the parents' request should be taken into consideration. Furthermore, the limitation of choosing a school within the municipality was removed and parents could theoretically choose any school in all of Sweden. It is believed that the reforms to the 1985 Education Act in 1994 established school choice without giving to the guardians an official role since the municipality still had the main responsibility of allocating students.

The amendment in 2007 took place with purpose to "improve order, safety and learning environment" (Harris, 2013: 43). The municipality was not obliged to align with parents' requests if their children unsettle other students' safety and learning environment.

The new amendment in 2010 strengthened and established the role of parents as choice-makers of their children's school. They are entitled to choose -or not to choose at all- which school their children will attend outside of their municipality where they live. The actual choice no longer belongs to the municipality, but specific issues such as "organizational or economic difficulties for the municipality" and "the overall safety and health of the child" should be taken into consideration (Harris, 2013: 44). In these cases, the request may be denied by the municipality.

The Swedish model of choice

The general rationale is that through school competition to attract students and the participation of many different providers several goals will be accomplished.

Considering the relevant literature review (Bunar, 2010; Harris, 2013; Wiborg, 2010), we state that the intended goals were the following:

- Ensured equal learning opportunities for students since the choice is made consciously and with specific purpose.
- Increased variety of choices.
- Empowered parental involvement that could make the system more democratic.
- Enhanced alternative educational paths thanks to differentiated curricula.
- Improved school management and a more effective allocation of resources in the school system through school competition.
- More qualified teachers have to be hired by schools.

School choice is performed to offer variety of choices and to increase opportunities for pupils to attend different schools. School choice urges parents to be more involved in the educational process, while somehow obliges local authorities and schools to listen to the needs and desires of parents and children and improve their offerings (Skolverket, 2006; Sommers, 2010). Anastasia de Waal (as cited in Cowen, 2008) stated that the Swedish school choice system meets the demands of parents for a “good” school. School choice system starts the debate about what is defined as “good school” and authorizes alternative pedagogy to take place and be implemented in the education system offering pluralism. It was stated by Alexandersson (2011) that more and more parents are exercising this possibility of choice from 21st century and onwards. The number of independent schools is also increasing, and “today free school choice is seen as a right” (Swedish Institute, 2014).

School competition can impel schools to improve quality and contribute to greater efficiency in allocating resources and resulting in lower costs per student (Böhlmark & Lindahl, 2012; Skolverket, 2006; OECD, 2005). The competition will also exist between public schools if there are no independent schools within a municipality. As the competition will be among schools, schools would also attempt to raise their quality and enrich their reputation attracting high-skilled educators.

The concept of school choice is based on equivalence for both individual and education system and aims to improve social equity and equality (Sommers 2010; Skolverket, 2006). The term “equality” indicates “being the same in quantity, size, degree, or value” (Oxford Online Dictionary). However, Alexandersson (2011: 195)

highlighted that “equivalence implies not only equality but also freedom to decide how to realize objectives and obligations”. The wording ‘equivalent’ (rather than ‘equal’) is emphasized as it indicates an ideological shift from a same treatment of children in a more personalized and attentive to their needs (OECD, 2005:14). Thanks to this distinction, the rewording of policy in Education Act 2010 can be better perceived. The Education Act 1985 (as cited in Harris, 28) stated that “the education shall be of equal standard within each type of school, wherever in the country it is provided”, when according to the Education Act 2010 “education in the school system shall be equivalent within each type of school and within afterschool care regardless where in the country it is provided”.

The key elements of the Swedish model, as it is implemented nowadays, are the admission criteria, the voucher system, the allowance of making profit and the type of competition. The admission criteria are three; proximity, waiting list and sibling priority (Böhlmark & Lindahl, 2012). Public schools serve first students who belong to that municipality whereas independent schools accept pupils ranked in order of priority, according to the “first come, first serve” principle and based on siblings criteria. Therefore, in this case schools have a slight participation in making the choice (OECD, 2005: 19).

The voucher system follows students to the schools. Besides, it is banned for both independent and public schools to charge any fees for the students’ admission and attendance. In other words, independent schools are funded by the municipality depending on the number of the enrolled students, being free to gain the relevant profit. Therefore, municipalities with more students receive more funding and the vice versa (Harris, 2013; Bunar, 2010; Wiborg, 2010).

Nevertheless, making profit is legal for independent schools and this possibility is a peculiarity of “a country traditionally based on social democratic values” (Lundström and Parding, 2011: 3). That means that they are not obliged to reinvest their profits for educational purposes unlike the municipal ones. Moreover, there are some companies behind the names of independent schools seeking to expand outside of Sweden. In fact, some of them “are publically traded on the stock market” having the profile of a company “which means that eventual profits can be distributed among shareholders” (Lundström and Parding, 2011: 3). Although the number of independent schools was limited before the 1990s, in recent years have increased and are recognized as a popular educational unit and supported by large political parties (Harris, 2013;

Lundström and Parding, 2011). Bearing also in mind that this reform period coincided with other actions and amendments that broadened the role of the market (Lidström, 1999), it plausibly understood the rapid growth of the institution of independent schools.

Sweden pursued to take advantage of efficiency gains from a quasi-market system combining it with equivalence and its tradition of egalitarianism (Ahlin, 2003). This kind of competition concerns what a school can offer to the students in terms of increasing productivity and it is not based on competition “by selecting the best students” as happens to the Chilean system (MacLeod and Urquiola, 2009 as cited in Böhlmark & Lindahl 2012: 32). Schools cannot select students based on their performance, but compete with each other in order to attract students. However, Niepel, Edmark and Frölich (2013: 11) maintained that there are three assumptions regarding competition that should be taken into consideration: “ a) that school quality is a determining factor for the choice of school; b) that parents can observe school quality; c) that schools have an incentive to attract students”.

School Choice Impacts

In the following section, we analyze the impacts of school choice reforms in Sweden, taking into consideration the intended goals of these policies and their actual implementation. It becomes clear that each of the below mentioned impacts has several and complex implications for all the actors involved, as well as for the learning process.

Parents as choice-makers

According to Harris (2013), one of the most prominent effects of the school choice policy in Sweden is that parents become personally responsible for choosing the “best” school for their children. As a result of their role as choice-makers and their involvement in allocating students to schools, parents receive personal responsibility for the quality of education that they provide to their children. By choosing one school, it means that they have rejected another and so it’s their responsibility if they didn’t choose the right school. In firmly economic terms this is translated as an opportunity cost that comes out from making a choice between a set of goods (in this case schools) and implies the benefits that one could have received by taking an alternative choice. Choosing one school over another bears the opportunity cost of losing the benefits that the other school could have offered.

School choice theory assumes that parents will choose the “best” school possible, linking this way their choice with the quality of the schools their children attend. Such an assumption though implies that there is a variety of high and low performing schools that parents could probably choose. In Sweden, if a school proves to be low performing and not efficient for a specific student, then the school is accountable to the municipality and the municipality to the guardians. However, the parents are also accountable for choosing the low performing school at first place. Thus, it is evident that one clear consequence of the free school choice is the assumption that parents are capable of making the “best” choice for their children, even though not all of them make the same informed choices. Another consequence is that if a parent makes a wrong choice, then the child must bear all the consequences of attending a low performing school. Lastly, when selecting a low performing school the role of parents in creating competition and in changing the supply of schools is marginal.

Before the Education Act of 2010, parents had the opportunity to voice their concerns and demands for equivalent education in any school around Sweden. The democratic right of keeping the municipality accountable for providing equity and quality in education has been transformed after 2010 in the right to choose individually a school of their preference. “The previous role of guardians to voice their concerns as collective rights-bearing individuals is overshadowed by this focus on personal choice because the main power of each guardian has shifted from their voice to their choice” (Harris, 2013: 49). Whereas in a public education system without choice the citizens can demand change, in a market-oriented education system the consumers have the ability to change their preference but not to demand any change from the provider who is not accountable to them. Obviously, business-oriented schools will adjust to the customer’s preferences because they want to keep them, but not because they are legally bounded to do so. What appears to be a freedom to choose illustrates that parents are implicated inside the education system in a way that former freedoms or rights they had are gradually silenced. Their role as rights-bearing citizens has been transformed to choice-making citizens.

Increased importance of the cultural capital

Free school choice has clearly increased the importance of parents’ level of education and has strongly linked it to the students’ academic achievement. When looking at the data provided by the National Agency of Education (Skolverket, 2009) it is evident that both test results and the opportunity to progress into secondary education have

decreased over the last years for children whose parents have received only a pre-secondary level of education. Skolverket (2009) indicated that the effect of pupils' social background has significantly increased and it is the main factor behind the grade point average outcomes and general school achievement results of students.

Moreover, Swedish research (Alexandersson, 2011: 210) on the policy of school choice has proved that "the earlier the educational choice and the earlier the differentiation, the stronger becomes the impact of the social background". Recent reforms have tried to combine choice and equivalence, the two political ideals in the Swedish school system, but their balance is questionable. Pupils with a strong social, economic and cultural capital seem to have a smoother path through upper secondary education. Furthermore, high performing students tend to choose the same schools and in this way social reproduction is maintained (Alexandersson, 2011).

Bourdieu's theory on the forms of capital could probably shed some light on the case of school choice and indicate whether individual factors like the family background is more important eventually than the institutional mechanisms. "All agents do not have the economic and cultural means for prolonging their children's education beyond the minimum necessary for the reproduction of the labor-power least valorized at a given moment" (Bourdieu, 2006: 108). The cultural and economic capital of the family determines the child's choice for school, implying that the "free" choice is not so free eventually. Unconsciously as it is transmitted, the cultural capital receives greater weight in the system of reproduction strategies, since the more visible forms of transmission are better monitored and controlled. Social mobility studies show clearly that different social groups have different education and career opportunities, either in Sweden or elsewhere (Alexandersson, 2011).

Increased Competition

As indicated by the theory of school choice policy, "competition should result from the demand of guardians, which then theoretically leads to the natural weeding out of unattractive schools which do not receive enough funding to stay open" (Harris, 2013: 51). In practice this implies that increased variation and inequality between schools is a sign of healthy market. However, there is a paradox when trying to apply the competition of the marketplace in the Swedish context, because equivalence between schools is a protected right of the citizens according to the Education Act. The only way to guarantee an equal quality of schools would be if all parents could make collectively choices that together would increase the quality of schools in an equal

way. Parents make choices though in an individual way, following their own rational and self-interest that cannot ensure an equal or qualitative outcome. Moreover, all parents may not share similar notions with the policy makers on what is considered to be the “best” school.

By being implicated in the process of determining which school is “best”, parents lose their right to be protected from inequality and its adequate costs. The municipalities are still accountable to citizens for providing their legal rights, but parents are now the ones responsible for protecting their own rights. Furthermore, as a result of increased competition, parents and students receive advertisements from both public and independent schools and after a choice has been made, parents are the ones filling in forms for the school that their child will attend. These choices are made when the child is about to enter the first grade or to leave the third, sixth and ninth grade (Östh et al., 2013).

Apart from the role of parents, competition becomes a predominant factor that influences the inner life of schools. Outcomes become more and more important than learning itself, because they are measurable and easily advertised. The increased pressure of competition causes the isolation of individuals within homogenous groups and threatens the equality of people that share a common background (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2006). Inside this context, it is also evident from the Swedish case that students’ influence and participation become less important. In their research in upper secondary Swedish schools, Lundahl and Olson (2013) argued that students’ voice is neglected when it comes to the forms and contents of their regular schoolwork and that teachers do not take into serious account the student initiatives. Competitive attitudes tend to marginalize the less quantifiable aspects of the curriculum, as for example the opportunity to express your concerns as part of a democratic citizenship that is highly valued in the goals of the national curriculum, at least in theory. Students are seen as representatives for the marketing of the school and that is why their initiatives include a risk of being considered as obstacles for the school’s advertised image.

Equity problems and segregation

As mentioned above, Sweden is often characterized as an equitable society and it is true that in the Swedish education system both the most and the least privileged groups have good opportunities to progress in tertiary education (Franscia, 2011). However, the last decades a shift has been noticed from education as a common good

to stressing the individual's freedom of choice (Alexandersson, 2011). This shift to individualization has created certain expectations for the process of learning. As Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2006: 144) pointed out "individualized lifestyles and life situations forces people to make themselves the centre of their own life plans and conduct". Individuals become exclusively responsible for their own success or failure and the state plays even more often a less significant role-

Individualization in the Swedish school system has harnessed the learning opportunities of ethnic minorities and socially marginalized groups (Francia, 2013). Individualization strategies assume that children are competent to choose what to study, how and where they would like to study it, without always considering the different backgrounds. Moreover, the teacher's role as a facilitator for students' social mobility has been neglected and schools have been transformed into "therapeutic places" with no clear rules, resulting in the deterioration of school learning environments and lower expectations for children and their professional choices (Frykman as cited in Francia, 2013: 18). Individualization strategies need to assure that academic knowledge and standards will be fairly disseminated among all students in order to achieve positive learning outcomes. That is why Francia (2013) suggested that the impacts of neoliberal individualization policies on differentiated curriculum strategies for students with a foreign background need to be re-examined.

Apart from the rise of individualization though, there are clear indications that school choice reforms have contributed to an increased segregation between schools (Skolverket, 2009). The National Agency of Education has conducted various studies (Skolverket, 2006; 2009) that show an increase in homogenization within schools' pupil cohorts and a rise in attainment differences between various groups of pupils and between different schools. The report of 2006 (as cited in Skolverket, 2009) indicated that by using parents' socio-economic background as a measure, a 10% increase of segregation between schools has been noticed between 1998 and 2004. However, it's not only the visible segregation, which is based on social background, gender and ethnicity that has been noticed to increase, but also the invisible segregation. This type of segregation may have occurred because of the tendency of motivated and well-performing students to choose schools with a higher percentage of Swedish students, whose parents have a higher level of education.

Furthermore, the National Agency has concluded that "school-level effects have intensified and that the specific school a pupil attends has gained increased

significance for how a pupil performs” (Skolverket, 2009: 24). This implies that exogenous factors such as peer group effects and teacher expectations influence a pupil’s school outcomes even more since the implementation of school choice policies. For example, if a student’s grades are influenced by the performance of friends and classmates and a teacher has higher expectations for Swedish students with highly educated parents, then the increasing homogeneity inside schools, along with the above mentioned contextual factors constitute a serious threat in delivering equitable education for all students (Skolverket, 2009). Of course other factors such as housing segregation in urban areas, decentralization and several structural changes that have occurred in Sweden since the 1990s are also playing a significant role in school segregation.

Impacts on learning and achievement

Östh et al. (2013: 422) argued that in the case of Sweden, school results have not improved and that “with expanding school choice, the differences between schools have increased and, at the same time, Sweden’s comparative performance has declined”. Performance here is strongly associated with the existence of independent schools and the argument that they can increase the overall attainment of students by competing with each other and with public schools.

In their research, Björklund et al. (as cited in Wiborg, 2010) were not able to identify a positive impact of free schools on educational attainment and Böhlmark and Lindahl (as cited in Wiborg, 2010) indicated an increased performance in favor of free schools only in grade 9, whereas in medium or long-term educational outcomes, such as upper-secondary education, university attainment or years of school, they didn’t find any impact. The latter study also showed that children with highly educated parents have greater benefits from independent schools, but the same doesn’t apply on families or immigrants with a low level of education. In addition, Bunar (2010) argued that there is no clear correlation between the number of independent schools in a municipality and their competitive impact on the average grades for students in the public schools of the same municipality.

The impacts of school choice and other market-oriented policies have also been prominent in the notion of learning itself. Inside this context, democratic values like solidarity, collective action and active civic engagement cannot find their place in the learning process. Group work as a learning method is hardly functioning inside a context of individualization and competition. Classroom practice inside Swedish

compulsory school indicates that “group work as a form of classroom practice happens less often and even when pupils do work in groups, the tendency is for their work to lead to individual assignments” (Skolverket, 2009: 45). Creativity and students’ initiatives are marginalized and collective methods of learning are hardly functioning. New identities for students have also been introduced, as for example the consumer, the school advertiser, the entrepreneur.

Upper secondary education is the sector most attractive to corporate interests and therefore the market-oriented policies have a greater influence in it. The last five years there were several incidents of companies that owned upper secondary schools and had to close down due to a lack of students. As a result, many students that attended those schools had to change school in the middle of the year, causing them a lot of stress and insecurity. One of the students from the student union mentioned in a local newspaper that the company “promised students something they cannot deliver” (The Local, 2013). For those students their educational achievements are seriously harnessed and the way for entering university becomes certainly much more difficult and stressful.

Impacts on costs

Increased competition does not necessarily lead to lower costs. In the case of Sweden the costs have risen, especially in municipalities where there is a high proportion of independent schools. Those municipalities have financial problems in the form of overcapacity and significant increase in costs. As indicated by the Swedish National Agency for Education (as cited in Wiborg, 2010), the reason for that cost-increase is that public schools have to accept every child living in a certain attendance zone and maintain a certain level of education. Many of them have long-term contracts for expensive buildings and also the agreements between teacher unions and the municipalities make it very difficult to characterize staff as redundant. An increased cost is also caused by the educational planning which becomes more demanding in the sense that pupils are changing schools more regularly.

Those findings are further supported by Olsson and Rottbers, in their Master thesis conducted for the Uppsala University at 2013. Their research included in the definition of competition, both private and public educational providers, proving that increasing costs could also be expected when pupils choose another school than the one offered by their home municipality. Especially for upper secondary schools, increased competition has led to an increased discrepancy in the composition and

movement of the pupil cohort, which in turn explains educational costs. Difficulties in planning related to a school's operation and size also imply educational costs, since for example in a small municipality with a small number of schools it would be very difficult to deal with overcapacity and the financial situation connected to it. Municipalities struggle to find new spots for students registered in them and the situation becomes even less cost-effective, when private education providers are closing down schools because of low attendance and to reduce costs.

Finally, the time spent on marketing of schools is contributing to a higher cost in expense to the quality of education. Some of the various means used to attract students and their parents include: open houses and school fairs, printed materials and advertisements in the daily newspapers, the internet, radio and TV, mailshots, emails and text messages, whereas special offers such as laptops, cinema tickets, access to gym etc. were common (Lundahl et al., 2013: 506).

Swedish lessons for England and Canada

English politicians have expressed their interest to implement the policy of free school choice, but it is not clear how this could be operated in England. The major parties support greater diversity and autonomy concerning school units, all in different ways. The Conservatives' suggestion is based on the Swedish "free schools" and the "charter schools" in USA, by giving the opportunity to the private initiative to manage schools and to empower parental choice (Gille, 2010; McLean & Hammond, 2012).

Conservatives supported that the Swedish model includes all their ambitions for English educational system (Johansson & Moss, 2012), while Gove (as cited in Paton, 2008), the secretary of state for education, believed that Sweden and England are different countries but with a "surprisingly similar" state system. For this reason it is believed that the introduction of this policy will succeed as succeeded in Sweden.

The policy for school choice aims to extend the freedom of choice for the parents and the same time to decrease selection in order to give equal access opportunities to students. However, the Right and the Left intend to limit the choice with additional rules. The policy will also make the free schools responsible for their curricula, educational paths and premises as bearers of educational innovation (Cowen, 2008). Furthermore, increased freedom of choice will result to positive outcomes as well as the competition, which is considered the main component that benefits the Swedish education policy (Taylor, 2009). It is also expected that the independent schools, as they perform in Sweden, will increase the number of school places since, because of

local authority admission rules, students cannot attend the school of their preference. (Sowter as cited in Henry, 2011; Taylor, 2009).

Wiborg (2010), however, noted that English policy makers argue about the cost of the Swedish reform and the allowance of making profit while teachers' union emphasizes the risk of school segregation (NASUWT, 2014). Besides, it is also criticized the speed with which free schools are introduced (McLean & Hammond, 2012). The main question of the Left is that this policy dictates the best students to enroll to "good schools" while it does not provide a mechanism to rescue the "non-good schools" that will fail (Cowen, 2008).

Similar educational policies to expand the right of parents in choosing and to enhance competition are also popular in Canada. The demand for a new policy has been shaped to favor learning outcomes and individualized teaching practices. (Hepburn & Merrifield, 2006). Studies for Canada confirm that Sweden is considered as the country which has implemented the school choice with success. It is believed that the competition and the free school choice among public and independent schools benefited Sweden and increased the quality of public schools. In the case of Canada, the implementation is more complex due to the different regulations that each province implies (Clemens et al., 2014).

Conclusions

From a role model in terms of quality and democratic education, Sweden's educational system has been gradually transformed to resemble a neoliberal model of quite different nature. As examined, the decision to introduce a voucher system and give parents the responsibility of choosing schools was already taken since 1992, but the process of transferring full responsibility to parents was not complete, not until 2010, when municipalities lost their responsibility of placing students to schools. The policy makers in Sweden pursued to apply the policy of free choice with gradual steps and the current situation is characterized by an increasing number of independent for-profit schools that are not obliged to reinvest their profit for educational purposes, increased competition and serious implications for the process of learning.

In the Swedish case, we came to conclude that the intended goals of the school choice policy have not been accomplished in practice. Instead, the implementation of this policy along with other market-oriented policies have resulted in increased inequalities, segregation of schools and vulnerable social groups, declined performance, rise in costs and a totally different role for parents. Parental background

and cultural capital have become more crucial than ever and learning has been strongly connected with the family's socio-economical status. Creativity and students' initiatives are marginalized and collective methods of learning are hardly functioning in a context of individualization and competition. New identities for students have also been introduced, as for example the consumer, the school advertiser, the entrepreneur. We need to realize though, that researches connecting neoliberal policies and performance in Sweden are sometimes ambivalent and further research needs to be undertaken in order to go more deeply in the implications of marketization practices inside the classroom.

In the case of other countries the lessons learned from Sweden could be useful. The "Swedish model" that attracts the attention of Canada and the conservative party in England, should be re-examined by taking into consideration the more recent studies and the country's international underperformance. It is also reasonable to think that if the defragmentation of a welfare state's public education was inevitable due to global trends, then other countries around the world with a less equitable and social justice system are more vulnerable in the forces of neoliberalism. In Sweden most people are willing to pay even higher taxes in order to improve welfare benefits and eight out of ten Swedes are against profit-making in the welfare sector (Franscia, 2011). Therefore, the policies could be re-adjusted in the future, but this cannot be expected to happen in different country contexts, if the same policies are applied.

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Empowering potential of critical reading for non-native English teacher candidates

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Abstract

Freire (1970) argues that the oppressed internalize the views of the oppressor on them and they have "an existential duality": they are both themselves and the oppressor. While they feel an attraction towards the oppressed, they are engaged in self-depreciation and they lack confidence. These feelings of inferiority and helplessness are also common in non-native English teacher candidates, as they think their language proficiency is deficient when compared to their native English speaking counterparts. Although non-native teachers have many advantages over native speaker teachers of English such as being a better model, teaching language learning strategies more effectively and anticipating language learning difficulties (Medgyes, 2001), most of them are not able to see their strengths internalizing the views of native speakerist ideology (Holliday, 2005). This paper discusses how student-teachers studying English Language Teaching at a central public university in Turkey start transforming their unquestioned beliefs about themselves when engaged in critical reading on the relative strengths and weaknesses of native and non-native teachers of English and the changing status of English as an international language. Student reflections and online forum discussions indicate that through their assigned readings most of the junior students come to realize they may have positive attributes as non-native speakers of English in a rapidly changing world where the majority of speakers of English are non-native. While some of them find it hard to accept the idea that English does not only belong to inner circle countries (Kachru, 1985), they are more open to discovering their inner strengths as learners of English as a foreign language. This paper demonstrates that critical literacy is crucial in unveiling the native-speakerist understanding internalized by non-native student-teachers of English.

Keywords: Non-Native Teachers of English, Pre-Service Language Teacher Education, Empowerment, Critical Literacy.

Introduction

Attempting to teach a language which has a colonial history bears some colonial residues even at a time when that language became an international language in which everybody who speaks it should ideally "own" it (Widdowson, 1994). If you chose that profession as a person who came to meet that language at a certain age not as a natural member of that language community, you are doomed to face discrimination as your whole being is reduced into the status of a *non*-member of that community. In fact, even the very distinction of being a "native" and "non-native" reveals the underlying discriminating ideology. What is worse, educated in a cultural and intellectual atmosphere where the natural members of that language community are glorified to the expense of its latecomers, you may come to internalize the outlook of the insiders looking down on the outsiders and may become estranged to your own situation.

As it might be obvious, this is the situation if you are attempting to teach English as a non-native speaker of English. First of all, being a *non*-native, you are not allowed to have equal rights to the language from the outset. You are usually put under the spotlights with your so-called deficient English language skills and most often find yourself being compared to a native speaker of English by your employers, students, and even colleagues. Constantly reminded of your *non*-status, you start to lose your self-confidence. This prejudice is also reflected into the employment policies. Those people coming from English speaking communities get teaching positions whether they are qualified as language teachers or not putting the non-native teachers of English at a disadvantage. As Ali (2009, p. 37) asserts, the field of English language teaching is perhaps the only field in which the majority - being the non-native teachers of English - face discrimination. Ironically, this happens at a time when the number of non-native speakers of English outnumber the native speakers and 80% of English teachers are non-native speakers of that language (Braine, 2010).

This unfair situation faced by many non-native English teachers around the world today has a lot to do with the colonial past of English (Pennycook, 1998). Being a minor language in 1600s, English became the language of international communication in the following four centuries, especially with the colonization of

British Empire and the vast amounts of funds allocated by the United States to the spread of English after the World War II (Phillipson, 1992). However, in the field of English language teaching neither the colonial past of English language, nor the current efforts to spread English around the world with the use of political, social and economic power are seldom mentioned. The growth of English is treated as a natural trend happening by chance (Phillipson, 1992). Those working in the field are mostly led to believe that this is an inevitable fact of the times and they rarely question the underlying political, economic and cultural reasons. They are also usually ignorant of the consequences of the dominance of English (Phillipson, 1992), since the English language teaching suffers from an overemphasis on the technical matters excluding political, social and economic issues.

Phillipson (1992) examines the historical spread of English in terms of the exportation of English from the core English-speaking countries - Britain, the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand - to the periphery-English countries. As the language spread from the core English countries to the periphery, the target language form taught and learnt has historically been the most prestigious one in the core English countries. However, with the emergence of the notions of World Englishes and English as a lingua franca, native-speaker norms have started to be challenged. As Kachru (1985) distinguished the outer circle countries (e.g. the former colonies like India and Singapore where English is still an official language) and the expanding circle countries (e.g. Turkey, Greece, and Japan which use English for international communication) from the inner circle countries, the notion of a diversity of Englishes rather than a single type of English dominant in the core English speaking countries started to become acknowledged.

No matter how the dominance and standardization of English have started to be challenged, the language teaching pedagogy is still trying to be disseminated from the English speaking core to the periphery (Phillipson, 1992, Kumaravadivelu, 2003). For one thing, English language teaching is big business making thousands of dollars for the inner circle countries. For another, when the language teaching pedagogy is prescribed by the inner-circle countries as universal rules of language teaching, it is easier to impose the hidden norms which contribute to the maintenance of the domination of English (Phillipson, 1992). Through English language teaching, the inner circle countries had political and economic advantages and they were easily influencing the mindset of the people in the periphery who internalized the dominant

values. In fact, English language teaching, which is claimed to be the product of colonialism (Pennycook, 1998), was used to promote English linguistic and cultural imperialism in which the center keeps the periphery in a dependent situation by providing the people in the periphery with the resources and materials and limiting their chances of flourishing their own cultural and linguistic resources (Phillipson, 1992).

In order for the inner circle countries to maintain their economic and social advantages, some basic tenets of English language teaching were promoted such as the idea that the ideal teacher of English is a native speaker, English is best taught monolingually, and the use of the mother tongue is sin (Phillipson, 1992). These basic notions were disseminated through language teaching methodologies prescribed to the whole world. When the monolingual teaching of English was underlined, native speaker teachers of English would have a natural advantage over those teachers whose native languages were not English. Yet, just as the phenomenon of World Englishes has come to be recognized, the native speakerist ideology which characterizes the non-native speaker as culturally and linguistically deficient (Holliday, 2005) also started to be challenged. Rather than targeting a so-called standard native-like English and universal norms in teaching English that would be followed all around the world, the importance of local intelligibility and local contexts started to be taken into consideration in learning and teaching English (Holliday, 2005). The fact that English does not only belong to the inner-circle countries, but to everyone who speaks it has become acknowledged (Widdowson, 1994). In the English language teaching profession, the notion that English should be taught not attached to a single culture, but *as* an international language started to be recognized (Canagarajah, 1999).

In order to fight against discrimination towards non-native English teachers of English and to ensure non-native teachers of English speak for themselves in the professional and academic circles, Non-Native-speaker English Caucus was set up in 1999 in TESOL organization (Sung, 2012). With the efforts of this group, George Braine, the founder of the movement, thinks the attitude to see non-native speaker teachers as "second rate" has started to change (Sung, 2012). Yet, he believes there is still much to be done. Given the fact that the concept of a native-speaker is considered to be a linguistic myth and idealism (Paikeday, 1995, Alptekin, 2002, Cook, 1999), the comparisons as to native and non-native teachers should come to an end.

Despite the efforts to change this situation of discrimination among the ELT professionals, it seems as though it will not disappear so easily partly because of the false consciousness of the people who are themselves victims of discrimination. Acculturated in an atmosphere where native speaker norms were imposed as the ideal forms of language use, non-native teachers of English suffer from feelings of insufficiency as it is not possible for them to catch up with the unattainable goal of becoming a native speaker (Cook, 1999). Research shows that non-native teachers of English are usually self-conscious and they are engaged in self-discrimination (Moussu and Llurda, 2008). Medgyes (1983) went even so far as to describe this situation as a of a split personality in which non-native teachers of English were thrown into a state of schizophrenia. Comparing themselves constantly with the native-speaker ideal in their minds, they never find their own linguistic competence and performance sufficient enough to teach. Thus, they are overwhelmed by feelings of weakness (Llurda, 2009).

While Llurda (2009) associates this subordination of non-native teachers of English to native speaker models with the Stockholm Syndrome in which the hostages of a bank robbery in Stockholm formed an emotional attachment with their captors, I will adopt a Freireian theoretical framework to explain the powerlessness experienced by non-native teachers of English. Freire (1970) characterizes any exploitation or injustice towards an individual as an act of oppression as that individual is not allowed to become fully human. Likewise, the discrimination faced by the non-native teachers of English is an act of oppression. For Freire (1970), this is also a dehumanizing process in which the abused are not recognized fully with their own identities. For this situation of oppression to be overcome, Freire asserts, the oppressed should come to realize the situation they are in and engage in a struggle to combat the situation.

However, Freire (1970: 45) believes, at the beginning of the struggle against oppression, the mindset of the oppressed is conditioned by the oppressors: "Their ideal is to be men; but for them, to be men is to be oppressors. This is their model of humanity. This phenomenon derives from the fact that the oppressed, at a certain moment of their existential experience, adopt an attitude of "adhesion" to the oppressor." The attachment of the oppressed to the oppressor is so great they have a deep admiration for the oppressor's way of life. This could be seen in the non-native teachers' general glorification of the native speaker and the native speaker norms. Freire (1970) describes the oppressed as "divided beings" who have a duality in

themselves: they are both themselves and the consciousness of the oppressor they internalized. Similarly, while non-native speaker teachers seem to feel self-conscious because of their accents or lack of fluency, deep down they may appreciate their own efforts to have a great mastery over a foreign language.

Freire maintains that *self-depreciation* is another trait of the oppressed who internalize the opinion of the oppressors of them. As Freire (1970: 63) puts it, "So often do they hear that they are good for nothing, know nothing and are incapable of learning anything - that they are sick, lazy and unproductive - that in the end they become convinced of their own unfitness." Likewise, exposed to a whole body of discourse which favors the native-speakers either explicitly or implicitly (Pennycook, 1998), non-native speaker teachers of English come to believe they are not good enough. For instance, they may prefer to remain silent after listening to a lecture by a native-speaker of English in order not to "contaminate the air" (Medgyes, 1983).

At this stage, Freire (1970) believes the oppressed have no awareness as to themselves as members of an oppressed class. Despite the efforts to create an awareness on the part of the non-native speaker English teachers, a large majority of them seem to be under the influence of the native-speakerist ideology. To emancipate from this oppressor consciousness, Freire (1970) maintains, the oppressed should first realize that this is not an inevitable situation from which there is no escape, but a situation they can transform. Llorca (2009) thinks that in order to get rid of this self-confidence problem, non-native teachers of English should claim an ownership of the language and come to see themselves as legitimate language users. They have two options: they will either stick to the old native-norms and continue to be disempowered or they will acknowledge the existence of English as an International Language and become empowered as users of the English language.

Critical literacy is regarded as an important consciousness-raising medium by Freire (1987), as he advocates reading the word to understand the world. He asserts that literacy could be used to reproduce the existing social order as in the case of non-native teachers of English coming to believe their own powerlessness through an exposure to the existing literature favoring native-speakers. However, through critical emancipatory literacy, Freire (1987) claims, the oppressed people can recreate their own culture and language. By reading the colonial past of English and the emerging literature on the diversity of world Englishes, non-native teachers of English may come to appreciate their own variety of English. By critical literacy, Freire (1987)

states, the oppressed reclaim their history and experience that is ignored and devalued by the dominant ideology. In a similar vein, engaged in critical reading and thinking on the advantages of being a non-native speaker of English, non-native teachers of English may begin to value their own existence. In doing so, they may get rid of their "culture of silence" (Freire, 1987) and find their own voices.

Purpose of the Study

Informed by a Freireian theoretical background described above, this study aims to explore the empowering potential of critical reading for a small group of non-native English teacher candidates in Turkey. As Turkey is an expanding circle country in which English is used for mainly international business and communication, English is taught as a foreign language by an overwhelming majority of non-native teachers of English born and educated in Turkey. However, with the onset of neo-liberal education policies in Turkey which started to commercialize language teaching, many private institutions began to disseminate a misconception that a foreign language is best taught by native-speakers and they have hired native-speakers mostly without any qualifications to teach. What is more, they have provided them with higher salaries and extra benefits depriving Turkish teachers of English from these privileges English (Tatar and Yıldız, 2010). This discriminating attitude towards Turkish teachers of English is discouraging for teacher candidates and practicing teachers without any doubt (Tatar and Yıldız, 2010). Yet, their concerns should not lead them to accept the situation as a given due to their own "disabilities" as non-native speakers, rather they should come to recognize their own personal and professional identities and empowered to take action against these discriminatory practices.

Departing from such a motivation to introduce my foreign language education students at a public university in central Turkey to a critical body of literature, I decided to introduce junior students of Foreign Language Education with the phenomenon of World Englishes and debates as to native and non-native teachers of English. The articles they were supposed to read for that week covered the changing world of English referring to the spread of English, English as a lingua franca and World Englishes (Harmer, 2007, ch. 1) and the debate on who is worth more: native or non-native teachers of English (Medgyes, 2001). This study focused more on the reflections on Medgyes's article because his article was the one which described the pros and cons of NESTs and non-NESTS and listed the bright sides of being a non-native teacher of English such as providing a better model, teaching language learning

strategies more effectively and anticipating learner difficulties more easily, etc. After students read these articles and wrote their reflections in an online platform for forum discussion as part of their course requirements, we had a class discussion. Upon reading student reflections and hearing student comments as to their changed perceptions on themselves as non-native speakers of English, I realized that the critical reading assignment seemed to have reached its aim as to create an awareness as to the changing situation of English and to the strengths of non-native speakers of English. Therefore, I decided to analyze the student reflections more closely to explore the empowering potential of the critical literacy in such a context. Therefore, this study addresses the following research question:

1. Does critical reading assignments on the changing status of English and native-non-native debate make the students feel empowered?

