This book aims to deepen the discussion about the goals envisioned, the roles undertaken and constraints found in higher education institutions both in Europe and Latin America in current times. This book addresses the controversies and challenges regarding globalising ideologies, policies, and practices at place. It questions leading concepts, epistemological axioms and sweeping transnational policies which are shaking core principles, traditional routines and local commitments of European and Latin American higher education institutions. It focuses on the motivations and consequences of transnational networking in academic life, on the impacts of the Bologna process, both its vision and implementation in higher education in Europe and its exportation to Latin America. This book also examines the definitions, translations and implications of concepts such as equality and difference, equity and solidarity, governance and citizenship and their significance in organizational, geographical and global contexts of contemporary higher education both in Europe and Latin America.
European and Latin American Higher Education
Between Mirrors
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INTRODUCTION

Higher education systems all over the world have gone through deep transformation and extraordinary expansion, mainly since the second half of the 20th century. One of the main causes of such change was the greater relevance awarded to scientific research, and the acknowledgement of the importance of a qualified workforce for the production of wealth in society, on which both the welfare state and civic security depend. Competition, which has become more and more globalized, requires a continuous stream of knowledge that can immediately be put into practice, making the cycle of technological innovation increasingly shorter in almost every area of production, and society at large.

Higher education, with its focus on social change as well as economic and social problems, has pushed the boundaries higher and created higher expectations, and has, therefore, gained recognition as one of the strategic priorities for national and global development. It is now widely accepted that economic and social progress requires a more highly educated population and that socio-economic growth (and as a result, the labor market) needs alternative training models that develop flexibility, agility and facilitate fast integration in a system of production in permanent change (Santiago, Tremblay, Basri & Arnal, 2008).

These new expectations for pedagogical training clash with rigid, and in some cases, undifferentiated, higher education models and patterns. Higher education programs have become shorter and more intensive, which has brought changes to curriculum design, both in what is considered “knowledge” and in its application to actual social problems, as related to the development of leadership capacities and multiple skilled training, as well as greater adaptability to ICT and the communication environment. The impact of such new methodologies on higher education institutions has been perceived and questioned in various ways in different countries, due to their own particular placement in the world, their education systems, their educational hierarchies, and their capacity to respond to pressure, to mobilize their resources, and to implement relevant policies. However, these new expectations also reveal common features and problems, and facilitate a global agenda.

In Europe, major transformations in higher education took place during the first decade of the 21st century and resulted mainly from the implementation of the so-called “Bologna Process.” The main goal was to establish a European higher education paradigm that allowed an increase in international competitiveness, attractiveness, and similarity among other European higher education systems. For
that purpose, several objectives were settled: (a) the creation of easily readable and comparable degree systems; (b) the establishment of a transferable system of credits; (c) the promotion of professor, researcher and student mobility; and, (d) the creation of quality assurance systems in accordance with European recommendations and guidelines. Evaluation of results of the Bologna Process has largely depended upon the evaluator’s perspective. At the political level, it is easy to conclude that the Bologna Process has been successful, since it has allowed greater integration and harmonization between the various education systems of the 46 participating countries. However, at the institutional and local level, the response is less enthusiastic, due to the great variety of contexts involved. On the one hand, the goal of greater competitiveness and the ability to attract students to European universities still needs a closer look, from an empirical point of view. On the other hand, various studies have been critical of the procedures adopted, and how they play out in different national contexts. The Educational Research Journal, for example, titles its special issue on the Bologna Process as Help or Hindrance to the Development of European Higher Education? (vol. 9(1), 2010), and the editors put forward the following question: “How much can we actually talk about a European higher education?” (Ursin, Zamorski, Stiwne, Teelken, Whilborg, 2010: 30).

In addition, the final stage of the Bologna Process in the early 2010s coincided with the debt crises in southern European countries (Greece, Portugal, Spain, Italy), as well as Ireland, United Kingdom, Slovakia, Netherlands, and even France. This crisis has led to austerity policies that have had a tremendous impact on higher education policies. In the United Kingdom, the Cameron conservative government raised university tuition to a very high level, making it increasingly difficult for lower-income groups to attend. In Greece, the external interference of international creditors represented by a troika – European Commission, European Central Bank and International Monetary Fund – forced the dismissal of thousands of university professors and researchers, and a contingency budget, that eliminated most of the basic services of the universities. In Portugal and Spain, the radical cuts in university budgets have placed their basic functioning in jeopardy, and has led to unprecedented regression in research and development. The idea of a united and solidary European construct, comprised of different peoples, which was historically rich and culturally diverse, has suffered serious setbacks due to a national selfishness and a domination of the strong over the weak. Europe has become the world laboratory of neoliberal experiment, viewed through an ordoliberal lens, which has resulted in the self-inflicted financial crisis of 2008.

In Latin America, timing was different. It is important to note that this was the first region where neoliberal policies were put in place, after Pinochet’s military coup in Chile in 1973, which overthrew Allende’s legitimate government. Later, in 1980, as a consequence of the external debt crisis in various countries (Argentina, Mexico, Brazil, and other smaller countries of less economic relevance), the World Bank and the IMF intervened under the terms stated in their “letters of intent,” intended to restructure their economies and reduce their fiscal deficit in line with the
traditional orthodoxy of those institutions: currency devaluation, privatization of public companies, removal of customs barriers, and a reduction of public spending in education, health and housing. As far as education was concerned, such policies resulted in the privatization of education services, mainly in higher education, greater decentralization, and changes in assessment and accountability (Arnove, Franz & Torres, 2013; Gazzola & Didriksson, 2008).

Several authors described the end of the 20th century in Latin America as the “lost decades” (see, for example, Didriksson, 2008): a long period of economic stagnation (and, in some cases, contraction) with intense decrease of per capita revenue, increase of social inequality, and a profound reduction of public resources that had previously been intended for universities and other higher education institutions. At the same time, there was an increased privatization of basic and secondary education, students increasingly began visiting other countries to study, higher education in various countries began to attract more foreign students, and, once universities were sold, a proliferation of distance courses. Therefore, it became commonly accepted that the state was inefficient, and the privatization of areas such as education and health, which had previously been considered protected areas, was considered inevitable.

The beginning of the 21st century brought with it important changes to the political and social climate. The election of left-wing and progressive governments in some Latin American countries – most of them connected with social and ethnic movements with large representation – with a long tradition of struggle and resistance against neoliberal policies, gave way to policies that favored redistribution of wealth and a provision of basic needs to vulnerable populations. At the same time, in some countries with robust indigenous communities, those cultures were granted political and social recognition and intercultural policies were developed (see Teodoro, Mendizábal, Lourenço & Villegas, 2013, about Bolivia). Universities, as well as education in general, were awarded more public funding and, in some countries, affirmative action policies were implemented favoring populations who had been historically excluded from higher education (for example, black, indigenous and economically-deprived students). It is meaningful that it is precisely in Latin America, where the first neoliberal experiment was carried out, that the search for alternative policies and the construction of other rationalities were undertaken (see, for example, Alcántara, Llomovatte & Romão, 2013; Sader, 2013), which may bring to an end such dark (and dangerous) times of recent history.

This book, while providing us with different viewpoints on higher education, through various perspectives, both from Latin American and European authors, who often mirror each other, also questions the manifold possibilities in the concepts of “equity” and “social cohesion,” as related to higher education institutions’ everyday life, depending on their communities and frame of reference. Different rationalities and epistemological frameworks, despite respective hybridizations and cross-fertilization, are therefore well represented in the various chapters.

While in the “North” higher education institutions are considered to “have failed to prioritize the instilment of values, attitudes and ethics into the accomplishment
of their objective of knowledge and skill development” (Heuser 2007, p. 294), in the “South” the concept of Buen Vivir is once again gaining popularity in society as well as in academic institutions (Mamani, 2010). However, we dare say, and believe, that a new era of the global university has been conceived and the embryo is growing in its womb, already visible; precisely due to the discordant voices emerging from the core of the “model university” from the North, as well as the assertive voices from the South, which proclaim that there are other possibilities, ones that had always been there but had been silenced by colonialism, and which still linger on in the field of academic knowledge. Therefore, “precisely by understanding that the contemporary university has its being through advancing learning and inquiry in and across the world, it may be possible to identify a space” where “we may talk not so much of the student as a global citizen but rather of the university as a global citizen” (Barnett 2011, p. 105). It is naturally more feasible to introduce radical structural transformation in a context where the colonial-imposed epistemologies exist, rather than in the North, where critical theories have hardly separated from the Eurocentric viewpoint, even though Europe was not the center of world history until the Industrial Revolution (Dussel, 2010).

