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### **Звернення П. Макларена та П. Яндрича до читачів часопису «Філософія освіти»<sup>1</sup>**

У нашій статті ми хотіли б звернути увагу на можливості інформаційних технологій для перетворення світу, в якому домінування капіталізму як світової системи призводить до зниження рівня життя, масивного руйнування навколишнього середовища і т.п. Сьогодні дехто вважає, що перехід до демократії, гуманного суспільства можливий шляхом спонтанних виступів та децентралізації влади тощо, як це було, наприклад, на площі Тахрір у Каїрі, Афінах на площі Синтагма, на Майдані у Києві та в інших містах і країнах. У таких випадках інформаційні технології розглядаються в якості потужних засобів досягнення мети. Поряд з тим з'явилася і поширилась дивна суміш вояччини і філософії Нової Доби, яку часто називають каліфорнійською ідеологією. Це — сучасний дігитальний апарат, який є відверто капіталістичним як за своїм походженням, так і за своїм призначенням.

Критична революційна педагогіка доводить, що використання інформаційних технологій є лишень димовою завісою для більш глибоких структурних диспропорцій у суспільстві, оскільки в цьому контексті самі інформаційні технології некритично піднесені та вбудовані у його структури та є фактично продовженням влади дисбалансу і гегемонії. Ми відкидаємо як технологічний детермінізм, так і утопічну віру в технології. Натомість прагнемо до критичного використання інформаційних технологій на користь людства. Виходячи з ідей марксизму-гуманізму<sup>2</sup>, ми розглядаємо освіту як

1 Адаптований переклад з англійської І. Предборської.

2 Основні ідеї марксизму-гуманізму викладені П. Маклареном в інтерв'ю, даному нашому часопису (див.: «Філософія освіти», 2010. — № 1–2 (9). — С. 57–58), та статті І. Предборської (див.: Філософія освіти», 2009. — № 1–2 (8). С. 243).

чинник становлення людини. І в цьому контексті інформаційні технології набувають гуманістичності, оскільки сприятимуть розкриттю потенціалу кожного індивіда для критичного визволення. З таких позицій революційна суб'єктивність розуміється як така, що іманентна самій структурі капіталу, яку вона прагне революціонізувати. Критична педагогіка спрямована на підтримку пригноблених з метою перетворення реальних, об'єктивних умов їх життя задля невідчуженої гуманості у вільно асоційованій праці.

Наша філософія освіти розглядає інформаційно-комунікаційні технології як один з освітніх засобів в реалізації більш широкого проекту визволення людства від існуючих вад суспільства. З огляду на це ми підтримуємо боротьбу народу України та демократичних сил Росії проти неосталінської ідеології В. Путіна і царського панславізму. Майдан став важливою подією. Він показав силу мас і вразливість авторитарної державної влади, не дивлячись на використання нею свого репресивного апарату і підтримку імперіалістичної Росії. Сподіваємося, що за допомоги діалогу у суспільстві можна досягти широкого консенсусу щодо вирішення системної кризи в Україні та досягнення миру.

УДК 304

**Peter McLAREN, Petar JANDRIĆ**

## **CRITICAL REVOLUTIONARY PEDAGOGY IN AND FOR THE AGE OF THE NETWORK<sup>1</sup>**

*This conversation is an abbreviated version of the article “Critical revolutionary pedagogy is made by walking — in a world where many worlds coexist” published in Policy Futures in Education (McLaren & Jandrić, 2014). The conversation is preceded with a dedicated address to Ukrainian readers, where Peter McLaren and Petar Jandrić place dire struggles of Ukrainian people into the broader context of struggle against capitalism and express their solidarity and support. The first part of the conversation explores global changes in the structure of production, juxtaposes the mass society shaped by one-way media such as television with the network society shaped by bi-directional communication powered by the Internet, and links those changes to critical pedagogy. The second part of the conversation explores the main features of the emerging digital cultures, identifies underlying values and ideologies, and links them to contemporary youth movements and the changing role of the state. Finally, the third part*

<sup>1</sup> The extended version of this conversation is available at: McLaren, P. & Jandrić, P. (2014). Critical revolutionary pedagogy is made by walking — in a world where many worlds coexist. *Policy Futures in Education*, 12(6), 805–831.

We give our special thanks to Christine Sinclair for her invaluable insights and criticisms on earlier versions of this conversation

*of the conversation looks into the relationships between information and power, explores algorithmic regulation through technological innovation, and concludes with reinventing potentials for Freire's revolutionary love in the age of the digital.*

**Keywords:** Peter McLaren, Petar Jandrić, critical revolutionary pedagogy, digital culture, network society, information, technological innovation, youth movements, communication, power.

### **Introduction**

Peter McLaren is Distinguished Professor in Critical Studies at the College of Educational Studies, Chapman University, Emeritus Professor of Urban Education at the University of California, Los Angeles, Emeritus Professor of Educational Leadership at Miami University of Ohio, and Honorary Director of the Center for Critical Studies in Education at Northeast Normal University in China, where he also holds the position of Chair Professor. He has published forty-five books and hundreds of scholarly articles and chapters that have been translated into more than twenty languages, and his name has slowly but surely become almost synonymous with the contemporary project of critical education. Peter McLaren's academic work is blended with political activism. As he lectures all around the world and actively participates in various political struggles, Peter McLaren actively lives theory and practice of critical revolutionary pedagogy.