Participants

51 undergraduate students of Foreign Language Education at a public university in central Turkey who enrolled in two different sections of a third year methodology course took part in the study. The reflections and comments they wrote as course assignments were analyzed to explore the empowering potential of critical literacy for prospective non-native teachers of English. As the idea of closely examining student assignments for this research study emerged after students wrote their reflections as a course requirement, their consent was taken for anonymous quotations to be made from their writings.

As for the demographics, 41 of the students were female and 10 were male mostly coming from middle-class families. All of them were non-native speakers of English. There were 5 international students among the participants and the rest were Turkish citizens. Two of the international students were from outer circle countries while the others were from expanding circle countries. As the participants of the study were studying at a university which accepts high-ranking students at university exams, they were top-scoring hardworking students. However, as they studied at Anatolian Teacher Training High Schools, the bonus points added to their scores in the university exams were also influential in their chances of getting admitted to this university.

Method

This qualitative study is situated in the critical research paradigm, as it considers the colonial past of English and cultural and linguistic imperialism are having a

substantial influence on the non-natives' lives and their perceptions of themselves. In this paradigm, knowledge is regarded as subjective and political. Therefore, this research study acknowledges the very political nature of its own construction together with the political background of the field of English language teaching. Just as in critical research, the very purpose of research this study is to raise consciousness of the oppressed that would culminate in social change. The assigned readings aimed to create such an awareness in learners and provided them with a space to voice their opinions. Seeking to understand the influence of the assigned readings on the teacher candidates, this qualitative research bring the voice of students into the research literature. By doing so, this study aims to enlarge the influence of the critical literacy on non-native teachers of English, as it might inspire scholars working in similar contexts to use similar instruments to raise consciousness.

As already mentioned, the data of the study comes from learner reflections and comments posted on a closed online class discussion platform. Content analysis was conducted to analyze data. First, student writings were read a couple of times and highlighted. Then, they were coded and sorted out into themes. Then, a close reading of each category was carried out. After that a frequency analysis of each theme was made to get an overall picture of the direct or indirect influence of assigned readings on the students. Later, each category was read again and the important parts were underlined to be quoted in the research report.

Findings

As a result of data analysis, six major themes emerged out of student responses, as can be seen in Table 1 below. Even though this study is based on qualitative data, a frequency analysis of each category was conducted to see the overall picture of the student responses. Although there are some overlaps in students' writings in terms of different themes, they were categorized according to the main focus of interest in the whole body of writing. While a great number of students (41 %) directly indicated that the assigned readings made them feel relieved as they realized their own strengths as non-native prospective English teachers, a significant number students did not directly write about their own feelings as to the distinction between native and non-native teachers. They adopted a more objective tone of voice in their reflections not referring to whether the readings helped *them* develop their self-confidence or not. They preferred to make more objective statements agreeing with the main ideas of the articles: they stated that native and non-native teachers complemented each other (25

%), non-native teachers were also as good as native speakers (16 %) and the distinction between native and non-native teachers of English did not make sense (6 %). A small group of students (6 %) stressed that they were already confident about their own self-identities and their strengths as prospective non-native English teachers. Yet, two students directly stated that they felt powerless as opposed to the superior language proficiency of native-speaker English teachers.

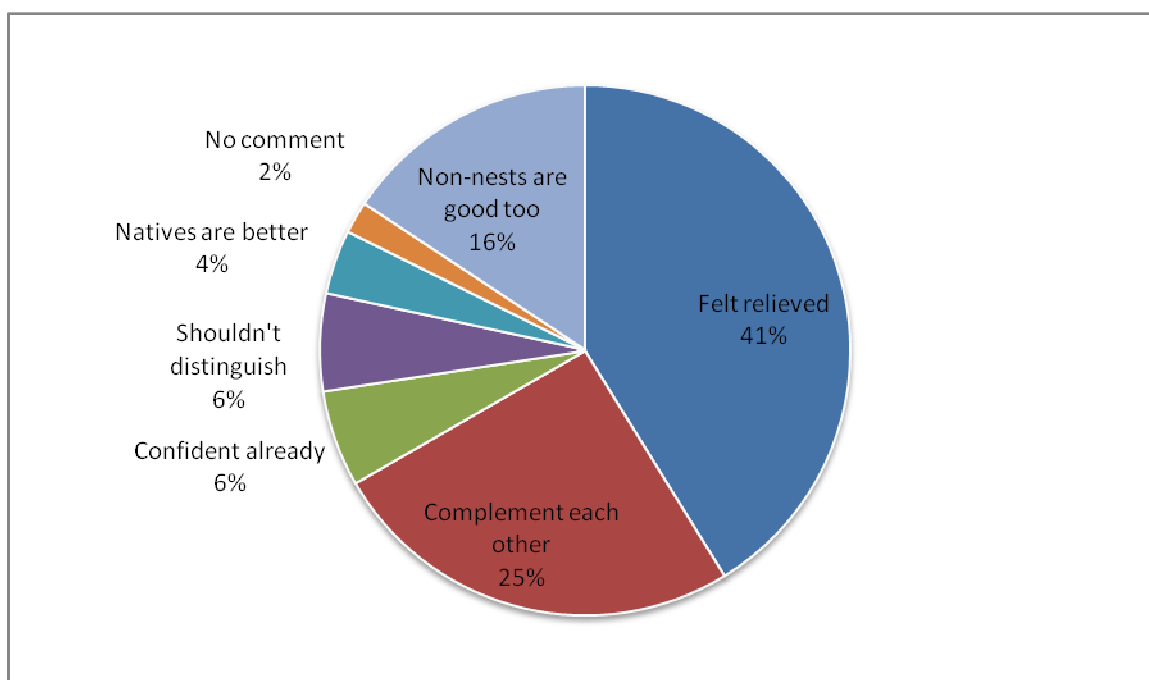


Table 1 The Frequency Analysis of the Themes of Student Responses

Having seen the general distribution of student responses, it is now time to delve into the depths of student reflections. Starting from student responses which explicitly indicated they felt relieved after reading the articles, each theme of student responses will be analyzed.

I Felt Relieved

Student responses indicate that the assigned readings had a positive influence on a large number of students (21 students out of 51), as they changed their opinions about the native (NEST) and non-native (non-NEST) dichotomy and they started to feel more comfortable about being a non-native speaker of English in their prospective career. Those students who openly wrote about their own feelings used adjectives like "relieved", "confident" and "optimistic" to describe how they felt after reading the articles, as can be seen from the student voices below (*italics in all student quotations are mine*):

What I have read is a kind of *relief* to me as I read some advantages of being non-native teacher from an "article".

These articles actually made me feel *better* about my field of study.

I really *felt relieved* after I read the article, because I always thought that I would never be skillful enough in English compared to a NEST even if I am a proficient language teacher. Before reading the article, I *was feeling inferior* to NESTs since they speak English better, use English more confidently and fluently. All in all, they have better language skills compared to non-NESTs, *but now, I am aware* of that teaching is a completely different field.

As seen from the student voices above, the assigned readings helped students realize their own strengths as prospective non-native teachers of English and made them feel "better" about their own identities. The third student's response reveals that the student explicitly referred to his/her own feelings of weakness referring to the argument of inferiority complex in the Medgyes's (2001) article. In fact, this student was not alone openly stating his/her feelings of inferiority. There are some other students who mentioned the inferiority complex they suffered from, as seen below:

Before reading Medgyes' article, I *felt myself inferior* to native speaker teachers because I used to think I could not be perfect as native speakers. However, I learned that neither NESTs nor non-NESTs are superior to each other. There are many advantages and disadvantages of being a NEST and non-NEST. Therefore, we do not need to be perfect or speak like a native speaker.

We will be teachers after less than two years, and the idea of being an effective or an ideal teacher always provokes me to improve myself; however, no matter how much I try, I could not be efficient enough to use appropriate pronunciation rules and obtain a fluent accent. *All these issues were discouraging me* in continuing to be a professional teacher. I believe that there are many EFL students who have this idea. It might be called as *inferiority complex*.

Apparently, the assigned readings contributed to the students' empowerment helping them get out of self-depreciation. They came to see the advantages of being a non-native in teaching English as a foreign language. Just as Cook (1999) stated, the fact that they had an unattainable goal in front of themselves to become native-like to be a competent teacher was disempowering for the teacher candidates. Through readings, one student wrote, she realized her inner thoughts about herself:

The most beneficial aspect of this week's readings is that they have enabled me to see how I perceive myself as a prospective non-native teacher of English. I have never had a conscious concern about being a non-native teacher candidate; however, while reading the articles, *I have realized that I have a low self-vision* about my language skills and transmitting my knowledge of English to students.

As the above quote reveals, some students began to question their own subject positions after reading the articles. They analyzed their own suppressed feelings related to their own identities. They also underscored the fact that non-native teachers of English are not aware of their own strengths:

Contrary to common belief, which [sic] native English speaking teachers are always better than non-native ones, the reading asserts non-NESTs are as good teachers as native ones on their own terms. This assertion *gives hope to non-NESTs*. As a preservice English teacher, *I got the comprehension of myself* and being a teacher; *realized advantages* of being a non-NEST and what my ultimate aim should be.

I do not believe that non-native speakers *are aware of their advantages*. I have to admit that in some instances I found myself questioning my English abilities but I *never thought* of the advantages related to having the same L1 like the learners or which advantages the fact one has learnt and not acquired English could bring with it.

It is sure some of non-NEST *are not aware of* their advantages on NEST. For example *I have not known this truth* until reading this chapters. Therefore, it is possible they have inferiority complex [sic], which includes me.

Echoing Freire's (1970) claim that the oppressed develop self-depreciation as they are exposed to a discourse which claims they are incapable of doing anything, the reason of non-native teachers of English not realizing their own advantages is actually given by a student in his/her reflection:

I really enjoyed while reading this week's articles. I learned many things like pros and cons of being a Nest or N-Nest. *So far, I heard about many things related to being a Non-Nest. Yet, all of them are bad. It is thought that Non-Nests are not good teachers because they don't know English as much as Nests*. In addition, people think that even if Nests do not have teachings skills, they are still better than Non-nests who have better teaching skills.

The above quote demonstrates that students are usually exposed to a discourse which favors native-speakers. Even though they are junior students, it seems as though it is their first time encountering an empowering discourse about their being non-native

teachers of English. One student used the word "enlightened" to describe the effect of the readings on her. A number of other students wrote about the change in their opinions *before* and *after* they read the articles. They stated that they believed native-teachers were "better" or "superior" before they read the articles. One student described his earlier attitude as "blind" and even admitted the way he thought about the issue was discriminating against non-native teachers of English like himself:

Last week, I was confident enough to say that I had rather pick a native English-speaker than a non-native one. I justified it with my own arguments which are acceptable and quite reasonable. However, as I go through the readings, it changed my perceptions of the decisions I made. It made me realize that *I was blindly walking around* without considering a lot of different factors. Having a native-speaker of the language as your teacher will not guarantee a hundred percent success rate in learning the language than having a non-native speaker. *It was a total discrimination in my part*, although I am a non-native speaker myself I think that it should not be a hindrance to excel and to do our very best in the field.

Native and Non-native Teachers Complement Each Other

While a great number of students made explicit statements about themselves and the way they changed their opinions, a large number of other students preferred not to make any such statements about their own feelings on the issue. Rather, they (13 students out of 51) agreed with the writer of the article in the relative advantages and disadvantages of being native and non-native, as seen in the excerpts below:

I believe that neither NESTs nor non-NESTs are superior to one another. It may change from one country's need to the other's, but I think it is better to have both NESTs and non-NESTs since they can provide assistance for different skills of English learners.

I do not know if it is an applicable solution, but if we can find a way to work with native and non-native teachers. I think that would be perfect in terms of efficiency of students if teachers collaborate with each other.

Even if some students did not make explicit statements about the effect of readings on them, it is important to see that they agree with the opinions of the writer that the non-native teachers are key actors in teaching English together with the native-teachers of English.

Non-Native Teachers of English are Good, Too

Apart from those who stated that non-native teachers and native teachers complement each other, a number of other students (7 out of 51) emphasized the positive sides of non-native teachers not directly referring to themselves.

I think that non-NESTs are different from NESTs as not having native English, but that doesn't mean that they are not proficient enough to teach English.

All in all, there is no need for non-NESTs to worry about their teaching as long as they try their best to improve themselves to reach at the level of near-native. They also could be quite successful at teaching the language although native teachers have some advantages in terms of competence in that language.

As is obvious from the above quotations, although students did not openly write about their own feelings or ideas about the issue, they seem to assure themselves of the good qualities of non-native teachers of English.

We Shouldn't Distinguish English Teachers as Native and Non-Native

While a great majority of students struggled with the idea of who is a better teacher, a small number of students (3 students out of 51) directed their attention on the implausibility of such a distinction referring to a relevant part in one of the articles, as is seen in the excerpt below:

First of all, it was needed to find a balance about the description of of no-NEST and NEST, because neither of them is better than the other one. We do not even know what they correspondence [sic] for. They are just different in terms of theory. When it comes to practice, we even as language teachers fall into that misconception and judge teachers based on if they are non-NEST or NEST. As it is stated in Medgyes' article, we shall be careful while talking about distinction between (non)NEST & NEST. Who do we call native, is there a terminology called as native really? Is every native speaker good at language production and awareness.

In fact, the fact that some students went beyond the discussion of who is a better teacher shows the extent of critical thinking they are engaged in and the fact that they transcended the native-speakerist ideology.

I am already Confident

While many students wrote about the effect of the readings on their self-perceptions, some students pointed out that they already had such a vision. One student said that she developed her confidence by going abroad, as she had noticed the importance of

intelligibility rather than having a native-like accent. Another student said she came to believe herself after conducting a research study on the issue. Yet one other student wrote that he always believed in himself, as can be seen below:

From this week's readings I have consolidated my previous thoughts about NESTs and non-NESTs. As a prospective non-native teacher of English I have never thought that a NEST will be much better than me as long as I improve my language skills such as speaking fluently, having knowledge about the target language's culture, and pronunciation. I have already known the bright sides of being non-NEST and I have never felt inferiority complex.

Even if these students were feeling comfortable with their own identities at the time they read the articles, they seem to have reinforced their thoughts about the issue. It is also significant to see that only 1 student out of 51 students openly stated how comfortable he felt about being a non-native prospective teacher of English.

Native-Speakers are Better Teachers

Despite the fact that the readings seem to have had a great impact on a large number of students, it looks as if some students did not really change their overall opinions about the native-speakers having superior qualities and making better teachers.

Firstly, I realize that it is not possible or not necessary to have only native speaker teachers; nevertheless, I think that *native speaker teachers are better*. To begin with, they have perfect pronunciation. Secondly, their lexicon contains more words. In addition, they are usually more familiar with the culture of the target language. Furthermore, native speakers feel comfortable using the target language while majority of non-native teachers do not feel the same, and it may influence instruction as well as students' attitudes towards the teacher. Of course, I do understand that non-native teachers also have lots of advantages over native teachers like better understanding difficulties that students encounter. However, does it mean that knowing about the impediments guarantee overcoming these problems? *As a non-native teacher in future I have many concerns*. You always think that your pronunciation is different or you are afraid that one of your students will ask a vocabulary item, and you will not be able to answer.

Having internalized the native-speakerist ideology, this student feels overwhelmed by her own perceptions of the native-speaker's superiority and feels uncomfortable as a prospective non-native teacher of English. Another student also believes native-

speaker norms should be targeted although she acknowledges some of the advantages of non-native teachers of English:

This week's reading gave me insight about being non-native-English speaking teacher. As I have understood from the chapters, non-NEST outnumbers NEST in today's world. However I think that *still non-native speakers should try to get norms of NEST*, because learning a language requires to learn a new culture, new people and etc. So someone who knows these norms of target language is the native speaker of it. In my opinion *NEST are superior on non-NEST* at this point. I know that learners can anticipate with their non-NEST, but studying with a native speakers can make them more closer to the target language, because they master on every detail of English.

As seen from the excerpt above, the teacher candidate has internalized the notion of a single language associated to a single culture and has difficulty challenging it. Another student is also critical of the phenomenon of World Englishes, as he sees this movement as an excuse for the non-natives to justify their lack of proficiency and their distinct accents.

As I expressed in my previous articles, actually I don't support the idea of world Englishes. It may have some advantages. Students' concentration and courage will not be affected in a negative way. They won't be sad because of their pronunciation mistakes. However, World Englishes take them away from perfectionism. Students were trying to be native like in the past; but now, students don't even try to be native like.

In fact, when student responses were explored, their relative flexibility to recognize the strengths of non-native teachers of English was not shown in the case of a diversity of Englishes since the majority of them had a hard time in recognizing the notion of World Englishes. They were attached to the purist forms of thought indicating that English would be "polluted" if a standard target form is not followed. This might be because, as Freire (1970) argues, like the oppressed, non-native teacher candidates might be afraid of freedom considering "liberation is a childbirth, and a painful one" (Freire, 1970, p. 49). They might be scared of the autonomy and responsibility their freedom will accord them. Yet, pre-service non-native English teachers' relative resistance towards the notion of World Englishes needs further exploration.

Conclusion

The findings of this qualitative study suggest that critical literacy helped a large number of students realize their own strengths as non-native teachers of English except a few who were more resistant to change their beliefs. A significant number of students wrote that they became more confident in themselves and more motivated to be a professional teacher after they read the articles. These findings reveal that through critical literacy, students begin to question their unquestioned beliefs about themselves and come to discover their inner thoughts. By affirming their own identities, an important number of students seem to have got into the process of empowerment, if we take empowerment to mean "people coming to a sense of their own power, a new relationship with their own contexts." (Fox, 1988, as cited in Brutt-Griffler and Samimy, 1999: 419). However, they were more reluctant to adopt a variety of Englishes as legitimate versions of English. This sign of resistance might be indicative of the deep influence of the native-speakerist ideology which favors monolingualism on the students. Therefore, for students to become more immersed in critical applied linguistics and to devote more time to reflect on the issue and the underlying reasons behind it, it might be necessary to spare a longer time in a separate course for critical language teaching. In such a course, students might both develop a deeper awareness and get into action to transform the situation they are in.

The findings of the study are in line with the findings of Brutt-Griffler and Samimy's study (1999) which indicated that graduate level non-native teachers of English were engaged in a process of empowerment when they took a course in which they were introduced to critical conceptual tools. As the critical reading, thinking and discussion process continued throughout a semester, participants went so far as to deeply analyzing the causes of their feelings of powerlessness and assumed agency as non-native teachers of English. Unlike their study, the critical intervention in this study was limited in scope and in the results it bear. Despite being so, this study has indicated the high potential of critical literacy for the empowerment of non-native teacher candidates.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Joshua Bear for the inspiration and support he gave me to write this paper. I have taken "the carnation" he gave us and tried to pass it onto my students. I also acknowledge the deep engagement

of my students with the assigned readings and their genuine reflections in which they openly shared their most intimate feelings, which motivated me to write this paper.

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Strengthening democracy, equality and social empathy. Theoretical approaches and practices for citizenship education

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Abstract

The modern multicultural environment is characterised by the simultaneous advance of neo-liberal reactionary policies. These policies produce a special kind of political economy of thought, moving in two opposing poles: of want and lack, leading on one hand to a psychological determinism- which effectively removes from the subject any attempt of change of the social paradigm, thus establishing a veil of silence driven by sadness and deprivation- and on the other hand offering an extreme version of hope (Hilgers 2011: 353) where the social and collective are replaced with the “convictions of an operational self which is exempt from the reasoning of social responsibility and public accountability.” (Giroux, 2008[2010]: 566)

Being active educationalists and perceiving the human soul as the “essence of history” we suggest and argue in favour of adopting educational approaches and practices that are routed on the principles of multicultural education and critical pedagogy, attempting the elimination of stereotypes and rationalisations that sustain and perpetuate the status quo and using as a principal tool active research that sustains our work and offers motivation to children. The goal of this study is the creation of those theoretical tools that will direct educational practices as well as connect them with the practices that aim at the creation of a critical transformative citizen, offering at the same time the potential for social transform.

Perceiving the act of education as a “transformative” process, we aim to give prominence to thought and reflection as a principal educational paradigm and therefore imperative for an education that will have as an objective the critical understanding of the world and action-taking (Banks 2008:.135, Nieto 1999: 206-210; Amosa & Gorski 2008: 167; Ajodhia-Andrews 2013: 35-36; May 1999: 30-32).

Keywords: Critical multicultural education, political socialization, critical citizen, social empathy.

Introduction

Differentiations in the structural organisation of societies impose new ways of action and create novel identities which reflect the special kind of relationships, interpersonal or in groups, thus creating new roles for the historical subject. The differentiation in roles find their expressions in the political field as well. (Rose 1974: 147)

The functional character of fragmented societies (Gellner 1996[1994]: 56) produced new collective behaviours (states) that operated in the name of mechanical solidarity (Durkheim 1893 at Blackledge & Hunt 1995: 31) and social empathy, such that defined beforehand individualism, even to the extent of caging them in life values and attitudes towards certain people or social groups.

This structure, as the polar opposite of a ‘state of anarchy’ (Bauman 1994[1973]: 89 & 82- 86) created new collectives (states) however it also formed ideologies that while they were asking for the liberation and emancipation of the individual, they none the less led to new prejudices and restrictions, where the individualized person seems more to be “an impersonal carrier of self-defence rights against society and of the rational, free individual (Tsoukalas 2010: 39), has formed a political economy of consciousness which forms new concepts and practices towards basic social terms such as trust and **reciprocity**. **According to research by** Bohnet et. al, trust and reciprocity in western societies is not based on any mechanism to prevent deception, but more on mechanisms of cost reduction (Bohnet et. al 2012: 152-155). The utilitarian individual establishes relationships not based on principle of ‘honour’ or ‘reputation’ but on the estimation of gain and damage. However, conscious will forms a reality that might be a distortion of the imaginary freedom of the individual (Tönnies 1985[1887]: 171), rationalizing its actions. Nevertheless, it is unable to define its context as moral or immoral; instead it attempts to rationalize any decision, arguing for or against it. The best argumentation tends to prevail and thus form a social relationship (Kondylis 2007[1999]: 744 -745, Strauss 1988[1950]: 130-131 & 171), which shapes a new type of human, the Homo Economicus (Kondylis 2007[1999]: 102-103), while at the same time it creates the myth of equivalency and

thus subduing reality to a formalism of reason (Horkheimer & Adorno 1986 [1947]:44).

Neoliberalism attempts to create a new type of 'emancipated human' who is led by pre-ordained practices and is intended to be "perpetually accepting" (Olsenn 1996 at Apple 2004: 21). In educational terms, however, that is translated into the achievement of a tangible goal: "the creation of individuals capable of being integrated in order to contribute to the production line (Apple 2008; Nikolaou 2009: 32; Mitchell 2003). The ratio of performance/efficiency is dominant in the reasoning of neo-liberalism, thus transforming the connotations of equality. The dominion of this market logic where the free individual is called upon to depend on their own powers- and in the opinion of the neoliberals is opposed to the social state which, always according to the neoliberals, applies "paternalistic policies" promoting the interests of certain groups- in essence conceals the dichotomy that is attempted between the concepts of equality and efficiency, as the individuals or groups in reality start off from different positions. The biggest difference between classic liberalism and neo-liberalism, though, is that neo-liberalism separates politics from economy, thus making the latter a regulator of politics, all in the name of an abstract notion of equality and freedom. In this way, any attempt to "democratise" authority and power, through the division between politics and economy" (see Iglesias 2000: 1052, Mc Cluskey 2002: 787-788), is artfully suppressed.

Citizenship education in modern multi-cultural era.

The ultimate goal of a citizenship training would be to delve into the kind of interaction that will lead and guide the relationships between individuals, while at the same time identifying both the restrictions and the alternatives that the Political itself provides as far as the formation, production or/and transformation of social relationships is concerned.

As pointed out above, neo-liberalism as a political-economic system produces a political economy of thought, moving in the two polar opposites of want and lack-deprivation. This anthropological distortion of the individual renders them incapable of examining the reasons and conditions of its circumstances. The private self is controlled on one hand by an illusion of acquiring wealth in some 'magical' way (Hilgers 2011: 353), such that it entraps the self in a state of social inaction and alienation, thus weakening the concept of collectiveness and social action. The isolated, private individual, accepts this state as is, due to personal weakness or

personal (in-) ability, while simultaneously it is incapable of comprehending the social and political factors that lead it to one or another condition. This caging of the spirit promotes an apolitical attitude of the kind that does not stop to examine power relationships and is restricted in postmodern values (self-realisation, anti-conformism, freedom of expression) of a soft ideology, seeking quantitative changes rather than qualitative.¹ It is an exploitation of the Unconscious, in order for the subject to become more rationalized so that its actions can be better controlled and predictable. As Jost mentions, the conscious and the unconscious play an important role in the acceptance and rejection of certain social and political norms, in such ways that even inequality between groups might be perceived as moral and legal (Jost 2001: 89, Jost & Banaji 1994: 16). The Unconscious “contributes to the formation of world-view rationalizations” just as much as the conscious, which most times is that which defines what must remain unconscious. In this way, worldview rationalizations become crystallized as social relationships; “an articulation of positions of the rationalizing actor against the positions of other rationalized actors” (Kondylis 2007[1999]: 746-747; Jost 2001: 90). Kay et al., through a series of researches, have proven that on cases where the individual might lose their personal control over the circumstances they are faced with, there is a tendency to turn to religion or other socio-political systems in order to attempt to regain control (*compensatory control*) (Kay et al 2008: 31).

Perceiving education- and in extension the educational process- as a purely political action, we believe that that the goal of citizenship education would have to be one that enables citizens to perceive, evaluate and reform the reality in which they exist. The crucial point here is that the objective reality is perceived as is, as granted, by the illiberate- in essence- individual, who has been objectified. Submission to a formalisation of thought that the immediate offers (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1986[1947]: 44), creates a survivalist morality relating to the immediate fulfillment of wants, a private morality that proletarianises thought and separated it from social

¹ This observation stems from the Events of May '68. One worthy critique of the uprising of the youths of that era, see Huyghe, 1990, *The soft Ideology*, particularly pp 61-75. As is mentioned characteristically in regards the revolution of '68: “In order for that revolution to be successful, one had to deny one little thing: the revolution.” (Huyghe, 1990, p.71). As is mentioned by Alexiou, it is rather “an attempt to prepare for the ideological dominion of the new middle-class” (Alexiou 2008, p.108).

authorities. (Adorno 2000[1951]: 172). What capitalism achieved with the partition of labour, neo-liberalism comes to extend on at a level of thought and intellect. It transmutes the ideas of equality and freedom, stripping them of their social dimensions² and thus presenting them as ‘personal complaints’ rather as ‘collective pursuits’³. The proletarianisation of thought leads to the acceptance of a fatalistic attitude that creates a sense of passivity in the individuals that now feel weak and powerless to change their own reality. At the same time, more and more often they turn to ‘experts’ to treat whatever ‘disadvantages’ or ‘weaknesses’ (Lash, 2007[1977]: 40). This “unmediated power of fact”, as is pointed out by Christofer Lasch, creates a tangible yet ‘invisible’ enemy. “This is the way things are and they will get worse” and “nothing is going to change” are at best an admission of defeat against something that is named as reality but in essence has no substance. Moreover, additional stereotypes, like “better poor but honest”, “rich therefore thief” come to excuse inequality and to also provide to the individuals the ability to absorb inequality and ‘withstand’ the difference between ‘an ideal equality’ and the reality they experience (Blasi & Jost 2006: 1123, Jost & Kay 2005: 499), “neutralizing and compensating for a hegemonic advantage that a group possesses with something else” (Jost & Kay 2005, p.505) creating in this manner a notion of complementary justice through which the social roles that are attributed to each group are rationalized, thus concealing any inequalities⁴ (Kay & Jost 2003).

² As is mentioned by Apple (2008, 96), these concepts are not connected to oppression and the unequal treatment of groups anymore. “Now, it is just a matter of personal choice within free-market conditions.” In his book, *Modernization and Conservatism in Education*, he points out the effort of conservative policies to transform “the meaning of the most basic categories of the key words we use to comprehend the social and educational world and our position in it Apple 2002[2001], p.11).

³ See Lasch (2007[1977] ,p.40). As Banks mentions: “What the liberal integration approaches accomplish through their emphasis on the individual is to be characterized as the interests of a dominant group as ‘public’ while those of individuals as characterized as ‘special’ (Banks 2008, p.130-131).

⁴ Such kinds of complementary stereotypes play a compensatory role when dealing with social and economic inequality. Stereotypes of the “poor but honest” kind, or that women are more friendly and focused more on care-giving than taking on roles that demand determination and a decision –making ability, are according to Kay & Jost a way of rationalization equality and of perpetuating the status quo. See also Lane R. E (1959). *The fear of equality...and* Jackman M.R (1994), *The Velvet Glove:*

This kind of rationalization, through a kind of self-evaluation- which however, stems not from the ideology of self, but from the ideology of others –effectively contradicting the first compound of the word (self-) and thus concealing the internalized peer-assessment- is what leads not to the increase of self-esteem but mainly to the increase of the preference for the outer-group and the legalization of any kind of inequality⁵ (Takis, 2011: 32). Its role becomes paramount in the rationalization of the system and clarifies the possible role of stereotypes and prejudices. On the other hand, it places the notion of self-evaluation under critical negotiation. An educational theory that is rooted in social and political psychology, should at the same time be rooted in, and promote, a critique on “the ideology of others”, which, despite its non-neutrality (no ideology is neutral) is characterized by its dialectic power: it operates as a subject (critically) on its own object (ideology).

We believe that the emergence of reasoning, views, beliefs, and values of individuals is the key question in an education approach on citizenship training. This means that evaluation should, on a first basis, have a context that will lead it not towards the emergence of the reasoning of value (what is useful, value as a functional measure) but on the emergence of the value of reasoning. Only then will the possibility be given for reasoning, values and convictions to emerge, and for them to be an object of debate and critical assessment. This will on one hand release potential, encouraging participation, and on the other hand might lead to reformed practices, by aiming at the reformation of stereotypes and prejudices that oppress the oppressed as well as the oppressors.

The proletarianisation of thought, where the subject has been rendered incapable of thinking and visualizing its future, acting rather as an executor than an a creator, has formed a mass political culture that has to do more with the “adaptability of the individual to their social and political setting” (Demertzis 1989: 262-263; Schwartzberg 1984[1977]: 193). In essence, the proletarianisation of thought has led to a political culture which at the best of cases is characterized by apathy and at

Paternalism and Conflict in Gender, Class, and Race Relations...as mentioned in Kay & Jost (2003, p.824).

⁵ Erikson, in his work *Childhood and Society*, mentions that the realization of the identity of self stems from the conviction that homogeneity and the continuity it has accomplished, will be identical to the homogeneity of the way in which others see the individual (Erikson 1963, p.261-262).

the worst of acceptance, of a capitalistic way of production and lifestyle, which the structure itself has cultivated.

We argue thus: the social policies that have developed in western society behind the seeming reduction of inequality have led, in practice, mainly to the acceptance of inequality, since the recipients of the social welfare is marginalized due to their inability to contribute to the production process (Bauman 2004[1997]: 134, Tsoukalas 2000). This way, the concept of the political and the political relationship is disconnected from its social-historical context, as the “primary structural identity” of the individual as an employee “Is cancelled to promote the identity of the insurance-paying citizen” (Alexiou 1999: 92-93). Social policies are therefore put forward as way of formally controlling society (formal social control) which stem from the state and the economy, and using systems of rewards and penalty, they aim to the adaptation of a conventional behavior, through organizational structures and standardization (Soss et.al, 2008: 537).

Developing practices for citizenship education. Psychological and philosophical prerequisites

As is mentioned by Homana et.al (2006: 2) , the modern concept of education concerning citizenship concerns the provision of the right opportunities by the school so that the students become involved in learning processes and experiences that are meaningful for their life- such as role-playing games, debates and consultations, class councils- and the usage of a multitude of strategies that benefit active learning as well as the development of political and social responsibility of the individuals. Providing such circumstances requires the creation of a school climate that will offer authentic learning conditions and the ability for students to present their views, placing them under negotiation, a fact that will lead them to increased knowledge and the acquisition of political skills.

Research conducted on citizenship education and the acquisition of political skill on behalf of the students, have shown that the use of teaching policies that encourage the active participation of the students have achieved considerable results as far as political knowledge and the acquisition of abilities, skills and commitments is concerned, thus transforming the whole teacher-student relationship from a ‘monologue’ to a ‘discourse’ (Sleeter & Montecinos 1999:118).

Fragmented, superficial knowledge offers few opportunities for students to evaluate and respond to social issues which both they and their families are faced with.

Opposing this 'everyday practice' as a consequence of and dominant ideology, we propose the need to conceive of an education in its entirety, both in terms of context and of the concept of negotiating and redefining a new situated knowledge. With the term 'situated knowledge' we refer to the 'higher' level of knowledge, according to which the subject controls both the kind of knowledge provided or possessed, and constitutes the crucial, critical stage, from which any decisions will be taken regarding further action to be taken or not, in addition to forming the right attitudes and behaviours. According to Bloom's taxonomy, situated knowledge is mainly found at the level of evaluation. Taking in consideration that citizenship training should correspond to the increasingly in flux modern social and political environments, we maintain that it should have a context based on human rights, the respect of diversity and the development of critical thought.

Citizenship training offers all those conceptual terms: freedom, democracy, justice, solidarity, dignity; concepts and prerequisites necessary for peace and social justice. As is pointed out by Starkey, each of these terms needs to be empowered so that the systems of human rights 'will not collapse' (Starkey 1992:126-127). Such an education aims at gaining knowledge, abilities and skills that build up and are build up, from and towards actions that have value for the students, aim at procedural and situational knowledge and emphasise cooperative forms of learning. (Lyseight, 1992:141;Aronowitz & Giroux 1986:213).

The development of programs for citizenship training stems from and evaluates the concepts of justice and social empathy. The notion of justice, in its purest form, is a motive which affects and regulates the live of people. (Lerner 2003:388). The justice motive refers to the degree to which people are willing to act in order to promote a fair treatment of others and not just from the estimation of their own interests: moral empathy and not a set of moral values which are based on the application of conventional rules. The latter ones seem to be what drives the decisions and attitude of individuals. In cases in particular where they are faced with issues that may have serious consequences, their feelings and knowledge on what they consider fair in its heuristic form, i.e. through automatic processes, and tend to dominate their attempt to restore justice (Lerner 2003:397-398).