In fact, the more the neoliberal entrepreneurial type of university becomes established, the more voices, also from the “North”, begin to speak of the limited scope and ability of a hegemonic model to respond to the needs, interests, and expectations of the culture it is intended to serve at the grassroots level; therefore, a claim for radical recovery of the lost path through “a wholesale, structural revolution in the aims and methods, the entire intellectual and institutional character of academic inquiry … so that the basic aim becomes to seek and promote wisdom … the capacity to realize what is of value in life” (Maxwell 2008, p. 2), and which cannot any longer be ignored. The need has been expressed for a holistic approach to world living conditions and the “good life,” that is, buen vivir, by rediscovering the essentials of life. Moreover, in the “North” there is now a growing recognition that “tertiary institutions are perhaps those best suited (both through research and general awareness) to identify social realities and/or trends that require moral action on behalf of governments and citizens” (Heuser 2007, p. 302), and will, therefore, make possible a re-discovery of the university’s role in society. It is not in responding to the interests of the powerful but to the needs of the powerless, not in meeting the requirements of the existing but in finding out the possibilities of the not yet, the “viable unknown” (inédito viável) in Freire’s words (1991), that the university can play a role. It is by “taking responsibility for itself” and, furthermore, also by committing to “the responsibilities that universities owe to each other” (Barnett 2011, pp. 101-103) that the higher education scene can change, and this is exactly the pledge of this book and the RIAIPE3 project behind it.

This is the backdrop of European and Latin American Higher Education Between Mirrors, a book that is divided into three parts: – Part One (Designing Possible Fu-
INTRODUCTION

... which aims to draw upon the current challenges for higher education worldwide and feature “the viable unknown” (in Freire’s words, o inédito viável!). That is, to find some new, inspiring, and visionary “escape routes” in the midst of today’s labyrinth of higher education; Part Two (Mapping Higher Education Area[s]) starts by analyzing the development of knowledge societies and the creation of academic/scientific networks, with a focus in Latin America, and continues with critical reflections on the implementation of the Bologna Process; and, Part Three, (Critical Reflections upon Conceptual Frameworks Currently at Work in the Academy) results from the conceptual analyses carried out within the scope of the Inter-university Framework Program for Equity and Social Cohesion Policies in Higher Education activity planning, a project between Europe and Latin American universities, funded by the EC-ALFA Programme, and coordinated by António Teodoro (Universidade Lusófona de Humanidades e Tecnologias), which set off from within the core of the RIAIPE3 research network.

Chapter One argues that a critique of the higher education curricula should be made within the context of dialogue about globalization. Therefore, its author introduces here the concept of “planetarization,” which departs from Freire’s perspective of popular education on the basis of eco-political and pedagogical principles. According to the author’s argument, the university curriculum should promote a cross-cutting, trans-disciplinary and connective model of knowledge. Furthermore, the main goal of university curricula should broadly be the construction of social justice; of multicultural and cosmopolitan citizenship; and, of radical education and radical democracy in the public universities of Latin America.

Chapter Two examines the social and political significance of the concepts of “equity” and “social cohesion,” by doing a brief genealogy of these concepts and by analyzing their role in the academic and policymaking documents relative to higher education, and ultimately compares them to the concepts of “equality” and “solidarity.” Following this conceptual discussion, the author deals with the state-society relationship, that is, the way in which higher education institutions mediate between policy formulation and policy implementation, and puts forward an alternative paradigm based upon a vision for the future of education, explored mainly by Boaventura de Sousa Santos and bell hooks, amongst others. Chapter Three offers some theoretical perspectives about science and epistemology, beginning with the author’s premise that the last non-colonized territory is the space where cultures are constructed and intermingled. The author proceeds with his reasoning by stating that “there is no general crisis of the paradigm, nor a general crisis of knowledge; however, there is a crisis of a specific paradigm and of a precise epistemology.” Therefore, the author states that the alternative is not to present a paradigm that is counter to the dominant ones, that is, a paradigm of the same nature. Instead, according to the author, the challenge is precisely to claim for space for an alternative symbolic system, which is not new, but rather, has always been there, and was silenced out of legitimacy by colonial powers. Finally, the author concludes by discussing that decolonization today means a process of recognition of various scienc-
es and epistemologies. Chapter Four attempts to round off Part I by bringing up the idea, from previous chapters, that there have been different knowledge-producing frameworks in the world that profit from and resist unequal relations of power. It focuses on the complexity of the multicultural fabric of our societies, cohabiting in a global world. This chapter builds upon the North-South metaphor and contributes to the discussion about the need to take into account different perspectives of what is understood as multicultural and intercultural, as well as their implications for the understanding of identity and citizenship. The author then analyzes the role and various features of language, intercultural communication and intercultural education against the above-mentioned backdrop and the resulting impact.

In order to move forward with Part II, which attempts to describe the state-of-the-art of higher education today both in Latin America and Europe and their reciprocal influences, Chapter Five centers upon the development and significance of a knowledge society and the role of institutional networks for the consolidation and promotion of a dialogic democracy. It focuses on the emergence of academic and scientific networks in the Latin American scenario, which are causing impressive impact and whose development is highly dependable on their political and cultural contexts. Finally, it reports on some of the networks that constitute central nodes in the construction of modern social sciences in the region. Then, both Chapters Six and Seven provide us with comprehensive views of higher education in Europe and critical reflections upon the so-called Bologna Process. Within this framework, Chapter Six aims to outline Bologna in the context of an enlarged process of policy integration in the field of higher education. The author examines how policy discourse emanating from documents may differ from policy implementation, since the latter depends upon the “real” contexts. Moreover, the Bologna Process also brought in a model of education management that is centered on policy evaluation, according to hegemonic criteria, rather than on the role of higher education institutions towards societies, communities, and respective citizens. Chapter Seven maps possible future scenarios and the present dilemmas of European higher education and contributes to the debate about the choices made with which higher education has had to struggle. The author points out that, in massive higher education contexts, shortcomings in the equality of citizens’ access to (and success in) higher education, have been increasing in Europe. Therefore, the author alerts us that, in Europe, where the Bologna Process has already gone into a period of consolidation, it is rather inescapable that citizens maintain continued and permanent vigilance and a critical attitude towards the various discourses, pressures, and dilemmas which higher education must now challenge.

Chapter Eight concludes Part II by bridging the European and Latin American higher education landscapes, while highlighting the possible influence that the Bologna model may have in the near future in Latin American policies, and in this respect, is similar to the leading role that European universities have played in the past. The author points out how, in a global world, Latin American institutions may be inspired, or sometimes pressed, to adopt some of the measures implemented in
Europe and which have proved to be positive; for example, student and teacher mobility; the implementation of mechanisms that increase mutual trust and transparency; and the recognition of degrees and qualifications. Reciprocally, Latin American universities may provide European partners with models of good practices that have also proved to be successful in higher education environments and which may also inspire new undertakings in European universities.

