

## **Reinventing emancipation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: the pedagogical practices of social movements**

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This issue of *Interface* aims to make a contribution to the ongoing politics of knowledge of those marginalized, made illegible and spoken-over by the contemporary geopolitics of capitalist coloniality. It engages with the rich heritages of popular pedagogical practices, subaltern philosophies and critical theorisations by entering into dialogue with the experiences, projects and practices of social movements who are at the forefront of developing a new emancipatory politics of knowledge for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

In this introduction we situate historically, politically and theoretically the centrality of the pedagogical in both the learning of hegemonic forms of life, social relationships and subjectivities but also in practices of unlearning these and learning new ones. We identify the general themes that emerge from the rich cornucopia of experiences discussed in the issue as a contribution to the mapping and nurturing of the ecology of counter-politics of knowledges flourishing across the globe.

Our intention is that this dialogue and systematisation will itself constitute a pedagogical intervention which can facilitate and inspire experimentation, reflection and collective learning by social movements, communities in struggle, and activist-scholars. We hope that this issue of *Interface* can play a performative utopic function visibilising the 'others' of capitalist coloniality and posing open questions which support the flourishing of multiple grounds of epistemological becoming.

Thus we aim to weave the generic insights and thematics of our contributing authors throughout this introductory overview.

### **Theorising the geopolitics of knowledge of capitalist coloniality**

Marxist, decolonial, post-colonial, feminist, anti-racist, queer, post-structuralist and autonomist/anarchist critical traditions with differing foci, demonstrate the exclusions and violences at the heart of the emergence and reproduction of capitalism (see for example in the Marxian tradition, Holloway, 2002; Vaneigem, 1967; Negri, 1999; di Angelis, 1996; for the anarchist tradition, Kropotkin, 1896; Day, 2005; for black and decolonial feminisms, Anzaldúa, 2007; hooks, 2003; Lugones, 2010; queer tradition, Kosofsky Sedgwick, 1990; anti-racist (postcolonial) Fanon, 2008; and post-structuralist, Foucault, 1980). They foreground how capitalism/modernity is built upon alienations and separations embedded within a world view of individualism, maximization of material gain and processes of subjectification. The worldview or cosmology of capitalism is one based on an instrumental and indifferent relationship to

nature, denial of 'other' worldviews and devaluing of the emotional and embodied. This is manifested in relationships of power-over, hierarchy and competition in the subjective and social realms and (re)produced through a spatial logic of separation, division and dispossession.

Crucially, as feminists have demonstrated these alienated subjectivities and social relationships are also gendered. Emotionality is a feminised construct associated with the irrational, the unruly and the shameful - something to be controlled to avoid disruption to the normal and rational social and physic order (Anzaldúa, 2007, pp, 38-40; Lorde, 2000, pp. 1-4). Alienation thus becomes embedded in our bodies, impoverishing our bodily relationships with each other and ourselves, and distorting our emotions resulting in toxic blockages and repressions (Lorde, 2000). Yet as Jamie Heckert (2013) describes 'to realise that the intertwined hierarchical oppositions of hetero/homo, man/woman, whiteness/color, mind/body, rational/emotional, civilized/savage, social/natural and more are all imaginary is perhaps a crucial step in letting go of them. How might we learn to cross the divide that does not really exist except in our embodied minds?'

And it is here where analytic and political attention to the pedagogical becomes crucial. Underlying and enabling the reproduction of such alienated and alienating ways of inhabiting, knowing and creating the world are a politics of knowledge which, as many of our contributors demonstrate is deeply monological, authoritarian and violent. This involves a conception of the world reflective of the particular interests of dominant groups, becoming 'incorporated into everyday life as if it were an expression of it, and to act as an actual and active guiding force, giving direction to how people act and react' (Gramsci, 1971, p. 268). As constructing consent to domination involves learning subjectivities, worldviews and ways of relating, it is, as many of our contributors acknowledge, inherently pedagogical. As Paulo Freire showed in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (2001), such understandings of the self and the world that reproduce domination often continue even after the structural relationship that has caused that domination in the first place has been eliminated. The character and relational mode of oppressed people tends to be marked by the identification with the oppressor and an often unintentional desire to emulate him/her in terms of identity, position in the social structure and ways of relating to the "other". If that often unconscious tendency is not identified and actively deconstructed, the odds are that the oppressive relationship will be reproduced, this time with new protagonists.

Hegemony is not however closed and determinant. Rather the subaltern are also historical subjects with past political struggles, cultural practices, and moral economies. The residues of such histories infuse everyday consciousness and are conceptualized in Gramsci as good-sense, which "rough and jagged though they always are, are better than the passing away of the world in its death-throes and the swan-song that it produces" (Gramsci, 1971, p. 343). Therefore everyday consciousness is contradictory and fragmented even when hegemonic, leaving

the immanent possibility of the articulation of counterhegemonic moral economy and political practice in the subaltern.

Or as decolonial feminist Maria Lugones argued, it is not enough to deconstruct the ontological and epistemological violences at the heart of the geopolitics of knowledge of capitalist coloniality. To remain within this move is to reinscribe the colonised into the coloniser's logics of representation and to assume that as Lugones (2010, p. 748) describes 'global capitalist colonial system is in every way successful in its destruction of people's knowledges, relations and economies'. Rather we must remember through creating an incarnated peopled memory that 'it is her belonging to impure communities that gives life to her agency' and she is,

Neither simply imagined and constructed by the coloniser and coloniality...but is a being who begins to inhabit a fractured locus constructed doubly, who perceives doubly, where the sides of the locus are in tension, and the conflict itself actively informs the subjectivity of the colonized self in multiple relation'(Lugones, 2010, 7p. 48).

Building upon good sense or the fracture in the colonial locus means that as bell hooks argues (1990, p. 15) '[that] after one has resisted there is the necessity to become- to make oneself anew...That process emerges as one comes to understand how structures of domination work in one's own life, as one invents alternative habits of being and resists from marginal space of difference inwardly defined'. This implies that the construction of counter-hegemony, anti-hegemony or decolonisation involves 'learning to cross the divide', unlearning these relationships and practices and learning new ones by building upon fragments of good sense and the fractured locus between processes of subjectification and active processes of subjectivity. It is thus also necessarily pedagogical. This learning and unlearning can occur in the formal education, in the informal spheres of everyday life and centrally, in the pedagogical practices (formal and informal) of social movements.

