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INTERNATIONAL CRITICAL PEDAGOGY READER



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ROUTLEDGE

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The Internationalization of Critical Pedagogy

An Introduction

Antonia Darder, Peter Mayo, and João Paraskeva

Since the early eighties scholars in the English-speaking world have been exposed to a heterogeneous corpus of literature from the United States under the rubric of critical pedagogy, an educational literature. Peter McLaren, a central figure in this U.S. tradition, describes critical pedagogy as “fundamentally concerned with the centrality of politics and power in our understanding of how schools work” (McLaren 1994: 167). For this volume, ‘schools’ with ‘education’ is conceived in its broadest context, to do justice to the various provisions and manifestations of the field, formal, non-formal and informal. This definition is particularly significant and necessary to an international reading of critical pedagogy, which also applies to the domain of emancipatory adult learning. Paulo Freire and U.S. neo-Gramscian scholars such as Henry Giroux, Michael Apple, and others helped to frame this field of study with respect to new theoretical avenues, anchored in key critical principles, including cultural politics, political economy, oppressor-oppressed dialectic, hegemony, ideology, critique, resistance, dialogue, consciousness, and hope and possibility (Darder, Baltodano, & Torres 2008).¹ Most importantly and worth repeating, critical pedagogy unapologetically engages education as a significant political arena in the struggle for democracy.

Critical pedagogy is fundamentally concerned with the relationship between education and power in society and, thus, uncompromisingly committed to the amelioration of inequalities and social exclusions in the classroom and society at large. Conceptually and in practice, this radical educational view contends forthrightly with the inextricability of power/knowledge relations. Critical pedagogy in the U.S. has drawn inspiration from a host of radical Western intellectuals of the 20th century. Most notably are the writings of Karl Marx, Antonio Gramsci, the Frankfurt school, Jürgen Habermas, Michel Foucault, and others. These works were most formidably developed and expanded into a critical theory of education by U.S. intellectuals such as Henry Giroux, Peter McLaren, Michael Apple, Donaldo Macedo, bell hooks, Joe Kincheloe, Ira Shor, Antonia Darder, Douglas Kellner, Shirley Steinberg, and others.

While the theorists involved in the evolution of the field utilize a variety of analytical approaches, one common element underscored is the political foundation of education. Education, hence, is not viewed as a neutral enterprise, but rather as a contested terrain. Heuristically speaking, education is perceived as serving one of two purposes in society. It either serves to ‘domesticate’ and strengthen the existing relations of power and therefore perpetuates the ills—economic, social, and environmental—critiqued throughout its corpus of literature, rendering conditions of oppression as non-existent (Sousa Santos 2014); or else it serves to ‘liberate’ in contributing to the ushering in of a new world in which principles of social justice and ecological sustainability are held uppermost.

Of course, this dialectic of oppression and liberation comprises ends of a non-linear co with critical educators striving assiduously to move towards the latter end, while being by a variety of forces, towards the other. Odd as it might be, in a world with such deeply entrenched inequalities, critical educators face tough challenges and uphill battles, in their efforts to make “the critical” a truly dominant tradition (Sousa Santos 1999). Needless to say, contending with the resulting tensions and contradictions is often tantamount to living and acting critically. Conceptually and politically, it is this notion that fundamentally connects critical pedagogy to the work of Paulo Freire in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, although he is clearly not the only educational philosopher to speak to these pedagogical concerns, as will become most apparent by this collection of international authors writing, directly or indirectly, about many of the critical principles that have informed the tradition of U.S. critical pedagogy.

Beyond a North American Context

Despite attributions made to Paulo Freire’s work by major exponents of the field, the field in general has been presented with a decidedly North American ring to it. Stretched further, it incorporates insights from an Anglo-dominated world, which includes USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom. The southern voices incorporated, although important voices in the majority world, still are those ensconced in the intellectual traditions dominated by Western North American scholarship. And yet we would argue that there is an international dimension to the field that extends well beyond these limited geographical contours. It includes radical intellectuals from different parts of the world, some of whom make no bones about subscribing to critical pedagogy; while others, including historical revolutionary figures and social movements, who have addressed similar issues concerning education and power, would not have called themselves so, particularly since they anticipated ‘critical pedagogy’ by several years, and, in certain cases, a century or more.

What renders their work germane to and in sync with a critical pedagogy is their basic pedagogical and philosophical vision, which embraces a non-negotiable utopia, as well as directly counters historical *epistemicides* produced by Western hegemonic assumptions of the world (Paraskeva 2014; Sousa Santos 2007). What enhances their suitability to be included in the field is the fact that texts concerning critical pedagogy, such as the basic foundational one by McLaren (1994), as well as contemporary critical pedagogy websites (see the Paulo-Nita Freire International Critical pedagogy website),² list mostly male historical figures such as W. E. B. Dubois, John Dewey and Antonio Gramsci (who along with Paulo Freire is one of the few non North-Americans who constantly make it into the list) among major exponents of the field. Although, it makes sense for critical pedagogy to acknowledge these sources of inspiration; once they are listed among the pantheon of critical pedagogy scholars, then it makes equal sense to draw on a larger body of thinking, deriving from historical individuals and movements situated beyond the constraints of a Western North American context. In so doing, we argue for the need to interrupt an unintentional fallacy of a U.S. driven critical pedagogical canon, whose modern Western thinking, as Boaventura de Sousa Santos claims (2007), produces an “abyssal thinking,” in that it consists