In this article, Peter McLaren discusses his ideas about the relationships between critical education and information and communication technologies with Petar Jandrić. Petar Jandrić is an educator, researcher and activist. He has authored three books and various scholarly articles, book chapters and popular articles. Petar Jandrić's work has been published in Croatian, English and Serbian. His current research interests are situated at the post-disciplinary intersections between technologies, pedagogies and society, and his ongoing projects are oriented towards collaborative research and editing. Petar Jandrić worked at the Croatian Academic and Research Network, the University of Edinburgh, Glasgow School of Art and the University of East London. Currently, he works as Senior Lecturer at the Polytechnic of Zagreb.

### **Address to Ukrainian readers**

In a world where the dominance of capitalism as a global system is taken for granted as a necessary but unfortunate reality, where information technologies are uncritically celebrated without reference to ideologies built into their structure, where the ratio of capital to income continues to expand at a disproportionate rate at the expense of labor, where economic growth in the developing world is shrinking as the scope of expanded reproduction through productive investment sputters forward like a cartoon automobile, where lack of wage

growth in nearly all sectors of the economy, decades of economic austerity, declining living standards, and massive environmental destruction are decimating populations that occupy vast swaths of the planet, where the earned assets of the working-class continue to be pillaged by the capitalist class through the privatizing of industries and through the redistribution of value from labor to capital by means of corporate bailouts by the government, it is clear to many that we need to move from anti-capitalist sentiment to anti-capitalist action, to a restorative praxis. We believe education, placed in appropriate relation to information technologies, has a crucial role to play in this challenge.

There exists today either an unfortunate resignation about not finding an alternative to capitalism and accommodating ourselves to a search for making capitalism less inhospitable to the working-class, or else the alternative to capitalism is left undefined, as a type of negative sentiment against capitalism. Hudis (2015) is correct when he writes:

*An alternative to capitalism is thus approached much as the neo-Platonists viewed the godhead — it can only be defined negatively, in terms of what it is not, since any effort to conceptualize its positive content is beyond the reach of mere mortals. This is a rather questionable approach, since all societies, real or imagined, are products of human activity. So why should it be beyond the ability of humanity to spell out more specifically the content of a possible post-capitalist society?*

Because capitalism is all about value production, what connects products of labor and people appears to be natural when, in fact, it is decidedly artificial — that is, it has to do with a historically specific social relation of labor within capitalism.

The pressing question McLaren wishes to raise is: What is the form of society — and here we are referring both to form and content — needed to replace capitalism? Socialist and communist alternatives to capitalism over the past two centuries were — even by their own admission — never able to abolish abstract labor, class domination and the law of value (Hudis, 2015). While there exists a great deal of debates surrounding the betrayal of democracy and the necessity of transitioning from existing liberal representational systems to socialist alternatives, very little debate among the left is occurring in terms of what the social relations of production might look like in such alternative societies.

Many of us agree that we have at least a general idea as to what the transitional forms of society should look like — spontaneous, decentralized councils and forms of self-organization that are non-hierarchical, etc., those which emerged from the bowels of the struggle in Cairo's Tahrir Square, Athens' Syntagma Square, Kiev's Maidan, Turkey's Gezi Park, Wall Street's Occupy Movement, etc. More often than not, information technologies are viewed as powerful means to these ends. However, born and raised by a strange mix of the military and New Age philosophies — often called the Californian Ideology (Barbrook

and Cameron, 1996) — contemporary digital machinery is deeply capitalist in its making and operation. Peter McLaren clearly rejects crude technological determinism and seeks hope in critical usage of information technologies. He also rejects the utopian faith in technologies, and seeks a middle route for their critical deployment in the service of the humanity. For McLaren, technologies are simultaneously symptoms and causes, chicken and eggs — in order to transcend that vicious circle, he looks beyond technologies and more fundamentally into the works of Marx and Marxist thinkers.

For McLaren's work in critical pedagogy, what is important now are debates about how we can move to eliminate the dual aspect of labor (concrete and abstract labor) by moving from socially average labor time (the actual amount of time socially necessary to create a product) to actual labor time (concrete acts of labor performed by freely associated individuals), from indirect social labor to direct social labor. The discourse of transformation from concrete to abstract labor by information technologies is a mere smokescreen for deeper structural inequalities — in this context, computers are mere extensions of power imbalance and hegemony created and perpetuated by human beings. As Hudis (2015) notes, it is imperative that we find ways of replacing the dictatorship of abstract time with time that contains spaces for human development since this can serve as the basis for a new kind of labor — directly social labor — which will heal the split between abstract and concrete labor. Only then can the substance of value — abstract labor — be eliminated as well as the form of appearance of value — exchange value. In other words, McLaren takes a Marxist-humanist position that we need to find ways to abolish the conditions of value production.

Some of the answers may be found not only by examining European social movements or by examining the history of Western capitalist development, but by examining social relations within autonomous indigenous communities in Latin America and elsewhere. Some of the answers are technological, while others are clearly beyond technologies. Which is one reason why McLaren spends so much time in Latin America. McLaren believes that critical pedagogy can contribute to such a task. Regrettably, critical pedagogy continues to be burdened by the scars of its compliance with the neoliberal academy and where merely tinkering with capitalism underwrites the *ne plus ultra* act of defiance of the critical pedagogue. Especially in a world in which capitalism remains synonymous with technological progress and democracy, while the struggles for democracy effectively mean democracy for the capitalist class alone.

McLaren's work is developed from a Marxist-Humanist trajectory, and he notes that most attacks on Marx come from a dismissal of Marx's work as an example of economic reductionism or teleological theorizing, claiming that the writings of Marx prefigure the historical inevitability of the dictatorship of the proletariat or that all alienation will cease as soon as factories collectivize.