### **Understanding the contemporary geopolitics of knowledge of capitalist coloniality**

In the contemporary geopolitics of knowledge, as forcefully demonstrated by many of our contributors, hegemonic pedagogies produce and reproduce a form of "abyssal thinking" (Sousa Santos, 2007) which renders illiterate, illegible and non-subject those millions of the global South and Global North thrown on the margins by contemporary capitalist logics. This epistemological politics posits 'the thinker' as the pinnacle of the knowing subject. This individualised 'Europeanised' subject has particular embodied attributes and affective practices. His detached, masculinised rationality is able to control the unruly and irrational emotions and bodily desires and the irrationalities of all others

named as disorderly and underdeveloped (Lorde, 2000; hooks, 2001, 2003). He is the subject fit for rule and ruling, a being of mind and reason as opposed to those non-subjects of irrationality and inhumanity.

Such geopolitics of knowledge is inherently produced through a violent relation against the 'other' as it attempts to render invisible, mute and absent through dominant pedagogies of power non-hegemonic subjects. As Lugones (2010, p. 745) describes this is:

the process of active reduction of people, the dehumanisation that fits them for classification, the process of subjectification, the attempt to turn the colonized into less than human beings.

Yet of course such particular forms of producing knowledge and the knowing subject are represented as views from no-where, eliding questions about power enacted through, and by, this particular subject and practice of knowledge production. In the contemporary period these logics have been deepened as externally designed (often by elites of the North) and implemented systems of ranking and evaluation of education are imposed in ways that create disciplinary mechanisms and self-disciplining subjects that devalue local, indigenous traditions of pedagogy, education, epistemology and ways of life (Motta and Cole, 2014). This seeks to create a set of institutional mechanisms, discourse and pedagogical practices that prevent the development of critical and autonomous communities of praxis. The result of these practices is to deepen in every more insidious ways the geopolitics of knowledge of capitalist coloniality by situating the masculinised European epistemological, monological and individualized subject as the centre through which all other contents and forms of epistemological practice are judged devalued and ultimately eradicated (Agathangelou and Ling, 2004).

Importantly, ways of knowing are also ways of inhabiting and creating the world and each other. To eradicate the former therefore enacts not merely a discursive eradication but an ontological denial of being 'otherwise'. As Lugones (2010, p. 745) describes the on-going politics of coloniality

justifie[s] the colonization of memory and thus of people's sense of self, of intersubjective relation, of their relation to the spirit world, to land, to the very fabric of their conception of reality, identity and social, ecological and cosmological organisation...the normativity that connect[s] gender and civilization [becomes] intent on erasing community ecological practices, knowledge of planting, of weaving, of the cosmos.

Within this as our authors demonstrate those of the margins of Africa; Latin America, North America and Europe are marked by their representational absence as rational subjects. If they are brought into view it is as the

pathologised non-subjects outside of the bounds of normality, insane, deviant, and subject of criminalisation or 'education'.

Of course the absence of these subjects in dominant pedagogies of power necessitates the agency of the knowing subject of capitalist coloniality. This 'knowing' subject speaks over the needs, desires, realities and struggles of the subaltern, to suggest the forms of education, politics and practices that she would need to become a political subject. Yet the contours of political economy into which she is inserted as non-subject reproduce the violent logics of ecological, material, political, epistemological and ontological denial, through which she becomes a gendered, classed and raced object of rule.

Such logics of denial of the presence, being and ways of knowing of oppressed communities implies that to make visible and re-place these subjects necessitates exceeding the logics of capitalist coloniality in thought and practice. To render visible, in this way, the non-subjects of contemporary capitalism as knowing subjects is an act which shatters the violences at the heart of the contemporary geopolitics of knowledge. This is something which many of our contributors enact and which we aim to practice through this Introduction. Practices of visibilisation (be that textual, visual, embodied, audio) are an act of public pedagogy embedded in ethical and political commitments to recognising the epistemological privilege of those represented as uneducated, irrational and illiterate.

The geopolitics of knowledge produced through the colonial capitalist pedagogies of everyday life enacts therefore a violent monological closure and silencing of all 'others'. Emotional, embodied, oral, popular and spiritual knowledges are delegitimized, invisibilised and denied. Other ways of relating to the earth, each other, the cosmos and our selves are annihilated. These epistemological logics are not external to the colonised and oppressed subject. Rather the long process of subjectification of her to the internalisation of the hierarchical and alienating dichotomies of being, knowing and relating of capitalist coloniality creates as Gil, Purru and Lin describe 'epistemological wounds and ontological wounds' (2012, p. 11).

As our contributors suggest it is not only in the shape of public pedagogies which render visible, literate and subject those made superfluous by capitalist coloniality which constitute counter-hegemonic pedagogical practices. Rather movements are involved in unlearning the oppressor's logics as they reproduce and mark who is heard, seen and rendered knowing within movement struggles and practices. The pedagogical practices of social movements therefore have two moments; one to deconstruct and rupture dominant pedagogies of epistemological and ontological denial by appearing as knowing-subjects. The other moment is the affirmative co-construction of becoming otherwise to these logics as communities and subjects.

## **Counter-politics of knowledge: 'Other' histories**

The pedagogical practices of the movements and struggles analysed and systematised in this issue emerge from and build upon rich traditions of subaltern philosophies, knowledges and pedagogies. These include indigenous cosmologies, liberation theology, traditions of popular education, participatory action research (PAR) and practices emerging from anti-racist, queer and black feminist traditions.

In the case of our contributions from Latin America these pedagogical practices are descendants of Simon Rodriguez's project of epistemological emancipation. Escobar elaborates on this project (cited in Cendales, Mejia and Muñoz, 2013, 7),

[Rodriguez] wanted all - blacks, indigenous poor, direct descendants of the coloniser-to be equals; he intuited that education could fulfil this task because he had no doubt of the intellectual capacities of anyone, and believed conversely, that the people should be the basis from (which) popular democracy is constructed.