...of a system of visible and invisible distinctions, the invisible ones being the foundation of the visible ones. The invisible distinctions are established through radical lines that divide social reality into two realms, the realm of “this side of the line” and the realm of “the other side of the line.” The division is such that “the other side of the line” vanishes as reality, becomes nonexistent, and is indeed produced as nonexistent. Nonexistent means not existing in any relevant or comprehensible way of being. Whatever is produced as nonexistent is radically excluded because it lies beyond the realm of what the accepted conception of inclusion considers to be its other. What most fundamentally characterizes

abyssal thinking is thus the impossibility of the co-presence of the two sides of the line the extent that it prevails, this side of the line only prevails by exhausting the field of reality. Beyond it, there is only nonexistence, invisibility, non-dialectical absence.

(45).

With all this in mind, we turn now to a brief discussion of some key international influences; some that, although generally absent from the critical pedagogical literature, also bring decisively distinct and useful insights to our international understanding of critical pedagogy.

Paulo Freire

Outside Western North American influences, Paulo Freire stands out as one of the most formidable intellectual forces in critical pedagogy. Freire's ideas, grounded in his adult literacy work in the rural countryside of Brazil, gained prominence in the 1970's, as a direct outcome of both the historical moment and the release of the English translation of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* in the United States. As in France, Mexico, and other parts of the world, student unrests of the late 1960s and early 1970s resulted in significant political movements for emancipatory struggles, where Freire's writings, along with those of Frantz Fanon, Albert Memmi, Amílcar Cabral, Julius Nyerere, Ernesto (Che) Guevara, and others provided impetus for rethinking conditions of material and political oppression beyond dominant Western assumptions of the other. Among these, Freire's work, at the time, provided some of the most focused and systematic arguments related to question of oppression and the education of oppressed populations.

A central concept of Freire's pedagogy is that of *liberating praxis*, which entails a process of teaching and learning that supports the evolution of conscientização or social consciousness (Mayo 2004).³ For Freire, pedagogy should enable students to read not only the word but also their world; and to do so critically without avoiding unsettling questions that unveil the complexities of asymmetrical power relations and hegemonic social arrangements. The focus here is placed upon students moving from 'object' to 'subject' of history, in the sense of individuals becoming active social actors, as opposed to passive producers and consumers. As social actors, students become capable of learning and acting collectively to advocate for change and contribute to the renegotiation of hegemonic social relations.

The key entry point to learning for Freire, then, is the learners' existential situation or lived experience. Moreover, Freire's view deeply counters the fatalism of banking education, which indulges in the *mythification* of the world (Freire 1994; 1970) and, by so doing, conserves the objectification of students and the reification of knowledge. As such, the learning process should be one that enables students to contend with their actual conditions, in order to move towards greater critical consciousness and a critical literacy that prepares them to engage effectively with complex forms of knowledge and to enact practices in their lives in sync with a more just world. This also clearly entails a humanizing pedagogy for the radicalization of oppressed populations, which is fundamentally grounded in an integral dialogical process fueled by a radical love for the world and a deep commitment to social and material liberation (Darder 2015; 2002).

It is also worth noting here that beyond the historical influence of Freire's ideas internationally, his ideas continue to be expanded and reinvented by intellectuals and educators in Brazil and beyond, including his widow, Ana Maria Araujo Freire who has authored numerous publications and edited several volumes that aim to conserve the integrity of Paulo Freire's humanizing vision of education (Borg & Mayo 2000). Along the same lines, the existence of hundreds of Freirian-inspired institutes, schools, educational projects, and publications bear witness to the saliency and power of Freire's ideas within the international arena of critical pedagogy.

Don Lorenzo Milani

An important international figure in the critical pedagogy field is Don Lorenzo Milani. Milani, an Italian Catholic priest from Florence, is a household name in his native Italy and has a following in other countries such as Spain, inspiring a movement of educators there. He is best associated with an important text, *Letter to a Teacher* (Borg, Cardona and Caruana 2013), written by his students at the School of Barbiana, in the locality of Sant'Andrea in Barbiana, Tuscany. The text, inspired by the teachings of Milani, anticipated many of the salient ideas associated with the 'new sociology of education' and the North American-driven critical pedagogy (Mayo 2013). Its political impact was so strong that it became a rallying text for social movements in Italy engaged in the much-documented 1968 period of turmoil and activism that swept across Europe. Written in the form of a narrative by eight boys who were school 'dropouts,' the text provides a strong illustration of the way social class politics conditions students' life chances, mediating the process of success or failure of a bourgeois-oriented public education system.

Issues addressed by the text, yet familiar in our contemporary context, include 'cultural capital' and 'habitus' (Bourdieu 1986), political misrepresentation of the oppressed in parliament, selectivity and tracking, private tuition, indirect taxation and cultural alienation. These are offset against aspects of the Barbiana experience. This experience includes dialogic and collective learning and writing, utilizing different learning pathways for different students, peer tutoring involving senior students teaching younger ones, reading history to counter 'sanitized' chronicles, and critical media literacy that included reading and responding to daily national newspapers. Milani's pedagogy also combined academic with technical education, humanistic with scientific learning, and the study of foreign languages at home and abroad.