While some critical educators give ground for the reproach of being against Marxism, this attitude is due more to an incomplete understanding of Marx than of boasting a greater sociological understanding than the old bearded devil himself. These critics frequently make their claims while ignoring Marx's own writings and avoiding works that have already been written by Marxists themselves who have already addressed these issues and put them to rest.

McLaren sees education in the context of cultivating the process of becoming more fully human and asserting that socialism is the only viable alternative for achieving such a goal. In the transition to socialism, capitalist information technologies may become deeply human — as they have the potentials to enable each individual for critical emancipation. What is so crucially important about McLaren's perspective is that he articulates a humanism that opens up rather than closes down the corpus of writings by Marx. For example, unlike many post-Marxists, he does not reject the ontological category of the subject itself. He perceives revolutionary subjectivity to be immanent in the very structure of capital that it aims to revolutionize. Secondly, even though he realizes that there may never be a fully resolute form of the social, he remains undaunted in his strategic priority of engaging in a protracted class struggle. Furthermore, he does not reject the idea that society can be considered an immanent totality, and that there are immanent tendencies to capitalist development which necessitates a particular form of revolutionary subjectivity that privileges the working-class. Also, he rejects crude readings of Marx's views to technologies — usually derived from various mis-interpretations of his famous quote: “the hand mill gives you the feudal lord. The steam mill gives you the modern capitalist” (Marx, 1955) — and opens spaces for nuanced readings of their role in the digital society. McLaren does not retreat from the idea that history has a subject and that the proletariat has a special relationship to progressive politics.

Left liberals stop short in advocating for the destruction of capitalism and instead call for the restoration of the primacy of labor over capital, workers' self-management, direct democracy, social welfare initiatives, management/labor alliances, housing cooperatives for the poor as an antidote to gentrification, effective investment programs, disinvestment, corporate responsibility, an end to the oligopolistic price-fixing of multinational corporations, etc. While these approaches are a good thing in themselves, they lack a broader vision that incorporates the necessity of moving beyond value production itself. In the age of digital cultures, such holistic vision is vital for achieving fundamental change. McLaren does not reject left liberal practices such as these so much as he puts them into a dialectical perspective. Since dialectics is about mediation and not the juxtaposition of binary oppositions, they see left liberal efforts at reform important, but limited when read against Marx's revolutionary call to transcend value production itself by building a socialist future. In other words, it is not a

question of ‘either reform or revolution’ and ‘either technologies or primitivism’ but rather ‘both reform and revolution’ and ‘both technologies and humanity’.

McLaren recognizes that since Marxism does not examine historical realities irrespective of their specific contexts, then Marx’s works cannot be fixed in place and time or set in stone; in other words, Marxist theory serves as a means of bringing to light revolutionizing possibilities and potentialities from ever-shifting technologies, social realities and geopolitical contingencies. Marx did not supercede philosophy in favor of economic or political theory. To understand the relative expansion of capital in recurrently reshaping of the globe as a series of geospacial investments and disinvestments requires that we understand the laws of tendency of capitalist production and the hegemonizing influence of technologies, education and work itself. But it also demands that we acquire a philosophy of praxis. We cannot transcend capitalism without first understanding its anatomy, its history, its technology, its evolutionary capacities. And understanding is a decidedly dialectical process, teasing out the internal relations of everyday life and the totality of social relations that inform it. Critical pedagogy is a conduit to the universal on the part of the oppressed who work from their particular subjective formations and localities of struggle to transform the real, objective conditions of people’s lives in the service of a non-alienated humanity engaged in freely associated labor.

As far as the struggle in Ukraine is concerned, we consider the uprising in the Maidan an important event in that it revealed the strength of the masses and the vulnerability of authoritarian state power, even a state power that exercised its repressive state apparatus to the fullest (considering the amount of people who were killed in the protests) and that was supported by imperialist Russia that transferred to the Ukraine government billions of dollars in loans. In fact, the uprising in the Maidan stirred such anxiety in Putin that he feared that Russians might follow with a similar uprising in the streets of Moscow. However, this popular movement was not led by a working-class possessing a sufficient theoretical-political perspective that opposes all forms of capitalism; clearly, social and anti-capitalist dimensions were missing from the uprising (Anderson, 2014). There were also problems associated with affiliating with the European Union and a lack of perspective about what EU and international lending institutions would demand in return for their multibillion dollar loan package to Ukraine.

We support the struggle of the people of Ukraine and democratic forces within Russia who reject Putin’s neo-Stalinist ideology and Tsarist pan-Slavism. But we caution against the fascist dimensions that were — and are — clearly mobilizing within the Ukraine. A promising sign occurred at the March 2015 World Social Forum held in Tunis, in which activists from Kyiv and Donbas as well as deputies from the European Parliament and representatives of left parties and

social movements from around the world, discussed the situation in Ukraine. We were encouraged to see representatives of the left who had participated in the Maidan protests engaged in a dialogue with representatives of the left from Donbas with connections to the so-called “Donetsk People’s Republic” (DNR) (Ukraine Solidarity Campaign, 2015). Both groups identified common problems and objectives, and were able to reach a broad consensus on the necessary steps to address the system crisis in Ukraine and for achieving peace.

### **Critical pedagogy in the network society**

**Petar Jandrić:** Nowadays, concepts such as ‘post-industrialism’, ‘post-Fordism’, ‘postmodern capitalism’ and ‘information society’ are often merged into an over-arching concept of Manuel Castells’ (2001) and Jan van Dijk’s (1999) *network society*. One of the main differences between the industrial society and the network society lies in the structure of production: the first is predominantly based on production of physical artefacts, while the latter is predominantly based on production of knowledge. Obviously, those trends are closely related to issues of education and class. For the very beginning of this conversation, therefore, could you please analyse the main contemporary changes in the structure of production?