In the Latin America and South African contributions they also build upon the heritage of critical educators such as Paulo Freire and Orlando Fals Borda. For Freire knowledge does not exist as a fixed object of facts (a bank) from which individuals might make withdrawals. Rather knowledge is constructed through the dialogical process of engagement between the self and the other, mediated by the world (Freire 2006, p. 25). The understanding of knowledge as an abstract object which constructs its subjects is critiqued as a stagnant, degenerate knowledge by which "words are emptied of their concreteness and become a hollow, alienated verbosity" (Mignolo, 1999 p. 52). As Jonathan Mansell (2013) explains,

In such circumstances, knowledge becomes the master of people; people become mere vassals to be filled with knowledge. Knowledge is in this context anti-democratic: distant, remote, imperial grammar, to be recited without innovation, without questioning, in this context knowledge disembodies people, turns them into mere repeaters, imitators rather than allowing them to develop their radical personhood as unique creators of meaning.

Traditions of Participatory Action Research (Fals Borda, 2001; Rahman, 1993) also frame movement practice with a commitment to, as Jonathan Langdon, Kofi Larweh and Sheena Cameron argue in their article about the Ada Songor Advocacy Forum of Ghana, 'anti-Eurocentric desire to stop studying the exoticised others'. Such traditions critique colonial knowing subjects and practices of knowing as reproducing the silencing of the exoticised underdeveloped 'other'. Instead they favour practices and pedagogies of

knowing which emerge from the context of community struggle. As in traditions of popular education, knowledge is practiced as a verb not a noun, and emerges from the collective reflective practices of subaltern subjects.

Within both the African and Latin American contributions the role of spirituality and indigenous traditions has played an important role in creating the conditions of emergence of counter-politics of knowledge of the oppressed. One such subaltern spirituality is liberation theology – a radical and popular Catholic tradition characterized by an ethical commitment to the body of suffering poor, faith realized through action for the oppressed, the Bible reread collectively, a focus on direct access to the word of God, and a commitment to self-actualization of the oppressed through their own liberation (Boff and Boff, 1987: 1–9). As Boff and Boff (1987: 9) describe it, it is a biblical frame of reference in which “knowing implies loving, letting oneself become involved body and soul, communing wholly—being committed.”

As Sandra Carvalho and José Mendes demonstrate in their contribution ‘Práxis educativo do Movimento 21 na resistência ao agronegócio’ and John Hammond in his piece reflecting on the role of *Mística* in the MST, liberation theology has played a role in facilitating a structure of emotion based on solidarity and a collective affective commitment to courageous action in the face of injustice. These traditions facilitate the unlearning of hegemonic emotional landscapes of fear and degradation and the learning of emotional attachments of inspiration and dignity. The collective practices and moral economies influenced by this tradition inflect the movements with an ethical commitment to all having the right to speak and to playing a part in realizing their faith and self-liberation.

In the case of the Ada Songor Advocacy Forum of Ghana as Langdon, Larweh and Cameron describe, communities create ecologies of activism in which the struggle for life and community is bound up with literacies based in oral traditions of storytelling. Here knowledge is shared and developed inter-generationally. Everyday spiritualities come to the heart of the constitution and practise of a counter-hegemonic politics of knowledge. They enable a contestation and transgressing of the dominant politics of knowledge of capitalist coloniality which separates the word from the world and as Langdon et al argue create ‘learning that reinforces local ownership of this conversation in opposition to narratives of globalization and state-led visions of large-scale development.’ Here communities create practices of naming the world through telling their own stories and collective authoring an ‘other’ historicity. This contests dominant historiographies which erase and deny them as knowing-subjects.

In the European context these practices build upon the heritages and traditions of working class adult and community education and informal and formal educational struggles. In both the European and North American contexts our contributors Timothy Luchies (*Anti-Oppression as Pedagogy: Prefiguration as Praxis*), Joe Curnow (US movement United Students for Fair Trade) and Rhiannon Firth (*Critical Cartography as Anarchist Pedagogy*) highlight the importance of anti-racist struggle, feminist praxis, anti-colonial struggle, queer

politics and autonomous/anarchist traditions in the development of movement pedagogical practices. In differing ways these heritages have shaped a moral economy and cultural practise committed to inclusion and the fostering of radical difference and dialogue. They explicitly contest the silencing and authoritarian logics of monological constructions of identity, politics and meaning. These traditions shape movement philosophies and political commitments through their attention to how the logics of capitalist coloniality and patriarchy enact processes of subjectification which deny oppressed communities' autonomy, criticality and creativity. Movements have thus developed theorisations arising out of their experiences of the oppressor's logic shaping internal movement practices in the form of habits of being, ways of relating and forms of subjectivity. This has inflected the pedagogical practices of movements with a deep concern to foster internal pedagogies that seek to unlearn dominant logics of being and relating so as to facilitate meaningful inclusion, voice and the conditions of co-construction of movement praxis.

These subaltern educational heritages, traditions, philosophies and practices dethrone the knowing subject of patriarchal capitalist coloniality, which (emphasises) *his* mastery of others and production of the word as separate from the world. In contrast, emancipatory pedagogy fosters processes of mass intellectuality and creativity which build from the embodied experiences of oppression and alienation. They are embedded in commitment to self-liberation, reconnecting pedagogy with politics and educator-educatee with their intellectual-political capacities. These enable communities to re-author themselves through the power of the word which, as Freire argued, is the power to name and change the world (1996, p. 69). This politics embraces multiple forms of knowledge, including the affective, embodied, oral, cognitive and cultural. It experiments with collective and horizontal pedagogies which enable communities to autonomously produce themselves and their communities. Centrally, these communities and movements enact in their knowledge practices the creation of an 'other' history to that of dominant historiography and weave as Lugones describes 'an incarnated peopled memory' (2010, 48)

### **Thematics in the pedagogical practices of social movements: privileging the epistemological margins**

Many of our contributors demonstrate that movements and scholar-activists are committed to a politics of knowledge that privileges the epistemological margins. Movement praxis therefore involves rendering visible and knowing those superfluous non-subjects of contemporary capitalism. As bell hooks (1990, 149) describes, 'I was not speaking of marginality one wishes to lose- to give up or surrender as part of moving into the centre- but rather as a site one stays in, clings to even, because it nourishes ones capacity to resist. It offers to one the possibility of radical perspective from which to see and create, to imagine alternatives, new worlds'. Here the margins become transformed from a space of deprivation and lack into a privileged space of epistemological possibility.