Don Milani was also instructive in his teaching and reading of history *against the grain* as part of the struggle to exercise the right to conscientious objection regarding the military draft. This draft was compulsory for young men until just a few years ago. His writings provided grist for the mill in this regard, as written responses to the military chaplains who chided conscientious objectors and to the judges contending with the case that was filed against him. Milani's writings are most relevant for a critical pedagogy against the 'culture of militarization,' a salient topic in the field today (Batini, Mayo and Surian 2014); and for a culture of peace (Borg and Grech 2014). Milani's writings are also most relevant to contemporary discourses about working class solidarity. Lastly, one can indeed detect parallels between Freire and Milani's pedagogical approaches (Mayo 2007), in that both offered a humanizing understanding of education, where faith in students' capacity to learn is paramount and the liberation of the most vulnerable populations is an intentional pedagogical purpose.

Other Intellectual Influences

Theorists writing in the critical pedagogical tradition are also heavily indebted to other intellectual influences. Martin Buber, for example, exerted an important influence on the emergence of the Freirean concept of 'authentic dialogue' through his writings on interpersonal communication as captured in such works as *I and Thou* (Buber 1958). Buber, who originally hailed from Central Europe, moved to the Middle East to what was then Palestine. He left a tremendous legacy, especially in the state of Israel, where an Institute at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem bears his name. His intellectual legacy among Israelis and Jews in general is probably as great and far-reaching as that of Nikolaj Frederik Severin Grundtvig among Danes and other Scandinavians.

If we remain within the region, a turbulent region where people need little reminding that *education is political*, we come across the ideas of a leading Palestinian intellectual, Ibrahim Abu-Lughod, especially with regard to critical curricular issues. Abu-Lughod lived and taught for many years in the USA but spent the last years of his life in Ramallah, Palestine, where he served

as Rector of Bir Zeit University, and spearheaded the development of a Palestinian curriculum that replaced the Jordanian one for schools on the West Bank and the Egyptian one for schools in Gaza. He developed important curricular ideas for a beleaguered people, when involved in the process of Palestinian curriculum development. His writings and those of his daughter Lila Abu-Lughod and Edward Said, both having lived in the USA but with constant contact with their own homeland, have inspired Palestinian and non-Palestinian writers in the field of critical pedagogy. Nahla Abdo (in Borg and Mayo 2007), a sociologist, activist, and writer constitutes yet another Palestinian example. Abdo, whose writings engage critical issues related to gender, has worked in Palestine helping to set up the Palestinian Ministry for Women Affairs, a 'first' for governments in the region.

Moving from the Middle East to Africa, we also find important experiences and insights for an international critical pedagogy. Without overlooking persistent forms of indigenous education in Africa, well documented also within the context of critical pedagogy (Dei 2011), we highlight noteworthy initiatives in the same continent undertaken by visionary state officials such as Kwame Nkrumah, Gamal Abdel Nasser Hussein, Julius Nyerere (Nyerere 1968; 1979), and freedom fighters and leaders such as Amílcar Cabral—who, in particular, had an important influence on Paulo Freire's thinking (Freire 1978)—in promoting an anti-colonial public education with its efforts to Africanize education, without throwing out the (knowledge) baby with the (colonial) bathwater. In an article that João Paraskeva helped translate into English, Freire not only acknowledges his intellectual admiration for Cabral, but also establishes a dialogue between Cabral and Antonio Gramsci, arguing Cabral as the conceptualizer of a specific critical organic intellectuality (see Freire 2009).

Some of the revolutionary writings and insights of Martinican, Frantz Fanon and Tunisian-Jew, Albert Memmi are most pertinent to this discussion. Both of these radical authors worked tirelessly to articulate a critical understanding of the destructive impact of colonialism to racialized populations, both as individuals and social beings. Given Fanon and Memmi's unapologetic anticolonial stances, their contributions have provided significant foundational insights in positing a postcolonial education—viewed here in a wider context. An example of this is evident in the last chapter of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, where Freire employs important ideas by both Fanon and Memmi in developing his ideas related to revolutionary leadership (Freire 1970; 1993). Hence, these also fall within the purview of an international critical pedagogy, especially critical pedagogy that incorporates postcolonial sensibilities. In South Africa, critical pedagogical forms emerged through important educational social movements such as the People's Education, Workers' Education, and Education with Production. In addition, individuals such as I. B. Tabata, Rick Turner, Ruth First, Steve Biko, Mathew Goniwe, Abu Asvat, Neville Alexander, and others have contributed to the formation of an emancipatory educational tradition in the region. More recently, the writings of scholar-activists such as Salim Vally and Juliet Perumal continue to expand on this tradition.