**Peter McLaren:** The knowledge society is premised on communication, on dialogue, on creating knowledge for the well-being of humanity. The knowledge economy, on the other hand, is interested in appropriating communication technology for the purpose of producing information that can be centralized, monitored, and controlled partially through the systematic deskilling of workers. In fact, the knowledge-based economy is really an illusion. When we can eliminate underemployment, then perhaps that term will have some real salience. We already have a highly educated workforce with plenty of skills. What we need is a massive redistribution of wealth in the form of more jobs. So let’s not be misled by all this talk about immaterial labor. Social exchanges are not equal, immaterial labor is not free of capital. Computers have not made us free and independent producers. Why are we even cooperating with generating high calibre human capital to corporations?

Glenn Rikowski recently put it thus: ‘To become capital or to humanize our souls’ (McLaren & Rikowski, 2000). I’d like to summarize some important points here made by Rikowski (McLaren & Rikowski, 2000). Human capital, as Marx pointed out, has become a condition of life in capitalist societies. The human is a form of capital and capital is a form of human life. While it is believed that competitive advantage comes from knowledge and innovation, knowledge workers are being exported all over the globe just like manual workers. The knowledge economy geared to employers’ needs has narrowed the aims of education by marginalizing critical inquiry and skills. In fact, Rikowski goes so far



as to note that education and training are actually a part of the knowledge economy, as higher education students from overseas bring in huge export earnings.

Capital, as Rikowski describes it, is a form of social energy, and is not self-generating. It depends upon our labor power which creates surplus value and then various forms of capital develop from this surplus value. Labor power produces immaterial as well as material commodities. Labor power is the most explosive commodity on the world market today, Rikowski points out, and education and training set limits upon the social production of labor powers, preventing the development of those powers that can break the chains imposed by the value-form of labor. In order to change ourselves, to reinvent ourselves, to decolonize our subjectivities forged in the crucible of capitalism, we need to transform the social relations that sustain our capitalized life-form.

**PJ:** The new social relations are closely related to the emerging *digital cultures* (I am deliberately using plural in order to stress multiplicity of backgrounds, narratives and perspectives). What are the main features of digital cultures? What are their underlying values and ideologies? Paraphrasing Freire (2000), how do they relate to our reading of the word and our reading of the world?

**PM:** C. A. Bowers and I have had some spirited if not downright acrimonious debates over the decades, especially in relation to the work of Paulo Freire. At the same time I want to acknowledge the importance of some of his lucid observations about digital cultures (Bowers, 2014). First, it is absolutely essential that we understand the metaphorical nature of language, and that intelligence is not limited to what can be explained by scientific study of the neuro-networks of the human brain. Consciousness, as Gregory Bateson acknowledges, along with Bowers, includes the pathways of all unconscious mentation which includes those pathways that are automatic and repressed, neural and hormonal. Print-based cultural storage and thinking, which is relied upon by developers of technology, is not rationally based and objective but in fact impedes awareness of what is being communicated through the multiple pathways that differ from culture to culture.

Bowers is right about this and he worries that computer technology and the digitalized mismeasure of man will offer us a truncated notion of ecological intelligence. Computer technicians and scientists working on artificial intelligence sanctify data and information grounded in print-based cultural storage and thinking, and this reinforces surface knowledge, ignores tacit knowledge, and presents a false sense of objectivity, and ultimately misrepresents the relational and emergent information-intense pathways of both cultural and natural ecologies. Bowers is very convincing here. Digital communication reproduces the misconceptions encoded in the metaphorically layered language that is often taken for granted by digital technicians.

Computer scientists are using a languaging process based on print literacy that reproduces the myths and deep cultural assumptions that influence thinking and awareness — what is being championed are the myths of individualism and progress and what is being silenced is the need to conserve the cultural commons of non-Western cultures that are able to provide largely non-monetized systems of mutual support that rely less on exploiting the planet's natural resources. I agree with Bowers' prescient understanding that you can't reduce culture, cultural knowledge systems and cultural ways of knowing to data and information — especially given the reliance of computer scientists on print, and given the fact that there exist six thousand languages in the world. Words are metaphors whose meanings are framed, as Bowers explains, by the analogues settled upon in previous eras. What craft knowledge and indigenous wisdom traditions have been lost and replaced by Western corporate vocabularies of profits, efficiency and competition.

There are linguistic and cultural differences that cannot be captured by artificial intelligence. We can't capture what lies beyond the surface of the interplay of individual/cultural/linguistic ecologies. Here we should listen carefully to Bowers' criticism of the root metaphors of Western knowledge systems and the effects they have on colonization of the life worlds of other cultural groups. The digital revolution has encoded dangerous assumptions about endless growth, individualism, and the deepening of the ecological crisis. Ecologically sustainable traditions need to be intergenerationally renewed. The traditions of civil liberties of the complex and non-monetized traditions of the cultural commons that are still viable within Western cultures must be preserved and the cultural commons of non-Western cultures that do not rely on the exploitation of natural resources need to be intergenerationally renewed. Computer technology is contributing to the ecological crisis as super-intelligent computers still rely on print-based cultural storage whose cultural assumptions have been shaped by root metaphors of Western ideas of progress and individualism. We need an earth-centred ecological intelligence. Critical pedagogy can join in such an effort.