Part III wraps up this book with five chapters whose authors took the commitment to define, analyze and critique concepts which, as a whole, construct a new vision and unveil a new role for higher education; a part of this new role will require a stronger involvement with civil society and an ongoing evaluation of political goals. Along this line of thought, Chapter Nine introduces and develops a new concept, that of “refraction,” built upon the study of historical periodization and which refers to the impact of policies in specific communities of practice. As a matter of fact, the implementation of these policies depends on a “plethora of contextualising, cultural and individual points for mediation, reinterpretation and recontextualisation,” which explains the immense variety of local responses to centralized official recommendations, whether they be at the regional, national, international or global level. By focusing simultaneously on structure and agency, and on various interactions that arise through mediated practice, the idea of “refraction” pushes higher education governance and research to be critically aware of the gap between policy rhetoric and policy hermeneutics; that is, about the dialectics between those who make decisions and those who have to interpret and implement them. Chapter Ten attempts to figure out the unfolding of the equity/equality dilemma by challenging their common use as synonyms and, as a result, exploring the potential of the notion of equity in the education field. To start, the author provides us with a broad definition of what the idea of “equity” implies, and, furthermore, he offers a multidimensional model of this concept. In addition, the author examines the possibilities of this model for higher education, namely for all those involved with the academic community, and how they relate with their outer circles. Then, Chapter Eleven concentrates on the concepts of “government,” “governance,” and “convergence,” as related to higher education institutions in general, with a focus on Latin American universities in particular. This chapter questions the notion of “public education” that is implicit in current models of university governance, and rejects the possibility that the latter can respond to the original goals of the former while giving priority to market demands. The chapter ends by pointing out that the Latin American universities have a tradition based upon social critique, political awareness and extension activities with a focus on socially disadvantaged groups, which the RIAIPE3 project attempts to recapture and invigorate. Chapter Twelve introduces the concept of citizenship education at university level, based upon the development of a critical pedagogy with a transformative stance. It also draws upon the experience of citizenship education at secondary school level. The concept of citizenship is here understood both as political and social from a “critical-democratic perspective” and it postulates that universities should take such a commitment, although this has not been present in
their traditional curriculum. Finally, Chapter 13 deals with the concepts of “equity,” “social cohesion,” and “relevance.” With regard to equity, the authors claim that this term has in a way tended to replace “affirmative action,” and discuss it in relation to university life. As far as social cohesion is concerned, the authors draw our attention to its ambiguity and remain cautious towards its use. With respect to relevance, the authors make a comparison with the concept of pertinence, and continue by presenting different approaches to the idea of relevance. Besides individual analysis of each concept, the chapter provides a view of their implications with reference to higher education institution contexts.

This is what this book has to offer, mainly aiming to inspire all those who work for the right of every citizen to enter the academy, if s/he is prepared to accept the challenges that it entails, and all those who are entitled to make this journey fruitful for the individual, the community and society at large.

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Part I

DESIGNING POSSIBLE FUTURES
Chapter 1

TAKING HEAVEN BY STORM?

A logbook for rethinking conceptual and normative categories in higher education in Latin America

INTRODUCTION

One of the most important themes in the discussion about Latin American university transformation is what kind of curriculum and knowledge-construction should be sustained in the public universities, especially from critical and progressive perspectives.

In this brief text I do not intend to develop a critique of the current state of things, which we have done elsewhere. But remembering that Hegel ironically insinuated that everything real is rational, I want to utilize the thinking of Paulo Freire and the entire tradition of popular education to suggest a few possible routes to a new educative utopia in higher education.

Since these ideas have taking form for a year or so in public conferences in different languages and countries, beginning with a conference in Madrid’s Casa Encendida, I prefer not to remove the spoken-word flavor of many of the statements. Loosened from the corset of written narrative, many of these ideas, intended to incite and to invite, may be read with more pleasure than if they had been aimed at specialists.

1 Inspired in Karl Marx’s statement about the 18th Brumaire of Napoleon Bonaparte, in a letter of April 12, 1871 to his friend and confidant Ludwig Kugelmann.


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Following the Freirian tradition, I dare to propose and develop the following working hypotheses:

First, if we want to revitalize the artful science of pedagogy and renew its curricula and practice in our institutions of higher learning, we must persist with a critique of obscurantism.

Second, this critique should be made in the context of debates about globalization. But first, I want to call your attention to an alternative model to neoliberal globalization that is being advanced in the Paulo Freire Institutes. At the risk of being seen as romantics, we call it ‘planetarization.’

Third, I want to state in no uncertain terms that, without an eco-pedagogical model, ‘planetarization is impossible. In the past, I have referred to the work of Paulo Freire as an enormous, original effort of synthesis and political pedagogical criticism. Nowadays, faced with the crisis of an unsustainable model of development and the consequent ecological destruction of the planet, Freire’s fruitful formulae need to be redefined in terms of eco-political and pedagogical practice. Freire himself, at the down of his life, stated that if he would write Pedagogy of the Oppressed now, will speak about the planet, which is the greatest oppressed entity in the world.

Fourth, it is impossible to carry out the first three proposals without defining them in normative and analytical terms: we must teach to change the world. In other words, what we want is social justice education.

Fifth, we support the construction of a multicultural and cosmopolitan citizenship in the institutional context of our public universities and we take this goal very seriously, not merely as a convenient battle flag in our struggle to democratize society.

Sixth, we must fight to build radical education and radical democracy in the public universities of Latin America. To do this, we must first find a way to facilitate tolerant, democratic dialogue within university institutions, if we want it to exist.

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4 I must certainly acknowledge that by a different, but completely coincidental, line to the Freirian, recent works by Boaventura de Sousa Santos are very important. See, for example, his Un discurs sobre les ciències. Introducció a una ciencia postmoderna. Valencia, Denes-Edicions del CReC, 2003.


6 For example, this is exactly the mantra of the model of teacher education we have at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), Social Justice Education. I have developed these ideas in another place. See my contribution in Mark Coté, Richard J.F. Day and Greig de Peuter (editors) Utopian Pedagogy: Radical Experiments Against Neoliberal Globalization. Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2007.
outside the academy.  

Finally, none of this will happen if the universities do not make an effort to promote a transversal, trans-disciplinary and connective model of knowledge.

The following sections of this essay will develop and justify these proposals in some detail.

TOWARD A CRITIQUE OF OBSCURANTISM

Thirty-five years ago, Freire stated that “...the day that the forces of power and domination that govern science and technology discover a path to kill the active, intentional character of consciousness, that which makes consciousness able to perceive itself, we will no longer be able to speak of liberation. But because it is impossible to annihilate the creative, recreative and comprehensive powers of consciousness, what do the dominators do? They mythologize reality. As there is no reality other than the reality of consciousness, when they mythologize it they hinder the process of transforming reality.”

My definition of obscurantism does not necessarily relate to the idea of obscurantism in the Middle Ages. As the medievalist Jacques Le Goff explains, it was in the Middle Ages that the seed of modernity was sown: “Those who speak of obscurantism have understood nothing. This is a false idea, the legacy of the Century of Enlightenment and of the romantics. The modern era was born in the medieval. The combat for secularity in the XIX century contributed to the legitimation of the idea that the profoundly religious Middle Ages were obscurantist. The truth is that the Middle Ages were an era of faith, when people were passionately pursuing rationality. To them, we owe the State, the nation, the city, the university, individual rights, women’s liberation, consciousness, the organization of war, the mill, the machine, the compass, keeping time, the book, the concept of purgatory, confession, the fork, bed sheets, and even the French Revolution.”

The obscurantism to which I am referring is the current version that Freire discloses in his criticism of the dominant powers: that which stems from the manipulation of the communication media, the construction of state administrations and public policies as instruments of domination rather than services dedicated to the common good, and the willful manipulation of the powers of science and technology to dominate, oppress, exploit and subjugate the population. It is the cynicism...

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7 I hope it is clear that I refer in this text to the public universities because I believe that they are marked by what political science defines as ‘public trust,’ but this in no way obviates private universities in Latin America, especially those that are serious and were not constituted as models of private accumulation of capital and/or ideological models of particular stripe, from assuming similar responsibilities.


of deliberately lying to the public as a way of obtaining private benefits. It is the constant use of disinformation to deform reality, in the best style of medieval times – perhaps comparable to the logic of the Crusaders for reconquering Jerusalem – setting the stage for a latter day obscurantist like George W. Bush to wage war on Iraq to avoid the phantom proliferation of “weapons of mass destruction.”

The obscurantism of science, where positivism as the dominant scientific logic “has been transformed from pure scientism to a strategy of technical control based on methodological individualism that converges harmoniously with the logic of the market and of the states that seek to adapt to this logic.”

The antidote to the obscurantism of power is the double key of conscientização. First, an epistemology of curiosity, as Freire proposed, constantly asking questions and being dissatisfied with the answers, finding nothing that cannot be questioned, employing the candor and simplicity of the child’s gaze to inspect even the most intricate relations and experiences. Second, the epistemology of suspicion, according to Freire and the great French phenomenologist Paul Ricoeur, the suspicion that all human interaction, all human experience, to the extent that it involves power relations, involves relations of domination and therefore must be submitted to systematic criticism. While this is currently applied to the interaction between individual persons (children and their parents, children and their teachers, associations within families), there is an even greater need for it to be applied to the interactions between people and institutions. Thus, it is valid to affirm that this epistemological model of suspicion reveals how the logic of capital and especially the logic of the rights of private property tend to prevail, in practice and the law, over the logic and the rights of people.