Historical moments in different parts of the globe also have furnished us with pedagogical strategies that fall easily within the context of an all-embracing critical pedagogy. Many of these ideas have emanated from Latin America, Mexico and the Caribbean, within the context of the revolutionary movements of Cuba, Nicaragua, and Grenada; and, most recently, the Zapatista struggles in Chiapas and the Bolivarian revolution in Venezuela (Marquez 2005). One can argue that these experiences have not been short of exposure in the international education literature. They have featured prominently in critical pedagogy, mainly because of the Freirean connection, and also in comparative and international education. Although not always noted in critical pedagogical discussion, Freire's exposure to the liberation theology movement of the 1950s and 60s in Latin America—particularly through the writings of Gustavo Gutierrez and others—as well as Freire's time in Chile also supported his emancipatory vision of education. In addition, the contribution to critical pedagogy by one of Freire's Brazilian contemporaries Augusto Boal,

whose *theatre of the oppressed* has inspired radical popular education movements around the globe, is also noteworthy.

In India, several forms of critical pedagogy have evolved, inspired by the historical writings and practices of two significant public figures, Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore, who contributed to the evolution of an anti-colonial public discourse across the country, which also extended into the arena of education (Bhattacharya 2013). Although neither would be considered explicitly anti-capitalists, their ideas have been garnered by critical educators in India to support a liberating pedagogy and a critique of neoliberal capitalism. For instance, Gandhi's view on linking work to education—although misinterpreted by the post-independence Indian bourgeoisie as vocationalization of education—essentially spoke to an emancipatory pedagogy that could instill social agency in the dignity of labor among students, particularly in a country where the oppressed have contended with a hardened caste system of discrimination and the ravages of its colonial past (Kumar 2012). He is also indirectly connected, via associates such as Mira Behn and Vinoba Bhave, with concepts such as environmental activism and learning, through the Chipko movement and *Nai Talim* (New Learning).⁴

Tagore, on the other hand, founded one of the greatest critical humanistic educational experiments in India, at the turn of last century. In his works *Nationalism* (1918), and *Religion of Man* (1931), Tagore argues for the need for global critical learning processes that can channel humanity toward sustainable progress. He considered connections with nature to be every bit as important to learning as those forged among teachers and students within a school and believed that the curriculum had to be kept flexible and geared upon the particular proclivities of students, with a clear intercultural focus on history, art and literature (Mukherjee 2014). Although profoundly influenced by Socrates and Rousseau as well, Tagore was able to implement an indigenous educational project that placed arts, ethics, and creativity at the very core of a permanent self-criticism, a humanizing pedagogical process that conceived of the world as holistic.

On a more academic terrain, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's post-colonial discourses on *subaltern* populations and Homi Bhabha's articulations on *hybridity* and *the third space* have challenged hegemonic assumptions of Indian identity and oppressive social conditions that impact the everyday lives of economically and politically marginalized students in India. Drawing on Gramsci's work, notably his notes on Italian history and interrupted writing on the 'Southern Question,' Ranajit Guha and his colleagues in the *Subaltern Studies* group promoted readings of history against the grain of conventional interpretations, seeing post-British Raj history within the context of caste and social class politics, using Gandhi's dictum of 'colonization without the English.' Lastly, we would also like to bring attention to the contributions of Jotirao Phule and Savitri Phule, who were also important educators and thinkers in the 19th century, given that they belonged to the marginalized class and caste. Their views on education were refreshingly distinct from more affluent Indian thinkers, in that they brought their experiences as subaltern subjects to their writings on education.⁵

Europe, too, has contributed to significant upsurges in critical pedagogical thinking, primarily in reaction to its Western authoritarian legacies of the state. Take for example Spain, or, more accurately, the various regions with their specific identities, some aspiring to nationhood, others falling under control of the state. The 'second republic,' brutally dismantled following the Spanish civil war and its popular democratic legacies destroyed during the Franco years, furnished us with a broad array of anti-dogmatic (there were persisting legacies of the 'Inquisition' which extended well beyond its established historical period) and anti-oppressive educational and cultural initiatives. This involved recognition and re-evaluation of different forms of popular culture (e.g. Flamenco music and dancing) and communal theatre (e.g. the work of Lorca and his University troupe, *La Barraca* [the Shed]: see Flecha 1992), an attempt at mass public education of the formal and non-formal type, and programs of teacher education. Many of these teachers,

education leaders and cultural organizers subsequently paid for their efforts with their lives. Federico Garcia Lorca features prominently among these victims.

When we look at Europe, we discover critical pedagogues who anticipated many of the themes later foregrounded in critical pedagogy. And we are not referring here to the 'mini-revolution' in educational thought brought about in the early seventies by the 'new sociology of education' in England, spearheaded by an introduction to a compendium of writings penned by Michael Young (Young 1971). We are referring to a wide breadth of ideas, experiences, and struggles, which included the phenomenon of 'independent working class education' that spread throughout the continent and also as far as Canada and Australia (Waugh 2009). We also note here ideas and educational experiments by a few figures from the Frenchman, Celestine Freinet; to the Catalans, Francesc Ferrer i Guardia and later Rosa Sensat i Vilà; to the efforts of Pep Aparicio Guadas and associates at the Instituto Paulo Freire de España; to the Italians, Maria Montessori, Danilo Dolci, Aldo Capitini and the late Mario Lodi.