The notion of procedural justice has a primary role in the development of citizenship training. Procedural justice concerns the way in which individuals not only enjoy the compensations and benefits of a fair transaction, but also the way in which they are

determined, so that the decisions regarding them are taken (Leventhal 1976, Jost & Kay 2010:1126, Blader & Tyler 2003:748). Procedural justice, which aims at 'voices' being heard, increases the willingness of individuals to accept the decisions that are being taken, therefore improving the relationship of individuals among themselves and with the authorities (Prooijen et.al 2006:686; Blader & Tyler 2009:446; Tyler 2006, p.308), the sustenance of a positive social identity. It is therefore a strong motive that promotes commitment to the success of the whole group (Blader & Tyler 2009:447; Tyler 2006:309).

Blader & Tyler (2003) suggest a model of procedural justice based on four points which seems to concern the way in which the concept of procedural justice is being perceived by people. These concern a) the evaluation of official rules and policies concerning the decision-making process (formal decision taking), b) the evaluation of rules that concern how a person is treated (formal quality of treatment), c) the evaluation of these cases where decisions are taken when formal rules cannot be applied (informal decision making) and finally, d) how particular groups are treated by authorities when there is no provision made in the formal rules (Blader & Tyler 2003:749).

The second guideline in developing citizenship training programs pertains as to the concept of social empathy. As social empathy is defined the ability and capability of an individual-person to perceive others as socially active, historically defined beings, examining the conditions of their existence and action, and understanding them as such, in order to be able to contribute to the change of the conditions that might limit them. Grasping the notion of social empathy has to do with its promotion of personal responsibility, understood as such that the person/individual has towards society as a whole. Personal responsibility concerns the self-awareness that the individual, as a social being, has against social issues that relate to its existence. At a level of interpersonal communication, personal responsibility concerns the active respect towards the contrasts and differences that make up the essential elements of a political organization of society and not just the "understanding of legal power" (Giannaras 2006[1998]:198-203), while at the same time, at a level of political organization of society, it refers to the development of actions that reduce inequality and reinforce justice and democracy.

Utilizing activities for citizenship education in practice.

In developing programs for the education of a critical multi-cultural citizen we must start off at the principles of multicultural education and critical pedagogy. Considering the current bind on the concept of citizenship in the modern multi-cultural era provides the conditions of growth for such interventions, the question posed here is what kind of citizen is education called upon to create.

Critical educators are obliged to act as social beings, exploring the kind of relationships that are formed inside and outside the classroom and provide their student the opportunity to develop the critical ability to take stance- and revalue that stance- as regards crucial social issues that might trouble them. Faced with such a challenge, critical educators must take into consideration that the concept of critic has little to offer when it is limited to argumentation, which only points out the problems and the “evils of the system”. “The world does not have a complaint box” (Savater 1997[2004]: 22), and that is something that should be taken into serious consideration by critical educators.

In direct correlation to the above, critical educators should develop such practices that can reveal the distortion of democracy, values and the corrosion of society that is attempted by neo- liberalism in the name of a blissful utopia which is, in its sum, quite abstract despite its rhetoric.

Critical educators are expected to premise a vision for education and society. Through the reformation and enrichment of the curriculum they are called to launch the development of a constructive discourse, with distinct goals and standpoints. Being aware of the restrictions that the curriculum itself imposes with the fragmentation of knowledge and the large amount of the offered syllabus, which offers little opportunity for the development of critical thought, active pedagogy teachers should promote in action the concepts of democracy, equality and social empathy.

On the basis of these goals, special emphasis should be given both on typical and a-typical forms of teaching. Class organisation is a part of the a-typical forms of teaching. It is important to see class organisation as a way to organised the framework in which many collaborative activities will be developed. For this purpose, we propose the organisation of teaching on the basis of group collaboration practices. The groups, as a key organisational element of the classroom have a double purpose: taking initiative so that projects assigned or undertaken are better arranged, and most

important of all, ensuring that every member of the group participates actively and contributes to the success of the group. Both at the level of this basic class organisation as well as at the level of the whole classroom, the members of the groups recognise the contribution of every member to the achievement of their goals and suggest solutions for better organisation and problem solving. The group collaboration method expresses the political organisation of the classroom and aims at a climate of collaboration, mutual respect and personal accountability. Moreover, the fact that the rules are established by the students themselves helps them internalise these rules. It should be noted here that these rules should only be of a positive nature. The perception of the students that rules are restrictive is therefore an item of negotiation, so that they might recognise the importance of rules in personal and collective life.

Developing interventions in favour of citizenship training is based on two pillars: awareness of reality and taking action and secondly, adopting attitudes and behaviours that might change this reality.

Teachers are called upon to develop a kind of deliberative democracy.⁶ The concept of deliberation gives 'differentiality' its needed niche in the development of different views and ideas, thus promoting self-respect and cooperation. Furthermore, the concept of deliberation, as a political practice, promotes the concept of community and critical thinking: the students recognize that their own community is characterized by a multitude of different approaches towards issues of learning, lifestyle, and world-view (Benhabib 1996, Gutmann 1996). It offers the basis on which students make their arguments, debate and decide. At the same time, it offers the students the possibility to think and reflect upon their own views and the views of others, understanding and forming a common identity (*shared identity*) with the members of the group they belong to.

⁶ For a critique on deliberating democracy, read Dryzek J. (2005) Deliberative democracy in divided societies. *Alternatives to Agonism and Anagelsia. Political Theory*. Vol 33. N.2 pp 218-242. Kymlicka's observation is worth noting here: the concept of consultation has offered minority groups the ability to express their opinions and achieve considerable benefits; the notion of consultation is put forward by both liberals and followers of multiculturalism as a priority in today's democracy. The 'turn to consultation' as a model of democratic theory has also brought on a new view on the concept of citizen. The question is whether and to what to extend can consultative processes lead to a new 'unified public will' or to a simple realisation of the chasms and conflicts that divide the various groups" (βλ. Kymlicka 2002[2005], p.409-412)

Simultaneously, students practice the critical analysis of the offered knowledge. They are called to analyse data (what, who, when), to critically examine (how, why) and to compose different/alternative solutions (what could have). They recognize the complexity of the world, the positives and negatives, and they position and reposition themselves on issues that might arise in favour of citizenship training

Both the methodological approach to knowledge and the framework in which it is produced, can develop the students' critical ability, as well as motivate them.

Within this framework, which also requires a change in the class culture, the teacher is called upon to enrich the syllabus of the curriculum. This enrichment, as regards citizenship training, pertains the negotiation of socio-political issues. Planning an intervention in favour of citizenship training should take under consideration Freire's view on education: it should start at personal understanding, continue at social understanding and end at social reform.

On the basis of that view there should be given emphasis to empowering students, the understanding of their personal contribution to the better operation of the basic social group to which they belong (school, family) as well as their own personal responsibility for the course and progress of that team and society as a whole.

Social issues such as unemployment, poverty, inequality and racism are issues that interest the students whether or not they themselves or the members of their wider social group have felt their consequences. The negotiation of such issues promotes the role of education, connecting it to society, while at the same time it develops the social empathy of the students as citizens. On the other hand, the negotiation of such issues should have as a goal to restore justice for the people that suffer such inequality. This means that the students realise that 'individual' success is closely related to social structures, and that inequality of any kind is socially defined on the basis of political choices.

While developing the activities, we have taken into consideration both the curriculum, attempting their connection to its cognitive goals, and the particularities of the school classroom. Other than the teachers' observation, the use of a sociogram allowed us to note the relationships between students and to focus on them. At the same time, open-end discussions offered us the framework on which the interventions will be build.

The 'labelling' of students as 'weak', 'naughty', 'filthy', their views on 'immigrants': 'they take our jobs', 'that's why there is unemployment', 'they are dangerous', have led us develop interventions aimed at negotiating these views and changing them.

The intervention was structured on the basis of modular activities that started at the individual, their inter-personal relationships on a first level and went on to deal with social relationships with the immediate environment of the students on a second level. Finally, the activities ended with dealing with their relationships at a wider social level.

My opinion counts

With this activity (which was one of the first ones introduced) it was intended for students to comprehend their role in the formation of a spirit of collaboration in class as well as the respect on the part of the teacher in regards to their interests. The students developed their opinions and after the decoding of their answers, the framework of the work and collaboration that would form the basis for the activities in the classroom was configured.

My family

The students presented their family tree in class: their maternal and paternal ancestry, their parents' interests, the values of their family. The origin countries and areas of the members of their family were pointed out on a map. The students discovered the similarities and differences as concerns place or origin and family values that their fellow-students' families consider the most important. They observed the changes in the lifestyle of their parents and compared it to their own.

During this activity, they were called to find information on the history of their family (time-space) and accessed the different forms of family structure (patriarchic-matriarchic, single-parental) on the basis of historic and economic conditions. They identified the role of each member in the hormonal coexistence and smooth operation of this primary social group.

PowerPoint presentation on the topic "Family in Art" with works of great artists. Critical assessment of the works with focus on family values as presented through them (love and affection, common pursuits, etc.). A generalization of the values that should characterize wider social structures.

Getting informed- Participating- Offering solutions- taking action

This activity's basic goal was to allow students to identify problems that might exist in their own lives and to help them attempt to solve them. Many of these issues demand the participation of the whole in order to be solved.

One of the 'issues' that we had to face during this activity was that of the size of the classroom. The students measured the area of their classroom as well as that of the

school yard during a corresponding Math lesson. They were informed of the standards that are in force concerning school classrooms and yards and compared them to their own findings. They identified the problem they are faced with (a small classroom, no access to people with special needs, etc) and suggested immediate solutions in order to overcome the negative aspects that were caused by this problem. They produced letters that point out this problem. This activity can be done on conjunction with the subject areas of Greek Language, Math, and Social and Political Science.

Recognising Violence

This activity was held with the opportunity of the World Day Against Violence. The students identified the meaning of violence through the use of appropriate questions and created a text in which the notion of violence was presented. This material was also published on the class blog. At the same time, they expounded their own views on a better world through poetry.

Discriminations- Prejudice

Screening of the documentary ‘The Eye of the Storm’. Discussion on the issue of discrimination based on racial differences (skin colour), sex differences, etc. The students identify the impact of such discrimination of the psyche of individuals (being led to failure), their relationships with others (conflict, feelings of superiority and inferiority) as well as how these discriminations are socially structured (who is it that discriminates, what is the impact, what is achieved).

Screening of the documentary ‘Dirty Greeks’ by the show Reporting Without Frontiers. The students are called to identify the causes of modern immigration, to locate the discrimination that Greek immigrants were forced to endure in America, the jobs they performed as well as the reasons of this discrimination (economic reasons, cultural and lifestyle differences). They then moved on to connecting those with the attitude against immigrants in our own country (empathy), finding similarities and differences.

Elaboration Questions: Who were those that immigrated? Why? What kind of difficulties did they face on their journey? Which dangers did they face? What was their treatment in the country that received them? Which kind of jobs did they undertake and what difficulties did they face? Why were Greeks called “Filthy Greeks” and by whom? Which was their evolution and did they eventually contribute to the development of their adopted country? What is the analogy with what is happening in our country?

The students read the 'poem' "First they came...". They analyse the poem, identifying the social groups that experience racism and racial violence. They are called to mention words that are related to racist phenomena: mock, hunt, divide, kill, curse, force out, pursue. They identify groups that might become target of racial violence: the poor, women, men, people of different ethnicities, people with different appearance, etc.

Getting informed-Discussing- Deciding

The students are called to study and discuss various perspectives of a real problem (The case of Skouries). They discover the complexity of the issues a society might be faced with, the arguments of all sides involved, as well as the ways in which these are presented (critical analysis: who is talking, what is their argument, what are their persuasion tactics, where do they target, emotion or logic, etc). The students identify the pros and cons of the conflicting opinions and propose solutions.

Role play: the students, acting as journalists, record and present their opinions in class. Their articles are judged in terms of the argumentation they develop and the clarity of their views.

School in the community

This action was materialised in order to connect the school environment with the community. It is closely related to the publication of a school newspaper in order for the students to be able to communicate their views, opinions and interests beyond the classroom.. At the same time, it aims to familiarise them with their own community through interviews, presentations and chronicling any problems that concern the wider community in which they live. One additional basic goal is for them to actively contribute through their creative work, both to their families and to their wider community and to develop active feeling of solidarity, offering, mutual assistance and humanity towards their fellow human beings.

Instead of an epilogue- Conclusions, Suggestions

In awareness of the basic restrictions that are posed in the scope of the Greek educational reality, our goal is the quality enrichment of the curriculum, and the critical approach of the topic sections that stem from it. Our goal is to intervene both at the level of a-typical education as well as at the level of the critical exploration of its offered context. Furthering multicultural sensitivity, cultivating a critical spirit and elevating dialogue in favour of rights and obligations should infuse whatever practices

and policies so that they might instil the principles of democracy, justice and responsibility.

The first conclusive findings that have stemmed from the pilot application as well as from interventions in schools of the western district of Thessaloniki are encouraging for the further promotion of such programs. These kind of practices have contributed to the students acquiring an energetic role during the learning process, to reconstruct prejudices and stereotypes against certain social groups and to work collectively towards a common goal. They have recognized the importance of dialogue in solving problems and practised on the critical processing of information. On the other hand they have also recognized the complexity of current issues and problems and realised that “all of us should have a perspective on the issues that concern human kind and will concern us in the future as well”. They have recognised that, every time, special circumstances affect the perspectives and ideas of individuals, and that the socioeconomic position one holds might force them to accept policies that would not otherwise tolerate. .(see. the case of Skouries).

Our intention is to cooperate with education specialists to create a network of critical and multicultural citizen training. At the same time the development of a research instrument offers the capability to access our work and make corrective interventions. We firmly believe that such actions will lead to the formation of a critical citizen, whose ideas and social principles are not fragmented and disjointed, within which lurks the element of a soothing abandonment (Adorno 2000[1951], 172). Rather, they trigger an energetic participation towards a better world in which individual perfection itself finds its completion.

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The Social Policy Committee of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki in the era of crisis: 2010-2013

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Abstract

The main purpose of this paper is to examine the various actions of the social policy committee of the Aristotle University during the years of crisis. It is evident that in the era of crisis, the university can be an integral part of the effort to help students, both financially and emotionally. The committee's action regards the disabled students, students with financial problems and generally every student in need. In this context, education can be seen in a multi-dimensional perspective, according to the principles of critical education for solidarity, social justice, true equality and acceptance of the different.

Keywords: social policy, committee, crisis, university, solidarity, equality.

Introduction

The current paper deals with the action of the committee for Social Policy and Health in Aristotle University of Thessaloniki during the years 2010-2013. The Committee for social policy and health of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki was established by No. A 357/8-9-97 decision of the Rector's Council, which was consisted of the rector Mr Michalis Papadopoulos and the vice rectors Professor Mr. John Antonopoulos and professor Ms. Olympia Gibba – Tziampiri (Kostaridou-Eukleidi, 2006). The committee's purpose is to support the student population of AUTH regarding problems during their studies at the Aristotle university, as well as to strengthen the social and cultural activities of the student groups with a view to enhance and promote the cultural presence of AUTH in the city of Thessaloniki. For operation and the achievement of the committee, the rector's council has made the decision to grant funding by the Company of Administration and Public Asset of AUTH. It is housed on the ground floor of the Administration building, in the office 18. Its members, who

are mainly academic staff members in various faculties of Aristotle University, are nominated by the respective Rector council for a term of three years, upon applications intended for the president of the committee, following the consent of the Rector's Council. It is also evident that the members of the committee provide their services without any compensation (Committee for Social Policy of AUTH 2006).

The committee's action can be examined through a theoretical way of view, since it can be associated with the principles of critical pedagogy for solidarity and true equality in education. We have to bear in mind that the committee's action is an example of the various ways, through which education can truly contribute to the true equality among students, an equality that does not ignore their differences and unique characteristics, but quite the opposite, takes them into serious account.

Theoretical background: equality of opportunities in education

The context of the supposed equality of opportunity in the modern educational system in practice is not applicable. In fact, the concept of equality of opportunity could be likened to a "race" where the starting point is different for each student. The impact of family background on the student's success in school is seen by Bourdieu (1974, Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990, Bourdieu & Boltanski, 1981), and others. According to Bourdieu, education rewards students based on their cultural capital, defined as "means of symbolic capital of wealth» (Bourdieu, 1977). Teachers allegedly communicate more easily with students from the upper classes, treating them as more "gifted" than the students from the lower or middle classes. Bourdieu noted, however, that financial barriers are not sufficient to explain the differences between the educational attainments of students from different social classes. Above and beyond economic indicators, cultural habits and dispositions (*habitus*) that are inherited by the pupils are essential for success in school. These cultural habits and dispositions consist of resources able to generate profit for owners, because they tend to be regarded as more capable in the community, as they have greater access to cultural heritage. Bourdieu finds that the legalization of inequality in cultural dimension should be shown in a way that is very different from that of the economic inequality. This is because economic inequality can be addressed by providing financial grants, but the inherent inequality is largely subjected to cultural predisposition and family heritage which is hereditary, because frequent interaction between parents and child creates a complete way of life, an entrenched behavior, a "custom", which is legitimized within school. This lifestyle includes visits to exhibitions, engaging music

and literature, reading books from the market and not from any form of borrowing, monitoring classics of cinema, visits to museums and places of great historical importance. All this creates a certain frame of mind, action and ownership of the historical and cultural heritage. Bourdieu states: «Education requires a certain behavior. This consists mainly of linguistic and cultural capacity and the relationship between family and culture, a relationship that can only be produced when the family transmits the dominant ideology (Bourdieu, 1973:80). Of course, for the acquisition of such cultural heritage, not only the right environment is required, but also the comparable ability of the student to internalize all those standards and norms that contribute to a better integration in the norm of school (Dumais, 2002: 44).

Since, according to Bourdieu, the educational system requires the possession of cultural capital, which only a minority of students actually has obtained, there's a great inefficiencies in the "educational broadcasting." This is because the students simply do not understand what the professors are trying to convey. For Bourdieu, this is particularly evident in the universities, where students are often afraid to reveal the extent of their ignorance. Nevertheless, despite the fact that students of lower class are at serious disadvantage in competing for educational credentials, the results of this competition are considered as merit and therefore as legitimate. Moreover, Bourdieu argues that this process is a vicious circle: Social inequalities are legitimized by educational credentials held by those who occupy dominant positions. This means that the education system has an important role in maintaining the status quo:

This [training] is actually one of the most effective means for the perpetuation of the existing social affairs, since it both provides an obvious justification for social inequalities, while it provides an acknowledgment of the cultural heritage, which is perceived as a social gift, as something natural (Bourdieu, 1974: 32)

In short, Bourdieu's view is that cultural heritage is obtained by these students who acquire higher educational credentials than students of lower social classes. Of course, some people of the lower class will succeed in the educational system, but this fact instead of challenging the system, will strengthen the idea of the meritocracy of education.

The poverty of inspiration is as devastating as the poverty of opportunities and it's time to replace a culture of low expectations for many with a culture of high standards for all. (Brown, 2007) Such "low expectations" have been commonly reported as one of the most significant obstacles to the working class educational achievement by both

researchers and makers of educational policy (Demie and Lewis, 2010). Children living in deprived communities face a cultural barrier that stands in very different ways than material poverty. It is a kind of cultural barrier, which includes low expectations and skepticism about education, a sense that education is for other people, and that is likely to leave someone who is standing in a low social position.

Moreover, critical pedagogy reckons that education should not ignore the differences that occur not only among students from different nationalities, but also among students with different socio-economic backgrounds (McLaren, 1995). Nonetheless, that does not mean that we should examine each student as something independent from the social status, but as a unique, integral element, that should be motivated to develop the foremost of its power. In the context, critical pedagogy has a multidisciplinary dimension and analyzes the cultural and social bases of the various cognitive fields. It mainly has a public mission to make society more democratic. Critical education tries to be both theoretical and practical. (Bertrand, 1999:148). Critical pedagogy aims to certain principles, such as human dignity, freedom, equality and social justice. It is a culture of questioning based on respect for differences. The analysis the educational event is not individual but a collective case. Also, critical education attempts to engage all participants of the educational process in the process of the critical analysis of personal and pedagogical beliefs and the consequent established practices that constitute the pedagogical procedures. Only then can education contribute to the empowerment of the individual and the reconstruction of society to a fairer system. (Carr&Kemmis, 1997:208).

The concept of solidarity through education was also expressed by the liberating theory of Paulo Freire, who gave emphasis on the fact that education is something far beyond a “banking education”. It is mainly an act for empowerment and an action that aims to the change of society (Freire, 1973). He mainly developed and implemented a comprehensive educational theoretical approach and a practical method, where the weak or repressed members of society can realize the critical relations of the social, political, ideological and financial aspects of society. First and foremost, Freire showed the significance of the action designed to emancipation. He organized his approach to emancipatory pedagogy in terms of a duality between the oppressed and the oppressors and between humanity and dehumanization (Freire, 2006). In theory, education should free the individual from the fake cultural construction of reality. It should exceed the dimension between theory and practice, leading students to the

reflection of the contradictions in their reality. This can be obtained through action and investigation in order to reach the acquisition of knowledge and the awareness of their position in society and creative. Also, education can subvert the social system and change social conditions. The theoretical beliefs and the teaching practices in Freire's theory created a language of opportunities for passing through education in a different social condition (Giroux, 1988).

McLaren believes that education should give priority to the moral dimension, with a view to engaging in social transformation and solidarity (Gounari&Grollios, 2010). According to theorists of critical pedagogy, teacher should consider the school education in the light of race, social class, power and gender. It is the role of the educator, who wishes to impart what Habermas calls emancipatory knowledge, i.e. the kind of knowledge that will help students understand the relationships of power and privilege, which largely distort the perception we have of world and social relations (Habermas, 1970; 1975). In this context, college professors have the duty to talk about issues such as oppression, irrationality, social injustice and structural violence.

The above position is linked to the notions of critical pedagogy, such as ideology and hegemony. The hegemony and ideology do not refer merely to the political ideologies of communism, socialism and anarchism, but are more related to the ways in which the ruling class ensures the consent of those who are oppressed through the production and reproduction of ideas, values and Norms " It can be described as a way of seeing the world, various kinds of social practices, rituals and representations, which we tend to accept as natural and as common sense (Gounari&Grollios, 2010: 307). Within the concept of ideology, all social practices and pedagogical approaches are important in schools. As McLaren states, certain pedagogical practices and procedures are presented as normal and are therefore not subjected to criticism:(*ibid.*: 311). This implies that the ideological basis of the course is not limited only to what students are formally taught, but especially in those who hide behind the official school knowledge, the hidden curriculum. Moreover, the whole process has to do with what Foucault describes as practical reasons, i.e. not only words, but practical institutions, behavioral patterns and forms of pedagogy. The important thing is that these practices speech shape and analogous relations of power, because they determine who can and cannot speak, while pointing who is in a position of power and who are the ones who obey (Foucault, 1972: 117).

These positions in the current context of education in the years of crisis can be connected with the ways and methods that the educational system will contribute to the resolving of the existing difficulties. Especially education in universities should not be seen as something neutral, as simply a way to prepare students for the labor market. It should be seen as an example of justice and equality, where students are taught the principles of social justice, solidarity, emancipation and the respect towards differences.

ACTION OF THE COMMITTEE FOR SOCIAL POLICY AND HEALTH OF ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI IN THE ERA OF CRISIS (2010-2013)

The action of the committee in the years 2010-2013 was significant in all areas of the academic life of AUTH. During the academic year 2010-2011, five scheduled meetings took place (13.12.2010, 20.12.2010, 10.2.2011, 4.4.2011 and 4.7.2011), while in 2011-2012 four scheduled meetings occurred (7.11 .2011, 6.1.2012, 26.3.2012 and 15.6.2012) and in 2012-2013 only two, owing to the fact that the function of the administration building was problematic.

Its action concerned the areas described below:

Voluntary Blood Donation

In order to conduct the blood donation, the committee collaborated for several years with the Blood Donation Center of the AHEPA hospital. The whole procedure requires the systematic organization and the coordinated efforts of the members and staff of E.K.P.Y and the volunteering students of Aristotle University. During the academic year 2010-2011, four days of voluntary blood donation took place , which gathered a total amount of 305 units of blood (134 units were gathered in November 2010 and 171 in April 2011). During the academic year 2011-2012, nine days of voluntary blood donation took place, which collected 446 units of blood (221 units were collected during November - December 2011 , while 65 units were gathered in March 2012 and 160 on May 2012). Moreover, during the academic year 2012-2013, seven days of voluntary donation were held, providing 270 units of blood (95 units were collected on the 5th of October, 2012 and 36 units were collected in December 2012. 95 units were also collected in March 2013 and 68 in May, 2013 (Committee for Social Policy of AUTH 2010 & 2013).

Services for the disabled

During the academic year 2010-2011, the committee has suggested to the Rectorate Administration a strategy to enhance the accessibility of students with disabilities in Aristotle, focusing on two central points: a) The establishment of an independent and robust Office of Accessibility and Regional Planning in Aristotle University, in order to ensure the vertical access to each building (with the use of elevators instead of hoists), the placement of ramps at the main entrances of the faculties, the construction of accessible toilets to each building, the infrastructure integration, in order to ensure the proper movement in the main axes of the campus, and b) the establishment of a service designed for the transfer of the disabled from and towards the city. In addition, intensive efforts were made towards achieving donation of a bus specially arranged for the transportation of students with mobility disabilities. This bus entered the AUTH service in July 2011 and came into operation by the beginning of the academic year 2011-2012. However, almost through all the first half of the academic year 2012-2013, the mobility service for the disabled students did not function, because the contractor employees of AUTH were on strike. By the beginning of 2013, the service was restarted by purchasing a second van. However, during the academic year 2013-2014, several problems arose mainly regarding the maintenance of the above means of transport (fuel, driver pay, etc.), due to limited financial resources. In addition, within the framework of reciprocating scholarships, several students have served as escorts in the vans (Committee for Social Policy of AUTH 2010 & 2013).

Services for students with vision disabilities

In order to serve the requirements of students with vision disabilities, the Secretariat of the committee collaborates with publishing companies, in order to convert the educational text books in to digital form. It also provides for the conversion of text books in Braille, in cooperation with the central library of the AUTH, where the required equipment is provided. Finally, it arranged the organization and conduction of a number of educational-experiential seminars entitled "Experiential workshop for orientation and mobility of blind people", in collaboration with the National Federation of the Blind. The seminar was implemented three times during 2010-2011 and 3 times during 2011-2012.

Services for students with hearing disabilities

The support for students with hearing disabilities was conducted during 3 academic years, via the Service for the interpretation of the Greek Sign Language. SpirosKouzellis was in charge. He was an official of the Secretariat of E.K.P.Y and a

sign language interpreter, in the form of Community Interpreting and not in the form of support during the course. Since the academic year 2013-2014, the service was not continued due to cutbacks.

Further actions for the disabled-

After intensive efforts of the E.K.P.Y. , an elevator was installed during the years 2010-2011 in the lower Student Club, in order to provide students with disabilities access to the Student Club, while previously they did not have access to this area . Also, during the years 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 , at the request of E.K.P.Y , the various technical and functional problems of the university buildings were recorded, in order to solve issues related to the accessibility in AUTH (control , maintenance and repair of lifts , etc.).

The committee issued the topic of the accommodation of students with disabilities in the camp of Kallandra in July, 2011. The same action took place in July 2012.

With the assistance of the committee, a pilot program was launched on 29.02.2012, regarding the physical exercise of the disabled students and staff members. In collaboration with the Supervisory Committee of the Aristotle University Gym, a specially designed area was created. This program ended on 30.6.2012 and had limited participation.

From January 2012 to October 2013, as part of the activation of disability issues, the committee joined and participated in the European project DARE: e-learning-Disability awareness of academic teachers: improvements through e-learning. The Jagiellonian University of Krakow was in charge of the whole project, while the other partners were the Charles University of Prague, the “Marie Curie” University in Paris and the Aristotle University, who was represented by E.K.P.Y..MrBenos was scientifically responsible for the project. 2 textbooks were published, a training manual and a user manual, which were issued in Greek and in English by the Aristotle University in December 2013. A phone Hot line was created in December 2010 (2310-991376, in order to serve the students' issues, providing information on technical problems of the buildings. This phone line continued to operate during the academic year 2011-2012. Nonetheless, during the year 2012-2013 it ceased to operate due to limited use.

Centre for Primary Health Care of AUTH

It was founded in May 2011 by Decision 1550/5-5-2011 of the Rector's Council of Aristotle, intending to protect the health care of the members of the university

community. It is housed in a specially designed room on the ground floor of the administration building and the office of the Health Center.

It operated until November 2012 on a daily basis, with the volunteer confluence of two doctors of EOPPY. Since January 2013, however, due to the restructuring of its structures and the removal of the contracted doctors, the centre started to function with the voluntary assistance of the Professor of Medicine MrBenos, the lecturer of general medicine MrSmirnakis and the assistant Professor of Medicine Ms. Kapoukranidou . Since the academic year 2013-2014, there are two doctors who work at the university 4 times a week and the centre is financially funded by the resources of AUTH (Committee for Social Policy of AUTH 2010 & 2013).

Planning and coordination of the civil protection services

After cooperation meetings of the members E.K.P.Y. with the Office of Civil Protection of Aristotle and the Volunteer Rescue Team & Disaster Response (ODAK), they acknowledged the need for coordination of the various agencies regarding the civil protection issues since 2011-2012. So a committee was set up, in order to develop an evacuation plan in case of natural disasters.

Social Care

In summary, during the academic years 2010-2013, the E.K.P.Y. arranged for the financial support and the free feeding of students with serious financial problems (February 2012). The committee also regulated the problem of cars parked on the sidewalks around the AUTH (March 2011) and it arranged the installation of audio devices in the traffic lights in the surroundings of the University, for the secure access of students with vision impairments (Spring, 2011).

Moreover, the administration has achieved a 20% discount on monthly commuter passes from OASTH for all employees of Aristotle (January 2012), while it organized a Christmas bazaar book (14-16 December 2011) , the revenues of which were offered for the digitization of the university textbooks for students of AUTH that are visually impaired. The whole project was carried out by the Foundation for Modern Greek Studies. Moreover, it issued the extension of the health insurance for students who had serious health problems (something that was significantly reduced by the Law 4009/2011). Also, it co-hosted a concert in April 2012 and 2013 to support the Social Solidarity Clinic of Thessaloniki, which was held twice in the Ceremony Hall of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and participated in the 15th and 16th Anti-Racist Festival of Social Solidarity in 2012 and 2013 respectively. Finally, it

organized events providing information about vision disability in October 15, 2012 (World White Cane Day) , to inform the use of condoms on the occasion of the “International Day of condom use” (02/13/2013) and for the prevention of breast cancer (31.5.2012) , in collaboration with the national Association of Women with Breast Cancer " Leap of Life” (Committee for Social Policy of AUTH 2010 & 2013).

THE ACTION OF E.K.P.Y. IN THE CURRENT SOCIAL STATUS

During the current academic year (2013-2014), the E.K.P.Y. encountered serious problems due to the restrained financial resources of the university. In summary, there was the problem of the maintenance of the transportation means designed for student with disabilities, the payment of the drivers as well as the hiring of escorts. Thus, from this year on, the daily usage of the above services was significantly limited, while some students were hired as escorts in the buses, under the contributory grants rewarded by the Aristotle University. Furthermore, the Community service of interpretation, which was provided by sign language interpreters , as previously mentioned , ceased to exist this year due to lack of money . In addition, the Centre for Primary Health Care of AUTH is now functioning with two permanent doctors working at the University. Finally , the expansion of the insurance coverage provided to students who were in a state of emergency, is no longer possible , since the implementation of the Law 4009/2011 , which limited the duration of studies to $n + 2$ academic years. In general terms, the lack of financial resources has severely restrained the multiple actions of the committee, leading to a situation where the students' needs and requirements can no longer be fulfilled. It is characteristic that even the informative leaflets that announce the various services and raise the awareness regarding several vital issues of the campus, have been practically eliminated.

Conclusion

Based on what was said , it can be stated that the aims of the Social Policy and Health during the academic years 2010-2013, despite the difficulties that AUTH faced and continues to face in the era of the economic crisis , were numerous and equally significant. Thanks to this academic institution, all students are able to develop lifelong relationships with the University life and not consider it as a faceless institution that is suitable only for coursework and examinations. Students can regard the University as a source of humanistic and social values. The university must offer to the society examples of wisdom, research, culture and sensitivity in all scientific areas

. We believe that the three-year term from 2010 to 2013 revealed the social face of our university, inspiring faith and optimism. It is undoubtedly an acclaimed institution and we are confident that it will continue to support our university community in all areas, connecting our campus not only with the society of Thessaloniki but also with the broader society.

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The theory and practice of critical pedagogy in bicultural community development. Part 1: Theory. Capitalism and community health: An indigenous perspective¹

Tony Ward

Architect and Independent Critical Educator

Abstract

We critical pedagogues work mostly in Schools or Departments of Education –teaching others how to teach. We try hard to practice what we preach, to be internally consistent, to match the medium and the message. We hope by so doing that we will bring about social change by conscientising our students to the economic, political, social, and cultural injustices that exist in the world, thereby to bring about a transformation of the status quo in Education, and ultimately in global power relations. This is a laudable goal, but one which I believe we are unlikely to attain through our presently pedagogical practices. This difficulty stems from the fact that most often, our theorising and our practice are confined to the conceptual environment we inhabit – the field of education, and rarely, do they engage directly with the wider community outside of this field. We practice what we preach within the confines of our discipline rather than in the community directly. In so doing we miss a rare opportunity to link our educational theories to community praxis. This has several significant consequences. The first, is that we often miss the nuances of cultural difference around issues of self-determination and sovereignty that are important to different sections of the community and instead, we generalise community needs and expectations and frame them in a blunt and insensitive conceptual Marxism. The second, and related, difficulty is that in the absence of direct community dialogue our language acquires a private elitism that further alienates us from those we would most like to influence. As I once put it, “When we seek to help liberate the oppressed using words that the oppressed don’t understand, we are lying!” (Ward, 1996).

¹A downloadable version of the combined paper is also available at:

<http://www.tonywardedu.com/critical-education-theory/critical-education-in-an-era-of-crisis-anticapitalist-health-and-design>

If we really want to change the world, we must step outside our comfort zone and extend our engagement into the community directly. For thirty years I have been teaching classes in Community Engagement through Architecture in New Zealand. Working primarily with the indigenous Māori community in pursuit of their goal of self-determination. This work has taught me much that I would never otherwise have learned not just about Māori culture, but about my own, European, colonial culture.

The late Joe Kincheloe draws our attention to the value that the cultures of colonised but unbowed indigenous communities have for us in our present world crises. Building upon my own work this paper critically explores precisely what indigenous cosmologies have to offer to us. Using the fields of community health and development as a metaphor the paper contrasts our modern capitalist health systems with those that existed in pre-colonial times, and which in many cases persist down to the present. The contrast develops into an informed critique of not just capitalism, but of western materialism and capitalism that is implicit even in suggested socialist models for its replacement.