TOWARD AN ALTERNATIVE GLOBALIZATION: PLANETARIZATION

In Paulo Freire Institutes around the world, we have been speaking and writing about an alternative to globalization that we call ‘planetarization.’ The foundations of this project are profoundly imbricated with the story of Paulo Freire, the itinerant “pilgrim of the obvious,” or “connective boy,” as he described himself. He evinced an intense joie de vivre through the connections he made with other people, knowing that the relationships in which we are involved help us to live in and understand the world we inhabit as much as those we study and understand through words. In the context of the fight against neoliberal globalization, the answer is in promoting a respectful ‘planetarization’ worthy of the men and women of this planet, based on

11 I leave this Freirian term in Portuguese because it has no direct equivalent in English. It refers to the pedagogical process of making people conscious of their condition in the world by removing the obscurantism of what Freire called ‘mythological thinking’ with which they justify their oppression.
an ethics of work, communication and solidarity, but also an ethics of production not founded on greed, avarice or usury.

I want to cite Moacir Gadotti, one of the most lucid of Freire’s interpreters and his principal biographer, so that he can illustrate this theme for us: “To open the school to the world, as Paulo Freire wanted, is one of the conditions for its survival with dignity in this beginning of the millennium. The planet is the new scholastic space, because the earth has been transformed into everyone’s domicile. The new educational paradigm is founded on the planetary condition of human existence. ‘Planetarity’ is a new category on which the earth paradigm is founded. In other words, a utopic vision of the earth as a living organism in evolution where human beings are organized in a single community, sharing the same dwelling place with other beings and other things.”

Three decades ago, the Argentinean anthropologist Rodolfo Kush reminded us that the concept of man is defined in the Quechua language as “earth that walks.” I cannot imagine a better definition of the men and women of today.

TOWARD AN ECOPEDAGOGY

Earth pedagogy, as Moacir Gadotti entitled one of his unique books, should be the pedagogy that inspires all pedagogies, ecopedagogy. As Gadotti puts it: “The classic paradigms, based on a predatory industrial, anthropocentric, developer’s mentality, are exhausted and no longer useful to explain the present moment or to respond to the necessities of the future. We need another paradigm, founded on a sustainable vision of the planet Earth. Globalism is essentially unsustainable. Its first allegiance is to the necessities of capital and human necessities are an afterthought. What is more, many of the human needs to which it answers are only ‘human’ because they were cultivated by and serve capitalist ends.”

Ecopedagogy invites us to think about ecology and the image of the social movements that work for the preservation of the environment, pure air, uncontaminated water tables, the forest lungs of the planet, birds, animals, insects, plants that preceded us as planetary beings and many of which we depend on for subsistence and to cure our maladies. Ecopedagogy also projects the image of the pillaging of our natural resources, especially those that are not renewable and must be prevented at all cost, as Brazilian theologian Leonardo Boff reminds us.

I ask myself, how many times do we caress a plant, watch a butterfly with surprise and delight or stop to smell the fragrance of a flower while in the whirlpool of daily activity? I remember a couple of years ago I was with Moacir Gadotti on an estate in Valencia densely populated by vigorous trees. He approached a tree,

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hugged it and said, “This is my tree in Valencia!” While some might regard this overtly romantic gesture with disdain, it is actually very important. Watching Gadotti embrace his tree, I asked myself how many trees I had adopted in my life, how many had I planted? If we adopt and plant more trees, we would certainly feel more related to the nature that surrounds us. The Spanish environmentalist and carpenter Ignacio Abella defines himself as someone who has “learned to walk in wonder.” Only those who are rendered wondrous by nature can learn to respect and appreciate it and become its passionate protectors, because it is the guardian of our future as well as the futures of our children and grandchildren.

TOWARD AN EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

Education for social justice constitutes the antithesis of the model of neoliberal globalization, both as a theoretical paradigm to inspire the training of teachers and the practice of pedagogy16 and as a source for curriculum and instruction of apprentice teachers and the formulation of educational policy. How can social justice education be used to neutralize neoliberal globalization? In the limited space of this chapter, I will indicate some ways:17

a) social justice education explores, analyzes and critiques the inequalities between people, b) by studying the resources available to communities, families, students, social activists and social movements, social justice education questions the possessive individualism proposed by globalization as well as the sustainable basis of placing the logic of avarice and cupidity above the social factors. c) Social justice education can empower people by making the kind of knowledge that belongs to the general public, e.g. the discussion of open codification when constructing computer programs and the notion of knowledge as a public domain, available to them. d) Social justice education confronts the notion of the merchandising of education by reinventing the notion of education for all citizens, not just for consumers who can afford it. The corollary to this is our realization that, while citizens have rights and obligations, consumers have similar rights but just one obligation: to consume.

TOWARD A MULTICULTURAL AND COSMOPOLITAN CITIZENSHIP

The question of citizenship is not only a question of status and roles, which one acquires by birth or adoption. True citizenship includes a number of civic virtues,
among which tolerance and a solidary spirit stand out. True multicultural citizenship means “to cultivate the spirit of solidarity by understanding how different we are as well as how similar, thus developing solidarity with those who still suffer. Clearly, we cannot expect this spirit to be generated spontaneously among fortified groups, each trying to be different from the other.”

Planetary citizenship is cosmopolitan, and here we encounter a Kantian dilemma: how is it possible to create a democracy in a country that is part of an non-democratic international system and, at the same time, how is it possible to establish an international democratic system when many of its national entities are anything but democratic?

The struggle for a tolerant and solidary multicultural citizenship at the level of international systems is another of the objectives of transverse radicalism in the fight for human freedom.

TOWARD THE CONSTRUCTION OF RADICAL EDUCATION AND RADICAL DEMOCRACY

The proposals of the great pedagogues have always been utopian. Education is essentially an exercise in optimism. One seeks to explore the limits of real possibilities for social transformation, searching for a human sociability to inspire the progressive construction of subjects, families, communities, nations and an international system where reason overcomes force, peace overcomes violence and war, justice overcomes injustice, domination and oppression. Clearly, this model proposes the ever more necessary culture of planetary sustainability over that of a dissipating modernity that consciously and unconsciously exploits natural resources.

It is also clear that, ever since the Illuminists, education proposed and, to a lesser degree, accomplished its central objectives in the constitution of citizenship and democracy. Today, however, educators have a new responsibility and that is to become critics of the culture. Thus, education must become a public sphere of deliberation, a theatre for public deliberation uncontrolled by either state or market. This is a duty, a commitment and a promise that utopian education must undertake in its promotion of radical democracy.

TOWARD A TRANSVERSAL, TRANS-DISCIPLINARY AND
CONNECTIVE MODEL OF KNOWLEDGE

As Moacir Gadotti writes, “The recognition of Paulo Freire outside the field of pedagogy demonstrates that his thinking is both transversal and trans-disciplinary. Pedagogy is, by nature, a transversal science. From his earliest writing, Freire considered schools much more important than the four walls that support them. I believe that ‘Culture Circles’ were an expression of an innovative pedagogy that was not reduced to the simplistic notion of [giving] classes. In the current ‘knowledge society’ this is much clearer since what is now ‘scholastic space’ is often larger than a physical school. The new training spaces include radio, television, videos, churches, union halls, businesses, NGOs, family circles, and the Internet, stretching the notion of both school and classroom. Education has become communal, virtual, multicultural and ecological, and the school widens to include the city and the planet. Today we think in terms of networks, we research through networks, we work in networks without hierarchies. The notion of a downward spiraling wisdom to ignorance hierarchy is very dear to the capitalist school. On the contrary, Paulo Freire insisted on connectivity, on the collective administration of social knowledge, which can be socialized in ascending and overlapping concentric circles. It is not just about recognizing the ‘Educative City’ of Edgar Faure, but of visualizing the planet as a permanent school.  