Ferrer i Guardia left a mark with his *Escuela Moderna* (Modern School) and its anarchist undertones (the Modern School also had a following in the form of a movement in the U.S.). One can also consider his fellow Catalan, Rosa Sensat i Vilà with her *Institut de Cultura i Biblioteca Popular de la Dona* (Woman's Cultural Institute and Popular Library). Her pedagogical philosophy differed considerably from that of Ferrer i Guardia and she was less politically committed, more of a Catalan equivalent to Montessori.⁶ However, she has the merit of having given rise to Europe's first women's cultural and working educational centre. Freinet's cooperative learning experiences and reconstruction of the media are well documented. The cooperative learning experiment was taken up and reinvented by Lodi in Italy.

Maria Montessori also deserves her due recognition in critical pedagogy not least for her different forms of peer tutoring as well as her principled stance in relation to the Fascist government of the time. Then there is Danilo Dolci with his learning through collective community action (involving hunger and 'reverse' strikes) in a Mafia dominated Sicily, with its high levels of unemployment, poverty and total neglect by the country's authorities, even in the immediate aftermath of catastrophic earthquakes. In Northern Italy, we come across the Umbrian, anti-Fascist peace activist and educator, Aldo Capitini with his adult education initiatives for peace and grassroots democracy (omnicrazia), mainly through his contribution to setting up throughout Umbria and beyond centres for social orientation (COS).

Political Conflict, Social Movement, & Critical Pedagogy

Most relevant for a critical pedagogy are issues emerging from different sites of struggle, involving military and other political conflicts, resulting in perennial losses of life, as in the Middle East, Africa, and other regions. Then there is the issue of the constantly hazardous and life threatening task of migrants, victims of a globally ravaging neoliberal and imperial process, crossing the Sahara and the Mediterranean sea to reach Europe, with its constructed image of the 'good life' and the 'Eldorado'—constructions which often prove illusory. Both of these are important topics in a genuinely international critical pedagogy. Equally important and pertinent are recent mass struggles such as those in Greece and Spain, involving movements known as the *indignados* and Turkey with respect to the *Gezi Park Revolt*. The general thrust of all these manifestations, each involving learning dimensions and critical educational dimensions, is a strong anti-neoliberal stance.

As might be expected, critical pedagogy has quite a following in these countries. One comes across scholars and activists in Greece who are fully committed to a critical pedagogy, drawing insights from many of the critical scholars discussed earlier. Greek activist scholars, such as Maria Nikolakaki (University of the Peloponnese), and those of a decidedly Marxist bent, such as Panagiotis Sotiris (University of the Aegean), or Kostas Skordoulis (University of Athens), who

contributed to the establishment of the critical education conference, have been active in the field. Critical pedagogy in Greece gains particular resonance in view of the quite recent experience of totalitarianism (1967–1974) and its scars, beyond the current situation of *debtocracy*, which has led to demonstrations in globalised public spaces such as Syntagma Square. The same would apply to Spain, which has witnessed similar events, in the context of the quest for a *Democracia Real YA!* (*Real Democracy Now!*). It boasts centres of critical pedagogy such as CREA at the University of Barcelona, involving Ramon Flecha, Marta Soler, Lidia Puigvert Mallart, Lena de Botton, and the late Jesus Pato Gomes, among others. Spain also hosts a Paulo Freire Institute comprising of critical pedagogues from the Valencia and Seville areas. These include Emilio Lucio, very active in education among social movements and with respect to the participatory budget and Manolo Reyes collective memory project (unearthing repressed memories of the Franco years), Dolores Monferrer, Paqui Borox and Pep Aparicio Guadas. The last three have been responsible for popular education initiatives, of Freirean and critical pedagogical inspiration, within the Valencia area and for the publication of numerous texts in Castilian and Valencian / Catalan some of which being translations of established critical pedagogy texts.

Also in Spain, we need to highlight the role of intellectuals, such as José Gimeno Sacristán (1988), Jurjo Torres Santomé (2001; 2012), Mariano Fernández Enguita, Ángel I. Pérez Gómez (2004), and Julia Varela (2007; 2011), as the engines of the *Movimientos de Renovación Pedagógica* and *da Pedagogia Crítica*. At the very end of General Franco's dictatorship and at the emergence of the current Spanish democratic representative liberal matrix, such groups of organic intellectuals engaged in the production and reproduction of powerful critical analysis, having a huge impact within the educational system. They challenged strong mechanisms of oppression in universities framed by ideological and discursive control mechanisms, such as Opus Dei, which was quite towering during General Franco's regime. These groups of intellectuals were also responsible for promoting some of the most radical and critical thought from the UK, the US, and France.

A good example of this was the *Congreso Internacional de Didáctica*, “*Volver a pensar la educación*,” organized by Jurjo Torres Santomé held in Corunha in 1993, a landmark in critical theory and pedagogy in Spain and in Portugal as well. World-renowned critical theorists and pedagogues as well as Spanish left intellectuals participated in this crucial meeting. Such a group of intellectuals from different autonomic regions of Spain showed an impressive record of publications, working with teachers and public schools, defending public education as well as examining and promoting liberatory educational practices. It is within this context that Spanish critical intellectuals connected with the most important progressive educational publisher in Spain *Ediciones Morata*. One cannot understand accurately the history of the democratization of education in Spain without the massive impact of the titles published by *Morata*. This group of intellectuals together with Jaume Carbonell and many teachers connected with the different *Movimentos de Renovação Pedagógico* (MRPs) would end up promoting the countless educational experiences as well as analysis of social mobilization that were published in the *Journal Cuadernos de Pedagogia* that just celebrated 40 years. These intellectuals organized debates, social forums, general assemblies, challenging the mainstream media the neoliberal and ultra-conservative policies imposed by conservative governments, such as LOMCE (Ley Organica de Melhora da Qualidade Educativa 2013). This group of intellectuals has been on the front line in national massive strikes, challenging the conservative austerity policies imposed both by PSOE and Partido Popular.