The pedagogical comes to the heart of this politics, not conceptualised as a set of methods but rather but as a philosophy of life and practice of struggle. This can imply in the case of the movements from the Global South developing heritages of popular education to create pedagogies and practices which enable collective and critical reflection on the experiences of oppression. As our contributors Cerianne Robertson, Gerald Gill and Anne Selmeczi who write in relation to Abahlali baseMjondolo (Abahlali) from South Africa note, it involves an ontological and epistemological ‘turning on its head’ of dominant pedagogical practices of producing shack dwellers as politically illiterate, irrational and ignorant. This is achieved through developing embodied public and internal pedagogies of presence, voice and intellectuality. It can also imply, as shown by Kowzan, Zielińska and Prusinowska, the creative use of disruption as a way of opening spaces of interrogation and possibility within mainstream, formal pedagogical practices. In their analysis of case studies of politically motivated disruption, by members of the audience, of university lectures in Poland, the authors show how such oppositional practice not only opens space for the public acknowledgment of epistemological margins, but also is in itself a pedagogical act that promotes learning from the part of disrupters, as well as the institutional structures of the university. The result is changes in the methods of disruption, as well as in the way public university lectures are organized.

In the case of North American movements, as Timothy Luchies demonstrates, this involves visibilising those on the epistemological margins *within* movement politics through traditions of anti-oppression praxis. Here the voices of queers, people of colour, women and subjects who face intersecting oppressions take centre stage. They help to configuring internal pedagogies which facilitate the unlearning of the oppressor’s logic of hierarchy, power-over and closure which often structure who is heard and who is silenced within movement practices.

### **Dialogue of knowledges and multiple literacies**

The pedagogical practices of social movements decentre the knowing-subject of capitalist coloniality through unveiling the violent logics at the heart of this practice of knowing. To different degrees this practice of decentring does not attempt to replace one form of knowing with another monological form of knowing but rather facilitates dialogues of knowledge. This is demonstrated in our contributions which reflect and analyse the experience of the MST and Movimento 21 of Brazil and the Ghanaian Ada Songor Advocacy Forum. In these experiences critical political economy, legal theory, non-textual narratives, cultural practices and participant experience are combined to create readings and interpretations of the world which facilitate and strengthen the collective agency of oppressed communities.

This dialogue does not remain within as Mignolo describes ‘the content of the conversation’ of capitalist coloniality but ‘change[s] the terms of the conversation’ (2009, 4). Thus to know and the knowing subject are not separated from the embodied. A crossing of the separation between the mind

and body is enacted and thus knowledge and knowledge practices are not delimited to textual abstraction. Rather multiple literacies are embraced. The experiences of the Ghanaian Ada Songor Advocacy Forum which build on community cultural practices of storytelling is a prime example of the (re)-creation of what it means to know, what knowledge is and who constitutes a knowing subject. Oral dialogues of knowledge are developed in which metaphor and symbolism are created to (re)present the world. These visibilise the capacity to make history of those rendered 'silent' objects of 'development', and (re)create the present and possibilities for the future through analysis of external power and internal movement power dynamics.

As Rhiannon Firth demonstrates in her contribution about '56a Infoshop map archive' in London multiple literacies and knowing-subjects can be created through co-constructing visual forms of representation and shifting spatialities of knowing. Key to this are embodied practices of creating counter-narratives of the city which expose its multiple realities and how power is spatially constructed. Here one comes to 'know' ones place in the urban landscape with greater intensity and depth. It can also involve co-constructing other practices of creating the city both in representational form and through embodied practice. This facilitates as Firth describes 'epistemological pluralism' as a grounds for radical political practice as subjectivity, process and protest. In these examples those denied voice learn to speak in multiple tongues re-working what it means to theorise, to know and be. As Gloria Anzaldúa (2007: 81) describes in relation to the Chicana experience but eminently applicable here, 'I will no longer be made to feel ashamed of existing; I will have my voice....I will have my serpent's tongue- my woman's voice'.

### **Informal pedagogies: facilitating movement emergence and sustainability and/or reproducing exclusions?**

Many of our contributors demonstrate how the pedagogical practices of social movements involve practices of learning and unlearning internal to the movement. These occur in the micro-practices of movement everyday life. They can included anything from the organisation of campaigns, resource management, development of tactics, distributions of tasks, socialising and storytelling, meetings, and development of movement strategy and understanding. Informal pedagogies enable the learning of specific skills. They also embody learning of the practices and understandings which (re)produce a movement's dominant political meanings, knowledges, subjectivities and relationships. As Joe Curnow describes in his contribution in relation to US student movement United Students for Fair Trade 'Essentially, the community itself is the curriculum that members are learning, reproducing, and innovating through their collaboration'. And as Carvalho and Mendes also demonstrate in the case of the Movimento 21 much of the construction of movement practise and strategy has occurred in everyday movement spaces such as meetings, marches and assemblies. In these an on-going dialogue of knowledges has been

facilitated to enable a coming together of diverse communities, forms of knowing and subjects of knowing.

Such informal pedagogical processes are often at the heart of the consolidation and sustainability of movement culture, relationships, institutions, identity and strategies. They transgress a practice of learning as separate from experience, systematisation as separate from struggle and knowing as a noun. Rather they suggest that movement knowing is an interactive process in which strategy, identity and belonging are continually negotiated and potentially transformed through collaboration and collectivity.

These experiences also demonstrate how the pedagogical does not refer to a method of learning but rather a political project of struggle in which practices of learning are embedded. As Curnow (in this issue) argues, such situated learning 'is a social learning rooted in participation in a community rather than an individual's uptake of content.' The pedagogical in this sense cannot be confined to the narrow limits of hegemonic understandings of education, which alienates and separates the body from the mind, the classroom from the community, and the knower from the known. Rather learning occurs in multiple spatialities, through multiple subjects and these knowing-subjects become creators of political agency, movement practises and imaginaries, and in some cases collective self-liberation.

However, as demonstrated by both Curnow and Luchies in their contributions in relation to North America, what is learnt through such informal pedagogies are a movement's dominant understandings and practices. These can often be exclusionary along race, class and/or gender lines. Both authors underlie how movement practices can mirror the coloniser's logics and how to unlearn these logics involves a politics of knowledge and pedagogies that emerge out of the dissonance experienced by the subjects on movements' margins. As Curnow argues, out of such dissonance can be fostered and facilitated 'oppositional consciousness and opportunities for conscientization'. Here questions about dominant practices, norms and sociabilities and what these obscure from view, what remains unarticulated in their languages, and what has been absent from their thought can be collectively asked (Nakata et. al. , 2012).