### **Digital cultures and youth movements**

**PJ:** Digital cultures are closely related to youth movements. Could you describe some distinct features of contemporary youth movements which emerge from the context of the network society?

**PM:** Youth today are beginning to refuse the cult of individualism as an antidote to their loss of a sense of self, to their being situated as impersonal agents in a rationalized society that is highly competitive and achievement oriented and psychotherapeutically oriented. Contemporary youth do not feel themselves embedded in a living reality that will endure within years to come because youth

are taught to concentrate on their personal status and well-being. They and their loved ones are not assured of protection from misery and oblivion. The 2011 student mobilization in Chile, the activism of Nigerian youth at the Niger Delta crude oil flow station, the clenched-fist protests against the ruling establishments of Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya, the resistance to the austerity measures by the youth in Portugal, Spain, and especially Greece, the South African public students who struggle to secure basic teaching amenities, such as libraries, in their schools, the Occupy Wall Street movement in the United States — all of these are part of a growing culture of contestation with its roots buried in the past, and its arabesque of tendrils arcing towards the future, the result of grafting what is desirable from the past onto new practices of revolt.

In the plant-grafting process, when the vascular cambium tissues of the root stock and scion plants have been successfully inoscultated, the stem of the stock is pruned just above the newly grafted bud. But the joints formed as a result of the grafting process are not as strong as naturally formed joints. Social movements that have recognized their weak links with the past are not attempting to begin again from the beginning (as this is a constitutive impossibility), but are utilizing technological innovations never before imagined in the history of social movements to refigure the ways in which student protest can be organized to resist the cooptation of the world capitalist aristocracy and to provide new networking potentialities for increasing the pressure on the sentinels of the transnational capitalist class.

The new youth movements have revealed that a decline in political activism among youth is not an inevitable fact of capitalist life or nor is youth political apathy evidence of a deep normality. However, youth are pulled in sometimes crazed and mostly inconclusive directions. The spectacle of neoliberal capitalism would have us believe that youth protest should be enlivened by constant stimulation of the senses and thus opposed to the course of daily routine of regulation and self-restraint. But protest does not always require youth to shift registers between the everyday and the culture of contestation because contestation can, in fact, be part of everyday praxis, such as in the world of hip-hop culture. Protests can erode our subsequent capacity to endure the strenuous demands of our daily life, which is, of course, a good thing, because they create a space of liminality where youth can cultivate contestation as an art form. Historical necessity does not grant these movements success in advance, nor does divine fiat. This question can only be answered inside the struggles themselves, and in terms of the commitment that youth have to the poor, the powerless, the disfavored and the aggrieved.

Ruling elites who wish to turn greed into an inalienable right are now more fearful than ever that democratic social movements driven by youth who were previously politically unwary might now spawn a revolutionary upsurge among

the popular majorities. So they make demands for more democracy by our youth undemocratically by enforcing brutal austerity measures and ratcheting up a permanent war on terrorism.

**PJ:** What is the role of information and communication technologies in these developments?

**PM:** Imagine a grandmother has lost her grandson to lung disease. Her tears are rolling down the precipice of her sunken eyes like a bucketful of pearls. But when she passes the chemical factory responsible for her grandson's death, her tears shoot out of her eyes in great red molten sparks as if spewed from an ancient volcano buried deep in the sea of her grief. She can do little more at the moment than scream in a high pitched rage that arcs around the smokestacks that killed her grandson. But can she do more than cry tears of grief and rage?

She can mount a social media campaign against the factory. She can petition the government. She can become an environmental activist. She can enter the digital world of protest. I am not saying that social media is in itself ineffectual. But so many protests these days are by digital petition. It takes less than a minute to sign. They give us the feeling that we are doing something, that we are making a difference, that the world is not hopeless, that we can intervene. My concern is to form a coalition that organizes on the basis of class initiative, that cuts across race and ethnicity and sexuality, that directly confronts the rule of capital. Is this even possible in the digital age? Are we predestined for political fragmentation, for single-issue campaigns that bury struggles that are necessarily universal under a micropolitics of single issues antiseptically cleaved from relations of production?

**PJ:** Talking about social order, we must revisit contemporary transformations of the concept of the state. Sociologists such as Jan van Dijk and Manuel Castells repeatedly assert that global neoliberal capitalism constantly diminishes its role in everyday affairs. At a phenomenological level, it seems commonly accepted that most traditional functions of the state have been transferred to transnational institutions such as WTO [World Trade Organization] and IMF [International Monetary Fund], corporations richer than many countries, and with increased individual responsibility for issues such as education and health. However, the left side of the political spectrum (McLaren, 2006; Standing, 2011, 2014) constantly emphasizes that the role of the state is as important as ever, and seeks to improve its functioning towards increasing social justice. Which concepts of the state are emerging from new social movements? How feasible are they?

**PM:** Youth resisters who assume the opinion that we live in the information age where we have a knowledge economy of 'immaterial labor', where productive capital and the working classes are becoming increasingly irrelevant to

social transformation, and that the nation state is relatively powerless, are likely to adopt a ‘civil societarian’ position (Holst, 2002) and put their faith in new social movements — in the ‘cognitariat’ rather than the ‘proletariat’. Many participants in the youth movements of today view the state as the ‘social state’ — here I shall borrow some terms from Tony Smith (2009) — where symbolic and moral philosophy is the systematic expression of the normative principles of the Keynesian welfare state. In other words, it is a version of the state that offers wage labor as the normative principles of modern society.