In Portugal, profoundly influenced by a wrangle between southern European critical perspectives and US approaches, critical pedagogues tried to conquer a space and time within the complex terrain of educational leadership. The works of Steven Stoer, Antonio Magalhães, Luisa Cortesão, and more recently Paraskeva, are graphic examples of the strengths and limitations of the critical pedagogical project in Portugal, as a semi-peripheral nation. Seminal debates such as *Orgulhosamente Filhos de Rousseau*, led by Stoer, Cortesao and others, as well the heated debates

on *Abordagens Críticas e Pos-Estruturais* and *Marxismo e Educação – Educação Pública em* championed by Paraskeva at the University of Minho have moved critical pedagogy to productive terrain, despite conservative challenges.

Odd as it might be the challenge in Portugal came, not only from dominant groups but also from within the very core of specific progressive intellectuals circles profoundly concerned with the way radical critical theory and pedagogues were occupying a substantive space. The volume, *Marxismo e Educação*, edited by Paraskeva, Ross, and Hursh (2005) was the first comprehensive Marxist/neo Marxist examination of education and ideological production published in Portugal. Paraskeva was also responsible for the translation into Portuguese of countless seminal work of critical theorists and pedagogues that were never translated in Portugal before, namely Michael Apple, Henry Giroux, Donald Macedo, and Peter McLaren. Quite recently *Pedagogia da Autonomia* was published in Portugal as well. In 2001, Paraskeva together with Hypolito and Gandin founded the first open access journal *Curriculo sem Fronteiras* (CsF) a publication that aims at being a forum for discussion on critical and emancipatory education and for advancing the dialogue among the Portuguese-speaking countries. In a CsF manifesto, Paraskeva, Hypolito and Gandin (2001) argued,

contemporary education enters the new millennium immersed in a set of extremely complex challenges, especially if we consider the social and economic asymmetries that are being multiplied by the subtleties of the strategies imposed by the dynamics of capitalism, in which the mechanisms and the policies that constitute the foundation of globalization are diffused. Nevertheless, the overwhelming majority of countries that contribute to the consubstantiation of this social project is largely excluded from the benefits of this hegemonic process. Among these countries – with different levels of inclusion/exclusion – are Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, S. Tomé and Príncipe, and Timor-Leste, expressing together a specific unity in diversity. In spite of their particular identities, underpinned by a common and intertwined past – as the historic will of these peoples in the plastic arts, literature, music, and cinema expresses –, we believe that these distinct realities can constitute a specific political project. This project could allow not only for the construction of a specific set of actions but also for the development of dynamics that, as a whole, can participate in an ample counter-hegemonic political movement, one that represents an opposition to the social policies imposed by the neo-liberal and neo-conservative strategies.

(1)

With respect to critical theory and pedagogy in Portugal, we need also to highlight two other seminal pieces. Michael Apple and Antonio Novoa's *Paulo Freire Política e Pedagogia* and Boaventura de Sousa Santos' *Porque é tão difícil construir uma teoria crítica?* While in the former Apple and Nóvoa (2002) challenge the impact of neoliberal policies and the role of critical pedagogues in challenging such nefarious policies, on the latter, Sousa Santos (1999) questions how and why in a world, with so much to criticize, it has been so difficult to produce a robust critical theory.

Critical pedagogy has also been finding fertile ground in Turkey, where a vibrant left has made its mark in a variety of ways, through manifestations, academic conferences, publications, and through the presence in such centres as Istanbul and Ankara of a thriving leftist book culture, comprising publications in Turkish of texts considered to be critical pedagogy classics. Kalkedon, Dipnot, Notabene, Ayrıntı, Metis, Yordam, Tan, Sol and Utopya feature among these publishing houses, in addition to left wing national newspapers such as *Bir-Gün* and *Sol* which often carry articles focusing on different aspects of critical pedagogy. As a consequence, critical pedagogy is making its mark among university teachers and students, in centres such as the University of

Ankara, Gazi University in Ankara and Boğazici University in Istanbul, some of whom to various communities including the various branches of the leading and left oriented union, Eğitim Sen⁷. This union also promotes critical pedagogy through the many seminars it funds, activities it carries out, and its academic and professional journals. Kemal Inal (Gazi University), Fatma Gök (Boğazici University) and Hasan Aksoy (University of Ankara) are very active in critical pedagogy, with Inal serving as editor of the journal *Elestirel pedagoji* (Critical Pedagogy).

The work of critical pedagogy in many contexts often occurs against a turbulent background characterised by State-perpetrated violence. Still vivid are memories of the 1973 military coup instigated by the CIA in Chile, to ensure the country's transition to Neoliberalism, and the 1977 May Day massacre at Taksim Square Istanbul, which led to a long suspension of this annual inter-ethnic workers' manifestation. A mothers' movement meets persistently every Saturday afternoon at Galatasaray Square in Istanbul to protest the disappearance of loved ones during the 1980 coup, when even leftist editors lost their life. This echoes Latin America struggles, in Chile and in Argentina, where mothers of the disappeared launched the *Madres de Plaza de Mayo* movement.