The paper is in two parts. This first explores the theoretical underpinnings of western materialism insofar as it has shaped our conceptions of personal and community health. From this critique there emerges an alternative model that borrows from indigenous concepts. It interrogates the process of colonisation on multiple levels – in the theft of land, destruction of productive capacity, the criminalisation of native leaders and healers, the destruction of indigenous languages and knowledge systems through forced Eurocentric education, and the imposition of racist and self-justifying theories of intellectual and cultural superiority. It also challenges progressive theories of community health, seeing them as still locked into Enlightenment rationalities. It acknowledges the profound wisdom of indigenous conceptions of life and health and connects these to an imperative for direct action to address our current crises and to reinstate the health of our communities and of planet earth.

Part 2: The Praxis *describes the engaged practice of this model in a small New Zealand town with a large indigenous (Māori) community. This praxis draws on indigenous models of health, and involves the design of a community facility using a critical pedagogy in a School of Architecture design studio project.*

Keywords: Critical Pedagogy, Community Engagement, Community Health, Indigenous Epistemologies, Precolonial Cosmologies, Anti-colonialism, Anti-capitalism.

The most odious form of colonisation, and that which has brought with it the greatest pain for the colonised – (is) the colonisation of the mind.

Frantz Fanon (1963)

As Paulo Freire and Antonio Faundez wrote, indigenous knowledge is a rich social resource for any justice-related attempt to bring about social change. In this context, indigenous ways of knowing become a central resource for the work of academics... Intellectuals, Freire and Faundez conclude, should “soak themselves in this knowledge... assimilate the feelings, the sensitivity” of epistemologies that move in ways unimaginable to many Western academic impulses. ...Only now, in the Twenty-first Century, are European peoples just starting to appreciate the value of indigenous knowledge(s) about health, medicine, agriculture, philosophy, spirituality, ecology and education.

Joe Kincheloe (2007)

Part 1: The Theory

Community Health and Development Under Capitalism

The story of Detroit is a wake-up call for all communities that have relied on industrial development and growth for their wellbeing. The city was hit particularly hard in the 2008 Recession and declared bankruptcy in July 2013. Since then, it has moved to annex workers' pension funds, to cut services (including municipal water supply) and to sell public artworks. Detroit's population has declined from a peak of 1.8 million in 1950. The New York Times called the city “home to 700,000 people, as well as to tens of thousands of abandoned buildings, vacant lots and unlit streets” (Davey and Williams, 2013). The story of Detroit is not unique, but is being played out around the world. Stock markets are thriving even as the economy is barely growing and unemployment remains stubbornly high, and the split and poverty gap between workers and the companies that employ them is widening. With millions still out of work, companies face little pressure to raise salaries, while productivity gains allow them to increase sales without adding workers.

The story of Detroit is the story of the failure of community health and development under capitalism, played out on a global scale. The fact is, we are not going to pull out of this recession by doing what we did in the past. In their ground-breaking analysis, *The Race Against the Machine*, Erik Brynjolfsson and Andrew McAfee (2011) compare the present economic recession with others (including the 1929-1940 Great Depression) all of which eventually led to recovery and full employment. They suggest that unlike these

other recessions, this latest one is different and that that full employment is a thing of the past. Their studies show that computing and automation are outpacing manufacturing job creation at every level of the industrial process – including previously sacrosanct white-collar occupations and professions like Law and Accountancy. Capitalism, in the old sense, is collapsing.

Almost any work activity can now (or will soon be able to be) replaced by a machine or a piece of software. Given this increasingly rapid shift, large sections of the workforce are being rendered unemployable as more and more qualified people search for fewer and fewer skilled jobs. In the USA the number of printing machine operators, was nearly halved from 2007 to 2009, and the number of people employed as travel agents fell by almost half. Automatic checkouts have begun to replace sales people in supermarkets, and electricity and water meter readers find themselves redundant.

The same dynamics are operating in worldwide. We continually hear stories of highly-qualified graduates with Bachelor, Masters or even PhD degrees (and big student loans) doing menial work in low pay or choosing to go overseas for work. Particularly vulnerable are those middle-aged and skilled individuals who are unable to retrain or re-educate themselves for a new role, and young people lacking an education in creative entrepreneurial skills. The trend towards greater efficiency and market economy invariably means that fewer and fewer people will be engaged in industrial production. This means that even if population growth in small towns and regions declines the pace of technological change will still far outpace our ability to re-employ those made redundant. This trend is already noticeable, with major employers (including the Government) shedding unprecedented numbers of workers, in the US, in Spain, Portugal, Greece, Britain, etc. Routine labour is replaceable, and the only hope is in the community-determined economic development and system change.

A bleak prospect indeed, especially for small towns that have always relied on primary industries for their economic survival. But there is a solution. If we can no longer rely on attracting jobs from outside the community, then we have to educate and train our youth with a very different range of skills and values than those that are currently offered by the present education system or by the limited range of activities currently available in the community. In fact, we need to approach the very issue of community in a different way. We need to build a community capable of nurturing and educating its members, able to network using the resources and skills of the entire community itself and not just its existing school system (which is still locked into the obsolete industrial model of

development). We need to acknowledge that we live in a post-industrial age and that we therefore need to adjust our image of what kind of society we want and can sustain. More to the point, we also need to educate our youth politically so that they understand the root causes of their difficulties and are trained in the skills of social activism so that they can contribute to system change.

Our current models of community and economic development are based on the false assumption that economic and infrastructure development will naturally lead to community development that is supposed to lead to community health. This means that towns and regions offer “sweeteners” and tax incentives to developers and corporations to bring industrial development and work to communities. But the communities themselves suffer doubly under this system. First, they must bear the cost of the incentives being offered. Then they must accept the loss of profits that are moved off to remote shareholders, often overseas, robbing the community of vital economic resources. The consequence for small towns and beleaguered cities is a loss of economic sustainability, elimination of services and consequent increases in unemployment, truancy, academic under-achievement, reductions in family income, family violence, youth suicide etc. Community Health must be made a primary goal and process of economic development, and this means a radical change in policies. It means a radical redefinition of community health to include multiple factors as well as a radical restructuring of community power and self-determination.

Capitalism, Colonialism and Health

The health system in every Western capitalist country exemplifies the processes of commodification, corporate power, alienation and dehumanisation of the community to the status of “patient” consumers – and the effects of so-called “free-market” economics. Education, too, is both a witness and the object of these same forces that have brought every aspect of our lives, and even the survival of the planet to a point of crisis. The driving power behind this corporatisation of health is, of course, the United States where the so-called “Health System” epitomises the ethic of greed and self-interest of the free market.

The average hip replacement in the USA costs \$40,364. In Spain it costs \$7,371. That means I can literally fly to Spain, live in Madrid for 2 years, learn Spanish, run with the bulls, get trampled, get my hip replaced again, and fly home for less than the cost of a hip replacement in the US. (Rosenthal, 2013)

But “Health” in this case is but a metaphor for the corporate takeover of our entire social, cultural and economic world. In resistance to corporatisation of life, communities around the world are developing alternative economic, social and cultural ways to break the linkages to corporate power, to develop and operate their own systems of education, justice and health. Often this resistance is headed by indigenous communities who know first hand the ravages that colonialism and capitalism have wrought. It is they who are leading the fight to change the system.

This is not so surprising since it is these indigenous communities that are suffering the worst consequences of free-market capitalism, exhibiting the worst instances of drug and alcohol abuse, child and family violence, unemployment, academic failure and youth suicide. More than any, they have been reduced from a state of personal, emotional, intellectual, social, cultural, spiritual and economic health to a state of abject dependency, ill health and “failure”. Yet despite their extended suffering, their pre-capitalist rationalities have frequently survived colonial oppression and now have much to offer us in the fight against capitalism.

What Can We Learn From Indigenous Communities?

Kincheloe’s recognition of the value of Indigenous knowledge systems to our present reality has emerged only recently, even among the Left, whose vision of pre-colonial indigenous communities as “primitive” and “savage” was shaped and endorsed by Marx himself. He saw capitalism as only a transitory stage in human development - itself subject to the same evolutionary forces that the capitalists themselves used in its defence. For Marx, the internal contradictions of capitalism would eventually transform it, in its turn, into a new social and economic order. That order, for Marx, was a classless society based not on social hierarchy but on social equality. He based his philosophy on a critical analysis of political economy throughout human history, noting, in the process, the relationship between different forms of civilisation and the mode and relations of production that they exhibited.

The late British historian A. J. P. Taylor has noted how Marx, with an uncustomary lack of reflexivity abandoned the model of the dialectic (ie the structural imperative of constant change) when he posited the development of socialism. While he saw capitalism as a transitory stage, he paradoxically saw socialism as an end state. This has been one of the contributing factors to the failure of the Marxist model to predict the eventual adaptive capacity of capitalism to the changing circumstances of recent history. an uncustomary lack of reflexivity abandoned the model of the dialectic (ie the structural imperative of

constant change) when he posited the development of socialism. While he saw capitalism as a transitory stage, he paradoxically saw socialism as an end state. This has been one of the contributing factors to the failure of the Marxist model to predict the eventual adaptive capacity of capitalism to the changing circumstances of recent history. (Taylor, 1967). He noted, along with Engels, that particular egalitarian forms of social relationships had existed extensively before, but that they had been associated with more "primitive" modes of production.

According to Marx's theory, society had moved through three successive epochal "modes of production" from food gathering and hunting, through collective land ownership, agricultural production and stock raising to the "civilised" development of industrial production, which involved a stratified (and therefore conflictive) social structure and the private ownership of property. He (and later Engels 1979) used the work of the American anthropologist Lewis H. Morgan with the non-hierarchical and egalitarian Iroquois Federation to justify their model of linear human development. Steeped in the evolutionary ethic, Engels saw that the Iroquois federation was doomed to extinction - superseded and shattered by what he saw as the more advanced economic system of capitalism itself (Engels 1979: 101, Ward 2007A). In abandoning the Iroquois example *in toto* because of what he thought of it as historically obsolete and superseded he failed to recognise in it those elements that could form the foundation for the socialism that he espoused. He and Marx also failed to account for the remarkable cultural resilience of these indigenous communities.

More to the point, Marx's theory of human development seen as a progressive linear system of productive capacity remains just that – a theory. It defines what we mean by *civilisation*. A society is defined as civilised because it has a larger and more complex productive capacity than its predecessors. The implication is that a society without a high productive capacity – such as the indigenous cultures that the west has colonised - cannot, by definition, be civilised. This was the excuse that the western powers used to justify their imperialism. It is also the ideology that Marx inadvertently perpetuates. Our own (capitalist) brand of civilisation has brought the planet to the edge of extinction, but there is no reason to believe that a socialist brand of civilisation that is based upon the same yardstick would not produce the same results, since it is based upon an identical ideology of environmental dominance and resource exploitation.

Seen through an alternative set of parameters we might otherwise define a civilised society not as one that exhibits a highly developed productive capacity but as one that

exhibits:

- Care for the environment
- Care for the most vulnerable members, (children, elderly, disabled)
- Equality of resource distribution
- Willingness and ability to negotiate peaceful reconciliations
- Openness to encounters with different communities
- Capacity for empathy, compassion, forgiveness, understanding
- Ability to co-operate and collaborate
- An ethic of giving, rather than taking, and a high regard for reciprocity

These are all qualities that are held in high esteem by most indigenous communities whose cultures we have attempted unsuccessfully to eradicate, and they are, perhaps, the only values that are capable of either addressing the global crises that we face OR leading to the creation of a Socialist system.

The Destruction of Community Health

When European explorers first encountered the indigenous peoples of the New World, Canada, Pacifica and Australasia they found a people in remarkable physical and mental health, living in harmony with their environment and with coherent, stable and useful spiritual, political and social systems. There was no child or family violence, no ethic of punishment, no prisons and no guilt. Social relations were conducted in an aura of respect, personal autonomy and sovereignty and an ethic of reciprocity and generosity.

Early contact reports with the Iroquois (Lafitau, 1724; Morgan 1851, 1954; Brown, 1975, Ward, 2007A), Lakota (Allen, 1986; Crow Dog and Erdoes, (1990), Canadian First Nations (Daschuk 2013), the Montagnais (Leacock, 1980), the Aché (Clastres, 1989), the Melanesians (Malinowski, 1929), the Tahitians (Beaglehole (1955, 1961, 1962), and the Māori (Polack, 1838; Angas, 1847; Taylor, R. 1855; Shortland, 1856; Swainson, 1859; Colenso, 1868; Best, 1924; Elder, 1932; Moorhead 1966; Binney, 1968; Salmond, 1991, 1997) all indicate that at first encounter, these cultures lived lives exhibiting gender equality unimaginable to their European visitors and an almost complete lack of intimate relationship violence or of any punishment ethic with respect to their children. Within less than two generations all of that had changed, and indigenous people now top the list in all of the negative social statistics – poverty, ill health, crime, mental illness, dependency, alcoholism and drug abuse, family violence, obesity and self harm.

This did not just “happen”. Indigenous health did not just “decline” over this period. Indigenous well-being was destroyed by a process of colonisation that was driven by a greed for ever-increasing shareholder profit – by Capitalism. Capitalism was the engine of colonialism. Its *intent* was to destroy indigenous cultures, to appropriate their resources and to turn them into consumers for private colonial shareholder profit.

This process (Colonialism) did not end in the 1960s with what we have come to know as *Postcolonialism*, (Young, 2001) but continues through corporate global capitalism to privatise and plunder the not just the collective resources of the world’s indigenous communities, but the global “commons” as a whole. It continues in the destruction of natural habitats, in the theft and patenting of traditional indigenous remedies and failed “free market” ideology that is still promoted along with the deceitful “trickle down” theory that widens economic inequalities and plunges countless millions into destitution. The process was (and still is) universal and systematic and can be catalogued. It included:

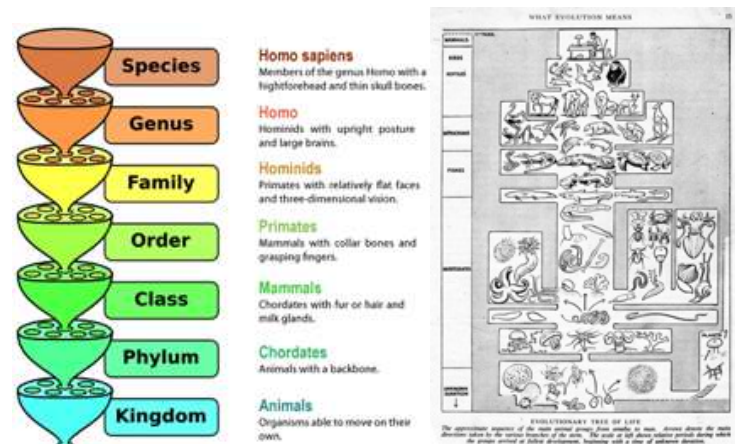
- The displacement of communities and the theft of resources, land and raw material (gold, spices, oil) to increase corporate profits
- The fragmentation of indigenous social structures (extended families, clans etc) and the imposition of Western nuclear (and patriarchal) family structures.
- The destruction of barter systems and the imposition of cash economies
- The creation of scarcity to maintain competition for low cost jobs
- The creation of economic dependency to establish a pool of labour
- The imposition and control of “civilising” compulsory Eurocentric education featuring colonial (racist) rationalities.
- The eradication of native languages, cultural traditions and practices
- Through Christianity, the imposition of an ethic of punishment, guilt and incarceration
- The replacement of indigenous constitutional forms and structures with Western models
- The eradication and/or assimilation of all indigenous cultural practices
- The displacement of indigenous cosmologies and the imposition of Western technical rationality(Giroux 1983:172 and Habermas,1971).²

² Both distinguish three types of rationality: Technical, Hermeneutic and Transformative. See: Ward (2006). Each of these three forms, including the latter are, of course, Eurocentric – that is – based upon the

- The criminalisation of indigenous political and spiritual leaders
- The “bio-prospecting”, privatization, commodification and patenting of indigenous knowledge systems (Global Research, 2013; Vandana Shiva, 2013).
- The destruction of holistic models of existence and their replacement with commodified materialist models

Epistemic Commodification of the Person

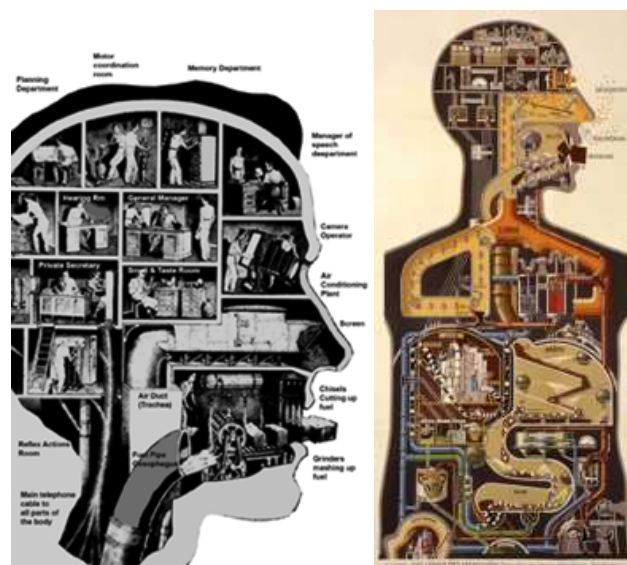
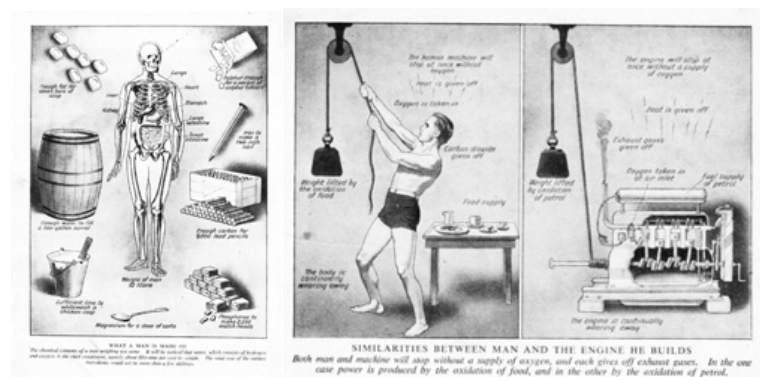
Key to the entire colonial project from first-contact down to the present was the racist belief in the superiority of European epistemologies that emerged with the Enlightenment. These were forcefully imposed upon indigenous peoples from the beginning. The biomedical model of human health that lies behind our modern Health industry is specific to and grew alongside colonial western capitalist culture, through the Enlightenment philosophies of René Decartes (1637) and Carolus Linnaeus' the 18th Century taxonomist whose *Systema Naturæ* (1735) divided nature into three kingdoms: mineral, vegetable and animal. Linnaeus used five ranks: *class*, *order*, *genus*, *species*, and *variety* to classify all the objects in his world. His method is still used to scientifically name every species. Significantly (and in contrast to the indigenous cosmology), Linnaeus' schema separates and isolates our own species *homo sapiens* from the rest of the natural world and places us at the top of the “tree of life” where we are free to exploit all that exists on the lower branches. In addition, of course, Eugenics and other theories of racial superiority were developed as offshoots of the Linnaean hierarchy and were used as a justification for colonial oppression, enslavement and exploitation.



rationality of the Enlightenment. None of them pay respect to the rationality of indigenous pre-colonial cultures.

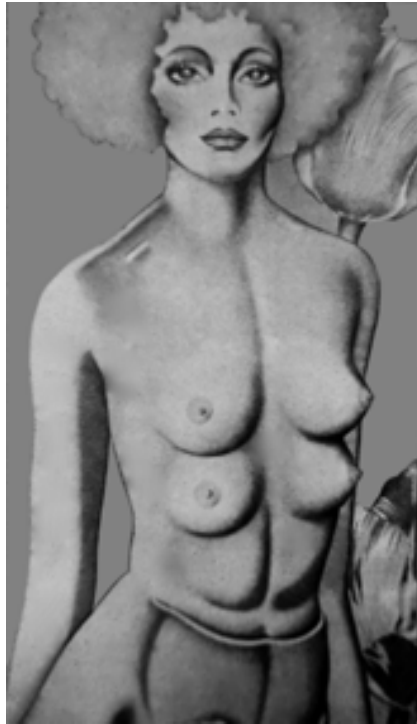
The Linnaean biological taxonomy - Human Evolution - a 1950's Encyclopaedia.

The combination of Linnaeus' taxonomy and Darwinian theories of evolution, coupled with the virulent ideology of capitalism and Judaic/Christian fundamentalism led almost inevitably to an ideology that saw *homo sapiens* sitting at the pinnacle of and separate from the rest of the biological world and having an implicit dominion over it. This reductionist view of the world developed alongside the industrial revolution with biology being seen through the same mechanistic lens as the parallel development of physical science. Biological systems – including that of human biology - were seen as simple machines.



Human Body as Machine

While this may all seem innocent enough at first glance, there lurks behind the metaphorical mask a deadly reality. Given our current interest in the development of genetically engineered organisms – from crops to this 1960s illustration of hypothetical redesign of motherhood (below) may not be so far-fetched. Seen as the functioning of its (mechanistic) parts, her body is a breeding machine with a marsupial pouch for ease of child-bearing and multiple breasts to feed larger “litters”.



GE Woman. (Sunday Times)

Using this mechanistic bio-medical model, disease is characterised as a malfunctioning of biological mechanisms that are studied from the point of view of cellular and molecular biology; the physician's role is to intervene, either physically or chemically, to correct the malfunctioning of a specific mechanism. The process is seen as essentially *curative*, where the doctor-mechanic is the active participant upon a passive recipient who *patiently* awaits a cure. The prime purpose of the model is the accumulation of capital through the *sale* of mechanical/medical services. It is a direct result of the capitalist economic system within which it operates.

The Enlightenment tendency to taxonomise everything extended also into the specialisation of the disciplines, including medicine, where all of the previously unified aspects of health – the physical, the spiritual, the emotional and the mental, were now treated as separate spheres of knowledge, each further broken down into smaller and smaller specialist niche market-components (Paediatrics, Geriatrics, Gynaecology, Oncology etc. within the physical realm, and Psychiatry, Psychology, Psychotherapy etc. in the *mental* realm). The *spiritual* realm was expunged completely from the model

In the realm of the *psyche* the proliferation of sub-disciplines or practices has been staggering and with each new sphere of practice, the scale and extent of diagnosis has increased exponentially. The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (better known as the DSM-IV) covers all mental health disorders for both children and adults. It also lists known causes of these disorders, statistics in terms of gender, age at onset, and prognosis as well as some research concerning the optimal treatment approaches.³ Each form of practice – Freudian Psychiatry, Jungian Analytical Psychology, Adlerian Analysis, Rogerian non-interventionism, Psychotherapy of numerous sorts - Transactional Analysis (Berne), Gestalt Therapy (Perls; Ward, A., 2005A), Neurolinguistics (Bandler and Grinder), Hypnotherapy (Milton Erikson), and (more recently) Poststructuralist Psychoanalysis (read “subjects” rather than “patients”) supports its own small market/industry, each with its own practitioners all swearing that *their* form of intervention is the most effective. Yet despite all of this hoopla, it appears that there is very little measurable difference in effect between any of them (Stiles et. al. 2006).

The proliferation of these many different forms seems to operate instead not as a response to *therapeutic need* but to marketplace conditions – from the need to have a distinguishable *brand* of therapy. The parallel proliferation in diagnostics and mental disorders as defined by DSM-IV may be similarly market-driven.⁴ Some theorists have suggested that the entire realm of psychotherapies constitutes a grand myth, that serves the needs of the therapist rather than the therapee. (Sasz, 1960, 1997; Laing,

³ The DSM was first published in 1952. At that time, it contained only 66 disorders with short lists of symptoms for each and some discussion of the believed cause of the various disorders (Holmes). In 1968, the number of disorders was expanded to just over 100 with the publication of Edition II. Edition III of the Manual (1979) introduced a multi-axial diagnostic system of five scales. DSM-IV was published in 1994 and described 297 disorders. The DSM-5 is the current edition of the manual (published in May 2013) has been the object of much criticism that the psychiatric drug industry unduly influenced the manual's content. Various scientists have argued that the DSM-5 forces clinicians to make distinctions that are not supported by solid evidence, distinctions that have major treatment implications, including drug prescriptions and the availability of health insurance coverage. General criticism of the DSM-5 ultimately resulted in a petition signed by 13,000, and sponsored by many mental health organizations, which called for outside review of the document. See: Coalition for DSM-5 Reform <http://dsm5-reform.com>

³ For a brief overview see: Psychiatry is a Mental Disorder at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bPOrD6xfDNo>

1967, 1972; Hillman 1972; Cooper, 1970). Laing (1968) particularly, makes a direct connection between psychiatric diagnostic theories and practices in the creation of “abnormality”, the repression of “unacceptable” behaviours and the development of markets in the political context of a world driven by capitalist ideology. There is reason to be concerned, for instance, that the diagnosis of Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) – "negativistic, defiant, disobedient and hostile behavior toward authority figures", or “over-creativity” (also included in the Manual) will be used to suppress legitimate challenges to the political status quo. As the Washington Post noted, “If 7-year-old Mozart tried composing his concertos today, he might be diagnosed with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder and medicated into barren normality.” (Will, 2010)

What better indication could there be of the extent to which mental health has been penetrated and colonised by rampant technical rationality! I am reminded of the wonderful and countervailing diagnostic definition of sanity by Ronnie Laing that redresses the authoritarian emphasis of prevailing diagnostics, when he describes sanity or psychosis as the degree of conjunction or disjunction between two persons where the one of them is sane by mutual consent. (Laing, 1959: 36)

The overall field of health has developed in a similar way, as the basis for prolific profiteering that has progressed alongside worldwide increases in poverty, hunger and malnutrition, infant mortality, homelessness and massive disparities in wealth and community well-being.

The New Patient: Homo Economicus

With the (corporately-driven) introduction of user-pays and free-market ideologies from the 1980s to the present, these disparities have increased exponentially. The results have been felt most by those at the lower end of the economic scale where people must choose between food and medicine (Scutti, 2014). The real beneficiaries have been the medical, insurance and pharmaceutical industries. The latter makes huge profits on a model of health that in many ways has been counter-therapeutic. The 20 largest pharmaceutical and biotech companies in the world amassed profits in excess of \$110 Billion in 2007, with an average net income of \$5 Billion each. In 2008, the top 15 had a combined sales income of \$358 Billion (*Med Ad* 2007; Bain & Company, 2003). Given these staggering amounts of money it is not surprising that these companies spend millions promoting a model of health that demonstrates a need for their product. In the US alone, they promote this model, through advertising,

marketing and lobbying (to influence political decision-makers) to the tune of \$19 billion a year. Annually, the 1274 registered drug lobbyists in Washington DC spend approximately \$150 million seeking to steer healthcare legislation their way (Smith and Birnbaum, 2007). They are now (2014) attempting to extend the scale and range of their influence through the imposition of the (secretly negotiated) Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) that would override national sovereignties and allow them unchallengeable rights to sue governments who seek to restrict or temper the sale of their commodities. In Australia, the tobacco corporation Philip Morris Asia is challenging plain-packaging legislation under the 1993 Agreement between the Government and the Government of Hong Kong for the Promotion and Protection of its Investments.⁵

Since the US Health Insurance Industry also exercises enormous power and influence in which drugs are prescribed, and since they too rake in extraordinary profits from the health care system, little wonder that in Obama's attempt to reform the system, the Health Insurance lobby spent more than \$1.4 million a day to ensure that public health care remained off the agenda and that their profits remained safe (Eggen and Kindy, 2009). The success of their campaign is demonstrated by the fact that not only did Obama's public system fail to pass a bipartisan vote, but that the result of legislation was that *every citizen* is now legally required to have health insurance. The insurance companies must have laughed all the way to the bank. In 2009, the year when the Health Care legislation debate was at its height, the five largest US health insurance companies set new profit records, while at the same time the greatest economic downturn since the Great Depression sent millions of Americans onto the unemployment line and into poverty. The US non-profit Healthcare for America Now has revealed that in 2009, five firms reported \$12.2 billion in profits', an increase of \$4.4 billion, or 56 percent, over 2008. At the same time, 2.7 million Americans who had been enrolled in private health plans the year before lost their coverage."(HCAN, 2010). These increased profits come from the exploitation the mostly poor through legislation and Federal programmes supporting a phenomenal increase in the prescribing of psychotropic drugs. To cite but one telling example we might look at the diagnosis and treatment of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

⁴ See:

<http://www.ag.gov.au/internationalrelations/internationallaw/pages/tobaccoplainpackaging.aspx>

Worldwide, the manufacture and prescribing of drugs such as *Ritalin* has increased 1000% over a ten-year period (Strebel, 2011).

Through over-prescription in US schools ADHD medications are now used as a primary form of classroom management and student control (Koerth-Baker, 2013; LeFever, G. B., 2002; Pierce, C. 2013) Moreover, a recent report by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found that more than 10,000 American toddlers 2 or 3 years old are being medicated for ADHD outside established pediatric guidelines, and that toddlers covered by Medicaid were medicated for the disorder far more often than those covered by private insurance (Visser, 2014). The (mostly male) children are now diagnosed and medicated for “medical” conditions” that might more properly be attributable to the hunger, poor diet, boredom or repetitive classroom drudgery, lack of healthy activity-outlets, enforced inactivity, suppression of creative curiosity, an isolation from risk that characterises much of American school life (Braugman and Hovey 2006; Breeding, 2000). Numerous researchers have pointed to the role of food colourings and food additives in the production of ADHD symptoms, yet we continue to blame and medicate the child but forgive and reproduce the system and the society to which the child may be responding while at the same time falling prey to and supporting a drug and medical industry that is making billions from our childrens’ suffering. It seems clear, then, that the market system of Health has become big business that operates and grows through the exploitation of its social, cultural, spiritual and economic environment.

Community Health: A Critical Perspective

The Western health system is unhealthy. It promotes a programme of diagnosis and treatment that may provide successful medical care on an individual case-by-case basis for the rich, but that fails miserably to provide good health at the community let alone the global level. In fact, the medical system *causes* community ill-health by creating an ethos of disempowerment and dependency (good for profits!) – all due to its sole focus on shareholder returns, and this tendency has increased substantially with globalisation. The reduction of the status of the individual to that of a mere consumer (medical or otherwise) brings with it a sense of profound alienation. This analysis is not new. Critical Theorists have noted this for almost a century. From Marx, through Tawney (1920), Fromm (1942), Mumford (1951) to Berman (1988, 88-9), writers have noted the impact of *modernisation* upon the collective consciousness of the community.

Tawney's work, "The *Sickness of an Acquisitive Society*", and suggested that social well-being may have other than a statistical basis, as theorised by Durkheim and later Parsons (1960.)⁵ Mumford (1951) cited the condition of modern man as one of increasing passivity and quiescence in which all sense of personal creativity, risk-taking and non-conformity were being expunged, leaving only two groups of people - the conditioners and the conditioned. Mumford is pointing to the condition of *alienation* - a condition which leads, without any internal contradiction, to the conclusion that it is possible for an entire society to be unwell, challenging the very notion of what we mean by "Health". Seen in these terms, wellness is measured and characterised by the ability to create, maintain, repair and develop balanced, wholesome relationships – a meaning very close to that held by indigenous communities. Accordingly a "healthy" human being is one who active, self-directed, risk-taking and spontaneous, but also one who experiences love, empathy and compassion for his or her fellow beings. Sadly, consumer-driven individualistic and competitive free-market capitalism seems to have diminished our collective capacity for these qualities. The "Me" Generation of the 1980s may have been the watershed. This distinction is one that has been given a particularly sharp focus by the critical psychologist Erich Fromm who noted the emergence of a state of what he called "consensual validation" between the members of a society who naïvely assume that the fact that the majority of them share certain ideals or feelings proves the validity of these ideals or feelings. On the contrary, he suggested that *consensual validation* has no bearing whatsoever on reason or mental health - that millions of people sharing the same vices does not make these vices virtues, or their errors to be truths, and the fact that millions of people share the same forms of mental pathology does not make them sane. (Fromm 1955) Indeed, picking up on the same theme as Mumford he goes on to note that in any given society it follows that a pathological condition may be the norm, and that in such circumstances, the pathology expressed as personal defects

⁵ Parson's offered a pragmatic theory of social relations that presumed that there were no conflicting interests within any field of enquiry - that the "social consensus" (falsely) ensured that "problems exist because of the ignorance of would-be problem solvers rather than because of the conditions of power-disparity among social groups". This became the accepted theory because it naturally appealed to the dominant culture since it continued to mask their continuing economic and cultural dominance. It thus became the normative social theory, influencing a wide range of disciplinary activity in the sciences and humanities.

may be invisible to its individual members. (1955: 23) A person who “fits into” such a pathological culture will be unaware of any defect and will not run the risk of having it revealed and becoming an “outcast. Indeed, in such a society, the outcast will be the one who expresses spontaneous feelings of love, compassion and an ability for autonomous action.

Glaswegian psychiatrist Laing, summed this state up when he noted that the condition of alienation, of being unconscious, of being “out of one's mind” is the condition of the normal man. He calculated that: “normal men have killed perhaps 100,000,000 of their fellow normal men in the last fifty years.” (Laing, 1967: 24)

Comments such as this turn the entire categories of *normality* and *health* on their heads. So when, as Joe Kincheloe suggests, we seek to learn from indigenous cultures how to heal our sick society, we should realise that what is involved is not a simple and further appropriation of their techniques, remedies and practices, but a going back to basics – to the grass/flax root level of human relationships – rebuilding from the ground up an anti-capitalist world of mutual support and trust in which we take responsibility for our own world, rather than to entrust it to the politicians and the corporations who control the market economy of health.

Indigenous Health Epistemologies

This capitalist model of health and the view of the human organism upon which it is built contrasts starkly with that of the pre-Enlightenment era. Even the words we use betray the similarities to models of health and well-being in traditional, indigenous or pre-enlightenment cultures.

- The **English** word *health* itself comes from the Old English word *ha*, meaning *whole*, or the Old Norse word *helge* meaning *holy* or *sacred*. This meaning has obviously been lost in its common usage, but we will find that it is a meaning shared with many other ancient, pre-capitalist cultures.
- The **Māori** word for health – *hauora* – derives from two roots, *hau*, meaning breath, vital essence, and *ora*, meaning *life*, *vitality* (n) or *to survive* (v). The emphasis here is on *well-being*, that is, an *active* state in which the person plays a central role. It is a state of *being-in-the-world* in which the act of *breathing* plays a central role.
- The **Lakota** word *got health* – *zanî* means to be *unmolested*, *whole*.

- The **Cherokee** word for health - *tohi* - is the same as the word for *peace*. You're in good health when your body is at peace. The "medicine circle" which is common to most Native American cultures, has no beginning and no end and therefore represents a concept of "harmonious unity" of completeness or wholeness.
- In **Myaamia**, there is not a word that functions like the English word 'health'. There isn't really a way to say 'he is healthy'. What one would say is: *nahimeehtohseeniwita* , meaning 'he lives well, in a proper way'.⁷
- In the **Dineé** (Navajo) language, the prefix *hózhó* (sometimes translated as "health") denotes the holistic aspect of the environment, the world, or the universe. It connotes beauty, harmony, good, happiness, and everything that is positive. The Dineé ritual healing practices or 'sings' seek to restore the individual's state of balance in the universe, through multiple pathways.
- The **Sanskrit** word for "health" is *sáhitya*, and connotes *association, connection, society, combination, union with, agreement or harmony*.