Some of the more conservative and even liberal-centrist participants in new social movements take a neoliberal state as the norm, which we could call the entrepreneurial state — in which generalized commodity production requires a world market and they follow Hayek’s principle that capital’s law of value (1948) in the abstract must be followed. Some of the new social movements look to create a new model of the state which could be called an ‘activist state’ that is based, in large part, on the work of Polanyi (2001), and includes methods of aggressive state intervention into its industrial policy. International capital still predominates in this model, and there will be an inevitable government and global trade dependence on international capital. Of course, those who govern the activist state desire to place government restrictions on its rules and regulations for attracting global investment capital. So there is a concerted attempt to lessen the worst and most exploitative aspects of the state. Then again, you have some left-liberal social movements who prefer the concept of the ‘cosmopolitan state’. This model is largely derived from the work of Habermas (1970), where forms of global market governance can prevail that are intranational rather than national; here there is a focus on the development of a global civil society.

Marxist and anarchist movements don’t ascribe to any of these models as it is clear to them that it is impossible to manage democratically wage labor on a global scale by placing severe restrictions on global financial and derivative markets. After all, wage labor only appears to include an equal exchange.

**PJ:** Could you briefly evaluate the social relevance of the new youth movements? Where do they take us, do they have enough power to bring real change?

**PM:** As they stand, social movements prepare us for the next step, rather than take us to a new space, mainly because we do not know the spatial transformations necessary to prepare us for an alternative to the law of value. They are preparing us to be reborn with a transmuted consciousness, and while they have seen the old vanguard as a hindrance to further social change, they are still wrestling with the forms of organization needed to transform a world stage-managed by a transnational capitalist class. These new social movements are the foreconscious of change, whereas what is needed is a change in the subconscious of the historical agent; that is, how do we gain an acceptance

of the deep mind for the fact that we need to build a social universe outside of labor's value form? Or is this just some youthful, chiliastic dream-vision? Some aspects of our goal must remain unspecified, our path trackless, our cry soundless and our destination uncertain, or else we will fall into the trap of imposing a blueprint, or re-coding old formulae, but at the very least we have to attune ourselves to history's migratory urge to sublimate that which we negate and to move towards a world less populated by human suffering, exploitation and alienation. That much is known and that much must be accepted before we can build upon the vestiges of past struggles and move into an entirely new terrain of resistance and transformation.

The pent-up force of the unmet shadow that lurks in our consent to the prevailing ideology of the capitalist class has the potential to destroy the very form of our past struggles. New modes of organization are called for. The political imagination must be reconfigured to the challenges of the present. If we view the accumulation of capital and the production of nature as a dialectical unity, we need a new vision of the future that can break free from modernity's mega-strategies of revolution so that we can think of a socialist alternative to capitalism differently, not as some cataclysmic leap by which life advances, but rather as steps — some precarious and some bold — by which life is prepared to evolve. We must recover from our past what the past regarded as utopian and thus was rejected by our predecessors and offer new forms of rebellion that can better ensure that such knowledge will re-impact the present more effectively.

### **Revolutionary love in the age of the digital**

**PJ:** Your last reply, Peter, touches upon a very important matter: the relationship between information and power ...

**PM:** Of course I believe that information is power. We need to know how institutions operate, how people inside of them behave. This is crucial. We can learn, for instance, about war from all the valiant work of Julian Assange and his Wikileaks staff, and the efforts of Edward Snowden and Chelsea Manning. We've learned about the deaths of thousands who otherwise would be relegated to the annals of ignominy, to abstractions that we can ignore because we can't picture them in ghastly and gory detail our minds. There is a lot of information out there — all communication relies on information, but I am concerned here about the providers. Who provides the information, how is it framed or 'punctuated' and what are the ideological effects? And how do human beings handle information? How do Americans cope, for instance, with the knowledge that their military has killed millions in its wars of aggression (which are disguised as preconditions for delivering 'democracy' by 'shock and awe' to those who won't play by our rules) and beaten them through our 'humanitarian imperialism' into submission until they become pliable client states? There is no country

more than the USA who appreciates quisling nation states that willingly bend over for whoever is in power in the White House.

How do young people react to the notion that their country is involved in a 'forever war' against terrorism? Or with the knowledge that we could be saving millions of people by bringing them medical aid for what are known and treatable diseases — we have the technology to do that, but we don't. Capitalism creates such vast inequalities between groups within states and between states. Pollution from air, water, sanitation and hygiene is responsible for more deaths than disease in the developing world. The rich countries can afford to export their pollution to the peripheral countries. We know that our fellow human beings, our fellow planetary citizens, are being poisoned by lead, toxic smoke from burning refuse in industrial dumps, from smoking cigarettes, from mercury, hexavalent chromium and pesticides which have become obsolete. After a while the death toll is just too much to bear but we can fast-forward all the messy details out of our consciousness through digital distractions. Our coping mechanisms involve surfing the television channels or the Internet; we don't have to stay in any one place for too long. Our anti-war efforts are really activated in the arena of cultural protest — through music, dress, plays, Internet sites — that are connected to rebelling against bourgeoisie society — as if war is just another feature of bourgeois society.

What I am concerned with is how war is connected to class structure, to capitalism itself, and I agree here with Garry Leech (2012) that capitalism itself is a type of war, a 'structural genocide' and it will take more than transgressions in the arena of culture to combat this genocide. All of us participate in this structural genocide as much by what we choose not to do, as by what actions we deliberately choose to take in our everyday lives. It is the concentration of capital within global corporations, their hegemonic control of the structures of ideological production through media, which largely makes this genocide possible, and, of course, the policies of international regulatory agencies. Even when we choose to resist, we find ourselves regulated in the way in which we are permitted to violate the rules — we are given a certain part of the public square where we can picket, chant slogans, and the like.