If we fail to do such internal pedagogical work then our movements can reproduce the very logics of ontological and epistemological silencing that they seek to transform. As Luchies describes 'When we fail to confront the materiality of White supremacy, settler-colonialism., heteropatriarchy, dis/ableism and capitalism we fail to address some of the most powerful institutions structuring social movement action. And because these institutions directly impact participation and internal dynamics in our movements, failure to address them undercuts our potential to create effective strategies of resistance'

This involves visibilising internal privileges and power structures through creating practices other than the norm. To facilitate such possibilities involves fostering the conditions of possibility for speaking, listening and voice, not as a

means to name and shame others but rather opening the conditions for the possibility of anti-authoritarian practices in all aspects of movement reproduction. Here the role of monologue also becomes central, not monologue to silence and deny others, but rather to facilitate the appearance on the political stage as knowing subjects of those who are denied voice and legibility in our movements. As Luchies describes often those who speak out in relation to internal hierarchies are misnamed as disruptive and problematic. This suggests that the pedagogical practices of social movements can also involve unlearning ourselves, ways of inhabiting the world and forms of relating to others which reproduce the logics of capitalist coloniality.

### **Formal pedagogies: multiplicity in praxis**

Movements also develop formal pedagogies and educational practices that enable the emergence and consolidation of counter-hegemonic politics of knowledge. Methodologies, curriculum, stimulus, programs, and autonomous sites of learning are created. As Edgar Guerra Blanco demonstrates in his contributions about the experience of Frente Popular Francisco Villa (FPFV) movement of Mexico, a militant school was set up to provide political education. This enabled the flourishing of a rich and diverse left universe of intellectual discussions, debate and strategies. It ensured that educational practices were generalised across the movement, undercutting the formation of intellectual hierarchies.

Or as Sandra Gadelha and Ernandi Mendes demonstrate, the movements and organisations involved in the emergence and consolidation of the M21 have been involved in developing Educação do Campo, an understanding of rural education that is *in* and *for* the rural population. This has resulted in the development of 'other' teachers and 'other' schools which contest the dominant politics of knowledge in Ceará and Brazil in which peasants are represented as ignorant, backward and uncivil. Rather it develops a situated politics of knowledge in which learning is reconnected to ethics and political commitments, knowing to everyday life and the spatialities of learning are multiple including all areas of movement life. This formalisation of situated learning enables a qualitative shift in the levels of systematisation and generalisation of movement education. Their practice decentres and re-orders academic knowledges to facilitate the collective construction of knowledges for social transformation. In many ways these are prefigurative epistemologies (Motta, 2011) which dethrone the knowing subject of capitalist coloniality.

Similar practices of formalisation of learning and knowledge practices have occurred in Abahlali baseMjondolo. As Cerianne Robertson demonstrates in her contribution, 'Professors of our own poverty: Intellectual practices of a poor people's movement in post-apartheid South Africa' the movement contests hegemonic politics of knowledge which present shanty-town dwellers as illiterate and 'out of order.' Rather, they resignify such terms through concepts such as living learning and the shack intellectual. They have developed a deep

critique of the colonising logics of formal education through creating their own University of Abahlali. Here learning is linked to reflection on experiences of oppression and exclusion and is again necessarily outside of any sanitised and separate educational space. They create a dialogue of knowledges but on their own terms not on the terms of the dominant, thus inviting outsiders to engage with them but in their placed based practices.

Some might suggest such movement knowledge practices can reify hegemonic common sense and become conservative localism. However, the movement hopes to create alliances, practices and knowledges across epistemic, social and geographical borders as a means to contest and transform the global nature of capitalism but also enrich and deepen their own processes of transformation. This politics of knowledge supports epistemological pluralism. It does not seek to hegemonies the poor's struggle under one banner but facilitate radical and multiple differences *of* and *from* the margins.

In the case of North America as Luchies demonstrates the influence of anti-oppression, anti-capitalism and anti-imperialism heritages and increasing turn to post-representational forms of political life have shaped political cultures which are committed to the contestation and transgression of authoritarianism. This situated movement learning has often resulted in relatively formalised norms of political engagement for example the use of particular methods of decision-making such as consensus or specialised techniques of facilitation of meeting spaces and workshops. However, as Luchies demonstrates, this can lead to a separation of the pedagogical from its political and philosophical underpinnings in which 'anti-oppression has sometimes become a set of methods that reproduces exclusions and silences'. Eurig Scandrett in his Action Note 'Popular education methodology, activist academics and emergent social movements: Agents for Environmental Justice' also demonstrates that when popular education becomes a method separated from its methodological roots in a critique of oppression '[it] can be used by reactionary groups in support of colonial and neoliberal projects.'

Edgar Guerra Blanco demonstrates how as the FPFV entered the electoral arena the logics of governance and power took over elite practices. In this scenario the militant school and political education became emptied of their emancipatory theoretical and political underpinnings. This undercut the conditions for the formation of the intellectual, cultural and institutional conditions that could enable the emergence of internal dissent to such processes of de-radicalization. These cases suggest that counter-politics of knowledge are deeply pedagogical but that if such pedagogies are separated from their theoretical and philosophical underpinnings they can become methods that (re)produce hegemonic ways of being, social relationships and subjectivities.

Luchies thus suggests that an emancipatory pedagogical-political project must place *continual* critical collective reflection on practice at its heart. This can be facilitated and fostered by maintaining an emphasis on the relationship between content and method of learning/creating movement practices. This can enable, as he continues, movements to 'produce tools that empower and educate

communities against violence and marginalisation with movement organising; into every aspect of anti-authoritarian politics including decision making, organisational structure, division of labour, resources management, tracts, subcultural norms and security.’