In 2013, students and academics in Istanbul joined forces in events such as protest marches and the occupation of Gezi Park, in defence of a public space against a neoliberal encroachment and privatization onslaught (Inal 2013; Gezgin, *et al* 2014). It constituted a defence against a form of 'primitive accumulation.' Critical pedagogy is carried out here in the context of opposition to the current Turkish regime that embraces old Islamic, anti-secularist values alongside large scale US based Neoliberal capitalism. Enacting critical pedagogy in these circumstances often results in facing a police backlash with alleged use of pepper spray, pressured water, plastic bullets and beatings from the police. Tear gas is frequently used, as participants at a recent critical education conference in Ankara (May 2013) found out, when they joined a protest in Ankara against the purported Government induced explosions, on Saturday May 11 2013 in Reyhanli, next to the Syrian border, which left 51 people dead. In an era paced by a state of exception (Agamben 2005) that creates the conditions not for a strong state, but for a violent state, critical pedagogues are expected, in these scenarios, to 'walk the talk,' at the risk of being bruised and battered, or possibly suffering a worse fate at the hands of the state's repressive forces.

Again, Turkish struggles are reminiscent of political conditions and struggles in the Caribbean, Mexico, Central America, and South America, where there has existed a long history of popular uprisings and struggles against repressive forces of the military and the impunity of the state. Within these contexts, emancipatory political actions, literacy campaigns, and popular education efforts have drawn inspiration from the historical writings of Simon Bolívar, José Martí, Enrique Dussel, Pablo Neruda, José Carlos Mariátegui, Emiliano Zapata, Aimé Césaire, Marcus Garvey, and many others who wrestled with questions of politics, justice, human rights, cultural identity, and societal inequalities, particularly with respect to the southern region's colonial past.

Critical pedagogy, however, is also about hope and possibility (see Giroux 1981). Just recently and as an example, Joao Paraskeva hosted Captain Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. At the age of 37, Captain Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho masterminded and implemented a revolution—that would end up being called the 'carnation revolution'—which overthrew the Portuguese dictatorship modeled after Mussolini and that lasted 49 years. Captain Carvalho became a world renowned political figure who not only put an end to the Portuguese totalitarian dictatorship, but who was also instrumental in helping liberate the last bastion of colonialism in Africa with the independence of Angola, Cape Verde, Guinéa-Bissau, Mozambique, and São Tomé and Príncipe. When confronted after his keynote address about his courage to do the revolution, Captain Carvalho straightforwardly quoted Amílcar Cabral and said 'the struggle for freedom, equality and social justice is never an act of courage. It is an act of intellectual honesty.' This is what is asked of critical education theorists and pedagogues. This is precisely what many are doing internationally, in the name of emancipatory education and democratic life.

In light of oppression in the world, however, critical pedagogy must also be understood as of 'leaving'—a leaving behind of the destructive, degrading, and disabling educational practices that rob us of our humanity.

Critical Pedagogy Reader as an International Project

Unfortunately, this brief discussion can only skim the surface of the international foundations and the movements that are evolving within the arena of critical pedagogy. There are areas of the globe (particularly non-English-speaking regions) where writings on critical pedagogy are just emerging or, perhaps, not yet fully reinvented or translated with respect to the cultural sensibilities and historical contributions of, for example, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Thai, Filipino, or Indonesian intellectuals. Yet, potential contributors to an international critical pedagogy, from past and present, are legion. It is for this reason that formal spaces are needed, in which authors from different parts of the globe can divulge and analyze, as well as excavate and resurrect experiences and writings that can provide grist for the mill of a truly and genuinely international critical pedagogy. Constructing this reader, to complement existing, predominantly North American-oriented, readers in critical pedagogy was, indeed, our intent here, in order to provide an initial, albeit modest, contribution to the task of appreciating and acknowledging critical pedagogy as a genuinely international phenomenon.

There is no doubt that critical pedagogy has become an established school of thought in the field of education. Donaldo Macedo (2006) and Antonia Darder (2012; 2002; 1991), among others, have framed critical pedagogy within the matrix of the political economy of cultural theory and politics, bringing culture, language, and power to the core of the analysis and the struggle against a Western politics of cultural eugenics, where the worldviews of subaltern populations are expected to give way to the alleged superiority of Western ideals and the consuming dictates of advanced capitalism. Given the current *quasi* totalitarian cult that dominates public education, framed in assimilative pedagogies, standards, high stakes tests, and the myth that there are only three solutions to the crises of public schools—convert schools into charters, fully privatize them, or close them down—critical pedagogy and educators around the world have become epistemological lightning rods in challenging dominant pedagogical forms.