EPILOGUE

How do I end this proposal faced with the magnitude of problems, the complexity of facts, the immense responsibilities the present moment demands of us as we confront the rampant and crescent injustices of neoliberal globalization? Maybe this is time to say that each of us has to draw his or her own conclusions. We must seek out spaces and develop a praxis that allows us to advance the cause that true pedagogues of different cultural and religious persuasions have sought since the beginning of the world and that Paulo Freire expressed so well in the concluding words of Pedagogy of the Oppressed: to build a world where it is easier to love.  

This is why Freire postulated the possible dream of an educational utopia in a proposal that captured the revolutionary heart of the 1960s; a utopic, effervescent and optimistic decade of struggles for freedom, struggles against colonialism and classism, struggles for racial, sexual and ethnic emancipation, a decade when

22 “Si nada queda de estas páginas, esperamos que por lo menos algo permanezca: nuestra confianza en el pueblo. Nuestra confianza en los hombres y en la creación de un mundo en el que sea menos difícil amar.” Paul Freire, Pedagogía del Oprimido, Montevideo, Editorial Tierra Nueva, 1969, page 175.
people placed renewed value on physical intimacy, by hugging each other and making love.

From this tradition only one proposal still makes sense, coined in a phrase that Antonio Gramsci proposed to us educators decades ago: pessimism of the intelligence, optimism of the will.

I believe this defines the task before us. But to close, I want to offer some verses as the poetic conclusion to a narrative excursion. A few years ago in Florence I encountered the poetry of Michelangelo. The following poem begins with a verse of his that I have translated freely\(^\text{23}\):

\begin{quote}
FOR MICHELANGELO

There goes truth – poor, naked and alone  
Appreciated only by the humble  
She has just one eye, pure and brilliant  
But she is born in a thousand places wherever she dies.

Faced with triviality  
licentiousness  
cynicism  
truth, justice and liberty arise  
heroes and victims of a civilization  
that creates its means of sustenance  
and its destruction, bit by bit

Pity the truth  
abandoned at every instant  
by the lies of power  
recuperated by popular movements in their struggle for justice

Pity justice  
defenseless in its nakedness  
blind in its search for equanimity  
crushed at every instant  
that freedom does not protect

Pity freedom  
The bird loses it  
When its tree is  
cut clandestinely
\end{quote}

\(^{23}\) This poem has been published with other poems of mine in Various, Nueva Poesia Iberoamericana. Buenos Aires, Ediciones Nuevo Ser, 2008.
CARLOS ALBERTO TORRES

men and women shed tears
over severed hands and broken hope
Pity freedom, justice and truth
If we have no utopia to defend them
Utopia, flag for a planetary future
utopias moisten our days
with every drop
ey they caress our faces
and remind us we are still alive
in the light of the sun

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TAKING HEAVEN BY STORM?


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Chapter 2

EQUALITY, DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP AND SOLIDARITY

Is there a role for higher education in the framing of an alternative paradigm?¹

INTRODUCTION

I will begin this paper by citing a statement by Eugene Rosa, a sociologist specialized in the field of environmental studies, when he says:

“While it seems fully appropriate to adopt the definition of a policymaking agency to guide risk management, it is curious that it would pass academic scrutiny as an analytic definition” (Rosa, 2008: 103, footnote 3).

Academic scrutiny is characterized by what Amartya Sen (2011) called, in his conference in Faculty of Economics of the University of Coimbra, on 14 March 2011, “criticality”, that is, and I quote: “the importance of critically confronting our own values, in addition to scrutinizing the values that others propagate. This criticality is needed not merely for examining the reasoning behind what disgusts us, but also for questioning what we come to live with and accept (often implicitly, because they seem like a part of the “normal” world which we are used to). An inclination to be uncritically contented with the world as it is can be, I would argue, seriously unhelpful for a theory of justice as well as the pursuit of justice in practice.”

In this paper, reflecting on conceptual developments in the field of education I ask the following questions:
– Why equity and not equality?
– Why social cohesion and not solidarity?
– And what is the role of higher education in fostering democratic citizenship?

¹ This paper is based on a conference given at the ALFA research project “Inter-University Framework Program for Equity and Social Cohesion Policies in Higher Education”, coordinated by António Teodoro at the Universidade Lusófona de Humanidades e Tecnologias, Lisbon, 22 March.

António Teodoro & Manuela Guilherme (Eds.), European And Latin American Higher Education Between Mirrors, 23–39. © 2014 Sense Publishers. All rights reserved.
Trying to answer these questions I felt the need to do a brief genealogy of these concepts and their role in the academic and policymaking documents pertaining to higher education. Because concepts are important in perceiving and changing the world, the role of academic work and education is to engage in a dialogue in the public sphere that enables people and citizens to change the way they see the societies they live in.

THE EMERGENCE OF THE CONCEPTS OF EQUITY AND SOCIAL COHESION IN HIGHER EDUCATION POLICIES

OECD promoted its first major review and conference on the issue of equity in 1961, at Kungalv in Sweden (Halsey, 1993), although the main preoccupation was with selection and entry at secondary schools. With the growth of higher education enrolment and the debate on inequality to access, the OECD Education Committee launched the Thematic Review of Tertiary Education in October 2003, in response to the OECD Education Chief Executives’ proposal of tertiary education as one of the five mid-term priorities for OECD work on education”, at their February 2003 meeting in Dublin. A meeting of National Representatives in April 2004 defined the guidelines for participation in the Review and the analytical work started in January 2005, with country thematic reviews. The thematic reviews were primarily concerned with equality of opportunity, while recognizing that relative equality of outcomes was often used as an indicator of equality of opportunity.

Tertiary education was also the focus of the meeting of OECD Education Ministers held in Athens in June 2006 with the theme Higher Education – Quality, Equity and Efficiency. Ministers noted that “Higher Education plays a vital role in driving economic growth and social cohesion” (Santiago et al., 2008).

In the study conducted by Simon Field et al. for the OECD in 2007, with the suggestive title, No More Failures. Ten Steps to Equity in Education, ten policy recommendations were drafted to promote equity in education. For the purposes of their study, equity in education included two dimensions, fairness and inclusion (Field et. al, 2007).

Fairness implies that personal and social circumstances such as gender, socio-economic status or ethnic origin should not be an obstacle to educational success.

Inclusion implies a minimum standard of education for all.

As for the European Union, the Sorbonne Declaration in 1998, the Bologna Declaration in 1999 and the Lisbon Declaration in 2000 set forward European worries about the global market in higher education. In Paris, the Declaration was primarily economically motivated, although symbolic references to European culture were not missing. The economic motive and agenda was even more open at the European Union – gathering in Lisbon in March 2000. Given the perceived successes of the United States and of Australia in producing substantial ‘export value’ in the domain of higher education, the European Union decided that European inferiority on the global educational market could no longer be tolerated (Lorenz, 2006).
The Lisbon European Summit in March 2000 set a new strategic goal for the Union for the new decade: “to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustaining economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion” (Room et al., 2005:11).

As Chris Lorenz states: “Given the idea that the global economy is a ‘knowledge economy’, the European Union inevitably came to the conclusion that European higher education had to become the most dynamic and most competitive in the world too. Therefore, the European Union Ministers of Education translated this intention in 2001 into an ambitious agenda for the educational domain. Predictably the ‘Lisbon Process’ has as yet only resulted in serious disappointments, because in 2005 it was already crystal clear to even the greatest EU-policy optimists that its objectives would not be met – even approximately. The remedy for this ‘delay’ is of course sought in speeding up the ‘Lisbon Process’ in all EU member states and in shifting the responsibility for the ‘process’ to the EU member states” (2006:80).

And, concurring with the conclusions of Chris Lorenz on his analysis of the higher education policies in the European Union and the knowledge society, “all the European declarations and plans considered so far basically contain an economic view of education, by considering higher education primarily in its function for the European economy and in terms of a marketable commodity” (2006:80).