Postmodern anti-rationalism and anti-universalism from our avant-garde professoriate will not help us here. The struggle is up to us, to make sure we have a historical record that is truthful, and that we have safeguards in place so that corporations and government agencies cannot delete our national history. Because without memory, without collective history, education is impossible. Every educator should be involved in making history by struggling to make the world a better place by connecting their local concerns to larger global concerns — war, industrial pollution, human rights, freedom from constant surveillance. Now there is another issue here about historical records. Who owns

our personal historical record? This generation's personal history is recorded in some form — who owns it? Whoever owns it can control us.

**PJ:** Your analysis kicks the nail in the head, Peter, and your last few sentences simply call for expansion. Nowadays, various gadgets and services collect enormous amounts of our personal data in exchange for 'personalized' services. For instance, my new phone is structurally unable to browse the Internet without knowing my age, occupation, gender and marital status; in return, I get restaurant recommendations based on my favourite foods and flight discounts based on my usual destinations. However convenient, these developments bring along elicited in-built ideological baggage which is painfully absent from our customer contracts. Whenever we subscribe to this or that digital service, a small part of our existence gets a digital life of its own. In the process, it moves out of our control — and returns as a control mechanism for our behaviour. What is the real price of our 'free' restaurant recommendations, flight discounts and heart monitors? Are we, like ancient American natives, giving away our best skins and gold in exchange for worthless glass pearls? What is the social role of meta-data, and how does it relate to relations of consumption and production?

**PM:** As Evgeny Morozov wrote recently in *The Observer* (2014), our 'techno-Kafkaesque' world is being subject to algorithmic regulation through technological innovation and this will get exponentially worse in the coming years. Our daily activities will be monitored by sensors as part of the 'smartification' of everyday life. Google will soon mediate, monitor and report on everything we do. Procter & Gamble has created a Safeguard Germ Alarm that uses sensors to monitor the doors of toilet stalls in public washrooms. The alarm blares once you leave the stall and can only be stopped by the push of the soap-dispensing button. Morozov mentions that Google plans to expand the use of its Android operation system to include smart watches, smart cars, smart thermostats and more.

Smart mattresses that track your respiration and heart rates and how much you move at night and smart phones that measure how many steps you take each day, or tools that measure how much you spend as opposed to how much you earn (to fight tax fraud) and 'advances' such as remotely controlled cars that can be shut down from a distance if you are being pursued by the police — all of these will increasingly regulate your behavior. When Apple patented technology that deploys sensors in your smartphone that can block your texting feature if it is determined that you are driving and talking on your phone, and when face recognition systems are made public to prevent your car from starting should it fail to recognize the face of the driver (and send the picture to the car's owner), we can rejoice or be wary. I am inclined to feel wary. The age of algorithmic regulation stipulates that we will be hived within a cybernetic feedback society in which the systems regulating our be-



havior maintain their stability by constantly learning and adapting themselves to changing circumstances. Morozov makes the important point that technologies that will detect credit-card fraud or tax fraud will do nothing to hinder super-rich families who write tax exemptions into law or who operate offshore schemes that funnel millions into their bank accounts. These technologies will always be evaded by the rich and powerful.

Morozov cites the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben who writes about the transformation of the idea of government. We have traditional hierarchical relations between causes and effects. We used to be governed by causes. Now this relationship has been inverted and we are governed by effects. This is emblematic of modernity, according to Agamben. If the government no longer wants to govern the causes but only manage the effects, then we are in for some difficult times. Don't try to find out the causes of diseases; try to keep yourself out of the healthcare system by being healthy. It's the insurance company model of algorithmic regulation, according to Morozov. If our heart rates and our blood pressure can be tracked as a means of proactive protection, will we be considered 'deviant' if we choose to refuse these devices? Will we be punished, in other words, with higher insurance premiums? In a cybernetically regulated world powered by the pro-privatization agenda of Silicon Valley, if we fail to take adequate responsibility for our health, will we be punished? Will we be seen as failures if we fail to keep healthy?

Well, Morozov makes a good point when he says that this lets the fast food companies off the hook, nor does it address class based differences and questions of inequality. We all should be monitoring the condition of our feces and if we don't self-track sufficiently, then it is our fault if we get sick. Forget the exploitation of the food and pharmaceutical companies! This is what Morozov calls politics without politics — a politics identified with the 'nudging state' that relies on metadata. As correlating aggregate data on individuals becomes more sophisticated, data on individuals goes to the highest bidder, as our personal data become state assets. The algorithmic state is reputation-obsessed and entrepreneurial. One day, everybody will be their own brand, and nearly every key social interaction will be ranked. This leads to the culture of resilience in which it is agreed that we cannot prevent threats to our existence, so we must equip ourselves with the necessary savvy to face these threats individually.

So this world that Morozov describes blithely glances over or studiously avoids serious issues facing humanity such as economic equality and emancipation — all that is important in the cybernetic world of feedback mechanisms in real time is the creation of social homeostasis in a world of polished surfaces, aerosol politics and epidermal social relations of consumption. What is blurred and discounted are the social relations of production and how these relations are connected to the ongoing centralization of the control of the

provenance of information. We are faced with an uncritical rehearsal of *Brave New World* (Huxley, 1932), and while the soma might taste good, all life is etherized inside the Internet Box.