Another form of formal learning and knowledge production occurs between movements and activist-scholars who inhabit both the space of the university and movement. Laurence Cox in his teaching note, which reflects from the perspective of one of the founders and facilitators of an MA course in Community Education, Equality and Social Activism, specifically designed for activists, argues that the course creates the temporalities which allow critical reflection on practice that help in the development of the organising capacities and reflexivity of participants. Central to this is the creation of alternative spatialities from those of movement spaces which are often concerned with the demands and needs of everyday organising. Rather spaces are created which bring activists together in small groups in which they might build the conditions of trust to reflect critically, through engagement with each other’ struggles and other subaltern traditions of knowledge, on their own practise. His contribution foregrounds the important role that dialogues of knowledges in radical education spaces outside of the everyday of movement struggles can have in deepening processes of movement theorising. For these processes to facilitate a democratising of movement knowledge practices they need to maintain and embed their connection to movements to prevent the reinforcing of epistemic privileges and exclusions.

### **Teaching as a reconfiguration of the public**

As our contributors so poetically demonstrate the pedagogical practices of social movements affirmatively create other ways of knowing and being in the world through a weaving of multiple literacies and grounds of epistemological becoming. However, movements also enact pedagogies of negation, disruption and rupture against hegemonic politics of knowledge which systematically deny the subjectivity, knowledges and ways of knowing of those on the margins. This involves processes of resignification of dominant ways of producing public space, political agency and normalised subjectivities.

Appearing as embodied knowing subjects, as Anne Harley demonstrates in ‘The Pedagogy of Road Blockages’ involves not only situated learning by movements but situated practices of teaching the broader community. Such teaching as she describes can be conceptualised as a Gramscian ‘war of manoeuvre’ which enacts an affirmative contestation of hegemony. The movement seeks to teach that those presented as criminalised surplus count, think, and are not voiceless but need to be listened to. As she argues ‘road blockages potentially allow for a rethinking and re-theorising of social movement pedagogy not only as learning within such movements, but as a conscious ‘teaching’ of an alternative truth’.

Such a reconceptualization of movement pedagogy stretches our understanding to include practices of deconstruction and displacement through embodied

public practices of presence and resignification. As Anne Selmeczi in her article, 'Dis/placing political illiteracy: The politics of intellectual equality in South African shack-dwellers' argues, Abahlali disrupts (mis) representations and spatialised practices which (re)produce them as politically illiterate. As she shows the movement is excluded from the public and labelled as disruptive and violent. Thus to become legible subjects involves a disruption of the terms and spatial constitution of the public. Such disruption of necessity creates multiple literacies as the hegemonic praxis of the political makes them mute, silent and unintelligible. In such conditions of life the embodied occupation and disruption of public space becomes a literacy which creates speech, visibility and intelligibility, re-framing the terms of the debate.

These disruptions facilitate processes of active subjectification in resistance to processes of signification which seek to produce shack-dwellers as politically illiterate. As Selmeczi describes these practices '[are] performances of the shack-dwellers' self-affirmation as "questioning people" effectively disrupting the order of knowledge that seeks to mask the contingency of equality and keep the shack-dwellers in their place.... [they] work to reassert the shack-dwellers' self-articulation as speaking beings.' This recalls Walter Mignolo's (2009) argument for epistemic disobedience as both a geo and bio-politics of knowledge. By this he means disobedience against the contemporary positioning of colonised people as less than human who act to rupture such placement of political illiteracy. It also resonates with Wiredu's (1995) appeal to 'epistemic awakening' as a means to counter epistemic obedience to the violent logics of contemporary capitalism.

### **On the margins of the margins: the embodied, affective and spiritual in becoming otherwise in theory and practice**

Existing on the margins of reflections on the politics of knowledge is attention to the embodied attachments, affective commitments and spiritual practices that are valued and devalued in hegemonic politics of knowledge but which become central in the creation of an emancipatory politics of knowledge.

The pedagogical practices of movements disrupt the 'normal' embodied attachments and affective commitments of the hegemonic subject of knowing. As demonstrated by Luchies the painstaking commitment and work to transform internal movement violences and exclusions involves developing the conditions of voice of, and active listening to, those who have been silenced. This transgresses the hegemonic subject of knowing who seeks to master the world and others in order to demonstrate the truth of their arguments and knowing. Rather it involves creating ethical commitments to each other and recognition of the other within and without, of that which is exiled and cast out by the violent logics of capitalist subjectification (see, Motta 2013 for discussion of the other within and without).

An intellectual-philosopher from the margins as our contributors demonstrate is of necessity in relation with others, collectively co-producing and facilitating

emancipatory knowledges. Such subjects transgress practices of shaming and (mis) naming characteristic of the knowing subject of capitalist coloniality and instead as Figlan describes (cited in Robertson, this issue) ‘someone who, firstly, knows their surroundings, knows their environment, and secondly, someone that humbles themselves not to be bullying or arrogant but instead to show a big mind by being able to adjust to their environment in a way that is not intimidating or undermining for the people in that environment’.

New emotional literacies are fostered in movement’s practices which nurture the coming into being as political subjects of oppressed communities. Spaces are created, as both Gerald Gill in his contribution about knowledge practices in Abahlali and Cynthia Cockburn in her contribution ‘Exit from war: Syrian women learn from the Bosnian Women’s movement’ detail, in which trauma can be witnessed and stories of everyday oppression spoken. Here vulnerability is not repressed and denied but rather embraced as a form of strength and courage. The power of tears creates openings in which enforced silence can become active voice. This recalls the practices of feminist consciousness raising in which honouring and speaking without fear the embodied experiences of oppression and trauma was a fundamental building block of enabling the appearance of subjugated knowledges and oppressed subjects (hooks, 1990; Anzaldúa, 2007).

This also speaks to the reflections in the action note by Ed Lewis and Jacob Mukherjee “Demanding the Impossible? An experiment in engaging urban working class youth with radical politics” in which they discuss their experience of organising a London based summer school about radical politics and activism for 16-19 year olds. When the course focused on oppression and exploitation as something external to participants lives it didn’t motivate the forming of collective solidarities or collective political agency that stretched beyond the ‘classroom’ space. However, when they revised the structure of the course to bring participant experience to the centre of the summer school this resulted in the formation of collective solidarities and a qualitatively different relationship between the young people, the course and political activity. Key to this was pedagogy of disruption that challenged taken for granted assumptions of participants through creating a dialogue between their experiences and other knowledges. The authors-facilitators were able to develop pedagogies of discomfort that were productive and creative, demonstrating the important role of affective pedagogies in creating transformatory learning spaces (see also Boler and Zembylas for a conceptualisation of pedagogies of discomfort). As they argue this demonstrates the narrowness of rationalist assumptions about what motivates and inspires political action and agency.