The World Conference on Higher Education (WCHE) in 1998 gave a new thrust to UNESCO’s higher education programme at a time when a need for change and adjustment to a new paradigm in higher education was strongly felt by decision makers. Its World Declaration on Higher Education for the 21st Century provided an international framework for action both at systems and institutional level. A particular focus was placed on broadening access and strengthening higher education as a key factor of development; enhancing quality, relevance and efficiency through closer links to society and the world of work; securing adequate funding resources, both public and private, and fostering international cooperation and partnerships. One spin-off of the World Conference was the UNESCO Forum on Higher Education, Research and Knowledge, an open platform forum encouraging research and intellectual debate. Within these general orientations and delivery mechanisms, research on trends in higher education remains at the heart of UNESCO’s preoccupations, along with the question of higher education and social cohesion (Burnett, 2007: 287-288).

More recently, the mainstreaming of the social cohesion thematic and higher education is well illustrated in the special issue of Prospects, UNESCO’s journal of comparative education in 2007, entirely dedicated to the thematic of higher education and social cohesion.

In 2000, The World Bank in its report “Higher Education in Developing Countries: Peril and Promise” recognized that rate-of-return analysis was out, and there was the need for the promotion of the public interest of higher education. In the absence of more and better higher education opportunities, developing countries could expect few benefits from a knowledge-based global economy. The report Peril
and Promise argued that developing countries needed to prioritize higher education more than would be indicated by rate-of-return analyses alone (Post et al., 2004).

In the World Bank Group report published in 2002, Constructing Knowledge Societies: New challenges for Tertiary Education. Directions in Development, it was stated that:

“The norms, values, attitudes and ethics that tertiary institutions impart to students are the foundation of the social capital necessary for constructing healthy civil societies and cohesive cultures – the very bedrock of good governance and democratic political systems…Through the transmission of democratic values and cultural norms, tertiary education contributes to the promotion of civic behaviours, nation building and social cohesion”. (2002: 23, 31).

EQUITY OR EQUALITY?

Luciano Benadusi reviewed the many conceptions of equity in the sociology of education, underlying the normative conceptions of equity and their implications for choosing indicators for analysis (2001:25). He identified five approaches:

– Functionalism: where the concept of equity is based on Rawlsian liberal equality of opportunity.
– Cultural reproduction theory: the concept of equity implies the existence of no natural social, cultural and educational inequalities among groups.
– Cultural relativism: equity means the equality and reciprocal independence among the different cultures.
– Cultural pluralism: the concept of equity implies the respect for cultural differences.
– Methodological individualism: the concept of equity is based also on Rawlsian liberal equality of opportunity or free choice (a formal equality of opportunity).
– International comparative research on equality of opportunity: equity means that no educational inequalities exist among groups.

One of the most sophisticated discussions of the dilemma between equity and equality in education can be found in the excellent article published in 2010 by Espinoza. In this article Óscar Espinoza proposes a complex equality-equity model (Espinoza, 2010: 134-139).

As Espinoza argues (2010: 129-130), the “equity” concept is associated with fairness or justice in the provision of education or other benefits and it takes individual circumstances into consideration, while “equality” usually connotes sameness in treatment by asserting the fundamental or natural equality of all persons. While “equality” involves only a quantitative assessment, “equity” involves both a quantitative assessment and a subjective moral or ethical judgment that might bypass the letter of the law in the interest of the spirit of the law. Equity assessments are more problematic because people differ in the meaning that they attach to the concepts
of fairness and justice and because knowledge of equity-related cause-and-effect relationships is often limited. The conception of “equity” which is commonly associated with human capital theory is based on utilitarian considerations; it demands fair competition but tolerates and, indeed, can require unequal results.

As Jean-Pierre Dupuy argues, equity presupposes no envy, that is, a simple relation between the desiring subject and the desired object with no third party involved, where there is the assumption of the incommensurability of preferences and where everyone feels better in her place than on others’ places (2009: 201). On the other hand, the concept of “equality” associated with the democratic ideal of social justice demands equality of results.

It is ironic that the current neo-conservative sweep in education fosters the resurgence of “sameness” to form the ethos of equity programs and policies. The concept of substantive equality and systemic discrimination is being replaced here by the more limited “one-size-fits-all” focus of equal opportunity.

According to Espinoza, equality pertains to five features of the educational process:

- Financial, social, and cultural resources.
- Equality of access – the probability of children from different social groupings getting into the school system, or some particular level or portion of it.
- Equality of survival – the probability of children from various social groups staying in the school system to some defined level, usually the end of a complete cycle (primary, secondary, higher).
- Equality of output – the probability that children from various social groupings will learn the same things to the same levels at a defined point in the schooling system.
- Equality of outcome – the probability that children from various social groupings will live relatively similar lives subsequent to and as a result of schooling (have equal incomes, jobs of roughly the same status, equal access to sites of political power, etc.).

These features can be translated in three different perspectives:

- equality of opportunity;
- equality for all;
- or, equality on average across social groups.

As for equity, it also can be analysed on the five features of the educational process (resources; access; survival; output; outcome) and structured as three different perspectives:

- Equity for equal needs
- Equity for equal potential (abilities)
- Equity for equal achievement
This sophisticated proposal for conciliating equity and equality fails to grasp the political assumptions underlying the concepts of equity and equality, that constitute different notions of citizenship, entitlements and social and political rights. Even Amartya Sen’s theory of capabilities, that propose a broad notion of equality and is critical of liberalism, seems to focus most on procedural aspects rather than substantive equality of capability in the political space (Sen, 1992).

In this paper I argue and invoke that substantial and active equality is more relevant for democratic citizenship. Democratic politics concerns the presupposition of equality, not the distribution of equality. Therefore, equality must be put at the beginning of every political process.

And, following here the proposals of Jacques Rancière, while passive equality is the creation, preservation, or protection of equality by governmental institutions, active equality is based on empowerment and composed of three basic components: disensus, the act of declassification and equality of intelligence (May, 2008: 339-44).

As Margaret Somers rightly states (Somers, 2008: 131), citing Hannah Arendt, the alternative to naturalism of both nationalism and liberalism requires more than merely the institutions of laws and states, and even more than the fact of citizenship itself. It requires collective political action toward the goal of human justice.

“Equality, in contrast to all that is involved in mere existence, is not given to us, but is the result of human organization insofar as it is guided by the principle of justice. We are not born equal; we become equal as member of a group on the strength of our decision to guarantee ourselves mutually equal rights. Our political life rests on the assumption that we can produce equality through organization, because man act in and change and build a common world, together with his equals and only with his equals” (Arendt, 1979:301).

SOCIAL COHESION AND SOCIAL CAPITAL OR SOLIDARITY AMONG STRANGERS?

In studying the impact of education on society there exist two basic analytic models (OECD, 2006). For the first model, an absolute model, education reinforces the technical skills and positive attitudes in individuals. In this model we are confronted with a positive sum game, where everybody wins, and more education means an increase in expected global benefits. In the second model, education by changing the place of the individual in the social hierarchy generates benefits for some at the expense of others. This is a zero-sum game, related to the most confirmed invoked devaluation of educational degrees.

In the studies of education and social cohesion, there is a research agenda that, based on nomological methods, tries to assert the role and relationship between education, social cohesion and equity or equality.

Two representative studies will be briefly analysed in this paper: Andy Green et al. Education, Equality and Social Cohesion (2006) and François Dubet et al., Les écoles et leur societé (2010).
Andy Green et al., using aggregate statistics (correlations and regression analyses) to compare countries, identified how education impacts on different aspects of social cohesion (2006). The model proposed assumed that education may impact in two different ways: the first, indirectly, through the way it distributes skills, and hence incomes, opportunity and status among adult populations; and the second, through how it socializes students through the formation of values and identities.

Andy Green et al.’s findings in relation to the first pathway – the distributional model – appear to be quite clear-cut. While there are no apparent relationships between aggregate levels of education and social cohesion indicators across countries, there are quite strong and significant correlations between measures of educational equality, income equality and a wide range of social cohesion outcomes, including general and institutional trust, crime, civil liberties and political liberties. More education-equal countries tend to be more income equal and rate higher on a range of social cohesion measures. Furthermore, educational equality appears to have a positive relationship with social cohesion outcomes independently of income distribution.