The following are a few models of Health in the modern indigenous world. They are not all actually *traditional* models, some of them are modern attempts to describe the traditional indigenous perspectives on well-being.

Indigenous Models of Health

1. Maori: Te Whare Tapa Wha (The four walls of the house) (Mason Durie)⁸

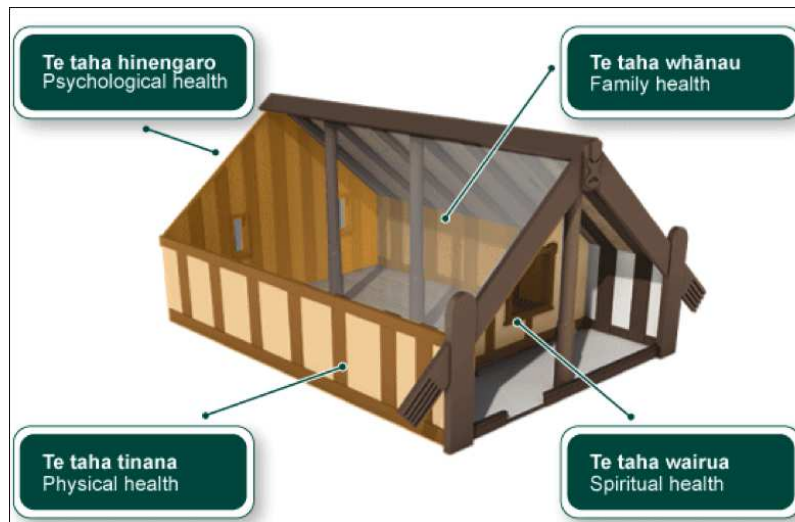


- **Physical (Taha Tinana)**
- **Spiritual (Taha Wairua)**
- **Social (Taha Whānau)**
- **Mental (Taha Inengaro)**

⁶ Personal Communication with Daryl Baldwin, Director of the Myaamia Project. 10th Nov. 2010.

⁷ This model is just one of several Māori Health models. Others may be found at the Ministry of Health website at: <http://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/populations/Māori-health/Māori-health-models>

⁸ There are also very formalistic rituals of encounter by which Māori come together. (Ward 2013A)



Te Whare Tapa Wha

Mason Durie is probably best known for his description of Te Whare Tapa Wha – the four walls of the house - the seamless connections of spiritual, mental and emotional, physical and social well-being. All four dimensions are necessary for strength and symmetry. The model is based upon the typology of the traditional Māori *Wharenui* or Meeting House, with each of the four aspects of being/experience being represented symbolically as one of the walls. All four dimensions are necessary for strength and symmetry, and all must be in balance for the house to stand. It is important to know that in the Māori world the *Wharenui* or *Whare Tipuna* as it is sometimes called, is the embodiment of an ancestor. The barge-boards are the arms, the rafters are the ribs and the ridge-beam the spine. Entering into a House, one enters into the body of the ancestor who watches over all activities.⁹

9 In Māori, for instance, the term *whenua* connotes both the earth or land as well as placenta or afterbirth and this relationship is symbolically reinforced when the afterbirth is buried in the individual's *turangawaewae* – or place where one has rights of residence or *manawhenua* power associated with historical occupation and with *whakapapa* (genealogical, relationships). But this relationship extends beyond the realm of relatedness to include fundamental elements of identity. Hence the Wanganui River tribes say “Ko au teawa. Koteawako au” (I am the river. The river is me). The Western Apache, on the other hand use their landscape as a story-telling metaphor for therapeutic and healing processes. A person experiencing an emotional or social crisis will be counselled not directly (with no reference whatsoever being made to their condition or to its possible cases) but through the telling of stories associated with places where similar or related events or crises were manifest in the past – often the very distant past several hundred years previously (Basso, 1996).

2. Lakota: The Medicine Wheel

Similar in many ways to Durie's four-sided *TeWhare Tapa Wha* model is the traditional Native American model of the Medicine Wheel. Although mainly associated with the Lakota, the Medicine Wheel is a cultural tradition shared with many tribal groups. Its tradition extends back at least 7,000 years. There are many versions of the Medicine Wheel, and not all tribal groups attribute the same characteristics to it. For simplicity, I will refer to the Lakota Medicine Wheel (below).



Medicine Wheel (Joe Gone)

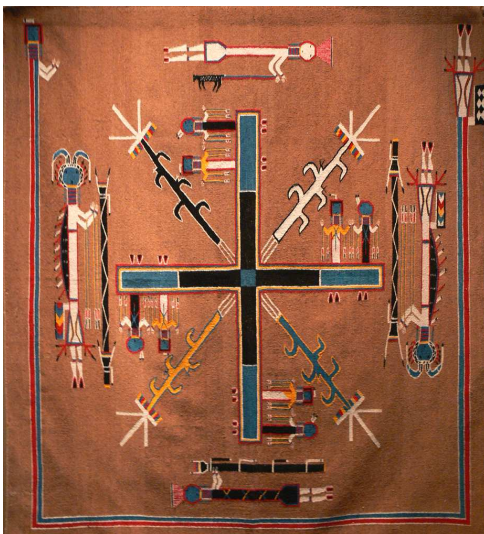
In traditional Lakota society, the Medicine Wheel is represented as a circle or hoop divided into four quadrants – one for each of the Four Directions – East, South, West and North. Each quadrant is represented by a different colour (in counter-clockwise order – (yellow, white, black and red), four gifted elements, (fire /sun, air/animals, earth/minerals and water/plants), four different periods of life (infancy, adolescence, adulthood, Elderhood), and (similar to Māori conceptions) four different aspects of being (Spirit, Mind, Physical and Emotion).

Illness is seen as a state of imbalance between the four areas of life. The role of the traditional healer being to help the individual regain balance through prayer (spirit), meditation (mind), herbal medicine (plants) and getting in touch with their emotions. In our modern world we tend to allocate different aspects of our lives to different specialists. The spiritual aspect is assigned to the priest, the mental aspect to the teacher or psychiatrist, the physical to the physician and the emotional aspect of our

life is shared with our friends and relatives. This places the locus of control external to the individual. The shaman or healer in the Lakota world is engaged in *facilitating* the healing process, acting simply as an intermediary between the individual and the social, mental, physical and spiritual worlds with which s/he is out of balance. The onus for healing resides with the seeker. There are attempts current to integrate the Medicine Wheel cosmology with elements of western psychotherapy. One leading proponent of this movement is Dr. Joseph Gone, a member of the GrosVentre Nation of Montana who specialises in finding more appropriate ways of treating his Native American clients. (Gone, 2009; 2010,166-235; Waldram, 2008; Roberts et. al. 1998; Twigg and Hagen, 2009)

3. The Dine'e (Navajo)

Similar to the Four Directions/Sacred Hoop model suggested by Gone, the Dineé or Navajo model of health usually is in the form of a circle or square, symbolising the Four Directions, often in the form of sand paintings.



Dineé Healing/Sand painting

Unlike Gone's model, they involve multiple symbolic representations, each expressed differently and used in differing ritual practices to achieve 'balance' in the universe. The many complex Navajo healing ceremonies or "ways" use songs, chants, sand paintings, sacred objects, and dance to recreate or enact stories and events that link ceremonial participants to their sacred origins, thus connecting them to the spirit world where balance can be restored.

Each different design or model is used for a different ceremony, officiated and facilitated by a *hataali* (singer). Ceremonies or ‘sings’ can take days and may involve the entire extended family of the seeker in the process. Preparations can take months, and the process of bringing everyone together plays an important part in the reestablishment of balance in the social realm. Such ceremonies are time-consuming and expensive and are rarely performed in modern times, save in times of dire need (Locke, 1979)

4. Eastern Systems

There is an interesting relationship between the Sacred Hoop/Four Directions model of the Lakota, the sand-paintings of the Dineé ritual practices and the *Mandala* (a Sanskrit word meaning “circle”) commonly associated with Tibetan Buddhism, which are also used in ritual practices to “restore balance” – in this case through an identification with and ultimately the achievement of a transcendent state in which *Maya* - the “veil of illusion” is removed and the ultimate reality of the universe is apprehended.



Vajradhatu Mandala

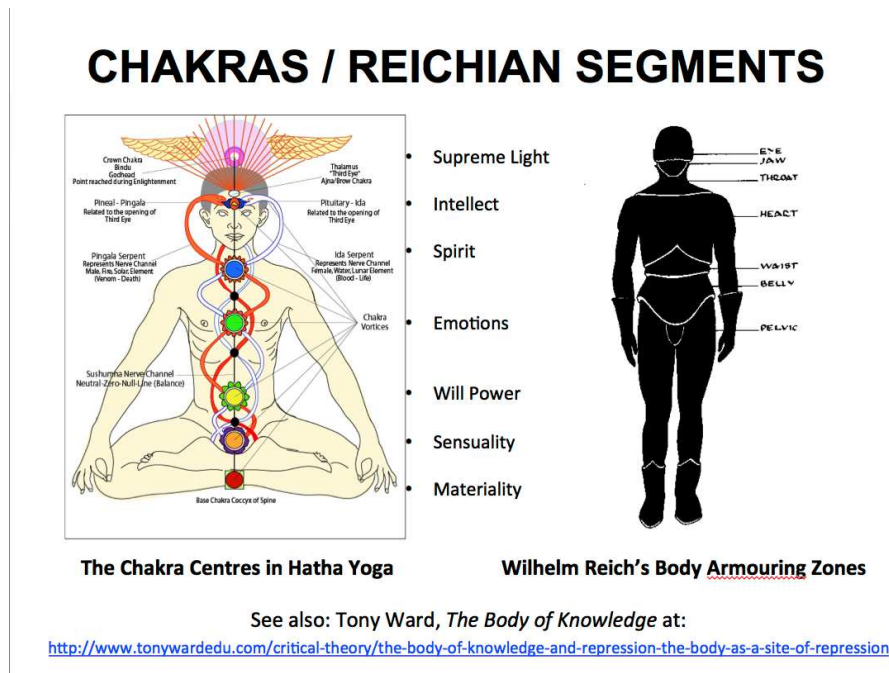


Sri Yantra mandala

The mandala thus operates as a gateway or connection between the *macrocosm* or outer world and the *microcosm* or inner world of the individual. Mandala are key instruments in creating a *sacred space* for the practice of meditation, or trance-induction the goal being the attainment of a state of Enlightenment through offering access to progressively deeper levels of the unconscious, ultimately assisting the

experience of a mystical sense of oneness with the ultimate unity from which the cosmos in all its manifold forms arises (Fontana 2005:10)

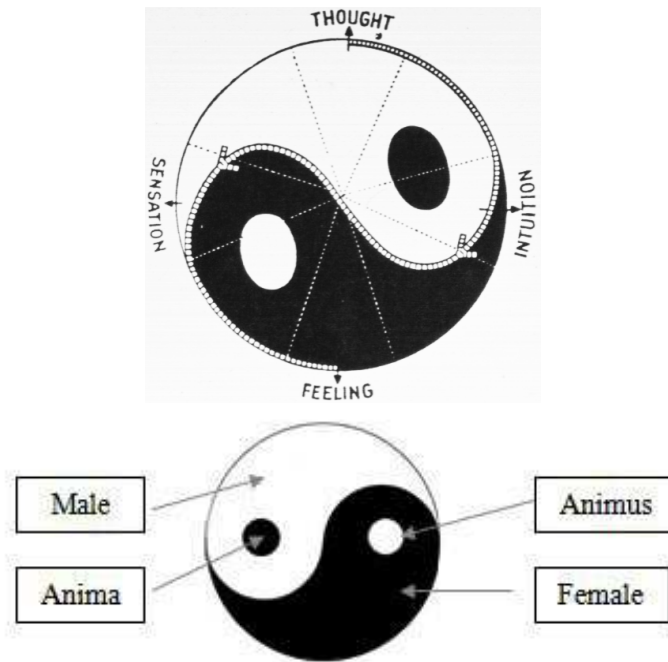
5. Chakra Centres in Hatha Yoga



Mandalas have been adopted into Western psychoanalytic methods. Taking his lead from the ancient Taoist text, *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, the Swiss psychoanalyst Carl Jung saw the mandala as "a representation of the unconscious self. Working with schizophrenics, he believed his paintings of mandalas enabled him to identify emotional disorders and work towards wholeness in personality (Wilhelm, 1979). He also believed that the construction of mandalas enabled individuals towards a state of *individuation* through a process of action and reflection (Sodersten and Williams (1981). Similarly, Wilhelm Reich's theories of the seven body-armouring zones bares a striking correspondence to the Chakra Centres in Hatha yoga, while his concept of *orgone energy* or *bioenergetics* (Lowen 1975) is very similar to the notion of *Prana* or "Vital Energy" in yogic systems (Reich, W.,1980: Ward 2005A).

Chinese Systems

In traditional Chinese conceptions of health, the principal of Yin-Yang reigns supreme. The Yin-Yang symbol (below) symbolizes the duality and interrelatedness of opposites.



Taoist Yin-Yang Symbol

- Yin is seen as slow, soft, yielding, diffuse, cold, wet, and passive, associated with water, earth, the moon, femininity and night time
- Yang is fast, hard, solid, focused, hot, dry, and aggressive; and is associated with fire, sky, the sun, masculinity and daytime.

The concept lies at the origins of many branches of classical Chinese science and philosophy, as well as being a primary guideline of traditional Chinese medicine, and a central principle of different forms of Chinese martial arts and exercise, such as *Tai Chi*. This paradigm, describes how opposite or contrary forces are interconnected and interdependent in the natural world and on this basis, good health (as in Lakota, Navajo and other indigenous cultures) is achieved through the balance of these opposing elements. Unlike these other systems, however, the Yin-Yang symbol suggests a *dynamic* relationship. Each element contains within it the seed of its opposite and each appears to be in a process of rotation. Jung's Analytical Psychology borrowed much from Chinese theory and practice, not least his interest in the Yin-Yang symbol. (below) that represents the dual nature of existence, the male and the female as unconscious archetypes, the *animus* (the male character-part of a woman) and the *anima* (the female character-part of a man). (Jung, 1973).

Herbal Medicine

Traditional Chinese herbal medicine also draws on the same Yin-Yang principle and seeks to restore a balance between these opposing systems within the body. Herbal medicine is as old as humanity itself, tested over thousands of years and millions of human trials to produce an incredibly sophisticated system of diagnosis and treatment. Many of our modern medicines derive from research into ancient remedies, and the value of this knowledge is implicitly recognised in the “bio-prospecting”, privatization, commodification and patenting of indigenous knowledge systems by Big Pharma.

SYSTEM SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

Several commonalities stand out among these pre-capitalist systems.

- Indigenous systems conceive of life as a *sacred* phenomenon, a mystery that can not be known but that can be experienced as a vehicle to right-living and health
- Indigenous concepts of health are based on the belief in metaphysical or supra-physical energy systems
- Indigenous conceptions of health are essentially *holistic*
- They embrace and include all aspects of life and existence and see them as interconnected.
- They all stress the individual’s *relationships* to the outside universe, and in particular to the material world.¹⁰
- They all stress the importance of *balance* between the four aspects of existence Body, Mind, Spirit and Emotions.
- They are also usually *preventative* rather than curative
- Where curing *is* involved they infer an active participation by the individual in his or her well-being. The “healer” is merely an intermediary or facilitator rather than the creator of the establishment, healing and maintenance of relationships.
- They include aspects of life that the Western materialist model is unable to grasp – specifically the notion of *spirit* or life *force*, that is seen as permeating the universe and at the core of each individual’s inner state
- They exhibit a reverence for life, for difference and for that which is unknowable.

10 One exception to this may be Jung’s notion of the *collective Unconscious* and its related *Archetypes*. (Jung, 1996: 43)

- The “healer” rarely expects and often refuses economic or material compensation for his or her engagement since humility in the face of *The Great Mystery* is a fundamental requirement of success.

In the realm of mental or emotional wellbeing Western models run counter in two important ways to basic beliefs and assumptions that are common to most indigenous cultures

1. Western models of mental health are based upon a model of an *individualised* self - independent of social, cultural, economic or environmental factors. This is largely because much of the foundational work – like that of Swiss developmental psychologist Jean Piaget - were developed through work with white middle class members of nuclear families. (Piaget 1972) The models conceive of the self as an autonomous (rather than *relational*) being whose development follows predictable and uniform patterns that bear no relationship to the context in which they are shaped. Deviations from the developmental pattern are automatically labeled “abnormal” even though, in a different cultural context (let’s say a tribal setting with extended families and very different cultural and ritual practices) they may be very normal indeed. An acceptance of this Western model automatically predisposes a colonising Eurocentric interpretation (and imposition) of normality across cultural boundaries.¹¹

2. The exclusivity of the Western model ensures that *physical* assume prominence in the diagnostic equation. Other, alternative diagnoses are automatically excluded. For instance, a person who hears voices of people who are not present is labeled a schizophrenic, for which the medical remedy is a prescribed drug. To an indigenous person engaged in ritual practices, the hearing of voices may signify the beginning of dialogue with ancestors or spirit guides which might be extremely beneficial to that person’s life and future actions.

Commodification of the Sacred

While it is true that Western medical practices have absorbed, assimilated or copied some traditional Indigenous practices, the practices themselves (Yoga, Meditation, Acupuncture, Tai Chi etc.) are still considered to be “fringe” activities within the health field. The rationality on which they are based recognises the existence of

11 Arvol Looking Horse *The Selling of Indian Culture: Protection of the Ceremonies O-mini-c’i-yapii*, at: http://www.dlncoalition.org/dln_issues/protection_of_ceremonies.htm.

phenomena that confound western notions of the rational. Many of them are useful to some seekers, but many are also commodified “New Age” practices that operate to the exclusion of the profound underpinning beliefs and cosmologies of their indigenous origins. Lakota *Inipi* Ceremonies or “Sweat Lodges”, *Hemleciya* or “Vision Quests” and the other five sacred ceremonies of the Lakota may still occasionally be found in the non-Indian world, but as from 9th March 2003, non-Indians are prohibited from participating in any of these ceremonies. On that date, at a grand council of the bundle keepers of the five major tribal groups of the Plains it was decided that:

“Discussions in the meeting included the molestation taking place in ceremony, indecent mockery, mixing of new age beliefs, charging for ceremonies and death, which was never heard of before in our ancient ceremonial history. There was also discussion of the use of other "medicines" (drugs) in and around our ceremonies. (Consequently it was decided that) ...there will be no non-Natives allowed in our sacred Ho-c’o-ka (our sacred alters) where it involves our Seven Sacred Rites.”¹²

Here, then is a stark reminder of the indigenous perspective on having their sacred knowledge appropriated, stolen and misused, often for profit, by practitioners in the capitalist world. The Plains Indians see only too clearly the futility of sharing their treasured ceremonies with those who cling to the colonial ways. So we should not perhaps get too excited about what we might learn about sustainability from the indigenous world unless we are willing to accept their whole message.

On the other hand they are perhaps even more aware than we are of the urgency to reverse the impending collapse of our environmental systems. Many indigenous communities have developed their own forms of resistance and action. Indigenous communities across the world celebrated and expressed solidarity with the peaceful demonstrators of the Canadian Mi’kmaq and Elsipogtog First Nations in their the recent confrontations between and the RCMP (significantly under-reported in Western media) over attempts by the Texas SWN Resource Company’s fracking explorations on Indian land (Kraus 2013). Indigenous communities, through organisations like *Idle No More* are on the forefront of the struggle against resource exploitation and state-sponsored and corporately-funded environmental

¹² Witness the role of Te Whānau a Apanui in assuming the leadership of sea-borne demonstrations against Petrobas’ deep-sea oil surveying of New Zealand’s East Cape

hooliganism.¹³ For indigenous communities, the relationship to place is inviolable and they take their role as guardians of the natural world very seriously. For Māori it is a question of *whakapapa*. They have no choice. As Dakota/Diné Elder Tom Goldtooth, the Executive Director of the Indigenous Environmental Network, has pointed out, the European concept of the natural world has become a dominant concept world-wide. It holds that knowledge and culture are property, with the attitude that commodities are to be exploited freely, and bought and sold at will. It has resulted in disharmony between beings and the natural world as well as the current environmental crisis affecting all life - a concept that is completely at odds with the indigenous worldview. Goldtooth holds that sacred responsibility is to safeguard and protect this world. Pointing out that human beings are not separate from the natural world but were created to live in an integral relationship with it, “We can fashion sustainable solutions and re-sacralize our relationship to Mother Earth. That’s what we (indigenous people) have to offer.” (Goldtooth 2013)

Community Health: The Global vs. the Local

While there is widespread agreement that we are facing potentially catastrophic social, economic, climatic and demographic crises, there is no agreement about how we should shape our collective responses to avert the worst consequences. Capitalists suggest that the whole system is basically sound and that improved technology, coupled with a modification of our patterns of consumption will solve our problems. Marxists generally believe that the abolition of capitalism is a necessary precondition for a solution, while both still believe that it is the destiny of *homo sapiens* to exercise and to exploit its *power over nature*, that is seen as a natural birthright and as a result of evolutionary progress. (Woods 2002)

What neither seem to understand, is that we are entering *End Game* where we have neither the time nor luxury to continue either with our present means of production or with our disregard for the environment with our paradigm of dominance and exploitation. This terse conclusion is realised by none less than the OECD itself, which in its latest Report, concludes that in the face of continuing stagnant growth and the increasing development of automation, the best of capitalism is past and that the future holds only increasing economic deterioration, social unrest and mass migrations for both rich and poor. (OECD 2014).

13 See *Schools for Chiapas* at: <http://www.schoolsforchiapas.org/>

And as we already know, the runaway warming of the global climate provides perhaps the ultimate and as yet largely unrecognised threat to capitalist development. If we do not *immediately* and *completely* cease the extraction and use of existing in-ground fossil fuels, global temperatures will probably reach 4°C above preindustrial levels within decades (that is, within the lives of our children!) bringing unimaginable and probably irreversible consequences. It's simple math: we can emit 565 more gigatons of carbon dioxide and stay below 2°C of warming over preindustrial levels — anything more than that risks catastrophe for life on earth. The only problem? Total known fossil fuel reserves in the world, if burned, would add 2860 gigatons of CO² to the atmosphere – more than 5 times the safe amount. Thus, simple math indicates that almost two-thirds of all known fossil fuel reserves must remain unburned if global temperatures are to remain habitable. And these are optimistic estimates. (IEA 2012)

Faced with these stark realities, either we can kiss goodbye to life as we know it (or probably at all!) or we must collectively intervene to prevent the major corporations from plowing ahead with their extraction and exploitation model. This will, of course, bring potentially dire confrontations with the military-industrial-state complex. If we, the people, are to prevail we will only do so if we are able to develop our collective relationships to each other and to the environment. Only mass public pressure and activism will succeed.

How, are we to accomplish this? Indigenous communities may have already taken the lead. It is they who are organizing active resistance to fracking and tar-sands pipelines. It is they who are facing down the drilling crews, the police and the corporations, it is they who (like the Mayans in Chiapas). who are developing their own health, education and economic development systems)and it is they who are telling us that we must abandon our supposedly superior ideology of dominion and exploitation of the earth. In non-indigenous cultures, too there seems to be a growing resistance to both capitalism and resource exploitation.

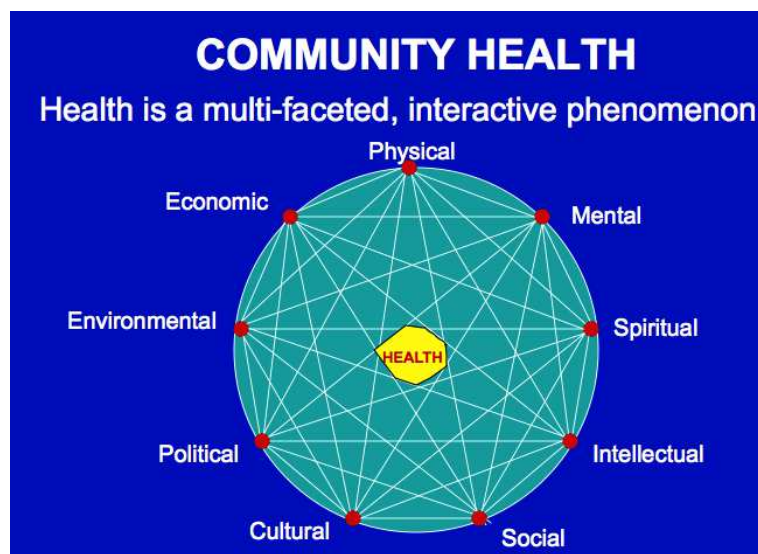


As the world economy approaches collapse, as our environment becomes increasingly ravaged by industrial and corporate greed, as health systems break down and become unaffordable, as our food becomes increasingly poisoned by the unrestricted use of pesticides, herbicides, artificial fertilisers and GE technologies, there is a growing trend to the world of direct mutual support and action. Farmers markets, bartering, alternative currencies, local economies, organic food co-ops, shared knowledge systems and community education initiatives are proliferating. The growth of these alternative systems has been exponential over the last twenty years. Community initiatives that do not require Government management or ownership and do not rely on corporate support are emerging that are operated by the community for the community, sharing skills and knowledge in pursuit of an improved community.

At the present moment, these disparate community initiatives have not consolidated into global movement to tear down capitalism, but that movement is growing as more and more communities recognise the underlying capitalist causes of their suffering. The emergence of increasingly politicised movements has been noticeable – particularly around environmental issues that have been spearheaded by indigenous communities and taken up by westerners. These are the signs of a healthy democracy and healthy community that are emerging as previously non-political grass-root movements find each other and build relationships and solidarity. We of the Left have spent too much time talking to each other rather than engaging in relationship-building and dialogue with those of a different mind. Yet if we are to really impact upon the global scene we must, of necessity, focus our attention on building relationships at the local level, and forming collective strategies of resistance. The sad

truth is that over the last forty years opportunities, resources and places to do this have been disappearing as we have drifted into patterns of individualised passive consumption. The shopping mall is not a location for building sustainable anti-capitalist dialogue or social movements. We therefore need to build and create places for public discourse that are operated by the community for the community as a basic requirement for building a social(ist) movement.

Part 2 of this Paper describes the implementation, the praxis that evolves from this theoretical analysis into pre-colonial health concepts. There, I will present a worked example of such a project, in my home town of Whakatane in New Zealand. There, in a community with 50% Indigenous Maori, we have developed a Community Health Model (below) that draws heavily on the theories described above, and which forms the basis for a proposed-generated facility that is unique and potentially very transformative.



Community Health Model

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I am a retired and now independent academic, having taught Architecture at the highest level for 40 years in Britain, the USA and Australasia, specializing in Community Design – pedagogies of empowerment in and with local and economically disadvantaged communities. For the last 30 years I have taught in New Zealand, working primarily with the indigenous Maori community. For 20 years I directed the Community Design Studio at the University of Auckland, completing dozens of community projects while at the same time developing student-centred (and student-evaluated) consensus-based pedagogies that are unique and immensely effective in their capacity for student empowerment and engagement. Since retirement (2006) I have developed my website (www.tonywardedu.com) devoted to Critical

Education Theory and Practice. PDFs of many of my projects and on the theories behind them can be found and downloaded there.

The theory and practice of critical pedagogy in bicultural community development. Part 2: Practice. Capitalism and community health: An indigenous perspective¹⁴

Tony Ward

Architect and Independent Critical Educator

Abstract

This paper is the second of two. The first involved an analysis of pre-capitalist, indigenous models of health and critically compared these to our normative capitalist system. It explored the theoretical underpinnings of western materialism insofar as it has shaped our conceptions of personal and community health. From this critique there emerged an alternative model that borrows from indigenous concepts.

This second part describes the engaged practice and implementation of this model in a small New Zealand town with a large indigenous (Māori) community. This praxis draws on indigenous models of health, and involved a culturally diverse group of 24 Architecture students (of 11 different nationalities), working with 7 local high school students to successfully navigated the complex web of requirements and diverse social, cultural and economic needs of the community to design a new facility – a Peoples' Centre for Community Well-Being that is designed to reclaim community power and to promote social activism – to create a place for social and cultural encounter. Working under the auspices of two local social service providers¹⁵ and in consultation with the bicultural – 50% Māori, 50% European – community (almost 4 times the national average) the Architecture students designed a family-friendly, universally accessible facility catering for the needs of all cultural groups, ages and beliefs and intended to rebuild relationships to reverse the town's dreadful social, cultural and economic statistics – the worst in the nation

- *High unemployment rates*

¹⁴ A downloadable version of the combined paper is also available at:

<http://www.tonywardedu.com/critical-education-theory/critical-education-in-an-era-of-crisis-anticapitalist-health-and-design>

¹⁵ *Pou Whakaaro* which initially worked to train the intellectually disabled and to place them in employment, and *Supporting Families*, an agency committed to family counselling.

- *Lowest income rates*
- *Second-highest child violence rates*
- *Highest family violence rates*
- *Highest youth suicide rates*
- *Highest truancy rates*
- *Lowest academic achievement rates*
- *Highest rate of wealth disparity (roughly divided along lines of race)*

The results of the project were endorsed by the entire community and the project is now proceeding to towards realisation. The design, evaluation and grading processes were carried out using a collaborative and consensus-based critical pedagogy that draws from indigenous models (Ward, 2008A; 2008B; Schielke, Fishman, Osatuke, & Stiles, (2014). While the outcome was successful from a design perspective, this paper will also offer reflective critical analysis of the learning outcomes for the students themselves drawing on instances of studio/classroom experience.

The most odious form of colonisation, and that which has brought with it the greatest pain for the colonised – (is) the colonisation of the mind.

Frantz Fanon (1963)

As Paulo Freire and Antonio Faundez wrote, indigenous knowledge is a rich social resource for any justice-related attempt to bring about social change. In this context, indigenous ways of knowing become a central resource for the work of academics...

Intellectuals, Freire and Faundez conclude, should “soak themselves in this knowledge... assimilate the feelings, the sensitivity” of epistemologies that move in ways unimaginable to many Western academic impulses. ...Only now, in the Twenty-first Century, are European peoples just starting to appreciate the value of indigenous knowledge(s) about health, medicine, agriculture, philosophy, spirituality, ecology and education.

Joe Kincheloe (2007)

Part 2: The Practice

The Need For A New Model of Community Development

In an earlier paper, I detailed the failure of the capitalist model of community health and development that is standard across the world, showing how it disempowers and

destroys local communities as profits and resources are extracted from the community and appropriated into the private realm and as governments cut services while simultaneously privatising essential resources. I developed a critical analysis of Western health systems and contrasted this with indigenous models that offer a more holistic and caring alternative from which we might learn. I suggested that we need to develop a radical redefinition of Community Health to include multiple factors as well as a radical restructuring of community power and self-determination.

This analysis came out of a project with which I have been involved, in the small New Zealand town of Whakatane, involving the development of a Community Hub – a facility initiated and operated by the community with the intention of reversing the appallingly negative statistics among the town’s youth and elderly. The worst of these statistics are attributable to the indigenous Māori population of the town (50% - almost four times the national average). Working in a bicultural context such as this provided insights into how we might approach the development and operation of this facility in ways that are replicable elsewhere.

This next part of the analysis describes the process by which we developed design proposals in collaboration with the community, together with detailed descriptions of the proposals themselves. The designs were carried out by a culturally diverse group of 24 Second Year Architecture students (of 11 different nationalities), working with 7 local high school students to successfully navigate the complex web of requirements and diverse social, cultural and economic needs of the community. The students designed a family-friendly, universally accessible facility catering for the needs of all cultural groups, ages and beliefs. Key to the proposals was an understanding of the historical causes of the community’s difficulties, particularly the impact of colonisation on the Māori community and its implications for a programme of self-determination and community control.

The Impact of Colonisation

Captain James Cook “discovered” New Zealand in 1769, and there followed a period of increasingly frequent visits by sealers, missionaries and early settlers until, in 1840 a large number of Marri chiefs signed the Treaty of Waitangi with the British Crown – agreeing to the admission of British subjects in return for the protection of the

Maori way of life and culture.¹⁶ Once signed, the Treaty was ignored by the new white new Zealanders, who embarked upon a ruthless policy of Maori land acquisition, until two centuries after Cook's landing, Maori – an otherwise entrepreneurial race -had been dispossessed of 95% of their productive capacity.



Map showing the loss of Maori land over the 200 years following the Treaty of Waitangi

The introduction of European Missionary schools, with strict rules (until the 1960s) forbidding the use of Maori language, the suppression and execution of native leaders, and the creation of a Maori education system designed to produce service workers for the white elite (Ward, 2005B) all conspired to reduce Maori to a subordinated, compliant culture within their own land. Their spiritual beliefs and customs were suppressed, the traditional close family structures and *tikanga* (prohibitions) that had safeguarded members against sexual and/or family abuse were severed, and replaced by a patriarchal system that, with the introduction of industrialisation, saw the traditional extended Maori family structure shattered.

Not only did colonisation reduce indigenous populations to state-dependency by destroying their organic social, political and spiritual systems, but also the imposition

¹⁶ In fact there was deception from the beginning by the British. There were *two* Treaties – one in English, the other in Māori. The Chiefs signed the Māori version which had them relinquishing only governorship (*kawanatanga*). In the English version they were required to surrender their sovereignty. (*tino rangatiratanga*). The authors of the two Treaties knew very well that Māori would never agree to giving up the latter. (Orange 1989)

of the supposedly *superior* Western systems has simply compounded the problem (Lawson-TeAho, 2012). In the New Zealand field of Health, the process involved the outlawing and criminalisation of Māori's spiritual and health practitioners. The 1907 *Tohunga Suppression Act* specifically targeted traditional Māori healers (*tohunga*) and made the practice of traditional healing practices unlawful. The Act was passed with the purpose of protecting the Māori community from introduced diseases like influenza and smallpox. Although there were only nine convictions under the Act, nevertheless the result was that many *tohunga* refused to pass on their oral traditions and much traditional knowledge was lost (TeAra). Over time, many practices were driven underground, some to be passed on orally from generation to generation. But many were lost, and with the loss, the communities that had safeguarded their own health for hundreds of years were forced to accept commodified European models and practices. This is true in all spheres, from physical health to social and cultural health and family counseling.