**PJ:** Could you please assess the role of critical pedagogy in these processes?

**PM:** Everywhere you go today you are forced to consume information that has been tested in order to prompt you to contact certain companies, or purchase certain goods, or remember certain information. At airports, in some supermarkets, at some movie theaters, and on billboards. It's very hard to escape this saturation society. But being the target of deliberate emotional manipulation puts us more squarely into the suffocating world of *1984* (Orwell, 1949). We are already there. Have you ever had a dream, Petar, in which you are dreaming inside the dream? And then you awake from the dream in your dream, but when you are awake you are still in the dream. Advances in technology help us awake from the dream in the dream, but they do not help us to live outside of the dream, in the domain of wakefulness. Are the advances in technology worth it, when we no longer have the agency to create ourselves, but are merely flesh-like putty in the hands of the government and corporations? This is why critical pedagogy is so urgent today. Another world is possible and critical pedagogy can play a part in its creation. Yes, I believe in transcendence, and unlike Vattimo or Agamben, I don't believe that transcendence cuts off questions prematurely. We need a philosophy of praxis, a Marxist humanist pedagogy driven by the desire to live in a world of freely-associated labor where value production is no longer the motor of human existence.

**PJ:** Recent issue of the *International Journal of Critical Pedagogy* entitled 'Paulo and Nita: sharing life, love, and intellect' (2013) is dedicated to 'revolutionary love' and its power to challenge oppressive social relationships. Your paper in that issue, 'Reflections on Love and Revolution' (McLaren, 2013), shows that the concept of revolutionary love extends from the private sphere into important questions such as re-evaluation of the contemporary role of academics. However, Paulo and Nita Freire lived in the world of one-directional mass media such as television and newspapers. Could you please relate the concept of revolutionary love to information and communication technologies?

**PM:** I believe that love is a social relationship as opposed to an entirely private matter. I believe that love can be productive for the collective emancipation of people. One might think that technological innovations — the social media, for example — have enhanced the possibility of love expanding into the collective arena of social development. But the class interests embedded in the social media — i.e. the ideology of individual consumption, the commodification of subjectivities (especially the commodified individualism of neoliberal capital with its exclusive and singular morality), the exploitation of the social labor

of others (the bourgeois treatment of people as commodities to be ‘owned’ or possessed which is increased by economic dependency and the social division of labor dominated by property relations) — have disabled the emancipatory potential of love and collective solidarity. Meeting the material needs of people — rather than treating people as ‘stranded assets’ useful only when they can be maximized for their purchasing power by an embrace of market fundamentalism — creates the necessary conditions of possibility for radical love and the solidarity needed to create a world unburdened by value creation, a world committed to freely associated individuals.

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**Пітер Макларен, Петар Яндріч. Критична революційна педагогіка в і для мережевої доби.**

Презентована розмова двох науковців є скороченим варіантом статті «Критична революційна педагогіка створена у процесі творення: в світі, де існує багато світів», опублікованої в журналі «Перспективи політики в освіті» (Макларен і Яндріч, 2014). Дана стаття починається із спеціального звернення до українських читачів, де П. Макларен і П. Яндріч розглядають боротьбу українського народу в більш широкому контексті боротьби проти капіталізму і висловлюють йому свою солідарність та підтримку. Перша частина розмови фокусує увагу на глобальних змінах у структурі виробництва, співставляючи масове суспільство, сформоване такими односпрямованими засобами інформації, як телебачення, з мережевим суспільством, сформованим за допомоги різноспрямованого зв'язку, що підтримується мережею інтернет. Автори пов'язують ці зміни з ідеями критичної педагогіки. У другій частині розмови аналізуються основні риси цифрових культур, які з'являються, визначені їхні базові цінності та ідеології в контексті сучасних молодіжних рухів і зміни ролі держави. Нарешті, третя частина розмови присвячена з'ясуванню відносин між інформацією та владою, дослідженню алгоритмічного впорядкування за допомоги технологічних інновацій. Вона завершується переосмисленням потенціалу для революційної любові Фрейре в дідігальну добу.

**Ключові слова:** Пітер Макларен, Петар Яндріч, критична революційна педагогіка, дідігальна культура, мережеве суспільство, інформація, технологічні інновації, молодіжні рухи, комунікація, влада.

**Пітер Макларен, Петар Яндріч. Критическая революционная педагогика в и для сетевой эпохи.**

Представленный разговор двух ученых является сокращенным вариантом статьи «Критическая революционная педагогика создана в процессе творения: в мире, в котором существует множество миров», опубликованной в журнале «Перспективы политики в образовании» (Макларен и Яндріч, 2014). Данная статья начинается со специального обращения к украинским читателям, в котором П. Макларен и П. Яндріч рассматривают борьбу украинского народа в более широком контексте борьбы против капитализма и выражают ему свою солидарность и поддержку. Первая часть беседы фокусирует внимание

на глобальных изменениях в структуре производства, сопоставляя массовое общество, сформированное такими однонаправленными средствами информации, как телевидение, с сетевым обществом, сформированным с помощью разнонаправленной связи, поддерживаемой сетью интернет. Авторы связывают эти изменения с идеями критической педагогики. Во второй части беседы анализируются основные черты возникающих цифровых культур, определяются их базовые ценности и идеологии в контексте современных молодежных движений и изменения роли государства. Наконец, третья часть разговора посвящена анализу отношений между информацией и властью, исследованию алгоритмического упорядочения с помощью технологических инноваций. Она завершается переосмыслением потенциала для революционной любви Фрейре в дигитальную эпоху.

**Ключевые слова:** Питер Макларен, Петар Яндрич, критическая революционная педагогика, дигитальная культура, сетевое общество, информация, технологические инновации, молодежные движения, коммуникация, власть.