According to their initial hypothesis, the other main route by which education could impact on social cohesion is through the socialization process which includes both values and identity formation. It is our values and identities which ultimately condition how we regard and interact with other individuals and groups, determining with whom we associate, how we co-operate and whom we decide to trust. Identity is, in a sense, the most crucial since our received and adopted identities determine the affective and ideological boundaries of our worlds and thus the locus and ambit of our trust and co-operation. Tolerance appears as a multifaceted and highly situational variable at the country level and subject to rapid changes over time. The authors found little evidence that educational inequality impacts on levels of tolerance, although plausible theoretical arguments suggest that it might, but there is evidence for a number of countries, particularly from the studies of education and racism, that levels of education can affect attitudes and behaviours to do with tolerance. However, the effects, as observed in the individual-level data, are highly context-bound, varying in strength and mechanisms from country to country and between social groups. Relations between aggregate levels of education and tolerance across countries are far from clear, probably because tolerance is strongly affected by other country contexts, including levels and types of immigration, and the dominant political discourses surrounding these.

In an attempt to create a typology of social cohesion regimes, Andy Green et al. (2009) defined four contemporary regimes of social cohesion:

a) Liberal Regime of Social Cohesion: the core values underpinning social cohesion in liberal regimes include opportunity and rewards based on merit; individual freedom and choice; active and “tolerant” civil society (some of the countries included are the USA, Great Britain, Australia and New Zealand).

b) Social Market Regime of Social Cohesion: in this regime, social cohesion is underpinned by strong institutional mechanisms concerted by the state. There is
a stakeholder model of the firm (with industrial democracy), highly regulated labour markets with solidaristic wage bargaining based on industrial unionism, social partnership between encompassing intermediate organisations, and sectoral agreements on pay and conditions. Also, there are lower wage differentials with generous welfare provision for unemployed and a corporatist welfare system, based on employment contributions, less universalistic and more divisive than social democratic model. Some of the countries characterized by this social cohesion regime include Germany, France, Belgium, Austria, Netherlands, Italy and Spain.

c) Social Democratic Regime of Social Cohesion: as in social market regime, social cohesion is underpinned by the state and powerful intermediate organisations. There is a centralised wage bargaining that leads to low pay differentials and promotes labour market solidarity; active labour market policies that support losers from industrial re-structuring and universalist and generous welfare state promoting solidarity. Furthermore, egalitarian education systems promote beliefs in equality and adult education promote ideal of community. Some of the countries included are Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Norway.

Finally, they propose a fourth regime.

d) Confucian Regime of Social Cohesion: included are Japan and South Korea. This regime is characterised by low crime rates and low inequality levels, high hierarchy, low Welfare protection and weak civil societies.

Andy Green et al. also reflect on the possibility of defining other social cohesion regimes as, for example, Southern Europe or Post-Communist regimes.

François Dubet et al. define social cohesion as “the values, the culture and the ensemble of attitudes that move individuals to cooperate in a solidarian way” (Dubet, Duru-Bellat and Vérétout, 2010: 50). These authors operationalized social cohesion in three macrovariables: Social Capital (density of social life and civil society); Confidence (group of attitudes and beliefs about confidence in others and institutions: army; police; justice; Parliament; trade unions; public administration); Tolerance (2010:51-53).

Dubet, Duru-Bellat and Vérétout distinguish social cohesion from social integration. Social integration is the systemic configuration of a society, its social structure, measured by inequality and the dynamism of the labour market. And the results obtained by the authors clearly show that social cohesion and social integration may not coincide. Crossing the statistical results for social cohesion and social integration they propose the following types of societies:
**Figure 1. Typology of societies by crossing social integration and social cohesion**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Integration</th>
<th>Liberal Democratic Confidence</th>
<th>Social-democrat</th>
<th>Corporatist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cohesion</td>
<td>High Dynamism/Strong Inequalities</td>
<td>Low Dynamism/Strong Inequalities</td>
<td>Low Dynamism/Weak Inequalities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Australia, Canada, United States</td>
<td>Sweden, Denmark, Norway</td>
<td>Netherlands, Finland, Switzerland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>Democratic Confidence</td>
<td>Strong confidence/Strong social capital</td>
<td>Strong confidence/Strong social capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social-Democrat</td>
<td>Democratic Confidence</td>
<td>Strong confidence/Strong social capital</td>
<td>Strong confidence/Weak social capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>United Kingdom, Ireland</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>Germany, Austria, Belgium, France, Luxembourg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Japan, South Korea</td>
<td>Italy, Greece, Portugal, Poland, Hungary, Slovakia</td>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcomers</td>
<td>Weak confidence/Weak social capital</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Dubet, Duru-Bellat and Vérétout (2010:64).

Dubet, Duru-Bellat and Vérétout (2010:175), analysing the factors that impact on social cohesion, concluded that 67% of the variance in social cohesion was explained by the dynamics of the labour market, Gross Domestic Product level and income...
inequalities. Only 47% of social cohesion was explained by the characteristics of educational systems.

Alongside the discussion of social cohesion, some authors argue for the analysis of social cohesion within higher education or, specifically, academic social cohesion (Heuser, 2007). Heuser proposes a synthesis model that highlights the main dimensions in academic social cohesion within higher education (Figure 2).

*Figure 2 Academic social cohesion within higher education*

This model presupposes a virtuous cycle between human capital, social capital and social virtue and the common good, and the author doesn’t discuss the institutional, political and interactional dimensions concurring for the result of academic social cohesion.

As these methods rely heavily on individual methodologism and aggregative statistics, we can ask what is the value of these findings and typologies for the analysis of collective dynamics and if they can evaluate adequately the role of higher education in promoting social cohesion.

According to Thomas Theo (2005:25), it was Habermas (1994) who proposed, in the context of the relationship between knowledge and interest and on the background of an epistemological foundation for a theory of society, three kinds of sciences: empirical-analytic sciences, historical-hermeneutic sciences, and critically
oriented sciences whereby each type of science can be characterized by a specific underlying cognitive interest that guides its pursuit of knowledge. Empirical-analytical sciences are motivated by the production of nomological knowledge in order to achieve technical control over processes or objects. Historical-hermeneutic sciences are motivated by the practical interest of interpretation and understanding of meanings. Critical theory has an emancipatory interest and applies self-reflection as a basic principle of investigation.

The best critique of the concept of social capital as a public good and its underlying assumptions was put forward by Margaret Somers (2005, 2008). Somers argues that the equation “social + capital” equals the evacuation of the social. Social capital refers to the economic value produced by social relationships. According to Somers, Robert Putnam, one of the most prominent scholars on the field of social capital, never comes to grips with the fact that the theory of social capital extends market principles to those non-contractual arenas of social life where utilitarian ethics will do nothing less than corrode the very social ties and practices he so celebrates. To achieve the practices and institutions of trust, communication, and reciprocity convened in the concept of social capital, requires abandoning its constitutive postulates of localism, acquisition, individualism, the market model of efficiency, the marketization of the social, and the radical autonomy from power and politics (Somers, 2008: 235).

The contributions of social capital to the political project of marketization of the social has four dimensions (Somers, 2008: 242):

– social capital provides a nonstate solution to those externalities the market is either unable or unwilling to solve. This is the function of saving capitalism from its own excesses.
– social capital shifts expectations of citizenship from rights claims to obligations and duties.
– social capital provides a nonstate alternative to the entitlement-driven welfare state and the excesses of democratic rights claims. This is the reconstitution of citizenship through the cultural sphere of moral regulation, self-help, and personal responsibility.
– finally, social capital provides a spatial substitute to civil society in the concept of “community” – the nonstate site in which relationships of social capital are confined.

Following Margaret Somers, as an alternative to the concept of social cohesion and social capital, I propose the notions of civil society and the recovery of the concept of solidarity, and using Bin Shu (2010) propositions, to operationalize the concept of solidarity among strangers (with no need for a specious concept of community, even if only imagined communities, as analysed by Benedict Anderson (1991)).

Solidarity, since Émile Durkheim, has been one of the central concepts of social theory (Hechter, 2001). Solidarity answers the fundamental question “What holds society together?” Due to its significance, scholars have discussed it in a whole
range of terms (integration, cohesion, solidarity, bonds, etc.) at various analytical levels (social groups, organization, community, social movements, nation-state, etc.) even in different disciplines (Shu, 2010).