Such affective commitments and practices do not exclude pedagogies of embodied resistances, as occupations and resignification of the public foregrounds. However, in constructing the conditions for epistemological pluralism and multiple grounds of epistemological becoming, our contributors also foreground the expectation that those outside movements also actively resist hegemonic processes of subjectification as knowing-subjects. Abahlali



seek to step across the false epistemological, social and geographical borders that separate us. However, as Gerald Gill shows in his contribution, they expect that 'outsiders' walk with humility and have willingness to learn from and with the poor. This recalls a recent contribution by Jamie Heckert, *Anarchy without Opposition* (2013) in which he asks 'what new possibilities arise when we learn to cross, to blur, to undermine, or overflow the hierarchical and binary oppositions we have been taught'. This involves not fostering critical distance- a common imperative of hegemonic knowing practice- but rather nurturing critical intimacy. When stepping across these (false) borders the embodied attachments and affective commitments learnt in such encounters involve activist-scholars unlearning those elements of themselves that reproduce the oppressor's logics and learning themselves anew (Motta, 2013).

Other contributors focus on forms of embodied and spiritual knowing as essential to the creation and flourishing of counter-politics of knowing and becoming. Rhiannon Firth analyses how processes of collective map making can create a new sense of place and of dwelling in the city, which deepens the capacity to autonomously author the map-creators' lives and communities. The maps in the process of their creation and their existence as a subaltern language reconstitute social bonds and horizons of hope. Through constituting sociabilities and solidarities they can facilitate the emergence and consolidation of autonomous communities and ways of life. As Firth describes 'the process of mapping has the potential to reconstitute subjectivities through affective learning, to reconstitute social bonds through affinity and to act as a basis for bringing new worlds into being'.

As Langdon et al. demonstrate symbolism and spirituality are essential elements in the development of epistemic disobedience and appearance for the Ada Songor Advocacy Forum. Meaning making and being in the world are constituted through the literacies of symbolism, storytelling and embodied connections with the land and broader cosmos. It is worth citing at length Kofi Larweh, one of the article's authors, for his ability to capture this epistemic-ontological inter-connectedness

When we were growing up, knowledge and wisdom was presented in the form of Ananse Stories and you have animals and trees talking and it helps to build the imagination so that one is led in the spirit to experience what is good. Now, our people are storytellers. All the history of the community is, is written in songs, in stories that are handed over from one generation to the other and so, people would even say what is going on in the community in the form of animals or trees, birds or whatever, in a certain way. Our people are great storytellers. That is the reason why I started by saying that what has been expressed has two forms, the spirit and the letter...And our work, in the field, is to help people tell their stories. Is to help people come out with these images so that it will stick, the images stick better, because that is what people will remember. Even up to this day, those who said these things and those who heard will know that, when you're talking of the thumbless hand, the dog and the chameleon, they know what they are talking about

John Hammond in his contribution about *Mística* in the MST also demonstrates how Christian mysticism and symbolism are central elements that help understand the sociabilities, solidarities and commitment of the movement. *Mística* as he describes abounds in symbols, material objects with deep meaning, incorporating everyday products and tools. It involves the enactment of performances which bring dignity and pride to communities who are constructed as ignorant, politically illiterate and uncivil in dominant literacies. The collective spirit and energy created in such performances enact a utopic function. This helps create and sustain emotional literacies that support continued embodied commitment and courage in the face of injustice and capitalist violences. As Roselli Caldart (cited in Hammond, this issue) describes 'Mística is the seasoning of the struggle, the passion that enlivens militants.' This is echoed in the contribution by Gerald Gill in which he demonstrates how Abahlali develop a new concept and ethical orientation to their praxis related to the Southern African Philosophy of Ubuntu 'a duality of individuality and simultaneous unity'. This facilitates processes in which taking care of one another is experienced as a form of power and dignity. It can result in public embodied processes such as protest dance, *toyi-toyi* which embodies this unity in diversity and enables, as Gil describes 'distanc[ing] from fear and symbolize[s] a triumph of spirit.

Nathalia Jaramillo and Michelle Carreon in their contribution 'The Pedagogy of *Buen Vivir*' foreground recognition of the multiple cosmologies that underpin emancipatory politics of knowledge. They suggest that these are epistemological-ontological struggles and practices of (re)-learning ways of life and forms of subjectivity other than those of neoliberal capitalist-coloniality. Dialogical spaces of engagement and relating become central in this pedagogy but as they argue (citing Walsh, 2011, p. 51) 'The principles of struggle and transformation are no longer simply about identity, access, recognition or rights, but about perspectives of knowledge that have to do with the model and logic of LIFE itself'. Echoing other contributors these emancipatory pedagogical practices are rooted in commitments to solidarity and reciprocity in which care for self, other and the earth/cosmos become central to processes of transformation.

Our contributors highlight therefore the important role of embodied commitments, affective attachments and everyday spiritualities in the weaving of subjects, social relationships and communities differently from the logics of capitalism. They bring to the centrality of this process practices of learning how to build community, solidarity and forms of listening to each other which challenge the knowing subject and knowledge practices of coloniality. Affective practices of opening and openness weaved through emotional literacies which value humility, kindness and care create the pedagogical possibilities for transforming processes of subjectification into active processes of multiplicity and becoming.

## **Non-thematic contributions**

There is a strong resonance between the topic of this issue of *Interface* and the contributions for the non-thematic area: The need to broaden our focus from the “macro” level and the abstract to the “micro” level, that of the concrete, of the everyday life, of embodied identities, as well as of the embodied experience of political projects. Such broadening of focus helps us not only to understand the hidden, often silenced dynamics of oppression that often underlie emancipatory and revolutionary projects, but also how such dynamics are either kept “silent”, reinforced and reproduced, or unlearned and dismantled as a result of internal learning processes.