The result of all of this was a sharp decline in personal and community Maori health, with increasingly disproportionate statistics in family violence, substance abuse and suicide. Family violence among indigenous communities is now epidemic around the world, including New Zealand. Domestic violence is a major issue in New Zealand and the cost to the nation is enormous. It has been estimated that child abuse alone costs the nation, both directly and indirectly over \$2 billion a year (Infometrics 2010) while family violence as a whole has been estimated to cost \$8 billion a year in a population of barely 4 million, (Almond and Hann 2007) yet less than 0.1% of GDP per year is spent on preventive measures (Infometrics. 2010). Furthermore, incidence of family violence is increasing (Kirk, 2013). In New Zealand an over-representative proportion of this violence and its associated cost occurs in the Māori community (Balzer et al, 1997; Kruger et.al. 2004). The primary victims are women and children (Elmond, and Hann 2007). This is in stark contrast to traditional and harmonious pre-colonial gender relationships that were built into the cosmologies that guided communal life.¹⁷

¹⁷ Many indigenous cultures exhibit this gender balance in their cosmologies with equal numbers of male and female deities (the projected externalisation of an inner reality). This balance/duality of the character is exemplified in Mason Durie's *Taha Wairua*. In Māori language the word for *spirit* is *wairua*, composed of two words, *wai* meaning "waters" and *rua*, meaning "two" – or "two waters". This has been translated as referring to the synthesis of both male and female components – in other words,

The Failure of Western Health Systems

Despite Government concern over 25 years and the production of two major Government reports¹⁸ and despite years of investment and some measure of success locally, the problem of *whanau* (family) violence continues to be an area of major concern. Indeed, it has been noted that western systems of intervention and treatment are failing Māori (TPK 2008), and have not curbed the epidemic of *whanau* (family) violence. More to the point, Māori professional social workers have implicitly noted the ongoing colonialism of the system by observing that if *whanau* (family) violence interventions continue to be delivered from a non-Māori conceptual and practice framework that isolates, criminalises and pathologises Māori individuals, nothing will change. (Kruger et. al. 2004:4; Dobbs & Eruera, 2014).

Key to this failure is the inability of the system to distinguish between the related concepts of *whanau* and *family* – the former including reference to past, present and future generations – including those of the colonial past, which could explain the roots of violence through the destruction of extended family relationship safeguards in traditional Māori society. The Western use of “family” tends, by comparison, to operate only in the *present* to deny colonial causality, while at the same time failing to recognise the importance of rebuilding these traditional relationships and the safeguards that they embodied. (Kruger et. al. (2004:12; Lawson-TeAho, 2012: Cram, Pihama, Jenkins and Karehana, 2002:4)

This is a crucial point because it is precisely the imposition of colonial western models of the nuclear family that has destroyed the social and cultural safeguards against *whanau* violence that existed in traditional Māori society. The notion of *whanau* carries important meanings in terms of relationships of mutual responsibility

the “Māori DNA”. And once we delve more deeply into ancient Māori cosmologies, we find the same symbolic structures at every level. The stories *Io* and *IhoMariri* (who, male and female make up the Supreme Being) and of *Rangi* and *Papa* (Sky Father and Earth Mother) suggest, once again, that integration and balance are crucial to personal, social, material and spiritual health. Māori theology goes on to identify their 70 male and 70 female progeny-gods, although our adopted Western patriarchy has tended to elide the latter. (Kelderman 2014). In Western culture it was only 2500 years ago that the female Earth Mother Goddess was displaced by an all-powerful and singularly male deity along with the patriarchal culture that it represented (Buenaventura-Rosso and Brown 1980, Leacock, 1980, Allen 1986).

¹⁸ The Māori Perspective Advisory Committee, 1988 and the The Royal Commission on Social Policy, (1988)

and reciprocity – mutually safeguarding whanau members from violence and harm through an adherence to *tikanga* (customary tradition). In this sense, violence within or against any whanau member was seen as a disturbance and imbalance of *tikanga* (tradition) that must be repaired and reinstated (Durie, 2001; Jenkins & Philip-Barbara, 2002; Lawson-TeAho, 2012).

It is only when we consider the extent and impact of colonialism and the ongoing imposition of Eurocentric meanings within the Health field that we can begin to understand the ways in which we perpetuate the ongoing colonisation and ill-health of subordinated cultures like Māori, and the absolute need to create the space for them to reclaim their own systems of care by rebuilding their *tikanga* and *whakapapa* connections. Self-determination is the *sine qua non* of community health, as well as of social transformation at the larger, global scale. This is something that our models of emerging socialism fail to grasp when they assume that the only requirement is the destruction (or withering away!) of the capitalist economic base. It is also something that explains the failure of many budding socialist revolutions to gain the support of indigenous communities like the Miskito in Nicaragua under the Sandinistas.

In addition to the confiscation of lands (Ward, 2007B), the destruction of *whanau* structures, the imprisonment and execution of native leaders and healers, the education system was structured into a two-tier system to educate Europeans to positions of leadership and Māori to work in the service industries. (Ward, 2005B) The fragmentation of Māori culture was achieved through land-loss and consequential urban drift to man the emerging industries of the new colony. During the years following WW2, with the rise of socialist policies in Health, Housing, Welfare and Education in Britain, Australia, New Zealand and Canada, free social services became the norm, and the health, education and general welfare of families prospered. But for Māori, this prosperity came at the cost of some loss of identity as they were “assimilated” into the larger colonial culture, many losing their language, their connections to their geographical (*turangawaewae*) and cultural roots. The worldwide rise of indigenous independence movements that began in the 1940s and that continues today was a direct response to this loss, to the continuing appropriation of indigenous lands and resources and to the increasing disparities of wealth between themselves and the dominant (white) culture..

A Tale of Two Cities

Fortunately the process of colonization was never completely successful, either in New Zealand or elsewhere in the colonial world, and many indigenous communities, including Māori, have retained at least some of their cultural identity and many of their cultural beliefs and practices down to the present time, and these may offer guidance in how we may *all* resist and confront market-driven ideologies to reclaim our community health. What follows is one experiment in this process of reclamation. Despite some recent advances in their collective health, Māori remain at the bottom of all social health indices. Increasingly, they have taken matters into their own hands, demanding a degree of autonomy and self-determination from the “mainstream” State systems. In Education, Māori have developed their own, culturally appropriate parallel system, and have taken a lead in administering the State Health system with culturally appropriate practices. In the field of Māori Health, a study in New Zealand promoted an alternative model of health that drew from Māori traditions in the design of a Māori Community Hospital (Ward 2001). More recently, the model has been extended and improved, this time in the design of a small community facility in the author’s home-town of Whakatane.



WhakataneTeUrewera Bush Walk

Ohope Beach

This is a tale of two cities. The town is unique in many respects. It has one of the largest proportions of Māori residents (50% in the Eastern Bay) in the country and the highest per capita number of native language speakers. It is the “sunshine capital” of New Zealand, it has the country’s *Best Beach Award* and it is surrounded by some of

the nation's most remarkable fishing, hiking and recreational environments. But Whakatane is a divided community. If you are white, middle class and employed it is a fantastic place to raise a family. If, on the other hand, you are Māori, and unemployed it can be the worst of places. Besides its positive attributes it also has the Nation's worst statistics in a range of social parameters:

- Highest truancy rates
- Lowest academic achievement rates
- Among highest unemployment rates
- The second-highest child abuse rates
- Highest family violence rates
- Highest youth suicide rates (regionally)
- Among lowest income rates
- Increasing disparities in wealth, health and hope.

Many of these statistics are attributable predominantly to the 50% Māori community. The reasons for their contemporary social and cultural situation can be traced back to issues of 19th Century land dispossession cited earlier. One of the primary means of land dispossession was "legal" confiscation. Under the New Zealand Settlement Act of 1863, tribes that were deemed "rebellious" had their land confiscated by the government. The definition of "rebellious" bore striking (slippery) similarities to American Indian "Hostiles" and today's "terrorists" - convenient labels for demonising those we oppress. When provocative Government raids of native lands

were resisted by Maori tribes, they were labeled "Rebellious", their leaders imprisoned and hung and their lands were taken.



This was particularly onerous for the tribes of the Eastern Bay of Plenty (Ngati Awa, Whakatohea), who live in Whakatane and neighbouring Opotiki and who had their *entire* land holdings

confiscated on the basis of fabricated charges of murder and sedition. Their lands

were taken and their leaders were executed (and recently exonerated). The neighbouring and related Tuhoe tribe were subject to a scorched-earth and occupation campaign by the Government - all of this leaving a community of later bicultural generations down to our own time that would harbor barely disguised feelings of mutual antagonism and hatred which would be one of the key issues to be addressed by the project described here. These antagonisms were exacerbated in 1916, when the police mounted a dawn attack on the peaceful Tuhoe village of MungaPohatu against the community of RuaKenana (who had urged his followers to ignore the military draft for WW1), killing his son and imprisoned Rua for 2 years (Binney et. al. 1979). Even as recently as 2005, in a raid reminiscent of that in 1916, the police mounted another dawn raid on the Tuhoe village of Ruatoki, breaking into houses, arresting many of the inhabitants and detaining women and children without food or water for 24 hours – all on the basis of trumped up “terrorism” charges that were later dropped.



2005 Ruatoki Raids

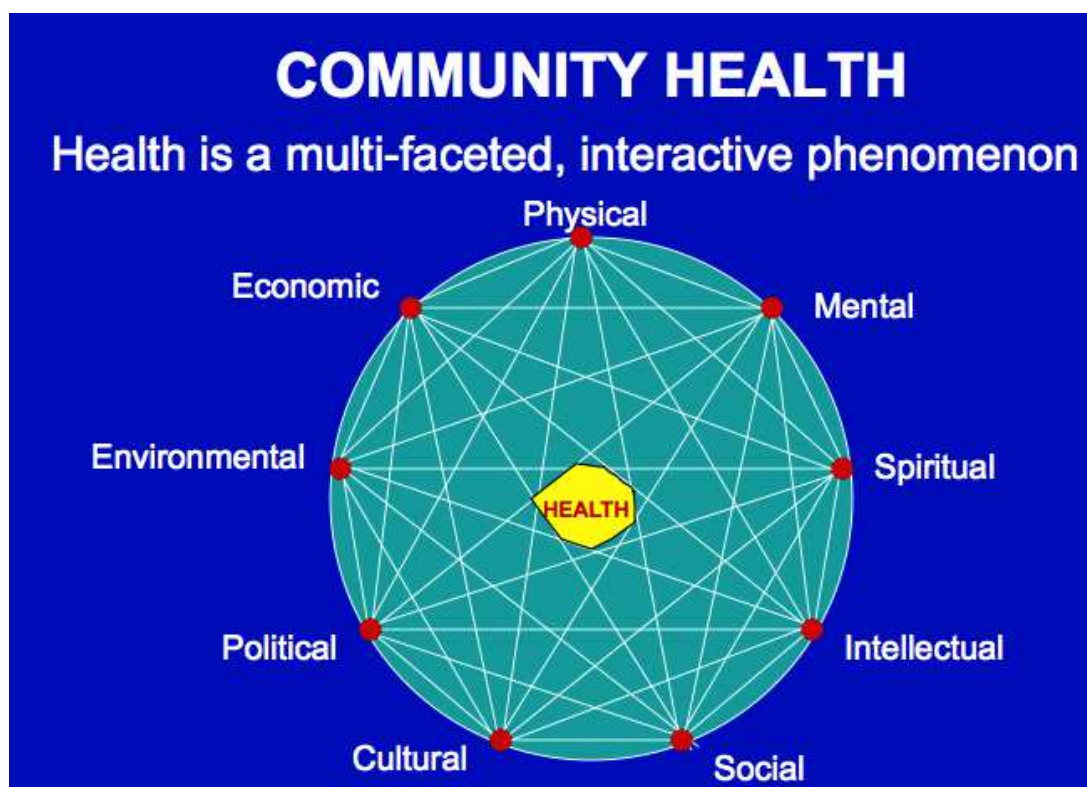
Reclaiming Community Health

The legacy of these State oppressions has been to leave the small town of Whaktane a divided community – the historical roots of which are rarely recognised or addressed by social service agencies who, instead, frequently work through a *deficit* model of community well-being which only exacerbates the situation. The fact is, that the

community has no facility or agency that operates biculturally – a place where Maori and non-Maori can come together in a collective process of healing. In the absence of such a facility the town’s community health remained stubbornly poor.

In October 2011, facing serious breakdown in community health, two social service providers – *Pou Whakaaro* and *Supporting Families* - floated the idea of getting all of the town’s service providers to co-locate as a way of cutting costs, improving efficiency and referrals and making it easier for their clients to navigate the social service system.

Clearly the providers were facing a formidable set of conditions. What was clear was that the problem could not be solved with the status quo model of social service provision. Dealing with family violence, crime or truancy without dealing with unemployment, economic disparities, mental health issues, illiteracy or the breakdown of culturally appropriate whanau and whakapapa relationships had proven to be a waste of time and resources. That model was failing. What was required was a coordinated and multifaceted approach – a model of community health that embraced a wide range of factors responding to a wide range of community needs with referrals and interventions made seamless. Such a model would be built upon the principle of grass/flag root relationship-building of, by and for the community, available to everyone at a sustainable cost.



Sustainable Community Health Model

Following two provider workshops and a community-wide online survey, a pattern of social and cultural needs that were congruent with the provider aims began to emerge.¹⁹The survey results revealed:

- bored and depressed youth
- lonely and depressed elderly
- adults with unmet social, economic and physical support needs
- unmet needs of numerous community groups
- a lack of coordinated transport and referral services

Responding to the survey questionnaire, the community itself recommended specific functional remedies that might be included in a more comprehensive Whakatane Community Hub facility:

A Place to Hang Out	64.2%	217
Computer Centre / Internet Access	52.1%	176
A cafe w/ a child play area	34.9%	118
Childcare	12.4%	42
Community Garden	33.4%	113
A place to play live music	55.6%	188
Monthly open mural space	18.0%	61
Free Shuttle bus to services	40.5%	137
Dances	28.7%	97
Cooking Space	20.7%	70
Rock Climbing wall	40.5%	137
Workshop space (art, yoga, weaving, budgeting, etc)	42.3%	143
Linking to Community services	28.1%	95
A place to learn how to use technology (computers, graphics, programs)	31.7%	107
Commercial Kitchen (to make and sell cooked items)	21.9%	74
A place to get help	33.1%	112
Community BBQ's	32.8%	111

¹⁹ See: <http://www.tonywardedu.com/critical-design-praxis/a-community-hub>

Community Festivals	46.2%	156
Flea markets	36.1%	122
Central Booking place for area services, sites, resources	21.3%	72
Multi-Cultural celebrations	27.8%	94
Ten Pin Bowling	55.9%	189
Somewhere to exercise and stay fit	38.2%	129
A place to show and see special movies	44.1%	149
Somewhere to host a conference	24.0%	81
Other (you tell us)	22.5%	76

There were few discernible differences across age and ethnicity. Based upon all of these findings, it was decided to proceed with the process of finding a suitable site and developing design proposals for the Hub. This process began in February 2013. The design brief prescribed and including the key elements from the survey.



The Peckham Health Centre, London 1935

Preliminary conceptual diagrams were developed that conceived of the facility being on two levels with the service providers being located on the upper, less public level (Ward, A., 2013). The concept is not unique – even in the Western world. In 1935, concerned about the poor health of working-class Londoners, the Peckham Health

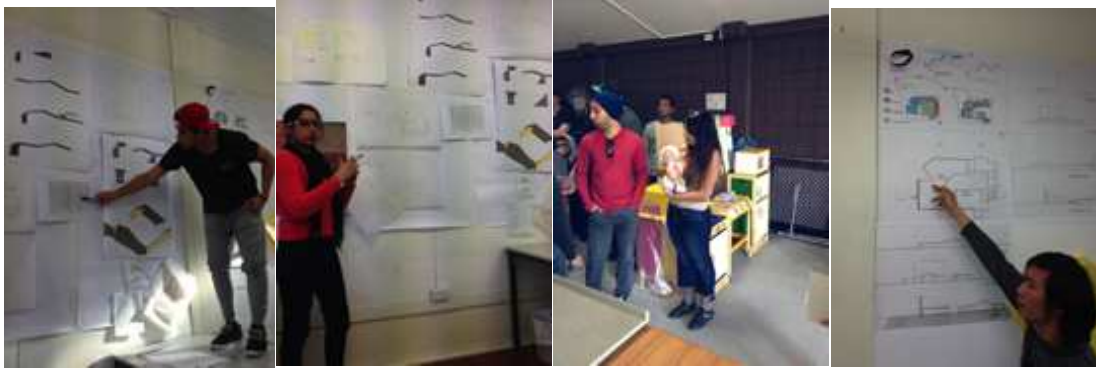
Centre was opened in the East End of London by George Scott Willamson and Innes Hope Pearse – a husband and wife medical partnership.

They were interested in *preventative* social medicine. 950 chosen families paid 1 shilling a week and had unlimited access to a range of activities such as physical exercise, swimming, games, workshops, dances, social events and child care. The members themselves initiating a wide range of sporting, social and cultural activities. The centre prospered until 1950 when it was superseded by the introduction of the National Health System – offering free medical services for everyone (Pearse and Crocker 1943).

The Design Process

In keeping with the general mission of the project to build and sustain relationships, to promote learning and to engage the whole community, the management team solicited the help of students in one of the Architecture design studios at Unitec School of Architecture in Auckland to work alongside a group of students from the two Whakatane high schools developing feasibility designs for the project. The students themselves represented the very aspects of relationship-building across cultures that the project embodied. We had 24 students of 10 different nationalities and languages (eleven if we included the high school students).





Their work involved investigating the appropriateness of eight possible site options, two of which were finally short-listed - an old and disused supermarket on the main street of the working class neighbourhood of Kopeopeo, and a vacant site, two hundred metres away belonging to the High School.

SITE NO. 1



**EX-COUNTDOWN BUILDING
KOPEOPEO**



SITE NO. 2: High School Field



The Two Sites

The design process itself involved a critical pedagogy relying on a student-centred, collective, (consensus based) decision-making method employing mutually-supportive *talking circles* (Ward, 2008A, 2008B) in which interdependence is both the pedagogical goal and the means of fostering engagement. Design evaluations and

individual grades were and are also student-centred and consensus-based (Ward 2009). The intention was to create a space that operates not as a state-initiated institutionalised *imposition*, but as a community-generated and community-operated system of mutual support and care, to reawaken the social and cultural empathies and compassionate support systems that are latent in the town. Drawing on and sharing the latent experience and knowledge that exists in every community, it may be possible to rebuild the social and cultural relationships that have been fragmented, isolated, and alienated that are so important, and to recreate a state of community well-being for the people, by the people – not as an end goal or target, but as an integral element of the process of relationship building itself – a return, as Māori would put it, to *Manaakitanga, Whanaungatanga and Whakapapa* – relatedness based on mutual trust and reciprocity. In accordance with the principle of universal accessibility, the concept includes a *Time Bank*, through which citizens can gain access to the facilities and programmes by reciprocally donating their time and energy towards the operation of the Hub, thus undercutting the cash economy that has led to such disparities of access to resources. This, perhaps, is what we can learn from our indigenous brothers and sisters.

Research And Presentations

Following a fourteen week process of community engagement, with five separate *nohoMarae* weekends (staying and sleeping communally at Wairaka Marae) involving continual meetings with community representatives and service providers and through three iterations of design process, the students were ready to present their final proposals to the community. The two presentations were to take place at the new Whakatane District Library and Museum and would involve drawings, models and descriptions of the proposed facilities. They were attended by Councillors, Council staff, Central government politicians and members of the general public.



The Designs

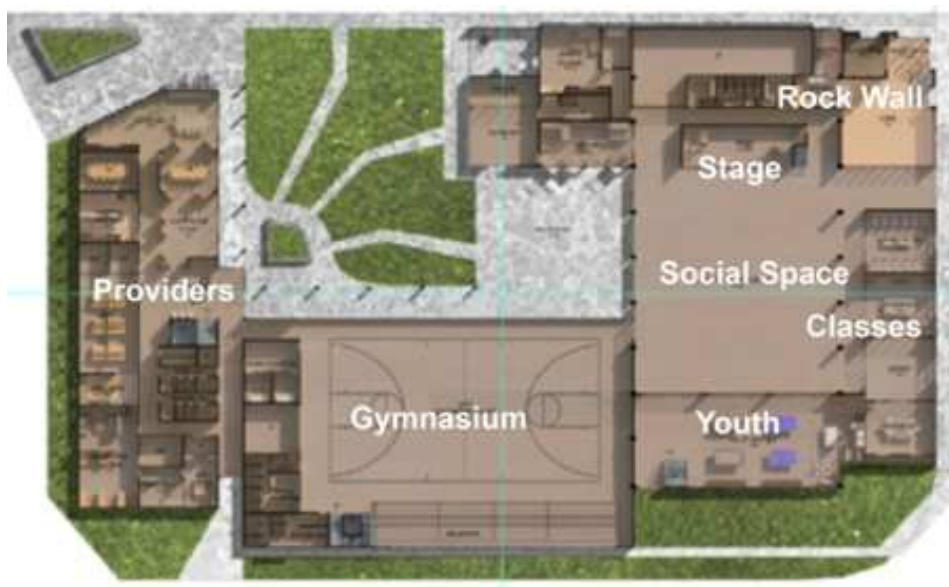
Site 1: The Countdown Supermarket Building

The Countdown proposal involved a three-stage development to allow for more sustainable budgeting. Stage 1 involved the reuse of the existing building – primarily for the service providers, the youth and elderly facilities with a café, a creche, a toy library, classroom spaces, a commercial kitchen and a computer lab all surrounding a central performance space with an upper level recording studio. These were seen as the primary income-generating elements of the proposal.

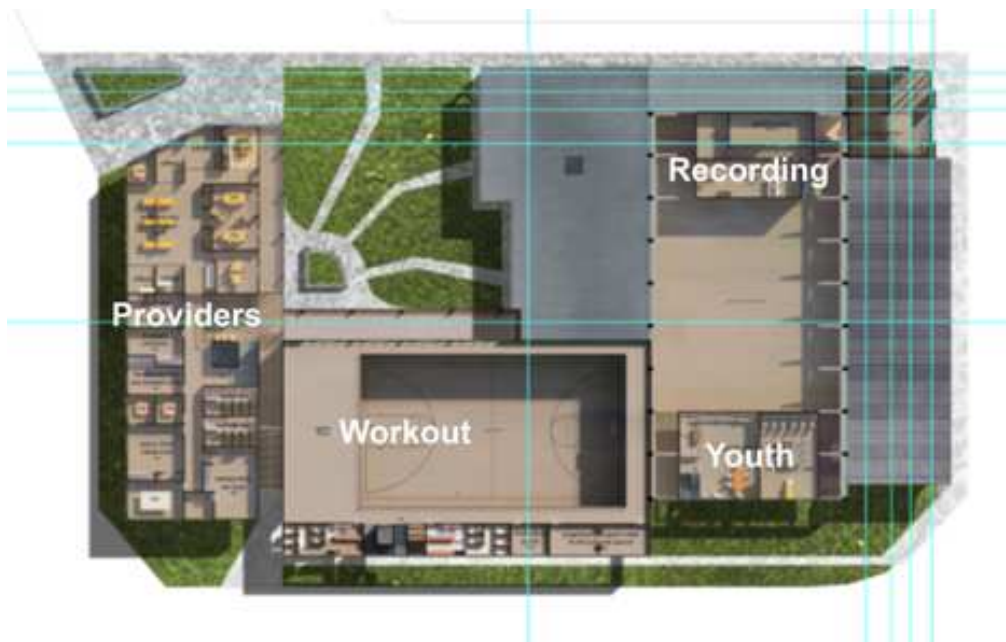
The development was planned in three stages to facilitate funding and to allow for an immediate income from the operation of the refurbished existing building.



Stage 1 Ground Floor Plan



Stage 3 Ground Floor



Stage 3 Upper Floor

The primary feature – designed to attract attention and engagement was a 16m transparent climbing tower, visible from the street and located next to the café. The intention was to bring interest and life to the street and to turn around the seedy economy of the existing street with a state of the art and environmentally and economically sustainable facility. Stage 2 involved the development of a purpose-designed facility for the service providers, releasing more space in the original building for community facilities. Stage 3 involved the development of a connecting gymnasium and work-out facility with associated physical therapies. The three distinct elements of the design were clustered around a central courtyard to be used for farmers markets, cultural and food festival and parkour activities





The climbing tower at night Courtyard Looking South West



Courtyard looking South East with the climbing tower to the left



Performance Space

Site 2: The High School Site

Unlike the Countdown site, the green-field opportunity offered more flexibility to include elements that space had not permitted in the alternative proposal. This was not

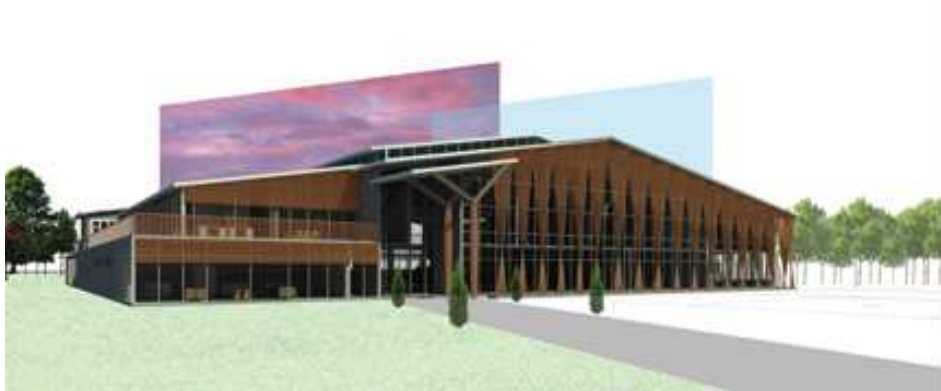
intended as a staged development but as a once-and-for-all proposal. The three basic divisions of activities were retained but were able to be functionally linked in more exciting ways. The facility is approached down a long, formal driveway which carries on as an internal thoroughfare through the building to the gardens and fields beyond. The service providers are located to the east of this thoroughfare, and once again the youth facilities are clustered around the other side of the main social/performance space. The cold southerlies are once again blocked by the gymnasium, leaving the existing all-weather netball courts well protected. Once again the facility was conceived on two levels with the service providers having their own wing. Wide galleries around the public performance and gymnasium spaces offer opportunities for extra learning and performance spaces as well as for people-watching.



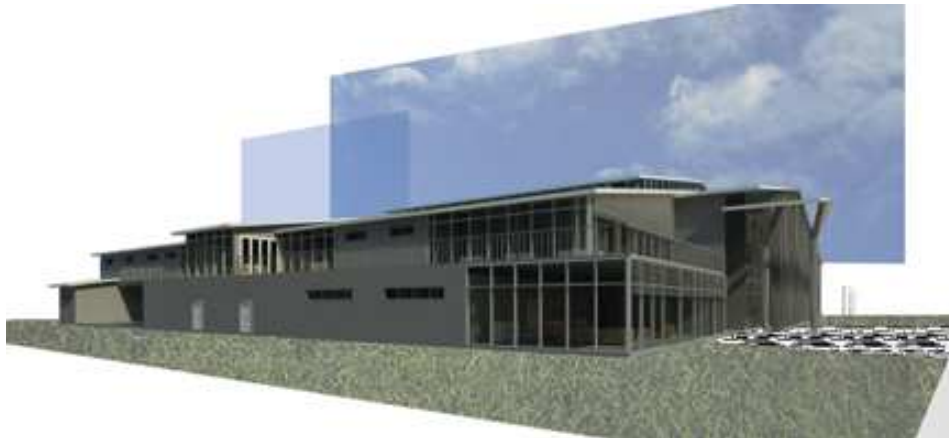
Ground Floor Plan



Upper Floor Plan



Approaching the entrance from the North



View of the Service Provider wing from the East



View of the Youth wing from the North West showing the climbing tower

Feedback from the community was uniformly positive with both the local print and radio media heaping praise upon the proposals and upon the students.

The Next Stage

On Monday, 24th February the Pou Whakaaro Board of Trustees voted to purchase the previous Countdown Supermarket site and to carry the project through the next stage – the completion of building construction drawings and specifications and the acquisition of a building permit. They decided that of the two design proposals, the Countdown site was the less expensive if only because 50% of the space is already provided by the existing building. The primary advantage of the Countdown site was that it would revitalise an unpleasant and seedy part of the town that is also closer to

the Hub's target population. Already, key service providers are lining up to participate in the programme. The provider group have already had extensive discussions with potential funding agencies and are confident that the goals are achievable. They need to be. If we are to turn around the dreadful social and economic statistics that we face, nothing less than a concerted effort by the whole community will succeed.

The aim is to make the facility universally accessible no matter what level of physical, economic or social ability an individual might have – and to build bridges across social, cultural and economic gaps to create a rapport and a sense of *awhinatanga* or mutual support throughout the town, as indeed, we did in the design project. The medium is the message, as they say.

I also wish to note the significance of working with indigenous groups, and in particular, groups who do not share our dominant language. This is a pointer to a much larger issue. Since this is, after all, an Educational Conference, I believe it is important to note the importance of having our students (as well as ourselves) engage with real, rather than imaginary transformative projects – to *immerse* them/ourselves in the community as a form of critical pedagogy that takes seriously the need for our young people to take up the challenge of systemic change in the world as well as the classroom. As educators, we ourselves cannot expect to influence the wider community and to help bring about conditions of greater equity and justice if we remain safe behind the walls of our ivory towers and communicate only with each other in our private languages (Ward, 1996). We cannot, after all, hope to “liberate the masses” if we use language that the “masses” themselves do not understand. To do so would merely extend enslavement to the oppressions of capitalism of which the obscurity of our specialized discourse is itself a symptom.



The Whakatane Community Hub Design Team

Final Reflections

The most significant pedagogical failing of this project, I suspect, was the inability to bring about opportunities for lasting attitudinal changes in our students that would ensure they continue to work creatively for a more just and equitable world after the project is completed. The social agenda of Architecture that flourished from the 1920s until the 1980s was critically undermined by the advent of *Postmodernism* – which was not coincidentally contemporaneous with the resurgence of free market economics. The ethos of Architecture and architectural education since that time has been dictated primarily by fashion and the need to develop an image that can attract future work. With the erosion of the State, private development has become the universal norm – largely dominated by large and profiteering corporate entities for whom minimal capital cost and maximum economic return are the prevailing parameters. The educational context that emerges from these values impacts directly on the students, for whom the ideal of being a “lead designer” in a corporate office becomes the accepted norm, Design studio projects that have a high social and/or political context tend, in this context, to be seen as fascinating yet eccentric. One of the tasks of such projects is to rebuild or re-establish a connection between architecture and the creation of social and political processes to bring about social change. This is no easy matter – especially over the longer term.

In my previous projects, students who have done remarkable work on Community Design projects such as this have often later drifted back into the normative

professional model of elitist design. We were fortunate in this instance, that the Unitec School of Architecture has a proud tradition of doing social architecture, and many of our students in this project were committed to the community ideals that it embodied. They did a remarkable job in the limited time that we had available. But there simply was not enough time to draw out the broader social, political and economic issues of free-market capitalism and its impact on small communities that I have described in this paper. The broader *theoretical* base was of necessity left unexplored. It is important, then, to determine how this might be corrected.

One of the difficulties is systemic. The University is the arm of the state, and as such is an instrument of its oppressive tendencies. This has become increasingly apparent over the last ten years with the penetration of academia by the corporate world. As states have cut their education budgets and privatised more and more sections of the education portfolio, as Universities have eliminated tenure positions and relied increasingly on low-paid, non-unionised adjunct teaching staff, we have witnessed a marked reduction in both academic freedom and protest. It is a brave academic, who, these days can speak truth to power by (for instance) outlining theories for the abandonment of the free market or of capitalism itself. In this aura of intimidation and fear, the language of academia has become increasingly opaque in order to mask progressive intentions (Ward 1996), and programmes that might have had a potentially transformative agenda have been reduced in many cases to an apology for the status quo power.

The Unitec School of Architecture is not immune from these social and economic pressures but has succeeded better than most in providing opportunities for community engagement and social transformation, and it was for this reason that we chose to conduct our design studio there.



A Visit to ToroaMarae, Whakatane

The Dynamics of Community Engagement

There are currently innumerable *service learning* and *community engagement* courses offered at Universities around the world that aim to *serve* and *help* beleaguered communities to achieve social and economic self-determination. But many of them have the opposite effect. Walking the fine line between institutional acceptance and transformative action they opt to bring prestige and kudos to the academic world – giving the impression that they are contributing to the common good, while invariably, through their *charitable* ethos, they leave the communities they serve increasingly impoverished and dependent because they presume a pre-existent *cultural deficit* that must be filled. They ignore or de-legitimate the existing social, cultural and economic knowledge and skills that are already operating in the community itself and that could and should form the foundation of its emancipatory process. Because of a misguided sense of intellectual or social superiority, these otherwise well-meaning but privileged academic programmes steal from their recipient communities their opportunity to liberate themselves, invariably, using high-

academic language that the community members themselves do not understand. (Ward,1996)

Any attempt to confront this academic game directly risks peer and institutional censure – accusations of lack of academic rigor, of political bias and indoctrination – and exclusion from the game itself. Witness for instance, David Horowitz’s invective about “dangerous academics” (Horowitz 2006). Confronting the University’s own culpability in State hegemony and social, cultural and economic oppression is risky, and walking the fine line of institutional acceptance and social activism is difficult, but absolutely necessary. Despite these difficulties there remains still the hope and opportunity for creative academics to resolve these tensions and contradictions through programmes that combine both critical theory and praxis in a form of community engagement that avoids the pitfall of charitable and therefore patronising work.

Theory – Practice: Community Praxis

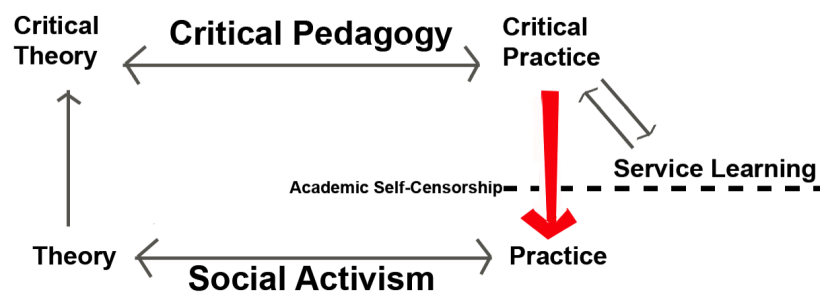
One of the difficulties confronting academics who wish to engage in community praxis concerns the tensions that exist between Educational Praxis - critical pedagogy – which sees the problem of developing pedagogies that flow from and can reflexively inform educational theories, and *Community Praxis* that is concerned with social, cultural and political change in the world *beyond* academia in a direct engagement in community activism. For many academics, the *conscientisation* of students confines itself to the academic environment, to the classroom, and rarely, if ever, extends beyond this in a relationship with what I have elsewhere called a “Critical Other” – the non-academic real world of the oppressed. (Ward,2000).

This engagement between the academic and the “real” world *does* exist, of course, but it is often framed as “Service Learning” and is often associated with organisations that while supporting the needs of the poor and disenfranchised through work with non-profits, charities, and multifarious social service entities, does not have as one of its goals an agenda of structural change and social and political transformation. It is often a *safe* way of engaging with the community that accepts the status quo power. Such projects and relationships are designed to *ameliorate* the worst effects of existing social and economic disparities rather than to eliminate them. Within the capitalist system this is often the only avenue available for social engagement.

Direct engagement with the community is often seen as *social activism* in academia and is characterized by the academy as violating the ethic of social and cultural

neutrality that has been socially constructed to validate, protect and legitimate that other illusory notion of *academic freedom*. This self-censorship effectively emasculates social and political engagement of any consequence and curbs the ability of the academy to pursue its (mythical?) role as the *conscience of society*. It also prevents the academy from constructing a domain of actual (rather than supposed) relevance to the struggles of the oppressed. Taken together, these two constraints make it difficult for academics to effectively participate in processes of social transformation.