This dialectic of struggle and possibility is powerfully reflected throughout the articles included in the seven sections that comprise this collection; including discussion of critical pedagogy and the politics of education; globalization, democracy and education; history, knowledge and power; society, politics and curriculum; critical praxis and literacy, critical pedagogy and the classroom; and critical higher education and activism. It is also apparent by the growing number of critical educational scholars and the flourishing of scholarly articles dedicated to the subject. Moreover, the steadily increasing flow of international writings on critical pedagogy that have emerged in just the last decade also substantiate the need for rethinking—philosophically, politically, and pedagogically—the larger radical educational project. All this, again, points to the pressing need for an *International Critical Pedagogy Reader* that can provide an introductory compilation of some of the most salient articles from around the world, in order to fill the current gap in the literature for an accessible international text that can provide depth and breadth to the field, as well as help us to extend, complement and, at times, challenge the discourse of North American-centric formulations of critical pedagogy; in order that we might more accurately unveil how critical educators around the world are addressing similar or different challenges and possibilities.

Nevertheless, we recognize that no one volume can possibly provide a fully comprehensive and unitary snapshot of the ways in which critical pedagogies are being produced, reinvented, and reframed, particularly outside of English-speaking contexts. This volume, then, is but one modest effort to bring to light this burgeoning phenomenon—a phenomenon that may also signal a growing political dissatisfaction around the world with oppressive educational and state

practices, as well as a growing international yearning for greater emancipatory life with and society. Critical Pedagogy, hence, is conceived within this volume as a large pedagogical movement embodying insights from past and present, from different sides of the colonial divide, from South and North, and from individuals and other specific movements.

In the struggle for human liberation, we contend that human beings everywhere express yearning for the freedom of expression and justice, but through their own cultural, historical, and material forms. If we are to embrace a quest for the genuine globalization of human rights and economic democracy, then we must also open ourselves to learn from the cultural and intellectual traditions of those who historically have been afforded too little room, if any at all, to participate at the center of the praxis. Most importantly, this collection does not pretend to comprise an authoritative volume; in that, true to a critical pedagogy, we acknowledge both the multidimensionality and absences that persist in the field. Thus, it is truly impossible to do so, given limitations of knowledge, space, resources, and the unfortunate lack of English translation of important works. Nevertheless, the writings compiled in this book are meant to arouse and whet the intellectual, political, and pedagogical appetite of critical researchers, educators, students, and activists who seek to better understand critical pedagogy as an international political project for liberation.

Notes

1. See *The Critical Pedagogy Reader* (Routledge) edited by Antonia Darder, Marta Baltodano, and Rodolfo D. Torres (2008) for a concise introduction and discussion of the major principles, generally speaking, associated with critical pedagogy.
2. See website <http://freireproject.org/> Accessed 23 September 2014.
3. See Peter Mayo's (2004) *Liberating Praxis* (Praeger) for a well-grounded and in-depth discussion of Paulo Freire's articulation of praxis as a liberating pedagogical phenomenon.
4. See *The Story of Nai Talim: Fifty Years of Education at Sevagram* by Majorie Sykes at: <http://www.swaraj.org/shikshantar/naitalimmarjoriesykes.htm> for a concise discussion of Nai Talim that sought to connect physical work, indigenous craft traditions and formal education.
5. See O'Hanlon, R. (2002) (1985). *Caste Conflict and Ideology: Mathama Jotirao Phule and Low Caste Protest in Nineteenth Century Western India* (Revised ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for an extensive discussion of Jotirao Phule and Savitri Phule contributions.
6. We are indebted to Professor Angel Marzo from the University of Barcelona for this clarification.
7. Not to be confused with the AKP-government oriented Eğitim bir Sen.

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"The brilliance of the *International Critical Pedagogy Reader* is its audacity to de-colonize the taken for granted 'Center-Periphery' exporting model of critical pedagogy—creating, instead, a powerful place for subaltern voices heard. This comprehensive, illuminating, and timely edited book re-inserts the centrality of both the 'critical' coherence, remaining loyal to principles of liberation and emancipation. The *International Critical Pedagogy Reader* makes it powerfully clear that critical pedagogy is a way of life that does not require courage to be critical but simply demands coherence, humility, and ethics."

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—**Juliet Perumal**, Faculty of Education, University of Johannesburg, South Africa

"This reader is destined to become a pivotal book in critical pedagogy. It will reshape the field by extending critical pedagogy's geography and issues. A must-read for educators committed to decolonizing pedagogy."

—**Carmel Borg**, Faculty of Education, University of Malta, Malta

"Paulo Freire has said that critical pedagogy can transform the world for the benefit of humanity. This volume shows the extent to which critical pedagogy has itself now become a global phenomenon and the impact it has made on the theory and practice of radical education around the world."

—**Mike Neary**, University of Lincoln, United Kingdom

Carefully curated to highlight research from more than twenty countries, the *International Critical Pedagogy Reader* introduces the ways in which the educational phenomenon that is critical pedagogy is being reinvented and reframed around the world. A collection of essays from both historical and contemporary thinkers coupled with original essays introduce this school of thought and approach it from a wide variety of cultural, social, and political perspectives. Academics from South America, Europe, Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and North America describe critical pedagogy's political, ideological, and intellectual foundations, tracing its international evolution and unveiling how key scholars address similar educational challenges in diverse national contexts. Each section links theory to critical classroom practices and includes a list of sources for further reading to expand upon the selections offered in this volume. A robust collection, this reader is a crucial text for teaching and understanding critical pedagogy on a truly international level.

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