This section also shows the importance of community organizations as sites of “unlearning” of hegemonic worldview and assertion of counter-hegemonic identities and political projects. It also shows how they can be a backbone for grassroots struggles when “old” social movement organizations, like labour unions, are defeated by a too unequal power relationship with capital or become co-opted by the semantics and modes of functioning of mainstream interests. Schaumberg and Sarker’s pieces call our attention to these realities by showing the importance of community organizations in the infusion of new strength in labour union struggles. Schaumberg uses the relative placidity of organized labour regarding “socially acceptable” job cuts at Opel Bochum (Germany) as an example of how the vertical, bureaucratic dynamics of labour unionism, with their implicit learning mechanisms, socialize their top officials into a mode of operation that make them think and act in a way that is more in tune with the interests of top management than that of the workers.

Sarker’s article shows how, despite the neoliberal reforms that marked Indian politics in the last two decades, which are likely to deepen with the election of the new executive led by the Bharatiya Janata Party, the labour movement remained a strong, significant and class-rooted force of opposition to neoliberalism. That happens because, unlike in Schaumberg’s account of the labour movement in Bochum, labour unions in India work closely with community-based struggles and have been partnering with grassroots organizations of small entrepreneurs, unemployed youth, the urban poor, landless peasants and other groups of non-unionized workers marginalized by the capitalist economy. The fact that many of these groups are inspired by Gandhian and other social reform ideologies that are not directly associated with “classical” Marxism helped to infuse the labour movement with grassroots epistemologies that contributed to the development of a comprehensive counter-hegemonic stance against neoliberal reforms. Such epistemological cross-fertilization from grassroots struggles also contributed to the recent trend, from the part of labour unions, of organizing these workers and incorporating their demands among those of organized labour.

Ilyas’ piece on the Al-Muhajiroun radical Muslim movement Al-Muhajiroun calls attention to the role of a totally opposite process in the facilitation of embodied, emotional and spiritual experiences that facilitate learning of the movement’s objective: That of the use of often violent public performance in the

streets, as well as in multi-media platforms, to transcend identifications with community-based specificities and promote a global socio-political and religious community, based on an emotional and religious identification with suffering Muslim communities in war-ridden zones. Through these methods, the movement aims to achieve its goal of deconstructing Christian/Western hegemony and promoting religious awakening, as well as adherence to political causes of the Muslim world, among Muslims and non-Muslims alike. The article shows how movement leaders developed over time a significant degree of “brand awareness” that led them to apply this strategy in an increasingly more sophisticated way.

Foran and Wael’s contributions invite us to “look under the radar” of what appear to be “victories” or “defeats” of social movements and into how the resulting embodiment and learning outcomes by participants. Foran shows that the setbacks that the environmental movement experienced at COP 19 actually resulted in learning processes that contribute to what “may well be the unglamorous, under the radar organizing” around “a re-imagined vision of climate justice” that “will take place at all points of the compass as the global justice movement does the hard work of building itself into a force to be reckoned with”. Such “under the radar organizing” is leading to a more inclusive strategy that aims “to include everyone from the young radicals to the long-standing and slower moving NGOs, institutions from local governments to schools and universities, communities of faith, labor organizations whether unionized or not, indigenous movements, and intergenerational activism”. Wael’s feminist analysis of the Tahrir Square movement in Egypt shows how “the foundation of nationalism and the technicality of revolutions” are based on a masculine, patriarchal approach to politics. In the absence of embedded and well-organized mobilizations around issues of identity, the voices of women and other social groups made subaltern by patriarchy will end up being marginalized and instrumentalised by the male, heteronormative “movement elite” and silenced as soon as its major goals are achieved. That will happen, despite the creation of “safe spaces” where non-normative identities can be expressed, if patriarchal norms and behaviours are not problematized and deconstructed.

The book review section follows a similar focus, with reviews of publications on non-western feminism, the embodied, the everyday life and modes of knowing the world beyond western rationality, namely in the fields of the imaginary and the spiritual. Maeve O’Grady offers a review of Brookfield and Holst’s *Radicalizing Learning: Adult Education for a Just World*, which shows how critical pedagogies of adult education contribute to problematize and politicize the everyday life. Edgar Guerra Blanco reviewed Daza, Hoetmer and Vargas’ *Crisis y Movimientos Sociales en Nuestra América: Cuerpos, Territorios e Imaginarios en Disputa*. Sara de Jong offered a review of Srila Roy’s *New South Asian Feminisms: Paradoxes and Possibilities*. Kristen A. Williams reviewed David Harvey’s *Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution*. Markus Kip reviewed a powerful account of the importance of grassroots embedment and bottom-up organizing for movement success in *Organize! Building from the Local for Global Justice*. Eilís Ward reviewed

Laurence Cox's *Buddhism and Ireland: From the Celts to the Counter-Culture and Beyond*, which analyses how a non-western form of spirituality can be culturally reinterpreted and used as a tool for the building of counter-hegemony in a semi-peripheral western country with a strong Catholic tradition.

## **Conclusion: pedagogising the political and politicising the pedagogical**

In this Introduction we have systematised some of the key thematic that emerge from the rich cornucopia of contributions that make up this special issue, *The Pedagogical Practices of Social Movements*, of *Interface*. We hope that the Introduction plays a performative utopic function in stimulating debate, reflection and engagement in our movements with the pedagogical in all its multidimensionality.

Clearly, counter-politics of knowledge are at the centre of our emancipatory struggles. At the heart of this is the pedagogical, understood as those processes, practices and philosophies that enable the unlearning of hegemonic forms of life, social relationships and subjectivities. As our contributors demonstrate the pedagogical practices of social movements involve the creation of embodied peopled memories, the (re)covery and (re)invention of subaltern philosophies and theorisations through an embrace of multiple literacies; and an epistemological privileging of the margins in which those made superfluous by contemporary capitalism appear as the emancipatory subjects of our times.

These philosophical and epistemological commitments are embodied in informal learning in everyday life of a movement, including the unlearning of the oppressor's logics in our internal practices and processes; formal educational spaces in which dialogues of knowledge are fostered; movement teaching which resignifies and reconfigures the public; and embodied and affective pedagogical practices which are embedded in the spiritual and cosmological.

As our contributors in this issue powerfully demonstrate the pedagogical practices of social movements are at the heart of the reinvention of an emancipatory politics of knowledge for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. They help to create the conditions of possibility for the emergence of subaltern subjects and movements, support the flourishing of multiple grounds of epistemological becoming and can enable reflection upon and unlearning of the oppressor's logics as they mark our practices and struggles. Arguably, it is time to pedagogise the political and politicise the pedagogical.

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