EDUCATIONAL PRAXIS



COMMUNITY PRAXIS

In the context of our work on the Whakatane Community Hub project, we encountered this same dilemma. While working through committed and conscientious social service agencies we continually strove to engage directly with the community (through our survey) public exhibitions and utterances etc. The dilemma also impacts directly on the process of engagement. In projects of this kind, the tutors must strive continually to establish both an authentic, critical and collaborative pedagogy *within the studio*, while at the same time advocating on behalf of and protecting the interests of the engaged community. Often communities that have suffered hardship and systemic discrimination (like those I have described earlier) are reluctant to trust “do-gooders”, having been previously exploited (and disappointed) by those seeking to serve their own research interests rather than those of the community. This is particularly true in indigenous communities such as Māori (Smith 1999). The tension between these academic and social and cultural imperatives continually shapes both the pedagogy and the design outcomes, and it is one of the main tasks of the tutor to

continually channel the attention of the students towards direct community engagement. Freire makes this very clear:

It is very common to find intellectuals who authoritatively discuss the right of the subordinated classes to liberate themselves. The mere act of talking about the working class as objects of their reflections smacks of elitism on the part of these intellectuals. There is only one way to overcome this elitism, which is also authoritarian and implies an inconsistency in intellectuals' revolutionary discourse. These intellectuals ought to stop speaking *about* and start speaking *with* the working classes. When educators expose themselves to the working classes, they automatically begin to become re-educated. (Freire & Macedo, 1987:136)

The task of a critical pedagogy is two-fold. First, to transform the awareness of the students, and second, to bring about a process of social transformation in the larger world. These two forms are related, and ultimately the former can only be accomplished through an engagement with the latter, or, as Freire has put it:

"Conversion to the people requires a profound rebirth. Those who undergo it must take on a new form of existence; they can no longer remain as they were." (Freire, 1972:25)

In the Whakatane Hub project this was an ongoing task, which left little time to also critically explore the social problems and to link them to their root causes in historical colonial oppression and ongoing colonialism in the form of contemporary free market capitalism. The project was just too short. In future I see the necessity of a parallel course in critical social theory, alongside such design studio programmes as one way of helping students to make these theory-praxis connections. One person who has done this successfully is my friend and colleague, Tom Dutton at Miami University's Centre for Community Engagement in Over-the-Rhine in Cincinnati. His continuing involvement in this largely African-American community for almost 20 years offers an exemplary model for those of us who are committed to social change. Tom's residential programme places white, privileged students from multiple disciplines within the black community and teaches them the essence of solidarity, carrying out real, live action design projects that are developed against a seminar-based critical exploration of the ideology of free-market capitalism. The results are invariably remarkable.²⁰

²⁰ See: <http://arts.miamioh.edu/cce/>

Final Thoughts: Evaluation and Grading

It was one of the key characteristics of this pedagogy (as it is in all of my design studio projects) that the students grade themselves and that I act only as a mediator in the process whereby grades are assigned and agreed by consensus. There are several reasons for this. The first, is that, as Paulo Freire has made clear, the classroom interactions operate on the basis of power relations between the “teacher” and the “student”. In the normative “banking system” of education this relationship is clear. The teacher teaches, the student learns and the teacher evaluates what the student has learned. In a pedagogy for liberation, on the other hand, the distinctions between teacher and learner must be dissolved. As Freire notes:

For the anti-dialogical banking educator, the question of content simply concerns the programme about which he will discourse to his students; and he answers his own question by organising his own programme. For the dialogical problem-posing teacher-student, the programme content of education is neither a gift nor an imposition - bits of information to be deposited in the students - but rather the organised, systematised, and developed "re-presentation" to individuals of the things about which they want to know more. (Freire, 1972: 65-6)²¹

This representation cannot be determined in advance, but must evolve from the dialogue between the teacher-learner and the learner-teacher, and this dialogue requires, above all else, the establishment of *trust*. This trust cannot be established in a context in which some voices are suppressed by others, where the “teacher’s” voice predominates:

It is important to construct a pedagogy of voice and difference around the recognition that some practices (voices/stories) define themselves through the suppression of other voices...(Giroux, 1988:160-1)

Key to erosion of trust in the normative power relationship between “teacher” and “learner” is the issue of evaluation and grading. Too often, critical pedagogues fail to make the connection between their acceptance of the existing institutional regimes of evaluation and their pedagogies in the classroom. Gregory Baum has described the dialectic beautifully:

²¹ This is in fact an excellent description of what takes place in the mainstream design studio, where instructors decide the programme, present it to the students, help to shape the student responses and then evaluate the end production, while all of the time complaining that the students lack initiative.

True dialogue takes place only among equals. There is no dialogue across the boundary between masters and servants, for the master will listen only as long as his power remains intact and the servant will limit his communication only to utterances for which he cannot be punished. In fact, to recommend dialogue in a situation of inequality of power is a deceptive ideology of the powerful, who wish to persuade the powerless that harmony and mutual understanding are possible in society without any change in the status quo power. (Baum 1977: 43-4)

In the absence of mediating others, the power relationship between the teacher and the student is unfairly skewed in the direction of the teacher, and always comes down in the end to the issue of grading. As long as the critical educator clings to the power to grade his or her students so does s/he fail to grasp the key element of liberation. The power to grade is the ultimate academic power, must itself become a part of the dialogical process required both to build trust and to democratize the teacher-learner relationship. (Ward, 2009). Trust is something that the dialogical process itself produces and which becomes one of the focus elements of dialogical production. This process takes time as each participant experiences the others in the context of a critical appraisal of the consistency between their pronouncements and their actions:

Trust is contingent on the evidence which one party provides the others of his true, concrete intentions; it cannot exist if that party's words do not coincide with his actions. To say one thing and do another - to take one's own word lightly - cannot inspire trust. To glorify democracy and to silence the people is a farce; to discourse on humanism and to negate man is a lie. (Freire, 1972:64)

For critical pedagogues to proclaim their commitment to liberation and transformation while clinging to the power to grade their students, and thus to hold on to the ultimate instrument of that power is a lie! What this means is that critical pedagogues have no alternative than to relinquish the power to grade and to find alternative forms of evaluation that are democratic and empowering. This requires a reciprocating trust, that the “learners” will not abuse that power. This is not an easy process, but it is very necessary. In “mainstream” pedagogies that stress individualism and competition it is particularly difficult. But in co-operative learning situations it is less so. In these cases, the “learners” themselves are invariably more aware than the “teacher” of the effort and quality of that they each have contributed. So it makes more sense to tap into this collective experience in the evaluation of the work. In addition, if one of the goals of a critical pedagogy is to help “learners” to acquire a realistic understanding

of their own abilities and accomplishments, then evaluations by the “teacher” steal from the “learner” the opportunity to develop this critical awareness. (Ward, 2010). In addition, the perceptions and evaluative experiences that critical others (peers and colleagues) have of one’s work constitute a realistic counter-framework within which self-evaluation can develop. As Freire notes:

One has to respect the levels of understanding that those becoming educated have of their own reality. To impose on them one's own understanding in the name of their liberation is to accept authoritarian solutions as ways to freedom. But to assume the naiveté of those becoming educated demands from educators a most necessary humility to assume also their ability to criticise, thus overcoming our naiveté as well. (Freire and Macedo, 1987: 41)

Freire goes on to make the important point that creativity, as a process of thought, is always a social, and never an individual act. Even when it is done alone, the act of creation is an act in which the creator conducts a silent co-operative dialogue with invisible others. (Freire 1973: 136-7). Taking seriously the commitment to critical pedagogy therefore means both an acknowledgement of the primacy of co-operative learning and co-operative evaluation – all carried out in the presence of a community’s struggling to rid itself of oppression. It was in this context that we carried out our collective work on the Whakatane Community Hub project.

Tony Ward, March 2014.

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I am a retired and now independent academic, having taught Architecture at the highest level for 40 years in Britain, the USA and Australasia, specializing in Community Design – pedagogies of empowerment in and with local and economically disadvantaged communities. For the last 30 years I have taught in New Zealand, working primarily with the indigenous Maori community. For 20 years I directed the Community Design Studio at the University of Auckland, completing dozens of community projects while at the same time developing student-centred (and student-evaluated) consensus-based pedagogies that are unique and immensely effective in their capacity for student empowerment and engagement. Since retirement (2006) I have developed my website (www.tonywardedu.com) devoted to Critical Education Theory and Practice. PDFs of many of my projects and on the theories behind them can be found and downloaded there.

Democracy, critical education, and teachers unions: Connections and contradictions in the neoliberal epoch

Lois Weiner

Professor

Abstract

My paper analyzes the reasons for the divide between scholars of critical education and teachers unions and suggests how they can develop a more vibrant relationship. I explain why supporters of critical education have a huge stake in the transformation and regeneration teachers unions and how critical education might, in turn, support teachers unions to develop a new grammar and vocabulary to discuss education. The paper concludes with discussion of pedagogical implications of unions educating members about the injustices and contradictions of capitalism, in contrast to insisting that union members agree with a critical perspective or adopt critical pedagogy.

Keywords: teachers unions; neoliberalism; critical pedagogy.

First, my thanks to the conference organizers for extending an invitation to me to present remarks. I am flattered and hope what I offer is useful as we take up the conference challenge to rethink the critical education movement's "views and practices in light of the crisis [in capitalism] as well as the paths that this crisis opens for challenging and overthrowing capitalist domination worldwide."

Both higher and lower education are being transformed by policies that aim to make all human activity, including intellectual and artistic work, subject to what is called the discipline of the market, but is, in fact, the control of powerful elites who manage capitalism and increasingly use the state without political challenge.¹ At no time in my life has there been a clearer need to develop and build a social system that is an alternative to capitalism. Woods' observation fifteen years ago is even truer today:

¹*The Global Assault on Teaching, Teachers, and Their Unions: Stories for Resistance*, edited by Mary Compton and Lois Weiner (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

Even when the market is not, as it commonly is in advanced capitalist societies, merely an instrument of power for giant conglomerates and multi-national corporations, it is still a coercive force, capable of subjecting all human values, activities and relationships to its imperatives. No ancient despot could have hoped to penetrate the personal lives of his subjects - their life chances, choices, preferences, opinions and relationships - in the same comprehensive and minute detail, not only in the workplace but in every corner of their lives.²

My paper addresses how scholars of critical education and teachers unions might collaborate to imagine and advance an alternative to capitalism, a social system that is thoroughly democratic in political, social, and economic relations and within this social system schooling that develops human potential. My analysis is informed by my work as a teacher educator; by my research on urban teacher preparation and teacher unionism; and by life-long experiences as a teacher union activist who now assists a new generation of teacher union activists to transform their unions. Ordinarily in research conferences and academic settings, we assume participants will turn off their phones. However, I ask that we turn ON our phones but turn OFF the sound. Please use social media to publicize the ideas we discuss in this conference. My analysis differs very sharply from what we hear and see in mass media, and I have learned in my recent work that as activist/scholars we can use social media to help create a global counter narrative. My twitter handle is @drloisweiner. If there is not a conference hashtag, I hope someone will suggest one.

My paper posits that critical education and teachers unions ought to have a more vibrant relationship than they currently do and that supporters of critical education have a huge stake in the transformation and regeneration teachers unions. As one labor historian has noted, the erosion of democratic institutions is “organically linked, at work and in the political arena, to the evisceration of the labor movement.³ Unions are accurately viewed by capitalism as a potential threat to neoliberalization’s economic and political project to ensure conditions for capital accumulation and the power of economic elites.⁴ Teachers unions, with all of their

² Ellen Meiksins Wood, *Democracy against capitalism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 254.

³ Nelson Lichtenstein, *A Contest of Ideas. Capital, Politics, and Labor* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2013), p. 221.

⁴ David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

flaws - and there are many - are quite correctly seen by capitalist elites as being the most stable and potentially powerful opponent of the neoliberal project that is transforming education globally. This project is fueled by three premises:

1. Workers in every country will be competing with one another for jobs which require only a basic education.

2. Since most workers will require only a basic education, educating them to higher levels is a waste of scarce public money.

3. Workers who are minimally educated require only minimally educated teachers. Educational quality can be controlled through use of standardized tests. Therefore, a highly-educated teaching profession is a waste of scarce public resources.

The footprint of the project is essentially the same throughout the world though it has national variations.⁵ Key components are privatization of the education market; eliminating civil service protections and pensions for teachers so as convert teaching to contract labor; destroying collective oversight of schools, fragmenting control; use of standardized tests to control education outcomes; and destroying the power of teachers unions.⁶ Sometimes I am told that what I am describing sounds like a conspiracy. But conspiracies are, by definition, secret and the elements of the project are easily found - when one looks in the right places, especially the World Bank, for instance in its latest report on education, "Making schools work."⁷

UNDERSTANDING THE DIVIDE BETWEEN CRITICAL EDUCATION AND TEACHER UNIONISM

The savagery of the attack on teachers unions relates to an unusual set of circumstances. Education is a huge market that capital thirsts to exploit; public education is often the most unionized sector of the economy. As union density has

⁵ Susan L. Robertson, *A Class Act. Changing Teachers' Work, Globalisation and the State* (New York: Falmer Press, 2000).

⁶ *The Global Assault on Teaching, Teachers, and Their Unions: Stories for Resistance.*

⁷ Barbara Bruns, Deon Filmer, and Harry Anthony Patrinos, *Making Schools Work. New Evidence on Accountability Reforms*, (The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank, 2011). *Human Development Perspectives*. 2011, [Www.Worldbank.Org](http://www.worldbank.org), 20/10/2011 <<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EDUCATION/Resources/278200-1298568319076/makingschoolswork.pdf>>.

declined in the private sector, public employment has become the primary foothold for organized labor. Within the public sector teachers unions often have the highest union density. Moreover, capitalist elites realize better than do most teachers that their work is potentially dangerous because it is “transformative labor” that influences what the next generation thinks.⁸ In light of the powerful potential of teachers unions that capitalist elites recognize, it is worth scrutinizing why a divide exists in much of the world between teachers unions and critical education. With the exception of some countries in Latin America, in teachers unions one seldom hears discussions of critical pedagogy. In publications of critical education one finds little about teachers unions. In one sense the divide is understandable, a result of characteristics of unions in general and the political pact unions made with capital in the welfare state. The factors that give teachers unions stability and economic and political power are also conservatizing influences.⁹ Unions are independent organizations but are embedded in the state. Because of their special relationship with the state they face legal restrictions and at the same time they have unusual power. As organizations that are democratic unions are “owned” by members who pay dues and elect officers. When unions function democratically, union officers lead according to their political beliefs - and also do as their members direct. Unions can bring democracy to the workplace, challenging hierarchical relations. At the same time, democracy can be problematic: union members are not immune to social diseases like racism, sexism, homophobia, xenophobia that affect every society. Finally, even when unions define their members’ interests broadly (as I advocate they do) so that the social good is understood as being inseparable from members’ self-interest, unions have as their chief obligation representation of their members. However, when unions define their members’ interests narrowly, adopting a “business” or “service” model, they increase the contradiction between their social role and their responsibilities to members.

Modern teacher unionism emerged in the global north in the 1960s, configured by labor laws that were adopted as part of the welfare state. Labor unions and capital agreed to make unionized workers the core of a high-wage and high-consumption proletariat. Private sector unions ceded to capital the right to manage production,

⁸ Raewyn Connell, "Good Teachers on Dangerous Ground: Towards a New View of Teacher Quality and Professionalism," *Critical Studies in Education* 50, no. 3 (October 2009): 213-29.

⁹ Lois Weiner, *The Future of Our Schools. Teachers Unions and Social Justice* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2012).

relinquishing the fight on “shop floor” issues in exchange for higher wages and government protections of unions’ right to bargain for their members.¹⁰ While the social reforms of the welfare state were extremely important, they were “structured so as to be embedded in capitalist social relations...limited by the way they were linked to the spreading and deepening of markets amid the relaunching of global capitalism.¹¹ This economic and political *quid pro quo* configured legislation creating collective bargaining for public employees, including teachers unions.

While this framework gave teachers unions stability and the right to negotiate improved wages and benefits for members, the legal arrangement generally excluded pedagogical issues from the scope of contract negotiations. Decisions about what is taught and how, as well as organizational aspects of school that directly impact how teachers do their jobs, like how school time is organized, are usually excluded from negotiations. Thus unions cannot negotiate many conditions that most affect teachers’ work and students. As neoliberal reforms have penetrated more deeply into the classroom, especially in regard to standardized testing and evaluation of performance, teachers have become less able to use union contracts to protect their professional autonomy.

It may be that critical scholars and teacher union activists collaborate more in Latin America than elsewhere because many Latin American teachers unions did not embrace - were not offered - the social democratic trade-off between wages and pedagogical voice that teachers unions elsewhere in the world accepted. But even in Latin America as teachers unions’ political strength withered, often due to the persecution of governments but also because of neoliberalism’s ideological victories, the vibrancy of union life and space for discussion of pedagogy and critical education also diminished. As an observer to the People’s Summit of the Americas in Mar del Plata Argentina I discussed with leaders of Argentina’s largest and most left-wing teachers union the challenge of recruiting younger teachers as activists because either the younger teachers are not political or they do not view the union as progressive arena for activity. I saw a similar phenomenon in 2012 when I co-taught a seminar for doctoral candidates in education at the largest public university in Bogota,

¹⁰ Leo Panitch and Sam Gindin, *The Making of Global Capitalism. The Political Economy of American Empire* (New York: Verso, 2012).

¹¹ *The Making of Global Capitalism. The Political Economy of American Empire*, p. 9.

Colombia. Most of the students were teachers in Bogota public schools. While they were far better informed politically than their peers in the US would have been and were comfortable with critical analyses of capitalism and education, they voiced many of the same complaints about their union that I hear from US teachers about their unions: The union does not have a presence in the school; union officials are remote from members' needs. Several participants said the union protected the status quo and was a barrier to improving schools, a viewpoint that is not unusual among teachers, as I learned from a national union officer. Colombian teachers oppose the kidnappings and assassinations from government-protected paramilitaries.¹² Yet they also want a union that is more open to its members, more active on pedagogical issues, more present in the schools. Still, as I will explain later, Latin America has much to teach us about bridging the divide between critical education and teachers unions.

Neoliberalism wins its ideological and material victories in part because of capital's control of the state and media. However, I think we need to acknowledge the ideological success of its (utterly erroneous) argument that its reforms ameliorate inequality. Within nation states, neoliberalism targets those who are most exploited. Globally, the World Bank reforms use the rhetoric of making services work for poor people. To create an effective counter-narrative we need to discuss inequality and solutions to it before our opponents do. In this regard, we should recognize that neoliberalism has been abetted by the social democratic agreement that schooling would be used as a sorting mechanism for the labor market. In emphasizing education's relationship to the economy, unions and social democracy allowed schooling's other functions in a democratic society to be marginalized, in particular schooling's role in educating the next generation of citizens and its development of students' intellectual, artistic, and physical potential. Neoliberal now effectively rejects any function for schooling beyond preparing students for the workforce. And by claiming that education can eliminate poverty, capitalist elites drop the state's obligation to address poverty through economic policy, for example by outlawing

¹² Mario Novelli, *Colombia's Classroom Wars. Political Violence Against Education Sector Trade Unionists*, (September 2009), Special Report. September 2009, 1-37. *Education International* Education International, Education International, 10 January 2012 <http://download.ei-ie.org/Docs/WebDepot/EI_ColombiaStudy_eng_final_web.pdf>.

poverty-level wages and creating well-paying jobs that support a sustainable economy.¹³

Most mainstream educational research about connections between education and the economy has presumed the need for rising educational requirements for workers. However, most jobs in manufacturing do not have higher skill requirements due to technological innovation.¹⁴ Rather we face a global “race to the bottom” in wages and working conditions.¹⁵ Capitalism has sentenced the vast majority of the world’s people to a lifetime of economic insecurity and desperation, under the guise that “There is no alternative.”¹⁶ International testing is designed to obscure this reality, to persuade parents and workers that a global economy must consist of workers of every nation competing against one another for work that can be easily shifted to a nation that will hyper-exploit its own people, providing huge profits for multinational corporations and wealth for a small sliver of the population.¹⁷ Schooling is not and cannot be the “one true path out of poverty” for the vast majority of the world’s children because the global capitalist economy, enforced by military intervention when needed, consigns millions to unemployment and work that pays poverty wages.

On the other hand, rejecting the claim that education can end poverty is not the same as presuming that schooling has no influence on an individual’s economic future. Critical empirical scholarship reveals how social reproduction of inequality occurs in education, through organizational practices such as tracking, through parent involvement, disciplinary practices, and because of teachers’ taken-for-granted

¹³ Steven J. Klees, "Privatization and Neo-Liberalism: Ideology and Evidence in Rhetorical Reforms," *Current Issues in Comparative Education* 1, no. 2 Spring (1999) 2002: 19-26, Teachers College, Columbia University, 13 May 2013 <http://devweb.tc.columbia.edu/i/a/document/25645_1_2_Klees.pdf>.

¹⁴ Kim Moody, *Workers in a Lean World. Unions in the International Economy* (New York: Verso, 1997).

¹⁵ Paul Mason, *Live Working or die Fighting. How the Working Class Went Global* (London: Harvil Secker. Random House, 2007).

¹⁶ Daniel Singer, *Whose Millennium? Theirs or Ours?* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1999).

¹⁷ Larry Kuehn, "Leaning Between Conspiracy and Hegemony: OECD, UNESCO and the Tower of PISA," in *Passing the Test. The False Promises of Standardized Testing*, ed. Marita Moll (Ottawa CA: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2004), 57-66.

assumptions about students' "ability."¹⁸ At the same time we have abundant evidence describing "schools as places where social reproduction occurs but also where human agency matters and makes a difference in students' lives." (p. 49)¹⁹ Through its credentialing function, schools in liberal capitalist society servesimultaneouslyas a vehicle for mobility for (a diminishing)few and reproduce social class for most, justifying poverty, low-wage work, and unemployment.²⁰

Neoliberal reforms resonate with many parents precisely because they arefrightened by the economic prospects for their children (and themselves). Many members of groups who were not served well by public schools respond positively to reforms like charter schools and testing because they want the same opportunity for their children to compete for good jobs that children of affluent parents have. Neither calls for schooling thateducates citizens for democracy, as radicals argue (correctly I think) nor demands for education that makes children happy and develops creativity as liberals and progressive education demand (correctly I think) can assuage parents' fears about their children's ability to be strong competitors for jobs in an increasingly punishing labor market. Therefore, demands about the content of schooling have to be accompanied by an economic programthat gets at the heart of the present economic crisis - creation of well-paying sustainable jobs. To argue effectively against standardized testing, nations measuring their educational systems with PISA, by standards set by the OECD, we need to address the political rationale for the tests, which is that workers throughout the worldmust accept international competition for a shrinking number of well-paid jobs.

Although the resistance is not - yet - explicitly anti-capitalist in much of the world, increasingly we see growing resistance among teachers, led by their unions, to

¹⁸Diane Reay, *Class Work: Mother's Involvement n Their Children's Primary Schooling* (Bristol, PA: UCL Press, 1998). Anne Gregory, Russell J. Skiba, and Pedro A. Noguera, "The Achievement Gap and the Discipline Gap: Two Sides of the Same Coin?" *Educational Researcher* 39 (January/February 2010): 59-68. Jeannie Oakes and Gretchen Guiton, "Matchmaking: The Dynamics of High School Tracking Decisions," *American Educational Research Journal* 32, no. 1 (Spring 1995): 3-33. Jeannie Oakes et al., "Detracking: The Social Construction of Ability, Cultural Politics, and Resistance to Reform," *Teachers College Record* 98, no. 3 (Spring 1997): 491-510.

¹⁹ Amy Stuart Wells et al., *Review of Research in Education*, edited by Robert E. Floden (Washington, D.C.: American Educational Research Association, 2004), 47-99.

²⁰Svi Shapiro, *Between Capitalism and Democracy.Educational Policy and the Crisis of the Welfare State* (New York: Bergin and Garvey Publishers, 1990).

demands of the neoliberal project. Almost daily one can learn about instances of strikes and popular protests, reported on www.teachersolidarity.com, not in the mass media. For example, in one week, 2-9 June, teachers in Rio de Janeiro mounted street protests about government spending money on the Olympics and not schools; teachers in Liberia went on strike for a living wage; British Columbia Teachers' Federation members undertook rolling strikes to limit class size and the number of special needs students placed in regular classes without additional support; teachers in Lebanon voted to strike for promised pay raises they have not received, demanding that the government raise taxes on the wealthy and reject the "advice" of the International Monetary Fund to increase the VAT.

Unions have until now been on the defensive. To shift to the offensive requires putting forward a new narrative of what we want from schools, as well as new forms of resistance. Though the strike has long been and can still be a powerful weapon, its effect is limited when the state is willing to weather the loss - which is now the case in much of the world. Alternative tactics are emerging: parents occupying schools to resist school closings in Chicago and Newark; teachers boycotting standardized tests in individual schools, school systems, and countries. One of the most exciting developments has occurred in Mexico:

... coupled with the demonstrations and marches teachers in several states organized "congresses" as they were called, which reunited hundreds of parents, in one occasion; large numbers of students in another; also communities and parents. From all this, new proposals for education started to emerge. This led to a re-appreciation of many projects organized by teachers and communities founded years before. In one of these projects, pre-hispanic languages were rescued as well as the culture they belonged to. Teachers and communities also organized projects of production and service to benefit students and the whole community. In some states, full-fledged alternative schools were created, and all the schools of the state rejected standardized testing.²¹

Most national confederations of teachers unions belong to an international confederation, the Education International, (EI) which is controlled by the two US

²¹ Hugo Aboites, "The Unexpected Crop: Social Insurgency and New Alternatives for Education in Mexico," paper presented at the Global Education "Reform": Building Resistance and Solidarity (London England: National Union of Teachers, International Solidarity Committee, 24 May 2014).

unions. Discussion of the EI takes me beyond the focus of this paper but I should note that the EI pursues collaboration rather than confrontation with the World Bank, despite World Bank policies destroying teaching as a profession and public education. Two nodes are emerging that challenge the EI's politics and hegemony. One is the Trinational Coalition to Defend Public Education, an alliance of activists and teachers unions in the Americas, anchored by the British Columbia Teachers Union (BCTF), the movement of reformers (CNTE) in the official Mexican teachers union, and now the Chicago Teachers Union. Another node is developing with the support of the UK's National Union of Teachers, which last month sponsored a conference of researchers and activists about building solidarity among teachers unions.

IMPLICATIONS FOR CRITICAL EDUCATION: THE ROLE OF "CRITICAL FRIEND"

A new generation of teachers is embracing a "social movement" orientation for teachers unions that breaks with the model of "business unionism" that accompanied the pact with capital.²² Union activists realize that they need the support of parents, students and community to protect teachers' jobs and professional obligations and rights. Often resistance to neoliberal education policy has begun with student protests, taken up by teachers and their unions. Sometimes the unions are themselves taking the lead. Ferment in the unions has created opportunities to engage in pointed discussions about the unions' assumptions and operations. I describe this form of involvement as being a "critical friend," borrowing a term used by educators in the "small schools" movement in the US before it was swallowed by the Gates Foundation and neoliberalism.

As a critical friend, we provide support when the unions struggle to defend public education and the dignity of teachers as workers, including traditional labor demands of wages and benefits. At the same time, a critical friend points out that the neoliberal project has made pursuit of these economic demands problematic because widespread popular support no longer can be assumed for public employees to receive wages that are higher than the people they serve. The campaigns unions wage must embed economic demands in a vision for public education, as the Chicago Teachers Union did - with the help of its critical friends - in developing its program for the schools,

²²Stephanie Ross, "Varieties of Social Unionism: Towards a Framework for Comparison," *Just Labour: A Canadian Journal of Work and Society* 11, no. 16-34 (Autumn 2007).

“The schools Chicago students deserve.”²³ It’s doubtful teachers will win parent and public support when they strike on economic demands alone. In addition, the state is increasingly willing to weather strikes, and unions need to come up with new forms of struggle that extend popular support, as the Mexican teachers movement has done. One popular tactic is the rolling strike. But what if teachers unions also organized a one-day occupation of the schools with parents and students, making schools sites of liberation.

The critical education movement offers teachers unions help in making sense of the *political* nature of the neoliberal project, which is not so much about corporations as it is about class power. Ideas count in this contestation of power. Critical education can convey that education’s role in resisting and turning back neoliberalism’s advances requires struggle over what is taught, how, and by whom, as well as the ways that schools and school systems can operate as sites of struggle over political power to decide these questions.²⁴

As critical friends we should encourage teachers unions to develop a new grammar and vocabulary to discuss education, one that rejects capitalism’s insistence that education is the same as vocational training. Democratic unions need to challenge paternalistic, hierarchical relations at the school site. But in doing so, they need to push against the constraints of collective bargaining, which generally allows for only teacher voice. Democracy in the school has to include parents, students and community. Moreover, when unions cast issues in terms of teachers’ rights, critical friends need to push them to configure the struggles as being in defense of teachers’ responsibilities to defend children’s needs and the social good. Finally, critical friends will push the unions to create spaces for teachers to engage critically with parents and community about what good teaching looks like, which in turn relates to what we expect of a society.

In the past three years I have worked as a critical friend with young union activists who are building reform caucuses to transform their unions as well as with teachers

²³ Eric (Rico) Gutstein and Pauline Lipman, "The Rebirth of the Chicago Teachers Union and Possibilities for a Counter-Hegemonic Education Movement," *Monthly Review* 65, no. 2 June 2013: N.p., 23 September 2013 <<http://monthlyreview.org/2013/06/01/the-rebirth-of-the-chicago-teachers-union-and-possibilities-for-a-counter-hegemonic-education-movement>>.

²⁴ Michael W. Apple, "Democratic Education in Neoliberal and Neoconservative Times," *International Studies in Sociology of Education* 21, no. 1 (March 2011): 21-31.

union officials who want to adopt a “social movement” union approach. What I have is that the unions need us but are, simultaneously wary because of our position as outsiders, as well as our critique. A border is inevitable, at least as long as unions are membership organizations that are responsible to their members. But we can influence what occurs on the other side of the border if we are simultaneously supportive and critical, learning with and from our teacher union allies.

Much of what I bring as a critical friend I have learned as a teacher educator working with poor and working class students of color who are the first in their families to attend college. Many of these students are ambivalent about standardized testing. On the one hand, they attended schools that were substandard and they had many teachers they perceived as uncaring and lazy. They believe that standardized tests provide a needed baseline. On the other hand, they did not do well on the tests themselves, felt the tests made class even more boring, and realize that the testing is narrowing the curriculum. Often these students are hostile to teachers unions, which in their view protect teachers who do harm to children. In talking with teacher unionists, I remind them that any position the union takes on standardized testing has to take into account the reasons parents may trust the tests more than they trust teachers and unions. For this reason I have advocated that the unions engage with parents in respectful discussion about what good teaching looks like rather than just opposing the testing. While no unions have yet done exactly this, I think we see the influence of my ideas in several places. When the Chicago Teachers Union polled parents on testing, the union found parents and teachers disagreed about its usefulness. The union then launched an educational campaign - as did the BCTF - informing parents about problems with testing. In April 2014 teachers and parents in a few Chicago schools boycotted the state test. Because of legal restraints the union did not encourage other teachers to join the boycott but it did issue a statement of support to the boycotting schools. It also asked faculty in teacher education to write and circulate a petition demanding that the teachers not be punished, as the school authorities threatened. Union members this past May voted to oppose use of high-stakes standardized testing. In publicizing the policy the union president has pointed out the origins of standardized testing in the eugenics movement.

While circumstances in every union are different, activists consistently face three challenges on which I contend there can be no compromise: building the union’s presence at the school so as to challenge power relations; democratizing the union’s

operations and culture; and forming mutually respectful relations with parents and community. Often activists think that electing a new leadership, replacing one set of faces with another, is equivalent to transforming the union. In private conversations and in blogs I suggest otherwise, questioning union policies, such as how contract votes are conducted or bargaining demands are developed. I sometimes find that activists, curiously even those who self-identify as socialists, think they are making a shift to “social movement” unionism when in fact they are advocating a more militant-sounding version of business unionism.

We in the critical education movement also face the contradiction created by education’s credentialing role, its ostensibly meritocratic function. In preparing students to become teachers, I have found their desire to make a difference in students’ lives co-exists with their ambition to have a secure job. In some students personal ambition is more powerful than idealism. For others, commitment to be in service to children or communities is more pronounced. Teachers unions need to live with the contradiction of serving their members’ immediate interests while simultaneously fighting for a more just, equitable society which improves life for all. Critical educators have to live with the contradiction that our beliefs about neoliberalism and critical pedagogy are not shared by all of our students or by all teachers.²⁵ In my opinion a commitment to democracy in schools and in teachers unions requires that neither we in critical education nor teachers unions should insist that teachers adopt one particular pedagogy. Instead, our role is to create space for teachers, scholars, community, parents, and students to decide together what good teaching looks like. One reason I maintain this stance rather than advocating a particular pedagogy, including critical pedagogy, is that I have seen too often how teaching principles and materials are corrupted in their implementation within bureaucratic, undemocratic school systems. In my experience any curriculum or teaching strategy can be destroyed by its being forced on teachers or students. Moreover, the best teaching, which I want for all students, is far too complex, too changed by context and relationships for one pedagogy to be used by all teachers equally well with all students in all schools. Therefore I ask unions to educate

²⁵Andrew Brantlinger, "Between Politics and Equations. Teaching Critical Mathematics in a Remedial Secondary Classroom," *American Educational Research Journal* 50, no. 5 (2013): 1050-80.

members to think critically, to understand the injustices and contradictions of capitalism, but not insist that all union members agree with a critical perspective or adopt critical pedagogy. Unions can and should insist that teachers support all students to develop their full potential. One can achieve that through many different pedagogies and political orientations.

As coordinator of a program for experienced teachers, I see how space in schools for critique has been diminished, even banished. The most powerful ally the critical education movement has for making room in schools for teachers to think freely, to question is teachers unions. For teachers unions to do what they must, they need the support and ideas of intellectuals who understand that capitalism in this epoch of neoliberalism does not want well-educated workers. It wants slaves. Our role in critical education is to work as critical friends with teacher unions to create schools as sites of liberation that will support development of the alternative to capitalism powerful elites want us to think is impossible.

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The consequences of the financial crisis in the educational praxis: A content analysis in the light of critical pedagogy

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Abstract

The main purpose of this paper is to examine the repercussions of the current financial crisis on the educational system of Greece. It is gradually becoming apparent that the symptoms of crisis affect education not only in financial terms, but also in a more humanistic dimension. Our research focuses on the teachers' beliefs and attitudes and allows them to produce their own "voice", to express their opinion regarding the financial crisis, the ways that this crisis affects them and their own role in the current situation. Hence, the interview was regarded to be the most appropriate methodological tool. The data are analyzed through a qualitative content analysis, in the light of an ideology-critical discourse. The combination of the qualitative content analysis with the critical analysis allows a more thorough insight into the underlying causes of what the teachers seem to believe.