Methodologically, as proposed by Bin Shu, defining solidarity only by its observable representations can avoid the debate over its normative features. Beyond the approaches that focus on values; or, on moral-linguistic codes that integrate conflicts into the bases of civil society (Jeffrey Alexander); or, on ritual conducts; or on political elites and the state’s manipulation of rituals and identities, Bin Shu proposes a theoretical framework that addresses the critical issues raised by the previous approaches, that is, what can account for the solidarity among strangers in a modern society with tremendous heterogeneity and power hierarchy. This framework must be empirical and explanatory, and Bin Shu advances a model based on the interaction ritual theory and the theory of publics.

Randall Collin’s theory of “interaction rituals” is an upgraded version of the ritual-conduct approach. At the core of interaction ritual is emotion. In explaining solidarity, the Interaction Ritual theory argues that variation in several critical ingredients will lead to collective effervescence, from which solidarity among the participants is born. These ingredients include 1) group assembly or bodily co-presence; 2) boundaries to outsiders or identification of who is taking a part; 3) participants’ focus on a common object and communicates this focus with other participants; 4) shared mood among participants. (Collins, 2004: 48).

If extended to the Solidarity Among Strangers, solidarity at macro-level, the theory might encounter the difficulties in linking different levels of analysis. How is the solidarity on the ground transformed into a large scale one among a large loosely connected and differentiated population? How do the macro structures and processes influence the micro-level interaction rituals? Collins answers these questions by indicating the “chains” between situations and interaction rituals, i.e. that social actors move among different situations and spread the symbols and emotions. This point is no doubt true but unspecific.

To liberate the interaction ritual theory explanatory power, Shu argues that the theory of publics based on networks and encounters, can supplement it at some critical points. Inspired by Habermas’ “public sphere” and social network theory, Shu argues that people from different networks encounter in publics, experiencing a process of “decoupling” themselves from the previous networks. Consequently, previous identities are suspended, and people tend to be engaged in ritualistic behaviors. Therefore, the encounter is open to new cognitive patterns, communication styles, and new identities.

From its inception, the empirical studies of publics are devoted to the informal and emergent networks and spheres in civil society. Following this trend, Shu pays close attention to how the state-society relationship shapes the boundary of the emergent public and how this macro-level political structure and its situational variation influences the interaction rituals within the public. Therefore, the theory of publics is a useful supplement for Interaction Ritual Theory. The combination of the
two theories can generate a more convincing theoretical framework that specifies the mechanisms linking the micro to the macro and relations to culture. Shu lays out three major theoretical mechanisms:

a) State-society relationship and publics (macro-to-micro).

State-society relationship shapes the boundary of the emergent public by enabling and constraining movement of information to and participants between the existing publics and the emergent public in the wake of the disaster or other incidents. This enabling and constraining could be the result of either the state’s intentional action or the power structure between the state and civil society. The result of open boundary is more converging networks and information, which lead to a space for interaction rituals to proliferate and compete with each other. The closed boundary will lead to reduction of interaction rituals.

b) Interaction rituals and public’s influence (micro-to-micro)

In addition, there is a less obvious aspect of the emergent public influencing interaction rituals by direct influencing their ingredients; thus, it is a micro-to-micro mechanism. An open emergent public will lead to more converging networks on the site and therefore more *bodily co-presence*. The more and quicker participants cognitively switch from their previous networks positions, the more likely an *identification* is established among them. Also, this decoupling will lead to fewer identities, and thus the participants’ *focus of attention* will be less distracted from institutions and structures outside the public. All these lead to a higher level of collective effervescence and then solidarity on local level. Negative on the two aspects, i.e. closed or restricted boundary and less decoupling and switching will lead to lower level solidarity.

c) Emotional feedback loop and formal rituals (micro-to-macro)

The emotional energy accumulated in the interaction rituals in the emergent publics and existing publics converge. Open boundaries enable this flow, while restricted boundaries impede it. The emotional energy flow eventually is solidified in large-scale formal rituals.

AN ALTERNATIVE PARADIGM: EDUCATION AS FREEDOM

The roots of an alternative paradigm in higher education and the contribution of higher education for creating a democratic citizenship lie in the notion of education as freedom as proposed in the book edited by Noel Anderson and Haroon Kharem

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(2009). And also in the book by the African American writer bell hooks: *Teaching to transgress. Education as the practice of freedom.*

And for higher education to be a practice of freedom, universities must be thought as public goods. The notion here of public implies four questions, as rightly put by Craig Calhoun (2006): (1) where does the money come from? (2) who governs? (3) who benefits? and (4) how is knowledge produced and circulated?

No scholar better than Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2010) proposed an alternative analysis to the role of the University in the XXI century. Boaventura identified three crises facing the university at the end of the twentieth century. First, the crisis of hegemony was the result of contradictions between the traditional functions of the university and those that had come to be attributed to it throughout the twentieth century. The second crisis was a crisis of legitimacy, provoked by the fact that the university ceased to be a consensual institution in view of the contradiction between the hierarchization of specialized knowledge through restrictions of access and credentialing of competencies, on the one hand, and the social and political demands for a democratized university and equal opportunity for the children of the working class, on the other. Finally, the institutional crisis was the result of the contradiction between the demand for autonomy in the definition of the university’s values and objectives and the growing pressure to hold it to the same criteria of efficiency, productivity, and social responsibility that private enterprises face.

According to him, the mercantilization of the public university resulted in the monopolization of reformist agendas and proposals by the institutional crisis. The public university’s loss of priority in the State’s public policies as a result of the general loss of priority of social policies (education, health, social security) was induced by the model of economic development known as neoliberalism or neoliberal globalization.

The response, Boaventura proposes, must be a counter-hegemonic globalization of the university. Counter-hegemonic globalization of the university-as-public-good means that the national reforms of the public university must reflect a country project centred on policy choices that consider the country’s insertion in increasingly transnational contexts of knowledge production and distribution. This country project has to be the result of a broad political and social pact consisting of different sectoral pacts, among them an educational pact in the terms of which the public university is conceived of as a collective good. The reform must be focused on responding positively to the social demands for the radical democratizing of the university, putting an end to the history of exclusion of social groups and their knowledges for which the university has been responsible for a long time, starting long before the current phase of capitalist globalization. From now on, the national and transnational scales of the reform interpenetrate. Without global articulation, a national solution is impossible.

Also, Boaventura proposes that University must reclaim legitimacy through 4 processes:
- **Access**

In the area of access, the greatest frustration of the past two decades was that the goal of democratic access was not attained. The University must account for the access of marginalized groups and minorities.

- **Extension**

The area of extension is going to have a very special meaning in the near future, according to Boaventura de Sousa Santos. At a moment when global capitalism intends to functionalize the university and, in fact, transform it into a vast extension agency at its service an emancipatory reform of the public university must confer a new centrality to the activities of extension and conceive of them as an alternative to global capitalism, attributing to the universities an active participation in the construction of social cohesion, in the deepening of the democracy, in the struggle against social exclusion and environmental degradation, in the defence of cultural diversity.

- **Action-research**

Action-research and the ecology of knowledges are areas of university legitimacy that transcend extension since they act both at the level of extension and at the level of research and training.

- **Ecology of knowledges**

The ecology of knowledges is, for Boaventura de Sousa Santos, a more advanced form of action-research. It implies an epistemological revolution in the ways research and training has been conventionally carried out at the university. The ecology of knowledges is a kind of counter-extension or extension in reverse, that is from outside to inside the university. It consists of the promotion of dialogues between scientific and humanistic knowledge produced by the university, on the one side, and the lay or popular knowledges that circulate in society produced by common people, both in urban and rural settings, originating in Western and non-Western cultures (indigenous, African, Eastern, etc.), on the other.

Boaventura also proposes a new institutionalism for the University based on: network, where the idea is that of a national network of public universities upon which a global network can be developed; internal and external democratizing, in which the new institutionalism must work toward the deepening of the university’s internal and external democracy; participative evaluation; and, finally, the new institutionalism entails a new system of evaluation that includes each of the universities and the university network as a whole.

An alternative paradigm must be based on a dialogic approach to education (Fle-
chá, 2011), constructing critical fora for exchanging experiences, proposing new concepts, challenging established ideas and, through access policies, pedagogical activities, curricula content and policy oriented recommendations contribute to the construction of a common world, based on critical inquiry, freedom, solidarity and democratic citizenship.

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