Keywords: financial crisis, education, teachers' role, ideology-critical discourse.

Introduction

Undoubtedly, financial crisis affects education, which constitutes a social institution in a perpetual interaction with society. The educational system seems to be a field of social contradictions and conflicts, as it is the boundary between the contesting forces and the forces of urban modernization. From this perspective, the teachers' rights and needs cannot be separated from the constant conflicting forces that govern the social and political life. In parallel, the development of social and educational struggles is inextricably linked to the work of teaching and is shaped by the aspects of modern life. Gradually, it becomes apparent that the symptoms of crisis affect the education practice through the long-term austerity policies, the reduction of the teachers' recruitment as well as the dramatic reduction of wages. The education provided to young people lags behind international standards. After finishing with their studies,

young people face difficulties in entering the labor market, while the restrictive regulatory framework discourages investment and job creation. If Greece does not directly alter the financial system, there is a risk that a lot of the new generation will migrate abroad (Vayanos, Vettas&Meghir, 2010). At the same time, the merging of schools and the increasing class size create a highly unfavorable school environment, which consequently affects the educational quality. However, simply hold that crisis complicates the job of modern education in Greece, would be a rather trivial and effortless position, which does not include the complex dimension of this situation.

The main purpose of this research is to investigate the impact of the current financial crisis on the educational system and mainly on teachers and the general educational process. Exploring the impact of crisis on the educational work requires a thorough investigation aiming to the examination of the teacher's attitudes, perceptions and prejudices towards the current economic, political and social situation. In a next step, this study aims to investigate the practical consequences of the economic crisis that hinder the educational process, whether that means the reduction of the teachers' willingness and motivation or the impact on the students' behavior and motivation.

Theoretical background: critical theory as the “key” for the constructive connection between society and education

The term critical theory contains a wide variety of attitudes, behaviors and perceptions in order to achieve an ideological and critical review of all aspects of life, from economics and politics to education and all social events. In the area of pedagogy we can find the foundations of a critical - emancipatory scientific paradigm, which was named Science Education Review (KritischeErziehungswissenschaft) (Bonidis: 2009).

The history of Critical Theory begins with the establishment of the Institute for Social Research at the University of Frankfurt in 1923. The institute gave its name to the theory together with all those who afterwards formed the critical theory and became the first generation: Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse and Erich Fromm. In the second generation belongs JuergenHabermas. It is a neo - Marxist theory, which attempts to explain social events based on the conditions through which they emerged: “Marcuse, Adorno and Horkheimer felt that they had to reconstruct the logic and method of Marxism, in order to develop a kind of Marxism on late capitalism in the twentieth century” (Agger, 1991: 22).

What interests us in this context is the empowerment of the teacher and scientist from any kind of coercion, materialistic or other, aiming to maturity and empowerment (Bonidis, 2009), and self-determination (Klafki, 1976; 2000).

From this point of view, we understand why critical theories criticize traditional theories of science, which focus on understanding, describing and interpreting data, but are not interested in changing them. For this reason, critical theory differs from empirical sociological theories in the sense that it appeals more to the repressed members of society in order to achieve self-knowledge and liberation (Horkheimer & Adorno, 2002: 140). For critical theory, social events in the social sciences events are social constructs, products of human activity and therefore are subjected to change, while anything that is recorded in mind as experience, is shaped by cognitive categories and concepts, which in turn depend on the language and forms of life of society and thus can be differentiated: "postmodernism rejects the idea of a universal social science, which is formed from a variety of ideas generated by people who come from different social positions" (Agger, 1991: 32). Therefore, there is an essential difference between the concepts that are based on critical theory and perceptions that are based on positivist examples. First of all, critical theory reckons that the product of human intellection is not psychological, but social. This primarily means that critical theory perceives that nothing can be seen as ideologically neutral. Both knowledge and human experience are created within a framework of specific economic and socio-cultural factors and thus should be treated. Especially the texts of textbooks construct a concrete reality in a certain way, thus some specific aspects of reality are in favor of specific groups (Bonidis & Hodolidou, 1997).

In this context, we are dealing with the important context of critical theory's concept of false or reversed consciousness, where we accept something as correct, but we do not have a depth look at the messages that are hidden and usually have to do with the ideology of the hegemony. Under the inverted consciousness (*camera obscura*), we know that the dominant ideology, as an inverted representation of reality, is not leading its force in the slave classes of society in a direct way, but by a mediated transformed form. One of the basic concepts of Marxist thought in the "German Ideology" is ideology. Marx states that ideology is a "camera obscura", which converts the image of reality in the person's head. In other words, Marx argues that ideology reflects an inverted image of social reality, which is distorted and false. This implies that the truth of reality and reality itself is opposed. In this way, Marx binds

the function of ideology in material reality with the course of development of human material. In other words, according to Marx, ideology is the product of material reality and the distorted image of reality represented by the ideology due to social and economic conditions (Marx, nd: 76-88; Marx & Engels, 1947). As Agger states, critical theory aims at ways in which the various discourses [1] of the political, economic and social organizations become "vehicles" of hegemony within an advanced stage of capitalism (Agger, 1991: 153-154). In the same context, Boltanski uses the phrase *social domination* in order to refer to "the various ways of placing power in the service of politics(...) but also serves to identify and condemn manifestations of power deemed extreme and abusive"(Boltanski, 2011:1). For Boltanski, domination seems to be a synthetic procedure that is mainly constructed by power relations.

Especially Habermas stressed the dangers lurking behind the technocratic ideology, where science and technology "wear the cloak" of neutrality, as if they are separated from economic and political interests (Morrow & Torres 2002:55). Man is eventually unable to determine his action and only through emancipation can someone realize the "underground" authoritarian and culturally alienating relationships. (Habermas, 1975)|2. In addition, another important aspect of critical theory is praxis, a concept important in the liberating theory of Freire, that is a theory about knowledge and learning. Freire presents the processes by which we can achieve awareness of the interests of the dominant ideology. This awareness can gradually be converted into a form of political empathy, where we can reconcile theory with practice, in order to systematically be released from the nets of false consciousness. It is a complex process, where "the acquisition of critical perception of the world, knowledge about the process of knowledge and knowledge itself and recognition of themselves as contemplating and assets, humanizes them, while helps them to form the mental components of social reality" (Freire, 2009:13). Based on the above, we can understand why critical theory is inextricably linked with the liberating act. This is because the process of emancipation and liberation leads to disillusionment and revelation of reality, free from artificial consciousness that can dazzle and distort facts. However, this process requires an understanding of the world, what Freire calls "reading" of the world. For Freire, critical reflection can lead to a continuous emancipation and it presupposes the discovery of the world around us, it means that we should conquer the importance of an object, however in connection with other

objects, placing them in a network of relations, connections and controversies. In this context, “students must be willing to risk and get into adventures. Otherwise, they cannot create anything neither recreate” (Freire, 2009:107-109). It is characteristic that Freire has developed a comprehensive theory of epistemology, which has been described as dialectic, a concept well known from the Hegelian - Marxist tradition. However, it does not give much emphasis on subjective dialectic of history, both in subjective and objective view of the world through knowledge and learning (Morrow & Torres 2002: 44-46). Habermas understands knowledge from a constructionist point of view, historically and socially. Specifically, he reckons that truth is the product of a collision, with the ultimate aim of ' consensus'. For this reason, knowledge in the context of critical theory is the result of the process, a consequence of a process of conflict and agreement (ibid. 47-48). Besides the basic ideas of Freire and Habermas, the primary issue is that in the context of critical theory, every knowledge of the world cannot be regarded as authentic if presented as supposedly neutral and free from the social and political aspects of reality. Hence, only through the analysis of historical and social contradictions we can fulfill the vision of a society where members will be able to detect any kind of violence and oppression. And this detection of violence can give the courage to oppose to the status quo (ibid.:51 -52). Focusing on the educational field, according to Apple, the institution of education is not neutral, since the teachers participate - consciously or not - in a political act. Therefore, there is an internal connection between the construction of knowledge and symbols organized and selected by educational institutions and the principles of social and cultural control in a stratified society. Schools reproduce important aspects of inequality, the most important of which is the economic and cultural capital they hold and distribute, creating and recreating forms of consciousness that allow the maintenance of social control (Apple, 1986:13-18).

From this point of view, we should examine the concept of hegemony as presented by Gramsci, and then represented by Apple. This concept is particularly important in the Marxist tradition and reflects the continuous efforts of sovereign power to maintain its legitimacy. This is essentially a state of constant conflict and compromise to maintain this hegemony, since the dominant power sees and realizes her limits in the other social classes. For Apple, leadership is not something self-existent, but something that is associated with the state. We realize the concept of hegemony not as a normative acceptance of the dominant ideology, but as the result of a perpetual confrontation

and resistance, where the ruling classes aims to achieve the active consent of those who are dominated: “Near to the views of Marx and Engels, the thought of hegemony in Gramsci meant the ideological dominance of values and the norm of the bourgeoisie upon the lower social strata” (Apple, 1982:86).

The research analysis

The research is conducted via the use of 20 interviews, while the sample derives from primary as well as high school teachers from the area of Thessaloniki. The location constitutes a significant criterion, since there were chosen schools from different locations, as far as the socio-economic status is concerned.

The data are analyzed through a qualitative content analysis, in the light of an ideology-critical discourse. The combination of the qualitative content analysis with the critical analysis allows a more thorough insight into the underlying causes of what the teachers seem to believe. And this insight can lead to the exposure of the teacher’s false consciousness on the political, economic and social fragments of the current situation in our country.

The critical-ideological method constitutes a reflective practice that dates back to the Critical Theory of the Frankfurt School , and is separated into four levels (Habermas, 1968, Cohen et al. 2000): 1) The description and interpretation of the current situation , 2) the critical evaluation of the situation (analysis of the causes, goals, interests and ideologies and legitimacy), 3) the design of a political program that will lead to change , and finally , 4) the evaluation of performance of the social situation in practice . The combination of the quantitative content analysis with the critical-ideological were discussed already in the 1970s, within the methodological dualism suggested by Habermas, Ritsert and his colleagues (Ritsert, 1972). In a “neat”, however , qualitative "Paradigm" the definition of the critical-ideological is possible to join the qualitative analysis , "since the analysis will now aim to the self-identification of individuals and the democratization of society" (Bonidis, 2009) .Thus , the researcher, after following the steps of qualitative analysis and after analyzing the material with the structuring content analysis and standard construction , will attempt to analyze each sub-category through a series of questions regarding the creation of false consciousness. The important aspect is the fact that we have a combination of macro -and micro- level analysis of the ideologies of the dominant social groups and the specific interests they serve. In this context, starting with the content of the material (what is stated, how it is stated and more importantly what is

silenced), approaches the last in the light of a continuous review compared with the wider social and financial context.

From this point of view, the pedagogical discussion is mainly focused on the responsibility of teachers towards teaching quality. At the same time, however, it should be taken into account that the quality of teaching depends on certain external factors beyond the teachers' control, such as schools and classrooms, the social composition of the student population and the socio - economic background, as well as the perceptions and actions of the others who are involved in the learning process (Grollios, 2012). And most importantly, all the above factors are in a perpetual interaction with the social and economic reality of the European welfare state, dominated by the so-called logic of post industrialism, which "puts in the center of the social dialogue the increasing income inequality and the instability of the labor markets, factors that have exacerbated the problems of poverty and social exclusion " (Petmetzidou, 2011: 90) . From this point of view the aim of this study is to enable one to consider these factors in the light of critical education , in order to understand how individuals - in this case teachers - react against this context of economic and social "pathology".

Consequences of financial crisis on school as an institution

A main element is the impact of crisis on the material and technical state of schools. The teachers' responses can divide them into two distinguished categories. On the one hand, there occur answers that emphasize the consequences of financial crisis on the logistics of school. In the teachers' quotations, we identify issues such as the existence of ancillary rooms or the availability of equipment, such as interactive white boards. The respondents indicated the difficulty of the school to cover even the cost of adequate heating. It is evident that teachers express a feeling of disappointment for the hostile environment of the educational process. Nevertheless, many of the responses distinguished a certain extravagance, which is inextricably linked to the broader economic and political context of our country. And indeed, the quality of the educational project appears to be respectively proportional to practical issues, such as heating:

Certainly we feel stressed, heating is a very important issue, it thoroughly affects us. When we do not work in normal temperature conditions - the educational process requires 18 to 22 degrees Celsius-we cannot create a productive educational environment. In our school we do not face such problems, of course, but from what I

hear from other schools, which are cold, it is impossible not to be affected both physically and educationally by such conditions. Perhaps many come to believe that this situation is a deterrent or an obstacle to work (teacher in a suburban primary school).

The quality of the teaching work has worsened. The fact that you may not have the funds to buy the materials that you need, for example the A4 paper, create a very miserable scenery of the educational process".The central state does not provide sponsorships or grants anymore. The Parents' Association does not have enough money to equip the laboratory or provide us with new materials (Headmaster in a high school in Thessaloniki).

On the contrary, there is a second category of teachers that do not accept that materials are such an important aspect. These teachers give emphasis on the school as an institution, rather than as a result of logistics and materials:

We cannot depend the quality of teaching on inanimate materials, machines and computers. I mean what did teachers do in 1950? What is really required is the desire of the teacher, the pride and love, willingness of the true educator

The above statement is derived from the words of a teacher that teaches religious in an experimental high school in Thessaloniki. This teacher highlights the importance of the human factor in the educational process. Throughout the interview, she outlined the moral dimension of education and the fact that the actual consequences of financial crisis are mostly found in the demoralization of the educational quality.

Another important topic was the role of the school in the era of crisis, where a lot of conflicting views are to be found with the general criterion of the political and ideological background of the teachers. A few teachers (7) reckon that the school, as an institution, has dramatically changed, since it has shouldered responsibilities and burdens, which under other circumstances constitute an obligation of the state. Many were those who argued that the school is now required to support students both materially and psychologically:

"In accordance with the school administration, we have designed the financial support of some students, some working at the cafeteria, and some participating in educational excursions" (English teacher in a high school in the center of Thessaloniki)

"Undoubtedly, education is a strong social network, both in a material and psychological way. Certainly, we are able to help students financially, this is possible

if there is an organized community of teachers, and if we consider that this is the concept of school, why not?" (Physical education teacher in Axioupolis)

"Our school collects clothing, food, stationery and we discreetly give them to some families of the school"(headmaster in a primary school)

The above responses highlight the financial support that school can offer to pupils, whose parents are facing financial problems, so that they can participate in the entire school life. And indeed, it is emphasized that this process should be done with discretion, owing to the fact that financial crisis is still considered to be a taboo subject. As Giroux states, the educational process is considered to be a social process. Thus, teachers are required to show sensitivity and discretion towards the financial and social background of each student (Giroux, 1988:159). In each case, school is regarded as an organized community of teachers, where the cooperation among teachers is of great importance, especially in times of difficulty. In this context, teachers are asked to search for a scientific way of dealing with the daily tasks at school, as part of a process of social transformation and overthrow of the current socio-educational reality (Bonidis, 2009; Agger, 1991; Horkheimer, 1937; Jay, 1973), a process which is possible especially in difficult times, when conditions require social change (Derrida, 1974).

Teacher's working conditions

The majority of teachers in our research have expressed the opinion that their working conditions have significantly deteriorated. Nonetheless, they seem to recognize that it depends on the teacher's adequacy whether the working conditions will affect the quality of their work. Especially the following response depicts that the educational work depends first and foremost on the ability of the teacher, but the working conditions play an important role as well:

"I work as I used to, I have the same results, always depending on the level of children. I do not think anything has changed. The pride of the teacher, the willingness to work... I think the problem goes beyond the financial dimension. Certainly we all have pay cuts, we are anxious for the pension, the older ones of course, but I think we all work here with the same willingness. We try to leave the crisis behind"(Class teacher in a primary school)

"Working conditions have deteriorated significantly and this should not happen, because we have remarkable teachers who strive every day to do their jobs properly and they do not have the opportunity to do so. Yes, I believe that our professional

field has excellent people” (class teacher in a primary school in the West of Thessaloniki)

Financial earnings and quality of educational work

18 of the 20 participants mentioned the inextricable link between reductions in wages and the quality of educational work:

“The salary is not in line with the effort of everyone to improve the profession. In general, a frustration occurs, wages have dropped, and these are “starvation” wages. And a large part of teachers is unable to cope even with the basics. You may even reach the point that you feel blessed even for the fact that you still have your job, there are many unemployed, unemployment reaches 30% today” (teacher of physics in the suburbs)

“Personally, my willingness was not reduced, because now that I have been pleasantly doing my job after 31 years in the classroom, I have a certain comfort to handle the various situations in the classroom, both the given knowledge and the materials. Nevertheless, I can see that the majority of my colleagues are not handling it very well. This precariousness and insecurity is a major issue, much more intense in my opinion than the purely logistical infrastructure of schools”(teacher of history in a high school in Thessaloniki)

The first response addresses the issue of the low wages, which do not respond to the daily effort and struggle. Moreover, it refers to the feeling of insecurity that teachers feel in the era of the rising unemployment. The professor in the second answer is very eloquently describing the surrounding educational atmosphere. She also refers to the issue of insecurity due to cuts, an insecurity that affects their psychological condition, creating a general nervousness and fear for the future. She reckons, however, that the quality of her work is the same after 31 years of experience. However, she admits that her colleagues are governed by strong feelings of insecurity.

Effects on teacher's psychology and emotional state

All 20 interviewees mentioned the impact of the economic crisis on their psychological condition. Nonetheless, we could not conclude that the economic crisis affects in the same way or with the same intensity all of the teachers, since this is a topic that depends on several factors such as prior experience, endurance and adaptability to new situations as well as the existence of characteristics, such as educational readiness and the ability to leave negative experiences outside the classroom. According to Johnson et. al., 2005, teaching is one of the most stressful

procedures worldwide, with possible repercussions both to teachers and students. Especially the concept of stress was a term that began to be associated with the teaching profession since 1972 and gradually began to be used more frequently in the subsequent literature (Kyriacou, 2001). Overall, nearly one out of the three teachers feels great anxiety at work (Jepson & Forest, 2006). Indeed, according to Smith, Brice, Collins, Matthews, and McNamara (2000), 41% of teachers reported high levels of anxiety compared, followed by nurses (31%) and managers (29%). Moreover, some of the factors associated with stress at work are certain external factors such as workload, time pressure, external evaluation, relationship with the other colleagues, classroom management, and teaching students with special needs (Chan, 2002, Jepson & Forrest, 2006).

A recent study sought to investigate the stress levels of teachers of primary education after the outbreak of the economic crisis (Kalyva, 2013). In fact, the research findings show relatively low levels of stress, a result which is consistent with other similar studies (Kyridis et al., 1996; Pomaki&Anagnostopoulou, 2003). The author attributes the results of the research on issues such as the fact that the profession of the teacher is characterized by long holidays, flexible hours and a steady job, although the reference in the absence of external evaluation is no longer relevant. Moreover, the author states that teachers may be somewhat accustomed to the new situation, which is consistent with the responses of many responses in this research, such as the following:

“I could say that it is mostly a psychological issue, not only for the children, we try to keep all the negative thoughts outside the classroom, but it is sometimes very hard to do so, when everything around us changes”(teacher of fifth grade in Axioupolis, a suburb area of Thessaloniki)

“I feel this insecurity about the future, I do not know what my future holds and I am certainly more willing to volunteer, to help people in need, this is something I do (pause). I do not allow myself to be depressed by the crisis and I try not to think about it permanently. I am a person of action. I only speak personally for me though, because I see people at school who suffer psychologically” (L., Assistant Director in an elementary school).

In the above answers, teachers referred to the issues of stress and the general psychological impact of the crisis. They seem, however, to face this situation with a relative dynamism. Especially L. states that the economic crisis has affected her in a

relatively positive way, because she seeks for ways to act and to help those in need. A general optimistic attitude is also expressed by a professor of philology in Triandria, a central area of Thessaloniki:

“Teachers need to see the optimistic way. Okay, a teacher understands that the situation is difficult, she can say "yes folks, it's tough, we do not have the garden of Epicurus or Summerhill (laughs), but we cannot behave as if every hope has been lost”

“The whole situation makes me anxious. After the great reduction in our salaries, which reached about 40%, we think about everything, we think what to spend, we even thing to go to the supermarket, how to get dressed. And all of these bring great levels of stress, both in your family and in your job “(K. sixth grade teacher in an elementary school of Kozani)

“The issue that mainly concerns us is that crisis has influenced many of our friends and relatives. I have also experienced a case of suicide and I was really upset. A friend of mine was dealing with many financial problems and he just could not take it anymore. It was the first time I had to deal with a suicide” (professor of history in a high school in the suburbs)

The above responses suggest that stress and anxiety are two elements that have started to prevail among teachers in the era of crisis. We observe that each teacher develop different defense mechanisms against this situation. The question, however, at this point is what kind of values and ideals can be transmitted in an environment of political corruption, as it is at this point in Greece, and especially in what ways the modern educator can allow students to share their personal experiences of the economic crisis. To make this possible, of course, certain skills are required. These skills cannot be limited purely to the educational field, but they should be developed throughout the interpersonal relationships between teachers and students. For instance, M., professor of religion in the second high school of Thessaloniki, reckons: “We teachers have forgotten that we are not just transmitters of knowledge, but also a “light” of hope for children. We cannot enter the classroom and behave as if we were public officials. What we do requires a part of our soul, a part of our self”

Also, another major issue is the case of suicides that have been dramatically increased in the financial crisis. The majority of the answers indicate that it is totally different to be informed about suicides only on the level of numbers and percentages and completely different to experience one. The fact is that cases of suicides have been

increased by 26.5% compared to 2011 and 43% compared with 2007, according to the Hellenic Statistical Authority. It is noteworthy that this is the highest increase recorded in Greece in the last 50 years, since the official record for suicides in the country has begun. In a related study (Kontaxakis et. al: 2013), it was found that during the economic crisis (2008-2011), there was an overall increase of approximately 27 suicides, 2%, while there was a statistically high rise among ages 50-54 ($t = 3.43$, $p = 0.007$). The same survey indicates that in absolute numbers in the year 2011 total cases of suicide were 477, of whom 393 were male suicides. The above represent the highest number of suicides that have occurred in Greece during the last decades.

Consequences on the teacher's role

All of the responses indicate that in the era of crisis, teachers deal with new responsibilities, which develop a more complicated profile. These responses could be combined with what Giroux and Aronowitz defined as the role of the intellectual reformer, who uses the pedagogical act in order to direct the political sphere (Gounari&Grollios, 2010: 179). The term was originally used by Gramsci, who analyzed the social function of intellectuals around the following categories of teachers: the reformers intellectuals, the critical intellectuals, the ensconced intellectuals and the hegemonic intellectuals. In this context, we are interested in the reformers intellectuals, because they are the ones that lay the foundation for a critical pedagogy, perceiving school as a continuous struggle for what is perceived as legal and what is seen as marginalized knowledge. From this point of view, what is required is an ongoing reflection in combination with the appropriate action, so that the students realize that they themselves are part of this struggle. Above all, the intellectual reformer enables students to develop their own voice and system of beliefs, in order to be able to share their personal experiences and personal history (ibid: 180).

F., a teacher of disabled students believes:

“Teachers should express his/her beliefs regarding the political parties, but it is advisable to create an air of doubt, so that students will be able to develop a critical way of view. Students should start asserting within school. For instance, we have no heat, what should we do? No need to do anything? Should we force parents to bring oil? Children should develop these doubts, movements, reactions”

Certain controversial responses were noted regarding the teacher's political beliefs and whether they should be expressed or not. The contradiction between the interviewees is evident at this point. Teachers that were presented more conservative expressed their skepticism towards the political role of the teacher:

“Our job is not to discuss about politics, but about training and educating students. When a teacher deals with issues and problems, such as racism, violence and aggression, he/she expresses a political position in the broader sense. In no case can we lead students towards a specific political orientation”

However, in general, the majority of teachers seemed to reckon that the educator must express political beliefs, but not about specific political parties:

“I believe that children should be told the truth, that there should be special attention and flexibility, a teacher should not be a “mouthpiece” of a specific political party. Moreover, today the general idea is that students should develop a critical thinking. I urge children to think about the various political problems in the era of crisis, such as corruption and nepotism. Children should gradually get used to taking responsibilities and thinking in a critical way. Whatever happened to our country has been created by incompetent, non-critical people”

In this context, teacher is now required not only to convey knowledge to children, but also to empower them. And this empowerment does not only mean helping students to cope with the world around them, but also transmitting the comparable courage to change the social order (McLaren, 2007). The above teacher supports the fact that schools should not only be classrooms but also cultural fields, where teachers are invited to actively contribute to the personal and social empowerment of students (Gounari&Grollios, 2010: 282). In the context of critical pedagogy, school process can not be a sterile procedure, neutral and detached from the political, cultural, economic and social spheres.

At the same time, some teachers reported the moral dimension of the teacher's role:

“When we mean economic crisis, we must think that it is not only economic, but also political, social and moral. Crisis means recession, means that something "goes down". The teacher has an outstanding debt against it, which most do not understand”

According to theorists of critical pedagogy, teachers should consider education in the light of race, social class, power and gender. It is the role of the teacher, who wishes to impart what Habermas calls emancipatory knowledge, i.e. the kind of knowledge that will help students understand the relationships of power and privilege, which

largely distort the perception we have of world and social relations (Habermas, 1974). In this context, teacher has the duty to talk about issues such as oppression, irrationality, social injustice and structural violence. A professor of philology stated: “When everything around is changing, teachers cannot behave as if everything was alright. I personally always try to convey some values, some commentary on things that are in the news, so that students can be awoken”

Also, K., a class teacher, who throughout the interview repeatedly stresses the emancipatory role of the teacher, stated:

“Our role is far beyond the official curriculum. We should play a significant role in the process of leading students to a path of wisdom, empowerment and social transformation”

Impact on students

Changes in the social composition of the student population

Most teachers recognize the fact that the economic crisis has a tangible impact on the economic and family background of students, reckoning that in many cases families of a high or middle socio-economic strata have suddenly lost their jobs and therefore their high social status. In this context, the analysis of responses has a very interesting sociological perspective, because many concepts such as cultural capital, equal opportunities and social mobility have been used.

The majority of teachers reported the inextricable link between the family context and the students' performance, saying that there are cases of students, who have totally lost their interest, due to various problems in their family:

“It makes perfect sense, children who do not have heating, adequate heating and have no food, they are often sick, how can you anticipate a good performance in the classroom? When you do not have the basics, how can have the ability to read and do well in school?”

In contrast, some teachers argued that family context has always played a role in student performance and is not a matter of the current financial crisis:

“I do not see any particular impact on performance, children perceive some things from home and their school performance has always been affected by other factors, but I can only say that financial crisis is not the only and exclusive factor. There were always times where a student had some financial problems and this affected his/her school's performance. Also, parents may be separated”

Apart from the above, teachers were asked about the changing role of the school in providing equal opportunities to students. Most concluded that school should- especially in these conditions of economic instability- provide opportunities for students, in order to equalize the deficient economic and social backgrounds, a process that is usually not plausible:

“I believe that while the purpose of school is to give equal opportunities, I do not think that this happens. Indeed, if it happened, children would not need private lessons. Besides, we should consider that school as an institution aims at some specific students, those who are said to have good school performance. They have adapted or are consistent with the method of school, but there are many other things which are not examined, for example the evaluation of teachers. Especially in the times of crisis, the gap among students seems sharper”

In the above insight, we can detect certain sociological elements of great importance regarding the subject of equality of opportunities among students from different social strata. As McLaren states (2007), critical education deals with the various ways and processes that lead to the reproduction of the social and financial status quo. This reproduction legitimizes the current financial and social stratifications of the wider society. Nonetheless, social reproduction is not just a matter of financial state or social strata. It constitutes a field that creates and recreates certain patterns of behavior and cognition that allow the maintenance of the social control (Apple, 1968: pp. 13-18). Apple specifically uses the concept of hegemony as the result of constant conflicts and resistances in the educational environment, where the ruling classes seek for the active consensus of the lower social classes: "Close to the views of Marx and Engels, the thought of hegemony in Gramsci meant the ideological dominance of values and the norm of the bourgeoisie to the lower social strata" (Apple, 1982: 86).

According to Bourdieu, schools reward students based on their cultural capital, defined as “means of symbolic capital of wealth” (Bourdieu, 1977). Teachers allegedly communicate more easily with students from the upper classes, treating them as more "gifted" than the students from the lower or middle classes. Bourdieu noted, however, that financial barriers are not sufficient to explain the differences between the educational attainments of children from different social classes. Above and beyond economic indicators, cultural habits and dispositions (*habitus*) that are inherited by the pupil are essential for success in school. These cultural habits and dispositions consist of resources able to generate profit for owners, because they tend

to be regarded as more capable in the community, as they have greater access to cultural heritage. Bourdieu finds that the legalization of inequality in cultural dimension should be shown in a way that is very different from that of the economic inequality. This is because economic inequality can be addressed by providing financial grants, but the inherent inequality is largely subjected to cultural predisposition and family heritage which is hereditary, because frequent interaction between parents and child creates a complete way of life, an entrenched behavior, a "custom", which is legitimized within school. This lifestyle includes visits to exhibitions, engaging music and literature, reading books from the market and not from any form of borrowing, monitoring classics of cinema, visits to museums and places of great historical importance. All this creates a certain frame of mind, action and ownership of the historical and cultural heritage. Bourdieu states: "School requires a certain behavior. This consists mainly of linguistic and cultural capacity and the relationship between family and culture, a relationship that can only be produced when the family transmits the dominant ideology (Bourdieu, 1974:80). Of course, for the acquisition of such cultural heritage, not only the right environment is required, but also the comparable ability of the student to internalize all those standards and norms that contribute to a better integration in the norm of school (Dumais, 2002: 44). In fact, the question that arises is whether the educational credentials are simply "... one internalisation of cultural 'capital' that turns into school knowledge." (Bourdieu & Boltanski, 1981:145). Moreover, it is apparent that the simple connection between two variables does not necessarily imply a causal relationship between them. Finally, Bourdieu also presents evidence that both social class and educational attainment are closely linked to participation in cultural activities such as reading books, cinema, theater, concerts and museum participation. However, these data are not sufficient to support the theory of Bourdieu, because the data are not adequate to support the fact that cultural events and participation in cultural events guarantee school success.

Beyond the issue of financial resources, the economic structure raises questions of whether students of all social classes receive appropriate stimuli and incentives, in order to internalize performance incentives and continuous evolution. The poverty of inspiration is so devastating as the poverty of opportunities and it's time to replace a culture of low expectations for many with a culture of high standards for all. (Brown: 2007) Such "low expectations" have been commonly reported as one of the most significant obstacles to the working class educational achievement by both

researchers and makers of educational policy (Demie& Lewis: 2010). Children living in deprived communities face a cultural barrier that stands in very different ways than material poverty. It is a kind of cultural barrier, which includes low expectations and skepticism about education, a sense that education is for other people, and that is likely to leave someone who is standing in a low social position:

“Not long ago, I had a conversation with my colleagues, and someone said: “At least high school should make repetition of what children learn in the tutorial”. So a lot come to believe that the educational system, especially secondary education, does not work anymore. With this in mind, how can we believe that students of all social classes have the same opportunities?”

A general conclusion that could be made is that teachers of more left-wing beliefs criticized school, in a larger sense, claiming that students' performance has always been influenced by cultural capital and is not a new phenomenon of the economic crisis:

“The performance of students is connected with what we call the hidden curriculum, i.e. beyond the formal; we have to consider the informal. This has to do with the ideology and values that the teacher wants to convey. The question is whether teachers will choose to convey the dominant ideology or they will try to create skepticism in the students' mind”

Within the concept of ideology, all social practices and pedagogical approaches are important in schools. As McLaren states, certain pedagogical practices and procedures are presented as normal and are therefore not subjected to criticism (Gounari&Grollios, 2010: 311). This implies that the ideological basis of the course is not limited only to what students are formally taught, but especially in those who hide behind the official school knowledge, the hidden curriculum. Moreover, the whole process has to do with what Foucault describes as practical reasons, i.e. not only words, but practical institutions, behavioral patterns and forms of pedagogy. The important thing is that these practices speech shape and analogous relations of power, because they determine who can and cannot speak, while pointing who is in a position of power and who are the ones who obey (Foucault, 1972: 117).

These positions in the current context of education in the years of crisis can be connected with the ways and methods that each teacher will choose to defend against the existing difficulties. What is obvious from the teacher's responses is the fact that

they perceive their role as more complicated and multi-dimensional in the era of crisis.

Conclusion

The analysis of the interviews indicates that the current financial crisis has created certain patterns of behavior among teachers. On the one hand, we have the profile of the teacher who gives emphasis on the materialistic aspect of education. This insight was mainly expressed by teachers in schools of the West of Thessaloniki, where the socio-economic status of the area is relatively low. In those schools, the results of the financial crisis are more tangible in the area of the logistics and infrastructure. On the other hand, there occurs the type of teacher, who perceives the financial crisis in a general demoralizing framework. This profile is to be found in schools of the Eastern Thessaloniki, where the financial background is considered to be high. As a result, the materialistic repercussions of the financial crisis are not so evident there, a fact that allows teachers to behold the further implications of the current situation. Another important factor that influences the teachers' beliefs and attitudes is their political beliefs. Those who declared to be left-wing, tended to criticize school as an institution, referring to the general deficiencies of the educational system in Greece, beyond the current financial crisis.

As a general assumption, the majority of the interviewees perceived the current crisis not only as a severe financial state, but also as a moral, social, political and educational crisis. Thus, they seem to believe that its repercussions on education should be examined in this multifaceted framework. A framework that is also shaped by the unique characteristics, advantages and disadvantages of the Greek society. Most of the teachers' responses indicate that whereas education should be regarded as a vital element, in the constant effort for financial recovery, it is in fact the sector that withstands the vast majority of the cutbacks of the Memorandum of Understanding.

Moreover, a general idea that was expressed- and is in correlation with critical pedagogy- is the fact that education should be more connected with the general financial and social context, as well as with the broader society. In this context, education can play a significant role in the empowerment and emancipation of students and teachers, in order to develop certain defensive mechanisms in the era of crisis. Especially teachers should develop a powerful role, in order to be opposed to the neo-liberal and neo-conservative ideology that is characterized by the constant

effort to undermine the teacher's role. In the era of crisis, teachers should now -more than ever -develop their own critical voice and identity.

Notes:

[1] The concept of discourse in critical theory is associated with a critical dialogue, constructive, democratic, with the aim of exposing the false consciousness of the dominant ideology. This is a political dialogue aiming to a different interpreting of the world (see Horkheimer & Adorno, 1972; Agger, 1991: 7, 174-196, 66-70).

[2] It is significant that Habermas locates in the position of laissez-faire, that characterized the early capitalism, the scientific and technological ideology as the new authoritarian power of the modern era (1970a).

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**IV INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CRITICAL
EDUCATION
Critical Education in the Era of Crisis**

Conference's Proceedings
Editors: George Grollios, Anastasios (Tassos) Liambas, Periklis Pavlidis
ISBN(SET): 978-960-243-696-7
ISBN: 978-960-243-698-1